



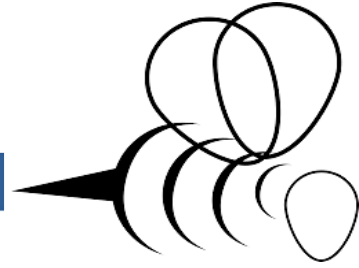
The CBC Pensioners  
National Association

*Preserving our Future, Sharing our Past*

L'Association nationale  
des retraités de la SRC

*Assurer notre avenir, partager notre passé*

**DURHAM CHAPTER**



**MARCH**—————**2021**

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – March 12th, 2021**



#### **Greetings!**

Spring is almost upon us, a time of rebirth and reawakening. Although the winter has been milder than predicted, I must admit I am looking forward to seeing the forest behind my home waking up.

As you may know, the CBC PNA is holding elections for its national officers this year. This past fall, I was approached by a number of people asking if I would consider standing for President. After a lot of thought, I have agreed to do so. One of my biggest concerns was the future of the Durham Chapter. We will also hold elections at the end of this year so our Chapter Executive will be actively recruiting volunteers to run for office. If you have an interest in any of the Executive positions (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer) and would like to discuss the task and commitment, please reach out. I am confident we will find new enthusiasm and energy! In the meantime, I will continue as Chapter President until such time as I am either successful in my bid for the national role, or to the next Chapter election. Please check the national website of the PNA for more election-related announcements.

This issue has updates on the pension plan & SAF, news about changes on our Chapter Executive, a piece about the health advantages of online video games, and a look inside the working lives and challenges facing reporters in the time of COVID-19.

Happy Reading! **Barbara Saxberg, Chapter President**



### PENSION SURPLUS SHARING AGREEMENT UPDATE

A dispute with the CBC over the status of the Memorandum of Agreement regarding the sharing of any surplus in our pension plan is headed to arbitration. The parties are working on the appointment of an arbitrator acceptable to both sides.

The process of getting an arbitrator is taking considerably longer than anticipated but it is hoped that this issue will be resolved soon. In December of 2019, the CBC unilaterally declared the MOA was concluded and no longer in effect.

On a related matter, the CBC is refusing to provide an accounting of the funds held for the purpose of offsetting health care costs. While the use of the funds is not directly relevant for the PNA, it is another major element of the MOA. At last report there is around \$40-million held in trust.

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### CHANGES COMING TO THE MANAGEMENT OF THE SPECIAL ASSISTANCE FUND

By Dan Oldfield, PNA Representative to the CCSB

Last May, the CBC advised the Consultative Committee on Staff Benefits (the CCSB) that it would no longer handle the administration of the Special Assistance Fund. This unilateral decision has caused some havoc in ensuring that those seeking the assistance are actually getting it.

The difficulties became obvious around the time of the scheduled September CCSB meeting. People who had applied, and ultimately been deemed eligible for payment from the fund, did not receive their cheques until December.

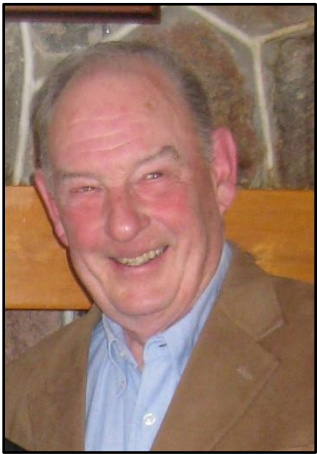
The PNA was facing a similar scenario this month but forced an ad-hoc special sub-committee meeting. Thanks to the efforts of Dianne St. Germain and Suzie Bougie in the PNA National office, most of the requests submitted for approval were ratified at the March meeting of the CCSB. The PNA will be watching to ensure cheques are sent in a timely fashion.

**The main reason for the delays is the CBC's decision to stop handling SAF claims.** The CBC wanted to hand the entire process over to Canada Life where it would be treated more as an insurance fund. But that was never the intent when the fund was created.

The PNA has offered to take over the administration of the fund and in December, the CCSB instructed the CBC and PNA to begin discussions on how that would work. A meeting involving the PNA, CBC and a co-chair of the CCSB was held on March 1st and the PNA committed to providing a detailed proposal for the take-over of the administration. A follow up meeting is scheduled for April 7th. It is hoped that a transfer of administrative duties will take place in time to deal with SAF requests at the June CCSB meeting.

