

February 24, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

There are those who lead in their community. There are those who lead in their province. And there are those who lead in their country. Over a lifetime in the newspaper industry, David Cadogan has done all three.

In the history of community journalism in Atlantic Canada over the past 50 years, Cadogan's flagship publication, The Miramichi Leader is iconic for its feisty, courageous and compelling journalism which both celebrated its community and held those in power to account. The Leader's dominance in annual Atlantic Community Newspaper Association and Canadian Community Newspaper Association award competitions set the gold standard for all others to follow.

David Cadogan believed his papers must be a reflection of their community. He is endlessly inquisitive, loves smart debate and worked diligently to ensure the paper was seen as far more than just a vessel for his opinions. Those who routinely put pen to paper writing Letters to the Editor were offered columns because he nurtured an environment that placed a premium on divergent views. He mentored generations of young reporters while holding court in hospitality suites and afterward offering a fortunate few membership in the Miramichi Nighthawk Society, an honour to those who stayed up and entertained him with smart conversation or a singsong until the crack of dawn. He gave his editors and reporters the now rare freedom of absolute editorial independence, allowing them to write without fear of reprisal.

Cadogan's leadership is displayed in his essential effort as a founding member of ACNA, a vital creation to support the journalistic, sales, design and business skills of employees at the then primarily independently owned community papers throughout Atlantic Canada.

When Alan Legere escaped prison and paralyzed the Miramichi River region with terror in 1989, Cadogan and his editorial team led with fearless reporting week in and week out, despite threats of retribution from the notorious serial killer, rapist and arsonist.

Nationally Cadogan was elected president of the Canadian Community Newspapers Association and to this day the Outstanding Columnist Award bears his name, an award I have been honoured to win twice.

David Cadogan has always been the conscious of the community newspaper industry, offering sage advice, insight and when necessary prodding to ensure the ethical and transparent operation of our industry associations. He was an early advocate for digital transformation in the newspaper industry and an early adopter of new technologies, with the goal of always improving the quality of his publications. After his retirement in 2003, he continued to attend annual conventions giving himself the honorary tongue in cheek title of Ghost of Christmas Past. Such is his love of this industry.

Miramichi was lucky to have David Cadogan pick it as his home. So too was our region and our nation.

I grew up in a newspaper family where David Cadogan was revered. As a member of the Atlantic Journalism Awards Board of Directors I can think of no more deserving recipient of the Hall of Fame Award. It is an honour to support this nomination.

Sincerely,

Paul MacNeill
Publisher
Island Press Ltd