

LIVEWIRE

CBC PNA ONTARIO REGION

WORDS MATTER: WHAT YOU CALL YOURSELF SHAPES WHO YOU ARE

BY BRIDGET COUGHLIN



There's a specific kind of internal cringe that happens when you're out living your life—perhaps hiking a trail, consulting on a project, or finally mastering a new craft—and you open a piece of mail addressed to a "senior citizen." It isn't about vanity; it's about the disconnect between a generic label and the reality of how we actually live our lives.

Former TV producer Lise Lareau left the CBC seven years ago, and is now working on her master's degree at McMaster University. She says she never uses "retired," what she calls the "r" word: "Language shapes identity. The words we use to describe ourselves—our stage in life, our community, our purpose—matter more than we often realize."

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WORDS MATTER, CONT'D...

For those of us in the CBC family, the words used to describe our lives after we leave the Corporation aren't just about semantics. They make the difference between being treated like a relic or being respected as a resource.

The 20% rule: Why we feel younger than the calendar says

Psychologically, many of us live by what researchers call the Rule of 15. Data from the Canadian Psychological Association indicate that once adults cross 40, they tend to perceive themselves as being about 20% younger than their chronological age. If they are 75, their internal compass is likely set to 60. Even for those over 80, that sense of energy and capability often remains far ahead of the calendar.

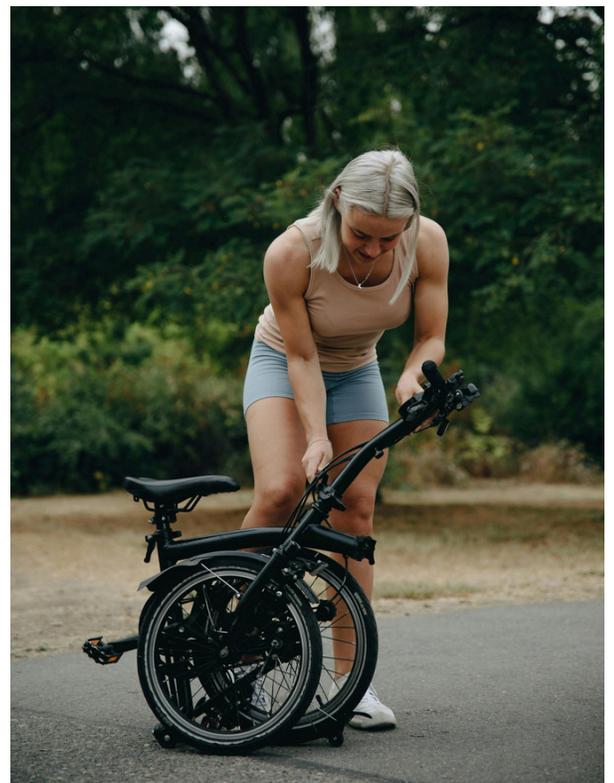
When messaging relies on "senior" tropes—those soft-focus photos of people playing bingo or sitting quietly on a park bench—it's easy to think, "That doesn't look like my life." Whether we are 63 or 83, we aren't just "winding down." We are active, engaged, and curious. Our language should celebrate that energy instead of boxing us into tired stereotypes.

Moving beyond the "retiree" label

The word "retiree" feels dusty. It implies a retreat or a pulling back. Yet the data show we are doing anything but: While the average age when most people leave the CBC is 62.5, the typical PNA member is 75, and a significant portion of our community is well over 80 and incredibly active. That represents decades of high-energy living when we aren't looking back; we are looking for ways to stay involved today.

To close that "relevance gap," we are rethinking our vocabulary:

- From "retirement" to "the next chapter" or "act": Retirement sounds like a finish line; "next chapter" is a new destination.



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WORDS MATTER, CONT'D...

- A positive shift to "pensioner": While some shy away from the word, being a CBC pensioner is a badge of honour. It represents secured independence.

The PNA evolution: More than just a safety net

Historically, the PNA has functioned as a protective shield—a vital safety net for our financial security. While that remains our bedrock, the PNA is transforming into a dynamic launchpad for purpose.

We're looking for new destinations, not just a departure lounge. Whether we are engineers who spent decades maintaining the broadcaster's technical infrastructure or reporters who told Canada's stories, we have a wealth of knowledge. Even over 80, producers don't lose their knack for problem-solving, and communicators don't lose their ability to engage an audience. The PNA helps facilitate these points of relevance, offering ways to use our skills, to mentor others, or to improve our communities.

Staying Sharp: The health of the hustle

This isn't just about sounding modern; it's about our well-being. Statistics Canada (2026) and research by sociologists Wilson & Musick (1999) show that seniors who stay involved in advocacy or volunteering are 2.4 times less likely to face cognitive decline.

Almost half of older Canadians report a loss of professional identity post-retirement. The PNA fills that void by treating us as a "brain trust," not just a social club. Financial security gets us in the door, but the sense of purpose and staying connected to our peers enhances our long-term satisfaction.



Looking forward

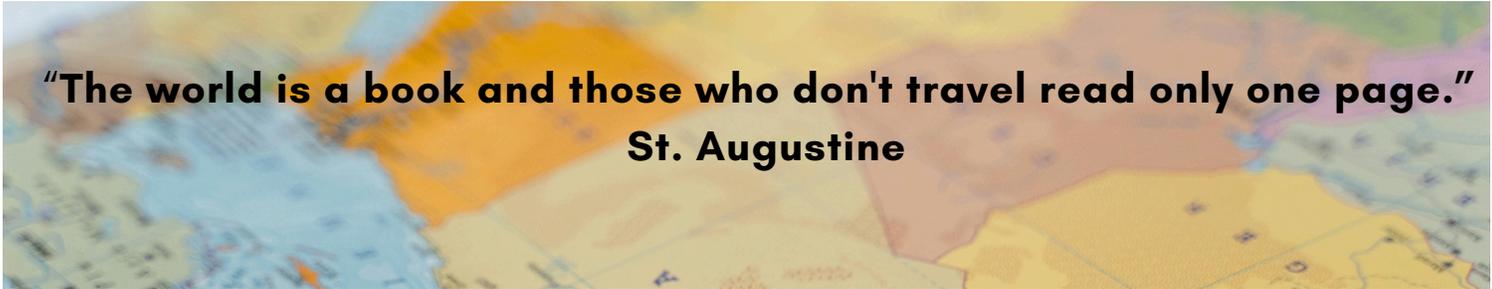
The PNA is about to launch a refreshed brand, logo and website, reflecting us as we are: active, engaged, and forward-looking. It will signal to all members—current and future—that our contributions matter, that our next acts are vibrant, and that our voices and skills are valued.

...continued

WORDS MATTER, CONT'D...

