



HOTLINE

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER
PUBLICATION OF
LOCAL 258 IBEW
SUMMER, 2006

LOCAL 258, INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS, BRITISH COLUMBIA



Elected to work for you — your 2006 Local 258 IBEW Executive Officers & Board Members

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 EITI 2ND ANNUAL EXPO

 TRAFFIC CONTROL MEETS IN SURREY

 SPOTLIGHT ON BOBBY SAMI, SHOP STEWARD

 DELEGATES ELECTED FOR CONVENTION



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HOTLINE is the official newsletter magazine published for the members of Local 258, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in British Columbia, Canada.

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Local 258 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers is affiliated to the British Columbia Federation of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress.

Local 258, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers:

- Executive Board Members:
Business Manager/Financial Secretary: Doug McKay
President: Michelle Laurie
Vice-President: Tony Brand
Treasurer: Larry Byhre
Recording Secretary: Dale Haines
Unit #1 Chair: Klaus Kraft
Unit #2 Chair: Gerry Pope
Unit #3 Chair: Leon Arishenkoff
Unit #4 Chair: Tom Greenwell
Unit #5 Chair: Cathy Tagseth
Unit #6 Chair: Barry Bell

Local 258 IBEW Senior Assistant Business Manager: Jim Greenwell

Local 258 IBEW Assistant Business Managers: Greg Fanning, Dan Giesbrecht, Dan Klassen, Susan Longva, Don McNabb

Local 258 IBEW Dispatcher: Brian Haugen

Local 258 IBEW Administrative & Office Staff: Eileen Baldwin, Janice Krieger, Lesli McBratney, Judith Phillips, Geri Watson

Local 258 IBEW Legal Counsel: Rebecca Murdock

FRONT COVER PHOTO: Local 258 IBEW Executive Officers and Board Members, from left: Larry Byhre, Treasurer; Michelle Laurie, President; Klaus Kraft, Unit 1 Chair; Barry Bell, Unit 6 Chair; Robert Abernethy (former Unit 6 Chair); Gerry Pope, Unit 2 Chair; Cathy Tagseth, Unit 5 Chair; Tom Greenwell, Unit 4 Chair; Leon Arishenkoff, Unit 3 Chair; Doug McKay, Business Manager/Financial Secretary; Mark Davison (former Unit 5 Chair); Laird Cronk, International Union Representative. Missing from the photo is Tony Brand, Vice-President and Dale Haines, Recording Secretary.

Cover photo by Michelle Boudreau

VIEWPOINT from your Business Manager Doug McKay

Summer is now underway and I hope this time of year finds you enjoying some time with family and friends. It's always fun to relax and enjoy your time off and remember it is wise to play safe as well as to work safe.

Speaking of safety, our industries have been challenged with a number of fatalities and serious near misses in the past few years. Discussions are underway at all levels to understand why these incidents are happening and what can be done about it. SAFETY is #1 and it is up to each and every one of us to follow all the safety rules that we as professionals in the trade have been taught. At the end of the day, if you don't think it's right, and you don't think it's safe, DON'T DO IT! If you are aware of a problem that affects safety in the workplace, it is imperative that you step up to the plate and use the channels available to question the procedure. There is no room for shortcuts in our industries, no matter what the circumstances may be — safety has to be part of our culture as there is nothing more important than being able to go home, safe and sound, at the end of our workday.

This spring was busy with bargaining with many of our employers and as a result, a three-year Master Line Agreement was ratified in early July that features wage increases of 3.25 per cent in the each of the first two years and 3.5 per cent in the third year. Retroactive wages will be paid at 50% of the first year increase from February 1, 2006. Many thanks to bargaining committee members Dan Giesbrecht, Jim Greenwell and John Dalin.

The BC Hydro agreement was also ratified this spring and includes a signing bonus of \$3300 as a result of these public sector negotiations concluding before the deadline of March 31, 2006. This four-year agreement features wage increases across all classifications and also includes an option for a market wage opener after two years (2008). The the union is working to undertake a professional study on wage and compensation rates in our industry so we are prepared to reopen this agreement if necessary. Many thanks to bargaining committee members Ed McEwen, Larry Bhyre, Tony Brand, Robert Brandon and Doug Hill, as well as consultant Tom Knight and Local 258 legal counsel Rebecca Murdock.



This year's EITI Expo found Business Manager Doug McKay's son Stirling, right, considering a career in the electrical utility trade.



IBEW members from across Canada met in New Brunswick for the All Canada meeting in June and Local 258 was there. From left, Tom Greenwell, Unit 4 Chair; Jim Greenwell, Sr. Assistant Business Manager; Michelle Laurie, President; Doug McKay, Business Manager; Dan Giesbrecht, Assistant Business Manager.

Easter weekend saw IBEW members take the time to travel from across the province to Burnaby's Eight Rinks to play in the IBEW/BC Hydro Hockey Tournament. I'd like to thank "The Rockies" who convinced me to put the skates on and play a few games. After 20 years being off the blades, I surprised myself that I could even stand on the ice! Congratulations to the winners, and by the way, I'm still hurtin'!

In keeping with fun activities, the IBEW/BC Hydro Safety Rodeo is returning to the lower mainland after a 10 year absence. The event is scheduled for Saturday, September 23, 2006 at the EITI Training Facility in Surrey. Please visit the union's website at www.ibew258.bc.ca for further details as they become available.

And finally, union elections were held this spring with many of our executive board members and table officers being acclaimed. At this time I would like to welcome those who have stepped forward to take an active role in their union as Unit Chairs and executive members. I would also like to thank those who supported my re-election as your Business Manager/Financial Secretary and I look forward to the next four years being very productive as we work together to explore all avenues available to us to secure continuous improvements in safe working conditions and improved wages and benefits for our membership. We will continue to focus on servicing the membership to the best of our capacity to ensure you have excellent representation in the workplace. Please remember to work safe and enjoy the summer. 🚧



We've Got Mail!

Dear IBEW Local 258,
The success of EITI's second annual Electrical Utilities Career Fair can be attributed to the contributions of great sponsors like Local 258, IBEW.

A special thanks goes to the many IBEW members who volunteered their time to help demonstrate their skills for the public. We received many positive comments about how interesting the work is, and how friendly and helpful people were.

Thanks also to Local 258 for contributing the food for the event. It really enhances the whole experience for all of the visitors. We hope to see you all again at our event next year.
Phil Davis
Director, EITI

IBEW Brothers & Sisters;
On behalf of my wife and myself, I would like to extend a thank you for the wonderful retirement party on March 31 at Eaglequest Golf Course. It was especially nice to see so many of my fellow workers, both present and retirees, in attendance.

Thanks to MMBU for the deck chair which I have been enjoying. As well, we would like to thank the union for 35 years of support. The jacket is very comfortable and I am proud to wear it, and the gift money is going towards a stainless steel BBQ.

We plan to spend our retirement travelling to exotic ports and enjoying cruising in our hot rod!
Once again, many thanks.
John & Carolyne Reitz



Dear IBEW Local 258;
Thank you very much for the card and sympathy. I am managing fairly well with the help and support of my three children.

Sincerely,
Sheila Rigby Jones

To my IBEW Brotherhood;
Thank you for the nice send off at the last Nanaimo union meeting in May.

Knowing how most of the world is turning these days I don't know... but wish all the best for the IBEW and brotherhood in the coming years.

