

# LIVEWIRE

CBC PNA ONTARIO REGION

## WOULD YOU HOLD MY COAT?

BY DAN OLDFIELD, REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON STAFF BENEFITS

By now you have no doubt heard about our arbitration victory, which preserves our right to a fair share of the CBC pension surplus. The arbitrator soundly rejected the CBC's attempt to have our Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) terminated. (You can read more about the decision on the PNA's "News" page.)

The fact that we had to go to arbitration to force the CBC to honour the MOA should ring alarm bells. We can take nothing for granted, and it seems clear we will need to continue to fight just to keep what we have. Our surplus sharing agreement was gained through a process of good-faith bargaining, and took considerable time and effort and money to achieve. So, it was more than disappointing that the CBC

attempted to renege on a deal that had resolved years of costly litigation, and mended strained relationships. We don't know what this senseless fight cost the Corporation, but it was in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. Clearly when it comes to legal expenses at the CBC, money is no object.

I am writing this in the hope you will share it with those who have not yet joined the Association, and convince them to become members.



Illustration by Scott Galley

*Continued...*

The Pensioners National Association does a lot of heavy lifting to protect our pensions, and to guarantee access to post-retirement health benefits. It also joins with other organizations to push for improvements to pensions, and fend off those who seek to undermine defined benefit plans, such as the one we enjoy through the CBC. This requires the time and effort of countless PNA volunteers, and a couple of part-time staff. These efforts also cost money, and our financial resources come only from our members. The average annual dues are around \$100—less than ten bucks a month.

Currently the PNA has slightly more than 5,000 members, yet there are about 10,000 CBC retirees. That means almost an equal number of CBC people are benefitting from our efforts and our financial costs. That needs to change.

Membership numbers add to the PNA's credibility and amplify its voice. We don't have benefits out of the kindness of the CBC or federal legislators. There is constant pressure to reduce or remove them, and we need to be vigilant. I'm a lifelong believer in the strength of the many. It's why I'm involved in the important work of the PNA.

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## **Livewire is the Ontario Region newsletter of the PNA**



**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*

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**Feedback and ideas are welcome. Write to [pnalivewire@gmail.com](mailto:pnalivewire@gmail.com)**

Becoming a member doesn't mean you have to run for office or become intimately involved in the organization's struggles. There are many different opportunities to volunteer, some of which you'll find in this issue of *Livewire*.

Some of us are willing to take on the political fights, and all I'm asking is that someone hold my coat and the coats of others, as we challenge those who threaten our pensions and benefits.

Please recruit more people to join the PNA, and consider rolling up your sleeves to support the important work we do for you.

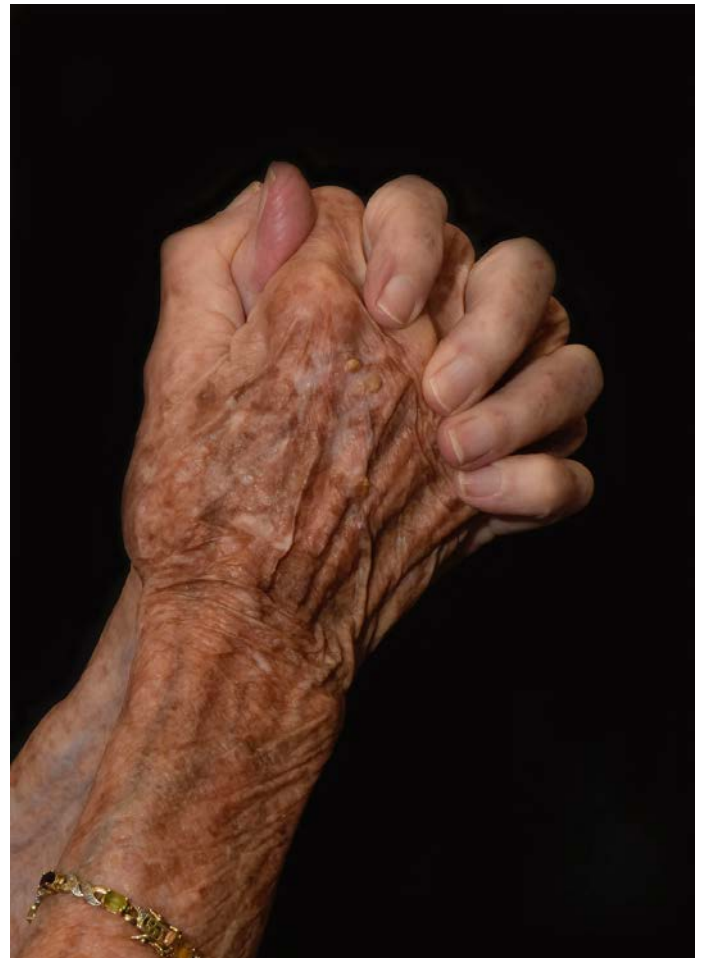
## WE ONLY HAVE WHAT WE GIVE

BY TALIN VARTANIAN

Those wise words are from Isabelle Allende. One of the most valuable things we can give is our time, something we all have more of now that we're no longer working at the CBC.

