



HOTLINE

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER
PUBLICATION OF
LOCAL 258 IBEW
SUMMER, 2011

LOCAL 258, INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS, BRITISH COLUMBIA

PLT Apprentices

Leading BC
in Red Seal
Certification
through
skilled
training
at EITI



INSIDE THIS ISSUE...



Register today for
the 18th Annual
IBEW/BC Hydro
Golf Tourney -
see page 9!



WHERE WE WORK -

FIND OUT WHERE LU 258 MEMBERS WORK IN BC



**LABOUR'S PARTNERSHIP WITH UNITED WAY BRINGS
BENEFITS TO UNION MEMBERS**



**CANADA POST WORKERS: UNNECESSARY LEGISLATION
FROM AN UNJUST GOVERNMENT**



BE A PART OF LU 258'S NEXT GEN YOUTH COMMITTEE!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Viewpoint from your Business Manager Doug McKay p3

We've Got Mail!..... p4

Strikes & Lockouts p5

Bargaining Reports..... p6

27th Annual Day of Mourning p7

Unnecessary Legislation from an Unjust Government p8

18th Annual IBEW/BC Hydro Golf Tourney Notice p9

WHERE WE WORK..... p10

PLT Training at EITI..... p12

Labour's Protein for People Project..... p14

Ruminations from a Retiree p15

Union Notice Board..... p16

Partnering with the United Way p17

Forkin Memorial Scholarships Awarded..... p18

Be a part of LU 258's Next Gen Youth Committee p19

Photo Opportunity p20

From the Back Corner by Michelle Laurie..... p23



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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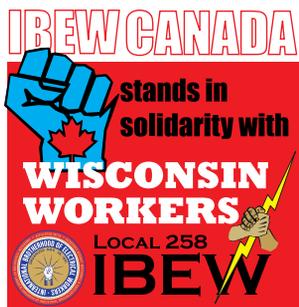
Local 258 IBEW Legal Counsel: Rebecca Murdock



Cover photo: Recent PLT Apprentice Training grads at LU 258's EITI training facility in Surrey. Congratulations to these graduates whose names are listed on page 13 of this issue of The Hotline.

VIEWPOINT from your Business Manager Doug McKay

As we await the arrival of summer in BC, it looks like 2011 is shaping up to be another one of those multiple election years. We have just come through a federal election that has seen a sea change in our government with the NDP becoming the Official Opposition and the Liberals and Bloc basically being tossed aside. Stephen Harper and his Conservatives achieved a majority and, with that, the attack on working people has begun. With legislation forcing locked out Canada Post workers to return to work with imposed wage rates less than those previously offered by their employer, an undermining of their retirement security, a two-tier wage environment that discriminates against new, and often young, workers, it looks like we are in for a battle for a few years as public sector workers now see the right wing agenda of this new government.



Our brothers and sisters in the US are seeing the attack first hand in the State of Wisconsin where regressive legislation, brought forward by newly elected Republican Governor Scott Walker, has stripped 175,000 public sector workers of their collective bargaining rights - including the right to negotiate working conditions, health and safety and worker's compensation provisions, leave entitlements, seniority rules, equality provisions, grievance procedures, representation rights, pensions and benefits and real salary increases being put to public referendum. LU 258 sent a delegation (see photos at left) to show our support for these workers at an International Rally that took place at Peace Arch in April and we vow to stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the US - and now in Canada - at this attack on working people.

In this province, both the Liberals and the NDP have elected new leaders and our new Premier now has her seat, the result

of a closely fought by-election. This summer, we face the HST referendum, with a somewhat confusing ballot question that requires you to vote yes for no or no for yes. Rumours abound a provincial election will be called in September followed closely by your local municipal elections in November. I encourage all of you to follow the issues closely and make sure your voice is heard by getting out to vote - or - in the case of the HST, filling out your ballot and making sure it is in the mail or dropped off at your local Elections BC office by July 22nd.

I hope I don't have to remind you how important voting is. Voting is your right and a privilege that has been achieved by the generations that came before us who fought to get us what we have today. It truly is a benefit of living in a democratic society - it's your opportunity to have your choice recognized and in doing so, you become an active part of your community, be it a workplace, society in general or on a specific issue.

I have had the privilege of being elected many times in leadership positions with this Local and humbly take this responsibility very seriously. It is a privilege to listen to the membership and through democratic processes, like voting, I am guided by your Executive Board to take action on issues important to you that will also bring benefit to our membership as a whole.

It is with this principle I am participating on the BC Hydro Safety Task Force that was established as a result of the recognition there are serious safety problems at this Crown Corporation due to aging infrastructure and a workplace culture that doesn't appear to be working in the best interests of workplace safety. I am reminded on a daily basis about safety as I listen to our members and their families who face daily struggles as a result of workplace injuries or deaths.

I am hopeful this employer, and for that fact all of our employers, recognize that an effective workplace safety program is not something that falls off a tree - it has to be properly funded and money has to be spent both in educating workers and their managers. This union will always reinforce the demand that safety comes first - especially in our industries - but the sad reality is not all contractors that bid for jobs put safety first. This is a problem that needs to be recognized when an employer's purchasing strategy focuses on lowest bidder that, more often than not, doesn't include making workplace safety priority #1. Safety truly is a matter of life and death in the industries our members work in.

I am certain nobody goes to work thinking this is the day I will die at work. You can be assured that I will continue to fight and do all the due diligence necessary on behalf of all the members of this Local who are faced with challenges from both our employers and those non-union companies who put forward low bids that don't give a hoot about the real cost of safety in the workplace in order to ensure that what we desire for ourselves, we desire for all. 



We've Got Mail!

Dear Members of the IBEW,
The Hudson's Hope Minor Hockey Association would like to thank Union 258 for responding to our request. We appreciate the support and donation.

The donation given to our Association will be used to pay for ice time. Our year has ended as of today and even though we only had very few teams and players they had a fantastic year thanks to the continued support of companies and groups like yours.

Sincerely,
John Herrington,
President, HHMHA

To Local 258 Executive Board,
We, the undersigned, would like to take this opportunity to thank you for approving the generous donation of \$200 towards our IBEW Curling Team to participate in the Smithers Friday Night Fun League. It is greatly appreciated by us and our spouses.
Klaus Kraft, Brian Cline, Zach Garland, Josh Miller, Val Frenz

Dear Local 258,
On behalf of the BC Hydro Power Pioneers Golf Club (Vancouver) members, I would like to thank you most sincerely for your donation and generosity again this year. The \$500 will be gratefully used at our annual golf wind-up tournament dinner in September.

We are all retired and our club is self-supporting so we really appreciate receiving your donation and the support you have given us over the past many years. Again, thank you.

Sincerely,
Irene Bedard
President, BC Hydro Power Pioneers Golf Club (Vancouver)

Dear Local 258,

Re: The Night of Nights - A Big Thank You

Well, the big show at the Massey Theatre in New Westminster has come and gone. On Saturday, May 28 and Sunday, May 29, the show choir I belong to, "The Maple Leaf Singers", welcomed over 600 guests to each show for our annual fundraising performance. It was an absolutely positive experience for me and a culmination of 5 months of hard work partnered with lots of fun.

