



HOTLINE

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER
PUBLICATION OF
LOCAL 258 IBEW
SUMMER, 2007

LOCAL 258, INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS, BRITISH COLUMBIA



IBEW members gather at National Day of Mourning ceremonies honouring workers injured or killed on the job.

With rising public concerns and increasing worker injury rates...

Has government policy put workplace safety at risk?

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 **IBEW DELEGATES ATTEND MANUFACTURING CONFERENCE & LOBBY MPS IN OTTAWA**

 **NEGOTIATIONS UNDERWAY AROUND BC**



HOTLINE Summer 2007

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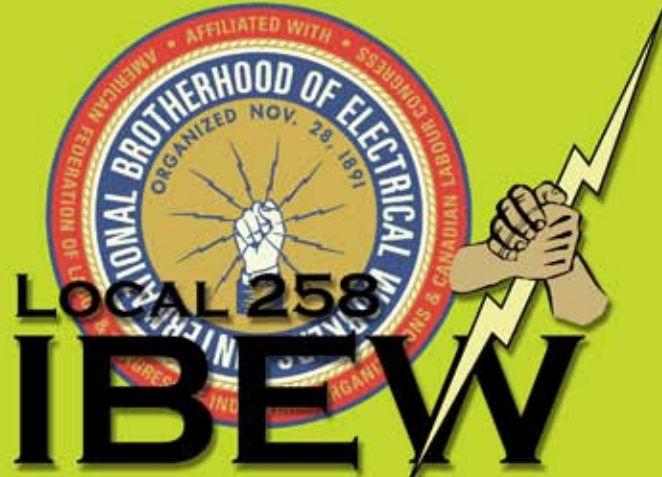
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THE UNION OF HEARTS AND MINDS

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FRONT COVER PHOTO: Worker safety continues to come under attack with rising public concerns about increasing worker injury rates. Members of Locals 258 and 213 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers joined with community members at the Day of Mourning Ceremonies in Bear Creek Park, Surrey, BC, on April 28th this year, to honour workers injured or killed on the job or who have suffered as a result of occupational illness. The question is asked — has government policy put workplace safety at risk? See story page 10.

Cover photo by Michelle Boudreau.

VIEWPOINT from your Business Manager Doug McKay

When the annual report came out from the Workers Compensation Board (WCB) this year, my stomach turned — nearly a billion dollar surplus, yet workers' who are injured on the job are finding it more and more difficult to access benefits, rehabilitation and pensions. And to make matters worse, more cuts to safety regulations are in the works. Granted, some of the planned changes are improvements, but many will have a negative effect of putting more workers at risk of injury in the workplace.

Safety is and has always been a priority for IBEW. This year, we attended the Day of Mourning ceremonies held throughout BC alongside our union brothers and sisters honouring workers killed or injured on the job. Sadly, serious injuries and deaths continue to happen in the workplace, and workers continue to develop illnesses related to their jobs. I can go on and quote statistics, but you'll find them elsewhere in this issue of The Hotline.

The cuts and changes made to the WCB in recent years by the provincial Liberal government have had a disastrous effect on working people in this province, and include: eligibility restrictions for workers injured on the job; reductions in disability pensions and services for injured workers; closure of the rehabilitation facility in Richmond; fewer inspectors to monitor workplaces; cutbacks in staffing to process claims, and; the closure of satellite offices across the province. And then there's the name change — from the Workers Compensation Board to "WorkSafe BC", an interesting marketing strategy.

The recent tragedy with the farmworkers is a reflection of some of the changes that have taken place at the WCB. Innocent labourers, stuffed into an unsafe, overcrowded van transporting them to their workplace, saw their vehicle flip over on the highway and three of the women inside were killed, with more than a dozen injured. We all asked, how could this happen? Pressure put on the business-friendly provincial government by the agriculture industry contributed to the deterioration of safety regulations and employment standards that used to protect these workers — the very people who harvest our locally grown food — because it was costing the producers "too much money" for their workers to be safe. When it comes to safety, no amount of money can replace somebody who doesn't come home from work at the end of the day. Just ask their grieving families and loved ones left behind to mourn their loss.

Even though there are, unfortunately, accidents that do happen no matter what precautions are taken, safety standards that focus on accident prevention are worth every penny they cost to enforce. Human nature shows that when people are left to their own devices, they tend to take shortcuts. If there are no rules, or if there is no enforcement of those rules, people will get hurt — it's a given.

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

Proper workplace safety training and reinforcement of safety standards and regulations with legitimate penalties for those companies that don't comply is a vital component of healthy and safe workplaces. We do our part as union members in reinforcing safety training and participating on joint occupational health & safety committees, but it appears our elected government officials are not doing their jobs. When they cave in to industry pressures and allow cuts to be made to the very health & safety regulations and enforcement whose purpose is to ensure worker safety, it is working people who will bear the personal cost at the end of the day.

But where is the voice of labour in all of this? Well, we in labour are invited to the table as a stakeholder in worker safety issues more often, even if we are not listened to, but we are continuing to fight, and speaking out and demanding to be heard. We are showing up at the hearings and we are making our submissions and recommendations, and we are lobbying. When health and safety regulation is being created, amended or removed, working people must have their voices heard and be active participants in the discussions — business alone cannot be allowed to control this agenda.

In closing, please remember to work safe and enjoy the rest of the spring and the summer. 



We've Got Mail!

Dear Doug McKay;

It is with great pleasure I receive the \$7,500 cheque from your membership. With your permission I will direct these funds to support our Burn & Wound Healing Laboratory. The BC Firefighters Burn & Wound Healing Lab is led by Dr. Aziz Ghahary, who is an internationally renowned researcher who we recently recruited. Dr. Ghahary's research is looking at new ways to solve the problems of healing and scarring, particularly as it relates to burns.

As I am sure you are aware, there are a significant number of work related electrical injuries treated in the Burn Unit each year. Dr. Ghahary's research will be of great significance to alleviating the suffering of these types of injuries in the future.

I invite you to tour the Burn Unit as well as the Burn & Wound Healing Lab and to meet myself and Dr. Ghahary at some point in the near future. Please extend my thanks and warmest regards to your membership.

Yours sincerely,

Nicholas J. Carr, MD

Head, Division of Plastic Surgery, University of British Columbia

Dear Michelle,

I'd like to thank you for donating your time to instruct at the 2007 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.

Again, many thanks from the Canadian Labour Congress and the 2007 Winter School students for donating your time to labour education. We all appreciate it.

In Solidarity,

David Rice

Regional Director

CLC Pacific Region



Dear Sister Michelle Laurie,
Thanks to your Local for the very generous donation to the Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC (COSCO).

