



Treasurer David Carr says goodbye after years of service, while his replacement Jane Hartlen looks on at the Maritime AGM on May 3rd .



Alf Walker, an RCI Sackville employee who has found many volunteer opportunities in retirement



Deb Woolway sports one of the many medals she has won in her post-retirement Dragon-Boat competitions. She tells her story on p. 4



Moncton retirees have built an eco-house near Memramcook, New Brunswick – meet Jacques and Monique Giguère on p. 3

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## Concerns over EAP access for retirees

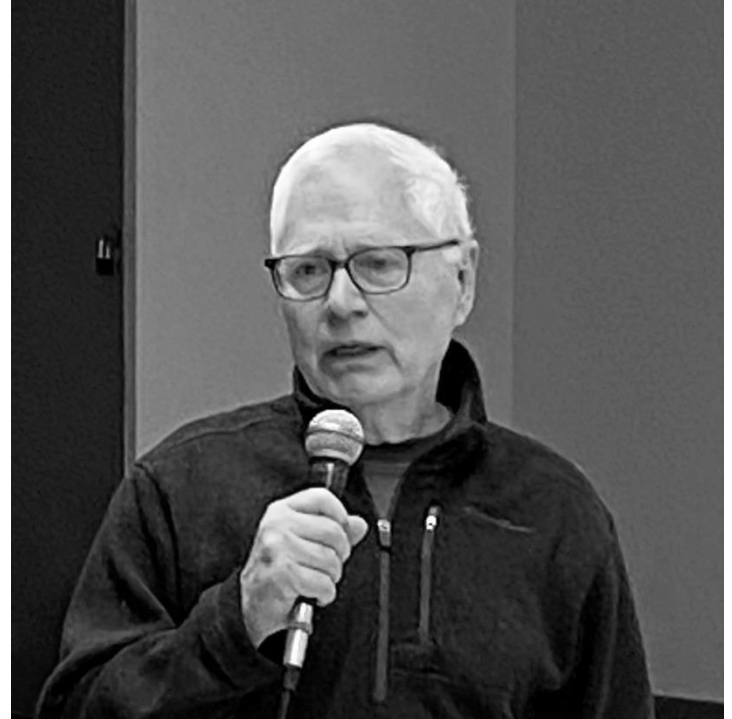
A move by the CBC which bars retirees from using the Employee Assistance Program is coming under fire by the PNA. It was one of the questions raised at the AGM in Halifax on May 3rd. Don Lockhart, a retiree from Moncton with 33 years at the CBC as a radio producer and host, spoke about how important it is to try to convince the CBC to keep access open to retired members. Lockhart was an early volunteer with the EAP during his career.

"We need the EAP. All people getting a cheque need an EAP. It's good for them and good for the Corp.", he said in arguing that retirees should have benefits and are currently being forgotten.

CBC PNA interim president Donald Langis said in a recent email to members: "I am extremely frustrated over the complete absence of consultation by CBC at the senior management level." Langis has requested a meeting with CBC Vice-president of People and Culture, Marco Dubé to seek a review of the decision. The EAP has not provided services to PNA members since early 2023.

## President's Report

By Geoff Turnbull



Geoff Turnbull

It has been a year of action, accomplishment, and not a little controversy.

And a year of sorrow, as we have said goodbye to many of our members. I'd like to mention especially Mary Munson, our former president of the Sydney chapter, who did much in a short time to help the Sydney retirees and the regional board. She, and many others, will be missed.

A year ago we met in person for the first time in three years and the future seemed to be clearing up. Since then the surplus disagreement with CBC's management got murkier, and CBC executives have started acting unilaterally in ways that impact retirees. The latest change seems to be to have dropped us from EAP coverage, after also ending our role in the Special Assistance Fund committee. Needless to say, we take none of it lying down. Our response as an association is twofold: to continue to advocate through legal and other means for our members, and to seek to develop a better relationship and communications with a management

that has not learned to see us as the very positive asset we can be. We are after all among the strongest supporters of public broadcasting!

Last month Justice O'Connor held his last session to hear final arguments on the MOA pension fund surplus dispute, and we expect to hear his conclusions soon.

Other developments have rocked the boat, including the resignation of the national president, Alain Pineau. Fortunately, our own Don Langis from Moncton, who was elected national VP francophone two years ago, has stepped up as interim president until next year's triennial convention.

