

THE UNION OF HEARTS AND MINDS

HOTLINE



Local 258 I.B.E.W.
March 2006



Inside this issue:

- **Shop Stewards hold successful seminar**
- **Partnerships BC: more is less by Murray Dobbin**
- **Call for delegates to International Convention**
- **Traffic control safety issues under review**

Business Manager Doug McKay

Let me begin by wishing you all a happy, healthy, prosperous and safe 2006.

In reflecting on the past year, it has been one of many successes and, unfortunately, horrible tragedies. We have lost two brothers in our Local union since last spring due to serious workplace accidents. Safety is of paramount importance in our trade and we are fortunate to have a low rate of workplace injury, but I am concerned about factors such as government-directed deregulation and contracting out that appears to parallel a rise in workplace injury and death rates. In the last year in the forest industry in British Columbia we have seen a dramatic rise in workers killed on the job, and many are focusing on the role that changes in the WCB regulation, changes that have been brought in since the provincial Liberal government was elected in 2001, as one of the causative factors. And now we have the review of the safety regulation in the traffic control industry (see



Members of IBEW 258 helped British Columbia double the number of NDP Members of Parliament in the recent federal election campaign. From left, newly elected MP Dawn Black for New Westminster-Coquitlam; Dan Klassen, IBEW 258 Assistant Business Manager; Doug McKay, IBEW 258 Business Manager; Jack Layton, federal NDP leader; Jim Greenwell, IBEW 258 Senior Assistant Business Manager; Susan Longva, IBEW 258 Assistant Business Manager and MP Peter Julian, re-elected in Burnaby-New Westminster.


story page 11) that causes

me great concern as it may have many negative consequences for our members who work in traffic control. We are following this situation very closely.

Since the last issue of The Hotline we have gone through two elections, one for municipal governments and one for our federal government. I hope you all had a chance to get involved in a local election campaign as this is your opportunity to make a difference. We

now have a Conservative minority government and we will have to wait and see how long it lasts. The first impressions are not good with the Emerson appointment as well as Stephen Harper placing an unelected party supporter in the position of Minister of Public Works. Just when you thought it couldn't get any crazier...

As a union, our commitment is to our members and to work as hard as we can in your best interests. As many of our members are employed by Crown corporations, it is our duty to follow the political scene very closely, and it is important they hear our strong and united voice. One of our biggest challenges in bargaining has been the restrictive atmosphere that has been placed on us by our elected political officials, including the most recent negotiating framework mandated by the provincial Liberal government that does not include a worker friendly environment. This makes our job in getting the best deal possible for our members a bit tougher, but I can honestly tell you I have never seen a more committed and dedicated group of men and women work so hard to negotiate the best deal we can under the circumstances and hope that we have met with approval from you, in doing so.

I look forward to the challenges the next year will bring, and above all, remember to work safe. 

HOTLINE

Published by Local 258 IBEW

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

TABLE OFFICERS:

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

EXECUTIVE BOARD:

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

Ken McEwen - Editor

Change of address notices should be sent to: 7535 - 6th Street, Burnaby, BC V3N 3M2
Our telephone numbers are:
Administration Office: 604-520-3305
Dispatch Office: 604-524-3547
Fax: 604-522-3371

e-mail: ibew258@telus.net

Printed at Broadway Printers, Vancouver, BC
Design & Layout by Michelle Boudreau



Together we really do make a difference

IBEW members awarded

“Tooq-Beek” by the late artist Art Thompson



The inspiration for Tooq-Beek comes from Art Thompson's great-grandfather, Tooq-Beek, who told the story of seeing a wolf go into the ocean and transform itself into a killer whale. As he witnessed this transformation, Tooq-Beek noticed that the fur from the wolf was left at the water's edge. Immediately, he gathered it up and said a prayer. During prayer, Tooq-Beek was instructed by his higher power to use the fur as medicine to benefit others. Tooq-Beek used the fur in this way until his death in 1954, when the remainder of the fur was buried with him.

As a young boy, Art Thompson recalls his grandmother telling him many such stories about Tooq-Beek, her father. The stories were meant to empower him as a young man, to teach him his own self-worth, and to show him that there is a reason for his existence. The colours of the rainbow in the print reflect the artist's memories of the time spent with his grandmother sharing stories about her father.

Art Thompson (1945 – 1999) was born in the village of Whyac, located at the western end of Nitnaht Lake on Vancouver Island. His ancestral roots are in both Coast Salish (Cowichan) and Nuu-chah-nulth (Ditidaht) Nations. A graduate of the Commercial Art Program at Camosun College in Victoria, Thompson's personal contribution

The HYDRECS Committee recently presented the IBEW with a Tooq Beek print in recognition of the years of support that the members of the IBEW have shown to the HYDRECS Fund. This print is given to charitable organizations with which HYDRECS has a long standing relationships or to which we have given significant financial support. When you see a Tooq Beek in the community, you know that Hydrecs has been involved. It is only fitting that there be a Tooq Beek hanging in our union office, so that the all the brotherhood and visitors have the opportunity to enjoy this beautiful artwork.

The Hydrecs Committee consists of IBEW, COPE, M+P, Power Pioneer and retiree representatives from across BC Hydro. They are involved in ongoing community support initiatives and encourage employee, retiree and corporate involvement in the communities through an annual campaign.

The 2006 Campaign was a huge success with the following stats:

total employee & retiree donations.....	\$661,619.98
corporate donation.....	\$100,000.00
50/50 proceeds	\$39,691.00
2005 fundraisers.....	\$49,746.00
total	\$851,056.98

The 2006 campaign has raised \$122,000 more than in 2005 with participation at thirty-eight per cent.

includes using strong contemporary and traditional Nuu-chah-nulth design shapes with a narrative approach to myth and legend. Beyond his reputation as an artist, Art was also an important educator, lecturer, and international ambassador for Northwest Coast art and culture. ☐

What's inside this issue...

United Way awards Local 258	p. 3
Delegate selection for 2006 International Convention	p. 4
IBEW 258 welcomes new ABM	p. 4
IBEW 258 holds successful Shop Steward Seminar	p. 5
We Got Mail!	p. 6-7
Partnerships BC: more is less by Murray Dobbin	p. 8
Traffic control safety issues at stake.....	p. 11
Know your hard hat.....	p. 12
EITI Expo announcement.....	p. 12
Unit 3 photo Opportunity.....	p. 14
Tax preparation & tax planning by Steve Watson	p. 16
IBEW Photo Opportunity.....	p. 18-19
“Mouseland” as told by Tommy Douglas	p. 20
Ruminations of a Retiree.....	p. 21
2006 Unit Meetings Schedule	p. 22
From the Back Corner	p. 24

Delegate selection for the 2006 IBEW International Convention

Nominations for delegates to the 2006 IBEW International Convention will be accepted at all regular Union Meetings during the month of May of 2006.

Following the nominations, ballots will be sent out by May 31, 2006, and will be counted on June 30, 2006. Depending on our exact membership at the end of May 2006, Local Union 258 will be entitled to either nine or ten delegates, as per Article 2, Section 8 of the IBEW Constitution. As per Article VII, Section 3 of Local Union 258's Bylaws, the Business Manager and President are automatic delegates. In accordance with the Bylaws, there will be one delegate and one alternate elected from each of our six Local Union Units, and the remaining delegates (either one or two) will be elected at large based on the candidate(s) with the most votes running "At Large".

No member shall be nominated as a delegate or alternate unless s/he is present or signifies his/her willingness in writing, nor shall s/he be eligible to be a delegate or an alternate unless in continuous good standing in Local 258 IBEW for at least twenty-four months immediately prior to nomination. Members may only run for one position – either a Delegate from their Unit, or a Delegate at Large.

- The regular May, 2006 Unit Meetings are as follows:
- Unit 1: May 9, 2006 in the Smithers Line Room, meeting starts at 5:30 pm.
 - Unit 2: May 16, 2006 in the Prince George Legion, meeting starts at 7:00 pm.
 - Unit 3: May 10, 2006 in the Kamloops IBEW #993 Hall, meeting starts at 7:00 pm.
 - Unit 4: May 10, 2006 in the Duncan BC Hydro Line Room, meeting starts at 4:00 pm.
 - Unit 5: May 17, 2006 in the Sechelt Seaside Center, meeting starts at 5:00 pm.
 - Unit 6: May 9, 2006 in the Surrey Mill-Pile Hall, meeting starts at 7:00 pm.



