

THE UNION OF HEARTS AND MINDS

# HOTLINE



Local 258 I.B.E.W.  
FALL 2002



Back row, standing, from left: Mark Davison, Dave McMinn, Bob Abernethy, Dale Haines, Leon Arishenkoff.  
Front row, kneeling, from left: Tony Brand, Larry Byhre, Klaus Kraft, Doug McKay, Michelle Laurie, Tom Greenwell.

## Introducing Your Union Officers

# Business Manager, Doug McKay



This article is my first as Business Manager. I would like to thank those members who took the time to get involved by voting in our recent election. To those who did support me, I extend my thanks for your confidence. To those who found they could not support me, I can only trust that you will become involved in our Union and that we will be able to address your concerns.

The latest episode at BC Hydro is the signing of a memorandum of understanding with a company called Accenture (formerly known as Anderson Consulting) to assume the business of a number of Hydro's shared services. These "shared services" include Customer Services,

Financial Services and Human Resources Services. There are more such services on the hit list, like Westech for example. The new business will impact approximately 2000 employees, including 17 IBEW members in the Building and Office Services. I don't know why our provincial government would give control of BC Hydro to a company that has been blacklisted by the state of California for questionable business practices relating to relocation to offshore tax havens. I urge all members to go to the web site of the Citizens for Public Power and sign the petition to leave Hydro as a public company ([www.citizensforpublicpower.ca](http://www.citizensforpublicpower.ca)).

The provincial government's attack on Unions and skilled trades people is well underway. The government has dismantled the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission (ITAC) and left present and future apprentices in our province in

a state of confusion and with a lack of structure. We are not sure just how this change will impact our training school (EITI).

It is my intent to get out of the office from time to time and visit members on the job site. I have informed our largest employer, BC Hydro, that I will be showing up at various headquarters. To the many members who are employed in the Utility Arborist, Manufacturing, Traffic Control and Line Contacting sectors, I will make every effort to get to your work location to discuss your concerns and issues and our Local Union.

In closing, with the summer holidays now behind us, I hope each and every one of you had a great and safe time. Remember our success as a Local Union requires the involvement of the entire membership, not just that of any one individual. 📧

## HOTLINE

Published by Local 258 IBEW

### TABLE OFFICERS

Doug McKay	Business Manager/ Financial Secretary
Michelle Laurie	President
Tony Brand	Vice President
Larry Byhre	Treasurer
Dale Haines	Rec. Secretary

### EXECUTIVE BOARD

Klaus Kraft	Unit 1
Dave McMinn	Unit 2
Leon Arishenkoff	Unit 3
Tom Greenwell	Unit 4
Mark Davison	Unit 5
Robert Abernethy	Unit 6

Ken McEwen - Editor

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# Your Union Elections

## LOCAL 258 IBEW OFFICER POSITIONS

Business Manager/  
Financial Secretary: Doug McKay  
President: Michelle Laurie  
Vice President: Tony Brand  
Recording Secretary: Dale Haines  
Treasurer: Larry Byhre

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### UNIT 1

Unit Chair: Klaus Kraft  
Unit Vice Chair: Phil Clattenburg  
Unit Recorder: Clayton Dunsford  
Executive Committee: Robert M. Anderson  
Vacant

### UNIT 2

Unit Chair: Dave McMinn  
Unit Vice-Chair: Don McNabb  
Unit Recorder: Bill Hood  
Executive Committee: Don McLennan  
Terry Norris

### UNIT 3

Unit Chair: Leon Arishenkoff  
Unit Vice-Chair: Ray Lapointe  
Unit Recorder: Rioh Hove  
Executive Committee: Alex Coutts  
Gary Conway

### UNIT 4

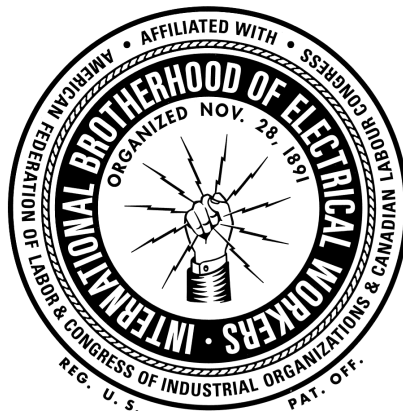
Unit Chair: Tom Greenwell  
Unit Vice-Chair: Fred Ruttan  
Unit Recorder: John Syrette  
Executive Committee: Ryan Angman  
Randy Williams

### UNIT 5


Unit Chair: Mark Davison  
Unit Vice-Chairman: Ross White  
Unit Recorder: Burke Lundy  
Executive Committee: Robert McKay  
Cathy Tagseth

### UNIT 6

Unit Chair: Bob Abernethy  
Unit Vice-Chair: Nicole Biernaczyk  
Unit Recorder: Kathy Diesel  
Executive Committee: Bob Palmer  
Doug Trapp



# Municipal Elections

Elsewhere in this publication are comments about our elected provincial government and about the recent Union election. Another opportunity to become involved in the democratic process will soon be upon us. Municipal elections will be held this November. These elections are no less important to our daily lives than the provincial election or the Union election. At every level where we choose individuals to represent us and to act on our behalf it is our responsibility to make the best informed choice possible. To do less is to throw away our right to self determination. The best way to maintain that right is to be involved in the process. One way to be involved is to actively support the candidates that promote the values and issues that are important to us. Another is to ask the candidates for their position on such things as labour issues and assess their responses. With that information we can then make an informed decision. The ultimate involvement in the process is to vote on Election Day. Please exercise your right and vote for the candidates of your choice. 



## Viewpoint from your

# Senior Assistant Business Manager – Jim Greenwell




The present provincial government has made many changes that have directly impacted all of the people of the province. Although I could choose many government mistakes to talk about, I will focus on just two that directly affects us.

First, as of March 31, 2003, the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission (ITAC) will be no more. The government has already reduced the number of ITAC offices in the province to six with no decision as to what ITAC's replacement will look like. This action has thrown our Line Apprenticeship into turmoil. Many Private Line Sector employers have taken this opportunity to bypass the Joint Line Apprentice and Trades Training Committee and indenture apprentices directly without any prescreening of qualifications. What is left of ITAC has accepted this practice as the Commission has neither the will nor the manpower to police the situation. The members of the Joint Committee have no idea whether the new indentures have even the minimum prerequisites to enter Line Apprenticeship. The Local Union has grieved this clear violation of the applicable Collective Agreement and has been in talks with the employers' representatives. We expect to resolve the issue by having these apprentices re-indentured to the Joint Committee with a commitment that such a violation will not occur again. For the past 12 years the Joint Committee has functioned well and developed the most sought after journeypersons in North America. This record is at

risk as long as the provincial government continues to show little forethought in its race to balance the budget without regard to the working people of the province.

Second, as of December 31, 2001, MSP discontinued coverage for eye exams and services such as chiropractic and podiatry, among others. The cost for these services must now be borne by the Extended Health Coverage of the various health plans we have negotiated with our employers. In addition, the provincial government, on May 1st, increased the MSP premium by 50%. This single premium increase costs each member of the plans \$0.26 per hour worked. We are now in the process of trying to, on one hand, negotiate an increase payment to the benefit plan for temporary employees at BC Hydro outside of the regular negotiations, and on the other hand, presenting our members in the Private Line Sector an option of a reduction of benefits, a reduction to their present wage increase or an increase to the number of hours that must come from the hour bank to cover the short fall in premium coverage.

Whatever the final result is, it is clear that the cost of your medical coverage will be downloaded from the government so that it can meet its budget targets on the backs of the working person. We will keep you informed, as there are further reductions to medical coverage expected in the fall. 