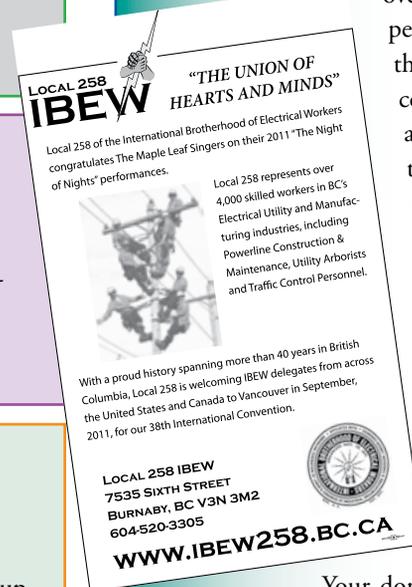
I joined and started practicing with the Maple Leaf Singers in January of this year. Having not done any singing at all for over 40 years, it was a daunting experience. Learning over 17 songs and the choreography to go with them; committing to twice weekly rehearsals; and practicing on my own ump-teen hours to memorize and perfect my technique certainly had its ups and downs over this time period. But it was a realization of a dream for me. People always talk about finding their passion. I didn't know what they meant... until now.

I want to formally thank Local 258 IBEW for their very generous donation of \$350 for an ad in our show programme.

Your donation meant so much to me personally but more importantly it probably paid a good portion of the production cost of the programme.

Thank you so much for your support!

In solidarity
Becky MacDonald
Staff, Local 258 Union Office



DID YOU KNOW? >> HST adds an additional 7% to the cost of accounting services • admission fees • advertising • airline tickets • animal feeds (hay is exempt) • appliance repair & maintenance • architect services • art gallery admissions • attractions / events • ballet lessons • basic cable TV • bicycles • campgrounds • chips • cigarettes / cigars • catering services • Chinese medicine • adult sized children clothing • used adult clothing purchased for less than \$100 • coffee at coffee shops • commercial leases...



Countdown to Vancouver

IBEW 38th International Convention

Vancouver, British Columbia, on Canada's Pacific coast is considered by many to be among the most beautiful cities in the world. This is the setting the IBEW chose as the site of its 38th International Convention that will take place from September 19th to the 23rd.

The convention is where the IBEW conducts the heart of its business, setting broad policy goals to guide the union over the next five years in an open, democratic forum. The planning for such a complex and important gathering is already well underway and will become more intense with each passing month until the gavel falls on September 19, 2011.

Held every five years, the IBEW convention is a massive undertaking that will bring thousands of local union delegates, officers, staff and guests from across North America to Vancouver, with the event taking place at the new Convention Centre on the waterfront.

This is the fourth time in IBEW's history that the Convention takes place in Canada – delegates gathered in Toronto in 1986 and in Montreal in 1923 and 1962.

STRIKES, LOCKOUTS & BOYCOTTS

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

Locked out & legislated back to work:

Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) VS.

Canada Post ** see article page 8

United Steelworkers Local 9346

VS. Teck Coal Ltd.

Major Issues: Benefits

Strike Action Commenced: January 30, 2011

CMAW Local 1928

VS. Cove Top & Flash Cove Employees

Major Issues: Benefits, Wages

LOCK OUT Commenced: December 23, 2010

United Food & Commercial Workers Union

(UFCW), Local 1518 VS. Extra Foods Maple

Ridge

Major Issues: Wages, Job Security

Strike Action Commenced: December 15, 2008

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

Major Issues: Seniority, Benefits, Concessions

Strike Action Commenced: July 25, 2001

BOYCOTTS

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

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

BARGAINING REPORTS

Members at Ace Flagging ratify new Collective Agreement

Assistant Business Manager Dan Klassen reports members working at Ace Flagging in Port Alberni on Vancouver Island have ratified a new Collective Agreement. For the first time, members at Ace Flagging will now receive a 100% employer paid health and benefit package.

Congratulations to these members who work in traffic control, a very difficult and often dangerous job.

Bargaining for Line Contractors Master Agreement underway

Negotiations for the new Line Contractors Master Agreement have been underway for a few months reports Assistant Business Manager Dan Giesbrecht. Issues on the table include wages and benefits for the Local 258 IBEW members who work for private line contractors across British Columbia.

Brother Giesbrecht is at the Bargaining table with Brother Dave Hollenstein from Glen Power, Brother Henry Bender from Arctic Power and Brother Jim Leckie from Alteck. This contract expired on February 1st.

Code Electric and Code Manufacturing members ratify new agreement

Assistant Business Manager Susan Longva reports members working at Code Electric and across the street at Code Manufacturing in Coquitlam, BC, have ratified new Collective Agreements after a long period of very difficult bargaining with their common employer.

The new agreements, reached with the help of a mediator, features wage increases and improvements to the benefits packages.

Sister Longva would like to thank the members working at these two properties for standing strong through these difficult negotiations.

Many thanks to Unit 6 Chair Karen Porter



Sister Karen Porter

With a recent move to Vancouver Island for a new career opportunity with BC Hydro, Sister Karen Porter has recently stepped down as Local 258's Unit 6 Chair.

Appointed in 2008, Sister Porter was elected by the membership in 2010 to this position. Unit 6 covers members from the lower mainland and Fraser Valley - everything south of the Fraser River and from Pitt Meadows to

Hope. Sister Porter worked at Fraser Valley Generation out of the Ruskin headquarters as a journeyman electrician.

On leaving Unit 6, Karen recently said, "It was a hard decision to leave the lower mainland, but I will continue to be in-

involved with my union - I certainly have enjoyed it very much and look forward to being actively involved again."

Moving to BC from Newfoundland with her family when she was 12, Sister Porter completed her schooling and went on to become a journeyman electrician after her apprenticeship with BC Hydro. Since then, she has worked for BCH mainly in the lower mainland as well as a stint in Terrace, BC.

She began her activism with the union as a Shop Steward and also took on a volunteer role as a Union Counsellor. A participant at numerous meetings and conventions, Karen was also a delegate to the Fraser Valley Labour Council, where she was also elected and served as Treasurer for two terms.

The union would like to thank Sister Porter for her contribution and looks forward to her continued activism as a delegate to the Victoria and District Labour Council. 

DID YOU KNOW? >> HST adds an additional 7% to the cost of compost • computer servicing • concert tickets • condo management fees • consulting services • conveyance fees • delivery services • dietary supplements • dry cleaning • driving range fees • electronics repair • energy equipment • esthetician services • fast food – beverages • fire extinguishers • first aid kits • fishing charters • fitness club memberships • fitness training services • food producing trees and plants • freight (in BC) • funeral services • golf fees • graphic design services • grass cutting services • hair cuts • hall rental fees • health equipment • helmets • hockey tickets • hockey rink rentals • home appraisal services • home inspections • home maintenance • horse boarding fees • horse shows • horse riding lessons • house cleaning services • insulation • interior design services • investment counseling fees...