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## **BEST WISHES, BRUCE! WELCOME, JOE!**



The Durham Chapter wishes to thank Bruce Rogers for his service as our Vice-president. Bruce is stepping down now that he and his wife Diana are starting a new adventure, moving to Edmonton. Bruce has been a voice of wisdom and level-headedness on our Executive for the past 2 ½ years and we wish him and Diana well!

In the interim, as per our by-laws, **the Chapter Executive has appointed Joe Solway** to serve as Vice-President until our next AGM at the end of this year. From 1998-2017, Joe was an associate producer with CBC Toronto, primarily with Metro Morning. He's now a board member of the Bowmanville Rotary club, where he created and produces the annual Concert to Feed the Need in Durham. Joe was also responsible for getting Dr. Brian Goldman to be our guest speaker at our last AGM. We're looking forward to putting his organizing skills to use. Welcome aboard, Joe!



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## **PNA CONVENTION UPDATE**

The National Board of the PNA met on March 5, 2021 and has determined that the Triennial Convention will now be held virtually on May 18th, 2021.



Each Region is entitled to a specific number of voting delegates, based on the Region's number of members. Ontario Region will have five delegates and has added one alternate.

The main order of business will be the work of the four Convention planning committees: Recruitment, Diversity & Inclusion, Advocacy, & Communications.

These committees are putting the finishing touches on their presentations to build on the action plans developed at the 2018 Convention. Their work will pave the way forward for the PNA for the next three years.

**This year is also an election year and the National election will take place at a separate meeting from the Convention. It will take place on May 21<sup>st</sup>, also virtually.** Members selected as full delegates to the Convention will be eligible to vote. All four national positions are up for election.

As of this writing, the following people have been nominated:

President – Barbara Saxberg

Vice President, Anglophone – Suzanne Cunningham, Dave Jeffrey

Vice President, Francophone – Marc-Philippe Laurin

Treasurer – Rejean Labrie

**Watch for Convention updates and details on the PNA website and in future newsletters:**

[www.cbcpensioners.ca](http://www.cbcpensioners.ca)

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## IN HEALTH NEWS...

**GAME ON! Electronic play is healthy, social and fun  
– especially for older adults!**

By Marc Saltzman

Reprinted with permission from Costco Connection



Thanks to the baby boomer generation, Canadians age 65 and older outnumber children for the first time. And, believe it or not, seniors are not only playing video games like their younger counterparts, but those mature players may be helping their health while doing so.



**Several studies have shown there are cognitive benefits to playing.** Psychology professors at the University of Montreal concluded playing 3D platforming games could stave off mild cognitive impairment, and perhaps even prevent Alzheimer’s disease, for those between ages 55 and 75. Another study, published by market research firm Elsevier, found gamers older than 63 reported higher levels of happiness and emotional well-being than

older adults who don’t play.

Similarly, AGE-WELL, a Canadian organization that focuses on technologies and services for healthy aging, maintains “life satisfaction” is reported to be highest among seniors with good cognitive and physical health, and with strong community relationships. A white paper from the organization explains that some research suggests that “playing exergames (digital games based on physical movement) may improve aspects of physical health for older adults, including mobility and balance; they appear to effective for stroke and Parkinson’s rehabilitation, fall prevention, general physical training, and encouraging physical activity.”

The paper goes on to say, “Older Canadians have reported that they experienced cognitive benefits including mental exercise, fun, and improvements in attentional focus, memory, reaction speed, problem-solving, and reasoning from digital gameplay.”

Canadians said gaming was an important source of joy and entertainment during the pandemic, according to the Entertainment Software Association of Canada. 57% of adult gamers said playing video games while required to remain at home improved their mental health. And about 43% of adult gamers said that video games helped them stay in touch with friends while self-isolating at home.

Just as there are varying movie genres, there are several kinds of video games to indulge in, such as fantasy role-playing, sports, simulation, action, strategy, adventure and puzzle games (and many sub-categories, too). In the end, digital gaming is fun. And even if you’re a senior, you don’t have to let the juniors have all the fun.



For more on video games for older adults, check out: <https://newcybersenior.com/best-video-games-seniors/>

## ...BUT BE AWARE...

There are some potential downsides to video gaming: the risk of addiction, possible eye damage, and repetitive strain injury.

A research paper from McMaster University found, however, that seniors who had eye damage and played first-person shooter games could still make out small print and recognize faces with ease. Because players needed to move their eyes quickly in order to play the game, it improved these skills even when they weren't playing.