On the positive side of the ledger, our newest regional chapter formed after a recruitment and organizational drive in Fredericton and Saint John. The F/SJ chapter, as we have taken to calling it, now has over 40 members and is a going concern. Co-presidents Susan King in Fredericton and Michael Holmes in Saint John, along with Treasurer Joyce Reinhart and director Chris Morris, worked diligently with help from the Moncton and regional executives to bring it about.

In Sydney, Wendy Martin took the reins from Mary Munson and has that chapter in good shape. Kathy Large and Linda Gillan Young co-chair the Charlottetown chapter and it too is vibrant. Carole Ryan and her executive have been very active in Moncton and among other things, hosted the national president at their lobster party in June. They are also exploring the idea of expanding their voice in the region.

Four years ago I agreed to start making annual visits to each chapter, and last year. I was able to attend and speak at meetings of all five groups. Of course, attending Christmas parties and eating lobster rolls turned the duty into a pleasure! I am always so delighted to meet with old colleagues and meet new people who all share the incredible experience of working for a first rate public broadcaster.

Kathy Large, with the assistance of Helene Branch in Moncton and our editorial committee, has done a wonderful job of publishing our regional bilingual

newsletter. It is one of the best in the country (IMHO!). We all owe them an enthusiastic round of applause.

I will close with a loud and grateful shout out to David Carr, who has diligently kept our financial records and paid our bills for many years. David is stepping down after a job so well done, and handing over the chequebook to Jane Hartlen, whom he has been indoctrinating for several months now. Thank you David for your incredible service, and thank you and welcome to Jane as she steps into those shoes (new shoes, like the finance minister gets?)

This is a great region, and I am grateful and honoured to have played a role in it for the last dozen or more years. The support of the chapters, board members and all of our members has made it both possible and worthwhile. A special thank you to you all for the support in the last year of health challenges.

Geoff Turnbull

President, Maritime Region, CBCPNA

## Retirees build Eco-home near Moncton

The best way to realize your dreams is to wake up, wrote the French philosopher Paul Valéry. When Jacques Giguère retired in July 2021 after working for Radio-Canada for 32 years, he had a crazy project in mind: to get closer to nature and complete the construction of an eco-responsible autonomous house, without depriving himself .



He and his wife Monique had this slightly crazy idea in their heads for 10 years. Climate change has been of concern to them for a long time. During his years in the service at Radio-Canada Moncton as a producer and manager, Jacques had also completed a master's degree in environmental studies at the Université de Moncton.

After much research into techniques for building houses with a low carbon footprint and energy self-sufficiency, the couple went to New Mexico, USA, to receive training in this unique approach to construction. They chose a type of house called Geoship. It is self-sufficient in water (rainwater) and electricity (solar panels), so there is no electricity bill. ZERO ! This off-grid home runs almost entirely on its own because it uses the earth's natural phenomena to its advantage, such as gravity, thermal mass, convection, thermal radiation and solar energy – passive and active. To further reduce its carbon footprint, it incorporates end-of-life materials, such as cans (3000), tires (1000), glass (2500 bottles) and other recycled materials such as wooden pallets as materials of construction.

After modifying and adapting the Geoship to the eastern Canadian climate, and especially after a lot of effort and surmounting many obstacles, they moved into their new home in November 2021. The result: an incomparable quality of life at very low economic and energy costs.

This exceptional house has two advantages which are in line with their values: It only costs \$2,500 per year to live there and once completed, its annual carbon footprint is five times smaller than a standard Canadian house of the same size.

## **Special Invitation**

***Jacques and Monique have graciously agreed to host an open house for all PNA members. They will give a tour and explain how the house sustains itself.***

***Friday May 26th from 1:30 to 3:30***

***Rain date: Monday May 29<sup>th</sup>***

***Address: Rockland No 1 Rd***

***Taylor Village, N.B.***

***(this is close to Memramcook)***

## **Deb Woolway reflects on her paddling journey**

***Deb Woolway was an executive producer at CBC Radio in Halifax when she took early retirement in 2010 at age 55. The following spring, she discovered dragon boating and hasn't looked back since.***

The early evening sun glinted off their paddles as a crew rhythmically reached into the waters of Lake Banook and pulled the dragon boat forward. In and out, turn, reach and pull, all in perfect harmony. I was mesmerized. I wandered to Graham's Grove saw a guy who seemed to be in charge. "Can I try this?" I asked. "Sure," he said, "Hop in."