Labour leaders demand action

Canadians continue to be killed at work as the 27th Annual Day of Mourning ceremonies take place across Canada

“Sisters and brothers – I have to ask all Canadian workers a question which makes us sick to our stomachs – Is Today The Day You Die At Work?”

Ken Georgetti, CLC President

Every day, men and women across Canada leave home to go to work – and they shouldn't have to ask themselves that terrible question, said Ken Georgetti, president of the Canadian Labour Congress in Burnaby on April 28 at one of the many Day of Mourning ceremonies that took place around BC and across Canada.

For 27 years, workers have been gathering on this day to honour their brothers and sisters who have been killed or injured on the job or who have died from workplace related illness.

The carnage continues – with another thousand Canadian families facing the news this past year that their loved ones will never come home again.

Georgetti demanded, “This year, let's tell politicians, at every level, that we want them to get ‘tough on crime’ – the crime of letting employers get away with murder when a worker is killed on the job through negligence. Let's demand far more action by government to do everything possible to stop needless workplace deaths and injuries.”

In the past year, workers died as a result of workplace accidents and just as many died as a result of entirely preventable causes – or because of fatal diseases like cancer and asbestosis caused by exposure to carcinogens in their workplace.

That exposure could also have been prevented – but was not.

Georgetti called for charges to be laid under the criminal code provisions that would send those employers found guilty of criminal negligence causing the deaths of workers to jail, to pay for their actions.

As a result of the work of Canada's labour movement, the federal government passed The Westray Act - Bill C-45, in 1994 – named after the mine where 26 workers tragically died in a methane explosion.

But despite the Westray Act allowing for the criminal prosecution of those believed to be responsible – including corporations - for the deaths of workers on the job – little has happened.

In British Columbia, BC Federation of Labour President Jim Sinclair called on the provincial government and the Workers Compensation Board to:

- Hire more prevention officers, with a focus on enforcement in high-risk industries;
- Develop a comprehensive public awareness campaign on workplace and public hazards of exposure to substances such as asbestos, paired with stricter enforcement



IBEW members gathered at one of the Day of Mourning ceremonies that took place across BC and Canada on April 28th. From left to right, Brother Dave Hicks, Brother Harry Van Beest, Brother Dwayne Marsh, Brother Craig McGeachy, Brother Mike Flynn, Brother Jim Greenwell and Brother Massimo Ostrouska attended the event that took place at Jack Poole Plaza in Vancouver.

of the regulations surrounding occupational chemical hazards;

- Establish a registry of public buildings and workplaces that are known to contain asbestos; and
- Increase criminal prosecutions of employers who wilfully ignore worker safety.

Workers in BC continue to pay far too high a price for simply going to work to support themselves and their families,” said Jim Sinclair. “Last year, 179 BC workers died. More than half of those deaths were workplace related diseases. Especially troubling is the fact that the vast majority of these deaths and injuries were entirely preventable.” 

Canadian Union of Postal Workers Fighting Back

Unnecessary Legislation from an Unjust Government

Late
Breaking
News!

As **The Hotline** goes to **press** in late June, an historic debate ended on Parliament Hill as Jack Layton's Official Opposition New Democrats stood up and defended Canada's postal workers from the harsh effects of Harper's Conservative majority government legislation that has sent a message to all workers with its unjust and punitive bill legislating postal workers back to work.

"The government is clearly willing to side with employers to grind down wages and working conditions," said CUPW National President Denis Lemelin. "Its decision to use back-to-work legislation in the Canada Post and Air Canada disputes was not neutral. The Conservatives have shown themselves to be very anti-worker after only two months of majority government."

Lemelin said the government's assertion that its legislation was necessary to protect the economy is illogical. He said postal workers had offered to return to work. "The government has attacked our right to freely negotiate the conditions we work under," said Lemelin. "It appears that only markets and employers will have freedoms in this country."

"The union's struggle for safe work, decent jobs and pensions will continue in spite of this unjust and punitive bill. Fortunately, the government can't legislate away our determination to fight for our rights," said Lemelin.

Lemelin added that postal workers are very grateful for the support they received from people all across the country and opposition Members of Parliament, especially members of the New Democratic Party (NDP) who eloquently defended free collective bargaining for 58 hours straight. He said the NDP's filibuster was successful in provoking a resumption of negotiations between CUPW and Canada Post over the last few days, but that the negotiations had ultimately failed.

"Canada Post was uncompromising from the moment Harper's government introduced back-to-work legislation," said Lemelin.



Jack Layton, Federal NDP Leader & Leader of Canada's Official Opposition spoke to postal workers and their supporters at a rally in downtown Vancouver on June 17.

process is bias towards the employer. Features of the legislation include:

Extension of the collective agreement: the collective agreement is restored until a new agreement has been determined by the arbitrator. The new agreement will expire on January 31, 2015.

Postal workers and their allies across the country joined together to protest against this unjust legislation.

In the House of Commons, the NDP did everything possible to fight the law.

The Secretary-Treasurer of the Canadian Labour Congress, Hassan Yussuf, assisted CUPW in their attempts to force Canada Post to get back to the negotiations table.

Lower Wages Imposed: The bill legislates wage increases that fall significantly below Canada Post's last offer of 1.9% in 2011, 2012 and 2013, and 2.0 % in 2014. The law includes increases of 1.75 % in 2011, 1.5% in 2012, 2% in 2013 and 2% in 2014. This would take \$875.50 out of the pockets of an average full-time postal worker during the four years of the agreement. It represents a theft of \$35 million from postal workers and their families.

Final Offer Selection: The new collective agreement will be decided by a government-appointed arbitrator. The parties will each submit a draft collective agreement and the arbitrator must choose one in its entirety.

Guiding Principles for the arbitrator: The arbitrator must consider the following:

- conditions of employment consistent with those in comparable postal industries
- the necessary flexibility to ensure the short term long-term economic viability and competitiveness of CPC
- maintain the health and safety of workers
- ensure the sustainability of pension plan
- take into account the solvency ratio of the pension
- operate efficiently, improve productivity and meet acceptable levels of service without undue rate increases.

Penalties: The law contains the usual penalties for non compliance: \$50,000 for union officers, \$1,000 for members and \$100,000 for the union for each day. ☒

18th Annual IBEW – BC Hydro GOLF TOURNAMENT

Monday, September 12, 2011
Burnaby Mountain Golf Course
7600 Halifax Street
Burnaby, BC

**Shotgun Start
at 1:30 pm**



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

ENTRY FEE: \$90
includes Gourmet BBQ
Burgers with fixins
AND Prizes for all!

*Limited golf carts available -
register today to reserve!*

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

**ALL PLAYERS & TEAMS
MUST REGISTER AND
BE FULLY PAID BY
AUGUST 29TH - GET YOUR
TICKETS TODAY!**

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



WHERE WE WORK

Local 258 IBEW members work for over 100 employers in the utility, powerline and outside construction, traffic control, manufacturing and utility arborist industries across British Columbia.