Please consider devoting some of your time, your skills and smarts to the PNA. There are always opportunities to get involved, commune with colleagues, and meet new people. Here are a few ways you can help out:

**Facebook page moderator** - The PNA Ontario Region is searching for more ways to keep you informed, and Facebook could be a useful tool to reach more members. If you're comfortable using Facebook and would



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like to be the moderator of a new PNA Ontario page, please let us know.

**Recruitment Committee rep** – Recruiting new members was, is and will always be Job #1 for all of us. The PNA’s national standing committee on recruitment needs representation from all regions of the country, and we’re currently looking for someone to represent Ontario. The work is gratifying, and not onerous. This group meets about eight or ten times a year.

**Join a creative team** – Put your CBC skills to work. We’d like to pull together a savvy, talented team with skills in writing, producing, sound and video to help create entertaining, compelling videos designed to attract new members to the PNA. This is a perfect opportunity to have some fun and collaborate with new people.

Please consider helping. Write to [pnalivewire@gmail.com](mailto:pnalivewire@gmail.com) with your questions, and to express interest in any of these opportunities. As Isabelle Allende said, “We only have what we give,” and giving your time and talent to the PNA will benefit us all.

## YOU DON’T LOOK BLIND!

BY JANICE STEIN

As we age, one in five Canadians will experience vision loss. It happened to Fran Cutler of Ottawa, a member of the PNA’s Standing Committee on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (SCEDI). Her sight began to deteriorate when she was teenager. As it worsened over time, Cutler discovered tools and tricks that helped her cope with vision loss, and live a productive life.

“You don’t look blind,” is one of the absurd things people sometimes say to her, and it will be the title of a new video. It’s the first of a series produced by the SCEDI, called “Storyteller Sessions.”

The Committee is looking for other stories from seniors, about how they deal with a challenge that comes with aging. It may be visible, such as the loss of a limb; or invisible, such as chronic pain or hearing loss. If you would like to share your story, please write to the SCEDI Chair Ron Charles [ron.charles.canada@gmail.com](mailto:ron.charles.canada@gmail.com) or Co-chair Linda Gillan Young [lgillanyoung@gmail.com](mailto:lgillanyoung@gmail.com).

## A REASON TO CELEBRATE AND TO GROW THE PNA

BY GAIL CARDUCCI, ONTARIO REGION PRESIDENT

We're all celebrating our success in the pension surplus arbitration, and we collectively owe a debt of gratitude to Dan Oldfield and the team who led the charge. This win clarifies why the CBC PNA matters, and how we are stronger together. We're not just a bunch of former employees getting together for lunch. The PNA works hard to protect your interests. Your dues paid for this victory.

Justice O'Connor has given us a strong argument to grow the PNA. To keep a seat at the table, and to ensure we have a voice on issues such as benefits and the pension surplus, we must represent more than 50 per cent of all CBC pensioners. Currently, we're hovering just below 51 per cent. That's a tenuous position.



All CBC pensioners, even those who haven't joined the PNA, are benefiting from our team's work. Ask the former colleagues you know whether they are members. If they aren't, please persuade them to join us. If you hear about people who are planning to retire, talk to them about why it's important to sign up as a PNA member. If your spouse will be the beneficiary of your pension, have "the talk" about the PNA. (See Phil Peck's article on page 7.)

Democracy—you might not think it's an issue for our organization. It is.

Making the Ontario Region elections more democratic was one of the planks in my campaign to become Ontario Region

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Gail Carducci

Photo by Ron Charles

president. You pay dues to the PNA, and you should have your say. Previously, a few dozen members who were able to attend the triennial annual general meetings (AGMs) decided who would represent our members. The new Ontario region bylaws will change that. When the next election in our region takes place in 2025, each of you will be able to vote, either online or by telephone, wherever you live, if you accept this revision to our bylaws.

We are asking you to support our updated bylaws at this year's AGM, on Wednesday, October 11th. Read more about them in this issue, in an article on page 15 by Vice President Barbara Saxberg, and watch for more information closer to the date of our AGM, which will be held on Zoom. *Today, please circle October 11th on your calendar, and plan to attend.*

At the PNA's national meeting and AGM in Winnipeg in May, we made good progress on several files. You can find details by going to the PNA website page, and clicking on

*Justice  
O'Connor has  
given us a strong  
argument to  
grow the PNA.*

"News," then "News Articles." Our VP, Barbara Saxberg, is leading a new advocacy committee, that will explore and develop relationships between the PNA and other organizations whose missions intersect with ours. She is also part of a new committee to examine the national structure of our organization. And I am continuing my work as part of a national committee that is reviewing the PNA's budget. Your Ontario Region board is busy, working on your behalf.

