



HOTLINE

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER
PUBLICATION OF
LOCAL 258 IBEW
SPRING, 2012






LOCAL 258, INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Transmission line work underway across the province



INSIDE THIS ISSUE...



-  WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS FROM POWELL RIVER WORKING IN TRAFFIC CONTROL
-  HONOURING WORKERS AT DAY OF MOURNING CEREMONIES
-  ASBESTOS-RELATED OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE ON THE RISE BUT COMPENSATION CLAIMS NOT KEEPING PACE
-  REGISTER FOR THE ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT TODAY!
-  LOCAL 258 FISHING DERBY SET FOR AUGUST LONG WEEKEND!

HOTLINE Spring 2012

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Viewpoint from your Business Manager Doug McKay p. 3 & 4

We've Got Mail p. 5

Tom Forkin 2012 Scholarships Awarded..... p. 6

New work on transmission lines secured..... p. 7

News from Around Local 258 p. 8

Day of Mourning 2012..... p. 9

Asbestos-related occupational disease on the rise p. 10

Take Action - Tell the gov't to keep it's nose out of the union's business..... p. 11

19th Annual Golf Tourney - register today!..... p. 12

MS Society recognizes LU 258 with Certificate of Exceptional Achievement p. 13

Local 258 launches new website!..... p. 14

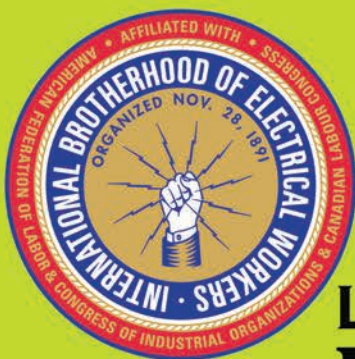
Ruminations of a Retiree. p. 15

A workable solution to retirement security p. 16 & 17

Local 258 Fishing Derby on August long weekend p. 18

Photo Opportunity ..p. 20 & 21

From the Back Corner by Michelle Laurie..... p. 22 & 23



LOCAL 258 IBEW



THE UNION OF HEARTS AND MINDS

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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Visit IBEW Local 258's website at www.ibew258.bc.ca or contact us via e-mail at info@ibew258.bc.ca.

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Front cover photo: Local 258 members from PEI Henkels McCoy are busy working on transmission lines. From left are, Brother Frank Giesbrecht, Brother Dave Jorgenson, Brother Chad Corsi, Brother JJ Nipkow, Brother Steve Langton, Brother Cyrus Yarjau, Brother Corey Raymond and Brother Ryan Bentley.

VIEWPOINT from your Business Manager Doug McKay

The past few months have been very busy with managing and participating in important bargaining sessions, meeting and working with our sister Locals in BC and across the country and lots of talking with many of you on issues important to our membership and our union.

Bargaining with BC Hydro got underway in March with a series of meetings and more meetings took place in April and May, with more dates scheduled for June. We are focused on your bargaining proposals and are working hard to achieve the gains that you want. I have taken the opportunity to travel around the province to meet with members for further discussions and we have been communicating to our Unit Chairs to share information with you at our Unit Meetings. We are up against a government that has made its mandate very clear – and it does not favour workers in any way. All I can say at this time is that it is imperative this government be removed from office in May of 2013 and replaced with a government that will deal with us fairly when it comes to labour relations.

To our members working at BC Hydro, as your Business Manager I am doing everything I can, together with our Bargaining Team, to help improve your work life as we negotiate a new collective agreement. The majority of bargaining proposals we received indicated you want improvements to your pensions and wages. I want to thank you for being strong and putting forward your voice in this round of bargaining.

I want to assure you I am listening to what you have to say and know how you feel about your working conditions and how they have deteriorated over the years. You have made it clear it is extremely difficult to work for people who don't have a clue of understanding of the work we do — they don't understand our industry and many of them have been put in management positions not for their skill or abilities in relation to our industry. I hear your concerns and frustrations about management decisions that at times cause on-the-job distractions and may be contributing to a lack of adherence to safe work practices. For those who have been with the company a long time, I understand your discontent as we watch the company we were all at one time so proud of being destroyed by mismanagement and misdirected political interference.

We are professionals in our trade and we follow the IBEW Code of Excellence. We encounter some of the most dangerous and lethal circumstances in the work we do, and, given that, it is



The 2012 BC Hydro Bargaining Team, from left, Brother Dave Mengerig, Unit 2; Brother Dave Rathlef, Unit 4; Brother Dave McMinn, Unit 2; Brother Rupinder Dhillon, Unit 6; Brother Larry Byhre, Unit 3; Brother Jim Greenwell, Senior ABM Local 258 IBEW; Brother Frank Nassachuk, Unit 6. Seated in front are Brother Doug McKay, Business Manager/Financial Secretary Local 258, IBEW and Mr. Garnet Zimmerman, professional negotiator from GZ Mediation.

up to each and every one of us to step up to the plate and show the leadership, respect and professionalism to each other that IBEW members are known for. I know this may not be the first thing in your mind when you're faced with a situation at work that reflects a poor management decision on the job but if we want to come home from work at the end of the day, our professionalism and focus on safety has to remain a priority. Nobody understands what we do but us – and it is up to each of us to continue to work towards making a better and safer workplace.

Nevertheless, let me assure you, we have a strong Bargaining Team and we are negotiating and standing strong with your desires for an improved collective agreement.

Onto other issues, I recently took the opportunity to travel to Ottawa to join with many of our sister IBEW Locals from across Canada and other members of the Canadian Building Trades to lobby our federal MPs in regards to Bill C-377 (initially introduced as Bill C-317 and featured in our Fall 2011 issue of the Hotline) – a detrimental and unfair Private Members Bill put forward by White Rock MP Russ Hiebert in an effort to place expensive, extraordinary and redundant demands on labour unions. This outlandish Private Member's Bill is nothing more than another attack on unions by the Conservative government and their supporters as part of an organized strategy to discredit unionized workers in Canada and whip up their own base of support. A Private Members Bill often doesn't become law – but – has the great potential to if there is no obvious opposition to it. Please read more about this issue on page 11 and I encourage you to visit

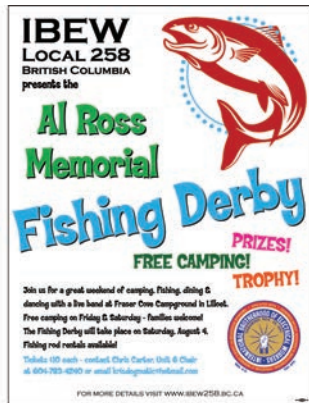
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Viewpoint from your Business Manager Doug McKay

(cont'd from previous page)

our union website to make your voice heard in opposition to Bill C-377 TODAY!

I would like to welcome our newest members to the union – both those who have been initiated at our Unit meetings and to those from Ace Traffic Control in Powell River who recently ratified their first collective agreement. I hope to get to meet you personally sometime in the near future.



As you will see in this issue of The Hotline, we are inviting you to participate in our own Al Ross Memorial Fishing Derby taking place on the August long weekend just outside of Lillooet.

Brother Al Ross was a respected union brother who was well known in his native Port Alberni for his generos-

ity and support of many community organizations. He was an avid fisherman, among other hobbies, and he spent most of his working life with BC Hydro. He was taken from us way too early in a tragic workplace accident in 2006. I recall his service was packed to the hilt.

Unit 6 Chair Chris Carter has done the work to organize the fishing derby and has tickets available. I encourage your participation as it looks like it's going to be a good time for all.

And don't forget, if you are a golfer, our annual Local 258 golf tournament is booked for Monday, September 17th at Newlands in Surrey, with all proceeds going to the MS Society of Canada. We'd like to thank the MS Society for their recent recognition of our contributions over the years from the golf tournament as they awarded LU 258 with a "Certificate of Exceptional Achievement" – read about it on page 13 – and thanks to ABM Dan Klassen and Brother Mark Davison, former Unit 6 Chair, for all your work in organizing this worthwhile and fun event.

In closing, I encourage you to attend your upcoming Unit Meetings and have a safe summer season. 🇺🇸

Get the scoop on what's going with contract negotiations and other important union business

You pay union dues. You get a say in what goes on with your union.

Come and find out what your union is doing. Have a voice.