It was April, 2011. And it took months for me to realize I had fallen into the clutches of one of the top dragon boat coaches in North America. And if anyone had told me that within the next decade I'd have made a Canadian National Dragon Boat twice, I would have assured them they were mistaking me for someone else.

Dragon boating is about teamwork. Twenty paddlers, facing forward in rows of two, try to propel a 12 metre long, 1,500-pound boat faster than the competition. The helm handles a huge steering oar at the back. A drummer sits high above in the front, and urges the crew onwards with a steady pounding beat. The sport has its origins in China. But for many people, it's synonymous with breast cancer survivors. Those are special crews, and they paddle with a sense of joy and commitment to each other that is deeply moving.

Competitive dragon boating is a whole other animal.

I had never paddled anything more than a Canadian Tire kayak special. I played a lot of competitive sports in my younger days. But the responsibilities of family and career had kicked all that to the curb. In truth, I'd been physically inactive for decades. But I got the competitive bug. I started travelling with our mixed all-ages team to competitions in ever widening circles. I loved having younger teammates. If you missed a couple of practices,

someone would call. “Everything Ok? Yes? Then get your butt back in the boat!”

I fell into a rhythm. April training camp in Florida. On the water all summer at Banook until the lake froze. In winter, it was dryland training, with ergs and weights. A few seasons passed, and my technique and fitness started to improve. Then, one cold winter night, my coach, Albert McDonald, came up to me at the gym. “Woolway,” he said abruptly. “I think you could make the Canadian National team in your age group. Let’s make a plan.”

And my dragon boat world exploded.

Trying out for the Senior C National Team (that’s 60 plus, folks!) was the hardest thing I’ve ever done. The fitness, flexibility and strength requirements were over the top. The national coach, a two-time kayak Olympian, was tough as nails. Sometimes I’d come home from a workout or testing and think to myself “What on earth am I doing? Who do I think I am? How OLD do I think I am?” The year-long tryout, with selection camps in Toronto and Vancouver, was physically and mentally stressful. My diet completely changed. My entire life revolved around training. My family was convinced I’d been abducted by a cult. And, in a way I had. I’m sure by now you’re wondering why anyone would put themselves through all this, at any age. All I can tell you is that when I made the National Team, I danced for joy. And when I sank my paddle into the water at the start line at the 2017 World Nation’s Cup in Kunming, China, wearing a Team Canada shirt, I almost cried.

International competition is an intense, high-octane rush of speed and strength. National Chinese TV covered the event live. Once a day a SWAT team of heavily armed men marched through the Athletes’ Village. I never understood why. Sometimes our team would warm up in a nearby park and crowds would gather. Then they’d clap, pass us their babies and take pictures. After a few trips to the podium, we began presenting the garlands of pink and purple orchids we were given along with our medals to the delighted Iranian team in the tent next to ours.

The next year I joined an Ottawa team competing at the Club Crew World Championships in Szeged, Hungary. Fields of giant sunflowers next to the race site stretched away as far as the eye could see. But I was acutely aware that at the nearby border with Serbia, razor wire fences were trying to stem the tide of refugees pouring into Europe from the Middle East. It was an uncomfortable feeling.

Back on the National team again, and in Pattaya, Thailand, I watched the Chinese Men’s Premier team obliterate the word record in the 200m sprint. Then they all sat down under a tree and had a smoke.

When COVID-19 brought the dragon boat world to its knees, competitions were cancelled. Somehow our local coaches found a way to keep us afloat, first in groups of four, then of eight. It was a long couple of summers. But it paid off. The Dartmouth Dragon Beasts took a Senior C mixed crew to Worlds in Sarasota last year and came home with 6 gold medals. In March of this year, I joined a motley crew competing at the Pan American Club Crew Championship in Panama. All the travelling is great, but as we joke: “The PROBLEM with paddling is, you have to paddle.”

My offspring have resigned themselves to the knowledge that I’m burning through their inheritance at a rate of knots to pay for my late breaking dragon boat career. My husband has been an unbelievable support. And I’ve been lucky, injury wise. Stretching before and after every practice and race, proper warmups, seeing physios when I need to, early to bed, early to rise— it’s all part of the deal. I’ve learned a great deal about nutrition over the years, and what works for me.

I know I can’t keep on doing this forever. Not at this level, anyway. But this is a big competition year for our Dartmouth team. We head to Nationals in Welland, in July, where we hope to qualify boats for the next Club Crew World Championships in Ravenna, Italy in 2024.