I'd love to hear from you. Please write to me with any questions, concerns or ideas. You'll find contact information for all your board members on the final page of *Livewire*.

In the meantime, have a safe and happy summer!



## HAVE YOU HAD THE TALK?

BY PHIL PECK, CO-CHAIR OF THE RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE

My parents bought a burial plot many years before they would need it. It was a joint decision. However, when my father died, my mother couldn't decide on a casket for him. She looked at several models and wondered, "What would Kenny have wanted?" (Kenny was my father.)

It was a horrible time for my mom, having to make significant financial decisions, while in shock over the loss of her husband.

She wished she'd talked about caskets and other money matters with my father. Later, she advised her friends. "Don't put it off, talk about these things with your husband, before it's too late."

She was a wise woman, and we'd all be smart to take her advice. Have "The Talk" with your partner.

"The Talk" has special importance for PNA members with partners. Let them know that when you die, they should join the Association as a surviving spouse because they'll be inheriting your CBC pension. Some people think membership transfers to a partner automatically.

It does not. They need to sign an enrolment form.



Joining the PNA means they'll be supporting the work of an organization that advocates on their behalf, in all matters related to their pension and benefits.

The PNA also will help them with a range of other needs, including reduced insurance rates, and health care benefits through the Special Assistance Fund.

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*A surviving spouse who joins our Association benefits us all.*

A surviving spouse who joins our Association benefits us all. There is strength in numbers, and when the PNA sits at the table with the CBC, it needs the backing of all pensioners. My mother always liked to plan, and she managed money very well.

Soon after my dad's funeral, she picked out a casket for herself, and wrote a detailed note about her finances. She didn't want anyone (especially me) to have doubts about her wishes.

Many years later, I had to open that note. It was a difficult read, but greatly appreciated. Thanks, Mom.

### THREE SURVIVING SPOUSES, IN THEIR OWN WORDS

*The people there are like family. The CBC family is great. They were a big help when my husband died. I've known them for years and it's nice to see them at events.*

- Zonnia Gore, Regina, widow of Wes Gore

*It's interesting to get the newsletters in the mail. It lets me keep up to date. I remember some friends of my husband. We all went out for lunches, back in the union days. It is nice to remember those times.*

- Gisela Fisher, St. Thomas, Ontario, widow of George Fisher

*I enjoy the monthly coffee get togethers. Getting out is really nice. I also appreciate the Christmas party and the discounts that are available to [PNA] members.*

- Anne Chase, Regina, widow of Doug Chase



## MEET A MEMBER SUE HEDDLE, GOLDEN HORSEHOE CHAPTER

BY TALIN VARTANIAN



Sue Heddle

Photo by Eightbyten Photography and Design

While some people struggle to define life after the CBC, Sue Heddle is a textbook case for how to make the transition. During a maternity leave, she registered for real estate sales courses and passed the exams. Then, instead of quitting her position as a video editor in TV News and Current Affairs, she took the advice of a union rep and requested a year's leave without pay to see whether she was up for the career change. She was. Heddle left the CBC in 2011, after 23 years, and is a successful real estate agent in Oakville.

"The newsroom is like a beehive, where there's a buzz and you get charged up" she says, "but when I transitioned into real estate, I realized I'm getting a buzz from that—the staging, the negotiating—and I get really jazzed on offer day."

Heddle owns a staging company, with a 1,200-square-foot warehouse filled with furniture that she uses to present a client's property in the best possible light. It's an extension of herself as "a visual person."

The most pivotal experience in her CBC career happened in 1999, while she was taking a visual journalism course in Port Elgin, near Walkerton, Ontario.

"I started talking to a woman at the hotel, who said they were afraid to drink the water because of leaching from a local pig farm," Heddle recalls. She decided to investigate, and conducted on-camera interviews with local experts who told her people could die from the contaminated water.

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*“I love this life because I can make my own hours, there’s no commuting, and... there’s more freedom to be creative.”*

When she returned to the office, there was little interest in running her story. Nine months later, the National Post reported on it, then people started dying. Heddle’s report aired repeatedly all day, “because we had nothing else.” She returned to Walkerton and discovered a cabal of journalists sitting outside the local hospital, waiting for news. Heddle took her camera into the field, filming at local lagoons, recording aerial shots of local pig farms and, she says, “I was in the ditches with scientists who were gathering water.”

The Walkerton Water Crisis was headline news for many years, and officials from the subsequent Walkerton Inquiry requested some of Heddle’s visuals, to aid in their investigation.

In her post-CBC life, Heddle has started a charitable foundation called Hockey Cares, which harnesses the appeal of hockey to introduce children from her hometown of Oakville to kids from Attawapiskat First Nation, near Kenora. It’s an exchange program that allows the players, Team Fire and Team Ice, to play in both communities.