Barbara Saxberg explains the shift beautifully: "Our rebrand is not just a new look; it's a reflection of the energy, creativity, and contribution our members continue to bring to the PNA community. We're celebrating what retirees can do, not what they've left behind."

Words matter. For CBC pensioners, they are not just labels—they are affirmations of identity, capability, and relevance.



**"The world is a book and those who don't travel read only one page."
St. Augustine**

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

Editor - Talin Vartanian

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**Feedback and ideas are welcome.
pnalivewire@gmail.com**

JOIN US FOR LUNCH

Durham-Trent Chapter spring lunch

Wednesday, May 6 at 11:00 a.m.

Kedron Hills Golf Club, 2400 Ritson Road North in Oshawa

Guest speaker: Effy Terry, Chapter president and founder of Organize That!
"Swedish death cleaning: A gentle approach to decluttering and downsizing"

Ontario members welcome and may bring a guest

Email Barrie Burhoe barrie.burhoe@gmail.com by April 22nd to confirm you're attending
Pay \$10 at the door



Golden Horseshoe Chapter spring lunch

Wednesday, May 13 at 11:30 a.m.

Royal Botanical Rock Garden, 680 Plains Road West in Burlington

Guest speaker: Paul Zammit, CBC Radio phone-in regular and master gardener

Ontario members welcome with a guest

Cost and further details to come



FROM THE VAULT: SLOW-MOTION RECORDING

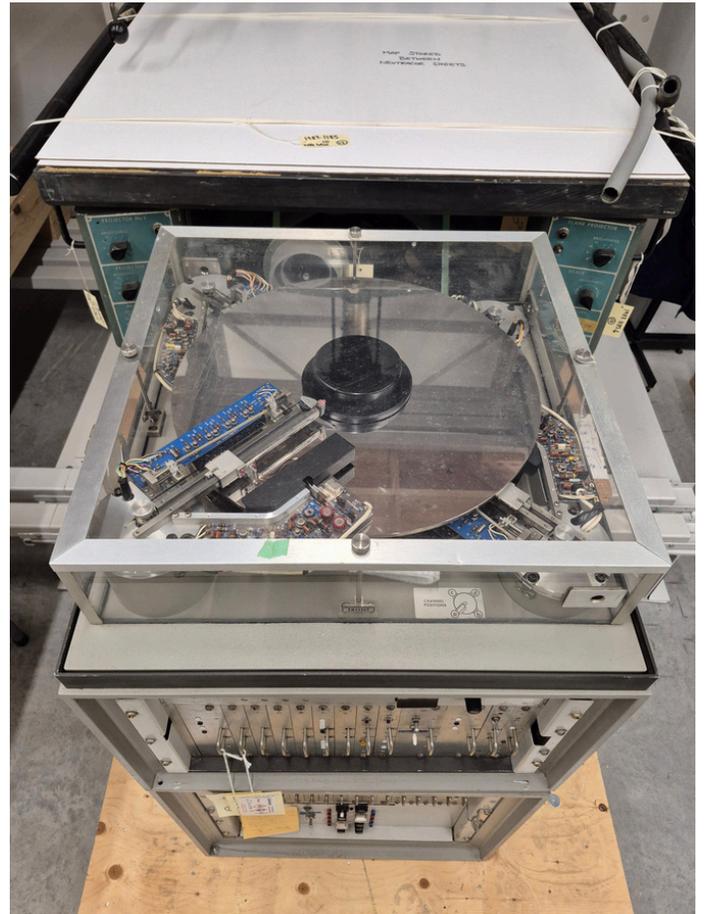
STORY AND PHOTOS BY KAVITA MISTRY
COLLECTIONS RESEARCHER AT INGENIUM, CANADA'S SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MUSEUM

As collections researcher at Ingenium, I'm fascinated by the clues embedded in artifacts that give insight into what they are, how they were used, and who might have used them. For example, serial numbers give a sense of when they were first created; scratch marks and general wear indicate usage and movement; and little markings or notes here and there can give insight to how everything works.

At Ingenium, Canada's Science and Technology Museum, we have an Ampex HS-100B slow-motion recorder in the collection that contains many of these clues. They tell a significant story, not only of this revolutionary technology for broadcasting, but of the person who used the machine and brought slow-motion recording to sports broadcasts across the country.

A short history of slow-motion recording

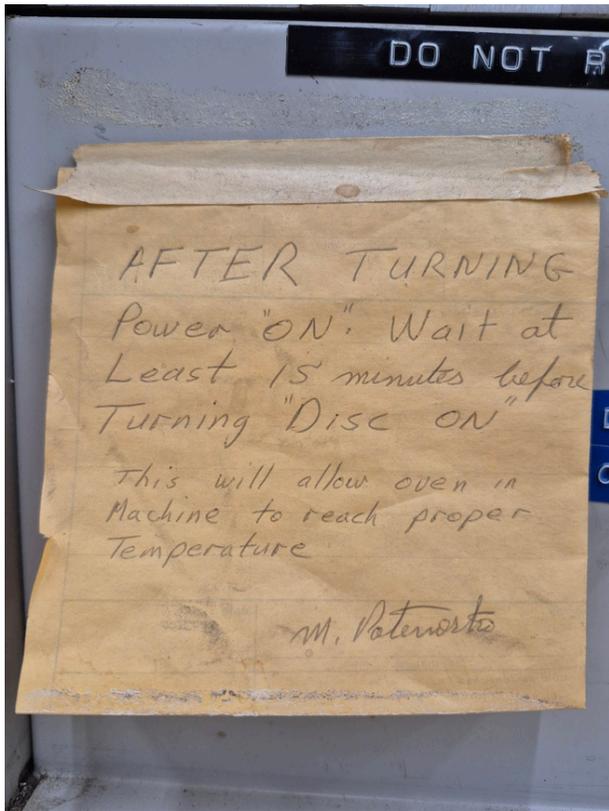
Slow-motion recording is a technique used to generate an array of diverse effects such as capturing everyday moments and slowing them down. It can create artistic moments, generate romantic or suspenseful tension, or highlight goals, fouls and unique plays in a sports game for entertainment. Initially, slow motion was recorded through "overcranking," meaning to hand crank an early camera to capture motion at a faster rate. When the film was replayed at normal speed, it would appear to be moving more slowly. Today, slow-motion is achieved by capturing footage at a normal speed and



The Ampex HS-100B slow-motion recorder, purchased by the CBC in the 1960s, is now housed at Ingenium, Canada's Science and Technology Museum

...continued

FROM THE VAULT, CONT'D...



A handwritten note by Michael Paternostro, taped to the machine.

playing it back at a slower speed. In the initial phases of its development, slow-motion recording successfully was used for sports broadcasting. With improved technology, it became useful in a variety of other fields, including medicine, the military, and education.

