

IBEW 230

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

www.ibewloc230.bc.ca

Local 230 Celebrates Its 100TH Year

If all we set out to do was throw a party for the membership, our 100th year Anniversary was a complete success. On November 9th, Local 230 members from up and down the Island congregated to celebrate the Local's Centennial. Our Members were perfect hosts. The food was delicious, the music of Brother Tim Holland set the mood, our visiting dignitaries were cordial, and the comedian was hilarious.

Many of our signatory employers provided some great prizes that were drawn throughout the night and we raised \$191 towards the Class Action Suit against the breakup of BC Hydro.

International President Ed Hill and International Vice-President Don Lounds both enjoyed themselves immensely and I believe left very impressed with our Local's efforts in both Organizing and our open embrace of the World Wide Web. I.P. Ed Hill presented the Local with an impressive crystal obelisk which reads "Your high esteem is our Pride"

while IVP Don Lounds presented us with a beautiful piece of art work which will hang in our office for the next 100 years to come.

Special thanks deservedly go out to Brothers Tony Rose for watching the door and John Pierce for demonstrating the assets of our website.

Retired members Don Bentley, Clarence Lamb, Peter Kappel and Gordie Brooks were presented their 50 year service pins. Brother Jim McAvoy was also in attendance and shared stories from when he was in Office as Business Manager of Local 230 from the late 60's through the early 90's and then continuing to serve the IBEW as the International Executive Committee Member representing Canada.

One Hundred years is a long time in the life of a

Local Union. To put this milestone into context, the year following, in 1903, Thomas Edison



Attendees gathered at the Princess Mary Restaurant

invented the battery, the Wright brothers took their first flight, the Red Sox won the first World Series and Henry Ford formed his motor company. With these other historic ac-

complishments in mind, our Local's membership should hold their heads high knowing our existence has been an uphill battle every step of the way.

The Trade Union movement has been responsible for negotiating overtime provisions, medical and dental care, pensions, vacations, holidays and even the weekend. None of these benefits were offered by employers or governments; they were negotiated by Unions who, in turn, went to the government and lobbied the same for all other workers. These efforts afforded them the power to go back to the bargaining table and ask for more on the next round, being ever careful not to

increase the gap between Union and non-Union workers. IBEW Local 230 was among the first Unions to get these benefits for our membership.

In writing this story, I felt it would only be appropriate to dig through our archives to find our first recorded meeting and whose calligraphy and wordsmithing of the time is nothing short of what I would expect of the brilliant and creative minds of our members. From that first meeting, I quote, "Be it resolved that



Don Lounds, Don Bentley, Ed Hill



Jim McAvoy, Phil Venoit

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20TH Annual Baskin IBEW Pig Roast
2:00 PM - July 12th, 2003
301 Peterson Road
Campbell River, BC

3RD Annual IBEW
Sooke Flats Picnic
2:00 PM - September 13th, 2003
Sooke, BC

Both IBEW events are Pot Luck and BYOB. Remember to bring designated driver. Camping is available. Adult and Children Events. No Pets Please.

VLC Labour Day Picnic
Monday, September 1st, 2003
11:00 AM - 5:00 PM
South Vancouver Island
Ranger Station

All events will be Fun

Winning Lucky Number Drawn at the Unit Meeting Raffle was #339312

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VOLUME 1 2003 Not Released
VOLUME 2 2003

Local 230 Quarterly Business Manager's Report



BUSINESS MANAGER/ FINANCIAL SECRETARY PHILIP M. VENOIT

The past few months have proven to be very challenging as there have been changes to almost every sector we represent and we are still assessing how the various legislations govern the way we do business will impact us. From the vicious attacks on our health care workers, the cancellation of the Bowen Island Ferry construction project which I also consider an attack on our Marine workers, to the changes the way our Apprentices will be trained and our members are represented on their WCB complaints. Over the Winter months; we began negotiations with the