I have been really proud to be an IBEW member since 1968, although an employee of Hydro since October 1965. I enjoyed being recording secretary, doing the few picket walks, strike office duties and ballot counting at the hall. The union and membership has always been there for me when I needed it.

There are a lot of brothers over the years I did not get to meet or only talked with them over the phone but still we stood beside each other. The brothers I did get to know are valued friends. Please do not let the division continue in our membership. Anyway, thanks for everything and the gifts.

Sincerely,
John Syrette,
Unit 4, Vancouver Island

IBEW Local 258, Unit 3,
Thanks for the fruit basket sent during my rehab from the accident at work. Things are progressing slowly.
Dave Clare

Dear IBEW 258,
The Lambe Family would like to thank the members of LU 258 for the lovely fruit basket sent to us after my father Hugh passed away. It was very much appreciated.

Sincerely,
Glenn Lambe and Family

Dear IBEW 258,
On behalf of the Canadian Cancer Society, BC & Yukon Division Greater Vancouver Relay For Life and those who will benefit from your generosity, I want to thank you for your recent donation.

Less than 5% of our overall revenue comes from the government. We rely heavily on the support of people like you to help make it possible to continue funding the research that is finding new and more effective ways to prevent, diagnose and treat cancer.

Together, we will make cancer history.

Sincerely,
Jacquelyn Kassa and the Relay Team, Relay for Life Manager, BC & Yukon Division, Canadian Cancer Society

Dear IBEW 258,
 Two things: 1. I wanted to say a long overdue thank you to our President, Michelle Laurie, for her valuable support during my WCB hearing.
 2. Thank you to all for the delicious fruit basket that was delivered to my home while I was recovering and a special thanks to Kit Munro and Eric Ethier for the delivery of the fruit basket. Thanks again to everyone, much appreciated.
 Randy Cronk,
 Unit 4, Victoria

Dear IBEW 258;
 Thank you for the donation.
 Bill Herman
 Cranbrook Prestige Inn AAA
 Midget Hockey Team,
 BCAHA Midget AAA Provincial
 Champions

Dear Michelle Laurie,
 On behalf of the Coquitlam Predators we would like to thank you for your generous donation to our hockey team.

The funds helped to make our Kelowna Tournament even more enjoyable.

Please accept this autographed team photo as a token of our appreciation.

Sincerely,
 Nikki Marcus,
 Team Mum



Dear Michelle,
 Thanks from all of us at the Canadian Labour Congress for giving up your time to instruct at the Harrison Winter School. Instructors have always been the foundation of the school and your efforts are really appreciated. I've received nothing but compliments about the school since it finished a few weeks ago and your efforts were a big part of creating that positive feeling.

The CLC and our affiliates will be lobbying the new Harper government over the next two months. We have a worker's agenda that includes childcare, healthcare and anti-scab legislation in this first lobby. I'd encourage you to keep an eye on what is happening in the Federal Parliament. It is another majority government that can be influenced. Please help keep the issues alive in your union, and your members involved in federal politics. The issues are enormously important to our members.

I hope that you picked up your spirit box while you were at Harrison. It is a small gift to say thanks for your efforts. Again, many thanks from the Canadian Labour Congress and the 2006 Winter School students for donating your time to labour education. We all appreciate it.

In Solidarity,
 David Rice,
 Regional Director, CLC Pacific Region

Dear Michelle,
 On behalf of the 2006 Curling Committee, I would like to thank the IBEW Executive Board for the generous financial assistance of \$300.00 for our Northern Curling Bonspiel held March 17-19 in Vanderhoof.

All curlers had a great time as teams "seriously" competed for those prestigious trophies.

Our numbers were down but the spirit was there as we passed the "Curling Torch"

on to GMS to start preparing the 2007 Bonspiel in Hudson's Hope. Thanks again for your support.

Brian St. Germain, Chairman
 Northern Curling Bonspiel

Dear Jim Greenwell and Michelle Laurie,
 A short note to thank you both and all other friends and associates who attended my retirement on March 31. It was wonderful to talk to some of my colleagues who have been retired for many years who took the time to attend and swap some stories. Both myself and my family had a wonderful time and much appreciated the great parting gifts. For me it's been a great 31 years working as a Winder for BC Hydro and the people I have worked with made it that way. I am looking forward to see what the future holds but for now I will relax and enjoy a leisurely life style.
 Yours sincerely
 Terry Blunt

Dear Sister Michelle Laurie,
 Thank you for your participation in the 2006 Union Counselling Conference held in Vancouver from May 25 - 27, 2006.

We appreciate you moderating the Saturday morning panel which the delegates enjoyed very much. Thank you as well for promoting the conference with your members.

The work you do and the time you give goes a long way towards helping achieve the goals of the Labour/United Way Partnership and the Union Counselling Program.

In Solidarity,
 Mervyn Van Steinburg, Director,
 CLC/Labour Participation Department
 United Way of the Lower Mainland



Business Manager Brother Doug McKay re-elected

Local Union elections secure leadership for next four years

With the re-election of Local 258 Business Manager Doug McKay and the acclamation of the president, treasurer and executive board members, the leadership of Local 258 is secured for the next four years after union elections were held this spring. Also elected were Brother Dale Haines as Recording Secretary, and Unit 2 executive members Travis Koehn and Don McLennan.

Since the elections, the Vice-Chair positions in Units 5 & 6 have been filled by appointments as noted below.

Many thanks to those IBEW members who participated in your local union elections this year. 🗳️

CURRENT TABLE OFFICERS

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Business Manager/ | |
| Financial Secretary | Doug McKay |
| President | Michelle Laurie |
| Vice-President | Tony Brand |
| Treasurer | Larry Bhyre |
| Recording Secretary | Dale Haines |

CURRENT UNIT OFFICERS

| | | |
|---------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Unit #1 | Chair | Klaus Kraft |
| | Vice Chair | Paul Russell |
| | Unit Recorder | Vacant |
| | Executive Members | Brian Cline, vacant position |
| Unit #2 | Chair | Gerry Pope |
| | Vice Chair | Ed McEwen |
| | Unit Recorder | Dwight Stevens |
| | Executive Members | Travis Koehn, Don McLennan |

| | | |
|---------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Unit #3 | Chair | Leon Arishenkoff |
| | Vice Chair | Ray LaPointe |
| | Unit Recorder | Trevor Williams |
| | Executive Members | Jan Kehl, Colin Kenney |

| | | |
|---------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Unit #4 | Chair | Tom Greenwell |
| | Vice Chair | Fred Ruttan |
| | Unit Recorder | Rob Brandon |
| | Executive Member | Ryan Angman, Dick Green |

| | | |
|---------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Unit #5 | Chair | Cathy Tagseth |
| | Vice Chair | Doug Hill |
| | Unit Recorder | Vacant |
| | Executive Members | two vacant positions |

| | | |
|---------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Unit #6 | Chair | Barry Bell |
| | Vice Chair | Karen Porter |
| | Unit Recorder | Mike McMinn |
| | Executive Members | Bob Palmer, Scott Peebles |



Welcome to the union's newest executive board members Barry Bell, left and Cathy Tagseth, right, who were sworn into office by International Representative Laird Cronk, center, at a recent Executive Board meeting.

