



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

Vancouver Island

Quarterly Newsletter

Since 1902

Canadian Building Trades Conference 2015

Earlier this spring the Canadian Building Trades Legislative Conference was held in Ottawa. In attendance with me were Vice-President Rocco DiSibio and Victoria Unit Chairman Al Sotkowy, where we met with all federal political parties heading into the federal election later this year. We heard from several clients looking to share information on upcoming large energy projects like; Newfoundland's Hebron project, the Ontario Power Generation folks from Darlington Nuclear and Bruce Power with a decade worth of work beginning next year, Manitoba Hydro with new Dams and other Infrastructure work, from the President of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) on continued commitment from the Alberta Oil Sands, who declared that regardless of the construction layoffs this year's maintenance hours will match the construction and maintenance hours worked in 2010. The President of BC LNG David Keane representing 7 of the largest proposed LNG projects in northern BC, with hopes to have an announcement on the first project by the end of the year.

We had keynote speaker political strategist Andrew Coyne often a guest on the National, who talked to us about our current political

environment. Canada's Ambassador to the United States Gary Doer, our largest and closest trading partner at \$1.4 Trillion a year in trade and investment, 77% of our exports! Justin Trudeau who began to lay down his campaign, announcing as the Prime Minister he would repeal Bills 525 and 377, and develop better trades training incentives for joint boards like Western JETS, he would provide a lower tax rate for Canadians earning less than \$200,000 per year and pay for it by taxing Canada's richest 1% more. I will describe more from his speech in an upcoming federal election Newsletter going out later this summer.

We had the Artist Call to design the Construction Worker Memorial to be built on a prestigious piece of real estate one block off from Parliament Hill. This memorial will depict the hard working men and women of the Canadian Building Trades who put our hands, backs and minds into what most now take for granted; the buildings they live and work in, the infrastructure they use for transportation and entertainment, the heat and light they stay warm with, we built this country and it is nice to see we are finally getting some recognition for it.



Left to right, Victoria Unit Chair Al Sotkowy, V.P. Rocco DiSibio joins, Canadian Building Trades Executive Director Bob Blakely, IBEW Canadian Vice-President Bill Daniels, Business Manager Phil Venoit and International Representative Laird Cronk.

Spring 2015

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News & Notes

Port Alberni

Information Meeting

7:00 PM Aug. 18th Tyee

Motel 4151 Redford St.

Child Find BC Dunahee Slo-pitch Tournament

Aug. 7, 8, 9 Topaz Park in Victoria – we're still looking for players, or simply come out and support the IBEW and Building Trades teams

Code of Excellence

Sept 24 Victoria

Sept 25 Nanaimo

Sept 26 Courtenay

Call or email Nicole in the office to reserve your seat Nicole@ibew230.org

Technical Training

Will resume in September with pipe-bending, First Aid, Code upgrade, and more.

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Business Manager's Report



Philip M. Venoit
Business Manager/Financial Secretary

Earlier this year Business Representatives; Rousseau, Scott, Livingston and I, all took part in Lobbying both BC Liberals and New Democrats on four important issues; the Underground Construction Economy, Apprenticeships, Women in the Trades and the Site "C" Dam.

We did some further lobbying and distribution of our white paper on Compulsory Certification for the Construction Electrician, Industrial Electrician, Gas Fitter, (all three of these are compulsory in every other province but BC), and the Powerline Technician.

We have also been working with the Provincial Labour Minister's Office on a few labour initiatives with the Province to help write some (semi) pro-labour legislation;

- mandatory apprentices on public projects
- prompt payment legislation across BC
- tax free status for all union training facilities in BC

I wrote our Labor Relations Board submission on the proposed changes to the British Columbia Bargaining Council Building Trades Unions (BCBCBTU) Constitution, and how the proposed process would currently conflict with the Canadian Charter.