Local 258 members are encouraged to attend your union meetings - please note some meetings are mandatory. Current meeting schedules are organized by geographical area - the Unit structure - and are posted on the union's website at www.ibew258.bc.ca

LINE CONTRACTING/ OUTSIDE CONSTRUCTION

A. Powerline Contracting Ltd., Langley, BC

Advanced Powerlines Ltd., Kelowna, BC

Aerial Contractors Ltd., Salmon Arm, BC

Allteck Contractors Ltd., Langley, BC

Arctic Power Systems, Abbotsford, BC

Arrow Installations, Cranbrook, BC

BC High Voltage Industrial Ltd., Aldergrove, BC

B & G Power Systems Ltd., Coquitlam, BC

B & T Line Equip Testers Ltd., Nanaimo, BC

B T All Powerline Construction Ltd., Nanaimo, BC

Batch Power Measurements Ltd., Kamloops, BC

Central Island Powerline Ltd., Cobble Hill, BC

Coast Powerline (2005) Ltd., Victoria, BC

Digger Civil Contractors Ltd., Vernon, BC

Dogwood Transport Ltd., Parksville, BC

Eafab Electric, Langley, BC

Edwards Powerline Ltd., Williams Lake, BC

EHV Power Corp., Burnaby, BC

EIDT & Associates Consulting Ltd., Madeira Park, BC

**ESC Electrical Services & Contracting,
Prince George, BC**

**Fujikura America Inc./Wilson Construction
Company, Burnaby, BC**

Galbraith Power BC Inc., Coquitlam, BC

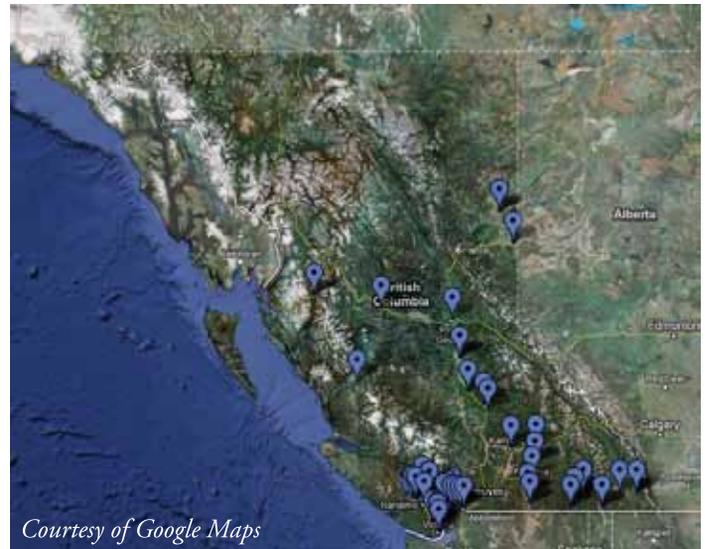
Garth's Electric Co. Ltd., 100 Mile House, BC

Glenn Power Contractors Ltd., Salmon Arm, BC

Henkels & McCoy PEI Inc., Abbotsford & Kelowna, BC

High Voltage Services, Abbotsford, BC

Highland Powerlines Ltd., Kamloops, BC



Courtesy of Google Maps

Horizon Developments Ltd., Saanichton, BC

Hyland Excavating, Surrey, BC

J.M.N. Contracting Ltd., Qualicum Beach, BC

Jaco Environmental Systems Inc., Surrey, BC

Jaco Powerlines Ltd., Cobble Hill, BC

**Kodiak Powerline Contractors Ltd., Abbotsford &
Kamloops, BC**

**Little Mountain Bison Contracting Ltd., Prince
George, BC**

Lumen City Lighting Company, New Westminster, BC

Martech Electrical Systems, Castlegar, BC

Midlight Construction Ltd., Fort McMurray, AB

Midway Power Line Services Ltd., Sechelt, BC

MPK Power Line Services Ltd., Rose Prairie, BC

Okanagan Test Rite Safety Shop, Vernon, BC

Plowe Power Systems Ltd., Kamloops, BC

Power Up Line Contractors Inc., Maple Ridge, BC

**PR Power Scanning, Inspection & Diagnostic
Services**

Prysmian Powerlink, Seattle, WA

R S Line Construction, Langley, BC

**Rocky Mountain Power Line Maintenance Ltd.,
Prince George, BC**

Rush Electric Ltd., Quesnel, BC

Skeena Power Systems, Prince George, BC

Stan-Mac Line Construction Ltd., Dawson Creek, BC
Sunset Powerlines Ltd., Surrey, BC
TransTech Corp. Ltd., Kelowna, BC
2-Way Consulting, Oliver, BC
Trans Power Construction (1999), Coquitlam, BC
Twin River Power Ltd., Terrace, BC
Valley Power Line Contracting Ltd., Langley, BC
Vancouver Island Powerline Ltd., Victoria, BC
Western Pacific Enterprises Group, Coquitlam, BC
Willoughby Holdings Ltd., Kamloops, BC

TRAFFIC CONTROL

A.L.L.L. Traffic Control and Safety Systems, Richmond, BC
Ace Flagging, Port Alberni, BC
Advanced Lane Tech, Port Alberni, BC
All-Clear Traffic Control, Roberts Creek, BC
Alpine Contracting, Lillooet, BC
Black Panther Traffic Control, Surrey, BC
Black Top Traffic Control Ltd., Kelowna, BC
C Z Flagging, Fernie, BC
Cariboo Traffic Control, Lac LaHache, BC
Central Interior Traffic Control 2004, Kaleden, BC
Crews Control Flagging Ltd., Rossland, BC
DC Traffic Control (see LaneTec)
Deb's Flagging Company, Kamloops, BC
Eagle Eye Traffic Control, Surrey, BC
Fast Lane Traffic Services Ltd., Abbotsford, BC
Four Star Flagging Service, Williams Lake, BC
Highroad Traffic Services Inc., Victoria, BC
Island Traffic Services Ltd., Sidney, BC
Lanetec Traffic DC Traffic Control, Richmond, BC
Mar-Tech Traffic Control Ltd., Langley, BC
Power Flagging & Traffic Control Inc., Vancouver, BC
Safety Zone Traffic Control, Creston, BC
Strictly Flagging, Terrace, BC
Valley Traffic Systems Inc., Langley, BC
Walk the Line Traffic Control, Madeira Park, BC

MANUFACTURING

Allied Controls Ltd., Burnaby, BC
Cam Tran Pacific Ltd., Chilliwack, BC
Canadian Process & Controls Ltd., Port Moody, BC
Code Electric Products Ltd., Coquitlam, BC
Code Manufacturing Ltd., Coquitlam, BC
Eaton Corporation, Delta, BC
Harbourview Electric Ltd., Burnaby, BC
Hobart Food Equipment Group, Delta, BC
N.C.S. International Inc., Burnaby, BC
Schneider Electric Canada Inc., Richmond, BC
Western System Controls Ltd., Kelowna, BC

UTILITY ARBORISTS

Asplundh Canada Inc., Aldergrove, BC
Davey Tree Services Ltd., Nanaimo, BC
Nelson Arborist Tree Services, Nelson, BC

UTILITY

Andritz Hydro Canada Ltd., Richmond, BC
BC Hydro - multiple locations throughout the province
Bear's Tool Testing & Inspections Inc., Salmon Arm, BC

LOCAL 258
IBEW





Electrical Industry Training Institute (EITI)

PLT training at EITI ON TOP with apprenticeship success

By Troy Hudson, EITI
Apprenticeship & Facilities Manager

EITI takes pride in the high quality of training we are able to provide at our union-owned training facility located in Surrey, BC. One of the many programs offered at EITI is the Power Line Technician Apprenticeship Training Program. Not only have we been successful at running the province's only school that provides an apprenticeship program for Power Line Technicians, we have achieved the highest Red Seal pass rate for all Apprenticeship Training Programs in British Columbia.