Delegates elected for International Convention

As per the Local Union's bylaws, an election was held for delegates to attend the IBEW International Convention to be held in September, 2006 in Cincinnati, Ohio. The results of the election are as follows: Unit 1: Klaus Kraft; Unit 2: Don McNabb; Unit 3: Leon Arishenkoff; Unit 4: Tom Greenwell; Unit 5: Brady Prentice; Unit 6: Bob Abernethy; Members-at-Large: Jim Greenwell and Al Beeson. Executive Officers who will be attending are Business Manager/Financial Secretary Doug McKay and President Michelle Laurie. 🗳️



Local 258 IBEW Executive Board members recently gathered at the office in Burnaby for their first meeting after the union elections.

Brother Davison stands down & Brother Abernethy looks forward to contemplating retirement



Executive board members Mark Davison, left and Robert Abernethy have stepped down from their positions, with Brother Abernethy contemplating retirement later this year. Many thanks to these activists for their years of service.

Davison thanks and encourages members

I have gained a lot in my last four years as Unit 5 Chair. Visiting retirees and delivering their years of service awards was the most rewarding of my duties. Listening to the recollections of work stories and labour battles has made me realize that the people change but the struggles of unionism remain the same. From their efforts we enjoy many benefits today, and I hope that my humble efforts have helped to build a legacy for those that come after me.

Before I became an Executive Board member it was easy to be a critic on the outside of the fish bowl while looking in. When you take the plunge and get involved, your perspective changes and you gain an appreciation for all those working at the Union Hall and the amount of effort required to keep the union running. You become acutely aware of what makes a union healthy, including the involvement of our members. The more active and vocal they are, the more vibrant the union will be. Our biggest threat is the apathy of the membership and the “what’s in it for me?” mentality. I implore all members to get involved and attend at least one union meeting a year. Be informed about what issues are being dealt with and if you don’t agree with something, let your union officers know; if you don’t understand an issue, ask a question! Care enough to help build the legacy for tomorrow.

I salute the membership who took time to vote in the last election and especially wish to thank all those who supported me in running for the position of Recording Secretary. I offer my congratulations, support, and good wishes, to Dale Haines as he continues in the role.

I especially wish to thank the Unit Five executive members for all their support: Burke Lundy, Unit 5 Recorder, thanks for the fine recording work and your attendance at

almost every union rally Local 258 supported in the last four years; Karen Porter, Unit 5 Executive, thanks for all your help and your passion, I know you will be a great asset to Unit 6 now that you have moved there; Cathy Tagseth, Unit 5 Executive, you have always been ready to take on more tasks to help the union and are now taking on the higher position of Unit 5 Chairperson. Congratulations Cathy, and I hope you will gain as much from it as I have.

As I move to the other side of the union meeting table I will continue to be an active member by staying informed and asking lots of questions. I hope to see more of my brothers and sisters join me to continue to build a legacy for tomorrow so that years from now some young union activist will be writing about the legacy of unionism we have built for IBEW Local 258.

In Solidarity,
Mark Davison

Abernethy recalls his involvement

By the time you read this message the new Executive Board will have been formed and I wish them well in their endeavours to steer this local union between the rocks and the shoals. As for me, another six months and I’ll consider shutting the door on this working portion of my life and go do something more pleasurable.

As Unit Six Chair, I must say it was a good experience - I even learned something about myself. It’s a long ways from sleeping in the back of a union meeting to being the Chair, and I’d like to thank Dale Haines for helping me to adjust. I feel I did the best I could and it certainly wasn’t for a lack of effort. I always felt that I could have done more, but I didn’t have the people skills to bring the membership out to the unit meetings in the numbers I would have liked to have seen.

I’ve worked at various departments in Hydro for 30 years come this November and I have met hundreds of people over the years - some unforgettable characters, even made a few close friends.

Also over the years I’ve kept a few word phrases, my favorite being - ‘Be nice to me, I’m trying to like you’, which came from a situation working with a fellow who is Italian. One day, he said to me in a heavy Italian accent, “Bob, be nice

(cont’d on next page)

Federal anti-scab legislation

Good enough for BC and Quebec, good enough for Canada

CLC/CALM

After the first debate on Bill C-257: An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code (replacement workers) it's starting to look like we'll finally get legislation to ban the use of scabs during labour disputes.

"It's a matter of fairness and balance," explains Ken Georgetti, president of the Canadian Labour Congress. "The prohibition on using scabs protects the interests of working Canadians and their families against the might of large, often global, employers with no roots in the community."

Similar legislation has existed in Quebec since 1977 and in BC since 1993. In both provinces, there was a

general decline in work lost to strikes or lockouts.

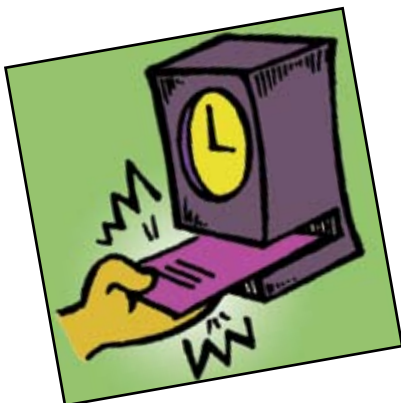
"If it's good for BC and Quebec, it's good for all of Canada," explains Georgetti. "It is well documented that employers that hire scabs during strikes or lockouts are given an unfair advantage to drag their heels in bargaining, reaping profits from unpaid salaries (scabs are often paid less) and



Union activists express thanks

(cont'd from previous page)

Another favourite nickname is Woof#@* (alias Burmese Bandit). We were working together one day, taking a bearing apart when 320 small ball bearings fell out onto the floor bouncing all over the place. Out of his mouth came this famous word - woof#@*! It stuck and that's his handle to this day!



Over the years I've also met many talented people who have impressive skills in art, music, woodwork and metal - beautiful work and talent beyond belief.

I think I'm starting to babble here a bit, so I'll cut it quickly.

For those of you who have a few years to go - Good Luck. Try not take it too seriously, the policies and politics change by the week these days. Look after each other, watch out for each other, even if you're not too fond of the other person. We're all in this fish bowl together for awhile.

For the people who started young and hung in there and can afford it, try the Freedom 55. I wish now that I would have arranged my time a little better than I did.

In Solidarity,
Robert Abernethy

compromising any hope for a fair settlement."

"The ongoing dispute at the Ekati Mine in the Northwest Territories makes the case in favour of this legislation. For months now, the huge multinational corporation BHP Billiton has evaded its duty to arrive at a first collective agreement with its 400 members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada, regardless of the consequences for workers and community."

"The prime minister campaigned on the promise to help working families in Canada. He can now move beyond the rhetoric of an election campaign to concrete action by supporting this legislation," says Georgetti.

The CLC is launching a national campaign to secure anti-scab legislation in this parliament. "Everywhere in Canada, mostly in ridings where the MP is Conservative or Liberal, union leaders are telling workers to call their MP to tell them to vote in favour of anti-scab legislation. It's a basic matter of fairness for working people," says Georgetti. ☑

Spotlight on IBEW Shop Stewards

Taking on the role of Shop Steward can be a lofty task in some workplaces. IBEW members who have stepped up to the plate and assumed the added responsibility of working on behalf of their union brothers and sisters as Shop Stewards gathered in Surrey last October for an IBEW training seminar, and IBEW Shop Steward Bobby Sami, who works at CODE Manufacturing in Coquitlam, was there.