Dan Giesbrecht returns to British Columbia to serve Local 258 membership



Dan Giesbrecht
Assistant Business
Manager

Long time IBEW member Dan Giesbrecht has recently been hired at the Burnaby office to serve the membership of Units 5 & 6 of IBEW Local 258. He has been assigned as Assistant Business Manager responsible to the union membership at a number of certifications throughout Greater Vancouver and the Fraser Valley.

Brother Giesbrecht has been an IBEW member for 26 years and reports he is

happy to be back home in British Columbia. A native of Abbotsford, Dan completed his apprenticeship with BC Hydro in the early 80s and became a journeyman lineman

in 1986 after having worked in the Northwest Territories for the Northern Canada Power Commission.

During his 13 years working as a lineman in Windsor, Ontario, Brother Giesbrecht became more involved with his union, beginning as a Steward, then an E-board member and was elected to office as Vice-President of IBEW, Local 636.

In 2000 he was hired as an Assistant Business Manager for that Local and for the next five years was responsible for negotiating and administering 12 different Collective Agreements in the Windsor and surrounding area.

Local 258 welcomes Brother Giesbrecht back to British Columbia where he will continue to serve his union brothers and sisters. Dan can be contacted directly at 604-520-3305. ☎



Successful seminar benefits Shop Stewards

The last weekend of October found dozens of IBEW 258 Shop Stewards travelling to Surrey to attend the first IBEW 258 Shop Stewards Seminar, organized by Business Manager Doug McKay as a training initiative and opportunity for union activists to enhance their skills and qualifications in helping their union brothers and sisters with issues in the workplace.

Business Manager McKay identified ongoing training and education is a necessary component of a successful union, and results in benefits that reach far beyond the workplace. With the assistance of IBEW 258 legal counsel Rebecca Murdock, McKay put together a weekend program that featured guest speakers from across Canada and Australia and included a series of training workshops that saw enthusiastic participation from those in attendance.

"We opened this up to all of our Shop Stewards from across the province in an effort to address some of the frequent situations they come up against in the workplace. This program was designed to enhance the on-site training and direction our Shop Stewards already receive from our Assistant Business Managers and was also an opportunity to share experiences," said McKay. "We hope to make this an annual or bi-annual event and judging from the post-seminar evaluations, this educational event was an overwhelming success."



Local 258 president Michelle Laurie, at podium, along with Business Manager Doug McKay address attendees at the Shop Stewards Seminar in October, 2005.

Guest speakers included **John Weir**, Director of Organizing at the BC Federation of Labour and **Professor John Calvert** of Simon Fraser University in Burnaby. Professor Calvert, who teaches political science and is also a board member of the Citizens for Public Power, spoke on the topic of independent power privatization.

Professor Harry Glasbeek, an academic, accomplished labour lawyer and author from Australia presented a very informative session titled "Corporations Now Criminally Liable" that focused on occupational health and safety and discussed the 1992 Westray, Nova Scotia mine



IBEW members attending the Private Sector Bargaining workshop presented by 258 Business Manager McKay and Dr. Tom Knight were, back row from left, Kaol Sigurdson; Walt Hockey; Klaus Kraft; Dr. Tom Knight; Rob Abernethy; Dan Klassen; Josip Radosovic; Bobby Sami; Jim Greenwell. Front row from left, Doug McKay; Leon Arishenkoff and Mark Davison.

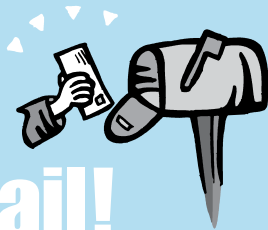
disaster and resulting legislation of Bill C-45.

A series of interactive workshops were held throughout the weekend with Shop Stewards having the opportunity to attend three of the following seven sessions: "Union Counselling" with **Merv Van Steinberg**, a Director with the Canadian Labour Congress Labour Participation Dept. of the United Way of the Lower Mainland; "The Union's Duty to Accommodate" with **Gina Fiorillo**, a labour lawyer from Vancouver; "Workplace Harassment & Violence" with **Dr. Perry Sirota**, a Clinical and Forensic Psychologist and the Founder and Director of Serenity House Drug and Alcohol Treatment Centre in Alberta; "Traffic Control Recertification" with **Nicole Biernaczyk**; "Getting the Most out of Public Sector Bargaining" and "Getting the Most out of Private Sector Bargaining" with Local 258 Business Manager **Doug McKay** and **Dr. Tom Knight**, founding Director of UBC's Centre for Labour & Management Studies and an Associate Professor in the Organizational Behaviour & Human Resources Division at the Sauder School of Business (formerly the Faculty of Commerce & Business Administration) at UBC, and; "Financing with RSP's" with **David Ayriss** and **Michael Kirwan**, both with Leith Wheeler, an investment firm in Vancouver

International Union Representative Brother **Laird Cronk** and BC NDP MLA **Chuck Puchmayr** were also featured speakers at the Seminar.

Your union officers, Doug McKay and Michelle Laurie would like to thank all the Stewards who attended as well as union office and support staff who contributed to make this a very successful seminar. ☐

We Got Mail!



Dear Local 258,
I would like to thank Local 258 and especially Ray LaPointe for the fruit basket he delivered after my surgery.
Sincerely
Ernie Lawton, Vernon



Dear Officers, Members & Staff of IBEW Local 258;
On behalf of our community and the thousands of people who will benefit from the donation from your union, thank you.

Your gift is working to strengthen our community. You are helping to provide critical resources for those among us who are facing life's challenges.

United Way is committed to making a difference in the issues that matter most by focusing on long-term solutions and investing in prevention-based programs.

Your gift to united Way will be carefully distributed where it will have the greatest impact in our community, for example assisting individuals and families living in poverty, providing support to seniors and helping newcomers and immigrants to engage successfully in a new country and society.

Together we're changing people's lives, helping individuals and families to be their best. Thanks to your gift, we are making progress in building the kind of world we would all like to live in, one community at a time.

Sincerely
Mervyn Van Steinburg
Director, CLC Labour Participation Department



Dear Local 258;
On behalf of the Surrey Civic Coalition (SCC), I'd like to thank you and your organization for your generous support during our municipal election campaign. The SCC has a special relationship with the labour movement, and your contribution is an important symbol of the confidence you have placed in our party and our candidates.

This has been both an interesting and challenging inaugural campaign for the SCC. Building on a sustained effort over the last three years, the Coalition fielded an excellent slate of candidates for City Council and School Board and we're confident we will deliver on our promises and return balance to Surrey politics.

The City of Surrey is nearly the size of Vancouver, and the school district is the largest in the province. A campaign involving over 250,000 voters is a difficult one logistically, and a very expensive one financially. Without the support of donors like you, a difficult job would be impossible.

Again, our sincere thanks for your help.
Yours truly,
Bill Piket, President, SCC
Brenda Makeechak, Election Planning Committee, SCC



Dear Jim Greenwell,
I would like to thank you and Michelle for attending my last day of work at the Edmonds Line Room. It is hard to believe 32 years have gone by.

Now that I have been away for several months it really does feel like retirement. We are enjoying the travel immensely.

Thank you for the parting gifts. It has been a pleasure to work with the local union and that great bunch of guys at Edmonds Line.

I am looking forward to the new opportunities ahead.
Yours truly,
Jim Orser



Dear Bob Abernethy, Unit 6 Chair,
Thank you so much for the terrific "plus" fruit basket enjoyed by all three generations of my family.

To the officers and members of IBEW 258 who phoned, sent cards and visited me to show concern for my health, it was much appreciated and no doubt it will have as much to do with my return to health as all the medicines I have taken.

The advice of those that have been in similar circumstances was particularly helpful in advising me how to cope with the problems of a heart attack and how to recover.

Bob, I accept your invitation to attend our annual Christmas meeting, where I can once again share

“Seasons Greetings” with my sisters and brothers of IBEW 258.

Yours fraternally and sincerely,
Murray MacDonald and family



Greetings Sisters and Brothers;
On behalf of our membership of Local 333, Cam Tran Co. Ltd., I thank you for your generous donation to our strike fund. It is pleasing to know that we in the labour movement continue to pool our support during these difficult times.

The concessionary demands of this greedy anti-union employer were far from being reasonable. On top of this scabs are being utilized.

The strike commenced March 16, 2005 and our struggle continues.

Once again, thank you for your kind support which is always greatly appreciated.

In Solidarity

Ken Cole, Business Agent

President, Communication, Energy & Paperworkers,

Local 333, Rexdale, Ontario



Dear President Laurie,

Just a short note to thank you for the time and effort that you put in while I was having my problems with WCB.