In Canada, the CBC adopted slow-motion recording for *Hockey Night in Canada* during the 1966-1967 season. Replay technology at the time provided poor picture quality and was difficult to use during live programming. However, an improved "slo-mo" system called the Ampex HS-100B made recording easier in the following years. It was used by the CBC to capture slow-motion footage in the late 1960s. This machine now lives in the collections of Ingenium, Canada's Science and Technology Museum in Ottawa.

Bringing slow-motion video to Canadian television

Understanding the history of the slow-motion recorder and how it functions is important to the documentation of this artifact in the collection. The serial number 002 indicates that this recorder was the second of this model to be manufactured by Ampex, a purpose-built, instant-replay machine used to provide continuous variable slow-motion recording in high-band colour, that could be replayed in forward or reverse motion. It also had the ability to sync with local sources, allowing the instant-replay footage to mix with live programming without causing disruptions.

This recorder could store 30 seconds of action at a time on a magnetic disk, using an instant-replay command operated by a separate control unit. The operator could stop action, rewind it, forward it, and gradually slow it down or speed it up, a technology that revolutionized the viewing experience for sports broadcasts. However, with its

...continued

FROM THE VAULT, CONT'D...

many components, buttons and switches, it was not an easy system to operate. The slow-motion recorder was new to the broadcasting world, and it took time, patience and experimentation to operate it. The CBC museum catalogue states that very few people at CBC wanted to work with this machine, however, one maintenance technician saw it as an exciting challenge. His name was Michael Paternostro.

Curious, I searched for a way to connect with Michael Paternostro to talk to him about this machine and his career at CBC. Unfortunately, he died in May 2025, a fact I learned from *Livewire*, and there is very little public information about him. However, he did leave a few clues on the slow-motion recorder and on its components, giving some insight into his routine with slow-motion recording.

On the bottom of the recorder is a handwritten note stuck down with tape. It reads "After turning power 'on,' wait at least 15 minutes before turning 'disc on.' This will allow oven in machine to reach proper temperature. M. Paternostro." These simple instructions act as reminders for himself and likely aided others who might have ventured into operating this system.

Leaving these instructions on the machine also demonstrated the importance of following the procedure to ensure the equipment ran smoothly, so it could be used for many years. At first glance, the machine looks to be in excellent condition, however there is not much indication of how long this machine was used at the CBC. Luckily, Michael Paternostro left more clues on some of the components.

The first component is the control unit used as the recorder's command center. On the case is a large CBC "exploding pizza" logo, which was in use from 1974 to 1986. This gives a general idea of when the slow-motion recorder was being used.



The "command centre" of the Ampex HS-100 slow-motion recorder.

FROM THE VAULT, CONT'D...

The other component that came with this machine is a magnetic disk housed in a wooden carrying case. On the case are many labels and stickers reading "Handle with care," "This side up," as well as an Air Canada Cargo label, with the destination "YYZ," Toronto. In the centre of the case, stuck down with hockey tape, a label indicates that the magnetic disk inside, with more than 5,000-meter hours of recordings on it, was



scratched during a hockey game and became unusable. This label was signed by M. Paternostro on December 13th, 1981. When we look at the manufacture date of the slow-motion recorder and the

On the recorder's case was the CBC logo in use from 1974 to 1986, a clue to the era in which the machine was used.

label on the carrying case, it indicates that this machine was used for at least 13 years. This may be the length of time Michael Paternostro operated the machine for the CBC.

Having these pieces of equipment in the national collection tells an incredible story of Michael Paternostro's career at CBC. He was not just a TV maintenance technician; he was the behind-the-scenes operator who helped bring slow-motion video recording of sports to televisions across Canada.

...continued



The case for the recorder's magnetic disc carries stickers and labels that offer more information about its provenance.

FROM THE VAULT, CONT'D...

Looking for more insights into this story

Those behind the cameras, computers and equipment are often unknown, however they bring broadcasting to life. By piecing together the clues left behind and sharing this story of Michael Paternostro and the slow-motion recorder, my hope is to reach colleagues who might have known or worked with Michael and can add to his remarkable story and legacy, now illuminated in the national collection in Ottawa.

**If you'd like to add to this story,
please write to pnalivewire@gmail.com.**

Your message will be forwarded to Kavita Mistry at Ingenium.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR



Thank you for the excellent edition of *Livewire*.

So much to read and enjoy and think about, with great events, and a great group of people featured.

One thing I wanted to mention regarding the list of people who recently joined the Ontario PNA: My preference would have been to be listed as Jennifer Harwood, News, Managing Editor.

The roll call listed me under my married name, which I also use, but professionally I used Harwood. I know it's confusing (!), but at CBC I was always able to have my paycheques under Harrison but for the actual work, I was identified as Jennifer Harwood.

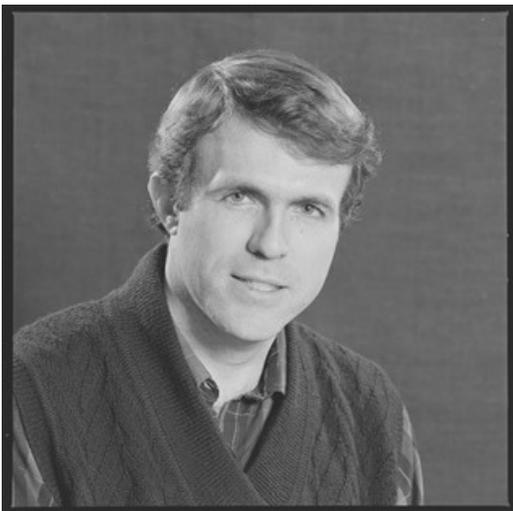
Keep up the great work,
Jennifer Harwood

MEET A MEMBER: PHIL PARK

BY BONNIE HEWITT

When he was first asked whether he'd agree to be profiled in *Livewire*, Phil Park said, "I guess I can do it, but I fear it won't be very interesting." He was wrong.

Park spent three decades at CBC Radio as a well-respected writer, editor, and producer. He didn't initially plan to be a journalist. Growing up in Ottawa, he dreamed of becoming a doctor until high school taught him that he was terrible at math and science. But he knew he could write, and he was always interested in what was going on in the world, so he opted for a journalism degree from Carleton University. Over the next few years, he cut his teeth and honed his skills at CHOV Television in Pembroke, CKOY-CKBY Radio in Ottawa, then CKO in Ottawa and Toronto, writing local news stories and reading newscasts.



Phil Park in 1992 (CBC photo)

In December 1981, the CBC asked Park whether he could fill some shifts over the holidays. ("I guess they were desperate," he quipped.) He walked into the old radio building on Jarvis Street in Toronto and never looked back. As a rookie, he was thrown on the "hourlies" and expected to produce accurate, succinct copy. He also recalls the scramble to quickly cut audio tape with a razor blade.