**Seniors aren't immune to video game addiction**, however, and it is a very real problem for some. Limiting gaming time and making sure your schedule is such that you have breaks to get out and about can help prevent addiction. Signs of video game addiction to watch for include:

- Aggression toward video games (believing that the games are real or have a real impact on life)
- Playing video games instead of socializing with friends or family
- Playing video games rather than getting outside
- Playing video games for long periods of time, and becoming aggressive if they can't play video games
- Playing video games more than 6 hours each week
- Spending most of one's free time playing video games
- Anxiety when anticipating a new game or the ability to play a game



**Video games can also result in overuse or repetitive strain injuries.** While these can be painful or activity limiting, the solution is pretty simple – take more breaks! Stretching, moving through one's full range of motion, splints, or strengthening exercises are all ways to relieve the discomfort seniors may experience while video gaming.



## SPECIAL ASSISTANCE FUND

The Special Assistance Fund (SAF) helps CBC retirees, their spouses and dependents with health care expenses not covered by OHIP or the SHCP.

It also offsets the cost of hearing aids and mobility devices. There are some restrictions.

Contact the CBC PNA staff in Ottawa for eligibility requirements and help in applying. More information and application forms are on the PNA website.

[www.cbcpensioners.ca](http://www.cbcpensioners.ca)



### CREATIVITY WITH COVID

#### CBC Reporters devise innovative ways to file from home

By Maureen Brosnahan

Many of us who were reporters and producers know the challenges of filing from the field. Remote locations, archaic technology, machine-to-machine mixes, scratchy phone lines, and foreign telephone operators were all part of the job. Necessity was the Mother of Invention.

We smashed telephone receivers that wouldn't unscrew to hook up alligator clips to send voice and sound. We sat and froze in our cars while we wrote and filed because the interior of a vehicle was as close as one could get to studio-like sound.

I remember one hotel in remote Northern Saskatchewan that was made up of a series of ATCO trailers. I was on the floor, under a desk in the so-called "lobby" trailer with the only phone in the place. It was 2am and I'm whispering as I filed for World Report, trying not to wake up the other guests.

The Golden Rule was, always get a hotel room with two double beds, turn up one mattress against the wall and then use a blanket and chairs to create a tent-like structure to voice and send. The look on the housekeeper's face the following morning was priceless as visions of an orgy danced in her head.

**Today our colleagues at CBC are facing those and even more challenges as COVID-19 conditions have them under orders to work from home.**

While they have all been given laptops and state of the art technology to send in their stories, it has its challenges.



“We try to find ways to make it easier,” said **Lorenda Reddekopp**, a Toronto-based reporter who files for both radio and television. Initially, she said she and many of her colleagues were sitting on their beds trying to do Zoom interviews and write and file their stories.

“I have a small place, a 600-foot condo,” she said. “I had to buy a desk but then I had to get rid of a bookcase to make room.”

Then try creating a quiet space to voice and file with on-going construction noise and regular fire alarms in her building. Her bedroom closet was too small, so she invented a new plan.

“I’d make up my bed in the morning and then I’d have to rip it apart in the afternoon to use the blanket to sit under,” she laughed. “Now I have a separate blanket, I call it my ‘voicing blanket.’ “

Eventually, Reddekopp was given rare permission to take home her office chair from CBC. She said it saved her back from both sitting on a bed or a backless stool in her small kitchen. “You sit a lot more when you work at home,” she said.

**Senior Correspondent Joan Leishman** wasn’t so lucky. “I’m still sitting on a bone-crushing kitchen stool because I write on my kitchen island,” she said. She does stretches and yoga to ease the pain but she’s still sore. “Kitchen stools are not meant to be sat on for eight hours a day.”



There’s also the world of Zoom which both Reddekopp and Leishman use regularly to record interviews. Reporters rarely go into the field now because of COVID-19 restrictions. But Zoom comes with its own challenges. “If you don’t have your monitor angled correctly, the guest only sees your keyboard,” Reddekopp laughed. On the other hand, she’s conscious of what her guests see behind her.



“You kind of bring people into your home and you’re always thinking, what do I have in the background. So sometimes, I’ll move a chair or check what’s on the wall.”

And then there are the guests themselves and trying to make sure they can be recorded without distractions from kids and pets. “One doctor did an interview with me from his bathroom, just to make sure there was no interruption from his kids,” Reddekopp said. “I loved it.”