Our success couldn't be possible without the instructors who facilitate our training programs. With the dramatic increase in the number of students enrolling in our PLT Apprenticeship program, we have also had a substantial increase in the number of instructors who facilitate and use their experience, expertise and teaching skills to prepare these students for achieving Red Seal certification and a career in the electrical utility industry.

The instructors at EITI are the pride of the industry with the best representation of excellence that IBEW has come to show.



“BC trades with the highest pass rates last year were Powerline Technician* (96%), Metal Fabricator (92%), Construction Electrician (91%), Baker (88%), and Machinist (85%).”

ITA E-NEWS Fall 2010

** With EITI being the only Apprentice PLT training facility in BC, this is a direct reflection of our training program and our instructors.*

Over the years, EITI has become busier and busier. Today, our school continues to be full of activity due to the current changes within the industry, caused by both the much needed upgrades to the infrastructure and worker retirements in the electrical utility sector. To meet our needs, we are always seeking to enhance our existing pool of instructors so we can continue to meet the training mandate originally bestowed upon EITI by IBEW in 1994 (see inset below).

We would like to give a special thanks to all the new instructors who have stepped up over this last year to ensure that the training delivered at EITI continues to promote relevant, up-to-date best practices that allows our students to take away the knowledge that will help them be safe and productive throughout their career working as Power Line Technicians. We are currently seeking additional instructors for the future as we continue to meet the highest standards that EITI has held for these many years.

The staff and management of EITI would also like to thank the members of Local 258 IBEW for your contribution and continued support of our training facility. 🚧



Congratulations to the recent PLT Apprentices at EITI:

Nicholas Bebber

Mitchell Dennis

Jordan Flanagan

Chad Hampton

Ryan Jacobson

Jason Lintunen

Daniel McDonald

Sam McRae

Jonathan McTaggart

Helmer Mussell

Ephraim Nelson

Will Nichols

Josh Rosborough

Gavin Smith

IN keeping with the mandate of International President J.J. Barry, to train union members, IBEW Local 258 officially opened its own training facility on April 23, 1994. The seed for the creation of such a training facility was planted in the early 1980's, fuelled by the layoff of apprentice linemen because of the economic down turn. To allow these apprentices to complete their training and to be able to gain journeyman status, Local 258 opened a temporary line training center on Vancouver Island. Although these apprentices graduated without jobs, as journeymen linemen they were able to take advantage of employment opportunities as they became available. Many of these linemen now work for BC Hydro or for independent contractors.

IBEW Journal, November 1994



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www.eiti.bc.ca



Working with local food banks, labour's Protein for People Project combines food and fun to bring community awareness

Hundreds of Surrey residents who depend on local food banks to help feed their families turned out at Holly Elementary in April for a free barbecue and to connect with community resources that can help them support their families.

Put together by the labour community's "Protein for People Project", this community outreach effort was another in a long line of events taking place across BC where unions and their members bring food, family fun and useful information together in one place.

"BC's labour unions have a strong tradition of reaching out to help support those in need in our communities", said John Radosevic, president of the Protein for People Project. "We believe we can be part of the solution at the community level for families who find themselves just getting by and depending on local food banks. Our Protein for People Project works with local food banks and the community to connect families and individuals who have been impacted by job loss or low wages with the resources they may need to help lift them out of poverty."

With the increased costs so many families are facing for everyday essentials, more and more families and vulnerable individuals are finding themselves falling through the cracks – the unemployed, seniors, the disabled and the working poor who can't find good paying jobs with family supporting wages. About 45% of food distributed at food banks goes to feed hungry children. Booths and display tables were set up at the barbecue providing information about employment rights, housing options and local meal programs. Resources about affordable childcare and public health care were also available.

The Protein for People Project was launched in 2006 as an initiative by BC's unions to help support families in need through local food banks. Unions and their members make donations that are used to purchase pink salmon that's processed at Great Northern Packing and then re-packaged, with the Protein for People label, for distribution at local food banks across the province. The Protein for People Project helps organize community events to connect families in need with essential community resources.

Local 258 member and Unit 4 Chair Tom Greenwell represents Local 258 at the governance level for Protein for People. 



RUMINATIONS OF A RETIREE

By Ken McEwen
Retired Local 258 member

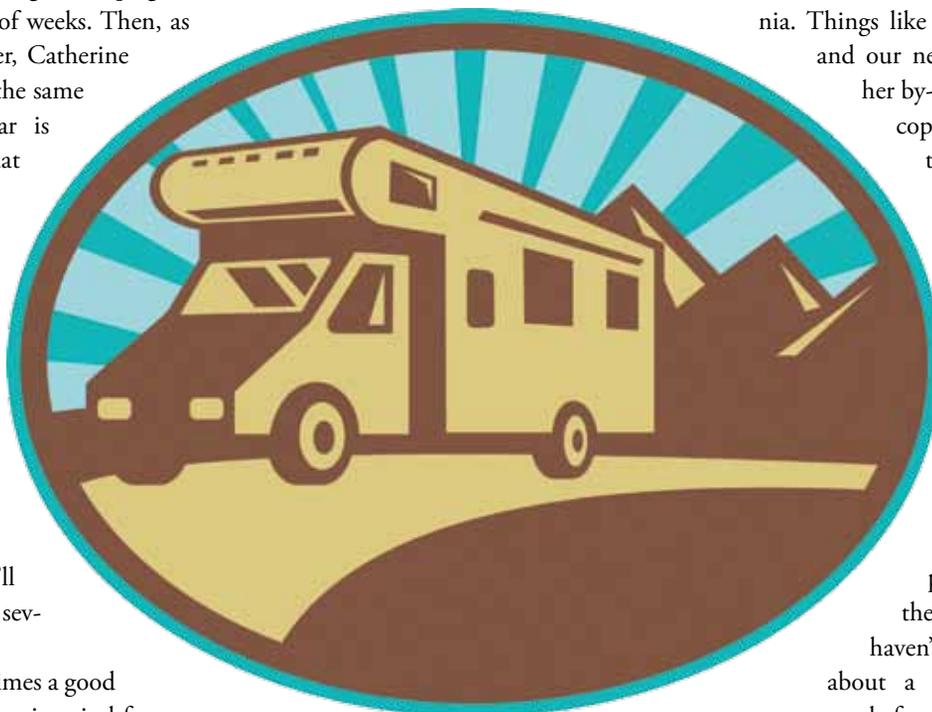
There is an old saying that states “There is nothing new under the sun”. I guess there might be some truth in that as here I am again under the gun, time-wise, to get this column to the editor by the deadline. As usual I have an overabundance of reasons why this is a last minute endeavour. Some of the reasons are even, in my view, pretty good. Like, I have been appointed by the president of LU 258 as Election Judge for the upcoming election of candidates to the IBEW International Convention. The requirements of that post have taken some time, effort and organization to get up and running. Also, when we returned to rainy and cold coastal British Columbia from warm and sunny southern California I caught the plague and was fairly sick for a couple of weeks. Then, as I was starting to recover, Catherine Dear came down with the same plague. Catherine Dear is quick to tell people that I gave it to her while I maintain that she just up and took it. As well as all that other stuff, I have been preparing the camper for a springtime wander. In the interest of saving time, because departure day for the wander is tomorrow, I’ll refrain from listing my several other good reasons.