“It’s a real eye opener,” Heddle says. “When the Oakville kids are in Attawapiskat, they live in the one little hotel in town, they have to haul their own water, learn how to prepare a goose, how to fish, do crafts, and they go to a powwow. Lives change.”

She launched Hockey Cares in 2017, and her goal is to take the concept to other communities across Canada.

“At the CBC, I had to cut red tape to get anything done. If I needed gear, I had to speak to this person, then that person, and get approvals, or pitch stories to different departments,” says Heddle. “I love this life because I can make my own hours, there’s no commuting, and working for the government is much different than the private sector because there’s more freedom to be creative.”

## WHO DOESN'T LOVE A LAKESIDE PICNIC?



The North Central Ontario Chapter of the PNA welcomes all members to the shore of beautiful Lake Couchiching for a summer picnic and swim! It's happening on Wednesday, August 23, at 11 a.m., rain or shine, at Bob Burt's beautiful lakeside estate. Along with your towel, please bring a lawn chair and sun parasol.

There will be sandwiches and salads, fresh corn on the cob dipped in a secret butter sauce, dessert, and door prizes. Barb & Clark will provide live music. (Check them out by searching "Barb and Clark music" on YouTube.)

If you'd like to attend, send a cheque for \$20 per person to: Paul Hoffmann, 31 Downer Crescent, Wasaga Beach, Ontario L9Z 1C3. You'll receive driving instructions to the picnic site. Be sure to add your email address and telephone number to the memo line on your cheque, and please send it in time to arrive by August 14th.

For more information or to volunteer to help, please e-mail Archie Reid, VP of the North Central Ontario Chapter [prufreid@gmail.com](mailto:prufreid@gmail.com).

### LIVEWIRE THEN AND NOW

This is the second issue of *Livewire* with a major change in both content and design. Please let us know what you think. Are there features that you particularly enjoy? Others that you could live without? Do you have ideas for future articles? Would you like to write for *Livewire*?

Please share your thoughts by writing to [pنالivewire@gmail.com](mailto:pنالivewire@gmail.com).



## STELLAR TORONTO TURNOUT FOR A PUB LUNCH

BY TALIN VARTANIAN



Lise Lareau and Leone Earls

Photo by Jonathan Churchill

About 70 people gathered recently at Noonan's pub on the Danforth for friendship, food and drinks. The smoky skies didn't keep people away from the pub's lovely back patio, and there was a steady offering of delicious finger foods. Toronto Director Lise Lareau organized and hosted this memorable event, which included door prizes, a CBC trivia quiz, and a 50/50 draw.

To her surprise, Ontario Region President Gail Carducci had the winning ticket for the 50/50 draw. She generously donated her share to the charity that had been designated for half the pot, granting \$328 in total to Second Harvest.



Ann Jansen, Joe Lawlor, and Marie Clarke

Photo by Talin Vartanian

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Nazat Lilley, Brian George, Ginny Hobbs, Carole Field and Peter Lilley  
Photo by Talin Vartanian



Toronto Director  
Susan Helwig and  
Ontario Region  
President Gail  
Carducci  
Photo by Ted Hackborn

Continued...





Jonathan Churchill and Gerard Bueche  
Photo by Janet Muise



Anne and John Dimon  
Photo by Talin Vartanian

## PLEASE KEEP US POSTED!

Have you moved? Have you changed your email address or phone number? And have you told us at the PNA? If not, please keep us posted.

Without up-to-date information, we can't ensure you're informed about your pension, about the benefits you have as a CBC pensioner, and about PNA events.

Please email your new contact information to [info@cbcpensioners.ca](mailto:info@cbcpensioners.ca) or [pnalivewire@gmail.com](mailto:pnalivewire@gmail.com).



## NEW BOARD, NEW BYLAWS

BY BARBARA SAXBERG, ONTARIO REGION VICE PRESIDENT

One of the responsibilities of the Ontario Region Board of Directors is to review its bylaws from time to time to make sure they are still relevant and useful. When the new Board first met, it established a subcommittee to take a look. It included Toronto Director Lise Lareau, SWO Chapter President Gino Piazza, and EDI Representative Rochelle Porter. I served as chair, and President Gail Carducci contributed as an ex officio member.

We discovered that the bylaws needed a significant overhaul.



A bit of history first. When the PNA was first created, the national bylaws consisted of two documents—the bylaws themselves and a rule book. Contained within the rule book was a set of rules for Ontario. A few years ago, the national bylaws were rewritten, eliminating the rule book and incorporating the necessary bits into the bylaws themselves. That meant the Ontario Region needed to write its own bylaws.

The first version consisted mainly of the appendix from the old rule book. That was later rewritten into a set of bylaws. It was a valiant effort, but there were gaps, and the bylaws were contradictory in places.