Attend your upcoming union meetings:

Unit 1 - North Coast

Terrace: Aug. 8 @ 7:00 pm at the Best Western
Smithers: July 19 @ 5:00 pm in the Line Room

Unit 2 - Central Interior

Fort St. John: July 12 @ 7:00 pm in the Line Room
Hudson's Hope: Aug. 15 @ 4:30 pm at Parkes Centre

Unit 3 - Southern Interior

Vernon: July 12 @ 7:00 pm at the Army & Navy Club
Vernon: Aug. 9 @ 7:00 pm at the Army & Navy Club

Unit 4 - Vancouver Island

Qualicum Beach: July 10 @ 4:00 pm in the Line Room
Nanaimo: July 11 @ 4:00 pm in the Line Room
Victoria: Aug. 7 @ 4:00 pm in the Line Room

Unit 5 - Lower Mainland

Burnaby: July 12, Aug. 9 @ 5:00 pm at the LU 258 office
Sechelt: June 27 @ 5:00 pm at Seaside Centre

Unit 6 - Fraser Valley

Langley: July 10 @ 7:00 pm @ USW Hall, 200th St.
Chilliwack: Aug. 8 @ 7:00 pm at the Best Western





We've Got Mail!

Dear Local 258,



Thanks to your organization, one (or more!) camper will have the opportunity to attend summer camp at Camp Jubilee.

Thank you for your recent generous gift of \$559.00 to the 2012 Send A Kid campaign. Your com-

mitment to helping children enjoy a wonderful, positive summer camp adventure helps to benefit families and communities. The value of camp – life skills, leadership skills, social skills – are not only included in the experience but also include the value of bringing positive relationships with fellow campers and leaders.

Thanks to donors like you, the Send A Kid to Camp campaign has provided over 350 children just last year. We hope to increase this number to over 400 in 2012.

Thank you for all you do for our organization and being a part of our Camp Jubilee family. We couldn't do it without you!

Sincerely

Tracy Staines

Funds Development Coordinator, Camp Jubilee

To the Executive Board, Staff and Members, IBEW Local 258, We want to thank you so much for your kindness in sending the lovely flowers to us in our time of sadness. We so appreciate your thoughtfulness.

Arleigh & Greg Fanning

Dear Michelle Laurie and Local 258 IBEW;



Well, what can I say - you always come through with thoughtful, constructive and inspiring leadership.

Thank you for your contribution to our labour staff meeting.

Janice

United Way of the Lower Mainland



Dear IBEW Local 258;

Thank you for sponsoring our Ladies Curling Team to the Senior Provincial Championships in Lethbridge. It was a great experience for us and have many memories of our week there. Thank you for being part of our team!!!

Marlene Maxwell Team: Marlene Maxwell, Debbie McNabb, Lori Taylor, Cheryl Ireland

Dear Local 258 and Sister Michelle Laurie,

We are writing to express our most sincere appreciation for your contribution of \$500 to the 2011 Labour Community Christmas Dinners that took place in Vancouver and Surrey. We were able to provide more than 800 food hampers, feed more than 3,800 people, hand out hundreds of toys and supply clothing to our guests.

This event would not be possible without the contributions of many unions, their members, their employers, friends of the labour movement and several hundred volunteers. While we hope that someday all British Columbians can look forward to a Christmas without hunger or homelessness, we know that without your continued support this effort to help would not be possible.

In solidarity,

Jim Sinclair, President; Irene Lanzinger, Sec-Treasurer
BC Federation of Labour

Dear Local 258,

I would like to thank you for your generous donation to help my teammates and I achieve our goal of a gold medal at the 2012 Paralympics in London. This donation will allow me to purchase the required equipment needed to compete on the world stage.

I would like to extend an invitation to come out and cheer on Team Canada at the 2012 Canada Cup in Richmond BC. This pre-paralympic event will host the top 8 teams in the world and offer a preview to the London Games in September. Please pass my appreciation on to all the IBEW Local 258 members.

Sincerely,

Trevor Hirschfield

2012 Tom Forkin Scholarships awarded

The Local 258 Executive Board has awarded three educational scholarships to this year's successful applicants for the 2012 Tom Forkin Memorial Scholarship, awarded annually to members or dependants of members of Local 258 of the IBEW.

This year's winners are Sarah Hillsdon, Meagan Blake and Hailey Chambers.

All three applicants submitted essays explaining their educational goals and described their relationship with the union, their community and their labour activities.

Sarah Hillsdon wrote that her father is a Local 258 member who works at BC Hydro, her mother is a CUPE member and her grandfather also was an IBEW member who worked for Manitoba Hydro and then BC Hydro. Growing up in a union household, Sarah described the advantages of union membership as her family has always been able to enjoy vacations together and has access to great health and dental benefits! Sarah is currently attending the University of British Columbia and is a varsity athlete who plays softball. She is pursuing a Bachelor of Kinesiology degree and would like to have a career in sports medicine and looks forward to being a union member someday.


Hailey Chambers has a father and grandfather who are IBEW members. She wrote, "This union has negotiated wages and benefits that have helped with expenses that would have otherwise

been major roadblocks to my goals... With these benefits I have had opportunities that others may never get, and I am grateful for it."

Now accepted into the Bachelor of Science program at UBC Okanagan, Hailey is looking forward to completing her degree and going on to become a veterinarian. She wrote, "I have experienced the rewards the IBEW has negotiated for its members. This ultimately has taught me to work hard, stand up for fairness and to believe in myself."

Meagan Blake wrote about her father who used to work as a self-employed journeyman carpenter seven days a week with no job security or pension. Since becoming an IBEW member when he began working for BC Hydro as a General Tradesman, Meagan writes, "The IBEW has had a positive impact on my family, giving my Dad a decent wage with pension after retirement, job safety and stability, extended medical and dental benefits and a quality standard of living".

Meagan is a student at Camosun College and plans further her education at the University of Victoria and then Queen's or McGill University to pursue a career as an Ophthalmologist.

On behalf of all Local 258 IBEW members, congratulations to these young scholars in the pursuit of their educational goals. 

STRIKES, LOCKOUTS & BOYCOTTS

Please respect the union's picket line and **do not patronize** these businesses until the dispute is settled.

STRIKES & LOCKOUTS

Teamster Canada Rail Conference VS. CP Rail

Major Issues: Benefits

STRIKE Commenced: May 23, 2012

Steelworkers Local 2009 VS. Gillwood Manufacturing (Chilliwack)

Major Issues: Concessions, Job Security, Wages, Work Hours

LOCK OUT Commenced: March 2012

Teamsters Local 31 VS. Great Canadian Railtour Company dba Rocky Mountaineer Vacations

Major Issues: Seniority, Wages, Work Hours

LOCK OUT Commenced: June 21, 2011

Construction & Specialized Workers Union, Local 1611 VS. Wescon Enterprises (Trivern), Armstrong

Major Issues: Seniority, Benefits, Concessions

STRIKE ACTION Commenced: July 25, 2001

BOYCOTTS

UNITE HERE Local 40 VS. Sodexho (contractor: Air Canada)

BOYCOTT Commenced: October 6, 2011

The boycott is in support of UNITE HERE Local 40 workers, many of them with more than 20 years serving Air Canada personnel who were not hired when Sodexho was awarded the contract on September 25, 2011. The BC Federation of Labour is asking the public to refrain from using the 3rd floor cafeteria in the Air Canada Operations Centre/Hangar until the entire staff is rehired and to write to Air Canada and insist all the cafeteria staff be re-hired.

USW VS. Sklar Peppler, Alan White branded furniture and its manufacturer, AW Manufacturing

BOYCOTT Commenced: March 17, 2010

The boycott is in support of approximately 100 workers who lost their jobs and severance pay when Sklar Peppler file bankruptcy in August 2008. In late 2008, Sklar Peppler bought the company's assets out of bankruptcy, closed the facility and bought AW Manufacturing Inc. and now uses product from that plant to sell to Sklar customers.

USW Local 7812 VS. Philips Electronic Products, Quebec

New work on transmission lines secured and in progress

Local 258 has secured long awaited work for our members as new transmission lines are constructed here in BC and in Alberta.

With a project labour agreement in place, ROW work has begun on the Northwest Transmission Line with contractor Valard for a 344 km, 287 kilovolt transmission line between Skeena Substation (near Terrace) and a new substation to be built near Bob Quinn Lake north of Stewart. Valard estimates the installation of 1100 towers with this project.

Work on the Interior to Lower Mainland Transmission Project has also commenced with joint venture contractor Flatiron-Graham. This is the largest expansion to BC's transmission system in the last 30 years, and will see a 250 km 500 kilovolt transmission line built between Nicola Substation in Merritt and Meridian Substation in Coquitlam.