Because it is sometimes a good idea to have a destination in mind for a wander we chose Dawson City, Yukon, for ours. I’m not really sure how that came about but it seems as good a destination as any other. Some people have asked how far it is from here and how long will it take us to get there. MapQuest indicates that it is just a little over 3000 kilometres from where we live to there. I have no idea how long it will take to get there. A lot will depend on what we find on the way. Being a Retiree means I have no particular place to be and no particular time to be there. So, Catherine Dear and I will set off tomorrow on the wander

and if things go as originally intended we will eventually arrive in Dawson City, Yukon. If, for some reason(s), we don’t get there we will be somewhere else and will still have Dawson City, Yukon, to use as a destination on a future wander.

This wander will be different than others we have done because Sesame the Dog is not with us anymore. After 14 years of our wanderings together, Sesame the Dog has gone to that great doggie park in the sky. So this time it will just be Catherine Dear and me wandering around with no particular place to be and no particular time to be there.

There has been a surfeit of events to ruminate on since we have returned from sunny southern California. Things like the federal election and our new BC premier and her by-election have caused copious quantities of time to be spent ruminating. Right now, on the eve of our departure for Dawson City, Yukon, I am busy trying to determine if my limited income meets the criterion set by the government to purchase my vote in the HST referendum. I haven’t thought too much about a purchase price for my vote before but given the current cost of gasoline I’m pretty sure \$175 (if I qualify) is not enough to do it. I’d really like to think I’m worth more than a one time payout of \$175. While I’m driving around BC and the Yukon, and Catherine Dear is having her “quiet time”, I’ll give further consideration to the issue. In that I expect to rise up as early as 8 AM tomorrow, being departure day and all, I’ll end this now save any further rumination reports until next time. Please continue to work and play safely. ☑



DID YOU KNOW? >> HST adds an additional 7% to the cost of • labour on home renovations • landscaping services • life jackets • limousine rentals • magazines / newspapers • marketing services • massage therapy • membership fees • moorage • museum admissions • movies / theatre • moving costs • music • MP3 downloads • naturopathy • new homes (some rebates may apply)...

Your website: www.ibew258.bc.ca



Visit your Local 258 IBEW website to find current updates on union issues.

Your union website features information about the Local and also includes a number of links for important union information, including downloadable pdf files of your member magazine, The Hotline.

You will also find a number of resources for members such as a Membership Application Form, Unit Meeting Schedules and Applications for Training Assistance.

We hope you enjoy the website and look forward to receiving any suggestions on how we can improve your website, including information that you would like to see on the site. Contact the union's president, Michelle Laurie, at mlaurie@ibew258.bc.ca with your suggestions. 

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 hotline@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.

Union members helping union members

Labour's partnership with the United Way bring benefits through the Union Counselling Program

The United Way and the Canadian Labour Congress have enjoyed a long and successful relationship in communities across Canada by working together to ensure that both union and community members have access to important services in our communities.



"Our union has a long history of supporting United Way because we know that this is a great way to make a difference. I am proud of my union for making that commitment. I also believe that it's important as union members to participate personally in making our communities stronger."

Dan Klassen, ABM Local 258 IBEW and Co-Chair of the CLC/United Way's Campaign Labour Committee

from COPE 378 as this year's Campaign Labour Co-Chairs, Brother Klassen's second term in this volunteer position.

IBEW 258 has, for many years, taken an active role in supporting the United Way. Last year, Local 258 was the recipient of the United Way's Community Spirit Award as a result of our contribution and involvement and support of the United Way. Sister Michelle Laurie, president of Local 258 also serves on the Board of Directors of United Way Canada.

One of the CLC/United Way joint efforts that directly benefits union members is the Union Counselling Program where union members volunteer to be trained to provide peer support to assist their union brothers and sisters to cope with workplace,

At the United Way of the Lower Mainland, union members donate their time to volunteer in many capacities on the Campaign Labour Committees and on the United Way's Board of Directors. By doing so, Labour ensures it has input in the decision-making processes around policy and allocation of funds, as well as fundraising.

Local 258's Dan Klassen, an Assistant Business Manager at the union hall, joins with Gwenne Farrell



personal or family challenges. Union Counsellors help their colleagues by referrals to programs in their community that can provide direct support.

The CLC/United Way Union Counselling Program is supported in part by funds raised by the Michael Wayne McDonell Labour Community Services Fund that was created by long time labour activist, retired Vancouver firefighter, former United Way Chair and Burnaby City Councillor Paul McDonell and his family.

Named after Paul's son, whose life was unexpectedly cut short by a tragic accident in 1996, donations to this fund are matched at \$15,000 by the Columbia Institute. This past year, the Community Savings Credit Union also donated \$10,000 to the fund as the result of a fundraising event.

The Michael Wayne McDonell Labour Community Services Fund hopes to make more people aware of planned giving and continues to seek support so programs such as Union Counselling can receive the much-needed funds to run the training program that benefits union members across BC. Recent graduates from the Harrison Winter School who have benefitted from this training are Baptist Cromptvoets (Union Counselling Level 1) and Jan Kehl (Critical Incident Stress).

The CLC/United Way Union Counselling Program benefits from the Michael Wayne McDonell Labour Community Services Fund along with the Labour College of Canada and Labour Education through the Canadian Labour Congress Pacific Region. 

Both unions and individuals have donated bequests in memory of the late Brother Rick Dowling, former Local 213 Business Manager and IEC Member, resulting in 38 union and other gifts totaling over \$18,000.