I know when I stop competing internationally, I’ll slide right back into the regular boat, where there is always room for anyone, of any age, size or skill level. Come join us! Paddles Up!

## Paul Young's Papers

By Joan Weeks

In Sydney, many people know the story of Paul Young, who overcame a medical misdiagnosis and personal challenges to become a valued CBC employee. His accomplishments only grew after leaving CBC, as Paul became a leader in the Canadian disability rights movement.



And now he has agreed to donate his life's papers, presentations and materials to the Beaton Institute Archives at Cape Breton University.

As a child, Young was diagnosed with developmental disabilities, a diagnosis later changed to cerebral palsy, which is a condition that affects a person's ability to move and maintain balance and posture. In the 1940's and 1950s there was little support in Cape Breton for people with physical and learning challenges. At the age of 20, Paul was attending a community workshop and learning basic skills such as tying his shoes.

How he became a Group 3 technician in CBC Sydney's radio master control (1980 – 1998) is a remarkable story in itself. Going on to head national disability rights organizations like People First and the Council of Canadians with Disabilities added a remarkable chapter. In recognition of his achievements Paul was awarded the Meritorious Service Cross in 2016, a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee medal in 2012 and a Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee medal in 2002.

In addition to making Young's materials available to the public, the Beaton Institute is producing a video interview. Young says he hopes, by telling his story, people will learn not to under-estimate the capabilities of people with disabilities.

*Joan Weeks is a former CBC Radio and Television reporter, producer and technician who is retired and lives in Sydney.*

## Chapter reports from around the Maritimes

### South West New Brunswick

by Susan King

After a break through the winter, the Fredericton - Saint John Chapter is beginning to plan events for the year. We will be holding a "Welcome to summer" social gathering in Saint John on June 21. We have booked the local curling club in Saint John and are hoping for an excellent turnout. Our membership is growing with two new members. Joe McDonald, a videographer, and Elaine Bateman, a senior producer both worked in Fredericton. Joe retired on January 1st and Elaine on March 31st. Sadly, we lost one of our members, Kevin Ryan, former host with the Rolling Home Show in Fredericton. He was 81 years old. A memorial will be held later this year. Kevin had attended our annual meeting in Fredericton in Nov 2022. I know he will be missed at our next gathering.

### Moncton Chapter

by Carole Ryan

This year the Moncton Chapter focused on Inclusion.

New Brunswick is a big province and we have chapter members living all over. I noticed in my first year as president that when we hosted events in Moncton most of the members in attendance were within half hours drive from the city. In other words, attendance from members further than a 30-minute drive from Moncton was extremely low.

So, with a focus on inclusion this year, we made the conscious effort of going to areas where our members with low attendance were, and it was a great success!

One such outing took place November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022. We invited all retirees from the Sackville area who had worked for CBC – Radio Canada International shortwave station in Sackville to a luncheon. Whether they were association members or not we invited all the retirees from that area to a local restaurant for lunch. In all, we had 18 attendees.

Over lunch we discussed what was happening with the pension surplus, what the Special Assistance Fund is all about, the general benefits of becoming an association member and how to access the PNA site for more information.

Although I had previously had the pleasure of speaking with many of these members while doing my monthly birthday greeting calls, it was so lovely to finally put a face to the name! Overall, everyone present seemed to enjoy reminiscing and catching up with old colleagues; a successful event indeed. So much so, that immediately after this get together, we had 2 new members join. As of now we have another event scheduled in Sackville for the end of May 2023.

Below is a picture of the Radio Canada International group from Sackville N.B. along with Donald Langis who was vice-pres. francophone at the time and is our current national president. As is often the case, I'm behind the lens taking the photo!

**Carole Ryan**  
**PNA President**  
**Moncton Chapter**



## PEI Chapter

The Lobster lunch is returning! We are inviting all members of the PEI chapter of the CBC PNA to gather at the Brackley Commons again for a lobster sandwich lunch on Saturday, June 24<sup>th</sup>. Our annual general meeting will be held in advance of lunch where we will give you a report on the year's activities and open up the floor for questions and nominations to our executive. More details will be sent to members in the next few weeks. Please hold the date to make sure you and a guest can join us.