I am sure that without your effort and IBEW I would not have received the settlement that I received.

Thank you,
Pete Szumik



Dear IBEW 258;

On behalf of the Board and Staff of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' BC Office, I am writing to thank you and IBEW Local 258 for your recent contribution of \$1,500.00 to the CCPA-BC's Public Interest Research Desk.

Please extend to your executive our most sincere appreciation for stepping up to the plate on behalf of the Provincial Council. IBEW's support for this important project is much appreciated.

As discussed, we will get in touch with Wayne regarding future years' funding.

Once again, our very sincere thanks for your support.

Sincerely,
Seth Klein,
Director CCPA BC



Dear Michelle Laurie,

It is with great appreciation that I am writing to thank you for your valuable support of the IBEW Golf Tournament held at the Golden Eagle Golf Course on September 19, 2005. The day's event was a resounding success. The popularity of the event resulted in many people being on a waiting list to join in on the fun.

Through your generous contribution we were able to raise a total of \$6,090.00 for the BC Division of the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada.

We look forward to working with you again for next year's tournament.

Yours sincerely

Dan Klassen,

IBEW 258 Assistant Business Manager



Dear Local 258,

Thanks for the gift basket.

I am recovering well and hope to have a full recovery. The concern of my fellow members is heart warming to me and my family.

Dave Duncan



Dear Burrard Thermal and IBEW 258;

I just wanted to say thank you to all those who supported me in the fund raising walk for Mercy Ministries on Saturday, October 8th. I was able to raise \$730.00 for the event.

Sincerely

Mark Davison



To all my Brothers & Sisters at IBEW 258,

Thank you for the wonderful fruit basket.

Alan Renwick

Unit 4, Victoria



Partnerships BC: more is less

by Murray Dobbin

This article originally appeared in The Georgia Straight, December 29, 2005.

You've heard it a thousand times: government should be run like a business. The problem is, those who make this judgment never say which businesses government should emulate. Should the British Columbia government be run like Enron or WorldCom? Maybe not. We can hope, of course, that the promoters of this simplistic idea actually mean that government should be effective and responsible, with maximum accountability for the taxes that citizens pay.

If that's the case, you have to wonder what on earth is going on over at one of Premier Gordon Campbell's favourite government agencies: Partnerships BC. It's the Crown corporation that promotes public-private partnerships, or P3s, and the more one delves into this little-known outfit, the more it feels like Alice in Wonderland. Partnerships BC has turned accountability on its head.

**Partnerships BC...
promotes government
deals that actually
guarantee we pay
more and get less.**

It promotes government deals that actually guarantee we pay more and get less.

Two of the most familiar P3s in the Lower Mainland are the Seymour Water Filtration Plant and the Canada Line, formerly known as the Richmond/Airport/Vancouver Rapid Transit project, or RAV line. The former was rejected in 2001 after a huge public outcry; the latter went ahead (after being turned down twice) and is now hugely over budget and downsized. Two other large P3s, the Vancouver Convention & Exhibition Centre expansion and

the Coquihalla Highway, were embarrassing fiascos.

The PBC Web site states that the agency's job is to determine whether a government infrastructure need "can best be met through a partnership with the private sector". But in practice, PBC is a promoter. Shortly after prominent BC Liberal supporter Larry Blain was appointed CEO of PBC in 2003, he told a Vancouver audience that "Our job is to drag government kicking and screaming into the marketplace—that's our mandate. Our corporate interests are aligned with the markets." Blain's contract shows that he is partly compensated (with bonuses of up to 70 percent of his base pay of \$275,000) on the basis of performance—and this performance is defined as moving P3s forward.

Public-private partnerships, really just a user-friendly name for privatization, vary from project to project. Some (like the Coquihalla Highway disaster) involve leasing existing assets, but most are new infrastructure projects. These are typically design-build-finance-operate deals where a private company, usually a consortium, goes beyond the conventional design-build contract, actually finances the project, and then operates the facility over a long period—between 25 and 40 years—for an annual fee.

Public-private partnerships persist in BC and are set to expand despite the fact that the rationales for them have, one by one, been debunked in the Straight and elsewhere. Early on, supporters touted them as a way to help debt-conscious governments get liabilities off the books. Yet there is little difference between taxpayers servicing the interest on a government loan and paying a yearly fee to a P3 contractor—who uses it to pay off its loan. It's all taxpayers' dollars.

However, there is one important distinction: the P3 fee is always higher, for the simple reason that governments can borrow money at a lower rate than private companies. On a big project, that can mean tens of millions of dollars in extra costs. As for keeping debt off the books, even the free-market International Monetary Fund has severely criticized governments for this accounting trick, demanding that they begin treating yearly P3 payments as debt and not operating costs.

If the rationale for getting the private sector to finance government projects is shaky, the reasons given for having private corporations operate the resulting facility for 30 or more years are just as questionable. Natalie Mehra, coordinator of the Ontario Health Coalition, points out that negotiating P3 contracts is complicated and expensive. "You have to negotiate a contract with the consortium and then with all the subcontractors whose contracts are woven into the master contract—laundry, food services, patient portering, maintenance, cleaning, all the non-medical services," Mehra told the Straight in October. "At the end of these negotiations, the
(cont'd on next page)

(cont'd from previous page)

price has often skyrocketed.” Mehra gave the example of the William Osler Health Centre P3 in Brampton, Ontario, whose capital costs jumped from \$330 million to \$550 million.

The source of such enormous cost increases is not difficult to trace. On top of the millions more in finan-

... P3s have proven to cost more than conventional projects ...

cing costs, profit margins on P3s can be outrageous. A 2004 study of P3 hospitals and roads in Britain, commissioned by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, found that profits were between 50 and 100 percent.

Closer to home, the Abbotsford Regional Hospital and Cancer Centre is scarcely more reassuring from a public-interest perspective. Partnerships BC's role is troubling to public-sector health workers. PBC was deeply involved in the Abbotsford project, actually forming a special company, Health Co, to develop the P3 contract. And if PBC—which refused to grant an interview for this story—really was looking out for taxpayers, it's hard to explain how it could have proceeded with the project.

Access Health Abbotsford, a private consortium created by several transnational corporations, was the only bidder. During the bidding and negotiating stage of the project, capital costs rose nearly 70 percent, from \$211 million to \$355 million. The yearly service payments to the P3 consortium doubled from \$20 million to almost \$41 million per annum, and total costs for the 33-year operational contract skyrocketed to nearly double as well, from \$720 million to \$1.4 billion.

Now that P3s have proven to cost more than conventional projects, pro-

ponents have quit claiming that they save the public money. Instead, they argue that P3s provide “value for money”, an extremely complicated concept that involves transferring risk to the private partner. Perhaps PBC boss Larry Blain likes it that way. In the September 2005 issue of Project Finance magazine, he said that “we are using a risk transfer model that is so complex only a few people in the province understand the ins and outs of it.”

Richard Neal is a researcher for the BC Health Coalition. A former insurance underwriter specializing in risk transfer, Neal contributed to a critique of PBC's February 2005 “Achieving Value for Money” report on the Abbotsford project for the Hospital Employees' Union. This critique raises many questions about the value-for-money concept and the reliability of the report itself. “P3 consortia in other jurisdictions appear to charge a premium of 30 percent to build hospitals on time and on budget,” Neal told the Straight. “This premium, however, greatly exceeds the costs of actual overruns for conventional hospital projects.” According to the 2004 Association of Chartered Certified Accountants study, it could be costing taxpayers three to five times as much as the actual cost overruns.

In the case of the Abbotsford hospital, the value-for-money argument is especially dubious. According to Neal (who co-wrote a 2003 Straight cover story about health-care P3s), “Any value from Access Health Abbotsford's ability to perform on time and on budget has been diminished by protracted P3 contract negotiations. The original public construction of the new facility was slated for a 2005 completion date. The P3 option will not be completed until 2008, adding \$68 million in inflationary costs to the project.”

Another local example of P3 cost and completion-date overruns is the 10 Mile Bridge project in Kicking Horse Canyon near Golden. Public financing was in place in March 2003.

Then PBC started the P3 process. Almost three years have gone by, with deadline after deadline missed. The completion date is now listed as 2009—a full six years after the money was in the bank. Inflation alone will have added tens of millions of dollars to the project's cost.