Fast forward to now. After several months of meetings, discussions, and consideration of a wide variety of proposals, the committee presented new draft bylaws to the Ontario Region Board at its April 19th meeting. They were adopted by majority vote.

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We believe the new bylaws are simpler to read and understand, and will make the job of governance easier. The PNA's national bylaws guru Paul Gaffney has given them his stamp of approval, ensuring the new bylaws are fully consistent with both the national bylaws of the PNA and the Not-For-Profit Act.

So, what did we change? In addition to housekeeping items such as spelling and grammar, there are six major headlines:

1. We clarified the election process for Region Officers and Toronto Directors, creating an elections committee to ensure Ontario elections are run fairly. And, most significantly, we will move to electronic voting (by computer and by phone) so that all members will have the ability to participate. Proxy voting will be discontinued. However, Chapters will have the choice of holding their elections electronically or at an AGM or through an alternate democratic process.

*All members will have the ability to participate in future elections. Proxy voting will be discontinued.*

2. We changed the language concerning the selection of our delegates to the PNA's triennial convention, putting that process in the hands of the Region Board. It's important to note that delegates to the triennial convention represent all of Ontario, not their particular Chapter. We are also bound by a formula in the National bylaws that determines the number of delegates we are allowed. The committee believes it's important that our representatives be well-versed in the workings of the PNA. However, we have maintained the option for alternates. And there is now a national policy for observers to attend as well, to allow them to become familiar with the workings of the PNA.

3. We separated items previously labelled, "Region/Chapter" and created separate sections for each. We also created a new section to guide the running of Toronto which is not a chapter, but rather a "key city" under the National Bylaws.

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**ONTARIO AGM**  
**11 A.M. ON**  
**OCTOBER 11**

*Please mark your calendar and plan to attend via Zoom or phone, to register your vote and take part in the running of your Region.*

4. We created a new section to address future bylaw amendments.

We anticipate these changes will help us to be more democratic and will encourage greater involvement of the membership.

The new bylaws took effect immediately after they were approved by the Ontario Region Board, and will remain in effect until the Region's AGM this fall. At that point, any member may propose amendments which, under Robert's Rules of Order, must be moved and seconded by members in good standing. Amendments require a two-thirds majority of members present at the AGM to pass.

Once our members have had their say, the final version goes to the National Board of Directors for its stamp of approval.

We encourage you to read the amended bylaws, which are available on the Ontario Region page of the PNA website. Send us any questions you might have, and please plan to attend our virtual AGM on October 11th.

**BY THE NUMBERS**

Percentage of CBC pensioners who joined the PNA to support the Association - 99%

Percentage who joined to keep abreast of key developments - 98%

Percentage who joined to keep informed of changes to retirees' benefits - 98%

Percentage who think it's important the PNA offers social activities - 49%

*Source: 2022 survey of CBC Pensioners 2022, with a 68% response rate*

## A PILGRIMAGE TO NORMANDY

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SUSAN HELWIG, PNA TORONTO DIRECTOR

In April, I went to Normandy along with my husband Andrew Szende to tour the landing sites from the Second World War. Our trip, postponed by Covid, would allow us to see for ourselves what remains of the Allied invasion, launched on June 6, 1944.

It was a tour we had long wanted to pursue.

In 1944, my husband was a Jewish baby in Budapest, born just two months before D-Day. The invasion helped to save his life. We had a purpose, yes, to pay some kind of tribute to those who served, and those who lost their lives. But what else would we discover? We were the only Canadians on the tour, along with about 20 Americans, most from the Midwest. Our French tour guide—calm, organized and superbly well-informed—has been leading these tours for 30 years. Our first stop was the Museum of Peace in Caen, where the Normandy landings are memorialized in precise historic context.



Susan Helwig and Andrew Szende  
at Canada House, Juno Beach

Then, day by day, we visited museums and graveyards right by the landing beaches: Sword and Gold for Britain; Utah and Omaha for the United States. Juno Beach for Canada.

At Arromanche, at Gold Beach, you can still see remnants of a bridge meticulously engineered and assembled by the British. The Allies had to bring their own port with them. Fragments of cement barges sunk in the ocean as a breakwater are still visible, but not for too many more years.

Museums display British pride in the detailed planning behind the invasion; not only in bridge building but also in the precision flying by glider pilots who landed their planes inland, silently and on target, just after midnight, seizing Pegasus Bridge.

A magnificent achievement.

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The tour was emotional and exhausting. Utah Beach, calm and bare in the spring sunshine. Omaha, daunting in a brisk wind with its high cliffs. All empty, the battles left to our imagination. In movies at the American Museum, soldiers tell us how terrified they were as they jumped into the water. We know how few are still alive.