# QUICK THINKING SAVES LIVES

When a paraglider collided with a set of 25 kV primary lines in downtown White Rock recently, it was quick thinking by two of our members that prevented a tragic incident. Apparently, the pilot was flying his motorized glider near downtown White Rock when he became entangled in the power lines. There was a large flash as the glider hit the wires. The contact tripped a circuit breaker, cutting power in the area.

One of our members, Marc Spencer, was working in the Lower Mainland Control Centre (LMC) when the incident occurred. Marc had to make a quick decision about reclosing the circuit. He tells us, "I knew that there would be lots of people in the area. The worst scenario is that by reclosing the circuit I could energize a line that was exposed to the public."

Just minutes after making the decision not to attempt a reclose, Marc received a phone call from Brother Jim Kline, an off duty lineman from Abbotsford who was at the beach when the incident occurred. Jim phoned LMC to tell Marc what had happened, and to warn him not to reclose the circuit.

Brother Bruce Byrnell was dispatched to the scene, and after he safely isolated the lines, a successful rescue of the pilot was achieved.

Thanks to all three of the Brothers for their swift response to the emergency, keeping the safety of all involved at the fore in their actions! ⚡



# Electrical Industry Training Institute



*Valley Traffic members at the Proximity Training course at the Electrical Industry Training Institute in May, 2002.*

## by Gerry Bramhill

With the resignation of Rick Klassen on May 1, 2002, the Electrical Industry Training Institute (EITI) found itself without a full time Training Coordinator/Manager. Rick has made a major career change by leaving BC Hydro and accepting a management position with a private sector line contractor. This move is a natural for Rick, given his line background. We wish him every success with his new endeavour in an industry that has every opportunity for expansion in light of the potential restructuring at BC Hydro.

I have been asked to fill the vacancy on a temporary basis until a new manager is hired. This process is ongoing and could be completed by August 31, 2002.

EITI's last fiscal year (June 30) saw yet another year on the positive side of the ledger. Since 1999 we have enjoyed a steady growth in our profits. How we will do in 2002/03 is still unknown, but we expect to see a drop in business as a result of the uncertainties at BC Hydro, our major customer.

Every effort will be made to generate additional training dollars in the private sector to replace the

expected reduction at BC Hydro. However, our experiences of late indicate this will be a challenge given the current provincial economic status. We have contracts with the Ministry (Industry Training & Apprenticeship Commission (ITAC)) until March 31, 2003, for the trades of Utility Arborist and Power Line Technician. As well, we will again be presenting BC Hydro's Public Safety Programs in the schools and First Responders Safety Training, predominately in the Lower Mainland, Fraser Valley and Vancouver Island. These programs alone will generate approximately \$675,000.00 gross before costs and taxes. In our last fiscal year we grossed approximately \$1.7 million before operational costs and taxes. We have a gap to fill.

As stated many times before, training as a business is very challenging, particularly when we are competing against publicly funded institutions. With the government decision this past spring to withdraw from any apprenticeship involvement and to close ITAC by March 31, 2003, there are many unanswered questions as to the future of apprenticeship training in the province. Unfortunately, we will not know

what will replace ITAC until new legislation is tabled early next year. What we do know is that competition for private institutions such as EITI will be increased. This could be a positive opportunity for us once it is determined what courses may be open to others than the public institutions. We look forward to this opportunity. We have already opened discussions with Kwantlen College to work in a partnership to deliver a specific program. Hopefully it will materialise later this fall.

With the government's decision to close ITAC, legislation has been introduced for training facilities to charge tuition fees (as of August 1, 2002) to apprentices and other students where full government funding was once provided. This is due to the government reducing all funding to Institutions. EITI's funding for this fiscal year has been reduced by 19%. As a result, apprentice PLTs and Arborists will be required to pay EITI, in advance, approximately \$35/day and \$25/day respectively. Because some employers may pay the fee, all apprentices should check with their employers before attending school.

*(cont'd on next page)*

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Since its establishment in 1991, EITI has been supported by Local 258 membership. From the beginning, our mission has been to provide apprenticeship training, technical trades upgrading and safety training for Local 258 members and others in the electrical industry. Nothing has changed except now we must be financially self supporting. We have proven we can do that. We intend to continue to do so.

In June of this year we carried out a survey of many customers of EITI for their opinion. Overall they noted EITI as being on the higher side of the rated scale of 1 to 5. When asked if they were satisfied with EITI's training services, only 13% indicated otherwise. When

line contractors, we did have a recent opportunity to provide electrical safety training to our Traffic Control membership at Valley Traffic. We provided training for over 100 employees on the new BC Hydro required training for the Utility Contract Workers. The training was delivered on week-ends and all attendees successfully completed the course and received certification. It was a lot of serious fun and most enjoyable (see photos).

Business this summer has been slow. However, that does provide us with the opportunity to be well prepared for a busy fall. There are already four classes for PLT apprentices and two classes for Utility Arborist apprentices scheduled. In addition, we are anticipating a prov-

and comment if there are items you think are incomplete or incorrect. We provide a wide range of courses. Many have been around for some time. With that in mind we have asked B. Hydro to consider updating and revising some of the courses to a workshop-styled Power Point presentation that can easily be delivered on site. As stated earlier, this type of delivery is a major request from our customers. We are working with BC Hydro in the hope that some of them can be done this fiscal year. Once again, please remember that prior to registering for any training, first secure approval from your manager/employer.

The management and staff at EITI truly appreciate your continued support and we ask that you extend



*Valley Traffic members at the Proximity Training course at the Electrical Industry Training Institute in May, 2002.*

asked if they had an option to receive comparable training elsewhere at the same cost, 89% said they preferred EITI. 91% of those surveyed felt that joint management of the school with the co-operative partnership with BC Hydro was a positive business arrangement. When asked if we should focus more on "On Site" delivery, 88% said yes. EITI staff was rated at 87% as being knowledgeable and courteous.

Although a bulk of our business is within BC Hydro and the private

ince wide program at Power Facilities delivering a one-day Fall Prevention Refresher course. It was four years ago that we did the initial Fall Prevention training. Beginning September 9th we are back in the thick of things with hope of completing the "PDP" Hydro training left over from last fall. This also includes some Traffic Control Training.

Changes have recently been made to our web site ([www.eiti.bc.ca](http://www.eiti.bc.ca)) and we ask that you have a look

that support to the new EITI Manager.

Training for the future is no longer an option, it is a necessity. Training will enhance safe work practices and improve trade skills, resulting in the best chance of retaining employment. Do not become unemployable due to lack of training. Enjoy the rest of the summer and please work safely. ⚡

# Outside Line

by Dan Payne, ABM

This summer the workload for the private line sector has increased to the point where, once again, we don't have enough linemen to fill all the calls that come in to the dispatch office.

We have had to deal with two pressing issues over the last couple of months, the first one being the 50% increase to the MSP premiums and the elimination of payments to some extended health benefits by our current provincial government. In a recent inquiry by this office, the members clearly indicated they prefer the option of increasing the hours needed to fund the benefit package from 100 hours to 125 hours.

The second issue was one concerning the indentureship of Line Apprentices. With the Provincial Government's restructuring of the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission (ITAC) there was much confusion around how any new apprentices



would be dealt with and their training monitored. After much debate and discussion with the LCA, it was agreed that the Joint Line Apprenticeship and Trades Training Committee is the best body to deal with Apprentice Training, and a Year 1 school is scheduled for October.

As of August 1, 2002 all members in this sector received an

increase in both wages and RRSP contributions, and if the current workload continues it should be a good year for all the members, as well as the employers.