Partnerships BC's examination of P3 projects is supposed to involve an unbiased comparison of the two approaches—the P3 and the conventional—by means of a “public-sector comparator”. These comparators apply a “discount rate” to P3s, a form of depreciation to assess costs of capital and services over time. The higher the assumed discount rate, the lower the projected costs of a P3 option. But PBC uses a discount rate

When secrecy regarding the spending of tax dollars prevails, the public interest is immediately put at risk.

of up to eight percent, while the UK government has dropped its rate to 3.5 percent after intense criticism that its comparators were rigged in favour of P3s. Larry Blain has publicly admitted that the public-sector comparator is easily manipulated. “Public sector comparators won't do you much good anyways, because I can make the public sector comparator as bad as we want to, in order to make the private sector look good,” the HEU reported Blain as saying at a March 2003 meeting of the BC Municipal Finance Authority.

One of the most serious problems with P3s and PBC's promotion of them is that the whole process is shrouded in secrecy—rationalized by so-called “commercial confidential-

(cont'd on next page)

Partnerships BC: more is less

(cont'd from previous page)

ality". Even publicly elected officials don't get to see the contracts. "P3s allow mega projects to be imposed upon local communities without any meaningful consultation," Richard Neal said. "Even rudimentary public scrutiny of projects is prohibited until the contracts are signed, and by then it's too late to stop them. Look at the RAV, St. Paul's Hospital, the Highway

Even private consortia are beginning to shy away from these enormously complex projects...

1 [expansion], and the twinning of the Port Mann [Bridge]—none of them would be approved as conventional projects without a lot more public oversight."

When secrecy regarding the spending of tax dollars prevails, the public interest is immediately put at risk. A project involving Vancouver's St. Paul's Hospital is already surrounded by controversy. According to documents obtained by the BC Health Coalition under a freedom-of-information request, Providence Health Care, which runs St. Paul's and Mount Saint Joseph hospitals, wants to close the two facilities and build a single new one as a P3. (In September, Providence claimed that Mount Saint Joseph would not be closed.) In October 2004, the Ministry of Health agreed to pay Partnerships BC \$1 million to consult on the project.

The preferred site for the new hospital is the False Creek Flats area near Pacific Central Station on Main Street. In March 2004, the private Vancouver Esperanza Society bought the False Creek property. Two of Esperanza's three directors have

connections with the controversial for-profit Cambie Surgery Centre. On March 31, 2004, Providence signed a "right of first refusal to purchase" agreement with Esperanza. The City of Vancouver has agreed to buy back the land if the project doesn't go ahead. Why the city couldn't have made the same deal with Providence directly is unclear. What is clear is that the private land deal will end up costing the public more money.

As the Straight has previously reported, the evidence against P3s is starting to reach critical mass. Public-private partnerships have been assailed by government auditors from Australia and Scotland to Ontario and Nova Scotia as seriously flawed in concept and delivery. Horror stories from Britain of shoddy hospital construction, huge cost overruns, dramatic cuts to medical staff to meet profit expectations, and relentless criticisms from professional medical associations are now commonplace. The 2004 Association of Chartered Certified Accountants study gave a blistering critique of almost every aspect of P3s.

Even private consortia are beginning to shy away from these enormously complex projects, with many P3s in Britain now attracting just single bidders. The same may be happening in Canada. In 2004, the Montreal Gazette reported that William Spurr, president of Bombardier Transportation's North American division, opposed a P3 for new Montreal Métro railcars. Spurr said the need for new cars was urgent and complained that it would take four or five years to define a P3 contract for such an acquisition.

In the face of all the bad publicity, Partnerships BC is developing a siege mentality. It cannot admit that P3s don't work, because its mandate is to promote them. It is now effectively a political organization. Anytime a P3 is criticized, Suromitra Sanatani, vice-

president, corporate and government relations, is immediately in print defending the side. As head of the BC branch of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, Sanatani earned a reputation as a ferocious defender of the private sector. Other PBC executives also go on the offensive. Highly regarded forensic accountant Ron Parks (hired by the BC Liberal government on several occasions) was personally attacked for his 2003 study of the Abbotsford hospital deal for the HEU. Mike Marasco, PBC's vice-president, partnership development, declared in a news release that Parks's report "makes a number of biased and naïve assumptions and uses outdated information". What Marasco didn't say: the reason it was outdated is that PBC wouldn't give Parks the most recent information.

A visit to the PBC Web site reveals the standard "Our People" page, which it says is "About Us". But unlike almost every similar Web site, click on CEO Larry Blain's name and there is nothing about the man—just his e-mail address. Ditto every other staff person. (Blain is an investment banker, a former managing director of RBC Capital Markets, and worked in the BC Ministry of Finance. He gave the BC Liberal party \$12,750 between 1998 and 2001, according to Elections BC. He was also a member of the BC Liberals' transition team prior to the 2001 election.)

What is Partnerships BC's future? And at what point do BC Liberal MLAs tire of Gordon Campbell's partnership with Larry Blain? Campbell and Blain are natural bedfellows. Both are rigidly ideological, and their faith in P3s is not easily shaken by mere evidence. But someone should be shaken: the amount of public money being spent on P3s throughout the province now exceeds \$5 billion, with billions more slated to go through the looking glass. ☒

Traffic control safety issues at stake with proposed amendments to Regulation

In British Columbia, most workers are protected under legislation known as the Workers Compensation Act that is administered by the Workers Compensation Board, now called WorkSafeBC. WorkSafeBC is responsible for the Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S) Regulation for employers and workers, designed to promote healthy and safe workplaces through enforcement, consultation and education.

The OH&S Regulation covering the Traffic Control industry is currently in the process of being amended as part of an ongoing review process directed by the WCB. Amendments to the Regulation are approved after what the WCB describes as a “comprehensive review and consultative process” that is supposed to directly involve representatives from both employer and worker communities.

The last time the Traffic Control Regulation was amended, representatives from labour, including Local 258 President Michelle Laurie and Assistant Business Manager Susan Longva, were part of the team that was instrumental in developing important aspects of the Regulation, a detailed process that took about six years to complete.

After more than forty years, they finally get to retire!



A well attended retirement dinner was held on March 3, 2006 for three long time Local 258 members who have been working together at Schneider Electric in Richmond for more than 40 years. Neil Campbell, left, and Mangal Singh, center, were initiated into Local 213, then transferred to 264 that eventually merged with Local 258. Missing from the picture is Tom Hamilton who was unable to attend the dinner. Plant Manager Peter Kershbaum looks on.

“Our work, together with representatives from the employers, the RCMP, and the Ministry of Transportation and Highways, helped develop comprehensive amendments to the Regulation and have proven to be very effective,” said Longva in a recent interview. “But we are concerned that the proposed amendments are essentially ‘gutting’ the Regulation and are not in the best interests of the workers in this industry.”

Longva describes the current review and proposed amendments as lacking a thorough public review component and not all stakeholders have been invited to the table. “We have been fortunate there have been no workplace associated deaths in traffic control since the previous amendments were instituted,” she said. “The protections we worked so hard at establishing are now being threatened with removal from the Regulation.”

For example, the current Regulation requires all traffic control persons to have completed a two-day WorkSafeBC approved course in order to become a “certified”. One of the proposed amendments is removing the requirement for certification in certain circumstances as well as expanding the role of the employer in allowing them to train “qualified” workers according to guidelines from WCB, but also allowing them to assess the situation where a traffic control person is required. It should be noted that “guidelines” are defined as “intended to assist with providing ways of complying with the legislation, not to provide exclusive interpretation”. In essence, employers are not bound by the guidelines and their own judgement applies.

Longva and other interested stakeholders have submitted their recommendations to WorkSafeBC and a public hearing is scheduled for May of 2006. The deadline for comments on the proposed amendments to the traffic control regulation has passed, although the form is still available on the website to complete if you wish to add comments.

For more information and to review the draft proposed amendments, visit the IBEW website at www.ibew258.bc.ca. ☐



Know your hard hat

Shell - Deflects blows to the head. Replace a shell that shows signs of wear, scratches, gouges, or hairline cracks. Shells exposed to heat, sunlight and chemicals can become stiff or brittle.

Peak - The peak should always face forward. Do not wear headwear backwards.

Foamliner
- Provides protection for lateral side impact.



Reflectors - Increases visibility. Required under the Occupational Health & Safety Regulation for traffic control. Crane operators at a building site can see the strip on the top of the hat. The reflective decals shown are available for order from WorkSafeBCstore.com. For more information, e-mail customer.service@worksafebcstore.com or phone 604-232-9704 (toll free in BC at 1-866-319-9704).