Local 258 members working at Henkels & McCoy have been busy reinforcing the existing steel lattice towers on the Atchelitz-Rosedale circuit 2L78 and the retermination of the existing "D" towers to dead-end structures.

And finally, work for Local 258 members has also been underway in north western Alberta with Rokstad Power, formerly Galbraith, with the 138 kilovolt rebuild from Edson to Hinton.

Many thanks to Brother Julian Jones for sending forward the photos featured on this page. 



News from Around Local 258



Chief Shop Steward Martin VanBeeke reports Local 258 members working at Power Flagging enjoyed a day with pay and a BBQ lunch put on by their employer while learning about improvements to their workplace health and safety policies with their new manager.

Members working in Traffic Control

Acting ABM Nicole Biernaczyk has been busy representing Local 258 members working in Traffic Control. She reports a first collective agreement has been signed with Ace Traffic Control in Powell River. Representing 10 employees, this certification was facilitated by our BC Hydro members who work in the local area. This first union contract has brought these new IBEW members a \$2.50 an hour wage increase, with contract language that falls in line with other local traffic control agreements. The union would like to extend a warm welcome to these new members!

In Kelowna, it unfortunately appears the owner of Black Top Traffic Control has not upheld their end of the arbitrated agreement reached last summer after the union filed an unfair labour practice on behalf of 13 workers who were owed monies by this employer.

The union continues to seek out a successful resolve for these members who have all moved on to work with different employers who actually pay them for the work they perform.


Members working in Electrical Manufacturing

A new collective agreement was negotiated and ratified in late March by members working at Schneider Electric in Rich-



Welcome to our newest Local 258 members working at Ace Traffic Control in Powell River who ratified their first collective agreement in May.

mond. The two year deal features wage increases of 2.5% in the first year and 2% in the second year and includes the changes to contract language members were seeking.


Members working at Canadian Process and Controls in Port Moody suffered temporary layoff earlier this spring as a result of a parts shortage and are now back at work. Negotiations for a new collective agreement are set to begin with members having established their bargaining proposals. The current contract expired March 31, 2012. 

Jail sentence for construction worker who deliberately rammed TCP

It was with great interest Acting ABM Nicole Biernaczyk sat in the visitors gallery at the sentencing of 43 year old Michael Biemans who was convicted in a New Westminster court room in March and sentenced to seven days in jail plus a year of probation.

“Our members who work in traffic control face harsh dangers every day, including the effects of drivers who don’t pay attention and drivers who fly into fits of rage”, said Sister Biernaczyk, “It was important to be at the sentencing hearing to hear the conclusions of the judge in this particular case. The public needs to be reminded that they must obey the direction of Traffic Control Persons (TCPs) as they perform their line of work, which, ultimately is protecting the public as well as the workers who are working at the roadside, or on the road itself.”

According to testimony heard at the hearing, Biemans verbally assaulted a TCP who was redirecting traffic on a closed road that was under construction. He then drove into the TCP, hitting him in the chest and knees, then drove away. Fortunately, the TCP was not injured.

Biemans was also sentenced to attend an anger management program. 

LOCAL 258
IBEW



Worker deaths recognized at National Day of Mourning services locally and across the country

Labour activists, family members, local politicians and observers gathered across Canada at dozens of venues in late April to honour workers who have been killed or injured on the job or who have died as a result of occupational disease.

In British Columbia, services took place at various locations over a number of days as the annual Day of Mourning fell on a Saturday this year. Most labour-organized events took place on Saturday, April 28, including a solemn service at the New Westminster Quay that featured guest speakers, a lone piper and the New Westminster Fire and Rescue Services Honour Guard.

Organized by the New Westminster & District Labour Council, the Vancouver & District Labour Council and the BC Federation of Labour, guest speaker Ken Georgetti, president of the Canadian Labour Congress, noted this year is the 20th anniversary of the Westray mining disaster in Nova Scotia that killed 26 workers when an underground methane explosion took place. Since then, the labour movement has worked very hard to push parliament to pass federal legislation, the Westray bill, that holds employers criminally liable for failing to take steps to protect the lives of their employees. If used as intended, significant inroads could be made at protecting workers health and safety and lives could be saved.

The lasting fallout

Two of the guest speakers at the New Westminster Day of Mourning event recalled their own personal suffering as a family member left behind when a worker dies on the job.

As a young teenager, Mike Davis recalled the day in 1981 when his father Don didn't come home from work because he, along with three of his workmates, were killed in a workplace accident that saw a platform suspended on the side of a tower being constructed in downtown Vancouver crash to the ground, sending the four carpenters working on the platform plunging 36 floors to their deaths. With anger in his voice, Mr. Davis condemned authorities whose responsibility lies in ensuring workplace safety — the Workers Compensation Board, now known as WorkSafeBC — and still describes that day as the worst day of his life.

The “Bentall Tragedy” is still recalled and commemorated on an annual basis at ceremonies conducted by the BC Building Trades Council in downtown Vancouver.

Hospital Employees Union member and First Nations activist Trudy Spiller eloquently recalled her own personal suffering and described the lasting effects on her and her two children of the workplace death of her husband two decades ago. This tragedy was recently compounded when she received the news in January her brother, Art Loring, was working with his son logging in the forests outside Terrace when he was struck by a falling tree. His son rushed to his aid, but Art died while waiting for help to arrive.

Trudy described not only her own personal loss, but the whole




LU 258 members and family members attended the Day of Mourning ceremonies in New Westminster this year to honour workers killed or injured on the job or who have died as a result of occupational disease.

community's loss, as her brother was a well known and immensely respected First Nations activist from the Terrace area, a member of the Gitksan tribe.

Renee Saklikar, a local poet and writer, recited a very moving poem about the three Abbotsford farm workers who were killed when the overloaded labour contractor van transporting them to work that day in 2007 careened out of control, resulting in their deaths and injuring the other 14 passengers.

After the speeches, mourners solemnly stood while the lone piper played. A procession then marched to the base of the cenotaph where they placed individual roses to honour those who gave their lives in the line of work.

The Statistics

According to statistics from WorkSafeBC, 142 “fatality claims” were “accepted” in 2011. The actual numbers indicate 186 workers were killed on the job or died from occupational disease in British Columbia last year. Since 2001, when the BC Liberal government was elected, the Workers Compensation Board has undergone a name change, removing “Workers” from its branding, regulation has been gutted and there are fewer safety inspectors. Most recently, Grant's Law has been watered down and Minister Kevin Falcon has been honoured with the “Golden Scissors” Award by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business for cutting “regulatory costs” to business, including WCB premiums. Teachers are facing million dollar day fines for going on strike while employers were fined \$320,000 for the deaths of mushroom factory two workers, with three other workers left permanently disabled in a vegetative state. Business has been permitted to “self-regulate” and injuries, deaths and illnesses continue to escalate for BC workers. 

Asbestos-related occupational disease rate on the rise but compensation claims not keeping pace

Thanks to the work of researchers at the University of British Columbia, there is a growing awareness of the relationship between asbestos and occupational diseases like mesothelioma, asbestosis, asbestos-related lung cancer and other respiratory diseases. But not all workers who have a history of working with asbestos and who are subsequently diagnosed with these diseases are filing compensation claims and researchers want to know why.

In 2004, researchers worked with the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) in a letter writing campaign directed at physicians to increase awareness of com-

penetration services for their patients who have been diagnosed with mesothelioma. Initially, they saw an increase in compensation claims, but that number has dropped off in recent years.

WorkSafeBC confirms in their latest Annual Report, "An increasing number of workers have become debilitated through previous exposure to asbestos, with research suggesting the incidence of disease associated with work-related asbestos exposure is under-reported or attributed to causes other than work".

Many workers who may have handled asbestos at some time in their working career may not be aware of its long term impact as symptoms of asbestos-related occupational disease often don't develop for many years after exposure, and usually after they retire.


Since 2007, more than 97 percent of mesothelioma claims have been accepted by the WCB.

Dr. Mieke Koehoorn, Principal Investigator in the UBC Research study says,

"It is so important to talk to workers with mesothelioma and their family members about their experiences accessing compensation benefits.

"Improving access to benefits based on their participation in the study and the information we learn, can provide workers and families with much needed additional health services during a critical time, and registration with the compensation system improves recognition of asbestos exposures and mesothelioma as an occupational disease in British Columbia."

Funding for this research project is being provided by WorkSafeBC and the AREA Fund that supports asbestos-related research, education and advocacy

WorkSafeBC has launched a website, hiddenkiller.ca, that features information about asbestos exposure in the workplace and includes a number of personal stories from family members who have lost loved ones as a result of asbestos-related occupational disease. 