Take care and work safe. ⚡





Jim Greenwell and Staff,  
Thanks so much for the lovely hanging basket brought over to our home by John Wilson on your behalf. Your attendance at the Memorial Service for Jim was very appreciated. He will be missed!!  
Regards,  
Shelly



To IBEW Brothers and Sisters,  
Sometimes the simple words are best. Thank you all for your donation to the Cancer Clinic. It's too late for Don, but I'm sure many others will be helped.  
Once again, thank you very much.  
Cecile Austin



Dear IBEW Local 258,  
Thank you for your thoughtfulness. Jim received the fruit basket "good eating". When Jim left Salmon Arm Hospital he went to Kamloops Royal Inland. He's home now and doing pretty good. Is in physio three days a week. It will be slow progress.  
Thank you  
Richard (Jim) Selfe



To Members of IBEW Local 258,  
On behalf of the Nanaimo Red Sox – Bantam "B" Boys Fastball Team, we would like to thank you for your very generous sponsorship of our team.  
We are nearing the end of our season with the Provincial Tournament just around the corner. We have played a number of games and tournaments and continue to represent our team, sponsors and community in a positive and respectful manner.  
Once again, thank you for helping to provide this opportunity for our boys and assisting in the development of young baseball players in our community.  
Your truly,  
TC Romini,  
on behalf of the Team Parents



Dear Michelle Laurie,  
Football Nanaimo would like to acknowledge and extend our thanks for the IBEW 258 generous \$200.00 donation to our league. The money is much needed and very timely. We have ordered our helmets so that we will have them in time to field our players for the upcoming season. We are on life support and you have come to the rescue.  
I'm proud to say we do extremely good work with these kids. We install a sense of team spirit, skill development, sportsmanship and pride that I think is unparalleled in any other sport. We have 43 coaches, managers, trainers, referees and executive members who put in endless hours. A lot of these people do not even have children in the organization; they do it out of loyalty and love of the game.



Once again we pass on our sincerest gratitude and if there is anything we could do to repay or offer assistance to the IBEW 258 please contact me. I am proud of our membership and I hope we continue to support community activities whenever possible.

Yours sincerely,  
Howard Quinn



Dear Doug McKay and the Executive Board members,  
I would like to offer a very sincere thank you to IBEW Local 258 for their generosity in offering scholarships. I am very pleased to be a recipient this year. I believe this is a valuable exercise; for youths to understand the importance of unions and the role they play in the future. I intend to pursue my goal in engineering and this contribution will be used wisely. Again, thank you very much.  
Colin Partridge,  
Fruitvale, BC



Dear Michelle Laurie and Executive Board,  
It was an honour to have the Executive Board select my essay for one of the three scholarships available. I would like to thank IBEW Local 258 for the making available to it's members relatives the Tom Forkin Scholarship.  
With rising tuition fees words cannot describe what a help this will be with my continuing education.  
I would be honoured if you printed my essay in the IBEW 258 HOTLINE. Once again, thank you very much.  
Sincerely,  
Kirk Kidd



IBEW Local 258;  
Just a note of thanks to the local for the gift certificate, and to Al and Jim for their visit during my recent hospital stay. Thanks also to those members who called or visited. I'm well on the road to recovery and hope to see everyone soon.  
Lee Engman



Dear Local 258;  
Many thanks for the fruit basket!  
Marte Sandferd

# UNIT REPORTS

## Unit 4

by Tom Greenwell, Unit 4 Chairperson

I would like to congratulate my fellow Unit 4 members on their election to office. They are Fred Ruttan, Vice Chair, John Syrette, Recorder and Ryan Angman and Randy Williams, Members at Large. We, in Unit 4, have been the recipients of some very good leadership in the past four years. Wayne Soroka deserves special thanks for a job well done.

The past four years have seen some very challenging times for our membership in relation to BC Hydro. The changes are happening

the reason for such a poor showing during our Union elections. A 39% ballot return is a dismal showing and I hope over the course of time we can mend the rift between us and can concentrate on the real perpetrators (BC Hydro leadership and the Campbell government) for the mess we are in.

When they talk of privatization in the Utility industry and divide wage settlements of workers, we should remember that this is driven by the lust for profit. This profit will be on the backs of those most vul-

nerable, the working, the poor and the elderly. Nothing in this push to privatize is being done to boost local economies or to improve your standard of living. The part I do not understand is why small business is not outraged. Deregulation will cause their electric bills to sharply increase. Then, on the other side, wage settlements are smaller and smaller, not keeping up with the cost of living. As such, people will have less disposable income with less to spend on the small businessmen's products.

I look forward to seeing as many members as possible on my trips up and down the Island, and I encourage you all to come to your local meetings. Let's try to fix a few things. My contact number can be reached through the Business Office.

Work safely! ⚡



Long term service pins, ranging from 25-30 years, were awarded to a number of IBEW Local 258 members in Victoria at a meeting held in May, 2002.

so fast, who can keep up? For the most part, the changes have frequently been for the worse.

My involvement in our other sectors, private line, tree trimmers, manufacturing and traffic control industries is limited, but I am eager to learn and assist members wherever possible. Please give me a call if I can be of assistance.

We should not forget the past, but we must move on. The last set of negotiations at BC Hydro, leading to our new contract, was particularly tough. We ended up with some members feeling very isolated. These members felt betrayed by the company and bewildered by our Union; that's the sad part. This, I believe, is



IBEW Local 258 members, from left, Jim Eckford, Eleanor Roth and Harry Dorward join Unit 4 Chairperson Tom Greenwell at the membership meeting in Nanaimo held in May, 2002.

## Inside Unit 5

by Mark Davison, Unit Chairperson

My name is Mark Davison and I am the Unit 5 chairman. I am a machinist/mechanic working at Burrard Generating Station. I have been an IBEW Local 258 member for almost 10 years.

The Unit 5 executive is made up of Ross White (vice-chairman), Burk Lundy (unit recorder), Robert MacKay and Cathy Tagseth (committee member) and myself.

I am committed to being a voice for all of the membership. I urge any member to express their concerns or thoughts of how to make the 258 membership stronger. Feel free to e-mail me at mark-d@shaw.ca.

To be a Unit 5 member you must live within its boundaries, which extend from the Pitt River west to the ocean, and from the Fra-

ser River north to the Pemberton Valley area. It includes Richmond, and the Sunshine Coast up to and including Powell River.

The provincial government seems to be set on reducing the rights and benefits of all union employees. The time to stand up is here. I cannot overly stress the importance of each and every member voicing their disdain to the government. BC Hydro is under attack. Please visit the web site, [www.citizensforpublicpower.ca](http://www.citizensforpublicpower.ca), for more information.

On a more positive note, I am also a member of the HYDRECS committee, the BC Hydro Employees Community Services Fund. I am pleased to announce that the 2003 campaign will kick off on September

17th and will run until November 29th. The "Caring for Our Community" campaign

touches all regions of the province, supporting social and health care services where union members, current and retired, live and work. Many thanks to all union members who took part in helping to raise this year's total of \$981,413.19 which is going back to the communities. Well done to all who took part! 📧



## Unit 6

by Robert Abernethy, Unit 6 Chairman

On June 4th 2002, I was elected Unit Chairman. It became quite obvious looking at the election results, that 60% of you don't really give a damn who runs this union. If you had, I probably wouldn't be sitting here typing out this message.

There are approximately 900 plus members in this unit. We are by far the largest unit in members in the province, yet we are lucky to see 20 members show up at a meeting. If 10% of you showed up we would have to move to a larger facility.

I can recall the days at the old Kennedy Hall on Scott Road when a person had to get there early to get a seat. The turn out was that good and the meeting lasted late into the night.

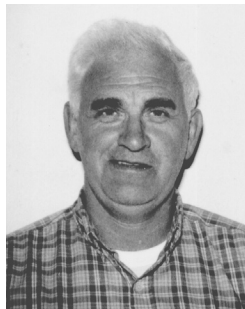
So what has happened in the last 25 years? Is everyone contented or is everyone so fed up that you can't be

bothered coming out anymore to voice your opinion?

I would like to hear from you. I know I'll get beat up but I've been there before. Phone me at home (604)574-5146 (not after 10pm and not drunk – ticked off is fine) or if you have e-mail try [robabernethy@hotmail.com](mailto:robabernethy@hotmail.com) or fax to (604) 574-5167.