Earmuff accessory slots

Rain trough - Directs rain water to the front of the hat.

Suspension lugs - Check the suspension lugs regularly. Long periods of normal use can damage the suspension. Perspiration and hair oils can speed up the deterioration of suspension materials.

Chin strap - Do not draw the chin strap over the brim or peak of the headwear.

Crown strap suspension - Acts as a shock absorber. Look closely for cracked or torn adjustment slots, frayed material, or other signs of wear.

Adjustable headband - Adjust the headband size so that headwear will stay on when bending over, but not so tight that it leaves a mark on the forehead.

Do's

- Do inspect headwear before each use.
- Do replace headwear that has been struck, even if no damage is visible.
- Do clean the suspension and shell regularly according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Do remove and destroy any headwear if its protective abilities are in doubt.

Don'ts

- Don't transport headwear in rear windows of vehicles.
- Don't paint the plastic shell. Paint solvents can make the plastic brittle and more susceptible to cracks.
- Don't use winter liners that contain metal or electrically conductive material under Class G or E headwear.
- Don't put anything between the suspension and the shell.

Reprinted with permission of WorkSafeBC.

EITI Hosts

Electrical Utilities Career Expo

Showcasing careers in the electrical trades!

**When: Saturday, June 10, 2006
from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm**

**Where: EITI Training Institute,
124th St and 88th Ave,
Surrey, British Columbia**

It was so successful last year we're doing it again! The Electrical Industry Training Institute (EITI), along with Local 258 IBEW, is hosting the 2nd Annual Electrical Utilities Career Expo at the Surrey Campus in June.

This is your chance to explore career opportunities in the electrical utility trade. We are expecting a large turnout of utility employers, Labour groups, and contractors who will be there with information booths and demonstrations. IBEW members will be there too, demonstrating their skills as Power Line Technicians, Electricians, Certified Utility Arborists, and Meter Technicians.

There is fascinating work being done in the electrical utilities industry and for those who think they may be interested in a well paying and exciting career, this is the opportunity to strap on the spurs and try pole climbing or get a ride in a bucket truck!

We extend this invitation to all IBEW members, your families and friends and especially young people seeking career opportunities. So come out and join us – Local 258 IBEW staff and executive will be “flippin’ the burgers” and greeting the public. Hope to see you there!

Unit 3 Photo Opportunity



Brother Brian Tulley received his 55 year service certificate presented on behalf of the union by Brother Leon Arishenkoff, Unit 3 Chair.



Brother Ray LaPointe congratulates Brother Ken Wright who was awarded his 40 year service pin.



From left are Doug Mayer, Randy Hutt, Doug Jensen and Brian Kozak, recently awarded their 30 year service pins.



The crew from Unit 3 at 100 Mile, from left, Al Walker, Rainer Kempf, Larry Watrich, Pete Smith.



Unit 3 Chair Leon Arishenkoff, center, congratulates Brother Bill Gunn, left and Brother Dave Senger, right on receipt of their 25 year service pin awards.



From left are Ray LaPointe who presented 30 year service pin awards to Martin Van deLeest, Rick Sparks and Wayne Inglis.



Barry Kingsley, right, receives his 25 year service pin from Brother Ray LaPointe.



Congratulations to, from left, Al Coburn, Dorin Crowe, Maria Kuhle and Dennis Harper who recently received their 15 year service pins.



Brother George Prossick was recently awarded for 55 years of service.



Brother Chris Christensen received his 30 year service award from Unit 3 Chair Leon Arishenkoff.



Brother Don Julseth received his 25 year service award from Unit 3 Chair Leon Arishenkoff.



Congratulations to Brother Gibby Loyie as he receives his 55 years of service certificate from Unit 3 Chair Arishenkoff.



Brother Rick Sparks, left, received his 30 year service award from Unit 3 Chair Leon Arishenkoff.



Congratulations on 50 years of service to Brother Leo Kreke.



Sister Lois Opatrik was recently awarded her 10 year service pin - congratulations!



Brother Riah Hove, right, received his 40 year service award from Unit 3 Chair Leon Arishenkoff.



Brother Brian Durand, left, received his 30 year service pin award.

Tax preparation and tax planning

by Steve Watson MA, CFP, FMA

Working Enterprises Tax Services Ltd.

Most of us don't like to think about income taxes.

But the reality is, tax planning is a year round activity - one that can have great benefits if you spend a little time to put things in order for yourself. Too often, it's April before we start to think of what we need to do and by then, as we all know, it's too late.

In order to minimize the taxes you pay, you must do two things: (1) structure your tax and financial matters so that you can benefit from the tax rules and (2) make certain that you correctly file your income tax return, not only claiming all deductions and credits available to you, but doing so in a tax efficient manner.

Outlined below are a few common strategies that will reduce the income taxes you pay and increase your income tax refund.

Invest in an RRSP

You get an immediate tax deduction, which pays back the tax on the money you contribute. More importantly, the income generated within the RRSP continues to grow without attracting taxes. This tax free compounding will make a huge difference in the value of your RRSP over time.

Consider investments that provide significant tax benefits

One popular investment vehicle is Labour Sponsored Venture Capital Corporations. The LSVCC provides in-

vestors with a 15% federal tax credit and an additional 15% provincial tax credit. LSVCCs also have the benefit of being an eligible investment for RRSP purposes. As a result, a \$5,000 LSVCC investment, put into your RRSP, can cost you as little as \$2,000 after all the tax credits and deductions are factored in. They also boost the foreign content limit of your RRSP.

You can also take advantage of the LSVCC tax credits by purchasing LSVCCs from within your RRSP. You would not get a new credit for the RRSP (as it is already in the RRSP) but, you still get the combined 30% federal and provincial tax credits. With this strategy, by transferring \$5,000 of existing RRSPs into an LSVCC you get \$1,500 of tax credits, without spending any money. Remember to transfer within the RRSP and not withdraw from your RRSP.

Combine family donations on one tax return

If you and your spouse donate separately, combine your receipts and claim all donations on one return to maximize the benefit, generally on the return of the higher-income spouse. It's a two-tier credit. Your first \$200 of charitable donations qualifies for approximately 22% in tax credits. After \$200, you get combined benefits of about 44%.

Get money for nothing

If you have kids who are over the age of 19, make certain they file a tax return. They may be eligible for the basic GST credit of \$232 and the provincial sales tax credit.

Make use of your child's tuition and education credits

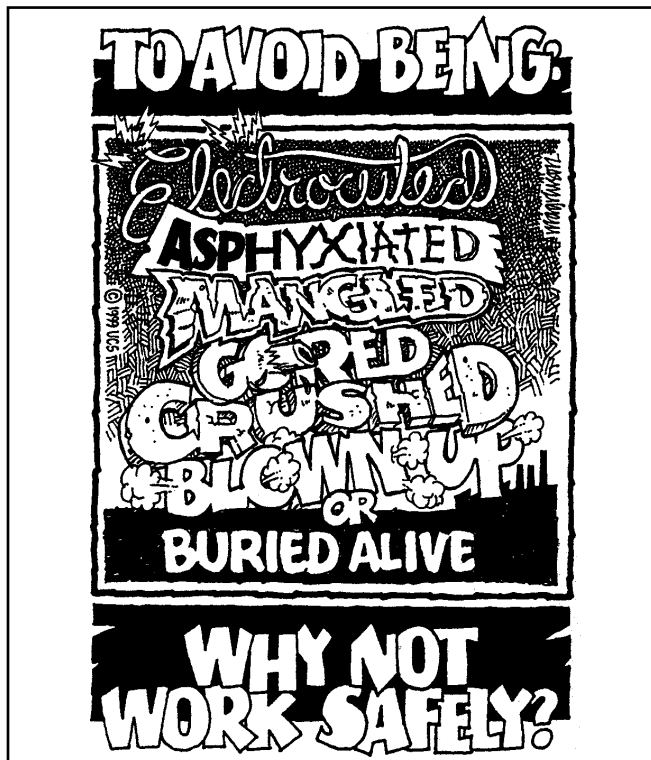
Students can provide valuable tax credits for supporting parents. Too often, the tuition and education credits are not efficiently claimed between the supporting parent and the student. To maximize the tax benefits, students must file an income tax return, taking into account scholarship and moving expense deductions. Up to \$5,000 can then be transferred from the student to a parent. If you are e-filing, make certain the returns are linked.