When he saw a senior editor show his copy to others for a laugh, Park learned that CBC News was a bigger stickler for proper language and terminology than the privates. The egregious error? He'd written "the Minister of External Affairs" instead of the "Minister for External Affairs." It was a lesson he never forgot. Another time, after writing a story about wildfires in Australia, the senior producer looked at it and yelled "INFERNO!?! When I run out of my burning house, do I yell INFERNO!?! NO! I yell FIRE! IT'S A. FIRE!!!" Park says hearing the word inferno in a news story still makes him smile.

In the late '80s, he was promoted to producing *World Report*, the daily morning newscast. He was at the helm for many major stories, including the Oka crisis in

...continued

MEET A MEMBER, CONT'D...

Quebec, the Air India disaster, and the fall of the Soviet Union. The job included challenging overnight shifts: "When our kids were little, I went to bed before they did."

Park spent the final decade of his career on the assignment desk, working closely with reporters in the field. It gave him a new perspective on his role behind the scenes. "I had a lot of respect for those reporters. They were on the cutting edge, putting themselves out there and, in some cases, risking their lives to get the story."

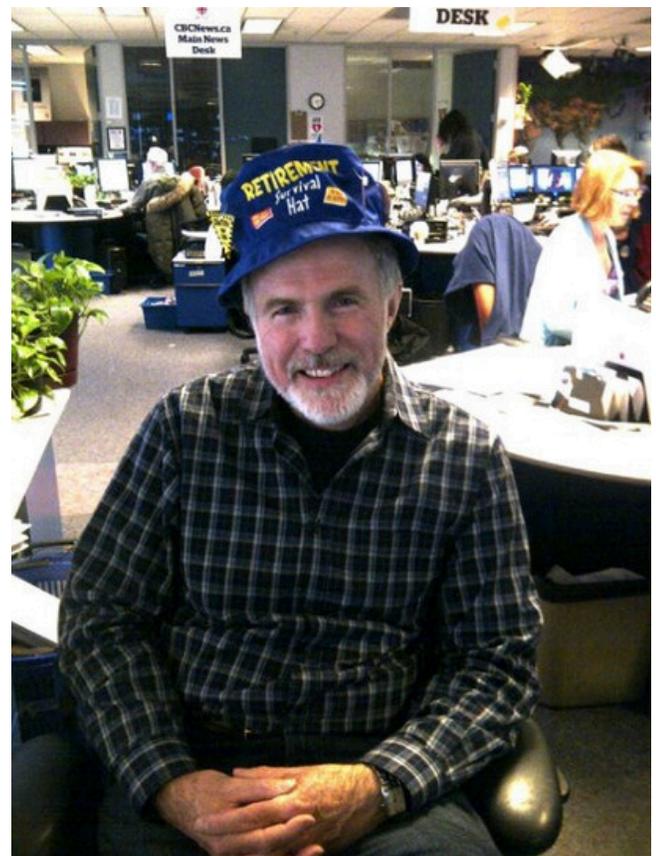
Park produced *Canada at Five*, which actually broadcast live to the East coast at four, and it was often a challenge to have the top story ready by deadline. On quiet days, his co-workers would fret about what would fill the newscast. That led to his trademark phrase, "Don't worry people, something will happen." And it usually did. Park became so known for "Something will happen" that it was immortalized in a caricature of him by Kevin Sylvester, a parting gift when Park retired.

In 2012, he applied for what he calls "early parole," and left the CBC. When asked what he does now, he says "whatever I please!" That includes playing guitar ("not very well") and spending time at his family's summer cottage. He also reads the paper, does crossword puzzles and tries to exercise a couple of times a week.

One enduring memory of his CBC career was playing first base for the X-Team in the CBC Mixed Softball League, which Park continued to do for seven years after leaving his career. But his greatest contribution to the team wasn't on the field.

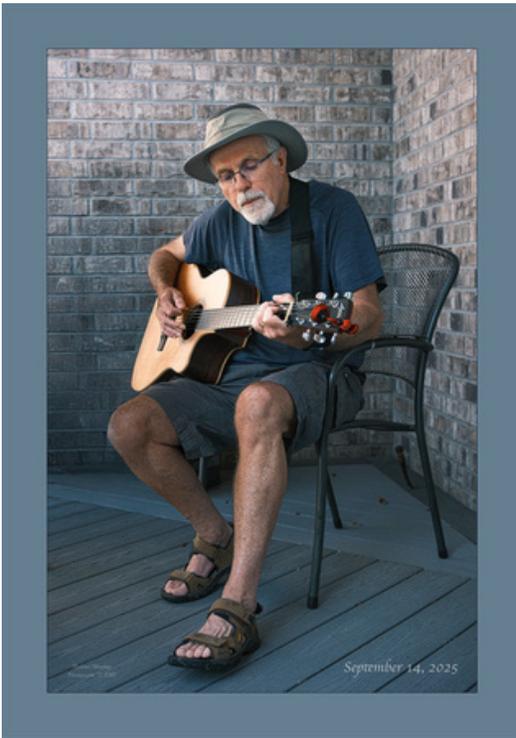
"I wrote a mock news story after most games, only for the eyes of my teammates. We usually lost, so the 'write-ups' may have been more fun than what happened on the field.

...continued



Phil Park when he left the CBC in 2012.
(Photo courtesy of Phil Park)

MEET A MEMBER, CONT'D...



Phil Park in his post-CBC life.
(Photo by Richard Morettin)

I retired from softball after we won the League Championship for the first time in 2019 - not that I had much to do with the win!"

Reflecting on his three decades at the Corp, Park says: "I was one of many who toiled mostly anonymously in the halls of National Radio News. I consider myself lucky to have had a career at CBC, however modest. I'd argue there's no better broadcast news organization and I feel privileged to have been part of it. For a guy of average intelligence and modest talents, I got to work with some extremely smart people and some of the best journalists in the world. Not bad, all things considered."

His former co-workers say Phil Park is a legend.

MY MEMORABLE MOMENT AT THE CBC

BY CATHERINE MALLIA

In the summer of 1981, I had an \$8,000 student loan to pay off and was thrilled when a fellow Ryerson graduate informed me CBC was hiring multiple TV assistants.

As luck would have it, we were both hired. Then I got a call from the manager informing me the technicians' union was on strike and my start date was cancelled. Now I was out of a job.

Eventually the protracted labour dispute was settled and, in late fall, I entered the Jarvis Street TV building in Toronto for the first time.

...continued

MY MEMORABLE MOMENT, CONT'D...