Let me know what's on your mind in regards to this union movement.

I hope you all have had a good summer with your families and the best of health to you all. 📧



## Editor's Note...

Please tell us what you would like to see in the HOTLINE. Would you like: more pictures? less pictures? regular reports and articles from ABM's? regular reports and articles from Unit Chairs? more reprints from other labour newspapers? How about comments on government activities, the environment, pension plans, etc? Are there any new or completely different features you would like included?

Are there any of the regular features you would like to see discontinued?

As well as content, please tell us what you think about the format of HOTLINE.

Send your ideas and comments to HOTLINE

via e-mail to

[ibew258@telus.net](mailto:ibew258@telus.net),

or regular mail at

7535 6th Street,  
Burnaby, BC, V3N 3M2.

# The Value of Protest

by Mark Leier

*Mark Leier is a labour historian and Director of SFU's Centre for Labour Studies. He is the author or co-author of four books on British Columbia labour history, most recently Rebel Life. He may be reached at [sfu\\_labour@hotmail.com](mailto:sfu_labour@hotmail.com).*



Will the recent demonstrations in Victoria and around the province accomplish anything?

If protests, rallies, petitions, and strikes didn't work, we would all still be working 10 hours a day, six days a week. There would be no holidays, no EI, no healthcare, and women wouldn't have the vote. These, and much more, were won using those same tools. How should we judge the effectiveness of protest? We can see some effects already. The government has promised to restore bus passes to disabled seniors, and even Liberal back-

benchers are asking pointed questions in the house as their constituents turn up the heat. Small things, perhaps, but it would be a mistake to think that protest was a failure just because the government hasn't resigned yet.

Protest is first intended to make the government aware that its policies are not popular. While the Premier is joined at provincial breakfasts, lunches, and dinners by the 10 per cent of



the population who are employers, the vast majority of the people of BC do not have such access to the government. Yet that majority too must be listened to in a democracy, and they have the right to be heard outside of election years. Extra-parliamentary protest is a crucial part of our democracy. If the government chooses not to listen, that in itself will indicate something important about the Premier and the Liberal Party, and the protest will have served to make that lesson clear.

The demonstrations in Victoria and around the province have other purposes. They show everyone who is alarmed by the government that they are not alone and that together they have more impact than they do as individuals. The protests are a way for people who have never met to tell each other that they share a common sense of injustice and outrage. It is a way to educate people about the issues. It is a way to



begin to build a movement and an opposition.

In that sense, the rallies are the beginning, not the end, of popular protest and participation. The rallies show people how they can fight back and inspire them to take the initiative in creating their own forms of protest and action. Rallies and demonstrations bring people together in a common purpose and there they form new alliances and create new strategies. Undoubtedly one of those strategies will be to begin the work of defeating the Liberals in the next election, just as Operation



Solidarity in 1983 led to the destruction of the Social Credit party and the political careers of three premiers.

What other forms of protest will we see? It is impossible to guess, because people are very creative. Certainly people in unions will think about strikes, picket lines, walk-outs, and similar tactics from their own past. Other people will devise new forms of protest appropriate to their strengths and level of organization. Historically, these have ranged from absenteeism to marches to street theatre and beyond. People will always find ways to “spit in the soup” to make their point.

One complicating factor this time is the government’s decision to impose settlements, rip up contracts, and attack union and non-union workers alike. The collective bargaining process that has evolved in BC over the last 100 years is like a peace treaty. Through negotiation and agreement, both sides have sought to limit their struggle and to limit the tactics they use when solutions are hard to find. The Liberal government, however, has declared that it will no longer fight according to the rules.



It would be naive to think that people will continue to play by the rules if their government won’t. Few people would argue that they have to obey the Marquis of Queensbury rules when their opponent hits below the belt and the referee sticks his thumb in their eye. When the government abandons the process, it forces people to think about civil disobedience and expanding the forms of protest. Again, it would be folly to guess what those forms might be. Historically, it has ranged from secondary pickets to sit-ins, blockades, and the like. In 1938, for example, scores of unemployed people occupied the main post office, now the Sinclair Centre, for six weeks, to make their point. Most British Columbians will recall many more recent actions.

What will the result be? It is too early to tell. It is clear, however, that this is not the end, there will be many more protests over the next few years. ☘

# power grab

*The following is an excerpt from the Sierra Legal Defence Fund report “Power Grab”, which was prepared for the BC Citizens for Public Power, and is reprinted with permission.*

It is difficult indeed to find a compelling rationale for why British Columbia should deregulate its electricity supply. While experience elsewhere has shown that deregulation has failed to deliver on its promises, for BC the promises do not even apply. BC has among the lowest electricity rates on the continent. And more than 90% of BC’s electricity comes from low pollution hydroelectric production. As well, BC Hydro is a revenue-generating asset, one that last year contributed \$790 million in revenue to the province and local governments, and \$904 million the previous year.

The BC government argues that deregulation is necessary to ensure that Independent Power Producers will build “much-needed” new power generation capacity. But, as noted by the Energy Task Force itself, major new generation capacity is not expected to be needed until 2010. As well, when new capacity is built, BC Hydro can provide it at less expense to the consumer than can the private sector. Any investment, private or public will require borrowing funds, and with its top notch credit rating and healthy debt to asset ratio BC Hydro can raise financing at lower interest rates than can the private sector – meaning lower cost production.

Moreover, the most cost-effective way to meet increasing demand is through conservation programs,

which, as discussed, can be best implemented through a regulated system.

British Columbia’s energy policy is at a crossroads. The transition to a sustainable, non-environmentally destructive energy supply will require changes in how electricity is priced to reflect the full environmental and social cost of power production, the development of renewable and sustainable sources of electricity such as tidal and wind power, and a renewed emphasis on efficiency and conservation. BC Hydro is ideally positioned to form the base from which this transformation occurs and to make British Columbia a world leader in sustainable power production. BC Hydro’s reach throughout the province and its existing base of high capacity hydroelectric production means that the transition costs of this progression can be spread across the power system so that no one consumer or sector of consumers faces a rapid hike in power prices.

The alternative outlined by the Energy Policy Task Force interim report would mean increased environmental degradation and incidences of respiratory disease, a significant increase in the province’s contribution to global warming, higher prices and price volatilities, and economic disruption. At its root, it is a shift from a system where the public has influence over how our electricity is generated, delivered and developed to one where such decisions are left solely to the business decisions of multinational corporations. Ensuring a socially and environmentally healthy electricity future begins with the rejection of the Task Force’s vision for British Columbia.

**View the entire report at [http://www.sierralegal.org/reports/Power\\_Grab.pdf](http://www.sierralegal.org/reports/Power_Grab.pdf)**

# CHILD LABOUR

by Kirk Kidd

Child Labour is a worldwide problem that has persisted throughout many centuries. The problem of Child Labour has become more visual to people of first world countries through journalists, photographers and reporters and has become a major concern. "Sweatshops" has become a revered word connected to large companies that provide employees with hideous working conditions and ridiculously low wages. The majority of Child Labour exists in third world countries



such as Africa, Asia and a majority of South America. Yet, first world countries are not completely disassociated with Child Labour because of the vast amounts of products we purchase that are produced by child labour in third world countries.