Deduct all interest possible

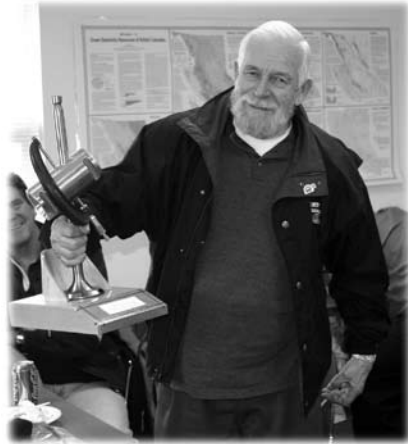
This one is straight forward, but it is often missed. Interest is deductible when money has been borrowed for business or investment purposes. For example, interest charged on Canada Savings Bond payroll purchase plans is fully deductible.

Claim medical expenses on the lower-income return

You are entitled to claim medical expenses over a certain threshold, which is 3% of net income, or \$1,844 for the tax year 2005, whichever is less. By claiming the expenses on the return of the lower-income spouse, the credit available will be increased. ☑



Awarded for reaching retirement



Brother Dale McKinstrey was "awarded" a beautiful trophy crafted by his co-workers at BC Hydro on the occasion of his recent retirement. Senior Assistant Business Manager Jim Greenwell attended Brother McKinstrey's retirement party and presented him with a plaque honouring his long time union membership.



IBEW 258 ABM Don McNabb congratulates Clark Lavallee of Unit 2 in Hudson's Hope on his retirement.



At work Seven easy resolutions for health

By Dave Scott/Teacher/BCTF/
CALM

Here are some constructive, easy to do, one-time resolutions for you to improve your health at work.

1. Make that appointment for the complete medical checkup you have been meaning to have. Include a pap test, mammogram or prostate test. Have a complete blood workup that includes a look at your cholesterol and triglyceride.
2. At least once a week, travel to work by an entirely different route and, if possible, use different transportation.
3. If a grocery store or drugstore is nearby, get all the free stuff the pharmacist has on healthy eating, living, attitude, fitness, environment and safety. Try out the free blood-pressure test and the free bone-density test. Look at the stores publications on health programs—they're chock full of good stuff.
4. Find a willing co-worker and during your lunch break, walk eight minutes away from your worksite. You'll be back 15 minutes later because it takes less time to return when you're already warmed up. Talk work going and don't talk about work coming back.
5. Indulge yourself in a random act of kindness for a co-worker. Keep it a secret.
6. If you buy lunch, don't buy it for one day—instead make a lunch like the ones your mom made you when you were in school. If you bring your lunch, don't bring it, go out, buy lunch and treat yourself.
7. Put a bottle of water next to your coffee, and drink as much water as you do coffee. ☑

PERSONAL INCOME TAX PREPARATION INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL PLANNING

A better way

SAVE MONEY

Get expert advice and service from accredited professionals at considerable savings over competitors' rates.

YEAR ROUND SERVICE

We are open year round to provide income tax preparation and independent financial planning advice when you need it.

INDEPENDENT ADVICE

We provide income tax preparation and independent financial planning services. We do not sell financial products.

BENEFIT YOUR COMMUNITY

We're committed to community involvement and proudly support the Columbia Foundation, a BC based non-profit organization providing scholarships for the re-training and life-long learning of British Columbians.

WORKING ENTERPRISES TAX SERVICES Ltd.

We specialize in personal income tax preparation and independent *fee only* financial planning for British Columbians.

- Save 40 to 70% off competitors' rates
- Get expert advice and professional service

INCOME TAX PREPARATION SERVICE

We prepare and file income tax returns for a flat fee of \$45. This covers returns with seven or fewer information slips. Information slips include T4s, RRSPs, tuition fees, charitable donations, etc. Individuals who have more than seven slips pay a little more, but still benefit from great savings of 40 to 70% off competitors' rates.

INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL PLANNING SERVICE

We provide independent *fee only* financial planning services. We do not collect commissions or sell financial products. This ensures that you get expert advice, tailor-made for your financial goals and objectives.

OUR OFFICES

Vancouver, Kelowna & Surrey
1200 - 1166 Alberni Street, Vancouver, BC V6E 3Z3
106 - 591 Bernard Avenue, Kelowna, BC V1Y 6N9
UFCW Education Centre, Surrey, BC (by appointment)
CALL TOLL FREE: 1-800-845-1181
E-MAIL: tax@wegroup.ca WEB: www.wegroup.ca

SAVE 40 to 70% OFF COMPETITORS' RATES

OPEN YEAR ROUND

9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday
EXTENDED HOURS February, March, April

Serving all regions of British Columbia

WE Tax Services Ltd.
Working Enterprises Group of Companies

IBEW Photo Opportunity

55 years!



Brother Art James, left, was awarded his 55 year service pin from Unit 6 Chair Brother Bob Abernethy at the Surrey meeting in December, 2005.

50 years!



50 year of service was awarded when Brother Abe Derkson received his pin from Unit 6 Chair Bob Abernethy.

50 years!



A 50 year service pin was awarded to Wilson Martinow, left, by Unit 6 Chair Brother Abernethy at the union meeting held in Surrey in December, 2005.

35 years!



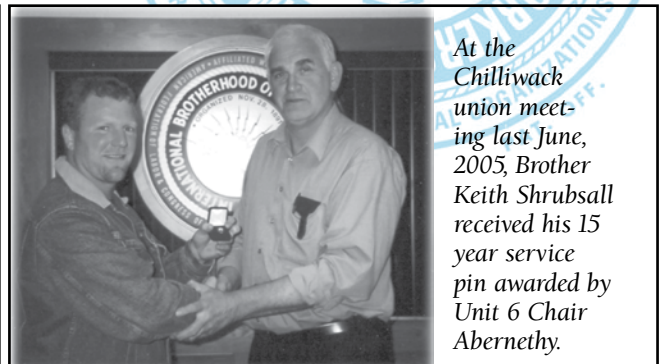
Brother Rolly Scott, left, was awarded his 35 year service pin from Unit 6 Chair Abernethy at the April 2005 union meeting in Surrey.



Brother Al Raven, right, accepts his 25 year service pin award from Brother Bob Abernethy, Unit 6 Chair, at the Surrey meeting in November, 2005.



Brother Scott Peebles, right, received his 10 year service pin award at the November, 2005 meeting from Unit 6 Chair Abernethy.



At the Chilliwack union meeting last June, 2005, Brother Keith Shrubsall received his 15 year service pin awarded by Unit 6 Chair Abernethy.



Business Manager Doug McKay testing the grip of Brother Dave Hicks at the Surrey union meeting held in December, 2005.

30 years!



It's Brother Walter Hockey, on the left, receiving his 30 year service pin, awarded by Unit 6 Chair Bob Abernethy at the February, 2006 meeting in Chilliwack. The Hotline apologizes for incorrectly identifying Brother Hockey in a previous photo published in the magazine. Congratulations Walter!



At the Surrey meeting in December, 2005, Brother Bob Abernethy awards Brother Bob Goodman, left, his 25 year service pin.



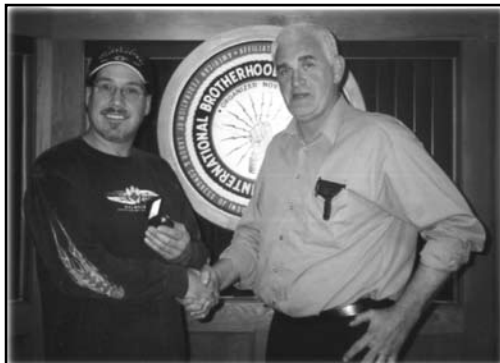
Brother Denis Levesque received his 20 year service pin award from Brother Bob Abernethy at the Surrey meeting in December, 2005.



Charlie Gallagher, left, receives his 25 year service pin at the Surrey meeting in June, 2005 from Brother Bob Abernethy.



Brother Bill Klick, left, was awarded a union jacket in honour of his recent retirement by Unit 3 Chair Leon Arishenkoff.



Congratulations to Brother Don Arsenault, right, who was awarded his 30 year service pin by Unit 6 Chair Bob Abernethy at the June, 2005 Unit Meeting.



Brother Glen Wardrop, right, received his 35 year service pin from Unit 6 Chair Bob Abernethy at the Surrey meeting in November, 2005.