The American Military Cemetery is stark and beautiful and powerful, with its 10,000 white crosses row by row on a high bank lined by pine trees next to Omaha Beach. We sat in silence by a memorial pool in the late afternoon. U.S. veterans on our tour stood to salute, as the Stars and Stripes was taken down from the flagpole at 6 o'clock. On the last day, we visited the Canadian sites, starting with the tragically beautiful cemetery at Bény-sur-Mer. As we arrived, a gardener was picking up stray petals that had fallen overnight from tulips planted among the gravestones. We walked along the rows and read the inscriptions. Three brothers from Toronto are buried here.



The Canadian cemetery in Normandy

Then it was on to Juno Beach. A Canadian visitor had built a tiny

Inukshuk in the sand just outside Canada House, the imposing building that was the first house liberated on June 6. All along on this tour, and before, I had been reading accounts of the landings in e-books available from the Toronto Public Library.

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I knew how hard the battles were, how great the losses, not only on the first day but in the relentless month-long struggle by British and Canadian troops tasked with capturing Caen. I knew that thousands of French civilians died, as their city was bombed by Allied aircraft. But reading only takes you part of the way. And today, the battle zones are mercifully at peace.

The Canadian museum is the most recently built, strongly influenced by veterans who want to ensure their sacrifices are remembered. They have achieved their goal in a remarkable film. It shows soldiers shot to death in the water. Sitting there, I heard the familiar voice of the CBC's Matthew Halton, reporting from Normandy.



But there was more. I gasped at the words of Marcel Ouimet, correspondent for Radio-Canada, reporting that Canadian soldiers had been executed after being captured by the Nazis. This was a war crime. Reported right as it happened. Halton and Ouimet, telling the news the way it was, setting the highest of standards to which we aspired all our working lives. Two witnesses to history whose words bring back the reality of the D-Day battles.

In the sand in front of Canada House

Perhaps it is not surprising that for me, a CBC retiree, and my husband Andrew, this film and its historic recordings are the most powerful evocation of the Allied landings. This will be our unforgettable memory.

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## MATTHEW HALTON'S VOICE STILL RESONATES

All of Matthew Halton's reporting brings admiration. While traveling, I found two recordings posted on the internet by CBC Archives. The first is Halton's reflection on what he saw at the moment of the liberation in Caen. Two thousand people had been sheltering for a month in an ancient church:

*In that month, the people of Caen had known the meaning of hell...I will never forget the scene when the people swept out into the square and sang the Marseillaise as I'd never heard it sung before. In tears and yet in joy.*

There is a second remarkable recording posted on the internet. Matthew Halton passed by Vimy Ridge, the memorial for Canada's dead from WW1 while the second war was still underway. For Remembrance Day, 1944, he spoke for the ghosts of Vimy in a broadcast that stands the test of time:

*Listen, what are you going to do after this war?...*

*We died. Our sons died. What are you going to do?...*

*Tonight as this war moves in our best blood toward its end, tonight amid our memories of Vimy Ridge and the other war, let's think of what we can do to ensure there will not be a third.*

*This time, let's not break faith.*

We can still hear Matthew Halton's voice, with a simple online search of his name and CBC.

## MEET A MEMBER JOSEPH LAWLOR

BY TALIN VARTANIAN

Joe Lawlor's memorable CBC career spanned just over three decades. He began as a technician, and his last role was as supervisor of a team of ten people who were responsible for online streaming, and file delivery. But his assignment in the early 1990s was a highlight.

The Corporation had just decided to enter the world of a spanking new medium called the Internet, and Lawlor began exploring its possibilities. Initially, the site he created served as a marketplace called RadioWorks, selling products such as T-shirts, hats, books, and Fireside AI audiotapes.



Joe Lawlor in *Anne with an E*

At the same time, colleagues across the country were working independently on other internet domains. Lawlor said they all enjoyed the freedom to create something new from the ground up; that freedom vanished in 2000, when all the sites were amalgamated under one domain, [cbc.ca](http://cbc.ca).

"It had to happen. It made no sense to have separate websites all over the place," says Lawlor, who became webmaster for [radio.cbc.ca](http://radio.cbc.ca), from 1994 to 2002. "No one really knew what we were doing, so we did what we thought was best for the Corporation, working with IT, networking people, journalists, programmers, and designers. It was a rare opportunity to have our hands in everything, and we had wonderful management that encouraged us."

Lawlor has stayed busy in his post-CBC life. He's been taking courses at his alma mater, York University, in everything from math and physics to art and Roman history. It's usually one class at a time, but he completes and is graded on all the coursework—assignments,

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essays and exams. (In its mission to support lifelong learning, York waives fees for senior citizens, who must claim the amount of the tuition as income, at tax time.)

In his spare time, Lawlor enjoys being a background performer in TV and film productions. He began with an online search for information, took a few mandatory courses, and is on the roster of a talent agency.