Child Labour refers to the children under 18 years old who work in both the formal and informal sectors, in conditions that are harmful or

**"The ILO estimates that around the world 250 million children between the ages of five and fourteen work, about 120 million full-time..."**

potentially harmful to the child. Underpayment of the children for their work and other forms of exploitation are also included. One of the major misconceptions about child labour is the age of the child. What age should the child be allowed to work and in what conditions? In International Standard, ILO's (International Labour Organization) 1973 convention on the "minimum age" of work sets the bar at adolescence. In developed countries it declares that children should be allowed to work in most jobs if they are: fifteen and older and fourteen and older in developing countries. In 1999, the ILO adopted a new convention to call for an end to the "Worst" forms of child labour as defined by Convention 182. This convention covers prostitution, forced-labour, bonded labour and

every as well as jobs that are harmful to a child's mental, physical or moral well being. The ILO estimates that around the world 250 million children between the ages of five and fourteen work, about 120 million full-time. Of the 120 million children working, sixty-one percent are in Asia, thirty-two percent in Africa and seven percent in Latin America. This makes sense since a large portion of the world's population is in Asia.

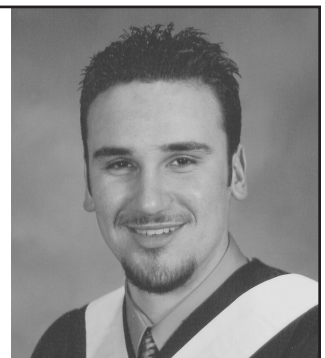
Some of the children work in factories, others in the formal economy, but the vast majority work in informal enterprises, agriculture and in homes. Today, in the United States, every state has child labour laws. In most states employment of minors under 16 in factories and during school hours is prohibited. Other provisions include a 40-hour workweek, prohibition of night work and work permits for minors under 18.

Child labour exists on the basis of supply and demand on three levels. The supply and demand of labour on the nation (and international) level; the supply and demand of labour at the level of the firm or enterprise; the supply and demand for labour (and other functions) in the family.

*(cont'd on next page)*

The 2002 Tom Forkin Scholarship topic was "Child Labour", and twelve essays were submitted by daughters and sons of members. Thanks to all who wrote for your efforts and your heartfelt consideration of this worldwide concern. Scholarships were awarded to Kirk Kidd, Colin Partridge and Sarah Hruschak, and we will be printing their essays over the next three Hotline issues.

Photo of Kirk Kidd



# CHILD LABOUR

*(cont'd from previous page)*

Another major reason for child labour is the economic conditions that the children must live in. For many of them there is no option for schooling, for others the option is there but they must work to help provide for their families. One of the most common reasons for the children in a family to go to work is starvation. Yet starvation persists even when families and the children in it are working. Child Labour exists to make it easier for major firms, companies and enterprises to make larger profits. It is much cheaper for a company to send its' work to a third world country where men, women and children will perform the unskilled labour for wages that are merely a fraction of what it would cost in their home country. This means that the company is making larger profits than it would otherwise. Companies that have been discovered to have inter-firm connections to child labour include Kathy Lee Gifford' s brand of clothing, Ikea, who sells hand-made rugs from India, Pakistan and Nepal. Marketers of soccer balls, such as Nike, Reebok and Adidas also use child labour. Sellers of coffee packaged by children include Peet's and Starbucks; and Brazilian automobile manufacturers such as General Motors, Ford and Mercedes-Benz use steel produced with charcoal made by children and their families. Retailers and brand-name licensors of merchandise made in sweatshops

where children are employed also fit into this category. This kind of child labour even exists in the United States as observed by an investigation by the Associated Press. They found that in 1997 children were helping to produce products in such companies as Campbell Soup Company, Chi-Chi's Mexican restaurants, ConAgra,

**Ikea, Nike, Reebok,  
Adidas, Campbell Soup  
Company, Peet's,  
Starbucks, General  
Motors, Ford, Mercedes-  
Benz, Chi-Chi's Mexican  
Restaurants, ConAgra,  
Costco, H.J. Heinz,  
Newman's Own, J.C.  
Penny, Pillsbury, Sears,  
Mattel and  
Wal-Mart...**

Costco, H.J. Heinz, Newman's Own, J.C. Penny, Pillsbury, Sears, Mattel and Wal-Mart.

There are many contributing factors that lead to child labour, one of the biggest reasons being survival. Many children often work to help support their families as well as relatives. Most children do not choose to work but must work to earn enough money to buy what little food that they can to live on. Children are more likely to work if they are from poor families, a minority, or a culturally marginalized population. Another reason that there is child labour is a lack of food supply combined with an enormous demand for produce. The amount of food that is needed to supply to the public is approximately half the amount that is needed. This is

another side affect of big companies and firms building factories in third world countries. All the local population is working in the factories and as a result there is no one, or very few people left to work the land for agriculture purposes. This means that there is no way that the demand for produce can be met. Other children are forced to work in a form of slavery known as "bonded labour", which is simply a polite way of saying slavery without anyone being offended. In this form of bonded labour children and women are forced to work 10-15 hours a day. The women and children usually have malnutrition and are often abused by the people that they work for. Although slavery was abolished in 1925 in Nepal, "Kanaiya," which is a form of slavery, still exists in the western district involving some 100,000 individuals who are working under "Bonded Labour".

The gender of the children does not often cross the mind of a person when you say "child labor" and yet it makes a great difference. Since cultural traditions in many parts of the world favors the education of boys over girls, this results in lower school enrolments and higher dropout rates for girls. The distance from the child's home to the nearest school is also another factor as it may be tens of miles thus making it impossible for the child to make it to and from school everyday, making it easier to work in a factory down the road or at a local market. School fees and books are another factor, if the child can't afford to buy food to survive on then it is very unlikely that the child or family will have the money to spend on such things as books or school fees.

In my opinion, child labour on a worldwide scale affects Canadians every day. It affects us every time we go out and buy a product that could be made by a child in another country. Every time you go out and buy your child a toy, it could be made by a child about the same age as yours, only in a third world country, who has malnutrition and works 10-15

*(cont'd on next page)*



# CHILD LABOUR

*(cont'd from previous page)*


hours a day in a factory. If you go out and buy some clothes, the chances are that women and children, in a factory, in a third world country, made them. Every time you go to the store to get something that you need, there is a great chance that somewhere along the line of production a child was involved in making that item.

Unions are one way of dealing with child labour by providing a healthy, safe working environment along with fair wages to all employees. Unions set standards as well as enhance working conditions for all forms of labour by monitoring such things as hours of work, days of work, rate of pay and safety conditions. Our economy is a major effect on child labour; if we did not buy any of the items made by these children then there would be no need for child labour in the first place. We as Canadians, affect child labour because we look to buy items for a cheaper price, and in order for that to happen labour costs must be slashed because there is no way to drop the price of the materials. Yet, if we do not buy the products we are contributing to the starvation of children in third world countries because without the demand for the products there would be no jobs for them. The children depend on

what little wages they receive to survive on. If you took all of the products that are involved with child labour off of the market, by banning or outlawing them, we would then be left with very little choice of what to buy and much higher prices. Yet, there is a very interesting argument on how to end child labour by Stephen Chapman of the Libertarian Newspaper. He states that, "The way to end child labour is not for people around the world to stop buying goods that are made by child labour but to buy more products of child labour. With the increase in demand for the products there will be an increase in production. This means that the children would be working more and earning more wages giving them a chance to

rise above the poverty level." Mr. Chapman believes that this would help benefit the families of the children, as well as the nation. Canadians are just another part of the cycle of the economy that helps keep the world revolving. There are many different views on child labour throughout the world. You can see that there is a two-sided coin to child labour with the children losing anyway that you flip the coin.

I personally can only do so much to help out the children that have to live in such conditions. There is very little that one person can do but if many people help out just a little then there is hope for all the children. I would monitor my personal purchases to try to regulate items that could be

involved with child labour. I would also look for items that are made by unions or have "Made in Canada" or North American labels. I would also contribute yearly to charities that do their best to help the children such as UNICEF and IPEC. Hopefully, one day there can be a total eradication of child labour throughout the world. Individually we can only do what little we can to help out, yet collectively we can place pressure on the large companies and firms that are known to have ties with child labour within their corporate structure forcing them to value their employees at a higher level by improving their working conditions. 