We will continue to be an advocacy for all seniors on any legislation that impacts on them.

In Solidarity,

Ernie Bayer,

Surrey, BC

Editor's Note: For more information about the COSCO BC, please visit their website at www.coscobc.ca.

Dear Sister Michelle,

Thank you for your recent \$500 contribution to the BC Federation of Labour Raise the Rates appeal. We understand the financial pressures faced by all our affiliates and very much appreciate the generosity we find when we seek support for causes like these.

Thank you again and rest assured that your contribution will be put to good use.

In solidarity

Angela Schira

Secretary-Treasurer, BC Federation of Labour

To all at IBEW,

Thank you so much for the beautiful flowers and for thinking of our family at such a sad time.

Sincerely,

The Duchak Family

Dear IBEW 258,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and the IBEW Local 258 for the golf shirts and hats sent to the South Interior Control Center for the 2007

Bonspiel. The gifts were greatly accepted and put to good use at the social evening. Thanks for your support.

Fraternally yours,

Tim Read and SIC

Dear Michelle Laurie,

On behalf of the Killarney Community Schools Team, I would like to thank the IBEW for their generous donation of \$200. The money will be used to help run our summer reading program, "Rec and Reading".

We run this program on a very tight budget. We receive no dedicated funds, so each year we must find funding in a variety of places in order for the program to run. Your donation of \$200 will help us a great deal.

The program is designed to help children in grade one who are not yet meeting reading expectations. They spend the month of July in the "Rec and Reading" program. The mornings are spent working on literacy and the afternoons are for recreational activities. We have seen great results. By the end of the summer, each child has gone up an average of 2 reading levels, and more importantly, parents report that most children show a greater interest in reading.

I have enclosed a brochure about the "Rec and Reading" Program. If you have any further questions, please feel free to call me.

Once again, thank you very much for the donation.

Sincerely

Colleen Dickie

Community Schools Coordinator

Killarney Community Schools Team



Dear Brothers & Sisters:

I am writing to express our deep appreciation for your contribution of \$200.00 to the 2006 Labour Christmas Dinner. This 11th annual event was another outstanding success, with more than 3,000 turkey dinners served to low-income families in Vancouver and Whalley. We were able to provide more than 600 food hampers and literally hundreds of toys.

A special note this year in Vancouver was the string quartet made up of members of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. Their music made it truly a special evening for everyone. This Christmas event would not be possible without the contributions of many unions, their employers and several hundred volunteers. Someday we hope society is organized so that all British Columbians can look forward to a Christmas without hunger or homelessness. Until that day comes we expect to continue the Labour Dinner and thank you once again for your help in making this possible.

In Solidarity,

Jim Sinclair, President

Angela Schira, Secretary-Treasurer

BC Federation of Labour

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 info@ibew258.bc.ca

Dear Doug McKay,

On behalf of the team, I would like to extend a thank you for the sponsorship money for our tournament.

A great time was had by all. Although we didn't do so well in the standings, we took the kids out for pizza on the Saturday night. The funds were used to pay for the food. Everyone enjoyed the bonding time.

Sunday's drive home was a little hectic in the snow storm. All the participants made it home safe.

Thanks again for your continued support.
Brother Denis Levesque

LOCAL 258
IBEW



BARGAINING REPORTS

Bargaining season underway in manufacturing and traffic control components

By Susan Longva

Assistant Business Manager, Local 258, IBEW

The past few months have been very busy with bargaining for many of our members who work in the manufacturing industry and traffic control components, with a number of collective agreements reaching their expiry dates at the end of March.

The bargaining committee representing members working at **Schneider Electric Canada** in Richmond, BC, have been meeting with the employer since April and have been engaged in difficult negotiations with fighting off concessions being demanded by the company. Claiming they need to "cut costs by twenty percent", the company has told the bargaining committee that even though they are making a profit at the Richmond location, the company shareholders are demanding more.

With the employer unwilling to

budge, the bargaining committee decided it was necessary to go straight to the membership and take a strike vote to show this employer that we are in serious negotiations and will not accept concessions. A strike vote was taken on April 30 with 94% in favour of taking strike action to back their demands for fair increases in wages, benefits and pensions.

Both sides are scheduled to return to the bargaining table in mid-June.

Twenty-four members of Local 258 work at Schneider. Many thanks to bargaining committee members Simon Creamer and Roland Soehm.

Congratulations to members working at **Interior Traffic Control** in Penticton who have ratified a one-year rollover of their collective agreement featuring wage increases.

On Annacis Island, members working at **Hobart Food Equipment** are negotiating a new collective agreement. Both sides have met to exchange proposals at the end of April and further meetings are scheduled at the end of May. Workers at this plant repair industrial food equipment and are seeking improvements to their wages, benefits and pension. Many thanks to bargaining committee members Mike Hatada and Bud Omstead.

Bargaining is also underway for members working in manufacturing at **Allied Controls** in Burnaby, **Eaton Electrical** in Delta, **Western System Controls** in Kelowna, **Canadian Process & Control** in Port Moody, and in the traffic control division at **Deb's Flagging Company** in Kamloops. 📧

Contract updates from Vancouver Island

By Dan Klassen, Assistant Business Manager

A new collective agreement has been reached for IBEW members working at **Island Traffic** when they voted to accept a new three-year agreement that has wage increases totaling 13 percent. They also negotiated a new benefits package. Congratulations to these members who work in traffic control.

A tentative agreement has been reached at **Davey Tree**. The negotiated agreement includes wage increases of 10½% over three-years and increases for out of town costs and vacation. An employer funded rehabilitation fund was also achieved. Members will be voting on this agreement in the near future.

Many thanks to Dan Giesbrecht who assisted with these negotiations. 📧

35 YEAR SERVICE PINS AWARDED



Congratulations to Brother Dave Gordon, shown above in photo on left, and to Brother Gord Simpson, shown above in photo on right, who were awarded 35 year service pins at the Unit 4 meeting in Victoria. They are shown here with Brother Dan Klassen, Assistant Business Manager with the union.

BARGAINING REPORTS

BCTC negotiations prove challenging

By **Jim Greenwell**
Senior Assistant Business Manager

Members working at the **British Columbia Transmission Corporation (BCTC)** have rejected an agreement presented to them as a result of negotiations that have been taking place since the winter. The contract expired at the end of March this year.


About 100 IBEW members work at BCTC, the Crown corporation responsible for the planning, operation and maintenance of the province's publicly-owned electrical power transmission system. These skilled professionals operate BC's high-voltage electricity grid, ensuring the transmission system receives power from generating stations and is delivered throughout the province.