Lawlor says he joined the PNA in October 2022, "to stay in touch with many of the folks that I spent time with during my CBC years."

## A LETTER TO LIVEWIRE ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE PNA

Dear Editor:

Congratulations on the latest version of *Livewire*. I can't help but ask what date you are using as the founding date for the PNA. (*Livewire*, March 2023 edition, page 7, By the numbers: "Number of years since the founding of the PNA - 38.")

The founding convention of the PNA took place in Montreal in June of the year 2000, and resulted in the essential merger of the then quite active Quebec pensioners association, with a fledgling and not nearly well-organized pensioners group fundamentally based in Toronto, but with activity occurring in various other parts of the country.

A large part of our original by-laws was drafted at that meeting, and the full version emerged shortly after. It was also agreed at that meeting that our formal head office should be in Ottawa, to facilitate effective and efficient communication with CBC head office. And the rest is history.

Howard Simpson  
Past President, Ontario Region

Editor's reply: *Thanks for the kudos. We used the date that's cited on the "History" page of the PNA website. The opening sentence reads, "The Association has been in existence since early 1985." Clearly, there's more to the PNA's origin story.*

# THE INSIDE WIRE: A STORY ABOUT THE SORDID WORLD OF SALMON FARMING

BY SANDRA BARTLETT



Photo by Tavish Campbell

I 'retired' from the CBC in 2010 to work at NPR in Washington. During my three years there, I had some fabulous experiences, collaborating with top investigative journalism organizations in the U.S.

When I came back to Toronto, I decided to return to my first role as a journalist: freelancing, a world that is scary, frustrating, difficult, exhilarating and professionally expansive. The most challenging part was pitching story ideas. If they were rejected the first time, I'd do more research and come back to the table.

The hardest story I have ever pitched was about salmon farming. I proposed it as a narrative podcast, and did more initial research than usual before bringing the

*Continued...*



Sandra Bartlett

idea to the table. I expected it would be a difficult sell, and I was right. Despite laying out all the great characters and story lines, the proposal was rejected over and over and over again.

By that point, I was so deep into it that I couldn't abandon it. So, I didn't. I continued interviewing and writing, then independently produced a 10-episode podcast.

In the phase of final production, I realized I would have to tap my home line of credit to pay

for an editor and a sound engineer. (Oh, how I thought of CBC editors and engineers at that point.) But delving into debt for a story was my no-go line. So, I looked for an organization that could host the podcast, and pay the final costs. That's when I connected with the National Observer.

"The Salmon People" is a tale that touches on many themes: the sometimes-nefarious relationship between government and big business, corruption, environmental degradation, and oh yes, salmon. Listen to it by searching for "The Salmon People" on your favourite podcast app.

## THE NCO WANTS YOU!

Geographically, the North Central Ontario (NCO) Chapter of the PNA covers a large area, including Muskoka, Bruce County, Grey County, and the Kawarthas. A few dedicated members have been holding the PNA fort, and they'd like to invite you in.

If you're looking for a new experience, and a chance to collaborate with former CBC colleagues, please email [pnalivewire@gmail.com](mailto:pnalivewire@gmail.com).

## PAUL KENNEDY'S IDEAS ON HANDWRITING

BY PAUL KENNEDY, TORONTO DIRECTOR

One of my best-ever teachers was a first-year university lecturer. He opened his first class by saying, "Careful readers of the university calendar will have noticed that I'm the only full-time faculty member without a university degree."

He was also the only professor who always wore a tie.

He went on to say that despite his non-academic background, he placed particular emphasis on spelling and grammar. Prior to being hired by the university, he'd been a journalist in New Zealand, so he was also a stickler about deadlines.

No problem, so far.

Then he went on to mention that he preferred that we submit our assignments in handwriting, because our personal penmanship would reveal more about our character, and the content of our thinking, than the typed submissions that every other professor was demanding.

I was immediately convinced he must be insane!

As the first member of my family ever to graduate high school, I desperately wanted a quality education. Calligraphic quackery had no place in the picture. I craved a level playing field, where anonymous fonts and impersonal typography guaranteed fair and equal treatment. It was the quality of thought that counted, not the superficial idiosyncrasies of adolescent scribbling.

That was then. Where are we now?

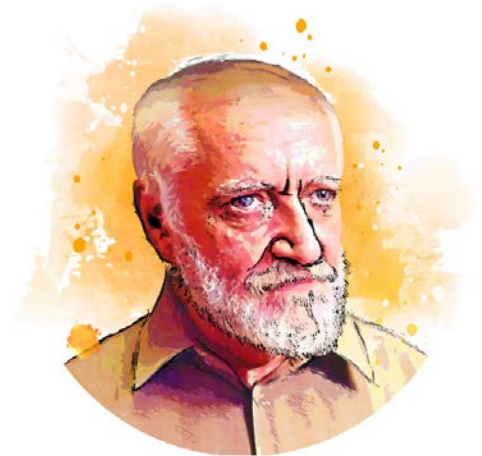


Illustration by Scott Galley

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Illustration by Scott Galley

I maintain exactly the same position, while acknowledging that the world has changed almost beyond recognition.