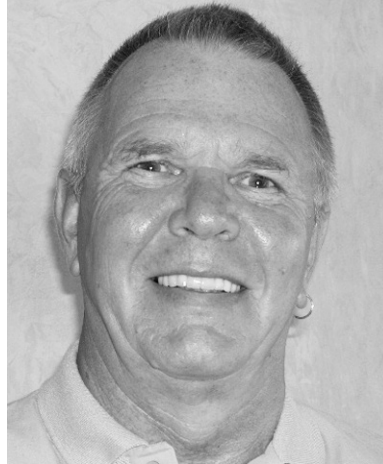
# Ruminations of a Retiree

by Ken McEwen

Live and learn they say. At my age I've had lots of experience at the living part. It seems the learning part needs some work. I should have learned that if you whine a lot somebody will do something. I whined about deadlines for this column in the Hotline. Oh, I nattered about being a retiree and how retirees don't do deadlines and all that stuff. Well, somebody did something. I am now an editor, sort of, for the Hotline. I think that full editorship resides in the president's office. Presidents, being the kind of people they are, tend to delegate. I have been delegated. Another thing I maybe should have learned is how to avoid delegation. Anyway, I'm now the guy that imposes deadlines on others to get their columns, articles and pictures in.

Speaking of presidents, I'd like to applaud all the candidates who ran in the recent Local 258 election. It's easy to sit back and pass judgement on those in elected office. It's quite another thing to put yourself on the line and volunteer for all the work and responsibilities of the elected offices. So, to all the candidates for all the positions, congratulations and thank you for caring about our Local Union.

Retirement continues to be the best job that I've ever had. Now that we've been downsized and condominiumized there is more time for time-honoured retirement pursuits. See, condominiums don't have lawns to mow or hedges to trim or porches to paint like houses do. Mind you, our condo overlooks a good chunk of the Fraser River in New Westminster. There's a lot of traffic on that river that needs monitoring. Keeping track of the ships, tow boats, scows, log booms and even the odd fishing boat is just as time consuming as lawns and

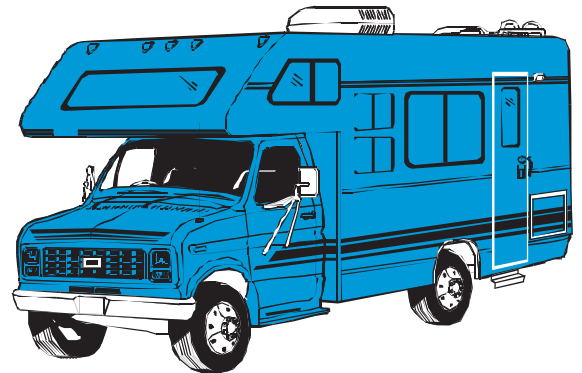


hedges and porches. However, Catherine Dear views river monitoring as sort of non-productive work. Catherine Dear prefers travel. Not only is travel viewed as a productive enterprise but it also a designated time-honoured retirement pursuit.

Now, the travel I'm talking about is not like flying off to darkest Africa or the Far East but just sort of trucking around BC in the summer and southern California in the winter. You see, Sesame, the dog, can't just climb on an aeroplane with us and fly off to darkest Africa or the Far East. Nor can Sesame just be chucked into a kennel for 5 or 6 weeks. Because Sesame lives with two retired people who treat her like family she needs to be looked after by someone who will provide the same loving care. That's what happens when older retired folk have a dog. So, to facilitate the kind of travel we need to do we bought a camper

van. I can't lay the need for the camper all on Sesame. Catherine Dear doesn't like motels. Well, it's not really the motels Catherine Dear doesn't like; it's the sheets on the motel beds. Motel laundries are always suspect. Sometimes, whether or not the sheets even make it to the motel laundry is suspect. And then I kind of like RVing too. So, we have a camper and all three of us can truck around BC in the summer and southern California in the winter.

Well, if this column is going to make it in before the deadline I'll have to stop writing now. I was going to mention something I learned about downsizing and moving. Like, in preparation for moving, downsizing consists of selling stuff, giving stuff away and just plain throwing stuff out. Then after moving, it seems downsizing consists of purchasing a bunch of stuff to replace stuff that you don't have any more because you downsized. However, I'll leave that for another time. That's it for now. Please plan for retirement by working and playing safely. ☘



# Isn't Retirement Great ? !



On February 21, 2002, some of our Retired Members got together in Yuma, Arizona in the park beside the Convention Centre. This is a picture of those attending including Robert McWillie, Retired I.O. Rep from Saskatchewan. The 2003 "Get Together" is already booked at the same place for February 20th.  
Front Row: Paul Sheepwash, Tom Makepeace, Ed Meyer,

Ed Wilschek, Dave Gallie, Jerry Goetz, Warren Byrnell, Grant Workman, Vic Scott; Middle Row: Vic Gleason, Don Sims, Maggie Sproat, Jim Sproat, Carole Woodcock, Ken Woodcock, John Hopkins, Joe Monahan, Don Krebs, Dave King; Back Row: Bruce McKinnon, Ed Meyer, Bob Swanson, Bill Brookes, Earle Thompson, Dan Houston, Robert McWillie, IBEW Rep. Retired. 📧

## BC Hydro donates Childrens Centre to City of Burnaby

In response to an anticipated high demand for child care facilities close the Edmonds campus, BC Hydro built the BC Hydro Children Centre in 1994. A survey had shown that Hydro employees' children would occupy 100% of spaces at the Centre.

This expected demand for child care has failed to materialize and only 10% - 20% of the Centre's clients are employees of BC Hydro.

The Burnaby Childrens Centre Society, a non-profit society, runs the Centre along with the City of

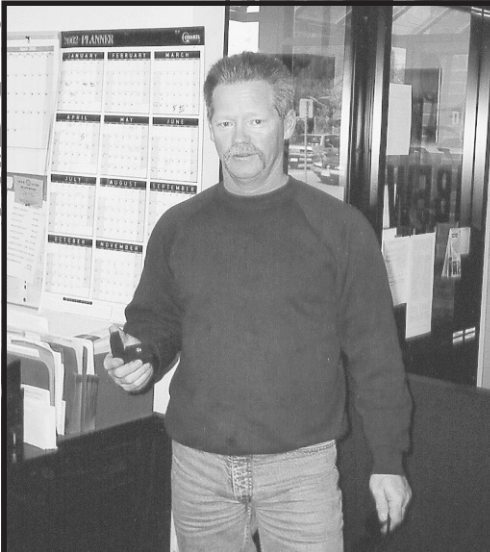
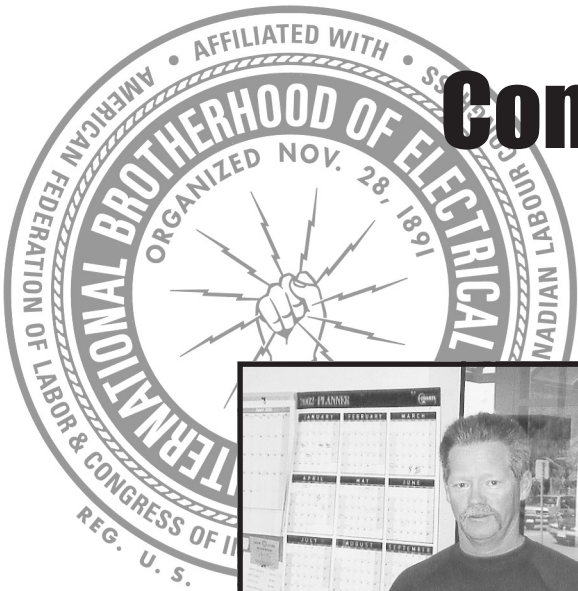
Burnaby's child care facility co-located with the Hydro Centre. Hydro's ownership and maintenance of the building, and the fact that Hydro employees have priority on the wait list, has prevented the Society from obtaining a charitable tax status number from Revenue Canada. This number would allow them to do fundraising which would bolster their ability to continue to operate effectively.