The planned restructuring of BCTC, with the closure of offices around the province and the centralization of the control centre in Langley and backup centre in Vernon and associated changes to member's traditional working conditions and job descriptions, is the bone of contention in this set of negotiations. Contract language surrounding these changes have

been proven difficult to negotiate with the added problems related the PSEC guidelines. The members rejected the company's offer by a margin of 97% at a vote counted on May 4.

In rejecting the contract, members also eliminated the public sector bonus payment offered by the Campbell Liberal government as an incentive to ensure labour peace through the 2010 Olympic Games being held in British Columbia.

Bargaining committee members Dave Herrington, Tim Reid, Doug Buchanan and Bill Major have demonstrated a great deal of integrity in these negotiations. We have since met again with the employer and are waiting a response before deciding on our next best steps.

The union would like to thank the hard working members at BCTC who have shown their support for the bargaining committee during this difficult round of bargaining. Members will be kept informed by the union on the progress of the negotiations. 



Brother Jim Greenwell, Senior Assistant Business Manager with Local 258, shown above on the left, congratulates Brother Gaetan Myre from Unit 6 and awards him with an honorary plaque on the occasion of his retirement.

Members sign new agreement at Asplundh

By **Dan Giesbrecht**, Assistant Business Manager

IBEW members working at **Asplundh Canada**, with local offices based in Aldergrove, ratified a new collective agreement by a margin of 79% in a vote taken on May 7.

The new three-year contract features 3.5% annual wage increases over the term of the agreement. The bargaining committee also achieved improvements to the benefit package that includes increases for board, lodging and meals for out of town work.

The skilled professionals who work at Asplundh provide tree trimming, right-of-way clearing and maintenance as part of the services they provide to the electrical utility industry. About 100 members of IBEW work at Asplundh throughout the province.

Many thanks to bargaining committee members Ernie Turra and Lee Oldam and Assistant Business Manager Dan Klassen.



**Attention all
Local 258 IBEW
A members**

**This is a reminder to all *A* members to update your beneficiary information for your International Pension when there is a change in your personal status. Please contact Janice or Eileen at the Union office in Burnaby for further information or if you have any questions.
Phone: 604-520-3305
Toll Free: 1-877-520-3305**

Canadian contingent meets at international conference

IBEW addresses strains on manufacturing industry that's affecting membership

By Susan Longva, Assistant Business Manager

IBEW members representing their Union brothers and sisters who work in the electrical manufacturing component of our union across Canada and the United States gathered recently to review and discuss the challenges facing our members who work in this industry, as opportunities for revitalization are on the horizon.

The IBEW, as a result of a significant commitment made at our International Convention last year, is working to realign our resources and shore up the erosion of union work that has faced our members in the manufacturing industry.


Members of the Canadian caucus met under the leadership of Chuck McKenzie, International Representative Ontario and Christine Pynaker, International Representative, Alberta, BC and Northwest Territories, to discuss issues specific to our Canadian membership.

The challenges faced by members working in electrical manufacturing in Canada include the loss of jobs as a result of companies moving offshore and the lack of political will to save Canadian jobs. International trade agreements and actions by our elected governments have decimated Canada's manufacturing industry – first with a number of hits in the early 90s as a direct result of NAFTA and more recently with additional trade agreements and changes to the political landscape that have further eroded good family wage jobs from our communities.

Corporate interests have dominated the landscape and working people have been left out of the equation with political will being weak on additional issues such as anti-scab legislation, pension protection for workers in cases of company bankruptcies, the increase in outsourcing and the introduction of masses of temporary foreign workers.

In Canada, 250,000 manufacturing jobs in various industries have been lost in the past five years. Talk abounds about low unemployment rates in Canada, but many of the new jobs being created are insecure, temporary and part time positions, with low wages and without benefits or company pensions.

Health & safety issues were also discussed at the meeting and concerns were raised about the deterioration of safety regulations and the effects on the membership.

Planning for the future was a major component of this meeting and working together with our International Union, strategies continue to be developed and implemented to face these ongoing challenges. 

IBEW members who work in manufacturing produce a wide array of products and electrical and electronic components for many diverse industries such as communications, healthcare, national defense, aerospace, consumer electronics and computer hardware. Equipment needed for the generation, control and distribution of energy is also produced by IBEW manufacturing members.

The highly diversified list of products manufactured by IBEW members includes electric motors and generators, light fixtures, all types of household appliances, broadcasting and entertainment equipment, telecommunications equipment and scientific and medical equipment.



LOCAL 258
IBEW



14th Annual IBEW — BC Hydro GOLF TOURNAMENT

1:00 pm North Course
Shotgun Start

**Fundraiser for the
Multiple Sclerosis
Society of Canada**

Monday, September 17, 2007
Golden Eagle Golf Club
21770 Ladner Road
Pitt Meadows, BC

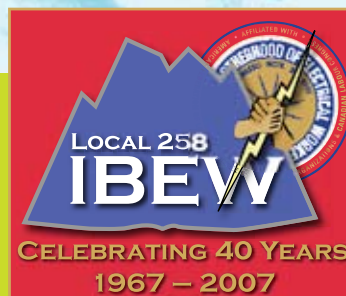
- Team Play Competition
- Long Drive
- Hole-n-One
- KP

Entry Fee: \$67.00
includes steak dinner
& prizes for all

*Early Birds
get the Eagle!
Register by August 31
and you'll be entered in a
draw for golf for four at
Golden Eagle!*

To get tickets and/or to reserve a
golf cart, please contact
Dan Klassen at 604-312-5929 or
604-520-3305, or Mark Davison at
604-469-6251.

Make cheques payable to
IBEW Golf Tournament
and mail to:
IBEW Local 258
7535 Sixth Street
Burnaby, BC V3N 3M2



With rising public concerns and increasing worker injury rates...

HAS GOVERNMENT POLICY PUT WORKPLACE SAFETY AT RISK?

With recent headlines in provincial newspapers exposing rising workplace injury rates, specifically among younger workers in BC's construction industry, public attention is being focused, at least for the moment, on workplace safety.

For IBEW members, our union is based on workplace safety, as worker safety always has and always will be our number one priority.

But we can't do it alone.

A "recipe" needs to be followed to ensure workers are in a safe and healthy workplace environment, protected from workplace injury, and fully supported, along with their families, in cases where injury or death unfortunately occurs. That recipe has to include the following ingredients:

- a fair and comprehensive workers compensation system;
- proper safety standards must be in place;
- appropriate safety regulations must be developed by all stakeholders;
- worker training and retraining must be mandatory and easily available;
- joint occupational health & safety committees must be a participant in the workplace;
- all of the above must be strictly enforced with penalties for non-compliance.