I was never so happy to be meeting the crew in Studio 7. They were working on *The Great Detective*, CBC's version of *Sherlock Holmes*. I was told by the crew this would be the show's last taping.

My most memorable moment of that day was climbing on top of a platform with a long, extended microphone and operating the boom. This was not my assignment. The boom operator asked me if I wanted to give it a try during a break. I quickly discovered the microphone arm was heavy and unwieldy. Most equipment was in those days. The operator had forewarned me. He gave me a lot of pointers on boom work and the director allowed me to follow the actors during a few rehearsals.

It was the generosity of that day I will always remember.



Catherine Mallia was on assignment at the Calgary Stampede in the 1980s. She wishes she'd kept the hat, and the ruffled blouse that was branded with the CBC Sports logo. (Photo by Ed Milligan)

*Catherine Mallia joined the CBC in 1982 and retired 32 years later. She started as a TV studio assistant, and her future roles included chyron and videotape operator, eventually becoming tape editor for the show *Wonderstruck*. Mallia edited numerous documentaries throughout her career, including for *Sunday Arts and Entertainment*, *Adrienne Clarkson Presents*, *The Nature of Things* and *Life and Times*. She also served as editor for the children's, sports, variety and documentary departments.*

NEW PNA TOUR: HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GROUP OF SEVEN AT THE MCMICHAEL GALLERY

BY TALIN VARTANIAN

PNA members are invited to a special guided tour of a new exhibit called Old Growth. Our host once again will be Chief Curator Sarah Milroy.

Founders Robert and Signe McMichael began collecting works by artists associated with the Group of Seven in 1955. They reached an agreement with the Ontario government in 1966 to donate the paintings, and the McMichael Conservation Collection of Art opened to the public in 1966.

This special PNA tour will give participants a more expansive understanding of Canadian art. Old Growth will highlight masterworks by Tom Thomson, Lawren Harris, Emily Carr, A.Y. Jackson, and J.E.H. MacDonald, and works by overlooked contemporaries of the Group of Seven, such as Anne Savage, Kathleen Daly Pepper, and Bess Harris.

Following the tour, members will enjoy lunch, courtesy of the PNA, at the Gallery's restaurant Cabin.

The total cost for PNA members and their guests will be \$10 per person, including parking, the tour, and lunch. (Gallery admission for seniors is \$17, and parking costs \$7.)



This will be the final PNA event at the McMichael before it closes its doors for a major renovation that will last three years. Capacity is limited, so reply soon to avoid disappointment.

Please write to cbcpensionerstoronto@gmail.com, and use "McMichael" in the subject line.



CBC Pensioners Association
curated tour and lunch
Old Growth: Masterworks by the Group of Seven
and their contemporaries

MCMICHAEL GALLERY
10365 ISLINGTON AVENUE
KLEINBURG, ONTARIO

THURSDAY, MAY 21 | 10 AM
CAPACITY WILL BE LIMITED
MEMBERS MAY BRING ONE GUEST
\$10 CASH PER PERSON



Register by May 6: cbcpensionerstoronto@gmail.com



COME AND SEE WHAT'S COOKING

Small groups of dedicated volunteers for the CBC Pensioners Association make things happen. They plan events, brainstorm ways to welcome new members, and set policies. Much of this occurs at board meetings: nationally, regionally, and locally, and you're officially invited to sit in and watch.

We have an official observer policy, essentially an open invitation to sit in on a board meeting at any level, a Chapter, the Region, or the National board. Most are on Zoom, so you can watch from the comfort of your own home.

At the local level in Ontario, there are four Chapters: Durham-Trent, Golden Horseshoe, North Central, and Southwestern Ontario. In addition, an engaged group of Toronto members meets from time to time, sometimes over lunch that's covered by the Association. (See page 30)



The presidents of all the Chapters plus four Toronto Directors, are members of our regional Ontario board. And Ontario has two representatives on the national board, the president and VP. (See page 32 for the full list of Ontario board members.)

Grab a chair and watch what's cooking in the PNA.

If you'd like to accept the invitation, write to ontario@cbcpensioners.ca, and we'll roll out the welcome mat.

CBC PENSIONERS DIVE INTO AI WITH HELP FROM NORA YOUNG

BY BONNIE HEWITT

We've already lived through enormous technological change, and now we may be experiencing the most transformative and disruptive change yet: Artificial Intelligence, or AI. Scientists first adopted the term "artificial intelligence" in 1956. Today, AI is everywhere, and we are all using it, whether we know it or not.

Clearly, we have questions. Which is why a recent national PNA event on the topic of AI quickly filled to capacity. More than 300 members registered for a Zoom presentation by the CBC's senior technology reporter, Nora Young. She created and hosted the CBC Radio show about emerging technology, *Spark*. She also wrote the book *The Virtual Self*, about how much personal information people compulsively share online, and its consequences.

Young opened with a brief overview of how most people use AI, by typing questions into tools such as ChatGPT. AI learns by gathering huge amounts of online data which it uses in a wide variety of ways, such as to create statistical probabilities, make predictions, or compose text. Modeled on neural networks in the human brain, AI is able to accomplish complex tasks, but Young says AI will never replace humans. AI makes predictions; humans use judgment.



Key takeaways:

- AI is a tool. It is not your friend.
- Take AI tutorials and online courses, which are widely available, often at no cost. (Check your local library.)
- Practise writing prompts. The more specific your question, the better the results will be. Experiment. Ask a question you already know the answer to and evaluate the results.
- Never share your private, financial or medical information with AI. Don't use it for personal or relationship advice. AI is not a counselor.

...continued

DIVE INTO AI, CONT'D....

- Be on high alert for scams because AI is being used to cheat people worldwide.
- AI is prone to “hallucinations,” the tech word for mistakes. Ask in your prompt for the sources used, and verify the results yourself, if you have doubts.



Senior technology reporter for CBC News Nora Young in an online presentation for PNA members across the country. (Screenshot)

Here are some highlights from the question-and-answer session that followed:

Who regulates AI?

It is not regulated. It's an emerging technology that is growing and changing rapidly. Canada's Minister of AI is former CBCer Evan Solomon, and we are waiting for the government's AI strategy. (Lately, he has focused on potential harms such as the mass murder in Tumbler Ridge, B.C., where the shooter was active on AI.) It's challenging to

regulate a technology that is run by transnational companies.

What about environmental concerns?

Massive AI data centres are being built that require huge amounts of water and energy. There are environmentally friendly options, such as building them in colder climates, but most AI companies are not addressing this, just as in the 1970s companies failed to assume responsibility for the pollution they produced. Legislation and public pressure have been effective, and there is pushback over AI.

Will millions of jobs be lost to AI?