City of Victoria and although it has been many years since this Agreement has been formally bargained, we are proceeding in a cautious, progressive and positive fashion and I will be happy to report on the outcome in our next Newsletter. We have had a few changes in our Executive Board. Mike Harbar has accepted the position of the Victoria Unit Chairman; Mike is currently working maintenance at the Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria and Mike Price has accepted the position of Port Alberni Unit Chairman, and he's working for Canem Systems out of the Nanaimo Office. Also Tom Sigurdson has moved out to Ottawa for the Canadian Office of the Building Trades and his replacement as Executive Director of the BC Building Trades is Wayne Peppard. Brother John Cole has resigned his position as the Canadian International Executive Committee Member for the IBEW and his replacement is Brother Joe Fashion, Business Manager from Local 353, Toronto. On behalf of the Local I have passed on our best wishes and congratulations to all of them in turn. The Romanow Report on Canadian Health Care was released and has recommended more money to go into the system as it has been

slowly withheld over the recent years. The Commissions Website received 24 million hits from Canadians and their input. It's important to note that Private Health Care proponents like Gordon Campbell, Ralph Klein and the Fraser Institute were all asked to contribute the facts about the cost savings and efficiencies that the Canadian Health Care system would realize through privatization so he could add it to his report, they provided nothing. We must continue to send Politicians the message that, Health Care in Canada is a moral venture not a business enterprise. It should be available to all Canadians regardless of their income or social status. The Father of Canadian Public Health Care, Tommy Douglas once said; Man has learned to fly through the air like a bird, Swim under the Ocean like a fish, Burrow into the ground like a mole, Now, if he could only learn to walk the earth like a man, this would be paradise. The second of five BC Ferry contracts has gone out to tender with nine shipyards from Poland, Spain, Japan, Holland and Canada bidding the new replacement ferry for the Bowen Island run to replace the Queen of Capilano. The successful low bid was Vancouver Shipyard, and after the

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Celebration From Page 1

it resolved that we the Electrical Workers of the City of Victoria, here assembled deeming it an object worthy of our efforts to place Labour & its Rewards on an equal basis with Capital and conscientiously believing that Organization is the just & right means thereto, Do hereby form ourselves into a United Body for that purpose & subscribe our names hereto," These objects haven't changed. These same interests are the ones that still bring us together today; wages, benefits and a safe, respectful working environment.



Locals' Treasurer Delivers Presentation

The obvious way to preserving what we have today is sticking together; this is why we have what we have. A number of our newer members can attest to the working wages and benefits of the cut-rate contractors as many of them have come from the non-union sector; some of whom even joined us for our 100th year celebration.

I would like to finish off this story by saying that I was very proud and honoured as Business Manager to host a night that everyone in attendance will not soon forget. Thank you.

Sector Report

Construction – The Industrial work has finally begun to pick up. Vicar won Westmin Mines which is camp job and is also starting a job down in Crofton with continued work in Elk Falls. Lockerbie and Hole has recently signed a Letter of Understanding with the Local as they have a chipper (strand board) plant project in Beaver Cove.

A short shut-down is also scheduled for Crofton beginning in May with Houle Electric, the Wismer and Rawlings High Voltage test crew and FMI. This should peak at around 55 guys. Western Pacific Enterprises will be coming over to the Island for a UV disinfection project in Jordan River and Raylec Power picked up the first of several sub-stations to come out for tender. Commercial work has remained steady with Canem starting up with the Marriott Hotel, Courtenay and Duncan Safeway, the Armories and Malaspina College in Nanaimo, the new Parkville Arena and a church in Campbell River. Houle has jobs at the Provincial Legislature upgrading and installing new security cameras, Sport Check and the Country Club Mall in Nanaimo and Chemainus and Ladysmith schools. Emery is steady with St. Michael's University, Bear Mt. Golf Course and the Kiwanis Village in Nanaimo.

Marine - Dockyard has been very busy as our members continue to work around the clock preparing our Navy for their role with Operation Apollo (the War on Terrorism) which is still being played out on the world stage. Victoria Shipyard has recently docked the HMCS Algonquin and the Queen of Burnaby both for refits and continues on the Aluminum Search and Rescue Boats for the Coast Guard.

Cablevision – Although, CRTV has upcoming underground fiber-optic work, management has

chosen to lay-off our members in a knee-jerk reaction to the Union's use of the grievance procedure and after our winning the last Unfair Labour Practice complaint at the Labour Relations Board. The Local has recently filed another complaint for "Anti-Union animus and interfering with the administration of a Trade Union and the representation of employees by a Trade Union". It is our opinion, the current CRTV Manager is the model why Unions are necessary.

Motor Winders - Wismer and Rawlings have sold their two Island shops (Nanaimo and Campbell River) to Beaver Machinery Ltd. from the mainland and George MacIver from Gee-Mac Rewind in Port Alberni has recently hired.

Health Care – In the midst of our members being informed of a Provincial funding shortfall in this year's budget and while they watch their MSP costs go up as well as having more work with less workers during this wage freeze, to add insult to injury the Hospital has attempted to replace one of our retiring members with another manager, because that is what Health Care needs, more managers. As bizarre as this sounds, one must wonder if someone at the top is spending way too much time in the medicine cabinet!