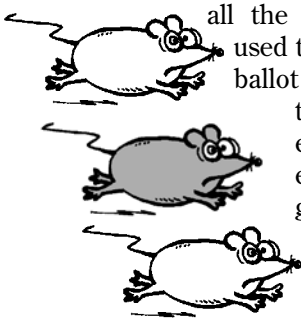
Mouseland

As told by Tommy Douglas in 1944/CALM



This is the story of a place called Mouseland. Mouseland was a place where all the little mice lived and played, were born and died. And they lived much the same as you and I do.

They even had a parliament. And every four years they had an election. Used to walk to the polls and cast their ballots. Some of them even got a ride to the polls. And got a ride for the next four years afterwards too. Just like you and me. And every time on election day

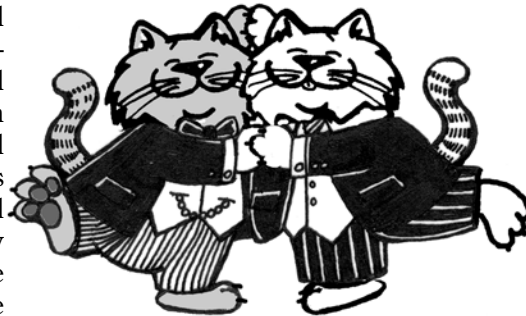


all the little mice used to go to the ballot box and they used to elect a government. A government made up of big, fat, black cats.

Now if you think it strange that mice should elect a government made up of cats, you just look at the history of Canada for last 90 years and maybe you'll see that they weren't any stupider than we are.

Now I'm not saying anything against the cats. They were nice fellows. They conducted their government with dignity. They passed good laws—that is, laws that were good for cats. But the laws that were good for cats weren't very good for mice. One of the laws said that mouseholes had to be big enough so a cat could get his paw in. Another law said that mice could only travel at certain speeds—so that a cat could get his breakfast without too much effort.

All the laws were good laws. For cats. But, oh, they were hard on the mice. And life was getting harder and harder. And when the mice couldn't put up with it any more, they decided something had to be done about it.



So they went en masse to the polls. They voted the black cats out. They put in the white cats.

Now the white cats had put up a terrific campaign. They said, "All that Mouseland needs is more vision." They said, "The trouble with Mouseland is those round mouseholes we got. If you put us in we'll establish square mouseholes."

And they did. And the square mouseholes were twice as big as the round mouseholes, and now the cat could get both his paws in. And life was tougher than ever.

And when they couldn't take that anymore, they voted the white cats out and put the black ones in again. Then they went back to the white cats. Then to the black cats. They even tried half black cats and half white cats. And they called that coalition. They even got one government made up of cats with spots on them: they were cats that tried to make a noise like a

mouse but ate like a cat.

You see, my friends, the trouble wasn't with the colour of the cat. The trouble was that they were cats. And because they were cats, they naturally looked after cats instead of mice.

Presently there came along one little mouse who had an idea. My friends, watch out for the little fellow with an idea. And he said to the other mice, "Look fellows, why do we keep on electing a government made up of cats? Why don't we elect a government made up of mice?"

"Oh," they said, "he's a Bolshevik. Lock him up!" So they put him in jail.

But I want to remind you that you can lock up a mouse or a man but you can't lock up an idea.

The moral of the story

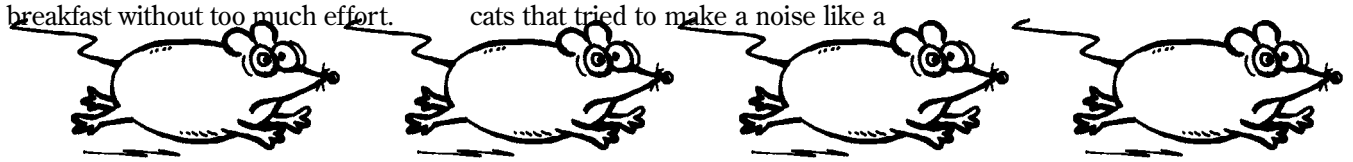
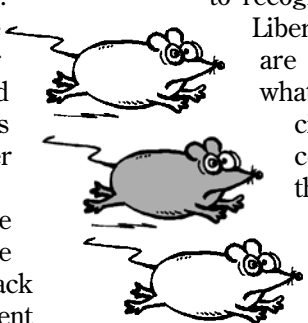
Mouseland is a political fable, originally told by Clare Gillis, a friend of Tommy Douglas. Tommy used this story many times to show in a humorous way how Canadians fail

to recognize that neither the

Liberals or Conservatives are truly interested in what matters to ordinary citizens; yet Canadians continue to vote for them.

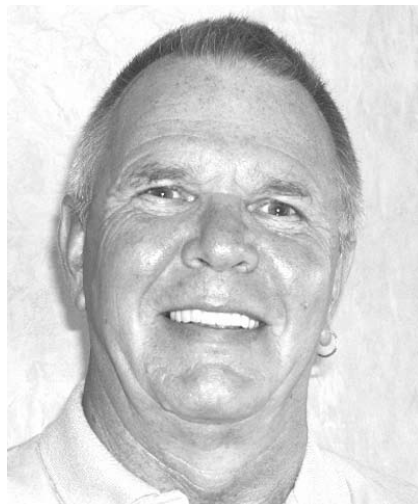
The ending shows Tommy Douglas has faith that some day socialism, which recognizes human rights

and dignity, will win over capitalism and the mere pursuit of wealth and power. ☐



Ruminations of a Retiree

by Ken McEwen,
Editor, **HOTLINE**



I've been advised that another publication of The Hotline is imminent. Now, I'm not sure whether it will be a late Christmas issue or an early Spring issue. If it happens that this is a late Christmas issue the time has passed to wish you all a Merry Christmas but I do want to wish you all the very best for the New Year, even though the New Year is already two months old.

In the event this is an early Spring issue winter must be almost over. The winter here in the southern California desert has been rainless. However, it has been cold. Some days it has struggled to reach 65 degrees (17 degrees Canadian). For the purposes of this report I'll speak USAmerican. Today the temperature is forecast to reach 70 degrees rising to 80 degrees by the weekend. We'll see what happens.

Another consequence of spring is that we will soon be thinking of returning home. Catherine Dear has determined that we will drive home by way of Hitchcock, Texas. As I understand it, Hitchcock, Texas is a few miles from Galveston. My review of the map indicates that Galveston isn't just across the western border of Texas but way on the other side. Notwithstanding that, to Catherine Dear Hitchcock, Texas is on the way home. If we kind of angle across the country from Hitchcock, Texas to New Westminster, British Columbia it only adds about 2600 miles (4184.29 km) to the normal 1500 mile trip. So, off we go to Hitchcock, Texas.

Speaking of Hitchcock, Texas do you ever watch TV? See, Hitchcock,

Texas is in the Central Time Zone. When those announcer guys on the TV want you to watch something they say, "Be sure to see the new episode of Lost (or Survivor or Grey's Anatomy or whatever they're touting) tomorrow night at nine, eight Central". Or maybe they'll say, "Watch House at ten, nine Central". Away over here in the Pacific Time Zone when it's nine o'clock it's already eleven o'clock in the Central Time Zone. Not eight o'clock. Now, maybe in the east, which purports to be the centre of our universe, there would be a reason to say that, because nine o'clock Eastern time is indeed eight o'clock Central time. But then it would also be seven o'clock Mountain time and six o'clock Pacific time. And let's not forget Atlantic time. It would already be ten o'clock there when it's nine o'clock Eastern. I've done some ruminating and it appears that, regard-

less of time zones, everyone in the country watches the TV show at nine o'clock except for those people in Central. They get to watch it at eight. Do you think the people in Central go to bed earlier than the people in the other time zones? I'm going to have to check that out when I'm in Hitchcock, Texas, on the way home.

Speaking of home, I've missed two elections. I was away for the municipal elections in November and the federal election in January. Or was it February? Being a Retiree my time lines get a little blurry. Anyway, I just leave the country for a little while and a Conservative government gets elected. Oh well, Canadian governments don't seem to last too long so maybe I'll be home in time for the next federal election.

Speaking of elections, this is the year for Local 258 election of officers. That event will take place in late spring. If this is indeed the early Spring edition and not the late Christmas edition, there probably won't be another publication until after the ballots are counted. So, at this time, I'd like to request that you all take an active interest in the upcoming Local 258 election. Your Union will be stronger with your participation.

