



Mixed Messages

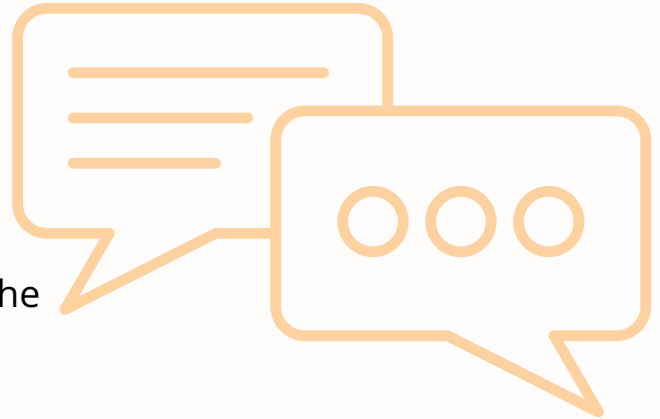
by Dan Oldfield, PNA President

There's a lot at stake in the next federal budget for CBC/Radio-Canada. The budget is scheduled to be tabled on November 4th. We hope the government will clear up an obvious conflict when it comes to the funding of our public broadcaster.

The PNA has publicly called for increased and long-term stable funding. And yes, we have a personal interest in this. CBC/Radio-Canada is the sponsor of our pension and benefit plans. But more than that, it is also an institution that we helped build and one we believe plays a vital role in preserving our democracy, particularly in an era of such concentrated private media ownership.

The conflict arises in two very different announcements by Prime Minister Carney. During the federal election, he announced the Liberals would ensure an immediate \$150-million increase in CBC/Radio-Canada funding and further said, "We expect that in the coming years, we will continue to increase that funding until it can be compared to that provided by other public broadcasters." This commitment was reaffirmed by Heritage Minister Steven Guilbeault at a recent meeting of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. So, it appears we can expect to see it in the upcoming budget.

Carney also promised that funding of CBC/Radio-Canada would be made statutory, meaning any changes would have to be approved by Parliament, not just the government's cabinet, making it less at the mercy of whichever government is in power.



However, in a post-election announcement, the Prime Minister committed to cutting government spending by 15% by fiscal year 2028-29. Crown Corporations are included in that announcement.

For CBC/Radio-Canada, this could represent up to \$98M in fiscal 2026-27, rising up to \$198M over three years. Reductions of this size, if implemented, would have an impact on jobs, programs and services. Clearly, the two statements can't be reconciled.

At this point, CBC has been asked to "develop proposals only." All of the proposals will be assessed by the government and final decisions will be reflected in the Main Estimates for 2026-2027, made public early next year.

The devil is in the details but it's hard to imagine any "proposals" that would allow for an increase in CBC/Radio-Canada funding and a concurrent budget cut of 15%.

For her part, the new president of CBC/Radio-Canada, Marie-Philippe Bouchard acknowledges the existence of the apparent conflict and the uncertainty it contains. Although she notes that the corporation has experienced uncertainty before.

Bouchard says a new strategic plan is being developed which will focus priorities as a public service broadcaster in the years ahead. That plan will be shared with Canadians at the corporation's next Annual Public meeting.

The sooner the matter of CBC/Radio-Canada funding, both short term and long term, is resolved, the sooner it can get on with the work it was created to do. Now more than ever, Canadians need a strong public broadcaster they can rely on to cut through the sea of mis- and dis-information.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE FUND (SAF)

The SAF reimburses some medical expenses not covered under a health plan. Members are strongly encouraged to send their SAF application forms to the PNA office before submitting. Staff members will make sure your form is complete. Email it to:

info@cbcpensioners.ca

Season of Change, Steady Purpose

President's Message
by Dan Oldfield

Greetings,

Autumn is upon us once again, with the leaves turning and a chill in the air. It always seems as if the summer passes too quickly. I hope you found time to enjoy it, to travel, to get outdoors, to relax and share time with family and friends. While I was careful not to unbalance nature, I found time to catch a few fish. I also got in a few rounds of pretty mediocre golf but it was worth it to spend time with old friends.

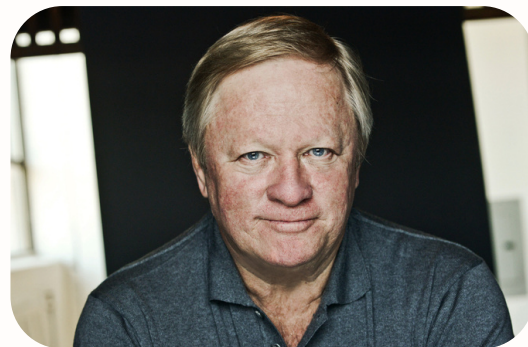
While things slowed down for us over the summer, it was still surprisingly busy. The surplus payout system seems to have found its groove and we can look forward to the next deposit in early November.

Our committees on the key priorities of Communication, Membership, EDI, and Advocacy have been busy working towards fulfilling the strategic goals established by the Board of Directors last fall. We will be reviewing their efforts at our National Board meeting later this month. You can read more about this important work in this edition of "CONTACT."