Seeking Participants for Mesothelioma Research Project

Have you or a family member been diagnosed with mesothelioma?

The University of British Columbia is seeking research participants and would like to hear about your experiences with mesothelioma and workers' compensation.

There is a \$100 honorarium for eligible participants.

Please contact
Suhail Marino,
UBC Study Coordinator at
604-822-0200 or email
smarino@chspr.ubc.ca.

For more information, visit the union's website at www.ibew258.bc.ca

Asbestos-removal contractor jailed


Young workers hired by an asbestos-removal contractor in the lower mainland now have a lifetime of waiting to see if they develop an asbestos-related occupational disease after discovering they were deliberately exposed to the harmful substance by their employer, Arthur Moore.

Moore received a sentence of 60 days in jail in January after being found guilty of civil contempt when he refused to stop exposing unsuspecting employees to asbestos contamination.

Ignoring WCB stop work orders and an injunction issued by the BC Supreme Court, Moore, under a number of different company names, continued to hire workers, sending them to jobsites for

home demolitions he had deemed "safe", but the drywall in these homes contained asbestos. The workers were completely unaware and were not provided any protective clothing or training in how to safely remove the asbestos.

Although asbestos is no longer used in building construction in Canada, it is still present in many workplaces and homes, and is regularly encountered by workers in the home renovation business.

It is important to note that Moore was sentenced to jail for contempt of court, not for being an employer who intentionally sent workers into a harmful environment. 

Take Action!**Contact your MP and tell them to keep their noses out of the union's business**

In their ongoing efforts to distract Canadians from “real issues”, the Harper government now wants to unfairly force unions to spend valuable membership dues money to publicly disclose their confidential financial records.



Bill C-377, a private members bill introduced by MP Russ Hiebert from White Rock, BC, aims to create an issue that doesn't exist, says Ken Georgetti, president of the Canadian Labour Congress. “This government has bullied civil servants, bullied scientists, bullied the churches and NGOs, and now they want to bully the labour movement,” says Georgetti.

“Our financial records have always been open to our members and if Russ Hiebert knew anything about unions, he would know this. I wish Conservative cabinet ministers like Tony Clement and Peter McKay would be as transparent with their use of taxpayers' money as we are with our dues from members.”

Georgetti adds, “This is simply a distraction from the real issues facing our country – a slow economic recovery, increasing joblessness, high youth unemployment, six in ten unemployed unable to receive EI benefits, and over 60% of workers unable to have a decent retirement because they have no workplace pension plans.”

Representatives from Canada's Building Trades unions, including LU258 IBEW, travelled to Ottawa in May to lobby MPs, bring them the facts and show the Harper Conservatives that unions will not stand for unfair treatment that will add enormous financial burden that, at the end of the day, harms Canadian workers.

A website has been launched to campaign against Bill C-377 where supporters are asked to register and can then select from a list of pre-written letters to send to their MPs via email, e-fax or by Canada Post letter mail. Registrants can also invite friends to do the same.


Please visit the website at www.workersbuildcanada.ca to communicate with your MPs about Bill C-377 — protect your rights and ensure your union's financial information remains for union members only and that dues remain a personal tax deduction on your income tax.

Myths and Facts from the workersbuildcanada.ca website:

Myth: Unions receive \$400 million per year in public subsidies through the tax code.

Fact: Unions do not receive any public subsidy — workers and their families receive this money back in income tax deductions, NOT unions. The tax treatment of these workers is exactly the same as that for members of the Law Society, Medical Association or employers who belong to a contractors' association.

Myth: Some provinces regulate union finances and their disclosure, others do not, C-377 seeks to ensure that all union finances are regulated.

Fact: Constitutionally, trade unions are regulated by the Provinces, and some Provinces have opted not to regulate union finances because the transparency and accountability provided by the union by-laws and constitutions would be redundant and create unnecessary government bureaucracy. The tax treatment of these workers is exactly the same as that for members of the Law Society, Medical Association or employers who belong to a contractors' association. 



Local 258 is seeking young members (under 35 years of age) to join the union's Youth Committee and be part of creating the future of our union.

By taking an active role in the International Brotherhood of Electrical Worker's campaign to engage young members in our union, we invite you to step forward to have your voices heard and to work with your ideas for shaping our union to meet the challenges of the future.

While continuing to provide valued services for all members of our union, looking forward is essential. By engaging our younger members we hope to build upon ideas and suggestions for organizing and for meeting the needs of the next generation. This is your opportunity to get involved!

If you want to have your voice heard and are interested in serving on Local 258's Youth Committee, please contact Dan Klassen, Assistant Business Manager at Local 258 by e-mail at dan.klassen@ibew258.bc.ca or by phone at 604-520-3305.

19th Annual IBEW – BC Hydro GOLF TOURNAMENT

*Monday, September 17, 2012
Newlands Golf & Country Club
21025 48 Avenue
Langley, BC*

You are invited to help us support the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada in a fun afternoon of golf, featuring Team Play Competition, Long Drive, KP and Hole-n-One prizes!

This year's entry fee is only \$105 and includes a gourmet steak dinner and prizes for all!



**Shotgun Start
at 1:00 pm**

For tickets, 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

**GET
YOUR
TICKETS
TODAY!**

**ALL PLAYERS & TEAMS
MUST REGISTER AND BE
FULLY PAID BY AUGUST 31st.**



LOCAL 258

IBEW



MS Society recognizes Local 258 IBEW with Certificate of Exceptional Achievement

Local 258 IBEW was pleased to accept a Certificate of Exceptional Achievement - Community Group, recently awarded by the MS Society of Canada, BC & Yukon Division, on behalf of members who have supported fundraising efforts directed at the MS Society over the years through attending the union's annual golf tournament and other events.

Citing Local 258's commitment, initiative and dedication above and beyond that which would normally be expected in response to multiple sclerosis, the MS Society presented Brother Dan Klassen, ABM, with the certificate at their offices. They have also acknowledged Brother Klassen's and Brother Mark Davison's commitment with helping organize the union's contribution to the annual golf tournament in their newsletter and on their website at ms-society.ca/bc/award_recipients_2011.htm.

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers has a long standing relationship with the MS Society that goes back many years when Brother Jim Wolfgang initiated the union's involvement.

Brother Wolfgang began his career as a construction electrician with Local 230 and in 1958, became an Assistant Business Manager with the Local before taking on the role of International Representative working out of the Toronto office.

Brother Wolfgang was diagnosed with MS in the mid-60's and continued to work until his doctor advised him to retire in 1985. It was then he became in-




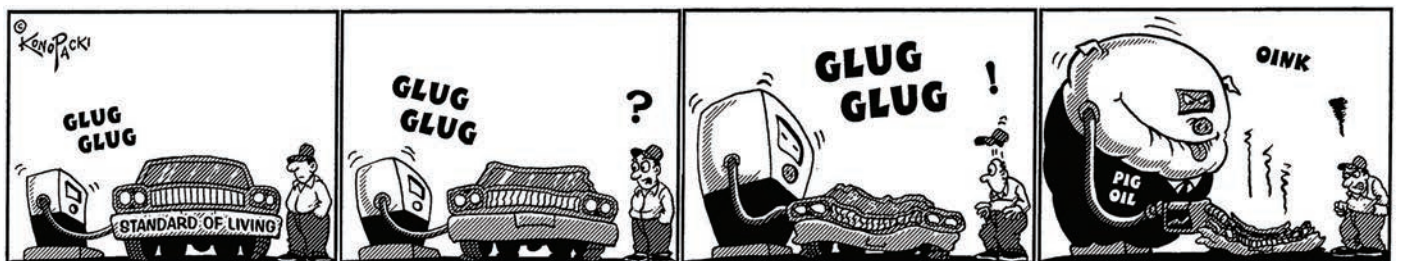
Accepting the Certificate of Exceptional Achievement on behalf of Local 258 IBEW is Brother Dan Klassen, ABM, with Janet Palm, President, BC & Yukon Division, MS Society of Canada, right and Paula Springman, Director of Development, BC & Yukon Division, MS Society of Canada.

involved as a volunteer with the MS Society, eventually becoming Chair of the MS Society's Central Island Chapter, a position which he recently stepped down from due to his health. Brother Wolfgang has made an immense contribution to the successful relationship between IBEW and the non-profit charity organization.

Over the past 13 years, Local 258 has raised over \$83,000 for the MS Society, funds that have helped make programs

and services available, free of charge, to those affected by this chronic and life-changing disease. Local 258's contributions have also helped fund research into finding the cause and cure for MS.