The **HOTLINE** recently travelled to Coquitlam to speak with Brother Sami who has worked at CODE Manufacturing for over five years now, after transferring over from



Brother Sami has attended a number of union training sessions for his role as a Shop Steward at CODE Manufacturing in Coquitlam.

CODE Electric where he previously worked for 18 months. Trained as a welder, Bobby took on the role of Shop Steward when he came to CODE Manufacturing where he now works as the Shop Foreman.

“I’ve been able to discuss important issues that come up on the shop floor with management at this facility,” said Bobby, “I’ve been able to help work out difficulties in the workplace before they get to the grievance stage. Sometimes all it takes is bringing the issues to the attention of the management, in a respectful way, with the understanding and backing of the collective agreement.”

Brother Sami has also attended additional Shop Steward training courses at the Justice Institute, sponsored by the New Westminster & District Labour Council. “Those training sessions were very beneficial and helped me gain a greater understanding of how to assess a situation and communicate to my union brothers so I can take a stand in their best interests when they have issues at work. Even in a small shop like ours, communication is really important. I’m looking forward to taking the Part 2 of the Shop Steward training,” he added.

“I found the IBEW training seminar last fall to be particularly helpful and the guest speakers were very interesting,” continued Sami, in recalling the IBEW Shop Steward Training Seminar

LOCAL 258
IBEW

IBEW Shop Steward Bobby Sami, CODE Manufacturing, Coquitlam



held in Surrey last October. “I’ve been able to use some of the skills I learned at that seminar on the shop floor and look forward to being on the bargaining committee when our contract expires later this year.”

Assistant Business Manager Susan Longva will be accepting proposals this fall at CODE Manufacturing in preparation for collective bargaining.

When asked what the IBEW members at CODE are looking forward to in the next round of bargaining, Brother Sami said, “If it wasn’t for the union there would be no possibility of getting a raise. I look forward to hammering out a good deal here this fall.”

Brother Sami originally came to Canada from Fiji almost 40 years ago and now lives in Coquitlam with his wife, who together they have two grown children and grandchildren. ☑




From left, Shop Steward Bobby Sami with co-workers Pedro Almero and Robert Edwards at CODE Manufacturing in Coquitlam.

2ND ANNUAL

EITI EXPO DRAWS

POTENTIAL RECRUITS



A warm and partly cloudy Saturday afternoon in June found all eyes looking skyward as young and old, men and women alike, participated in the 2nd Annual EITI Expo held at the Surrey training facility. Visitors to the Expo enjoyed free bucket rides, took the opportunity to strap on the gear and test their skills at pole climbing, observe utility arborist demonstrations, all while chowing down on complimentary hot dogs and hamburgers supplied by Local Union 258 IBEW.

Hundreds of potential electrical utility industry workers visited the Electrical Industry Training Institute's grounds in Surrey to ask questions and visit the display booths as they pondered a possible future in the skilled electrical trades.

Local 258 IBEW members were there as a resource to answer questions and share their working experiences, with the union also being a sponsor of the event. Many thanks to the volunteers who helped make it all happen (listed on the next page)!

THE ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY TRAINING INSTITUTE IS OWNED BY LOCAL 258 OF THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS.

EITI CREATES AND DELIVERS TRAINING THAT DEVELOPS SAFE, SKILLED AND COMPETENT WORKERS IN THE ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY WITH A VISION TO ENHANCE THE INDUSTRY'S WORKFORCE BY LEADING THE WAY WITH INNOVATIVE, RESPONSIVE TRAINING SOLUTIONS.

EITI'S MISSION IS TO BE RECOGNIZED AS THE LEADING PROVIDER OF QUALITY CUSTOMIZED TRAINING THAT DEVELOPS SAFE, SKILLED AND HIGHLY RESPECTED WORKERS FOR OUR INDUSTRY WITH A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE OF QUALITY CUSTOMIZED TRAINING FROM OUR INDUSTRY FOR OUR INDUSTRY.

WILL GEMMELL, ADDY POWER
 DOUG LAITY, ALLTECK
 KEVIN MOLENAAR, ALLTECK
 MIKE SAWATSKY, ALLTECK
 RYAN SANDERS, ALLTECK
 TREVOR LEWIS, ALLTECK
 ERIC WESTLUND, A-POWER
 KURT SANDERGAARD, A-POWER
 ERNIE TURRA, ASPLUNDH
 LARRY KWAK, ASPLUNDH
 ADAM LEE, BC HYDRO (CHILLIWACK LINEROOM)
 JOHN VANNIEUWLAND, BC HYDRO (COQUITLAM LINEROOM)
 JORDAN GILRAINE, BC HYDRO (COQUITLAM LINEROOM)
 WALT STEIN, BC HYDRO (COQUITLAM LINEROOM)
 COGAN RUCKSTUHL, BC HYDRO (EDMONDS OP CTRE 2)
 DAVE ARNOLD, BC HYDRO (EDMONDS OP CTRE 2)
 GREG STACK, BC HYDRO (EDMONDS OP CTRE 2)
 JASON HOWES, BC HYDRO (EDMONDS OP CTRE 2)
 MARTY BRIGGS, BC HYDRO (EDMONDS OP CTRE 2)
 PAUL LU, BC HYDRO (GANGES DO)
 JOHN PETTIGREW, BC HYDRO (LM TRANSMISSION)
 MIKE McMINN, BC HYDRO (LMS-1 LINEROOM)
 KAREN PORTER, BC HYDRO (RUSKIN GS)
 IAN HOAG, DAVEY TREE
 TROY HUDSON, DAVEY TREE
 CHARLIE BRIDAL, EITI (PRE-APP)
 DEACON MARSHALL, EITI (PRE-APP)
 JASON SOMERVILLE, EITI (PRE-APP)
 JOSH WAHL, EITI (PRE-APP)
 MIKE KENNEDY, EITI (PRE-APP)
 RANDAL ADAM, EITI (PRE-APP)
 RANDY WERTZ, EITI (PRE-APP)
 ROGER DAWSON, EITI (PRE-APP)
 TREVOR STACK, EITI (PRE-APP)
 TRISTAN ARNOLD, EITI (PRE-APP)
 DAVE WATTS, EITI INSTRUCTOR
 JIM HINDS, EITI INSTRUCTOR
 REG MCGRATTEN, EITI INSTRUCTOR
 ROSS DOWNEY, EITI INSTRUCTOR
 JOHN STERRIKER, JACO POWERLINES
 DUSTIN PALOPOSKI, TRANSPOWER
 GRANT MUIR, TRANSPOWER
 JOEL BATCH, VALLEY POWER



Photos from top: 1. Unit 2 Chair Gerry Pope chats with a volunteer at EITI's 2nd Annual Expo. 2. Prospective students take an opportunity to experience climbing. 3. Surrey NDP MLA Harry Bains, left, with Andy Cleven, Training Director, Local 213 IBEW. 4. Brady Prentice, left, former Local 258 IBEW ABM takes a moment to speak with a possible new recruit. 5. Davey Tree utility arborists at their display booth with volunteers and Local 258 IBEW members and Shop Steward Troy Hudson and Ian Hoag. 6. An exciting and rewarding career in the electrical utility industry awaits those who are willing and able.

Traffic management needs at Canada Line bring increased hiring
IBEW members at Valley Traffic elect two additional Shop Stewards



Assistant Business Manager Susan Longva, left, and Shop Stewards Debbie Wright, center, and Lisa Welland, right, work on behalf of Local 258 members working for Valley Traffic in the lower mainland.

