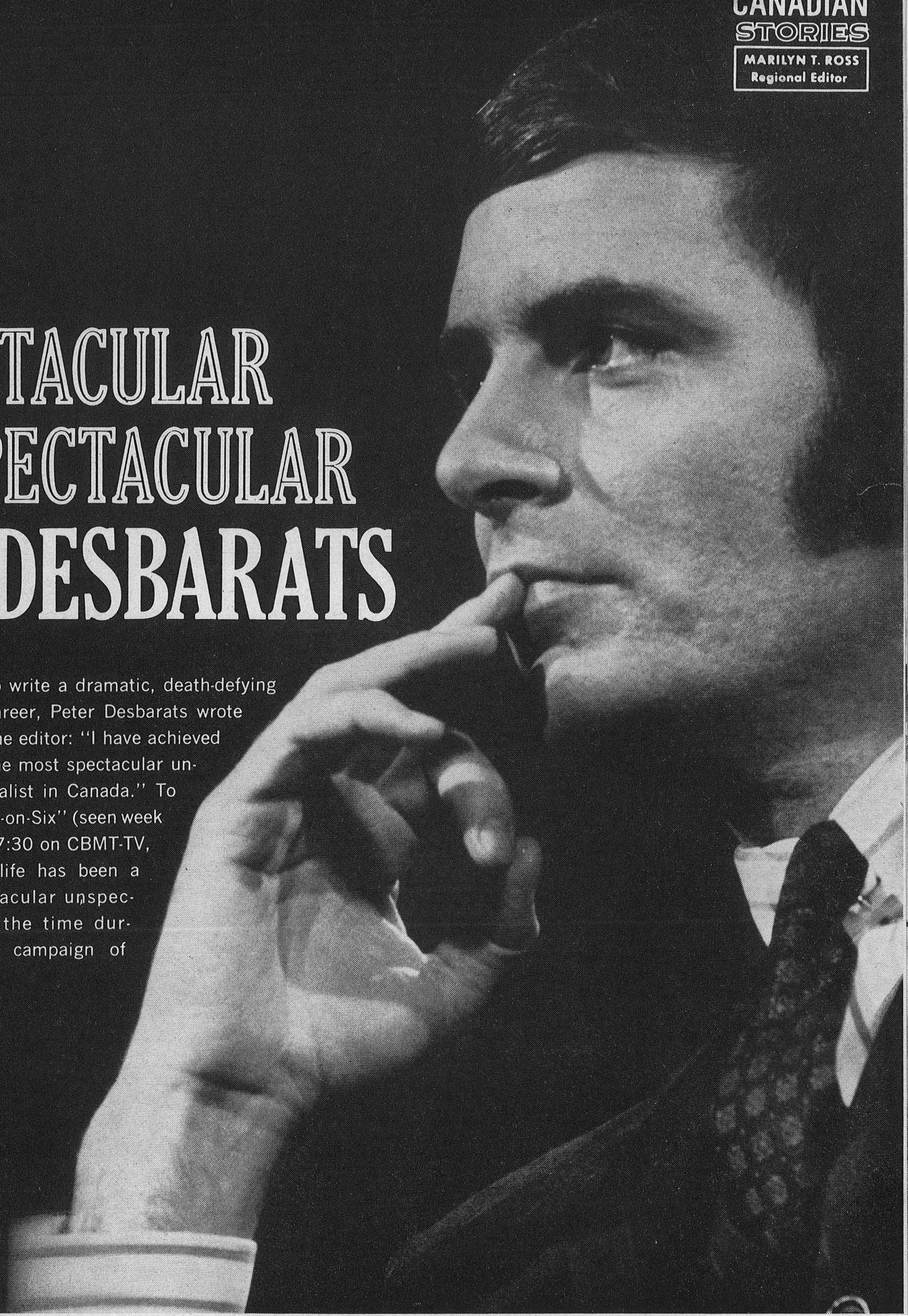


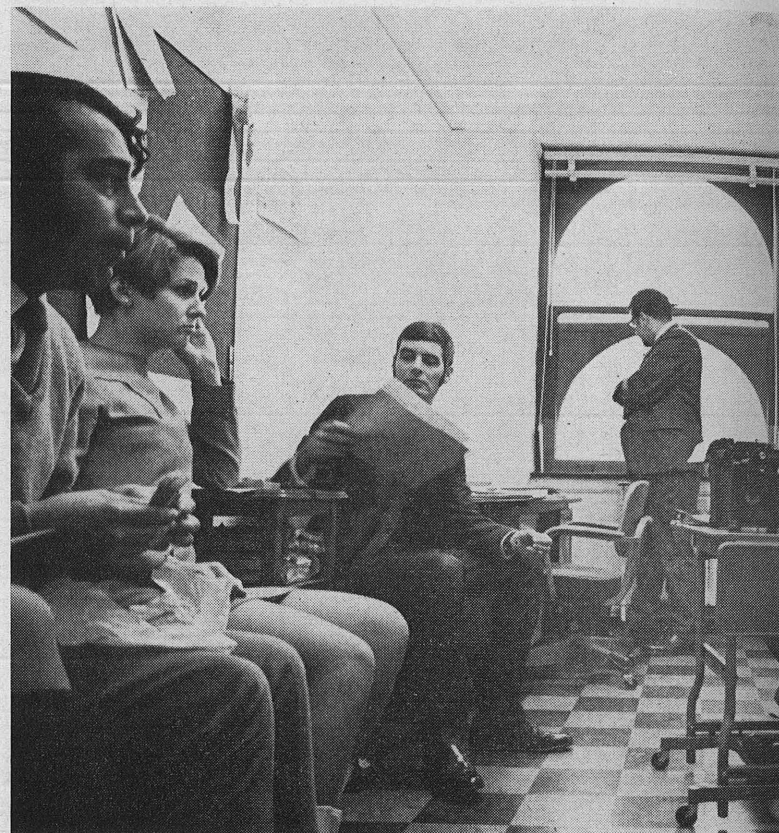
Host of  
Montreal's  
Seven-on-Six

# THE SPECTACULAR UNSPECTACULAR MR. DESBARATS

□ When asked to write a dramatic, death-defying incident in his career, Peter Desbarats wrote back to a magazine editor: "I have achieved a reputation as the most spectacular unspectacular journalist in Canada." To the host of "Seven-on-Six" (seen week nights from 7 to 7:30 on CBMT-TV, Montreal, Que.) life has been a series of "spectacular unspectaculars." Like the time during the election campaign of

(Please turn ►)





1963 when he and Liberal Leader Pearson, up in a light aircraft, got caught in a violent thunderstorm. Though the pilot said it was the worst he had ever seen, Peter knew nothing exciting would happen. After all, he was there!

In Winnipeg, the editor who assigned him to cover Arctic maneuvers with the Army, said it would make a good story if Peter lost a hand or foot through frostbite. . . . The only thing he lost was \$40 playing poker in a tent during a blizzard.

When Desbarats went to Poland on an assignment for a Montreal newspaper, the police in the Iron Curtain country didn't follow him. "As a matter of fact," he sighs, "I got lost about twice a day and ended up following them." In West Berlin, no oppressed East Berliners tried to leap over the Wall. In Spain, stumbling on an underground publishing house, Peter was sure he would be shot. But the Spaniards just invited him for a drink.