The MS Society of Canada is the largest single funder of MS research in Canada and Canada is a leader in research internationally. 




Union launches new website!



In an effort to keep current and to be able to provide timely information directly to Local 258 members about important union business, a new website is being launched at www.ibew258.bc.ca.

Featuring a Member Resources section, the new website allows Local 258 members to register and have access to information from the union that is not available through the public website. Only current Local 258 members will be permitted access to the Member Resources section of the website.

The new website will also include updated resources, an easily accessible Calendar on the front page - so you know when and where those important union meetings take place - a modernized photo gallery (remember to send your pictures in!) and an Action Centre featuring current campaigns about important issues.

We hope you enjoy the new website which should be launched by the time you get this issue of The Hotline in the mail. We look forward to and welcome your feedback. 

UNION NOTICE BOARD

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 the Union office in Burnaby for further information or if you have any questions.

Phone: 604-520-3305 Toll Free: 1-877-520-3305

Have you moved?

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

Contact Local 258 IBEW with your new address so we can make sure you continue to receive news alerts, The Hotline newsletter and be notified of current events. Please note: 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

Do you have photos, original artwork, cartoons or poems for The Hotline?

The Hotline knows many of you have an interest in photography and sometimes take photos at your workplaces. We also know there are some of you who are very creative. Share your photos and creative works — and your stories too — with your union's member magazine, The Hotline!

You are welcome to send in photos from your workplace, and if you have a bit of writing ability, we are also interested in any stories, poems or articles you have written about a work-related issue. Cartoons and drawings are also welcome.

Send your items via e-mail to headline@shaw.ca, or mail to:

Local 258 IBEW
Attention, The Hotline
7535 Sixth Street
Burnaby, BC V3N 3M2

Looking elsewhere for work?

Before you leave, call the Local 258 Union Hall and apply for your traveling card and/or paid up dues receipt. If you live close by, just drop in and see us to get your traveling card.

Local 258 traveling cards are made out for three months (as per Constitution Article XXIII, Sec2), giving you plenty of time to deposit your traveling card with any IBEW Local in which you are seeking work.

Please contact Janice at Local 258's headquarters in Burnaby for further details.

Call direct at 604-515-3530 or 604-520-3305, Toll Free: 1-877-520-3305.

RUMINATIONS OF A RETIREE

By Ken McEwen

Retired Local 258 member

The last time we talked I started out by discussing change, not the money kind of change but change in our lives. Maybe it's a sign of advancing seniority but I'm kind of thinking about change again. This morning I determined that I would sit down and write this column only three days past the deadline, so not much change there. It is a rainy Victoria Day holiday, absolutely no change there. Anyway, I got to wondering if the holiday was still called Victoria Day. It seems that every time my attention gets distracted for a while the names of things change. Like I used to drive to Haney and now I have to drive to Maple Ridge. Along the way we use to pass through Pitt Meadows. I don't know if Pitt Meadows is still there but signs indicate that I am somewhere called Ridge Meadows. There may even be a place called Maple Meadows by now. Then there's that patch of bush up the coast that somehow became the Great Bear Rainforest. Where did that come from? And how about Westbank in the Okanagan? I now have to learn to say "West Kelowna". Also, it seems there is a large chunk of the Okanagan now called Lake Country or something like that. Back on the coast again I find that the Queen Charlotte Islands are now Haida Gwaii. There are other examples of our changing world but I'll leave them for now. Given all the name changes it's a wonder I can find my way around anymore. But going back to Victoria Day, perhaps they should change the name to Tarp Day which would be more meaningful to the campers and picnickers enjoying the rainy long weekend.



On a completely different subject, Indio (the dog) and I, along with Catherine Dear, were walking along the street when we passed a handsome Harley Davidson motorcycle parked at the curb. I remarked that I would really like to have one and on non-rainy days the three of us could motor about our beautiful province. That got me to ruminating about safety in general and road safety in particular. The last time I drove a motorcycle was somewhere around 1960. In those days it was not required to have a special driver's license to operate a motorcycle. If you had a license to operate an automobile then you could also operate a motorcycle. If on the other hand you didn't have an automobile driver's license you could get a license to drive a motorcycle but you were restricted to motorcycles only. Then it seems the boffins of road safety determined that motorcycle driving was a special skill and it would be safer on the roads if prospective drivers

were trained and licensed in that special skill. That concept would make perfect sense to any safety-minded person. To demonstrate how convoluted a retiree's ruminations are I then began thinking about the operation of recreational vehicles. Where, I wondered, are the road safety boffins when a senior person such as me can wander down to the local dealer, purchase a 45 foot Diesel pusher RV (well, if Catherine Dear would buy the right lottery ticket I could), with air brakes yet, hook on a 2500 kilogram car behind it and hurtle down the freeway with 70 feet of vehicle and only the training required to obtain a class 5 (automobile) driver's license. It just seems to me that if safety requires a special license and training to operate a motorcycle (small) then safety should require a special license and training to operate an RV such as a motorhome (large). It kind of makes me wonder if there are criteria other than safety behind the licensing of drivers. And for discussion on another day I really wonder about the logic of having an insurance company (ICBC) in charge of licensing drivers.

Still another completely different subject has to do with Indio the dog. Indio is a mixed breed. The animal shelter where we rescued him told us he was a spaniel Chihuahua cross.



In reality, with his long body and short legs, he looks as if a dachshund or corgi got in there somehow. Anyway, when we're out walking and people ask what kind of a dog he is we have to answer that we don't know. Having watched sufficient television to know that the CSI guys can find a miniscule particle of something, perform a DNA test and within minutes have a complete profile of the "perp", down to what he/she had for breakfast, we decided to have a DNA test for Indio. That way, when people asked, "What kind of dog is that?" we'd be able to present a certificate in answer. Well, we got the test kit, sent in the sample and eagerly awaited the results. I was surprised to learn that it takes more than a few minutes. The results came and we have a certificate. The results are broken down into three categories. They are (1) Primary (2) Secondary and (3) In the Mix. The explanation revealed that Primary means 75% of a breed is present i.e. one parent would be a purebred; Secondary means that a preponderance (35% or more) of a breed is identifiable; In the Mix means whatever else can be found. Well, Indio's results shows Primary=0, Secondary=0 and In the Mix= Siberian husky, Alaskan malamute, English coon hound and Chihuahua. Given how Indio looks I suspect that the DNA test lab accepted payment, posted a list of breeds on the wall and

(cont'd on next page)

RUMINATIONS OF A RETIREE

by Ken McEwen
Retired Local 258 member
(cont'd from previous page)

threw darts to select the listed breeds. Notwithstanding that I am a poor old pensioner on a very limited income, as well as a slow learner, I have ordered another test kit from a different company, this one in Canada, to see if the results are the same. Perhaps we will have to carry two certificates on our walks.



As I write this Catherine Dear is organizing stuff to prepare the RV for a wander up to the Okanagan, or whatever it's named these days. From there we may ramble on to somewhere else. The option we select from north, east or west will be dependent on how we feel, weather forecasts and yet to be determined factors. As I've said before, retirement is best described as having no particular place to be and no particular time to be there.

Please continue to work, play and drive safely because, regardless of what it may come to be called, retirement is worth getting to. ⚡



Support the CLC's plan for an improved Canada Pension Plan A workable solution to retirement security

Since Labour Day 2009, the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), representing more than 2 million unionized workers in Canada, has been working on a national campaign to increase retirement security for all working Canadians.

Workplace pensions are in retreat and more than 60% of workers across Canada have no workplace pension at all. In 2010 in British Columbia, just 28.5% of workers were covered by a workplace pension plan.

In an effort to provide a cost-effective, low-fee, safe, portable, secure and guaranteed retirement savings plan, the CLC has been gathering support to double the Canada Pension Plan benefits for the next generation of workers when they retire.

Expanding the CPP today will increase the retirement income and purchasing power of future generations of retirees.

But, to make this happen, more pressure needs to be put on our politicians. And by more pressure - this means stepping up to the plate and lobbying your local MP.

The Retirement Gap

Yes - it's true - the majority of Canadians have inadequate retirement savings. With existing workplace pensions under attack, combined with the Harper government's cuts to Old Age Security benefits, many future retirees, and not that far off into the future, will be facing financial insecurity as they retire from their working careers.