A very well attended union meeting at the Days Inn in Surrey saw over 40 Local 258 IBEW members working for Valley Traffic come out to participate in the meeting that concluded with two additional Shop Stewards being elected as a result of increased hiring on the Canada Line project in Vancouver.



Local 258 IBEW members welcomed Sister Catie Norris, left and Sister Bev Tarrance as the two additional Shop Stewards who will be working with their union sisters and brothers on the Canada Line construction project in Vancouver.

Assistant Business Manager Susan Longva organized the meeting at the request of the members as many of the workers felt that additional Shop Stewards were necessary due to the increased workload on this long term project. IBEW members Catie Norris and Bev Tarrance were acclaimed as the two additional Shop Stewards on the Canada Line jobsite in Vancouver and join Shop Stewards Debbie Wright and Lisa Welland who work on behalf of their union sisters and brothers at Valley Traffic.

IBEW 258 Business Manager Doug McKay attended the meeting and spoke with the members, acknowledging the safety concerns in this dangerous field of work. "The union is here to work for you," he said. "Our main concern is your safety and we urge you to report

any safety concerns you may have, especially any 'near misses' that happen on the jobsite. If we don't know about your issues, we aren't able to bring them forward to get solutions. You are the union, and working together we can bring your issues forward with the employer to ensure the collective agreement is enforced, and to play a significant role in lobbying government officials and WorkSafeBC in improving, reinforcing and ensuring safety standards are met."

Members in attendance were notified of the meeting in advance and the turn out was exceptional. Assistant Business Manager Longva reminded members that if their mailing address has changed, they have to notify the union. "If you change your mailing address, you have to notify the union dir-

ectly - don't assume that your employer is going to do this for you. The union office can only contact you through the information we have and if you have moved and not given us your new address, we can't inform you of meetings like this," she said.

Sister Longva and Shop Steward Wright also informed the members that their employer has arbitrarily increased some wage rates on the job, which they can do under the current collective agreement, but that the increase has not been secured with the union in a letter of agreement. "We will be sitting down with the employer next week to ensure that this arbitrary wage increase is formally recognized, as an employer can take this action to increase wages, but if it is not secured by an addition to the collective agreement in the form



Local 258 IBEW members working for Valley Traffic in the lower mainland took a moment to pose for a photo at their recent union meeting held in Surrey.

of a letter of agreement, it can be just as easily taken away by the employer. We will notify the members of this bargaining unit when the letter is secured, including the details,” Longva advised.

Other issues brought up during the meeting included concerns about favouritism on the job site, seniority issues and employer-paid parking. Members expressed their concerns about safety issues and the question was asked - if there is an unsafe situation on the jobsite, can a worker refuse to perform the work? Both McKay and Longva strenuously advised that every worker has the right to refuse unsafe work. “The procedure should be followed of informing the employer of the unsafe situation and to also keep your Shop Steward informed, especially if there is no satisfactory resolution to the situation,” said Business Manager McKay.

“The union can also be contacted directly about unsafe working conditions,” he continued, and both Brother McKay and Sister Longva distributed their business cards to those in attendance with their contact information.

McKay stressed, “I am available directly by cell phone every day, so please don’t hesitate to call me directly with any situations you cannot find a satisfactory resolution for.”

Shop Steward Wright spoke about the Traffic Control Persons (TCPs) recertification process, as many members’ certifications as are about to expire. She stated members should be receiving notification in the mail about the TCP recertification requirement and noted those requiring recertification will have to attend a special training class at their local Chamber of Commerce that will involve testing, payment of a recertification fee of \$25 and a new photo to be taken for their certification ID. Classes will be held on the weekends and members were reminded that recertification is mandatory.

Sister Longva concluded the meeting with notice about the union’s website that contains current information about upcoming union meetings and that all members are encouraged to get involved and attend their regular union meetings. ☑

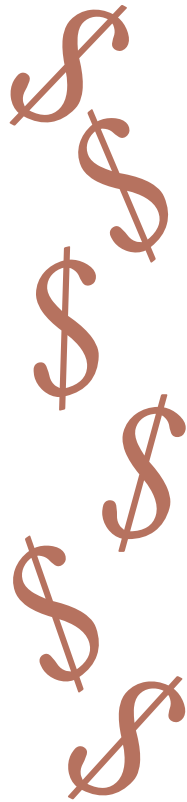
HAVE YOU MOVED?

If you have recently moved, make sure your local union office has your new mailing address.

Contact Local Union 258 IBEW and let us know your new address so we can make sure you continue to receive news alerts, The Hotline newsletter and be notified of current events.

Your employer is not responsible for forwarding your new mailing address in a timely fashion, so please let your union know where you are.

Call the office at 604-520-3305, fax us at 604-522-3371, or e-mail us at ibew@ibew258.bc.ca

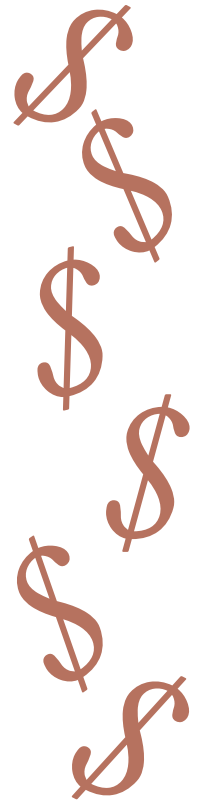


Pensions: What's it to you?

CMG/CALM

Most workers in Canada
have no pension plan.

That means it's entirely up to them to save for the day they want or need to stop working. And many of them know they will have to work long after they'd rather be enjoying their golden years.



That's why unions in Canada have fought hard over the years for pension plans that guarantee employees a certain income after retirement. Workers have exchanged wage increases and other forms of compensation for company pension plans and for a greater sense of security about their old age.

Most company-sponsored plans are called "defined benefit" (DB) plans. That means you are guaranteed a certain income after you retire. That income keeps coming as long as you are alive and it continues for your surviving spouse or partner.

Over the last 20 years, another type of pension, the "defined contribution" (DC) plan, became popular among employers and some workers. In effect, it's an individual savings plan in the form of an RRSP.

The only thing that's guaranteed is how much money the employer and employee contribute. The money is invested in mutual funds or other finan-

cial vehicles and the benefit received at retirement is entirely dependent on how well these investments have done.

Employers tend to find a DC plan attractive because it's relatively easy to cap their costs and because they aren't on the hook if your retirement isn't fully funded.

In a DB plan, the employer is responsible for making sure the plan can pay the retirement benefits owed to employees. The number of private sector DB plans is shrinking.


Defined contribution plans are much riskier for employees than defined benefit plans. Either way, employees contribute money. The difference is that under a DB plan, you know how much you will receive, based on your years of service and your salary.

Under a DC plan, all you know is how much money is in your account at the time you retire.

Research has shown that DC plans tend to give lower returns over time

than defined benefit plans. A recent newsletter from Mercer Human Resources Consulting (one of the largest firms in Canada) says: "The typical DB plan return exceeds the typical DC return by 100 to 200 basis points and sometimes much more."

Some employers in the U.S. are switching back to DB plans from DC plans, recognizing that their own money is better spent on a retirement plan that they know will provide income to their retirees. However, it is still popular for companies in North America to try to put the risk of paying for retirement income on employees by opting for a DC plan.