Municipal – We're heavy in the middle of negotiations with the City of Victoria and look forward to communicating the outcome in the next Newsletter.

Railway – We recently wrapped up the Industrial Adjustment Committee with a 70 page Volume I Report on the future viability of Island Rail Service. We have also had discussions with the new entity VI Railway who is positioning itself to take over the E&N service from Rail America, tentatively scheduled for early July.

Remember to Submit all members' dues to the Victoria Office only.

bids were opened, the Ferry Corporation decided perhaps they would wait for a new ferry and they would re-tender the job at a later date. However, now the entire world knows Vancouver Shipyards bid and could simply shave a few bucks off and this work could go to another country. The foolhardiness of this bid procedure does not factor in the taxes BC Shipyards and their workers pay to keep this Government and Province afloat. On a good note however, the workers at Victoria Shipyard have recently ratified their contract giving them an average increase of \$0.90 per hour, per year, over the next five (5) years. The first of the public/private (you had to be invited) consultations on Apprenticeship were held in Nanaimo, and in true Building Trades fashion, we flew under the Governments Radar and infiltrated this sham of a public process. Protestors kept us locked INSIDE, while traditional apprenticeship advocates slew Stuart Clarke and his lackeys for their, "throwing the baby out with the bathwater" approach to changing the way we've developed our training. I was very proud to see so many of our members' presence which helped to set the tempo for what turned out to be a very contentious item throughout the rest of the Province. I agree our Apprenticeship system could have been improved however, I believe our suggestions fell on deaf ears, as BC Apprentices will now be forced into performing many of the Administrative work which was being performed by the 120 Apprenticeship Counselors, prior to the Government axing 100 of them. I also believe this action, along with the proposed Industry Training Authority Act, will shove many Craft workers out on that slippery slope. On the heels of a disastrous leaky condo crisis, Apprenticeship qualifications are about to get really watered down in construction, while tuition fees will continue to climb. In reply to these changes, the IBEW Provincial Council have initiated a study on the possibility of training our own Apprentices in our own schools. I have, and will continue to participate on this committee, as I see the IBEW's very existence will depend on the quality of our future apprenticeship system.

I was very pleased to see the results of our members vote on the creation of a Local 230 Building Fund. Now we may look ahead to the future and one day own a building and, like many other IBEW locals, perhaps with our own IBEW Training Institute a few years down the road. Recently, the Nanaimo Shipyard/Alberni Engineering Employees Association have decided to stop trying to run a Union Office and work for their Employer at the same time. Many of these in-house Associations simply don't work and this is the perfect example. After years of unresolved problems, workers have voted in favour of going to the BC General Shipyard Workers Federation, Local 1, a Union that has had long standing ties to the IBEW in the Province. After discussions and meetings with them, Local 230 supported the workers move and will continue to supply them with our members. With their recent low bid on the HMCS Win

Assistant Business Manager's Report

The union recently settled all outstanding grievances at Campbell River TV (CRTV) and we were successful in getting Jeff Goodwin back to work after he was laid off. Along with the return to work, Jeff received a cash settlement negotiated by the Union and the employer.

We are in conciliation with CRTV June 4th and 5th in an attempt to complete a new Collective Agreement. I would like to thank Shop Stewards Anita Prendergast and Perry Birchard for their unwavering commitment to the members at CRTV. Both are on the negotiating committee and without their help, we would have been hard pressed to get things back on track with this employer.

In a move brought about by the new Collective Agreement, the BC Construction Health and Safety Council has begun the wrap up of it's affairs. As you may know, the Council began in the early eighties in response to four deaths on the Bental Centre in Vancouver. The idea was to provide more construction-focused safety training to our members.

Up until the last Agreement, the Council received funding based on contributions made by the employer to the tune of two cents an hour. With the removal of this funding, the Council has been forced to close its doors.

As the Chairman of the Board, myself and the other appointed labour members worked to make the transition from an employee/employer board to a safety department under the umbrella of the Building Trades Council. This will mean that the council will still exist but with a new name and a new focus.

The plan is to bring safety training to our members as well as doing advocacy work for them. Construction has become one of the most unsafe industries to work in, in BC; due mostly to non-



ASSISTANT BUSINESS MANAGER DAVE THOMPSON

union contractors who don't follow WCB regulations. With our members working beside non-union workers the need for more and more safety training is now becoming extremely important.