For the above reasons BC Hydro has donated the Childrens Centre to the City of Burnaby. 📧

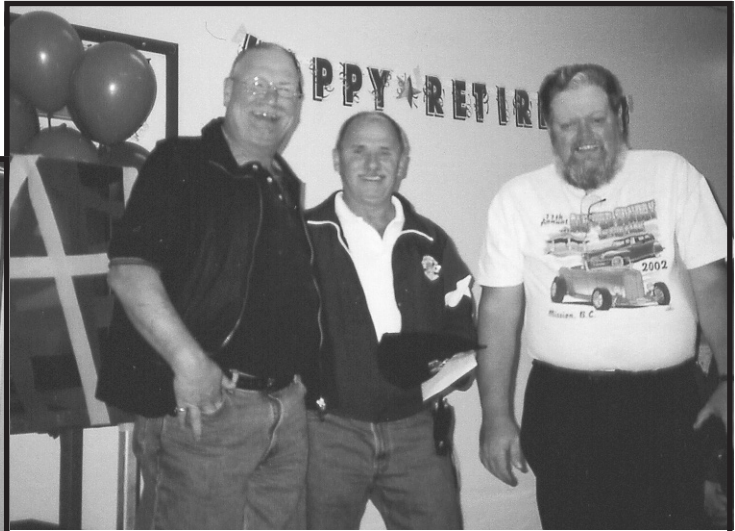


*Ken McEwen, now retired IBEW 258 member, is shown assembling a chair at the BCH Day Care Centre prior to opening day in 1994.*

# Congratulations IBEW members



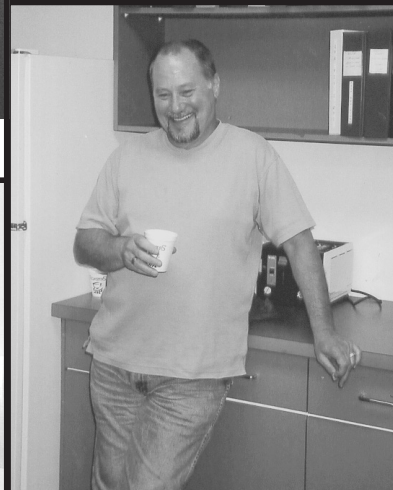
*Harold Wooter, 25 year service pin*



*Doug McKay, "Frenchy" and Bill Cummings*



*Bob Mugford, left, receiving presentation from Jim Greenwell at the Burrard Thermal Retirement dinner.*



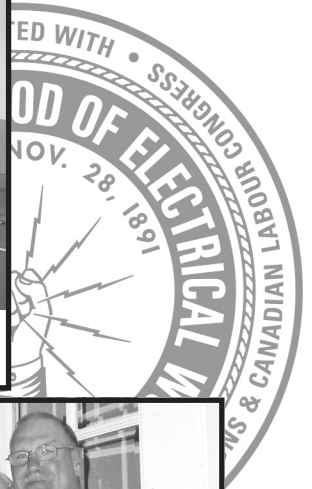
*Howard McIlwain, retirement from Unit 5.*



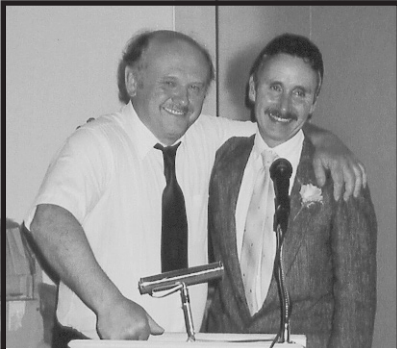
*Jim Hinds with Dale Haines*



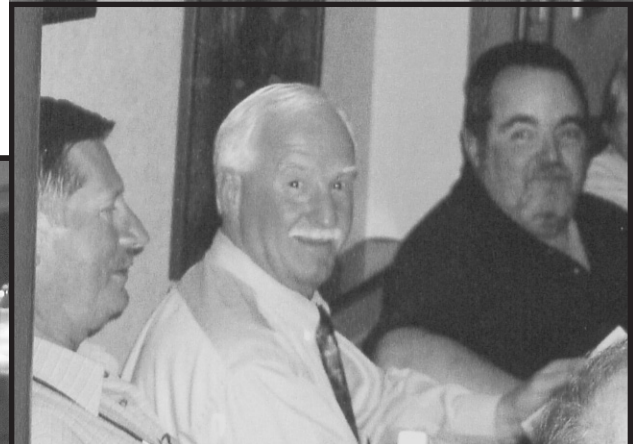
*Terry Buckoll retires from Burrard Thermal, shown here with Business Manager Doug McKay.*



# Members – on your retirement!



*Frank Hauzer, Lloyd Simpson,  
Burrard Thermal retirement.*



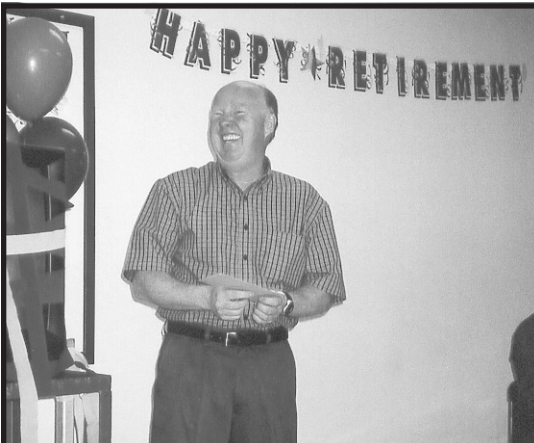
*Al Beeson*



*Bob Hinkle on retirement from  
Burrard Thermal*



*Jim Orser, left, with Ed Johnson on Ed's retirement*



*Len Chamberlain retirement dinner,  
June 2002*



*Merfyn Jones, left, being congratulated by Jim Orser.*





## Viewpoint from the Fed

# BC Hydro breakup would be a mistake

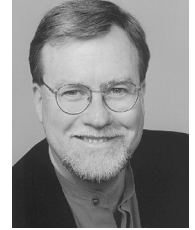
by Jim Sinclair

The growing charge by the BC Chamber of Commerce to get on board with the Liberal government's plan to break-up, deregulate and privatize parts of BC Hydro should be sounding a warning bell in every small business in British Columbia. The decision to destroy one of BC's best economic advantages, now advocated by the chamber, is not only a deep betrayal of Liberal election promises, it will add instability to our electricity system and result in higher rates. Small businesses, as the chamber often points out, are critical job providers and economic contributors to our provincial economy. They purchased more than \$800 million in electricity from BC Hydro in 2001. For the chamber to support the breakup of the company, the selling of the transmission lines and the introduction of more private energy will create real economic hardship for all British Columbians.

Fortunately, small business people have found new allies in city councils, large industrial users, seniors and the labour movement. All are united in rejecting the government's interim task force report on energy policy, which calls for the breakup of BC Hydro. Energy minister Richard Neufeld's predictions, would see small businesses pay an average annual increase of \$2,000 or \$344 million across the province.

BC Hydro is not broken. If anything, it is the model of excellence that most electrical users in North America would die for. Power prices in British Columbia are the third cheapest in North America, behind Manitoba and Quebec where they also have public power.

But price is only half the story, BC also enjoys secure power, unlike deregulated and privatized places like California and Alberta, where brownouts and blackouts have become all too frequent. Chamber president John Winters points to Alberta as a success story. Perhaps for the four large energy corporations



that now control the market, but for thousands of small businesses, the experiment has been a disaster. Prices have climbed dramatically and are now 300 per cent higher than BC. Following a survey of its Alberta membership, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business concluded that a competitive market had failed to produce the desired results of cheaper power.