If you have the opportunity to join a defined benefit plan, you should seriously consider it. If that opportunity does not exist right now in your workplace, talk to your colleagues about the possibility of working toward a defined benefit plan. 

RUMINATIONS OF A RETIREE

by Ken McEwen

The last time I wrote in this space it was early spring and I was plotting a course to Hitchcock, Texas. Some of you may remember that Catherine Dear specified a desire to travel home via Hitchcock, Texas. Actually, what Catherine Dear said was, "Let's stop in and see Angie on the way home". I've already discussed how not on the way home from Indio, California Hitchcock, Texas is. Nonetheless we went to Texas. We had a good trip and a real nice visit with Angie. Sesame, the dog, particularly liked Angie's place because it had a large fenced in backyard eminently suited for exploring.

I learned a couple of things while traveling to and from Hitchcock, Texas. One thing is that there is a lot of flat in Texas. Another thing is that by traveling in the US of A you get to go to a lot of places. Like, to Texas and home we traveled through the states of California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. Some of them twice. If we traveled a comparable distance in Canada we would have been in Saskatchewan, Alberta and BC. That doesn't sound nearly as interesting, does it?

During this travel, while Catherine Dear was having her daily "quiet time" (read nap) I managed to get some ruminating done. One of the things I pondered was age. See, a year or so ago I became sixty-five. Once that happened, a whole bunch of other events flowed. The federal government sent me a nice plastic card with my name on it that says, on the back in small print, "The government of Canada requests that this person be extended all possible privileges." I thought that was pretty nice of the government and now when I go anywhere I always display the card and point out to the clerks and service providers their government's request. Usually I get a nonplussed look in return but every now and again I am extended a possible privilege. Also, the federal government started to give me money under the Old Age Security Act. I do have one minor criticism about that and it is the name. Perhaps one of the privileges I could be extended would be to find a kinder more gentle terminology than "Old Age Security".

Not to be outdone, the provincial government sent me a gold coloured Care Card and said I could ride on the BC Ferries for free Monday through Thursday. They also indicate that fishing licenses cost less and I can renew my driver's license for only \$17.00. The Insurance Corporation of British Columbia sent me a letter urging me to see my Autoplan agent for reduced vehicle insurance costs. It would seem that by becoming sixty-five I also became a much better and safer driver than I was when I was sixty-four.

To ensure that all levels of government get in on the act, the City of New Westminster advised me that my property taxes would be reduced. Although, I kind of think that might be a joint provincial/city effort because it has something to do with a

Homeowner's Grant. However, as I pay my taxes to the city I'll give them the credit for the reduction.

Although I have gratefully accepted all this bounty, my ruminations have led to wonder if it occurs at the wrong end of the scale. Like, when I was a whole bunch younger and raising a family I'm sure I could have used all this financial help a whole lot more.

I seem to have taken up all my available space talking about age related things. That's too bad in a way because I really wanted to discuss the pricing policies of gasoline and cherry producers. Without a lot of in depth rumination it looks to me like they attended the same school. Both commodities display the same wild fluctuations in price for no apparent reason. Well, unless extracting the maximum profit from the consumer's pocket without any increase in production costs is an apparent reason. Oh, oh, it kind of looks like I'm getting started on a rant here. Listen, I'll leave the gasoline and cherry producers until next time.

Elsewhere in this issue will be the results of the recent LU 258 election of officers. I want to thank all those who took part in the election process, candidates, campaigners, counters and voters, for their interest in our Local Union. Our Local Union will be better for your participation.

That's it for this time. Please continue to work and play safely because retirement is good and, at age sixty-five, the governments will give some of your money back. 📧



Working with HYDRECS

IBEW members help raise money for BC Children's Hospital charity



LOCAL 258

IBEW



IBEW 258 members donated their time to make a presentation on behalf of HYDRECS, the charitable fundraising arm of BC Hydro employees and retirees, to the BC Children's Hospital at the Miracle Weekend Telethon held in June, 2006. A cheque for \$41,350 was

presented by IBEW members in photo above, Doug Swoboda, Robbie Duke, Kevin Duchak from the Coquitlam/Maple Ridge line room, Sherry Ernst and Mark Davison. Members in others photos were not identified.

More than 170 years of service combined

LOCAL 258

IBEW



Congratulations to long term Local 258 IBEW members who together have more than 170 years of service combined. From left are Brother Gerry Fox who was awarded his 55 year service certificate by Brother Leon Arishenkoff, Unit 3 Chair; Percy Cooley was awarded his 60 year certificate and Brothers Gerry Livesey and Randy Quackenbush were awarded 30 year and 25 year service pins respectively.

2006 Labour Participation

United Way campaigns set to begin



United Way

The 2006 United Way campaigns are starting up and will be running through the fall. United Way believes strong communities create good opportunities for all its' constituents – United Way of Canada's mission statement is "To improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action".

Organized Labour shares that mission, and understands that we must continuously strive to create a society where social services are accessible, universal and of the highest quality. Because of these shared principles, the Canadian Labour Congress and the United Way of Canada (Centraide Canada) formed a partnership relationship in 1988. Both parties have committed to ten shared principles, outlining the ways in which they will work together to make the vision of healthy communities a reality.

In addition, the Labour Participation Department of the United Way has developed the Union Counselling programs, helping workers help co-workers on and off the job. United Way is the only charitable organization that the Canadian Labour Congress has partnered with, and this is an important distinction for each of us to consider when we look for charities to fund.

When you make your decisions this year about how you will contribute to your community, please think about this synergy, and donate to an organization that shares your beliefs and your principles. Give what you can, and take pride in knowing that you are helping to keep your community strong.

If you don't yet have a United Way Campaign in your workplace, please contact Michelle Laurie in the Union Office to start one this year. To find out more about United Way and the Labour Partnership on the internet, visit <http://www1.unitedway.ca/sites/PortalEN/CLC.aspx>.

Your opportunity to speak out

The provincial government is inviting British Columbians to share their thoughts and ideas on how to structure a tax credit program aimed at addressing the province's skills shortage.

In a press release dated July 6, 2006, the Ministry of Finance announced they are welcoming views and opinions about the impediments to skilled trades training in British Columbia. Interested parties are invited to visit the consultation website at www.fin.gov.bc.ca/scp/tp/tcp.htm which features a discussion paper (in English, Chinese and Punjabi) and an online form for providing input.

A summary of the consultations and submissions will be posted on the Ministry of Finance's website once the consultations are complete.

<http://www.ibew258.bc.ca>

Your
union
website



Did you know your local union has a website?

Local 258 IBEW has had a presence on the internet since 2002. The union's website contains current information about your union's activities and includes contact information. You can also find out when & where your local union meetings are.

So take a moment and visit your union website. We welcome your participation.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for the website, please contact the webmaster at hotline@shaw.ca

LABOUR DAY QUIZ

Test your Canadian labour history savvy

#1

The “workingman’s holiday” was first celebrated by trade unions in 1882. When did the Canadian government make Labour Day a national holiday: 1884? 1894? 1924?

#2

In 1872, the Prime Minister passed the Trade Unions Act making it legal to form unions. In part, his motivation was to undermine Liberals such as George Brown, who had opposed strikes calling for a nine-hour workday. Who was this Prime Minister?