We believe the new Safety department will be able to focus on the needs of our members and help ensure we all go home at night.

We recently held two Code Course upgrades and a Nordex Course with more coming in the Fall.

On the Organizing front, we would like to welcome H&T Power Technologies, PDC Installations and Lockerbie and Hole to the Local. In our last Newsletter, we had started a campaign to organize Bert's Electric where an apprentice had been fired twice in one week at the same time we were applying for Certification. Bert's flew in several regular mainland employees to stack the vote against the Union. We negotiated a \$4,000 settlement on behalf of the Apprentice, as our day at the Board would not have proven a winner. The Labour Relations Code has been clearly slanted to favour Employers like Bert's who would rather continue to pay their workers far below our standard wage and benefits.

WCB Changes - Death by Deregulation

The British Columbia Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) has been preventing injuries, providing compensation benefits to injured workers and helping with rehabilitation since 1917. The purpose of WCB is to replace the coverage an insurance company would normally provide. The historic compromise is; workers are covered by a no fault system in the event of workplace injury while giving up the right to sue their Employer for workplace safety neglect. The WCB system satisfies a universal coverage concept that is close to the hearts of all Canadians. This system is extremely important as it covers 2 million workers and 165,000 employers in BC. In the year 2001, approximately 140,000 workers needed WCB but sadly, 4,000 workers were disabled for life and 180 workers died. Despite the importance of the services WCB provides, the Provincial Liberals are forcing the WCB to make dramatic cuts estimated at 12% from their 2003 Budget. This budget cut will result in closing down the Rehabilitation Centre in Richmond, the Head Injury Unit, the Campbell River Office, the Hand Therapy Unit for severe hand injuries and amputations,

the Pain Clinic and Occupational and Medical Rehabilitation services are no longer available. Positions from the Nanaimo, Courtenay and Victoria offices are being eliminated and a total of 500 prevention officers around the Province are being cut. These cuts will only lead to more workplace injuries and deaths. More employers will be waiting longer for their injured employees to return to work and more injured workers will be living in poverty. I have written Doug Enns, the Chairman of the Board and all the Vancouver Island MLA's requesting public hearings up and down our Island. We need to tell them "These changes do not work for British Columbians". It is more important than ever to look out for each other so we can continue to promote the safest work sites out there. On a more somber note, please remember that April 28th is our National Day of Mourning. Take a moment to remember those that have died on the job and as importantly, let's continue to fight for the living.

Important PharmaCare Notice

Effective May 1, 2003, the BC PharmaCare Program will be changing significantly. All members, including retired members, should register with the new PharmaCare program as soon as possible. This will help keep our Health and Welfare Plan costs as low as allowable as those who do not register will be rated at the highest income level by PharmaCare.

You can register by: Calling 1-(800) 387-4977 or Online at www.gov.bc.ca <<http://www.gov.bc.ca/>> then click on PharmaCare

To register you will need: BC Care Card numbers for you, your spouse, any dependent children, birth dates and Social Insurance Numbers of anyone you are registering, and Your household net income which you will find on line 236 of your 2001 tax return. The Ministry of Health has declared that these

changes are being implemented to slow the acceleration of the PharmaCare cost increases with their intention to remove up to \$100 million from the annual increase. These costs however, do not go away. The liability is simply moved to either the individual claimant or their benefit plan. If a plan member does not register for the "Fair PharmaCare" coverage, there will be no benefit payable by PharmaCare. This is a change from the current practice. While it is too soon to accurately quantify the cost increases associated with these changes, it is paramount our members get registered and authorize CCRA to release the required income information this month so we can continue to provide our members with adequate prescription drug coverage.

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nipeg, our members will have their chance to show this Employer, we mean to do business. Enclosed in this Newsletter is a decal displaying the Union's strong commitment to a progressive partnership with our Electrical Contractors Association in BC and an American Income Life supplemental Accidental Death and Dismemberment Benefit. This insurance is an optional benefit and by filling out the response card you will

be contacted by an AIL Agent in our area.

In closing, we look to have come out of the slump we were in last year, our dispatch list is shrinking and many of our members are heading back to work. It appears this positive flow of work will hold for the balance of this year with much of it spilling into 2004.

In Solidarity, Philip M Venoit

WHOSE CASE IS IT ANYWAY?

There have been some questions and misunderstandings raised from the Unit meetings surrounding the ownership of grievances over the past few months. We have the Author's permission to run this article, and I hope this clears up the confusion.