Members of British Columbia's labour community are aware of the importance of workplace safety and continue to recognize the need to work collaboratively with all stakeholders to protect this province's



most valuable resource — it's workers. But, labour's participation has been made more difficult in recent years with the exclusion of their voice from the table by the legislative policy makers.

Nonetheless, the BC Federation of Labour and its affiliate unions regularly contribute their expertise on behalf of their membership to the bodies governing workplace safety regulation, and voice their concerns, even if we aren't listened to, when worker safety is being compromised or has the potential to be compromised.

So what's gone wrong?

It appears some of the "ingredients" are missing from today's WCB.

After the Campbell Liberal government was elected in 2001, drastic legislative and policy changes were implemented that affected the WCB, changes that ap-

pear to have heavily favoured employers and their organizations. In turn, workers across the province have suffered increasing difficulties when they have been injured on the job and workplace fatalities have been on the rise.

According to the union member newsletter, *Impact*, published by the Compensation Employees Union, major changes at the WCB since 2002 as a result of government policy have included:

- lower disability wage rates and pension benefits for workers;
- reduction of health & safety regulations (including chemical exposure limits and first aid requirements);
- closure of the rehabilitation clinic in Richmond;
- elimination of the first aid officer position and other positions which contributed to the Board's enforcement and prevention efforts;
- creation of an accounts manager to exclusively help the employer;
- branding, which resulted in a name change to WorkSafeBC – the name itself implies employees have more responsibility for their health and safety than is in the Workers Compensation Act and regulations;
- creation of an industry segmentation model, with one result being a higher claim disallow claim rate.

(cont'd on next page)

Protect Public Compensation

As part of a response to the ongoing attack on the public workers compensation system that directly affects all workers, a coalition has formed to support the restoration of pensions and benefits to injured workers and has issued a call demanding a fair and comprehensive workers compensation system.

Through a public awareness information campaign, the coalition is bringing much needed attention to the state of worker compensation issues in British Columbia. They have an on-line petition and have created a series of pull-tab info cards (shown below) highlighting scenarios of workers who have been injured on the job.

Local 258 president Michelle Laurie, who sits as the Chair of the BC Federation of Labour's Occupational Health & Safety Committee and is the union's WCB advocate, has taken a role as a member of the Public Compensation Coalition Steering Committee, and recently made a presentation to delegates at the New Westminster District Labour Council on it's behalf. A petition is being circulated, available on the coalition's website, calling on the BC government to restore permanent injury and pension benefits and eligibility to the levels they were at before 2002.

Please visit the coalition's website to sign the petition and become a supporter at www.publiccompensation.ca.

IN BRITISH COLUMBIA LAST YEAR, 160 WORKERS DIED FROM A WORK-RELATED ACCIDENT OR DISEASE, INCLUDING:

- **12 WORKERS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 15 AND 24;**
- **22 FORESTRY WORKERS AND 39 CONSTRUCTION WORKERS;**
- **61 WORKERS WHO DIED FROM OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE; AND**
- **4,723 WORKERS WERE PERMANENTLY INJURED AS A RESULT OF A WORKPLACE ACCIDENT.**



injured workers pension pull tab

Name: EDWARD
Profession: Warehouse Worker

under the old legislation	TOTAL BENEFITS PAID TO AGE 65	\$315,000
Edward would have received a loss of earnings pension.	BENEFITS TO AGE 65 Loss of earnings pension: \$625 / month	BENEFITS AFTER 65 Loss of earnings pension: \$625 / month

under the new legislation	TOTAL BENEFITS PAID TO AGE 65	\$56,976
Edward will not receive a loss of earnings pension. <small>His \$18,000 reduction in yearly income is not considered "significant".</small>	BENEFITS TO AGE 65 9% Permanent Impairment Benefits: \$206 / month	BENEFITS AFTER 65 One Time Payout: \$2,713

injured workers pension pull tab

Name: SUSAN
Profession: Personal Care Aide

under the old legislation	TOTAL BENEFITS PAID TO AGE 65	\$504,000
Susan would have received a loss of earnings pension.	BENEFITS TO AGE 65 Loss of earnings pension: \$875 / month	BENEFITS AFTER 65 Loss of earnings pension: \$875 / month

under the new legislation	TOTAL BENEFITS PAID TO AGE 65	\$32,613
Susan will not receive a loss of earnings pension. <small>Her \$14,000 reduction in yearly income is not considered "significant".</small>	BENEFITS TO AGE 65 9% Permanent Impairment Benefits: \$94 / month	BENEFITS AFTER 65 One Time Payout: \$1,553

EITI adds 500kV Tower to Training Facility

By Phil Davis, EITI Director



Recent visitors to Local 258's training institute, EITI, will have noticed the addition of a significant new feature to the training yard — the upper portion (60 feet) of a double dead end 500kV tower was recently erected on approved engineered footings at the west side of the upper training yard.

The tower is owned by the British Columbia Transmission Corporation (BCTC) and was placed at EITI through the generous cooperation of a few key parties. BCTC's Bryan Hooper helped to acquire the tower for loan to EITI and Brian Kilvert, manager of Lower Mainland Transmission, coordinated his crews, including apprentices, to erect the tower. Gerry Bramhill and Bun Freeman, working on behalf of EITI, have been instrumental in seeing this new addition come to our training yard.


EITI will be able to incorporate the tower into a variety of training programs for Power Line Technicians (PLTs), in-

cluding tower rescue, fall prevention/arrest, tower climbing and, eventually, live-line methods on transmission voltages up to 500kV.

The opportunities don't end here, however. EITI has recently been working with BCTC and WorkSafeBC to prepare a training program for professional painters, with a focus on safe work practices for skilled workers who could be painting possibly thousands of transmission towers. Although approved safe work procedures are currently in place, there are a number of other important issues that need to be addressed prior to undertaking this tentative project using these new procedures. EITI may also be able to put the tower to work as part of training for helicopter touch-and-go procedures.

The tower is just one exciting example of the growth and facility development ongoing at our school. In the past year, through the generous contribution of BC Hydro Field Operations, we have

been successful in securing for use three vehicles: two 55ft bucket trucks and one line truck with a digger. These vehicles have passed BC Hydro Fleet Services' garage inspections and are being well-used in EITI's apprenticeship and journeyman upgrading classes. These three vehicles join a bucket truck and line truck that also very generously have been on loan to EITI from Allteck Line Contractors for three years. Finally, we have added a new pickup truck to our fleet to supplement "Old Blue", the familiar blue pickup truck used for many years at EITI.