On the advocacy front, we will continue to push our agenda focusing on matters such as the preservation of public broadcasting and its role in protecting our democracy, defending defined benefit pension plans, and advocating for better access to quality healthcare.

I know some may get tired of hearing me say this but recruitment of new members is our life blood. The PNA must grow to survive, to be influential and to create the necessary leadership for the future. Sadly, there are still about 4000 CBC/Radio-Canada pension plan members who have yet to join the PNA. The PNA matters. It does great work on behalf of ALL pensioners and that work is done primarily with volunteers, those who not only financially support the work but also contribute thousands of hours to doing the work. If you are not yet a member, please join us.

I hope you enjoy this edition of CONTACT. And if you have questions or concerns, please get in touch. We're always happy to help.



Dan Oldfield, President of the CBC Pensioners National Association

Dan Oldfield

Big Changes Coming Soon to PNA Communications!

This year, the PNA is marking the 25th anniversary of its founding. So what better time to embark on revamping and revitalizing our communications?

The process began a year ago when the National Board of Directors approved a detailed new communications strategic plan and a communications policy. Our communications in the past had, for the most part, been ad hoc and reactive. That needed to change.

First steps included creating a communications committee to implement the strategy, and hiring a communications officer. Lilia Rassoul joined us in January. Lilia is a young marketing and communications professional who brings us much-needed contemporary skills.

Next up, with Lilia's guidance, was a revamp of our national newsletter, Contact, and developing a presence on social media. Our national Facebook page now boasts almost 900 members and we have a following on both Instagram and LinkedIn. During the recent federal election, we made good use of social media, generating thousands of likes and comments on some of our posts.

Perhaps most exciting though is the redesign of our website and a brand refresh. In the next few months, you'll begin to see a whole new look for PNA communications, including a new logo that, like our current one, draws from our CBC roots while adding a whole new energy and vitality. Even our colour palette is changing, allowing us greater flexibility in the design of all our communications. The website will be simpler to navigate, focusing on our key messages of community and advocacy. Contemporary, visually appealing while remaining accessible, filled with helpful information, the new site will be your primary source of all things PNA.

**Watch for a January launch –
New Year, New Look!**

We are looking for contributors and columnists for Contact!

If you have an idea for a story or an area of expertise that you think members might enjoy reading about, let us know.

Send us your pitch! We also need writers and can assign you a story if you prefer.

**Reach out to us at:
info@cbcpensioners.ca.**

November Surplus Payout

PNA members will be receiving their pension surplus payout on November 4th.

Payments will be distributed in the same manner in which you receive your regular pension deposit. The amount received is based on a percentage of your lifetime contributions to the CBC/Radio-Canada pension plan.

Individual details will be available for viewing during the week of October 20th. Details about how to access the information have been provided by the Pension Administration Centre (PAC).



The November payout will be the fourth consecutive payment. Surplus payouts to members of the plan will have totalled nearly a quarter of a billion dollars by the end of this year. And in all likelihood, contributors can expect a further payment next year as the plan continues to do well with assets exceeding \$8-billion.

If you have difficulty in accessing your information, please contact the PAC at: 1-888-604-9258.

Making Our Voices Heard - 2.0

By Barbara Saxberg, Ontario Region President & Chair,
National Advocacy Committee

The PNA's National Advocacy Committee is back in action after taking a much-needed summer break following our work around the recent federal election. Top of our list of priorities is speaking up about the Liberal government's plans for the CBC. You will recall during the election campaign that Prime Minister Carney made significant promises regarding the CBC: more money and perhaps more importantly, legislation that would ensure stable funding regardless of the party in power. The message though has been muddled since the government's request to all federal departments to seek efficiencies amounting to a 15% budget cut.

PNA Advocacy will be paying close attention to the November budget and working to let the government know we're watching. We believe the current government needs to be held accountable for its promises. And we're hoping to begin meetings with MPs who are engaged in arts and culture issues - to make our voice and our concerns heard. Read more about this in *Mixed Messages* feature story.

The committee has also established some big picture goals: We need to raise our public profile as credible and experienced voices on our issues. We hope to develop influence with decision-makers on these issues, and be viewed with respect and as people worth listening to. And we will seek partners who share our concerns.

It was particularly disappointing to see very little thought given to the role of seniors in Canada in party platforms. Seniors seem to be left to lip service. National Seniors Day this past October 1st is a good example. The government claimed, "This is an occasion for all Canadians to join in celebrating older adults across Canada—whether a parent, a co-worker, a neighbour or a friend. The Government of Canada is proud to acknowledge the contributions that older adults in Canada have made and continue to make to our families, communities and society."

The government then proposed ways to celebrate such as, saying thank you, paying a visit and saying hi, running errands, helping with chores, or taking a walk.

While small individual gestures are nice, Canada's seniors need and deserve much more than that. There must be meaningful action that makes a real difference in the lives of older adults. Initially, we intend to prioritize the future of the CBC, but we will be watching to see if there are any attempts to undermine defined benefit pension plans or talk of rolling back health care commitments. We also note that cost of living, while an issue for many Canadians, is of particular concern to seniors on fixed incomes. We'll be looking for answers. And we'll be sharing ways for you to get involved soon. Join us. And make your voice heard. We need you now more than ever.