By Tim Gleason/CALM

Although employees enjoy the benefits of collective bargaining, they will almost never be permitted to sue their employer.

In exchange for the right to sue, unionized workers have access to the grievance procedure in their collective agreements. In some cases, this means free representation and the ability to pursue complaints that would never justify the cost of a lawsuit. Sometimes their unions retain and pay for lawyers to fight their cases. Sometimes issues as seemingly insignificant as a verbal reprimand attract thousands of dollars in legal fees that a non-union employee would never be able to spend.

What many grievors fail to understand, however, is that the grievance is not their own. It is the unions'. The parties to the collective agreement are the union and the employer, and although a grievor may have a right to present a grievance concerning some violation of the collective agreement, it is for the union to decide what to do with that grievance. In making that decision, the union will consider the interest of the grievor and those of the entire membership. Unions have a duty to represent their members. If they fail to do so fairly, then they may face a

complaint to the appropriate labour board. However, unions are only required to represent their members in a manner that is not arbitrary, discriminatory or in bad faith. They do not have to hire lawyers and fight every grievance. Unions have a duty to their entire membership and that may mean withdrawing from a fight where the interests of the membership would be better served through caution and discretion. When a union takes a case to arbitration, the grievor may be an active participant. A grievor may also have tremendous input into the process. But the grievor does not have the final say on whether the case proceeds, settles or is withdrawn. That is for the union to decide. And provided that decision is made fairly, the grievor should not have any recourse.

Although some employees may not appreciate these rules, collective bargaining still places them in a far superior position when compared with the non-union worker. Without a union and a collective agreement, most litigation is beyond the reach of workers. Even something as important as termination may be far too expensive for an individual to pursue in the courts.

The collective bargaining relationship is an ongoing one with ongoing rights and responsibilities. A member of a union has some security and the ability to deal with an employer on an almost equal footing in many circumstances. No right to sue can compete with that.

Tim Gleason practices law with Sack Goldblatt Mitchell in Toronto.

Fallen Brothers

Ed Henly-March 6, 2003

Dieter Fettback-February 11, 2003.

Derek Leigh-February 27, 2003

Michael Proctor-April 1, 2003

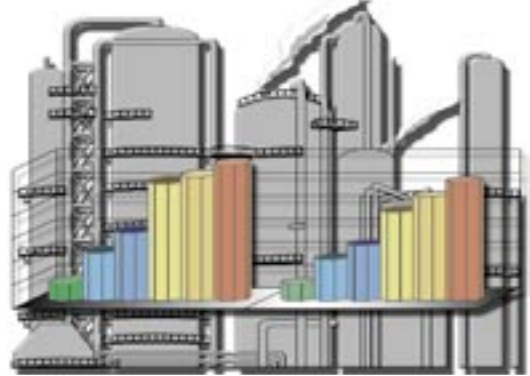
Walter Nygaard-May 13, 2003 Past President IBEW

Ken Gislason-April 11, 2003

Ray Cleugh-May 28, 2003 Unit Chairman/Ex Brd Member

Chris Morgan-May 22, 2003

Local 230 Quarterly Financial Overview



During some of the Unit meetings last Winter, questions were asked from our traveling brothers with respect to what could they claim as expenses for income tax purposes when they travel outside the Local. I researched through the Income Tax Act and found nothing conclusive specifically for construction workers when they travel from their primary residence. Some members say they have used the 2200 form which is referred as an attestation form for transportation employees (pilots, railway conductors, long haul truckers to name a few) on which their employer would declare that the worker had worked away from his or her residence and therefore incurred some expenses that they would not in most normal circumstances (ie. motel rooms, transportation costs). In researching this very important question, as our members could save thousands of dollars per year in traveling expenses, I discovered Section 54, which covers temporary workers in remote locations or required to work away from the employer's normal place of business. Further reading uncovered other classifications of workers like musicians and commission workers. With nothing conclusive to point our traveling members to that they could take back to their accountant, I have instead decided to write the CCRA asking for them to investigate this issue under the "Fairness Legislation" so I can close this Chapter on a very important financial hardship for our members and every other Building Trades member in this Country who finds him/herself traveling from home to earn a living. I have asked for their decision in writing so it may be published as soon as we receive it.

One other financial item I would like to bring to the members attention at this time is the reallocation of our Strike Fund. I have recently invested in several one year GIC's earning maximum interest and that are spread throughout year so most of our money is liquid all year round providing us easy access if we ever need it. This one small financial change will allow the Local to earn approximately \$5,000 per year more than we made last year with the same money.