It's too soon to tell. There are mixed productivity gains. Computer coding is changing, knowledge-based work is going to change. Future careers will focus on jobs that are not easily replaceable. AI can't replace creative thought and human inventiveness, so human skills are still needed. AI will never cure cancer or fix your plumbing. *...continued*

DIVE INTO AI, CONT'D...

ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE AI

AI has a massive environmental footprint. The [UN Environment Program](#) reports there were about 500,000 AI data centres around the world in 2012, and that number has surged to more than eight million.

A single AI search consumes about 16 ounces of water, the equivalent of a single-serving water bottle. According to one estimate, AI-related infrastructure around the world will soon consume six times more water than Denmark, with a population of six million.

If you care about environmental protection, don't use AI for frivolous purposes. And when you need to use it, turn to [Ecosia](#), a green AI tool. Ecosia generates more electricity than it uses; it uses smaller, faster AI models that consume less energy; and all its profits are donated to environmental groups for climate action.



A single AI search consumes about 16 ounces of water.

AI trains by gathering data online. Is that plagiarism?

It's more imitation than stealing, but we're still waiting to see how this plays out. Some content creators and artists are suing. Watch the courts.

How can AI best be used by retired people?

It's best used for research. Planning a trip? Ask AI to plan a travel itinerary for you. The more specific you are in your prompts, the better the results will be.

How is AI affecting education?

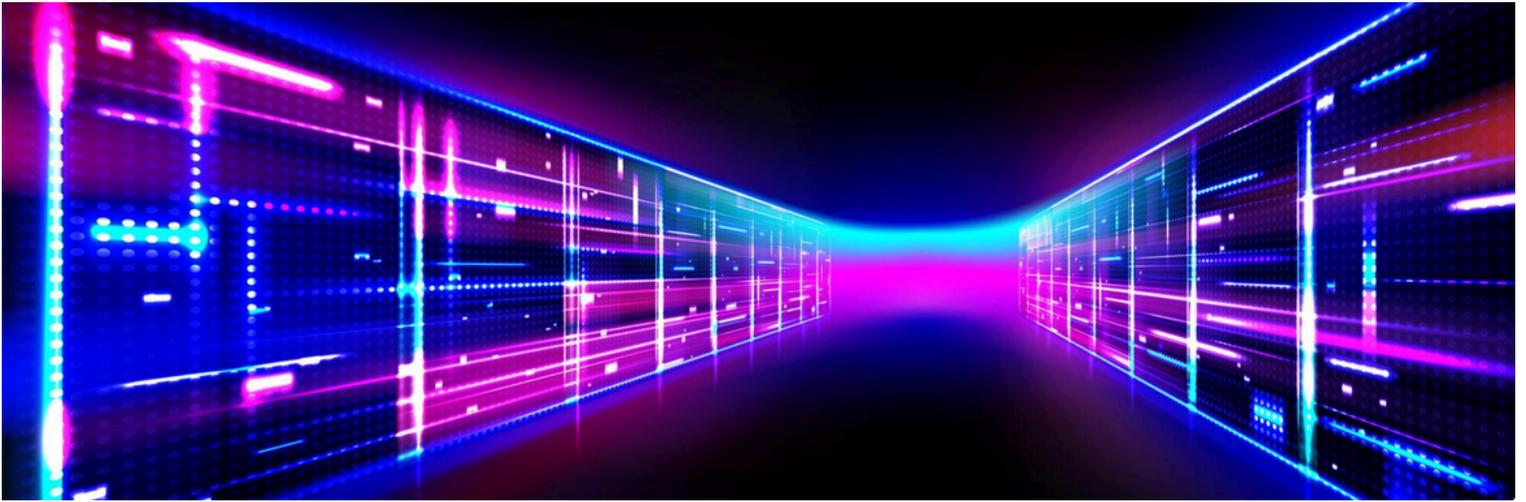
Some schools are adopting AI and others are pushing it away. Educators are using new tools to assess whether an essay was written with AI. Cheating has always been an issue.

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DIVE INTO AI, CONT'D...

Young reminded us that this technology is so new that we're still learning the implications. Governments and the legal system are racing to catch up. Learn as much as you can about it and make this tool work for you.

Author's note: *As I was taking notes during the live presentation, a prompt suddenly appeared on my screen, asking if AI could use my writing for training purposes. I chose to opt out.*



WHICH AI SEARCH ENGINE SHOULD I USE?

AI Valley offers a curated directory, encompassing almost 2,000 different AI search tools. Scroll down for a full list of AI search engines and what each one is best used for. Options include everything from image editing to healthcare and gift ideas.

AI Valley also suggests almost 400 different prompts or commands for AI searches, with smart advice on how to phrase your question for optimal results. For example, scroll down on this page for advice on how to ask AI for cooking advice to get optimal results.

SHARE YOUR AI EXPERIENCE WITH RESEARCHERS AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
AND RECEIVE A \$35 GIFT CARD.
DETAILS ARE ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE.



Are you an older adult who has tried AI tools like ChatGPT?

We want to hear about it!

We are interested in how older adults use and experience artificial intelligence (AI) tools that can chat with you

By participating in an interview, you'll help us learn how to support older adults' well-being when using these technologies and promote their inclusion in the digital world.

Total participation time: ~1-hr interview with a researcher
Participants will receive a gift card to compensate for their time

Please contact Dr. Maya Arieli



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Let us know what you like, and don't like, about *Livewire*.
Want to suggest someone for our "Meet a Member" feature?
Have any story ideas for us?

Write to pnalivewire@gmail.com

I'M TAKING COPING CUES FROM THE GOOD HUMOUR OF MY BLIND DOG

BY KEN MYRON, ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THE **GLOBE AND MAIL**

There's a saying that goes "old dogs can't be taught new tricks." Well, contrary to the adage, this old dog is learning new tricks from a seven-year-old, blind dog.

Poppy is my daughter's pet. A DNA test indicates she's primarily Great Dane. Poppy is tall, gangly, uncoordinated and often drags her knuckles on walks. She's a mutt and looks like she was made from spare parts, on a Friday afternoon, just before closing time. This past summer, Poppy went blind, virtually, pardon the expression, in the blink of an eye. A dog ophthalmologist confirmed it's irreversible.



Ken Myron and Poppy. (Photo courtesy of Ken Myron)

My wife and I recently cared for Poppy for a month. It was the first time we've been with her extensively since she lost her sight. During her stay, I was surprised to discover there's much I can learn from this sightless dog and how she copes with her disability.

I am in my 70s. I too have faced and continue to deal with health challenges. Notably, at 38, a life-threatening non-Hodgkin's lymphoma cancer diagnosis, was followed by surgery and six months of chemotherapy. I now have painful osteoarthritis in my hips and knees. And for the past two years plus, have been

dealing with Parkinson's, which is not so slowly robbing me of my independence and good humour.