#3

In 1881, children as young as nine worked a 12-hour day for 20 cents in Toronto. How much of the city’s workforce did children comprise: three per cent? 11 per cent? 17 per cent?

#4

Between 1880 and 1882, 17,000 labourers were brought from China to build the Canadian Pacific Railway’s passage through the Rockies. How many workers died during the building of this section: 500? 2,000? 4,000?

#5

In 1898, Canada’s Trades and Labour Congress called for radical social change with a platform that included which of the following: Free compulsory education for all? A minimum wage? Public ownership of railways, telegraphs, waterworks and hydro? Abolition of the Senate?

#6

A 1912 strike by 20,000 women textile workers in Lawrence, Mass., gave rise to a song that has become the anthem of women in Canada’s labour movement. What is the song’s name?

#7

What was the daily pay of Canadian soldiers in the First World War battlefields: \$1.10? \$2.30? \$3.20?

#8

In the early 1900s, all provinces except Prince Edward Island required employers to compensate workers who were injured on the job. Ontario introduced the first Workmen’s Compensation Act to provide government compensation for injured workers in what year: 1914? 1934? 1954?

#9

In 1909, Sir Wilfrid Laurier created a separate department of labour, saying it was “rendered necessary by the ever-growing dignity and importance of labour questions and labour problems.” Whom did he appoint as the first deputy minister of labour: Sir Oliver Mowat? Clifford Sifton? William Lyon Mackenzie King?

#10

In 1919, prices were rising much faster than wages. Workers in one of Canada’s largest cities went on strike demanding higher wages, fewer working hours and union recognition. The city was shut down for six weeks and two strikers were killed during demonstrations. What was the strike’s name?

#11

The Old Age Pensions Act introduced by the federal government offered a maximum yearly pension of \$240. It was restricted to seniors whose income, including pension benefits, was less than \$365 per year. When were the first old age pensions introduced: 1927? 1937? 1944?

#12

During the Great Depression, 28 per cent of Canadians were unemployed. While US President Franklin D. Roosevelt established massive job-creating public-works programs, Canada set up work camps, primarily in British Columbia. Faced with deteriorating conditions and scandalous misuse of funds by administrators, camp workers organized an “On to Ottawa Trek.” They were met in Regina by the prime minister but when talks broke down, organizers were arrested during demonstrations. Who was the Prime Minister?

#13

For black men in Canada, it was one of the only occupations that offered steady employment. For 50 years, the job was entirely filled by black men. It was not until Canada's Fair Employment Practices Act was passed in 1953 that they won the right to be promoted to other jobs and supervisory positions. Who were they?

#14

Canada was the last Western industrialized nation to introduce unemployment insurance. When was it introduced: 1930? 1940? 1960?

#15

In 1944, Prime Minister Mackenzie King passed a law giving workers the right to form a union and requiring employers to bargain with that union. That year, Saskatchewan's newly elected government gave its own employees the same right. What was the name of the provincial party?

#16

From 1948 through 1952, efforts to form a union at one of Canada's department stores ended with the union losing by a handful of votes. In 1952, employees of Dupuis Frères department store in Montreal won a union vote. What was the name of the department store that defeated the union?

#17

Saskatchewan premier Tommy Douglas introduced Canada's first public health-care program. Following a royal commission headed by Emmett Hall, the federal government faced down opposition from businesses, insurance companies and doctors to introduce a national medicare program in what year: 1958? 1962? 1966?

#18

In 1951, the International Labour Federation called on governments to provide equal remuneration to men and women for work of equal value. Prior to the introduction of the Canadian Human Rights Act and its Equal Wages Guidelines (1977-78), what province had already adopted the principle of pay equity in its Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms in 1975?

#19

On October 14, 1976, the Canadian Labour Congress led a national protest over an act introduced by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. More than a million workers stayed off the job because the measure imposed limits on the ability of unions to negotiate wages. What was the measure?

#20

In 1988, the labour movement opposed a specific plan proposed by prime minister Brian Mulroney, saying that it would open the door to lower labour standards in wages and working conditions and reduce the rights to unionize and bargain collectively. The ensuing public debate went to the very core of Canadians' rights to decide their future. What was the government's proposal?

CHECK THE UNION'S WEBSITE AT WWW.IBEW258.BC.CA FOR LABOUR DAY EVENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY! REMEMBER, THIS YEAR LABOUR DAY IS MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4.

- QUIZ ANSWERS**
1. 1894
 2. John A. Macdonald
 3. 11 per cent
 4. 4,000
 5. All of them
 6. Bread and Roses
 7. \$1.10
 8. 1914
 9. William Lyon Mackenzie King
 10. Winnipeg General Strike
 11. 1927
 12. R.B. Bennett
 13. Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters
 14. 1940
 15. Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF)
 16. Eatons
 17. 1966
 18. Quebec
 19. Wage and price controls
 20. Free trade agreement
- This quiz was prepared by the Toronto and York Region Labour Council.

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

LOCAL 258

IBEW 258 AFFILIATED WITH THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS - INTERNATIONAL UNION OF LABOR & CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS & CANADIAN LABOR UNION PAT. OFF. REG. U. S.



The Fernie Line Crew, from left, Dave Berard, Bill Laible, Butch Pedersen and Bruce Orr.



Brother Bert Simpson received his sixty year service certificate and a visit from IBEW 258 Assistant Business Manager Dan Klassen, left, and Unit #4 Chair Tom Greenwell. Brother Simpson worked as a sub-foreman in Nanaimo prior to his retirement.



Unit 4 Chair Tom Greenwell welcomes Brother Don Reid as he is initiated into the union. Don works in Duncan as a Pre-Apprentice.



Brother Glen Christopherson was awarded his 50 year service certificate when Unit #3 Chair Leon Arishenkoff visited as Glen was enjoying his retirement.



Brother Ernest Jackson, left, was recently awarded his long term service certificate by Unit #4 Chair Tom Greenwell.



Brother Dennis Noel, left, received his 15 year service pin award from Unit 6 Chair Robert Abernethy at the Surrey union meeting held in March, 2006.



Brother John Syrette and Brother Dave McLaren recently retired from working as storemen in Nanaimo. John was initiated into the union in 1968 and Dave was initiated in 1965. Congratulations on your retirement!



Long time union member John Vickers was visited at his home in Saanich recently by Unit #4 Chair Tom Greenwell and was awarded a sixty year service certificate. Brother Vickers worked as an operator at Jordan River prior to his retirement.



Brother Shane Holgrem received his 10 year service pin from Unit 6 Chair Bob Abernethy at the Surrey meeting held in April of this year.



A lot of time is standing here together. These union brothers were awarded their 25 year service pins at the Surrey union meeting held in February of this year. Left to right are Doug Stewart, Ken Irwin (Shop Chaplain) and Kurt Hofer.



Brother Doug Fulcher, right, worked as a cableman in Victoria prior to his retirement and recently received his 55 year service pin and certificate from Unit #4 Chair Tom Greenwell.



Congratulations on your retirement to Brother Harry Dorwood, left and Brother Frank Link, right. The Nanaimo Lineroom will not be the same!



Brother Karl Townie, above on left, was awarded his 25 year service pin from Unit 6 Chair Bob Abernethy at the Chilliwack union meeting in April, 2006.