In other news, our co-president, Linda Gillan Young has taken on a new national role as co-chair of one of the national standing committees of the CBC Pensioners National Association, the Committee on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

**Kathy Large**  
**Co-President**

## Cape Breton Chapter

The Cape Breton chapter met in late March. About a dozen members attended the luncheon meeting. The chapter held its spring election, and the following members were acclaimed.

Wendy Martin - President  
Joan Weeks - Secretary  
Jean Levesque - Treasurer

Members also decided to send a note of thanks/support to the negotiators for the pensioners in the pension surplus negotiation.

This is the message.

**We, the members of the Cape Breton chapter of the CBC Pensioners Association, want to express our hope for a successful resolution of the pension surplus arbitration, as the arbitrator prepares to release his decision this month.**

We have waited years for this issue to be settled, and are confident that the arbitrator will side with the pensioners, and order that the surplus be distributed. In the case of such a decision, we urge the CBC to move swiftly to distribute the funds, without further delay.

In the meantime, we send our thanks and appreciation for those who have worked hard on our behalf.

Respectfully submitted,  
Wendy Martin  
president  
PNA president, Cape Breton

## Halifax Chapter

We had over 90 people sign up for our Christmas gathering early in December. That turned out to be a real shot in the arm, bringing many of us back together and attracting some new faces as well.

It was an indication we may be starting to overcome the Covid effect. It was a given over the first 20 years in Halifax that many members would pencil in the first Wednesday of the month for our meetings. Covid cancellations interrupted that habit but numbers have increased in each month since February.

Credit our new series of “lunch and learn” sessions featuring some very engaging topics lined up by Olga Milosevich. Speakers have included an emergency measures specialist and an expert on dementia. We’ve had a lot of questions for them and they’ve had some very interesting and helpful answers.

We are being reminded how much pleasure there can be in getting together with people who have been our friends and colleagues for many, many years. As our gerontology specialist reminded us, getting together gives us two important ways to combat cognitive decline: social interaction, and learning something new.

Geoff Turnbull  
Maritime Branch President  
Halifax

## A well-deserved 2<sup>nd</sup> retirement: The busy life of Alf Walker

By Jacques Hamelin

Nothing prepared Alf Walker, originally from Ontario, to leave his native province to settle in the Maritimes and put down roots in Sackville, New Brunswick. A handyman, he could never have imagined, either, that he would spend 30 years of his working life in the workshops of Radio-Canada International, not far from the Nova Scotian border.

Retired since 2001, he has only good memories of this period which, for him and his work colleagues, ended about twenty years ago. Set up in 1945, this crossroads of shortwave retransmissions broadcast programs, chronicles and news bulletins in eleven languages. RCI in Sackville has long been considered a strategic site for the dissemination of "Made in Canada" information around the world, from Spain to Hungary, via Russia, Germany and Spain.

Advances in technology, the rise of the internet, the rapprochement of international networks, there came a time when the RCI building and its gigantic retransmission antennas no longer had their *raison d'être*. “The arrival of the internet has quite upset our functioning. Gradually, some networks of foreign countries broke away. It was a difficult period for several of my colleagues who had some seniority but could not qualify for retirement. They had to look for another job.”

### A second start

In his mid-fifties, however, there was no question for Alf to be inactive. On the contrary. He could make himself even more available for volunteer activities in Sackville. “Long before my retirement, I had been involved in annual fundraising campaigns, particularly for the fight against cancer. The door-to-door, I knew



well. But it is also in associations related to the Royal Canadian Legion that I have been most involved.”

Son of a soldier who fought in the army during the Second World War, Alf quickly joined teams that were keen to facilitate the maintenance of links between former soldiers, but also between those who were members of the Canadian Armed Forces who are now retired. There are about 150 in the Sackville area. Thus, major renovations have been made to the Royal Legion building on Lorne Street, which welcomes dozens of members every week for social or recreational activities. Each month, a community meal is also offered to the general public, in order to raise funds for activities offered in particular to young people associated with military families.

At the same time, Alf also acted as public relations officer, supplying information and photos to the national magazine, Legion, or on the Facebook site. “I have also always been interested in local hockey associations, in particular by sitting on the Board of Directors of the Sackville arena.”

At the same time, Alf has always been an active participant in Tantramar’s Senior College. As if that were not enough, Alf also joined the Board of Directors of Sackville and Area Housing in 2012, a small but very well-meaning organization. Its mission is to facilitate access to housing. So far, two duplexes are under the group’s supervision. Alf was the coordinator until very recently.