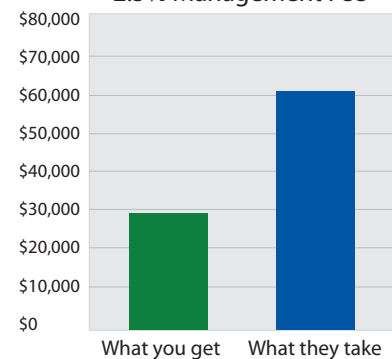
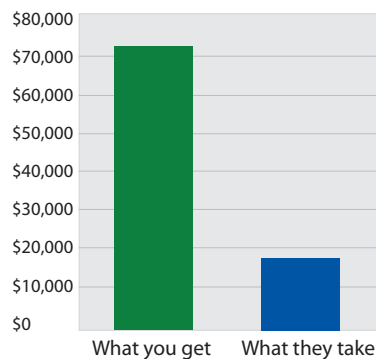
Private savings are failing to meet the challenges of our ageing society and statistics show Canadians just aren't investing in RRSPs.

With most mutual funds, such as RRSPs, there are costs added to "manage" the funds in those plans of between 2 and 3 percent. In comparison, the Canada Pension Plan is effectively managed at a cost of less than one-half of one percent. Based on these costs alone - the CPP is a way better deal and the Canadian Labour Congress wants to expand on this "better deal" for all working Canadians.

Fact: The median RRSP savings for the minority of workers who do contribute to RRSP savings aged 55 and older is \$60,000 (this means half of them have less). This works out to a monthly retirement income of just \$250.

To consider how much money is at stake, consider the following:

\$10,000 invested for 45 years at a 5% annual compounded rate of return
 CPP - 0.5% Cost to Manage Most Mutual Funds - 2.5% Management Fee



If you invested \$10,000 in a fund with a 5% annual rate of return with a management fee of 0.5%, after 45 years you would get \$72,066.60 back and the management fee would be \$17,783.48.

But, if you invested \$10,000 in a fund with the same rate of return with a management fee of 2.5%, you would get just \$29,493.18 and pay \$60,356.90 in fees.

Workplace Pensions in BC

Like most pension plans, workplace pensions in BC were hit by the 2008 financial crisis. Many defined benefit plans continue to struggle with unfunded liabilities, and employers and plan members have subsequently been faced with having to address these challenges either with special payments to meet the funding shortfalls, contribution rate increases, benefit cuts, or a combination of these steps.

Expanding the CPP will reduce pressure on defined benefit pension plans, at no extra cost to employers (including the provincial and municipal governments). Most workplace pension plans are integrated with the CPP in that CPP benefits are included as part of the replacement income which the defined benefit plan is designed for. Thus, as the CPP is expanded, the employer and employees would be able to negotiate adjustments to workplace pension contributions and benefits in light of improved CPP benefits. This would allow for no net increase in costs for most employers with existing defined benefit plans.

Pooled Registered Pension Plans (PRPPs) won't work

PRPPs are a new form of group RRSP. As a voluntary savings plan that both employers and employees can choose to opt out of, they are an inadequate policy response by the Harper government increasing retirement security for working Canadians.

Evidence shows that most Canadians have already opted not to fully use RRSPs and as PRPPs are also a voluntary savings plan, they too will fail to provide legitimate retirement security for Canadians.

PRPPs vs. Canada Pension Plan	CPP	PRPPs
Employers must participate	yes	no
Employers must contribute	yes	no
Fully portable - workers contribute to a single pension, no matter how often they change jobs	yes	no
Provides a guaranteed pension, indexed against inflation, for life	yes	no
Pension funds managed on a low-cost, strictly not-for-profit basis	yes	no
Supports rather than undermines existing workplace pension plans	yes	no

How the CLC Plan would work

The CLC Plan proposes a doubling of Canada Pension Plan (CPP) benefits to ensure a better minimum pension for all Canadians. Currently, workers and employers contribute a combined total of 4.95% of your "pensionable earnings" – a specific amount set each year by the Canada Revenue Agency – into the Canada Pension Plan. By increasing current contributions by 0.43% of pensionable earnings each year for 7 years – a total of an additional 3 percent – CPP benefits would double.


The CLC Plan has been endorsed by Bernard Dussault, who was the Chief Actuary of the CPP and Old Age Security program from 1992 to 1997.

What Can You Do to Improve Your Retirement Security?

You can improve your retirement security by helping to lobby your elected politicians. Lobbying is the process of trying to influence decision makers so they do what we want them to. You need to lobby your municipal politicians and try to get them to lobby provincial politicians. You need to lobby provincial politicians in order to get the CPP expanded. And you need to lobby your MP.

Fact: The CPP is recognized as one of the most stable pension plans in the world and it will be there for the next generation of workers when they retire. It is actuarially sound (meaning it is guaranteed to deliver, as promised) for the next 75 years.

Lobbying is a legitimate process and can make a significant difference. Politicians often don't know the range of opinions on an issue and must be given an opportunity to understand our views. Remember, it's a politician's job to serve US - we can't forget that we hold the power.

If you are interested in creating or participating in a lobbying effort to a politician to expand the Canada Pension Plan, please visit the union's website to find out more information - we can help get you the training and give you the pointers on what you may need to have a successful lobby and a better retirement. 



RETIREMENT SECURITY
LET'S MAKE IT WORK *for everyone*

Plan for fishing on the August long weekend


Brother Chris Carter, Chair of Unit 6 in the Fraser Valley, is organizing a long weekend Fishing Derby for IBEW 258 members and their families at the Fraser Cove Campground just outside of Lillooet.


"I'm really looking forward to having Local 258 members come out to Gator's campground and do some tournament style fishing on the Saturday of the long weekend in August," said Brother Carter, who began organizing this event a few months ago. "I've been up to the site and had a look at the place and it's great - there's camping spots, about 20 RV hookups and even an overnight cabin. Gator, a retired lineman who used to work for BC Hydro, is holding the spots open for us, so I hope members who are planning to go can get in touch with me soon so we can firm up the details."

Brother Carter, after talking with staff in the union office, suggested the tournament be named after Brother Al Ross, a LU258 member who was an avid fisherman and well know hunter and sportsman in his community of Port Alberni who was killed on the job while working near Bamfield on Vancouver Island in 2006.

Brother Ross's long time friend and colleague on the job, Brother Ron Boffy, who worked with him and was Al's hunting partner for more than 40 years, was impressed the Fishing Derby will be named after Brother Ross.

"I still miss him to this day," said Boffy in a recent phone conversation with The Hotline. "I think this is a great idea. Al always had a way of bringing people together and I hope everyone will have a great time doing one of the things Al really loved to do - fishing. I'm planning on going myself."

To confirm your spot, please call Chris Carter at 604-793-4240 or email him directly at krisdogmatic@hotmail.com. 



IBEW
LOCAL 258
BRITISH COLUMBIA
presents the


Al Ross
Memorial
Fishing Derby

PRIZES!
FREE CAMPING!
TROPHY!

Join us for a great weekend of camping, fishing, dining & dancing with a live band at Fraser Cove Campground in Lillooet.
Free camping on Friday & Saturday - families welcome!
The Fishing Derby will take place on Saturday, August 4.
Fishing rod rentals available!

Tickets \$10 each - contact Chris Carter, Unit 6 Chair at 604-793-4240 or email krisdogmatic@hotmail.com

FOR MORE DETAILS VISIT WWW.IBEW258.BC.CA



So, what has the union ever done for me?

weekends all breaks at work, including your lunch break
paid vacation sick leave minimum wage 8-hour work day overtime
pay occupational health & safety 40-hour work week Worker's
Compensation employment insurance pensions workplace
safety standards & regulations employer paid health care benefits collective
bargaining rights for employees wrongful termination laws
age discrimination laws holiday pay employer paid dental, life and vision
benefits privacy rights pregnancy and parental leave
the right to strike wage earners protection program anti-scab legislation

PROBLEMS AT HOME OR AT WORK? NEED TO TALK WITH SOMEONE?



Trained union counsellors are now available to help you with issues that may be affecting your well-being, home life and/or work performance.

To arrange a completely confidential phone call to talk with someone who can help, call IBEW Local 258 at 604-520-3305 (Lower Mainland), or Toll Free at 1-877-520-3305, during regular business hours. Or call Dan at 604-312-5929 anytime.

