



CNPA – Annual Directors Update December 2024

The **CNPA** held our Annual Director's Meeting (ADM) in Montreal in November, chaired by National President Bruce Anderson, with some attending via Zoom. We reviewed and discussed the year's activities, the budget, programs and plans for 2025 and beyond.

Below is a summary of those discussions, but also a broader look back at our activities in 2024.

1. We have had a Partnership Agreement with CN for several years which has proven to be advantageous to both parties. The current agreement expires December 31, 2024 and we have been working with CN to develop a mutually beneficial agreement to take us both forward, and that agreement is close to completion. We have discussed some innovative ways to reach new and prospective pensioners (both DB & DC), and these are incorporated into the new agreement.
2. CN introduced their Premier National Sponsorship of **Hockey Helps the Homeless (HHTH)** and the CNPA can play a significant role in providing volunteers for the over 15+ events over the next 5 months and for years to come, as their sponsorship is a multi-year agreement. This is one concrete example of how we “partner” with CN on activities in the communities where we live.
3. As Pensioners on fixed incomes, we have all been affected by high inflation over the past 3 years. Despite higher than normal CN Pension **indexations**, they still fell short by over 10%. This year we presented several suggested changes or one-time improvements to the Pension Plan to help those affected the most. Despite our efforts, CN has not been in a position to make any changes. We will continue our efforts going forward.
4. If you are looking for **discounts**, we have continued our negotiations with external providers and landed a couple of deals with **Rogers Mobility and Hearing Life**. We are also in talks with CN to potentially extend more of their “employee only” discounts to Pensioners. We received an update from Belairdirect, who have been providing access to discounted Home, Auto and Travel Medical insurance to you, our members, for over 20 years. In many cases, the deals we negotiate are only accessible to CNPA **contributing members**. Click on the “Membership” link to see how you can join easily and economically!
5. We appointed a new **Communications Officer** – Steve Mihell, to take our national newsletter and our social media presence to the next level. Your stories of interest are always welcome.
6. Our national website, www.cnpensioners.org, administered by George Rowan, has been a big success since being fully implemented about 18 months ago. There were over 30,000 hits this year, with interest in many areas. If you explore the site, you'll find most of the answers to your questions are right there, as are some very helpful documents.
7. We are always looking for additional folks to help manage our Association. It starts with volunteers at the Local/Regional Councils across Canada and migrates all the way to the National Executive. We plan to devote a lot of time and energy over the next two years uncovering the best avenues to improve the recruitment of officers at all levels within the Association. Having these layers of councils, and their volunteers, is a critical component to the overall health of the Association, and we need to focus on keeping all councils staffed appropriately. As we lose some because of age or health we struggle to find others to step up and give us a few hours of their time each month. **Can you help?** If so, Contact your Local



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or Regional Council members or write me, and I will get you connected president@cnpensioners.org

8. **Finances** – As a not-for-profit Association, finance can be pretty detailed and our National Treasurer, Ron Charles, has a busy job managing our funds, transfers and expenses. The CNPA is in solid financial shape despite a net reduction of over 1000 pensioners per year. As a note of interest, 84% of your \$1 monthly dues goes back to your local councils to help them fund activities, and provide services and information across Canada.
9. Our **CNPA Health Care Plan**, independently managed by the Health Care Committee, chaired by Blake Olson, continues to feel the impact of increased usage and significantly higher prescription medications (due to inflation and new higher cost drugs). We recognize that increases to your premiums are not popular, but are they are necessary to keep the Plan financially viable. We assume full liability for every expense incurred, so we need to manage the finances tightly.
10. **Pension Committee** – you have possibly seen and read the Pension Committee Annual Report (PCAR) that provides the status of our CN Pension Plan. It is in very good financial shape with the Solvency and Going Concern ratios well over 125%. Additionally, the CN Investment Division reported in November that our Fund investments have had very positive returns this year and this bodes well for the future of the Fund. Should we be concerned going forward? We always need to be cautious with conflicts, world geopolitical issues and recent comments about tariffs and also limited economic growth.
11. One important component of the role of the Pension Committee, is to educate and inform our Pensioners. We proposed to CN to restart annual **Out of Town Meetings** across Canada in 2025. The first scaled down **Town Hall** style meeting will be in June, in **Kamloops, BC**, and potentially host up to 100 pensioners. The intent is to provide important pension, financial and actuarial information, but also take the opportunity to discuss new and important CNPA issues and answer questions from our pensioners, in a slightly more informal session.
12. **Membership – is declining** – with about 1800 pensioners and surviving spouses passing away each year and only adding about 700 new pensioners and spouses, the numbers will continue to fall. We, through our Membership Co-Chairs Peter Moloney and Nancy Zajacz, are always looking at ways to streamline, improve and innovate membership processes to make it easier and more efficient. Questions – membership@cnpensioners.org
13. One significant **change to Membership in 2025**, is a new requirement that anyone applying to be a participant of the **CNPA Health Care Plan**, will also be required to be a contributing member of the CNPA. When new applicants sign-up they will be both enrolled and covered.
14. After slow pandemic years, interest in **our CNPA Scholarships** has rebounded. The National Committee, chaired by Reg Hebert, and assisted by regional committees, had a very successful year with good quality applicants. The program was renewed for 2025 with 25 – \$1,500 Scholarships offered again. The program application process starts April 15 with a deadline of August 15. The program is offered only online. See [Scholarships](#) on this site.

This summary has been approved by the National President