**See what some of our members are
up to in the latest edition of
Life In Motion (pg. 9)**

What to Do if a Pensioner Can No Longer Manage Their Affairs or Has Passed Away?

By Talin Vartanian, Ontario Region VP & Gail Carducci, National VP, Anglophone

We know it's not easy to think about, but it's important to be prepared. If a CBC pensioner becomes unable to manage their own affairs, or if they pass away, here is what families and caregivers need to know.

Your CBC ID Number is key. Always keep your CBC ID number handy. It can be found on:

- Your December Notice of Deposit (or the one issued in January).
- The Pension Plan Annual Statement, mailed in June.
- Your old CBC ID card, if you still have it.



The ID number is usually a combination of six letters and/or numbers. This is a very important piece of information when dealing with the Pension Administration Centre.

Who to Call?

Contact the CBC Pension Administration Centre at: 1-888-604-9258.

Please note that while a pensioner is still living, only someone with Power of Attorney can act on their behalf. After a death, the Centre will deal with a spouse, family member, or the executor of the estate.

Documents and Details You'll Need

The Pension Administration Centre will ask for:

- Full name of the pensioner
- CBC ID number
- Full address and phone number
- Date of birth
- Date of death (with Death Certificate, usually provided by the funeral home)

If you also have life insurance through CBC, this same number will connect you to the right help.

Planning Ahead Makes Things Easier

We strongly encourage everyone to:

- Have a valid will
- Designate a Power of Attorney
- Ensure someone is listed on your bank accounts
- Without these steps, families may face long and difficult delays in accessing accounts and benefits.

Additional Resources

The Pension Administration Centre offers a helpful workbook to guide you and your family in preparing for the future. You can find it at: www.pensionadmin-cbc-src.ca or in the member section of the PNA website.

You can also reach the Centre by mail:
CBC/Radio-Canada Pension Administration
Centre 2200 – 630 Robert-Bourassa
Boulevard W. Montreal, QC H3B 1S6.

A Note About your Will and Power of Attorney

These documents are regulated by each province. If you move to another province, be sure to update them. Your province's law society website can provide guidance.



From Intent to Action: The PNA EDI Guide

By Ron Charles, Chair of the Standing Committee on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Members of the Standing Committee on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion had a busy summer working with a hired researcher/writer to put together a well-sourced EDI guide.

The freelance researcher/writer, Ilana Mandel, is a subject-matter expert who has produced several reports and guides about inclusion and accessibility for NGOs and government agencies.

The guide is a series of checklists that the committee hopes will help PNA volunteers ensure that our events, meetings and communications with members are truly inclusive and accessible. A resource section at the back contains helpful information and contact details for accessibility advocacy organizations. The guide needs a bit more polishing before it will be ready, but we hope to have it in the hands of volunteers in the coming months.

Once the guide is completed, expect to see EDI committee members out actively promoting its use over the next year or so. We also plan to spend some time seeking feedback from members about the guide's utility and any changes they think might make it better.

At the same time we hope to move on to another part of the committee's founding mandate regarding improving PNA leaders' knowledge around diversity and inclusion. The committee is still discussing how best to tackle that.

Life In Motion

What Our Members Are Up To - A Few of the Authors Among Us

Brian Stewart's Front-Row Seat to History

Brian Stewart, a longtime CBC foreign correspondent turned author, brings frontline reporting to life in *On the Ground*. His memoir spans wars and crises from Ethiopia to the Middle East, with interviews of figures like Nelson Mandela and Margaret Thatcher.

A mentor and media voice, Stewart reflects on courage, ethics, and bearing witness.

Learn more at: www.bit.ly/3KLcdIR



Brian Stewart reflects on a life in reporting in *On the Ground*.



Claude Morin at the book-launch of *Élise et Irène* in Rimouski.

Claude Morin's Tribute to Family and Memory

In *Élise et Irène*, retired journalist Claude Morin blends fact and fiction to trace his mother's and aunt's lives in Québec's Lower St. Lawrence (1935–1945).

Inspired by real events—including a fatal 1941 Mont-Joli train crash—the novel becomes a spare, moving homage to resilience, love, and family memory.

Learn more at : www.bit.ly/3IrbfAh

Earned, Not Given — A Memoir of Grit and Reinvention

The Long Road to Easy Street is Margaret Pacsu's plain-spoken memoir of change and perseverance. She traces the turns—personal and professional—that reshaped her life, highlighting the habits, boundaries, and small daily steps that make progress stick.

It's a straight forward, story-first read with practical reflections woven in, aimed at anyone navigating a reset or building momentum for what's next.

Learn more at: <http://www.bit.ly/46XEBYX>



Margaret Pacsu shares candid stories of change and momentum in *The Long Road to Easy Street*

Letters to the Editor - Your Voice Matters!

We'd love to hear from you!

Whether it's a response to an article, a personal story, or thoughts on issues that matter to our community, share your perspective with us.

Selected letters may be featured in a future of CONTACT

Reach us at : info@cbcpensioners.ca or 1-877-361-9242



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