Over the years, the two buildings have been renovated, maintained and have undergone insulation work to ensure the comfort of the four families.

Alf is happy with his contribution to the comfort and safety of these families. But at the age of 75, he chose to give way to younger people. In a year, he plans to take ... a second retirement.

*Jacques Hamelin is a former Radio-Canada reporter who worked in all three Maritime Provinces and now lives in the Sackville area.*

## Cape Breton Chapter celebrates centenarians

The CBC PNA chapter in Cape Breton has a couple of members who are beating the odds. They are both more than a hundred years old. **Ray MacKay** turned 100 on Feb. 19, 2023. **Iver Gillis** had already reached that milestone. He is 102.

“Too many people give up on life. They just sit home and watch TV,” says Iver, explaining his longevity as a gift from his family. “My mother’s genes. She was 103 when she passed away. At a hundred, her mind was as clear as a bell! She never grew old. I don’t believe in growing old. I like to think about things I still want to do.”

Iver Gillis started to work at the CBC in Cape Breton in 1955 and retired 39 years later in 1994. He was a technician, finishing up his career as supervisor of the transmitter group in Cape Breton and eastern Nova Scotia which kept 26 transmitters, big and small, in operation.

Ray MacKay lives in Westmount with his wife Jean of 73 years. He started to work at the CBC in 1950 and retired in 1983. “I still drive my car - just to get groceries and to the bank - you know stuff like that. We don’t travel very much. I don’t drive my car at night.”

In his early days, the Sydney station a delay point for programming to Newfoundland due to the different time zone. He worked as a radio technician, program operations officer and later as a television cameraman and other studio roles.

Both men have passions that keep them interested in life. MacKay is still an active church organist and loves all kinds of classical music. And golf is what has been a sustaining interest for Gillis. “I wouldn’t say I’m a good golfer but I am a happy golfer,” he quips. “I love golfing.” His best score is a respectable round at 84. However, mobility issues will probably limit his chances of playing this summer.

## New Members

**Elaine Bateman** - NB - Senior Producer - CBC NB

**Willa Briggs** - NS - surviving spouse of Fred Briggs

**Glenn Carey** - NS - Radio Technician - Sydney

**Jane Chalmers** - NS - National TV reporter, VP of CBC Radio

**Jules Chiasson** - NB - radio Producer HFX, director of French radio Moncton

**Denise Cormier** - NB - Surviving spouse of Raoul Cormier

**Rose-Marie Duguay** - NB - Surviving spouse of Benoit Duguay

**Betty Hayes** - NS

**Robert Hicks** - RCI – Master Control Technician - Sackville, N.B.

**Margery Lenore Hussey** - PE- surviving spouse of Geoff Hussey

**Linda Kelly** - NS - Host/Reporter News Halifax

**Bernard Lebel** - NB -Journalist TV evening news for Moncton. Stationed in Edmundston, N.B.

**Terrence LeBlanc** - NB - TV Master Control Technician, Moncton

**Margaret MacDonald** - NS - News Editor, Sydney

Joseph Louis McDonald - NB - Videographer CBC Fredericton

**Jaipersad Parasram** - NS

**Mark Pineo** - NS - Maintenance Technician - Halifax

**Jean Richard** - NB - Television Graphic Artist & Studio Technician

**David Wheaton** - RCI – Shortwave Radio - Mechanical Rigger - Sackville, N.B.

## Deceased Members

**Sally Burns** - NS - surviving spouse of Charlie Burns

**Raoul Cormier** - NB - TV Master Control Room Technician

**Frances Dibblee** - NS - Script Assistant – Halifax

**Gerald Hanlon** - NS - Purchasing Department CBC Halifax

**Geoff Hussey** - PE - Exec Producer CBC Compass

**Velma Ibsen** - NS - Receptionist/Switchboard CBC Halifax

**Robert Marks** - Master Control Tech - CBC Halifax

**Jim Nunn** - NS - Host Supper Hour News / Marketplace

**Jean Pottie** - NS - Human Resources

**Kevin Ryan** - NB - Host Radio Show - Rolling Home Show

**James (Dave) Shea** - NS - TV Technician Halifax

**Madelyn Smith** - NB - Surviving spouse of Harley Smith

**Colombe Thibodeau** - NB - Surviving spouse of Claude Thibodeau



**CBC Pensioners National Assoc.**

**Website :** <http://www.cbcpensioners.ca/>

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