EITI is experiencing an exciting period of growth, tied to the need for more PLTs to address the coming demographic shifts in the trade. If you are curious about the continuous growth and improvement under way at the union's training facility, contact your Unit Chair for an update, or call EITI directly at (604) 590-8911. 

Local governments should have input on TILMA — the Trade, Investment & Labour Mobility Agreement

Guest Commentary by Charlie Wyse, MLA Cariboo - South, NDP Critic for Municipal Affairs

Any government agreement that is negotiated in secret and not given full scrutiny should be cause for public concern.

So British Columbians have a legitimate reason to worry about the Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA).

TILMA is an agreement that was negotiated in secret between the governments of British Columbia, and was signed last spring. It took effect April 1.

Inter-provincial trade is a positive thing. The natural and economic diversity of Canada means that we have much to offer each other. It's natural that BC softwood is used to build homes in the prairies, while steel from Hamilton helps bridge our rivers. New Democrats support a strong business climate and economic growth that benefits all British Columbians in all regions.

But agreements such as TILMA could lower BC standards and put at serious risk the ability of British Columbians to set their own rules without having to ask for permission from Edmonton.

For example, TILMA will restrict the use of subsidies and procurement policies that promote local economic development. And it can also restrict municipalities from putting limits on development by way of municipal bylaws aimed at protecting public views and guiding urban expansion.

British Columbians are rightly concerned about this secret agreement, and as the Opposition Critic for Municipal Affairs, I have been hearing from local governments representing all regions of the province.

Despite the fact that Victoria has been downloading responsibilities to local governments since the BC Liberals took office in 2001, municipalities were totally ignored in the lead up to this agreement's conclusion nearly a year ago. Neither the Union of BC Municipalities nor its member governments were given any opportunity to raise concerns. Municipalities in Alberta were


equally ignored prior to this agreement being signed.

In choosing not to consult with local governments, the Campbell government embodied the spirit of TILMA: under this inter-provincial agreement, communities don't matter. That people in Fernie, for example, have different needs than the people of Surrey, or Prince Rupert, or Fort St. John, or Port Hardy, is immaterial. Under TILMA, municipal governments will lose control over local decision-making. Standardization will be the norm, and the unique needs of individual communities will take a back seat.

What's equally worrisome is that there is no guarantee that the standardization will be in the best interests of British Columbians. There are provisions in TILMA that could allow corporations to prevent local govern-

ments from enacting or enforcing regulations in place to protect unique local values. Although there are exceptions to these provisions, they are very specific; both Alberta and BC governments have indicated a willingness to actually reduce those exceptions, meaning an even greater loss of control at the local level.

And finally, there may not even be a good need for such an agreement. There is very little evidence that inter-provincial trade barriers are causing economic hardship.

British Columbians deserve a full accounting of secret deals that impact the ability of local governments to look after the interests of their citizens. The BC Liberal government should put the brakes on TILMA, to allow for meaningful consultation with local government, and following that, a full debate in the Legislature. 

It's Show & Tell Day for proud IBEW member



Brother Shawn Keats and the Squamish Line Crew from BC Hydro recently held a bucket truck demonstration for Bro Keat's daughter Sierra's grade 3 class. The other folks are Brother Randy Owen in the bucket, Brother Tristan Arnold and Brother Eric Belland.



Union delegates lobby Members of Parliament

Mobility aid program would help keep skilled Canadian workers employed in the trades

Business Manager Doug McKay and ABM Dan Giesbrecht recently traveled to Ottawa to participate in the Canadian Building & Construction Trades Conference, where delegates from unions from across Canada had an opportunity to lobby Members of Parliament on issues concerning labour mobility and the increasing, inappropriate use of temporary foreign workers by contractors, especially in the construction industry.

Focusing on labour mobility issues, the


union lobbyists met with MPs to address the fact that many qualified tradespeople across Canada who are unemployed are facing financial hardship when having to access work away from their homes, either in other provinces or elsewhere in their own province. Tradespeople are by nature mobile workers, having to, at times, leave their families to earn money where work is available, but in today's economy, they often face high travel costs and associated living expenses that may prevent them

from securing available work in areas of high employment activity.

Possible solutions presented to the MPs for these problems included: direct grants financed through the Employment Insurance (EI) program, a program that is currently experiencing unprecedented surpluses; an employer subsidy program directed at Canadian tradespeople; income tax deductions; or a combination of the above.

Delegates also recommended the creation of a national mobility assistance program for skilled Canadian tradespeople. When qualified, skilled Canadian workers are available for work, the government should make every effort to ensure those opportunities for Canadian workers are realized. These efforts could go a long way towards decreasing the growing use of temporary foreign workers by employers, and provide long lasting benefit to Canada and its communities.

Also discussed at the lobby effort was the temporary foreign worker situation. Delegates strongly clarified they are not against immigration but are opposed to the use of temporary foreign workers when qualified Canadian workers are available. It was brought to the attention of the MPs that some contractors are applying for the permits needed to bring in temporary foreign workers because they are not willing to pay the rates a skilled journeyman can command.

MPs were also informed that unions that belong to the Building Trades are International in scope and there are protocols in place that allow qualified workers from sister locals in the US to enter Canada to fill justified temporary shortages. These workers also have the advantage of having the same training and knowledge of construction safety and are not used to circumvent Canadian wage scales and industrial standards. 

SIGN THE PETITION BAN ASBESTOS EXPORTING HUMAN MISERY

There is a groundswell of opposition to Canada's despicable role in promoting the export of this most deadly carcinogen. A growing number of national unions, provincial labour federations, cancer prevention organizations, and environmentalists have joined the battle to stop this carnage. Yet despite the call by the World Health Organization for all nations to immediately stop the production, use, and export of all forms of asbestos, Canada continues to shamelessly promote this dying industry.

Over 100,000 women, men and children die each year from asbestos disease. Asbestos-caused cancers account for 80% of the increase in Canadian worker fatalities over the past decade. 95% of Canadian asbestos is exported to developing countries where community and worker exposures are horrendous, laying the groundwork for an ongoing epidemic of cancer. Meanwhile a growing number of countries have joined the international ban in order to protect their citizens. By signing this petition, we are calling on our governments to stop subsidizing this dying industry and to directly invest in sustainable jobs in those Quebec mining communities that have been held hostage to this industry.

As Canadians we have a special duty... to stop Canada's promotion and support of the global asbestos trade. Ban Asbestos Canada is circulating a petition, available on Local 258's website at www.ibew258.bc.ca, that can be downloaded, signed and returned to NDP MP Pat Martin who is leading the ban asbestos struggle in Parliament on behalf of all Canadians.