But there’s the social isolation from workplace colleagues. “Even when you’re talking through a story, it’s hard not to have people to bounce it off,” Reddekopp said. “I wonder when we go back, will we even know how to interact?”

Leishman, who starts her days at 4am, enjoys some of the freedom working from home offers. “I can look out my back yard and hear the birds. Sometimes I cook breakfast while I wait for a story vet.”

But it can’t compensate for the lack of camaraderie, she said. “Personally, I will be very happy to be back in the office. I miss the feeling of being connected to the News Service, of being in the middle of things, being part of a team. Those things are heavy losses,” Leishman said. “There’s no team when you are at home. You’re a team of one.”

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## A TRIBUTE TO MARGARET LYONS

In case you missed it, here is the link to watch A Tribute to Margaret Lyons by Durham member Karin Wells.

<https://youtu.be/elkrJJUw3LY>



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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**In our last issue, we published The Story of the Special Assistance Fund, written by CBC PNA CCSB Representative Dan Oldfield. The story was reprinted on the PNA’s national website and prompted the following letter:**

A word to thank Dan Oldfield for his article about the Special Assistance Fund (SAF). Really interesting.

And what a great initiative the "creators" of this Fund had, from which I benefited. This assistance is essential in situations where we would have to weaken our assets to meet an essential need to sustain or improve our quality of life. This financial aid takes away an enormous pressure and, as a result, contributes to a better quality of retirement, of old age.

The lifetime amount of \$12,500 may seem enormous, but believe me, it is quickly reached when we must pay for expensive equipment that has a limited life expectancy and that must be replaced sooner or later.

So, if finances permit one of these days, and if the directors feel it is appropriate, hopefully a review of this limit could be considered.

Thank you again and congratulations to all those who have contributed to the creation and are still dedicated to the management of this SAF.

Yours sincerely,

Gilbert Savard

Chicoutimi

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## **Coping With COVID**

You know the day you finally snapped due to COVID-19, the day you get out of bed, stretch and think yes, a package of Oreo cookies will be perfect for breakfast, the family size one of course. The one you bought actually believing you would share with family before the expiry date. How silly was I? A gander in the freezer and it's confirmed a tub of ice cream for lunch but let's hold back on the strawberries, too much sugar, got to be sensible in these trying times.

I've been mostly isolated for a year now; all cruising and family visits cancelled but I have remained upbeat. We're in this together, and who doesn't need to clear out their cupboards and try new recipes? And what about 1500-piece jigsaw puzzles and knitting Aran sweaters for the grandkids? Although I was advised I have been knitting the same ones in the same colour and size repeatedly, how could I know? I haven't seen the darlings recently. I think the last straw was when yet another box of clearance clothing arrived on the door step. Such great deals! Where was the room to store it? Then realising I needed to line up with my frail 92-year-old mother-in-law in the extreme cold so she could get a vaccine shot as no, they would not be going to her retirement home to administer it. But I do feel guilty about complaining. A

lot have it worse. There's Prince Harry with pal James Corden on a double decker bus touring around Los Angeles. I think they missed the GREEN message there? Poor Harry and Megs - what a rough time they've had living in their California mansion with more staff than they could throw a stick at! Yes, I must pull myself together and get on with it. Cheesecake for supper anyone?

Janet Abate  
Durham

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### CONTACT US:

Would you like to comment on this or anything else in the Buzz?

We welcome your contributions and story suggestions.

[CBC-PNA-Durham@outlook.com](mailto:CBC-PNA-Durham@outlook.com)

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### YOUR DURHAM CHAPTER EXECUTIVE

#### OFFICERS:

- **President** – Barbara Saxberg
- **Vice-President** – Joe Solway
- **Secretary** – Glenn Gray
- **Treasurer** – Dan Oldfield

#### DIRECTORS AT LARGE:

- Maureen Brosnahan
- Dan Karpenchuk
- Bette Laderoute Sampson
- Mac Skelton

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR** – Bette Laderoute Sampson

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*Please share this newsletter with any CBC retirees or spouses who are not yet members.*

*Encourage them to join the PNA.*

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### **PNA SPOUSAL MEMBERSHIP**

Individuals who receive pension survivor benefits are eligible to become members of the PNA and access all PNA member benefits including the Special Assistance Fund, loyalty programs, discounts and social activities.

They are also eligible to hold office in the PNA and serve on committees.

Join us! We want to hear from you!