FOR MORE PHOTOS VISIT WWW.IBEW258.BC.CA

LABOUR NEWS

BC Fed takes a stand on Harper/Emerson softwood deal

Nothing for BC's forest communities, \$450 million for US communities in Softwood Pact

July 5, 2006 — "BC's communities are missing from the proposed Softwood Lumber Agreement while Americans have allocated \$450 million dollars from duties paid by Canada to assist forest dependant communities in the United States," says BC Federation of Labour Secretary-Treasurer Angela Schira.

"Labour has been calling for all of

those duties to be returned to Canada with a significant portion dedicated to helping Canadian forest communities," Schira said. "Instead of ensuring a fair deal that invests in BC's forest communities, communities and workers alike have been completely ignored."

Under Article XIII of the agreement \$450 million dollars will be spent in the


US on projects including: "educational and charitable causes in timber reliant communities, initiatives related to low-income housing and disaster relief, and educational and public-interest projects addressing forest management issues." The Agreement creates no such funds for forest communities in Canada nor is there any requirement that duties returned to Canada are actually invested by forest companies in Canada.

Forest unions also dismissed any notion that more contentious aspects of the deal could be ironed out over the summer. "This deal doesn't need tweaking, it needs a complete rewrite," said United Steelworkers Western Canadian Director Steve Hunt.

Hunt also expressed concern that the proposed Agreement was part of a "sell-out strategy." "If this is what Bush-Harper talks have achieved, then we'd prefer continued litigation, rather than a Softwood Lumber Agreement that might only last a few years and gives up provincial sovereignty over forest policy," he said.

Despite earlier pronouncements that the proposed Agreement would benefit BC, this past weekend BC's provincial government was forced to publicly reject the Softwood deal.

While the BC government has now indicated it will not support the deal, Schira expressed concern that both the federal and BC governments have failed to consult with the very workers and communities who are directly impacted by the proposed Agreement.

"Forest workers and their communities will bear the brunt of whatever these politicians agree to, yet they have been ignored as the draft Agreement has been passed around corporate and government backrooms." 

Background—Softwood Lumber Agreement

The fundamentals of the Agreement signed on the weekend by Minister David Emerson and the US Trade Representative are basically the same as announced in April:

- Canada forfeits \$1 billion of the illegally collected duties in the US; \$4 billion is returned, but not until after November 2006.
- Tariffs are replaced with a border tax that increases as price decreases or a combination tax/quota system. The tax/quota system is "not commercially viable" – for example, the deal suggests a monthly, regional assignment of quotas, which is highly unpredictable, especially for the smaller players.
- We are ceding our sovereignty to the US, who would have oversight over Canadian (provincial) forest policy as it relates to softwood lumber pricing.
- The term for this "new" deal is 7 years. However after 23-months an "opt-out" clause allows either party to serve notice they wish to "opt-out" of the deal. This would take effect 13 months after giving notice. In effect, either country can cancel the deal after 3 years – despite previous statements from the Prime Minister and Minister Emerson for a "long-term" Agreement that would be 7 years, plus a potential two-year extension.
- Article XIII of the Agreement provides \$450 million in funds, (from the \$1 billion forfeited) to forest-dependant communities in the United States. Projects potentially funded could include "educational and charitable causes in timber-reliant communities; initiatives related to low-income housing and disaster relief; and educational and public-interest projects addressing forest management issues."
- There is no such commitment for Canadian forest communities. In fact, there is no requirement that any duties returned to forest companies in Canada, actually be invested in Canada.

The hurdles to the deal taking effect are:

- Canadian companies representing 95 percent of the duties on deposit in the US must ratify the Agreement;
- All Canadian companies must withdraw legal action related to the dispute (recall that over 80 new lawsuits were filed by Canadian companies in late May and early June); and
- Passage of a "ways & means" motion in Canadian Parliament to permit the collection of the border tax.

The BC government and industry issued a "joint" statement saying "the current draft Agreement has not met some of our key requirements. We will, therefore, not be able to offer our support." However, other industry sources have said there is still a "two-month" window to make changes in the deal.

It's been a busy and politically charged spring – starting with a lobby to the Provincial Legislature in April over worker health and safety issues. About 30 activists from unions across the province came together to talk to our MLAs about occupational health and safety regulations, as well as the problems with our workers' compensation and appeal systems. The government's goal to reduce regulations, in the midst of a period when employment, particularly in the construction sector is booming, is a recipe for disaster for workers.

Last year, 188 workers died because of workplace accident or exposure – the highest number in 25 years. Of those, 11 were young workers – another statistic that has been on the rise for the past few years. Obviously, removing regulations and allowing employers to be self-regulating is not working. We asked our elected representatives to demand more enforcement, to bolster the WCB so that they have the resources to monitor workplaces and create effective prevention programs. At the same time, we asked to have loss of earnings pensions for permanently injured workers re-instated, and for a review of the current appeal system that seems bent on denying workers' benefits. Some of the MLAs seemed surprised at the statistics we presented and I believe they did learn something. Still, this provincial government is not predisposed to taking advice from Labour.



Sister Michelle Laurie was asked to participate in a promotional video being produced for HYDRECS. She is shown here being videotaped while attending the 2nd Annual EITI Expo in June as she provided a comment on behalf of the union.

In May, I traveled with a large delegation of Building Trades members to Ottawa to lobby Members of Parliament on issues regarding construction workers with a focus on apprenticeship issues. Once again, we were dealing with a government that is not known for being Labour-friendly, however, we were able to meet with over 200 MPs in the two days we were there. Our specific requests were for EI breaks for workers who have to travel to a different city to work – some financial assistance to acknowledge that they may have a home to look after, as well as accommodation where the work is. The government's recent budget did

From the Back Corner

Report from
Michelle Laurie,
President, Local 258 IBEW



provide allowances for employers who indenture apprentices – we asked that this be tied to advancement or completion, to prevent employers from starting apprentices to get the grant, but not following through with the actual training allowing the apprentice to become certified. Also included in the budget was a plan for a tool allowance for apprentices; unfortunately, the government is suggesting that the employer must write a letter before this will be paid, and we argued that this was not fair treatment for the apprentice.

Finally, of course, we had our own elections in the Local Union. Thanks very much to all those who were willing to take positions to represent their brothers and sisters, and thanks to each of you that took the time to participate in the process by voting for the candidates you felt were best suited to take on those roles. For myself, thank you for stating your confidence by allowing me to continue for another term. I hope that I will meet your expectations, and look forward to accomplishing some critical initiatives this term with our new Executive. First, our bylaws are outmoded and need to be reviewed and updated; second, I would like to create orientation packages for new members, as well as for newly elected members. Of course, I will continue to work on your behalf with WCB issues and appeals as well.

Special thanks to our Election Judge, Brother Ken McEwen for overseeing (with calm and professionalism) both of our recent elections, and to the brothers who gave up their time to count the ballots - Dan Giesbrecht Sr., Burke Lundy, Frank Neilson, Teemu Rautiala, Brian Gourley, George Carter, Murray MacDonald, Bob Merrison, Gene Bougie and Doug Henning.

I hope that you all enjoy a safe and fire-free summer, and find time to get away from work with family and friends. ☑



SAFETY FIRST

If you don't think it's right
and you don't think it's safe

DON'T DO IT

*THE UNION OF
HEARTS AND MINDS*

LOCAL 258

IBEW



RETURN UNDELIVERABLE
CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO:
7535 SIXTH STREET,
BURNABY, BC V3N 3M2