The spectacular unspectacular Desbarats is an English-speaking Roman Catholic French-Canadian of Scottish Presbyterian, Swiss-American ancestry. He was born in Montreal (July 2, 1933) and educated in Catholic and Jesuit

schools. He dropped out of Loyola College in his second year to go into journalism.

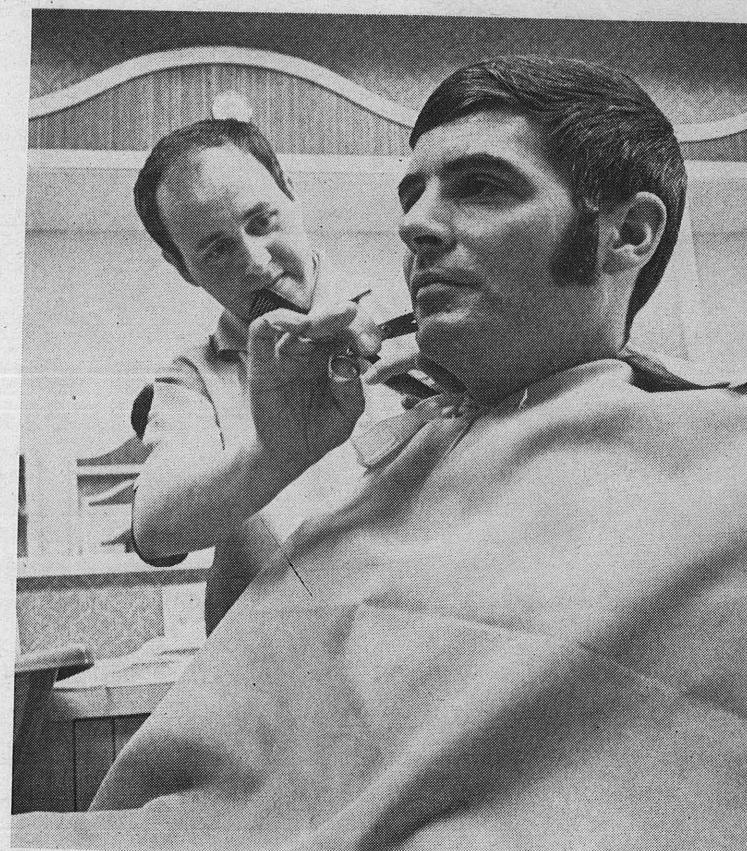
"I've always been a writer," says Peter. "I've never wanted to be anything else. I started doing bits and pieces of radio and TV work in western Canada about 1958, when I was employed as a political reporter for newspapers. In 1960, I returned to Montreal to write for the Montreal Star and continued to do freelance radio and TV. In the fall of '66, when I was editing a magazine which was about to fold, the offer to host 'Seven-on-Six' on a regular basis came up. I decided to give it a try. It has worked out well."

"Seven-on-Six" is a public affairs presentation—a local, topical news program composed of interviews, short features and news editorials. "Our ratings have increased steadily since we started in 1966," Peter informs us. "And I believe we are the most successful show of this type in the history of CBMT."

The spectacular success of his program has flabbergasted the unspectacular Mr. Desbarats. He can't really believe the inevitable no longer is. But he shrugs philosophically and happily admits: "C'est la vie!" □



Desbarats interviews the famous U.S. movie director John Ford, above. At Le Cartier Barber Shop, Peter has his trademark (sideburns) trimmed weekly by Willy the Barber.



Peter in a thoughtful mood (top right); during weekly conference meeting with Seven-on-Six production staff (center). In shop, above, he's recognized by TV fan.