Successful shop steward training course held at union offices in Burnaby

In April, a number of Local 258 shop stewards participated in training classes taught by Michelle Laurie, union president, and Dan Klassen, ABM, held at the union offices in Burnaby. Shown here in photos are, clockwise from top right:

1. From left: Sister Cindy Smith from Valley Traffic, Sister Karen Porter from BC Hydro and Brother Ron Norland from All Clear Traffic.
2. From left: Sister Tasha Mydlak from Valley Traffic, Brother Stan Crees from BC Hydro and Sister Laurie Blancard from Valley Traffic.
3. From left: Brother Doug Stewart from BC Hydro, Sister Bev Tarrant from Valley Traffic and Sister Arlene Runka from Cam Tran Pacific.



<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

MONITOR YOURSELF

Internet/CALM

It's time to reassess your relationship with your computer when....

You wake up at four in the morning to go to the bathroom and stop to check your e-mail on our way back to bed.

You can't communicate with your mother because she doesn't have a computer.

You're really depressed, your e-mail box shows "no new messages."

In real life conversations, you don't laugh anymore, you just say, "LOL, LOL."


After reading this message, you immediately copy it and forward it to a friend.

Attention: IBEW members working at BC Hydro

Brother Mark Davison, Chair of the HYDRECS Committee, asked for this opportunity to thank all the IBEW members working at BC Hydro who supported the 2007 HYDRECS Campaign. Through the generosity of its' supporters, we raised over \$800,000 for more than 700 charities in BC. Well done, this goes a long way in helping out those in need.

He also would like to ask IBEW members who work at, and retirees of, BC Hydro in the lower mainland to consider putting their names forward to stand on the HYDRECS Committee. There are presently

two openings for retirees on the committee in the lower mainland. Mark will be standing down from the committee at the end of the year (end of term) and this will leave only two IBEW members on the committee. The sixteen member committee is best with equal representation from the four groups: IBEW, COPE, M&P and Retirees.

To maintain a strong IBEW voice on the committee we need more members to get involved. If you are interested in helping others, are willing to get involved or want more information, please contact Mark at 604-469-6251. 

DON'T FORGET TO SIGN UP FOR THIS YEAR'S GOLF TOURNAMENT!



Registrations are now being accepted for the 14th annual IBEW—BC Hydro Golf Tournament.

Last year's tournament was a resounding success with IBEW presenting a cheque to the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada in the amount of \$7,000.00. Shown above is Brother Dan Klassen, centre, who presented IBEW's contribution to Gerry Bramhill, Board Chair and Janet Palm, President, both of the MS Society of Canada.

SEE DETAILS PAGE 7 OF THE HOTLINE

Congratulations Brother Ken Irwin



A recent retirement gathering was held to celebrate the occasion of Brother Ken Irwin's retirement. Ken was a Trades Trainer for vehicle mechanics at Surrey garage. He is shown above on right with Brother Doug Stewart, Shop Steward and on left with Brother Bob Abernethy, former Unit 6 Chair. Congratulations Ken!

Thank goodness summer is on the way!

Brother Klaus Kraft, Unit 1 Chair, wanted to remind everyone of the heavy snow British Columbia experienced last winter. Here is the truck after only a few hours during the first snowfall in Terrace last October 27th.



LOOKING FOR INDEPENDENT MEDIA THAT'S SMART, EDGY, AND FUN TO READ?



Check out **WWW.THE TYEE.CA**

BC's fastest-growing independent online source of:

- Feisty takes on books, film, TV, music, and life in BC
- In-depth coverage of environmental and social issues
- Sharp investigative journalism you won't read elsewhere
- Lively reader feedback forums

RUMINATIONS OF A RETIREE

By Ken McEwen

Once again spring finds us at our northern home on the Pacific wet coast. We pretty much boodled straight home from Indio this year. Well, we did veer somewhat from the straight path and made a stop in Pahrump, Nevada, so that Catherine Dear could visit the casinos. As usual the Nevadans came out ahead. Anyway, the winter was unremarkably desert-like with rain on four separate occasions. The rain that did make it all the way to the ground on those four occasions wasn't enough to make anything wet. It was just enough to make spots in the dust on the camper so that washing was necessary. So, you see, winter in the desert isn't really all sunshine and leisure.

One of our winter activities was a wander to Quartzsite, Arizona. Well, two wanders really. We spent three days there each time. Quartzsite, Arizona, boasts that it has the largest flea-market/swap-meet gathering in North America. They may exaggerate a bit but it is pretty big. The reason we went twice was that, after three days of non-stop shopping, the only way I could get out of town was to promise to return to visit the still un-shopped areas.

The phenomenon of Quartzsite is that during the flea-market/swap-meet season, RVers gather in the tens-of-thousands to search for bargains. While there are a few RV parks in and around Quartzsite most RVers, being the thrifty souls they are, just park out in the desert. Boon-docking they call it. Aerial photographs of Quartzsite in season show the desert littered with all manner of rigs from modest little campers to million dollar Diesel pushers, all enjoying the wind, sand and dust of the Arizona desert.

Now, given my two excursions to this shopping opportunity, I am of the position that my required shopping quota has been satisfied for the next three years. Somehow, though, I am sure that further discussion and negotiation will occur before the next Quartzsite season. Notwithstanding (there's a collective agreement word for you) that I am a reluctant shopper I did manage to acquire a few things, at Quartzsite, that became necessities as soon as I saw them. Like a brand-new-in-a-box 15-Ton bottle jack for two dollars. Right now that jack is in the shed in Indio just waiting until I find something that needs jacking. But for two dollars I just couldn't pass it up. I am also the proud owner of a brand-new-in-a-box circular saw, a CB radio, tin snips, hatchet, a set of files, squeegee, portable generator, screwdrivers and some other really good stuff.

Now then, where was I? Oh yeah, I was talking about being home. So, as we were driving into town I remarked to Catherine Dear, "Look at the price of gas. It's \$1.05 a litre. They're really gouging us now". Well, you all know what's happened since then. The gouging has gone deeper. I've had to do some pretty

heavy ruminating on this subject. It seems like every day some expert or other is quoted in the newspaper or on TV giving me all the good reasons the price of gasoline is so high and how that high price is good for me and the world in general. I've heard all their reasons from supply and demand affecting wholesale costs to restricted refinery operation. The facts remain that since mid-April the supply is still there, the costs to get the stuff out of the ground haven't gone up – the refinery workers haven't received a 29% pay increase. So, when contriving to justify the high cost of gasoline I have concluded that the experts left out the key reason. Greed. Ruminations have led me to believe that the oil companies philosophy of supply and demand is, "We have the supply and we demand that you maintain our escalating exorbitant profits by paying more".