Well, that's it for now. I have to go and check the temperature, see if the oranges are ready for picking and start plotting a course for Hitchcock, Texas. Please work and play safely. Retirement is great whether you're in Hitchcock, Texas or Hedley, BC. ☑



IBEW LOCAL 258 UNIT MEETING SCHEDULES, 2006

Unit 1 Meeting Schedule

* Denotes Official Meeting

Masset (Line Room @ 4:30 pm) Feb. 9; Oct. 12, 2006
Prince Rupert (Line Room @ 4:30 pm)..... Feb. 8; June 14; Oct. 11, 2006
Queen Charlotte City (Line Room @ 4:30 pm) June 15, 2006
Smithers (Line Room @ 5:30 pm) Jan. 10*; May 9*; July 11*; Sept. 12*; Nov. 7*, 2006
Terrace (Carpenters Hall @ 7:00 pm)..... Feb. 7*; Mar. 7*; Apr. 11*; June 13*; Aug. 9*; Oct. 10*;
Dec. 12*, 2006

Unit 2 Meeting Schedule

* Denotes Official Meeting

Note: Quesnel, Hudson's Hope & Williams Lake meetings start at 4:30 pm, all others start at 7:00 pm.

Dawson Creek (Labour Temple)..... Feb. 14*; Apr. 19; Aug. 15*; Dec. 14*, 2006
Fort St. John (Northern Grand/Quality Inn) Jan. 19; July 13*; Oct. 18, 2006
Fort Nelson (location TBA) May 18; Oct. 19, 2006
Hudson's Hope (Sportsman Inn) Mar. 16; Sept. 14; Nov. 16, 2006
Prince George (Legion)..... Jan. 18*; Mar. 14*; Apr. 18*; May 16*; June 20*;
Sept. 13*; Nov. 14*, 2006
Quesnel (Line Room)..... Mar. 15; June 21; Nov. 15, 2006
Williams Lake (Line Room) Jan. 17; May 23; Sept. 19, 2006
Bella Coola May 24; Sept. 20, 2006

Unit 3 Meeting Schedule

* Denotes Official Meeting

Bridge River (Lunch Room B2 @5:30 pm)..... Jan. 10*; May 9; Sept. 12; Nov. 7, 2006
Castlegar/Trail (Castlegar - Travel Lodge @ 7:00 pm; Trail - Terra Nova Hotel @ 7:00 pm)
..... Feb. 7 in Trail; Apr. 11 in Castlegar; June 13 in Trail;
Aug. 8 in Castlegar; Oct. 10 in Trail, 2006
Cranbrook (Labour Temple @ 4:30 pm) Feb. 8; Apr. 12*; June 14; Oct. 11, 2006
Invermere (Hydro Line Room @ 4:15 pm) Feb. 9; Apr. 13; June 15*; Oct. 12, 2006
Kamloops (IBEW 993 Hall @ 7:00 pm) Jan. 10*; May 9; Sept. 12; Nov. 7, 2006
Mica (Curling Rink @ 6:00 pm)..... Jan. 16; May 15; Sept. 18*; Nov. 13, 2006
Vernon (Army & Navy Club @ 7:00 pm)..... Jan. 12; Mar. 9*; May 11; July 13*; Sept. 14; Nov. 9,
Dec. 14, 2006



IBEW LOCAL 258 UNIT MEETING SCHEDULES, 2006

Unit 4 Meeting Schedule

* *Denotes Official Meeting*

Campbell River (Haida Inn @ 7:00 pm) Feb. 8; June 13; Sept. 12*; Nov. 7, 2006
Courtenay (Line Room @ 4:00 pm) Mar. 8*; June 13*; Sept. 12; Nov. 7*, 2006
Duncan (Cowichan Valley Inn @ 7:00 pm) Jan. 10; May 10* (location Line Room, meeting starts at 4:00 pm); Oct. 11, 2006
Ganges (Line Room @ 4:00 pm) Jan. 11; Apr. 12*; Oct. 12, 2006
Nanaimo (Line Room @ 4:00 pm) Mar. 8*; May 10 (Location is Legion #256, meeting starts at 7:00 pm); Aug. 8; Dec. 13*, 2006
Port Alberni (Line Room @ 4:00 pm) Feb. 7 (meeting starts at 7:00 pm); June 14*; Sept. 14, 2006
Port Hardy (Line Room @ 4:00 pm) Mar. 7; Sept. 13, 2006
Qualicum Beach (Line Room @ 4:00 pm) Feb. 7; May 9; Dec. 12, 2006
Victoria (Line Room @ 4:00 pm) Jan. 10*; Apr. 11; July 11*; Oct. 11*, 2006

Unit 5 Meeting Schedule

* *Denotes Official Meeting*

Burnaby (Union Hall, 7535 Sixth Street, Burnaby)
..... Jan. 12* @ 5:00 pm; Feb. 9 @ 7:00 pm;
Mar. 9* @ 5:00 pm; Apr. 13* @ 7:00 pm;
May 11 @ 5:00 pm; June 15* @ 7:00 pm;
July 13* @ 5:00 pm; Aug. 10* @ 7:00 pm;
Sept. 14 @ 5:00 pm; Oct. 12* @ 7:00 pm;
Nov. 9* @ 5:00 pm; Dec. 14* @ 7:00 pm, 2006
Sechelt (Seaside Centre @ 5:00 pm) Feb. 15*; May 17*; Sept. 20*, 2006

Unit 6 Meeting Schedule

* *Denotes Official Meeting*

Chilliwack (Best Western, 43971 Industrial Way, Chilliwack @ 7:00 pm)
..... Feb. 8*; Apr. 12*; June 14*; Aug. 9*; Oct. 11*;
Dec. 13*, 2006
Surrey (Millwright's Hall, #202-14625 108 Ave., Surrey, BC)
..... Jan. 10*; Feb. 7; Mar. 7*; Apr. 11; May 9*; June 13; July
11*; Sept. 12*; Oct. 10; Nov. 14*; Dec. 12, 2006



From the Back Corner...

There are many celebrations in this issue of the Hotline – from the collage of members receiving pins for “years of service” on the front cover, to all of the Unit photos of retirees receiving pins, trophies and certificates. Of course, there is a direct link to the other theme of this issue – safety. Our brothers and sisters who achieve the long years of service are able to do so because all of us do our best to ensure that we all go home intact at the end of every working day, and hope that we will be able to keep doing that well into retirement. As Brother McKay points out, we have had tragedies this year that touch us all, and that we all want to prevent from happening again.

Over the past few months, I had the opportunity to visit with some of you in the Columbia area, as I was part of a BC Hydro Generation Safety project that involved talking to our brothers and sisters and others about safety in their workplaces. While it would have been wonderful to find some “magic” solution, some key that we could share that would ensure that no one would suffer any more workplace accidents, it would be naïve to think that such a panacea exists. What I did find was that each of our brothers and sisters in those workplaces is truly committed to not just their own safety, but genuinely concerned with the safety of their co-workers and the general public. There is a frustration regarding the amount of paper trail process that current regulations have created, but a real willingness to participate in and drive any idea that will provide security and enhance safety in the workplace. You train each other with concern, and you protect each other from distraction and danger. I know that I only managed to get a very small snapshot of some of the workplaces our members inhabit, but I believe



Sister Laurie recently spent time visiting members in the Columbia area and had an opportunity to tour Duncan Dam with Brother Kris Wiens, shown above on left.

that it was a true example of what you are all doing every day. To all of you that shared your thoughts and concerns with our team, thank – you for your frankness, and the time you gave to our interviews even though you all have heavy workloads and another meeting might not have been high on your list of priorities for the day. To those of you in Mica who extended the hospitality to allow me to attend your Christmas dinner, an extra thank-you, and while there are pictures, I don’t think anyone needs to be reminded of what can happen when a karaoke machine is mixed with alcohol, so those will stay out of the Hotline! Though, I must admit, there are talents untapped out there...

Now you are probably wondering – what, no political rant?? Well, let’s take a breath and hope that we aren’t faced with another federal election for a bit. It is an interesting time to watch the provincial MLA’s, though. Who is fighting to protect our interests, and look after our social needs and our public assets? In this issue, you have read Murray Dobbin’s article about public private partnerships, and the article about diminished safety regulations for our Traffic Control workers, and I urge you to contact your MLA and let him or her know how you expect them to react to such attacks on workers and citizens of this province.

You can find a direct link to your MLA at www.legis.gov.bc.ca/mla/3-1-1.htm.



**Local 258 IBEW 258 President
Michelle Laurie**

Return to:
IBEW Local 258
7535 Sixth Street
Burnaby, BC V3N 3M2

CANADA		POSTES
POST		CANADA
Postage paid		Port payé
Addressed Admail		Médiaposte avec adresse
3262510		