The BCBCBTU Constitutional Review Decision by the Labour Relations Board has come out and essentially lined up how I figured it would. The Labour Board has backed away from making changes to the Council's Constitution. They have appointed

an investigator to oversee negotiations. They are recommending timelines be set up within a bargaining protocol, a mediation process to move bargaining towards resolution, the identification and agreement of main table proposals prior to negotiations commence. These were all part of our submission. On the move towards sector bargaining on which we advocated a Civil Sector, Structural Sector, a Finishing Trades Sector and an Electrical/Mechanical Sector the Vice-Chair said, "I see potential for efficiencies in that regard.", but refused to enshrine into the Constitution. The legal bill for this file probably hit close to a \$100,000 with the other unions hiring over twelve lawyers, for the IBEW it took a couple weekends to write our submission and a few days to present and explain our position on the practical and legal ramifications of the proposed changes by various other construction unions.

We are now in the process of negotiating a protocol agreement with the Construction Labour Relations Association (a Board requirement in the Decision), and I expect we will actually be able to begin bargaining for our construction members by early fall, which should line up nicely with some movement on the site "C" Dam, and an LNG or two providing for some good certainty for Industrial construction.

On a good note we are looking at a very good commercial/institutional year next year on the Island as well as the mainland, the Industrial work up north along with a very busy commercial south, should establish some good reasoning for reasonable construction increases.

The Supreme Court of Canada has directed that our Bill C- 10 Canadian Charter challenge be returned to BC Supreme Court of Appeal for reconsideration in light of

the recent decisions in the RCMP cases. This is great news in hopes of receiving the best decision for our members at Dockyard on the Harper Government taking our members 5.2% Arbitrated increase away.

I've met with our Website Administrator to move our new website closer to being complete, and I will be happy to let everyone know once we get there. Unfortunately, we have had way too many legal issues all pressing my time over the past 4 or 5 months to devote much time to this project; however we are close to wrapping it up, and moving our old site as archived.

With a focus on improving lives and building community for positive change, and with over 500 workplace south Island campaigns, our members working at Victoria Shipyards contributing to the United Way received the Outstanding Campaign Award at the Victoria Spirit Awards.

SHOW US YOUR METAL

BUILDING TRADES • METAL TRADES UNIONS & FRIENDS

CARS & TRUCKS . BEST CLASSIC . BEST PAINT . BEST ROD . BEST CUSTOM . BEST TRUCK
MOTORCYCLES . BEST IMPORT . BEST HARLEY . BEST PAINT . BEST CUSTOM .
BADDEST / BEST BAGGER

SHOW AND SHINE

REGISTRATION 9 - 10AM
SHOW 10 - 2PM
JUDGING AT 12:30PM

SPONSORED BY
Local 276
VANCOUVER ISLAND

ALL PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT
children's HEALTH FOUNDATION
OF VANCOUVER ISLAND

\$10

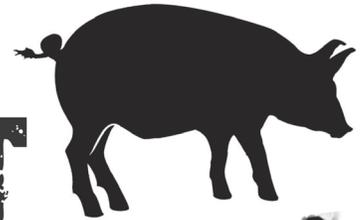
SATURDAY - AUGUST 29TH 9AM-2PM - GYRO PARK
ENSURE YOUR SPOT (INFO@SMWIA276.CA) OR DAY OF THE EVENT



New Western JETS Executive Director Adrien Livingston watches over Local 230 new Training Coordinator/ Business Representative Ken Armour in the office.

YOU ARE INVITED TO
The 28th Annual Baskin /
IBEW Local 230

PIG
ROAST



Saturday
July 11th, 2015

2:30pm till ?
301 Petersen Road,
Campbell River

Pot Luck ~ Bring a Salad or a Pie
BYOB * Camping Room Available
Horseshoe Tournament, Chicken Chit Bingo, and much more
Bring the entire Family ~ No Dogs Please

Training Director/Coordinator Changes

The Western Joint Electrical Training Society has struggled over the past year with the retirement of Pat O'Connell who performed as the JETS Executive Director for the past 27 years. Pat took on many relative tasks including Chairing the Committee which successfully recommended compulsory certification for the Construction Electrician in British Columbia in the early 1990's. (which was repealed by the BC Liberals in 2003). Pat's retirement left an obvious hole in our Training and we needed somebody with a passion for training and young enough to carry on a legacy well into the future, providing us with the stability that's needed. I am proud to say Brother Adrien Livingston Local 230's Training Coordinator took on the role as the new Provincial Training Director.