These days, I barely recognize my own signature. Other than those relatively rare occasions at the post office, when I'm asked to squiggle my finger across a blank computer screen, I'm almost never required to scribble my name, or anything else.

Kids in elementary school no longer learn how to produce—let alone read—cursive handwriting. Can spelling or

grammar be far behind? My daughter teaches grade one, and is required to introduce computer coding before moving on to obsolete anachronisms like addition or subtraction. We live in a brave new world, and there's no going back. Or is there?

Almost six hundred years ago, a regular guy named Johannes Gutenberg invented something called the moveable-type printing press. It changed the world.

Herr Gutenberg immediately proceeded to produce massive print runs of the bible. Although I'm not particularly religious, I still experience almost absolute awe when confronted by illuminated medieval manuscripts. Modern, mass-produced printed bibles don't pack anywhere near the same punch.

And printing didn't immediately predominate, despite obvious advantages in production and distribution. Small circles of devoted illuminators continue to practice their art even today, and handwriting—whether it's sophisticated calligraphy, perfectly presentable penmanship, or even unwashed illegible scrawl—endures.

*Continued...*

Writing requires paper, something that another regular guy named Bill Gates predicted would disappear, with the advent of a digitized universe. Clearly, he never wasted a nanosecond worrying about the future of handwriting, but I'm relieved that Mr. Microsoft was wrong. There's no doubt our world is littered with much more paper than it used to be. And the fact remains that people will use paper to scribble down anything and everything that really matters.

In my mind, this is a good thing.

Twenty-first-century technology prevents me from signing this column with my own unrecognizable signature. I can only assume that my "voice" will convince you that I wrote it. And I meant every word.

## AND NOW, A WORD FROM OUR FRIENDS

Because of all the incredible work we have contributed to the CBC over the years, FRIENDS wants to share this special message about its work. FRIENDS is a people-powered, citizens' movement, devoted to standing up for a strong, independent CBC. From *The Beachcombers* to *As It Happens*, the CBC binds us together, providing a shared sense of identity and belonging that transcends the vast physical distances that separate Canadians.

The logo consists of the word "FRIENDS" repeated three times in a bold, black, sans-serif font, stacked vertically. A thick red horizontal line is positioned below the bottom-most instance of the word.

**STANDING UP  
FOR CANADIAN VOICES**

That's why FRIENDS is asking Ottawa for a CBC that is truly public, with fewer ads, more news, and an updated mandate, to ensure that it continues to serve Canadians for generations to come. This includes advocating for a significant and sustainable funding increase for the CBC, which would send a message to all Canadians that our government values our national public broadcaster, and the essential role it plays in public life.

To find more about what FRIENDS is doing to defend the CBC, with the help of Canadians like you, please visit [friends.ca/cbc](https://friends.ca/cbc).

## IN MEMORIAM



**Philip Balsam** died on March 23, 2023 at the age of 79. He was an artist, musician and composer. One of his major accomplishments was composing, with Dennis Lee, all the music for *Fraggle Rock*.

**Bruce Evans** died on April 7, 2023 at the age of 79. He started his CBC career in Toronto working in the mailroom before becoming a music producer.

**Warren Groves** died on April 10, 2023 at the age of 97. He was a stationary engineer who worked at the CBC for more than 30 years.

**Jim Carney** died on April 14, 2023 at the age of 87. He worked in CBC Toronto Public Affairs as a story editor with *Close-up*, *Horizon*, *Inquiry* and *This Hour Has Seven Days*.

**Fausto Belluomini** died on April 19, 2023 at the age of 86. He was a producer for CBC TV Sports in Toronto.

**Brian McKenna** died on May 5, 2023 at the age of 77. He was one of the founding producers of *The Fifth Estate*, and perhaps was best known for his series "The Valour and the Horror."

**Jaroslav Petruck** died on May 11, 2023 at the age of 87. During his CBC career, Jaroslav worked on many programs in Toronto, and with many performers including Tommy Hunter, Barbara Frum and Veronica Tennant.

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**Bruce Whiteford** died on May 16, 2023 at the age of 63. He was a technical producer for TV Sports, including many years with *Hockey Night in Canada*.

**Brian Currie** died on May 22, 2023 at the age of 72. He enjoyed a 30-year career at CBC Toronto working on *Morningside*, *As It Happens*, *The National*, *Newsworld* and News Network.

**Bryon Lowe** died on June 1st at the age of 85. He was a TV switcher on programs such as *Marketplace*, and a driving force in NABET.

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