The chamber claims BC Hydro can't afford to continue to build power facilities to meet our needs. Instead, if we allow the private sector to make lots of money they will come to our rescue. Nothing could be further from the truth. Any new investment – private or public — will be supported by debt and this is most cheaply done by BC Hydro, which boasts a topnotch credit rating of AA-.

The same cannot be said for many of the private sector companies that are experiencing, despite major increases in rates, credit and financial difficulties.

Calpine, which until recently was involved in the Duke Point Plant project, saw Moody's downgrade the investment grade of its debt to junk bond status. Aquila, formerly known as Utilicorp United Inc, an affiliate company of Utilicorp Networks Canada (formerly West Kootenay Power and Light) is rated by Moody's as one step above junk status.

Gordon Campbell promised to lower energy costs for British Columbia and protect BC Hydro from privatization and deregulation. I would encourage the chamber of commerce to join with the 76 per cent of British Columbians who are demanding the provincial government stop wasting time destroying a great economic advantage and get on with the real work of building a province where prosperity is possible for all British Columbians, not just a handful of private energy companies.

*Jim Sinclair is a director of the BC Citizens for Public Power and is also president of the BC Federation of Labour and former BC Hydro board member.*

# IBEW LOCAL 258 – UNIT MEETINGS, FALL, 2002

## Unit 1

Smithers.....October 7 & December 10 – Hilltop Hotel @ 5:30 pm  
Terrace.....October 8 & December 11 – Terrace Legion @ 4:30 pm  
Prince Rupert .....October 9 & December 12 – BCH Lineroom @ 4:30 pm  
Masset.....October 10 – Community Hall @ 7:00 pm

## Unit 2

Prince George.....September 10 & November 12 – Legion @ 7:00 pm  
Dawson Creek.....September 11 and November 13 – Labour Temple @ 7:00 pm  
Hudson Hope.....September 12 & November 14 – Peace Glen Hotel @ 4:30 pm  
Williams Lake.....September 18 & November 20 – Elks Hall @ 7:00 pm  
Quesnel.....September 19 & November 21 – BCH Lineroom @ 4:30 pm  
Bella Coola.....October 17  
Fort Nelson.....September 26  
Fraser Lake.....September 17

## Unit 3

Bridge River.....September 10 & November 12 – Lunchroom B2 @ 4:10 pm  
Kamloops.....September 11 and November 13 – IBEW 993 Hall @ 7:00 pm  
Revelstoke.....September 16 & November 18 – Regent Hotel @ 7:00 pm  
Mica.....September 17 & November 19 – Curling Rink @ 6:00 pm  
Vernon.....September 18 & November 20 – Army & Navy Club @ 7:00 pm  
Castlegar.....October 8 – Fireside Inn @ 7:00 pm  
Cranbrook.....October 9 – Labour Temple @ 4:30 pm  
Invermere.....October 10 – Legion Hall @ 4:30 pm

## Unit 4

Victoria.....October 9 – BCH Lineroom @ 4:10 pm  
Ganges.....October 8 – BCH Lineroom @ 4:10 pm  
Duncan.....October 9 – Cowichan Valley Inn @ 7:30 pm  
Qualicum Beach.....October 10 – BCH Lineroom @ 4:10 pm  
Port Alberni.....October 10 – Clutesi Haven Marina @ 7:00  
Nanaimo.....September 12 & November 21 – Tally Ho Hotel @ 7:00 pm  
Port Hardy.....September 10 & November 19 – BCH Lineroom @ 4:10 pm  
Courtenay.....September 11 & November 20 – BCH Lineroom @ 4:10 pm  
Campbell River.....September 11 & November 20 – Haida Inn @ 7:00 pm

## Unit 5

Burnaby.....September 12 & November 14 – Local 258 Office @ 5:00 pm  
Burnaby.....October 10 & December 12 – Local 258 Office @ 7:00 pm  
Powell River.....September 19 – Coast Centre Hotel @ 7:00 pm  
Sechelt.....September 18 – Bella Beach Hotel @ 7:00 pm  
Squamish.....October 15 – Sea to Sky Hotel @ 7:00 pm

## Unit 6

Surrey.....Sept. 10, Oct. 8, Nov. 12 & Dec. 10 – Days Inn @ 7:00 pm  
Abbotsford.....September 11 & November 13 – O.A.P. Hall @ 7:00 pm  
Chilliwack.....October 9 – Rainbow Country Inn @ 7:00 pm

# From the Back Corner

Summer is winding down, and our local elections are becoming a fading memory. As much as I believe we must always look forward, there are times when it is critical to reflect on our past. Brother Art O’Keeffe and Brother Jock Davies, two strong leaders that were part of Local 258’s evolution, passed away in recent months. While we offered condolences to their families for the losses they must now face, we also were given the opportunity to reflect on their contributions to our development as a local union; we are stronger because of their hard work to achieve what they believed in.

Local 258 is a vital union today, largely because we have had a string of leaders who envisioned a strong labour body; that vision guided them in their decision making. Over the years, our Local has grown in scope, and the membership has remained solid; we owe all of our past leadership great respect and thanks for those achievements. The last election brought about a significant change in the make-up of Local Officers, and I want to thank


each of those officers we are following – you stepped up to serve the membership, and gave immensely of yourselves over the years to protect and enhance the conditions we continue to enjoy.

To each of the members that participated in the last election, you also are deserving of our respect and thanks; your example of active commitment to your fellow members is the essence of brotherhood. Those of you who had to endure one of my rants on the campaign trail know that it is that sense of

community, that commitment to each other, that is most important to me as an officer of your union. There are adjustments that we all want to see in our various headquarters, in our bargaining units, and in our local union, and the only way we will achieve positive changes is by building on our strength as a whole; I believe we can only accomplish that by valuing the needs of our fellow members as much as we value our own needs.

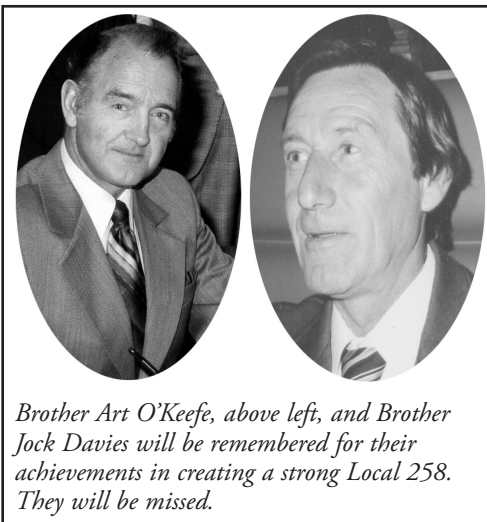
Well, now that I am up on the political soapbox, let me finish with a reminder of some upcoming critical

decisions each of us will be faced with – our municipal elections. Many of our geographic communities have had to endure devastating cuts to services in health care, education and social programs, and much of the funding responsibility is being downloaded from the provincial to the local levels. The provincial government introduced a proposed “Community Charter” in May of this year that laid out significant changes to the powers and responsibilities of our municipal governments. With this impending change in legislation, it more critical now than ever that we become active in municipal governments and elections, if we are to have a say in how our communities respond to the needs of our families. I urge you to consider your own options for participation – whether that be attending all-candidate meetings, working on a candidate’s campaign, or running for office yourself – if we are active in the process, we can protect the ideals that we value.

Finally, to those of you whose support has put me in this office, my heartfelt thanks for your belief in my abilities. Over the next four years I will work hard to make some changes that I hope all will view as positive, while protecting the “hearts and minds” concept that makes the IBEW strong. 



**IBEW 258 President  
Michelle Laurie**



*Brother Art O’Keeffe, above left, and Brother Jock Davies will be remembered for their achievements in creating a strong Local 258. They will be missed.*

Return to:  
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