Speaking of greed, I've also had to do some pretty serious ruminating on the increased compensation proposed by our provincial government for elected politicians. Now, I have no problem with a worker saying, "Hey, I'm worth more than you're paying me". I did it myself when I was a worker. I'm sure I could have even constructed an "independent panel" to agree with me and recommend a compensation package appropriate to my view of my worth. It just seems somewhat inconsistent for the body whose committees, commissions, agencies, crown corporations, etc. restrict "public sector" employee wage increases to 0% to 3%, based on productivity, to grant themselves a 29% wage increase and attach improved pension and benefits. All this achieved without the need to enter into negotiations with anybody. I think leadership would be better demonstrated by the government accepting an average of the munificent wage increases offered to public and private sector employees.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of Local Union 258 of the IBEW. Congratulations LU 258. The only disconcerting thing about acknowledging such a historical milestone is that I was there when LU 258 was formed. That was forty years ago and I had already been in the workforce for a bunch of years. I remember when my Dad was forty years old. He was a pretty old guy. Now not only am I somewhat older than forty, I can comment from experience on events that happened forty years ago. Anyway, congratulations and thanks to the Local for forty years of service to members, the industry and the community.

That's all for this time. There were a bunch of other conclusions made during my ruminations that I wanted to share with you but time and space have again dictated otherwise. Please continue to work and play safely because the world needs more ruminators. 📧

UNIT 2 PHOTO OP

Many thanks to Unit Chair Gerry Pope & Assistant Business Manager Don McNabb for making sure The Hotline got some photos from BC's north country! Recent union meetings saw long term service pins being awarded, as well as new members being initiated into Local 258.



Brother Mark Zieske, right, was recently awarded his 10 year service pin by Brother Gerry Pope, Unit 2 Chair, at the union meeting in Quesnel.



The line crew in Bella Coola, from left, Ken Mackenzie, Barry Williamsen, Brant Underhill, Ray Hem and Gerry Pope.



Brother Pete Smith, left, was recently awarded his 25 year service pin by Brother Gerry Pope, Unit 2 Chair, at the union meeting in 100 Mile House.



Brother Paul Davis, left, was recently awarded his 25 year service pin by Brother Gerry Pope, Unit 2 Chair.



Unit 2 Chair Gerry Pope, left, swears in new member Tim Zerr at the union meeting in Prince George. Welcome aboard Brother Zerr!



Welcome aboard Brother Ingo Theuring, shown above on left, who was recently initiated as member of Local 258 by Brother Gerry Pope, Unit 2 Chair.



Brother Al Beeson was the lucky winner of a "cool pair of shades" at the Unit 2 meeting held in Prince George!



Brother Al Walker, left, was recently awarded his 5 year service pins by Brother Gerry Pope, Unit 2 Chair, at the union meeting in 100 Mile House.



Unit 2 Vice-Chair Ed McEwen swears in new member Jason Herbison at the union meeting in Hudson's Hope. Welcome aboard Brother Herbison!

Union members at Valley Traffic take first aid training



A number of Local 258 members working at Valley Traffic spent a Saturday learning CPR and first aid techniques as a result of training arranged by the union. Local 258 president Michelle Laurie and ABM Susan Longva took a moment to visit with their union sisters, shown in photo at left, and their instructor.



AND THE 2007 TOM FORKIN SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS ARE...

Many thanks to this year's applicants for their hard work in researching and writing their submissions for the annual Tom Forkin Scholarships.

This year's applicants were asked to write an essay addressing the subject of raw log exports, an issue that is of major concern for British Columbians.

The successful candidates were **Aaron Frame, Kim Lipscombe** and **Kathryn Rogan**.

Congratulations and the union wishes you the best in your future educational endeavours. 🚩

Some say Canada is enjoying a strong economy.

Bank economists, policy-makers and government officials boast that Canada is witnessing economic good times. Stories of strong consumer demand, low unemployment, healthy finances, and record-breaking profits capture the news headlines we read every day.

But there is a different story unfolding. Good jobs in Canada are disappearing – fast. And the Canadian labour movement is sounding the alarm and taking action though a series of community forums, information campaigns and rallies. **See story page 22.**

Welcome aboard new IBEW members



New union members Pat Coloma, Mike Canuel and Wes Wagner were initiated at the May meeting in Surrey.

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

LOCAL 258

IBEW AFFILIATED WITH THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF ELECTRICAL, ELECTRONIC & COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA
 INTERNATIONAL UNION OF LABOR & CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS & CANADIAN LABOR UNION
 REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.



Congratulations to Brother Gerry Root on his recent retirement. He is shown above on right with Brother Klaus Kraft, Unit Chair, who awarded him with a retirement plaque and jacket from the union.



Brother Dan Giesbrecht, ABM Local 258, congratulates Brother Jim Betteridge on his recent retirement at a luncheon held in Powell River where Jim was awarded a jacket and retirement plaque.



Sister Cathy Tagseth, Unit 5 Chair, is shown above with new member Scott McKillop as he is initiated into the Local at the February meeting in Sechelt.



Congratulations to Brother Kit Munro who was recently awarded his 5, 10 & 15 year service pins by Brother Dan Klassen, ABM.



At the union meeting held in the hall in Burnaby in March, Brother Jim Romas, seated, was the lucky winner of a pair of custom sunglasses featuring the union logo. Brother Sameer Kasim took home a complimentary union t-shirt.



Congratulations to Brother Larry Mistal on his retirement. He is shown above on the right being awarded a long term service pin by Ray LaPointe, Unit 3 Vice-Chair.

****A special note of thanks to Brother Greg Fanning, ABM, for sending photos to The Hotline.**



Congratulations to Brother Gerry Rhienshart & Brother Garth Jorde on the occasion of their retirements. They are shown above with Unit 3 Vice-Chair Ray LaPointe, center, who presented them with some "union goodies".



Unit 3 Chair Leon Arishenkoff, left, presents an award plaque to Brother Keith Elliot on his retirement and thanks him for his years of service to the union.



Congratulations to Brother Jimmy Botham who recently retired from Burrard Thermal. He is shown here at a retirement party put on by his co-workers.



Brother Janusz Kurczab was recently awarded his 5 year service pin by Brother Leon Arishenkoff, Unit 3 Chair.



Brother Walt Campbell, left, gets his "retirement goodies" from the union as Brother Leon Arishenkoff wishes him well in his retirement.



Smiling for the camera is Brother Lloyd Dundas who was recently awarded his 30 year service pin by Brother Ray LaPointe, Unit 3 Vice-Chair.