The first thing I learned from Poppy's journey is acceptance. One might ask what else can the dog do? But apparently dogs facing such a challenge can become depressed and

...continued

COPING CUES, CONT'D...

possibly aggressive. Poppy remains her same sweet, gentle self. She is literally smelling the roses.

I too mostly accept my situation, but need to work on my tendency to complain and my inclination toward resignation. Yes, in time Parkinson's will get the better of me. But I can do more to delay its evil clutches by being positive and exercising more. And moaning less about the associated pain and other losses with which I live.

Poppy has proven adaptable. Her navigational skills are inspiring. There are two staircases in my home. Both curve and consist of at least 13 steps. She goes up and down them with remarkable ease, albeit slowly. Apparently, dogs that go blind compensate through more enhanced senses such as hearing, smell and touch. I suspect it's touch and smell that assists her on the stairs and getting safely about. She can feel the carpeted steps. She uses memory to know where she has trod before to locate her food bowl and bed.

The first thing I learned from Poppy's journey is acceptance.

Stairs are becoming a nemesis for me. But like Poppy I am adapting. I continue to slowly and safely scale these domestic mountains. While I'm still fully ambulatory and able to do most day-to-day activities such as personal care, driving a car, and cooking, I am shelving my

pride. As balance becomes more of an issue, I resort to walking sticks, particularly when bending over for dog cleanup duties. And when I require help, I now ask with less embarrassment. Recently I was trying to replace a broken toilet seat. When that proved too much for my shaky hands, I called in the son-in-law.

Our home isn't exactly set up for the blind. Big pieces of furniture remain in place but there's always clutter, presenting even a challenge to me. Currently there's a rolled-up carpet in a hallway and boxes in another, which require disposing. But Poppy, nose-a-twitching, somehow senses them, mostly. And when she does bump into something, which is heartbreaking, she always does it with dignity, no cursing, just a dog-with-a-bone determination. Note to self: cut down on the swearing. Keep moving forward.

...continued

COPING CUES, CONT'D...

Poppy still delights in cuddles, though she's no lap dog. Her tail wags at her everyday meal of dry kibble. Walks are spent using an inordinate amount of time sniffing every blade of grass. She can laser in on passing dogs well before any contact. Poppy listens and responds to commands "step up, step down, tree, big mailbox." She trusts in the routine.

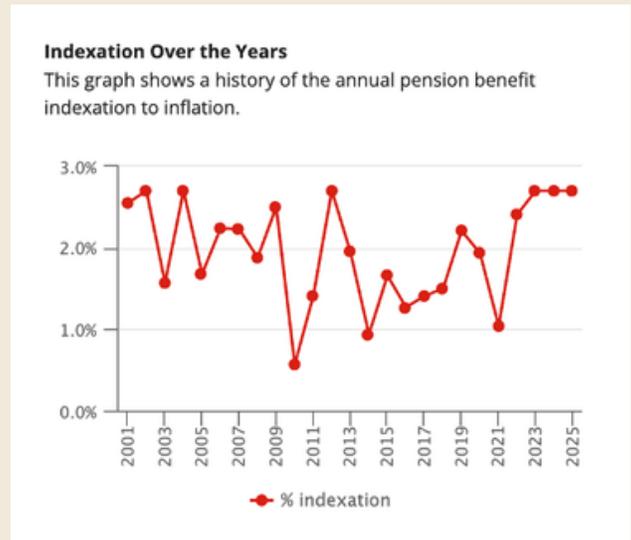
So I have to remind myself, I too have much to be joyful about. I remain relatively independent. Tomorrow, who knows? And I have four grandchildren all under the age of four who are a hoot and supposedly will keep me young and fit. Although, after an extensive visit, I question the wisdom of the person who coined that saying. I am trying to be less frustrated. I am trying rationally to be more Poppy-like, grateful for what I do have and not dwelling on what I am losing.

It's ironic, when Poppy came to spend a month in my home, it was I who presumed to be looking after her. In reality it was the reverse. Now, much of how I view what's ahead in my Parkinson's journey is coloured for the better through the lens of a blind dog.

Ken Myron spent more than three decades at CBC in both radio and TV. He was a producer on network radio programs such as This Country in the Morning, As It Happens, and National Radio News. On the TV side, he worked at The National and with local news in Windsor and Toronto. Ken also did a stint as Head of English Radio Training. He lives in Ancaster. Poppy visits from her home in Oakville.

BY THE NUMBERS: PENSION INDEXATION

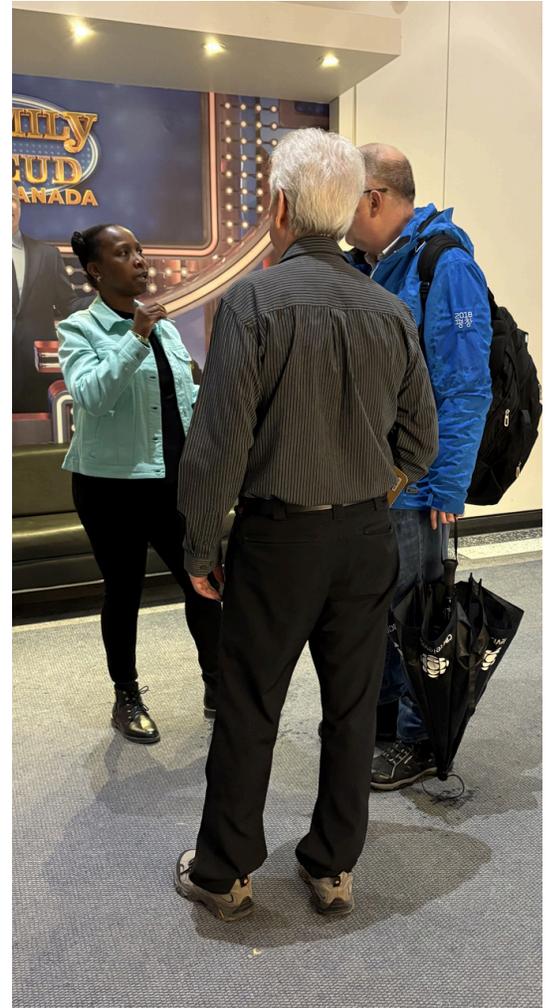
The CBC pension plan is indexed for inflation. This graph shows the percentage of additional benefits we receive as a result.



SPREADING THE WORD AT THE CORP



On March 11th, a small team of PNA members met with CBC employees to tell them about our Association, and to collect their personal contact information so we can stay in touch. Pictured above, left to right: Gail Carducci, Talin Vartanian, and Kathryn von Bezold at the Front Street entrance. On the right, Petrona (Pet) Martin and Mike Darley (with his back to us) in action at Wellington Street.