DID YOU KNOW? >> HST adds an additional 7% to the cost of nicotine replacements • non-prescription meds • painting services • parking • photography services • postage • private bus fares • printing services • rail travel originating in BC • real estate fees • reflexology • rentals for weddings • reroofing house • restaurant meals • RV Parks • safety equipment (not all safety and energy equipment is affected) • school supplies • shoe repairs • skiing • smoke detectors • snow removal • solar power • **AND MORE...**

2011 Forkin Memorial Scholarships awarded

Local 258 IBEW congratulates the three applicants who were successful in being selected for this year's Tom Forkin Memorial Scholarships.

Since 1991, Local 258 has awarded a member or a member's dependant who is attending or planning to attend a post-secondary program in British Columbia the Tom Forkin Memorial Scholarship. Consideration is also given to students who may be attending a post-secondary institution outside of BC.

This year's winning essays asked applicants to explain their educational goals and their labour activities.

The union would like to congratulate this year's successful applicants:

SHANNON KEHL is from Salmon Arm and is currently completing Grade 12. She plans on attending Okanagan College and then move on to University to obtain a degree in Social Work. Her father, Jan Kehl, is a member of Local 258.

KIM LIPSCOMBE, who speaks five languages, is from Nelson, BC and is currently in her third year of studying Professional Communications at Royal Roads University in Victoria. Her plans for the future include facilitating intercultural communication. Kim's dad Barry is a member of Local 258.

MICHAEL PETERSEN is from Chilliwack and is currently completing Grade 12. His future plans include attending the University of the Fraser Valley with the goal of obtaining his teaching certificate. Michael's dad is an IBEW member and currently works with BC Hydro and his grandfather is John Josephson who also worked at BC Hydro and is a retired Local 258 member.

Their winning essays can be read on the union's website at www.ibew258.bc.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.

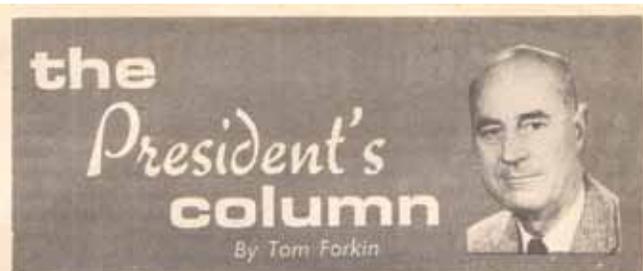
By doing so, you will be connected with a WCB representative who completes an injury report on your behalf.

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 4 pm.

Tom Forkin remembered...

Searching through archived copies of The Hotline, in publication since Local 258 was chartered in 1967, the column below, written in 1969 by then President Tom Forkin, leads us to conclude, while some things stay the same, some things never change.



Attendance and interest at union meetings has been picking up during the past period and we wonder whether contract negotiations are the only reason for this. Poor attendance has always been a problem in almost all unions and ours is no exception. It may be that the period of relatively high employment and "prosperity" since the war has bred a certain complacency in labor and meeting attendance has suffered as a result. In this period contract negotiations have come and gone, there has been the odd strike, but the average Joe has seemed more or less satisfied with his returns. Our last provincial election seems to indicate that.

That picture is changing. The rapidly increasing cost of real estate and money has put a new home beyond the reach of the average young worker entering the labor market. The cost of living is on the same spiral. There are many pressing social questions from local to international that our own welfare demands we consider. As these pressures mount there has to be a growing interest in the union and its policy.

We like to think of our local union as the instrument of the membership and as being directly responsible to them. We hope that the procedures are as democratic as possible so as to guarantee this right of the members. Why are so many so little interested in their own welfare, in their own bread and butter, that they don't even attend a meeting once a month?

Attendance isn't always enough either but it's the first step that ensures you getting the straight dope—not some job scuttlebutt or grapevine rumor that may have no validity at all. After a report, from officers or members in a position to know, questions can be asked and a discussion held. If members feel that policies or procedures could be improved or changed they should get up and say so. A comparison between diverging opinions is what makes democracy tick and the opportunity to do that is the right of the member and a fundamental strength of the union. We have room for all opinions and when they get free expression our membership has sense and maturity enough to make the proper judgment.

The right to organize and to speak freely, along with others, didn't come easily, as we all know. If those rights are not kept in good shape through use they will degenerate. Our officers should see to it that proper procedures are protected but this calls for the active participation of the membership. If that course is followed we will never stray far on the long haul. After some experience we have considerable faith in the judgment and common sense of working people, when properly informed. We urge that they get that information at the union meeting.



Local 258 is seeking young members (under 30 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.



From the archives...

This photo to the right was recently discovered and the question now becomes - who are these IBEW members and where and when this photo was taken?

We think someone out there may know. We also think the photo may have been taken somewhere on Vancouver Island.

If you think you know, please share your information with The Hotline so we can share a caption with everyone.

Get in touch with The Hotline at hotline@shaw.ca and let us know what you know about this photo.





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www.healthandsafetybc.ca



**PHOTO
OPPORTUNITY
LU 258**

OUR MISTAKE!

Apologies for the error in the caption for this photo in the last issue of The Hotline. Please find the corrected caption below.



Congratulations to IBEW members Brother Percy Ng and to Brother Peter Lee who recently retired from working at BGS. A retirement gathering took place at Burrard Thermal where cake was served and retirement goodies awarded.



Unit 2 Chair Gerald Pope congratulates Sister Tanya Peric, a Thermal Plant Operations Technician, who was sworn in at the Fort Nelson meeting in May. Welcome Sister Peric!



Unit 2 Chair Gerald Pope, left, awards IBEW long time members with service pins at the May Williams Lake Meeting. Congratulations to Brother Rainer Kempf, 30 years and Brother Herb Butters, 20 years.



Senior Assistant Business Manager Jim Greenwell, right, congratulates Brother Rob Brandon on his recent retirement.



Unit 2 Chair Gerald Pope, right, congratulates Brother Brian St. Germain on his retirement at the May Prince George meeting.



SIXTY YEARS OF SERVICE!
Brother Art Beadle is congratulated on 60 years as a member of IBEW by Unit 4 Chair Tom Greenwell.



Congratulations to Brother Gerald Brown, left, of Quesnel, winner of the watch draw at the union meeting, presented by Unit 2 Chair Gerald Pope.

230 YEARS OF IBEW MEMBERSHIP!



Congratulations to four Brothers in the IBEW who have a combined service record totalling 230 years! Awarded long term service pins and plaques at a recent Unit 6 meeting in Langley are, from left, Brother Bill McLennan, 60 years, Brother Jack Evans, 55 years, Brother Hugh Woolner, 55 years and Brother Wally Doskotch, 60 years. The union thanks you for your support!



Acting Unit 2 Chair Mike Mant, center, awarded IBEW long term service pins to Brother Pete Smith, left, 35 years and Brother Paul Davis, right, 30 years, at the 100 Mile House union meeting.



Congratulations to Brother Derek Egroff, right, winner of the watch draw at the Unit 6 meeting, awarded by Vice Chair Chris Carter.



*Welcome Aboard!
IBEW members working at Lanetec/DC were sworn in at the April Unit 6 meeting in Langley. From left to right are Martin Van Beek, Helen Jozsa and Andra Garrett.*



PHOTO OPPORTUNITY LU 258



PHOTO OPPORTUNITY LU 258



Congratulations to Brother Real L'Italien, left, receiving his 25 year service pin from Chris Carter at the April union meeting in Chilliwack.