**IF WE CAN'T HELP YOU,
WE KNOW SOMEONE WHO CAN.**



JHSC Basic & Advanced • Incident Investigations • Chemical Hazards
Strains, Aches & Pains • Prevention of Violence in the Workplace
Understanding & Preventing Stress • Ergonomics for Drivers & Operators

**Providing province-wide education for
Joint Health & Safety Committees**

View our course schedule and descriptions at
www.healthandsafetybc.ca

WCB Teleclaim service for injured workers

1-888-WORKERS

1-888-967-5377 or #5377 on your cell phone

Injured workers can now file time-loss claims more quickly and easily through the WCB's Teleclaim Contact Centre.

Workers who are injured at work and miss time as a result can report their injuries to WorkSafe BC by calling the Teleclaim Centre.

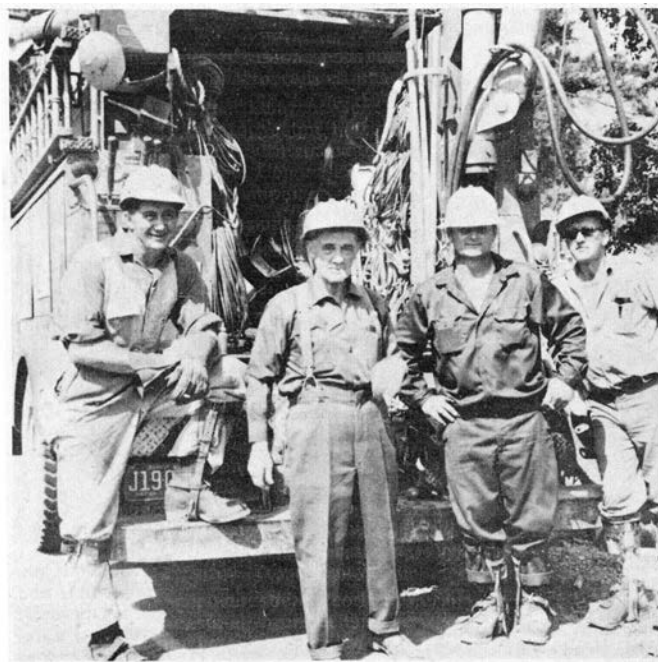
By doing so, you will be connected with a WCB representative who completes an injury report on your behalf.

The Teleclaim representative will help explain the claims process in an average 30 minute discussion, and can help obtain services to assist with recovery and return to work.

Teleclaim is available to workplaces throughout BC, Monday through Friday, from 8 am to 6 pm.

From the Archives

Can you identify the LU 258 IBEW members in this photo?



Does anybody know the names of the members in the hard working Line Crew in the photo above? Hint: it looks like they were having an important tail gate session before starting a hotline job in the Abbotsford area. Rumours are the photo is from 1969.

If you think you know who is in the photo, send your answers to The Hotline via email at hotline@shaw.ca or by letter to the union office. We will print your responses in the next issue of The Hotline. Good Luck!



PHOTO OPPORTUNITY LU 258



Unit 2 Chair Gerald Pope recently presented long term service pins to Local 258 members Brother Tim Stiemer, Brother Gerald Tandy and Brother Kevin McNabb.



New member Brother Craig Stanchfield, left, gets initiated into the union by Unit 2 Chairman Gerald Pope at the March meeting in Quesnel.



Brother Don Schultz receives his 35 year service pin from Unit 2 Chair Gerald Pope at the meeting in Prince George.



Brother Len Nadeau receives his 45 year pin from Unit 2 Chair Gerald Pope at the Prince George meeting.



Congratulations on your retirement Brother Victor Arce! Victor worked as a General Trades Subforeman at Burrard Thermal and is shown here cutting his retirement cake baked by co-worker Adora Provinciano. The cake was a rendition of the largest swimming pool in the world at a resort in Chile. Victor has plans to return to Chile and set up a fishing charter.



Brother Al Beeson receives his 45 year service pin at the Prince George meeting from Unit 2 Chairman Gerald Pope.



Brother Ellis Boon is presented with his 35 year service pin at the Quesnel meeting by Unit 2 Chairman Gerald Pope.



Brother Kim Black, left, and Brother Dwain Galbraith, right, were presented with long term service pins by Brother Trevor Williams, Vice Chairman of Unit 3 at Bridge River, May 08, 2012. Brother Black works as a CBU Electrician and has 36 years of service and Brother Galbraith works as a CBU Foreman Electrician with 35 years of service.



Topped out PLT apprentices from Rokstad Power, from left, Brother Kevin Dagg, Brother Steve DeBoer and Brother Kyle Elkie.



Taking a moment for a photo opportunity for the Hotline are, from left, Brother Greg Nelson, Brother Bob Mills and Brother Ed McEwen, Vice Chair Unit 2.



Congratulations to new members, Brother Dylan Dawson and Brother Stephen Marcil, sworn in at the May Unit 6 meeting in Langley by Unit Chair Chris Carter.



Congratulations to new members, from left, Brother Duncan Romp and Brother Brian Kyle, who were sworn in at the May Unit 5 meeting by Unit Chair Cathy Tagseth.



Congratulations to Brother Kelly Hambleton who won the watch draw at the March Unit 2 meeting.



Unit 2 Chair Gerald Pope presents Brother Gunner Moren with the coveted IBEW watch.



**PHOTO
OPPORTUNITY
LU 258**

From the Back Corner

Report from
Michelle Laurie,
President, Local 258 IBEW



Over the past couple of months, our Executive Board has engaged in conversations with our members about the role Local 258 could play in political activism and the possibility of affiliating to the NDP. Affiliating means officially attaching to an organization like we do with our current affiliations to local Labour Councils, the BC Federation of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress.

As you may know, our sister Local 213 is affiliated to the NDP, and, as such, has a place at the table when policy and political discussions take place. At our union meetings with members around the province, your feedback indicates that you think our Local Union should be participating in political activism and have a seat at this table and a voice in the discussions. And I agree. With the escalating attacks on working people coming from all angles, including harmful actions by the Harper Conservative government with back-to-work legislation, and provincial government actions that impair collective bargaining and create an atmosphere of unfair labour relations, it is imperative that we engage as an organization and make our voices heard.

This spring has seen the aggressive assault on Canadian workers by the federal government escalate with more back-to-work legislation being forced, this time, on railway workers, who join Canada Post and Air Canada workers in being denied their rights to free collective bargaining.

And then there's Bill C-38 – the government's enormous 425 page omnibus bill currently finding its way through Parliament disguised as the "Budget Implementation Bill" – making it very clear Stephen Harper's attack on working people in Canada is "in full swing". This Bill makes cuts to the EI system that will see fewer and fewer workers who suffer layoff having access to the EI funds they contribute to with each and every paycheque. Workers will

have fewer opportunities for appealing unfair decisions regarding their EI claims with the removal of the EI Board of Referees and even employers are concerned about the loss of seasonal workers as Canadians will be forced to travel away from their homes to secure work in jobs they may not be qualified or trained for – at lower rates of pay!

Cuts to Old Age Security benefits means workers 54 years of age and younger today will have to work until they're at least 67 to qualify for these important benefits in their retirement and costs will be downloaded onto provinces and municipalities that already pay to help impoverished seniors.

Canada's shortage of skilled workers isn't being addressed by any type of plan to increase funding for training Canadian workers. Instead, this government is opening up the Temporary Foreign Workers program to unprecedented growth allowing employers quicker access to bring workers to Canada and pay them 15% less than the going rate.

This Bill also repeals the "Fair Wages and Labour Act" that assured that workers hired by the Government of Canada for construction, remodeling, repair or demolition work would be paid "fair wages", including overtime.

It's very clear this government is working quickly in other areas to implement more harm on Canada's workers — tens of thousands of public servants are losing their jobs as Canadians are deprived of public services and offices closed across the country. And the Private Members Bill put forward by White Rock MP Russ Hiebert, Bill C-377, is a flawed Bill aimed at attacking unions by forcing them to pay additional prohibitive costs to duplicate requirements for financial transparency that are already in place.

Canadians have to speak out against this masquerade of a "Budget Implementation Bill" that guts environmental assessments, weakens health care services, threatens fisheries and resources and, overall, reduces democratic accountability.

Closer to home for many of us have been the issues surrounding the Christy Clark Liberal government's ongoing interference with BC Hydro that borders on the intentional destruction of our public utility. After the most recent debacle of stepping in and closing down public hearings set by the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC), I wrote an editor to the letter (see sidebar) and remain firm in asking the questions I asked.