Congratulations to Brother Kevin Brown who was recently awarded his 5, 10 & 15 year service pins by Brother Dan Klassen.



It appears Brother Vince Orr got the "royal treatment" as he retired from many years of service to the union. Congratulations Brother Orr and have a happy and healthy retirement!



LABOUR NEWS

Sounding the alarm on Canadian job loss



Panel speakers discussed Canadian jobs that are being lost at an alarming rate. From left, Peter Julian, MP, Burnaby-New Westminster; Wes Sim, Educator, IAMAW Local Lodge 764; Jim Sinclair, President, BC Federation of Labour; moderator Carolyn Chalifoux, Secretary-Treasurer, New Westminster & District Labour Council; Anne Davidson, CAW Area Director, BC & Alberta; Steve Hunt, District 3, Steelworkers.

As part of the Canadian Labour Congress' campaign addressing the 250,000 jobs lost in Canada's manufacturing sector, a community forum was held in New Westminster on May 24. Local labour leaders and politicians joined with members of the community to discuss the job losses in British Columbia, the result of government policy and related corporate decision-making.

Speakers described how thousands of BC workers have lost good-paying jobs with benefits in industries such as fish processing, airline maintenance, the forest industry, shipbuilding and our energy sector.

Anne Davidson of the CAW described how Canada is now suffering with a \$29 billion trade deficit when just a decade ago we had a \$12 billion trade surplus.

Steve Hunt of the Steelworkers highlighted 300 local jobs lost with the closure of Western Forest Products in New Westminster, a result of the Harper-Bush softwood deal. He pointed to the lack of political will with both the federal and provincial governments as raw log exports continue to send our forest resources out of the country, along with the jobs. Since the Campbell Liberals came to power in 2001, 39 saw mills have gone down in this prov-


ince with nearly 20,000 jobs lost in this industry alone.

BC Fed president Jim Sinclair said, "It takes guts to change things", as he too described the lack of political will and strategies to put the best interests of Canadians before the corporations that want our resources. "We have to demand that if they want our resources, then they have to invest in Canada and Canadians," he said.

Peter Julian, MP for Burnaby-New Westminster, described the trend seems to be a downward spiral for the majority of Canadian families as they see their buying power diminish over the years — and they are working more and earning less. "It's a hemorrhaging of family-sustaining jobs," said Julian.

Stats Canada shows jobs are being created, but the majority of these jobs are part-time, temporary, with low wages and no benefits.

Julian concluded by saying, "Canadians are starting to figure out something is fundamentally wrong."

For more information, visit the Canadian Labour Congress' website at www.clc-ctc.ca and click on the "Made in Canada" campaign link on the front page. 

700 more BC jobs — gone




Local 258 President Michelle Laurie and ABM Susan Longva attended the mass rally in support of 700 IAMAW members who have been permanently laid off at Vancouver International Airport.

Following in the footsteps of raw logs leaving British Columbia to be processed by workers elsewhere, members of the machinists union working as aircraft mechanics at Vancouver International Airport are watching from the sidelines as their jobs fly away, with 700 workers receiving permanent layoff notice in March of this year.

Their employer, Air Canada Technical Services, recently purchased a majority controlling interest in an El Salvador company doing similar business. After the employer recently lost a major contract with another airline to do heavy maintenance work on wide-body jets, the union claims the company did not even look for another contract to replace the work — this after workers took concessions when the company was in trouble back in 2004.

The workers at YVR are the latest victims in a series of corporate decisions that have seen Canada's manufacturing industry lose 250,000 jobs in the past few years.

Hundreds of other unionized airport workers, along with members of the local labour community, showed their support for the machinists who have lost their jobs in a mass demonstration held at YVR in March of this year. The permanent layoff notices take effect in June. 

Safety: from your workplace to your community

The theme for this issue is safety – and that extends from your workplace to your community. I know that many of you participated in the National Day of Mourning for Workers injured and killed on the job; like you, I hope for the day when this is a remembrance of times past, when we no longer have brothers and sisters dying and being maimed when they go out to earn a living. Until then, we must keep the pressure on – pressure to ensure we have adequate equipment, proper training and effective regulations to protect our co-workers, ourselves and our children as they enter the workplace.

To that end, the BC Federation of Labour Occupational Health and Safety Committee spent a couple of days lobbying our provincial members of the legislature at the beginning of May. We focused our lobby on the issues of the detrimental changes to the Workers' Compensation Act and policies that have degraded enforcement capabilities and leave workers with no pensions after 65 and virtually no recognition of loss of earnings due to a permanent injury. We will be following up with the MLAs that met with us, as well as with those who did not, reminding them of their responsibility to working people in BC.

Safety and security for our communities happens when we have healthy communities – ones in which all constituents are valued and many hands join together to create a strong web of human caring and energy. As union members, we know that that is how we improve conditions in the workplace, and we understand that the same concept of strength in unity will help our communities as well.

Labour unions in BC have long understood the need to be active in community issues, and have looked for ways to have a positive impact in those communities. That desire for united action is what created the labour partnership with the United Way – a partnership that has been strong for over 25 years. In May, the United Way of Canada/Centraide Canada held their national conference and annual general meeting in Whistler. Labour played a major role in the conference – five unions (including the IBEW) acted together as a major sponsor, and we had the largest labour presence at any United Way conference to date. We showed that union members truly do wish for all what we desire for ourselves, and we demonstrated that we are organized, energetic and focused when it comes to addressing social issues.

The CLC United Way Union Counselling Program is Labour's way of caring for our sisters and brothers in their time of

From the Back Corner

Report from
Michelle Laurie,
President, Local 258 IBEW



need. It is a union-based program operated in the workplace, by workers and for workers. It is based on peer support, with referrals to community agencies when appropriate. Several 258 members have taken the training over the past few years, and many of them came together in April to discuss formalizing a program within our Local Union. As first steps, we decided that we need to look at some other Local Union Counselling program structures (no need to reinvent the wheel), to put together some material that will explain the nature of the program to our members, and to recruit members to take the training. I encourage all of you to check out the link on our website to find out more about the program, and to watch for more information about upcoming training opportunities.

Keep yourselves and each other safe and healthy, and enjoy a wonderful summer! 🌞

Union counsellors meet



Local 258 members who have taken peer counselling training through the United Way/Labour partnership are shown above as they met at the union office for a regular meeting. From left are Brother Scott Peebles; Sister Karen Porter; Sister Susan Longva; Brother Barry Bell; Brother Dan Klassen; Sister Michelle Laurie; and, Brother George Carter.


*THE UNION
OF HEARTS AND MINDS*



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