Congratulations to Brother Chance McCullough, right, who received his PLT certification after completing his apprenticeship. Joining him are, from left, are Shop Stewards Brother Dwayne Robinson and Brother Sean Quinn.



Congratulations to Brother Dustin Grant and Sister Jennifer Biberdorf on completing their Meter Tech apprenticeships. They are shown here with LU258 Senior Assistant Business Manager Jim Greenwell, left, and Business Manager Doug McKay, right.

Union Member Survey Results



In the last issue of the Hotline, we featured a survey for you to complete as a result of discussions that took place at our Elected Members Conference last February. We were seeking your

feedback and opinions about the kind of communication with our union that you find useful/appropriate. We received 27 responses (from just under 4000 members), which tells us that is not the best way to gather your input. As a result, your union Executive will be discussing other survey options and look forward to contacting you for further feedback later in the year. 



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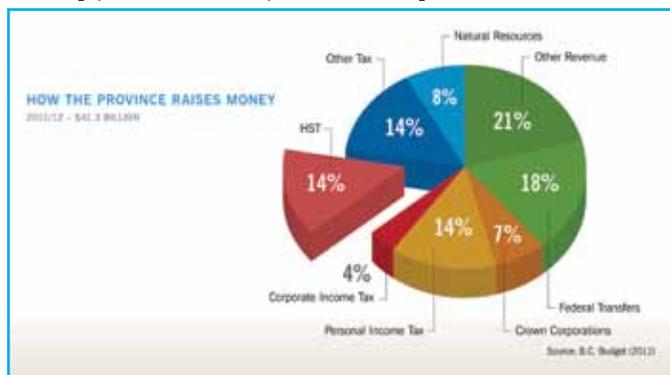


Surely it will be summer as you are reading this, though it has been late starting around the province. I hope you are finding time to enjoy the outdoors, be with your family and friends away from work and take pleasure in the other passions that fill your lives.

As you may have guessed by the general tone of my columns over the years, I have a passion for politics. I am fascinated by the process, the people and the spin used to direct public support one way or another. The current issue before us is the HST referendum, and we are being inundated with advertising on TV and radio, as well as discussions on talk shows and in public forums in our communities.

Personally, I am increasingly angry about the failure to have an honest and vigorous discussion about the true cost of the social structures government is mandated to deliver and how those costs are covered through taxation. What I have seen over the past ten years is that we are increasingly being encumbered with “consumption” taxes – fees, tolls and increased taxes on things that we use. While I would agree that ‘user pay’ systems are appropriate for luxury items, I don’t think consumption taxes are the best way to fund government services and the social structures that we deem critical for supporting and growing our communities.

Consumption taxes are basically unfair in that everyone pays the same. Some of you may ask, how is that unfair? Well, when a senior citizen living below the poverty line on a fixed income pays the same amount of consumption tax as a corporate CEO with a six or seven figure income, that is unfair – a bigger percentage of a lower income is spent through consumption taxes than that of a person with a higher income. While the latter can, for example, easily pay the extra tax dollars on a basic phone bill or a haircut, the senior with the fixed low income is now faced with the dilemma of making a choice between putting food on the table, paying for their prescription medication or heating their home. Consumers simply have less money with consumption taxes like the HST.



The breakdown of revenue for BC's Provincial Government shows corporate income tax at 4%, personal income tax 14% and HST 14%. From the Independent Panel's Report, May 4, 2011, "HST or PST? It's Your Decision", www.hstinbc.ca.

Contrary to government claims that the HST would be revenue neutral, the HST does indeed return revenue to the government. But this majority of the HST is being paid by the individual consumer and is disproportionate to the significantly lower

From the Back Corner

Report from
Michelle Laurie,
President, Local 258 IBEW



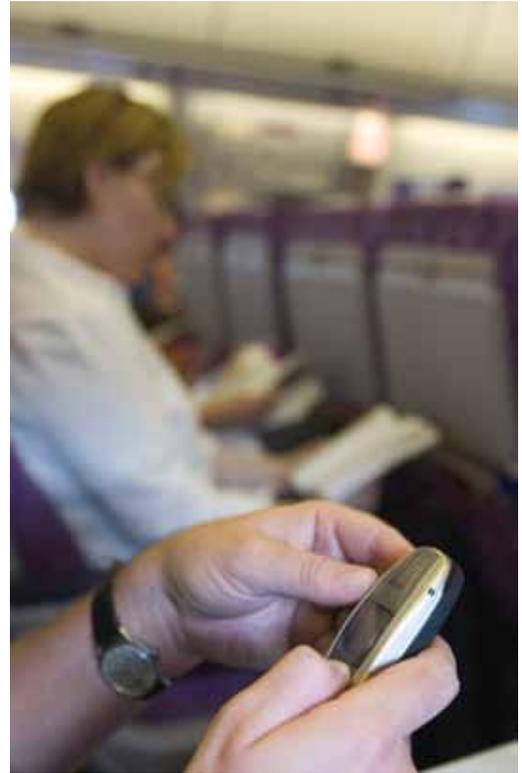
amount of tax revenue that comes from corporations.

The reality is, the HST has shifted \$2 billion dollars from the corporate sector onto the backs of consumers – a corporate sector that the government has told us has already been enjoying low tax rates for many years now. In the year since the HST has been implemented, prices have not gone down, jobs haven't been created and we still have a huge deficit. Each of us is paying more for goods and services, regardless of our ability to pay, and we are not seeing any benefit through increased services.

Now, as we head into the referendum vote on the HST, the provincial government, in a desperate attempt to curry voter favour, is proposing to reduce the percentage of HST we would pay – in a few years. But what does this really mean? Well, by cutting the rate, one would assume this would mean a decrease in revenue for the government. The question then becomes, how does government make up for this lost revenue? Cut more services? Create another consumption tax to put on something else? Increase Hydro rates yet again so they can take an even bigger chunk of revenue from the utility? The reality is the HST is an unfair tax that gives a significant benefit to the corporate sector that already enjoys some of the lowest tax rates in Canada and is a difficult and costly burden for consumers. By extinguishing the HST and returning to the PST, British Columbians will have a more fair tax structure where individuals and corporations share in the costs to provide the public services our communities need.

Elected members at the February Conference agreed the Local Union should undertake a comprehensive review of our Member Benefit Fund that is designated for helping members in crisis. Currently, the fund is supported only by donations from members, and it is not well supported. As a result, I have appointed a Committee of four long term members who will bring their experience, expertise and understanding to the table with the goal of making recommendations to the Executive and the membership on ways to improve the Fund to more effectively meet the needs of members in crisis. The structure of the Fund will also be reviewed and we will bring the Committee's recommendations back to you in the coming months. As our union strongly believes in standing together in solidarity, especially in times of crisis, I look forward to finding effective ways of improving our abilities to respond and help support one another in times of need. 📧

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.