CALLING ALL SHUTTERBUGS

The Pensioners National Association is looking for amateur photographers to work on special assignments.

The goal is to set up photo shoots with members across the province. We are looking for professional-looking photos with proper lighting, both indoors and outdoors, and have specific needs.

If you're interested, write to ontario@cbcpensioners.ca.



HOW THE SPECIAL ASSISTANCE FUND CAN HELP YOU

As Canadians, we take pride in our universal healthcare system. In reality, many expenses are not covered, from dental services to the cost of wheelchairs. The list will differ for each province. For example, the following services are excluded in Ontario:

- optometry services including eyeglasses, contact lenses
- hearing aids
- consultations with psychologists or social workers
- drugs prescribed outside a hospital setting
- fiberglass casts, air casts and wrist splints, and limited coverage for prosthetics and wheelchairs (financially debilitating expenses, especially for seniors on a fixed income)

PNA members can get help from the Special Assistance Fund (SAF) to help defray some of these costs.



The SAF is the brainchild of PNA President Dan Oldfield. In the late 1990s, when he was with the Canadian Media Guild, Oldfield wrote a discussion paper about various pots of money used to defray medical expenses not covered by employer or government insurance plans. He proposed merging all of them into a single fund, and thus the SAF was born.

“For just over two decades, the SAF has paid out millions of dollars in benefits but surprisingly there are still way too many pensioners and employees who don’t know it exists,” Oldfield says.

As he recounts in his [history of the fund](#), “The creation of the SAF is a story that demonstrates the power of co-operation between groups of employees and retirees and what a relatively small amount of money can do when managed well and creatively used.”

...continued

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE FUND, CONT'D...

The SAF covers expenses such as occupational therapy, kinesiology, medical marijuana, and travel expenses for medical treatment. It will top up coverage for electric wheelchairs and scooters, dental procedures to treat medical conditions, and some fees for facial reconstruction. The lifetime maximum benefit is \$12,500.

The SAF is not a substitute for supplementary health care coverage. For example, the SAF doesn't cover the following expenses: dental services, home care, patient lift chairs and prescription drugs.

Note that all expenses covered by the SAF must be recognized by the [Canada Revenue Agency](#).



To apply to the SAF, you'll need a personal number for the CBC Supplementary Health Care Plan. (Group Number: 51089; ID number: letter "M," followed by your CBC employee ID number.) The form is submitted to Canada Life. However, PNA members do not have to be members of Canada Life to qualify for the SAF.

Claims must be submitted within 15 months of the date the expense was incurred. The Consultative Committee on Staff Benefits (CCSB) meets four times a year to consider SAF applications, in March, June, September and December.

Toronto director Ben Daube benefited twice from the Fund, first for eye surgery in a private clinic, and again for hearing aids.

"The benefits have been life-changing for me," Daube says. "I'm thrilled that my improved eyes and ears didn't cost me an extra penny. Without the SAF, I'd be several thousand dollars poorer."

Further details about the Fund and the application form are available on the PNA website, on the top nav, under the heading "Programs."

We strongly encourage PNA members to contact the PNA office to complete the form, to make sure you have dotted all the i's and crossed all the t's.

THE TORONTO CABAL OF THE PNA

A motivated, friendly group of Toronto members meets from time to time, occasionally over lunch, to share ideas for activities that might appeal to PNA members. Toronto director Sophia Hadzipetros chaired the gathering last month.

New members are welcome. If you're interested in joining this conversation, write to cbcpensionerstoronto@gmail.com.



Left to right standing: Leone Earls, Paul Kennedy, Bonnie Hewitt, Gail Carducci, Pet Martin, Susan Helwig, Ben Daube, Mary Wiens, Joan Melanson, Simon Dingley, Kathryn von Bezold. Seated: Sophia Hadzipetros, Talin Vartanian, Mike Darley.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF LIVEWIRE?

Do you have a story idea? Would you like to share a Memorable Moment or recommend a book or movie? Are you interested in getting back into the groove of writing? Please get in touch.

[**pنالivewire@gmail.com**](mailto:pنالivewire@gmail.com)



COMPILED BY LEONE EARLS

Joan MacKinnon died on December 25th at the age of 78. She retired as executive producer of *Land and Sea* and among her many other roles, was the Halifax network producer for *Midday*.

Hal Wake died on January 6th at the age of 73. Hal worked for CBC Radio for 17 years. In the mid-1980s, he was the book producer for *Morningside* with Peter Gzowski and, after leaving the CBC, became the artistic director of the Vancouver Writers' Festival for 12 years until 2017.

Ralph Thomas died on January 4th at the age of 86. When Ralph moved from print media to the CBC, he became a "trailblazing documentarian and current affairs producer." In 1975, he produced the docudrama series *For the Record* and from there moved into television drama.

Volkmar Richter died on January 29th at the age of 81. Volkmar joined CBC Radio in 1970 as an original member of the Radio Revolution, formed to make the broadcaster's programming more relevant to the era's youth culture. Assigned to *As It Happens*, he chose its iconic theme music.

Elly Alboim died on February 8th at the age of 78. Elly spent almost 25 years as reporter then Parliamentary bureau chief for CBC News.



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**Visit the Ontario page of the PNA website for information
about upcoming events, and to read our bylaws and
minutes of our Annual General Meeting.**

<https://www.cbcpensioners.ca/regions/ontario/>



**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

ENROLMENT FORM – RETIREE

Clear data

Please print

Name			
Street	City	Prov.	Postal Code
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I wish to join now (please fill in the remaining sections of this form).

I am uncertain about joining at this time. I understand that, with the information given above, a representative of Association may contact me and, upon request, provide assistance with the enrolment process.

I, _____, wish to join the CBC Pensioners National Association and hereby authorize the CBC to deduct monthly membership dues from my pension cheque and remit them to the Association. I also authorize the CBC to provide the Association with such personal information relating to me as the Association may require to facilitate the administration of dues and other services related to the welfare of pensioners.

All personal information provided to the Association by you or by the CBC is held in strict confidence.

Membership dues are 0.32% of a member's gross pension payment. For every \$1,000 of monthly pension, a member would contribute \$3.20.

CBC ID (See Notification of deposit, above your name)	Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)	Gender (optional)
Civil Status <input type="radio"/> Single <input type="radio"/> Married <input type="radio"/> Widow/er <input type="radio"/> Divorced <input type="radio"/> Separated <input type="radio"/> Common-Law		
Preferred language <input type="radio"/> English <input type="radio"/> French	Date of retirement (dd/mm/yyyy)	

Spousal information

Name			
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Signature Required

Date

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 P.O. Box 8570
 Ottawa, ON K1G 3H9
 or press the submit button to send via
 email to info@cbcpensioners.ca

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