What is the government so afraid of? Why won't they let BC Hydro make it's case for a rate increase so it can meet it's energy revenue requirement? We all know BC Hydro is being forced to

HOTLINE



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Michelle Laurie's letter-to-the-editor that appeared in the Vancouver Sun, Saturday, May 26:

Why are Mr. Coleman and Ms. Clark so afraid of letting British Columbians hear what BC Hydro, our public electricity utility, needs to meet its revenue requirements? Why are they restricting BC Hydro's ability to begin to effectively address the massive debt-load the government has forced on the utility and its ratepayers, the majority who are BC families?

Their recent actions to evade independent scrutiny by the BC Utilities Commission, the independent regulator the Liberal government created, comes on the heels of the government's 2010 Clean Energy Act, which removed 13 of BC Hydro's most costly and controversial projects from BCUC's oversight and public review. The Act also removed the Commission's ability to review BC Hydro's Integrated Resource Plan, which will now either be approved or rejected by cabinet. Why does the provincial government feel that it needs to take such a heavy-handed approach?

The only conclusion a reasonable person can make is that it is now apparent Coleman, Clark and the Liberal government have taken these actions to hide the facts that neither its muddled and outdated energy plan, nor BC Hydro's ineptitude in the plan's implementation, can withstand even the slightest amount of informed public scrutiny.

pay significant dividends to the provincial government. And we also know government policies like the Clean Energy Act force BC Hydro to purchase private power at exorbitant rates through secretive contracts with severe long term impacts to its own financial viability. Add to that mess the boondoggle expense of the Smart Meter program and the bad accounting using multiple (more than two dozen) deferral accounts that basically "hide" the real costs of operating the utility, the BCUC was correct in scheduling public hearings in an effort to determine what's really going on.

Hydro's use of deferral accounts is the "intergenerational" dispersing of costs that both BCH and the government like to call "logical", but that "logic" isn't supported by any evidence. Just as the BCUC hearings were about to get underway this month, the government cancelled them and instead, chose to interfere again and arbitrarily set a rate increase themselves – an artificially low rate increase of 1.4% — a thinly veiled attempt to distract British Columbians and try to gain their support with claims of "success" in "helping BC families" who were facing a massive "50%" (their numbers and not correct) rate increase that BC Hydro "wanted".

As the Christy Clark Liberals slip lower and lower in the polls, it appears a leadership collapse is contributing to a growing sense of panic with this government becoming more reckless with our resources and our money. The last few weeks of the legislature saw a confusing array of massive bills being pushed through the legislature without any time for proper discussion or fair debate. Sensing their time may be limited with a provincial election just

under a year away on May 14, 2013, some of this government's decisions are becoming more than highly questionable and British Columbians deserve way better.

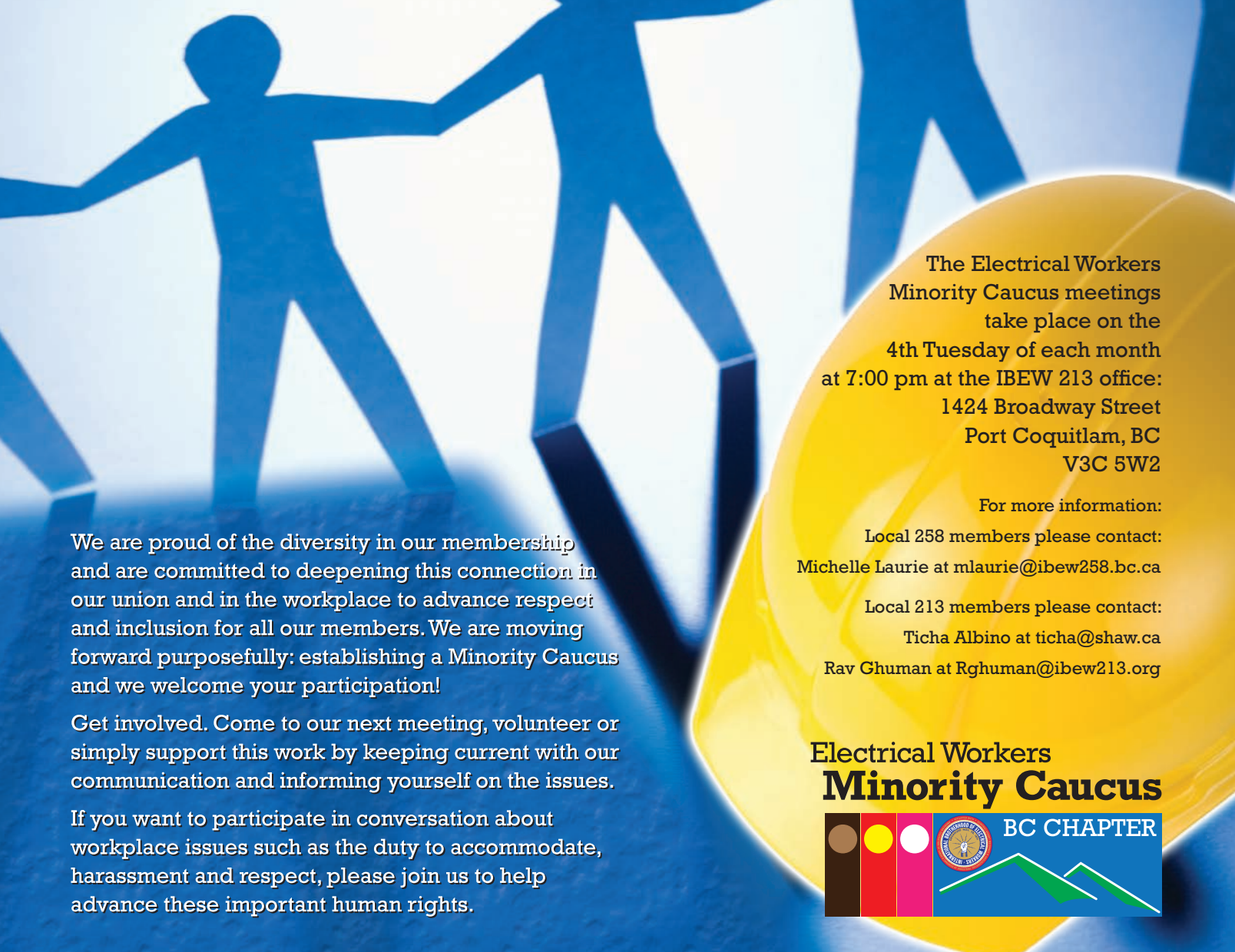
For example, this spring, the government announced they intend to sell the Liquor Distribution Branch – a publicly owned operation that actually makes money for British Columbians. When questioned in the legislature on details of the sale — from the Request for Proposal process to providing any reasonable rationale or even a competent business plan that could make a case for the sale of the LDB — Mr. Rich Coleman, the MLA and Minister responsible, stood up in the Provincial legislature and ranted, "I know the socialist communist thinking is that everything should be nationalized and controlled, if you had your ways you'd probably nationalize mining, nationalize natural gas, you would nationalize everything cause you don't believe in the private sector". His response was flabbergasting. How, exactly, does that answer the question about what is the benefit to British Columbians when the province sells such a valuable, money making asset?

Finally, I want to touch on the upcoming closure of EITI, our union-owned training centre. Since the school began in 1991, BC Hydro has been our largest single customer, accounting for about 60% of our courses and business. When they announced all of their trades training would now be performed in-house, the Board of Directors of EITI sought an expert opinion from Price Waterhouse Coopers that indicated the school would not be sustainable without Hydro's business. As a result, Local 258 will cease its operation of EITI effective August 31, 2012.

We are very proud of the work that we have done to develop and deliver highly skilled training to workers in our industries over the past 21 years. Our reputation has been stellar worldwide, due to our successful management team and our impeccable instructors who come from the field as experts in the industry. As a special celebration of our accomplishment, we will be having a tribute to EITI on October 19, 2012, at the Hilton Metrotown Vancouver Hotel in Burnaby. Watch our new website for updates on the event. [↗](#)



The IBEW represents workers from many communities.



We are proud of the diversity in our membership and are committed to deepening this connection in our union and in the workplace to advance respect and inclusion for all our members. We are moving forward purposefully: establishing a Minority Caucus and we welcome your participation!

Get involved. Come to our next meeting, volunteer or simply support this work by keeping current with our communication and informing yourself on the issues.

If you want to participate in conversation about workplace issues such as the duty to accommodate, harassment and respect, please join us to help advance these important human rights.

The Electrical Workers
Minority Caucus meetings
take place on the
4th Tuesday of each month
at 7:00 pm at the IBEW 213 office:
1424 Broadway Street
Port Coquitlam, BC
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Electrical Workers Minority Caucus



WE WELCOME ALL TO OUR EQUITY CAUCUS.

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