This created another challenge for us in finding a replacement

for Adrien. As Adrien's duties also required him to serve the Marine Industry where 400 of our members work each day. Fate had it Ken Armour dropped into the union hall. After spending 30 years working in the marine industry, 5 in the Island's private shipyards and 25 of those for the Canadian Coast Guard, including six years as their Union's President, and four years overseeing training for the Coast Guard on Canada's west coast, made Ken the obvious choice to continue on Adrien's marine industry/training portfolio.

Ken has an in depth understanding of the federal government and its relationship to the marine industry which gives us a tremendous leg up on matters that affect our Ship Repair Group members at Dockyard, Nanoose and Rocky Point. I would ask our members working at DND, Victoria Shipyard, and Point Hope Shipyard welcome Ken as he becomes familiar with your workplaces.

Together Against Poverty Society

Early in 2014 we sat down with Stephen Portman from TAPS to discuss the benefits of having a worker's advocate in the City of Victoria. Back in 2002 the BC Liberals made twenty-six changes to the Employment Standards Act many of those with a focus (and result) to diminish worker's rights, and reduce the ability for workers to receive owed wages and benefits they earned with unscrupulous employers. Weakening employment standards protections through an ineffective compliance strategy has contributed to the worst provincial income disparity of the average wage of the lowest 20% of wage earners in Canada, and there is no doubt it has further contributed to an increase in child poverty where again British Columbia is the worst performer in the country.

Every employment relationship is governed by a contract between an employee and an employer, and common law relies on two fundamental principles of contract. Contracts are freely entered into, and freely terminated (with reasonable notice) if the terms are, or become unsatisfactory, and there is an equal balance of power. However the courts have long realized that, with the exception of a small fraction of employees with special skill sets, the balance of power has shifted to employers. Over the past 100 years government has been writing legislation designed to prevent the abuse of the superior bargaining power of employers. In 1872 the Canadian government passed the Trade Unions Act legalizing the formation of unions and permitting workers to demand their employers bargain with employees collectively to help reset the balance of power. For workers without a union they have nowhere to turn. TAPS is the largest anti-poverty organization on Vancouver Island. As a registered charitable nonprofit with over 25 years of experience, their legal advocacy and education services touch over 5,000 people per year. They provide services to residents across Southern Vancouver Island. They work to promote justice and a community where everyone can access the services they require and obtain the benefits to which they are legally entitled. What is not so well known is that access to even these minimal level protections is out of reach for many who are facing unfair treatment and wage theft at the hands of their boss. TAPS cuts through the barriers to justice and effectively returns power to the worker. This is accomplished through advocacy support and representation in negotiation, mediation, determination hearings, and before the BC Employment Standards Tribunal.

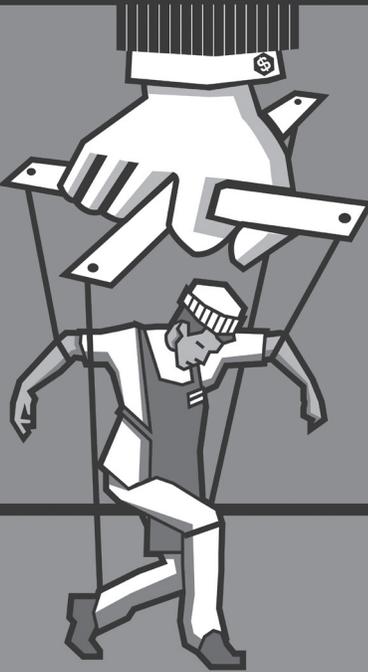
In the month of November in 1998 Local 230 filed complaints against six non-union electrical contractors in

Victoria for non-payment of overtime. One month, one community, one sliver of one industry, and one person making the complaint. It is clear to me the system has become much worse over the last seven-teen years. Along with the other 25 changes that occurred in 2002 we were essentially robbed of the ability to represent other workers in our industry, the same industry that our members and contractors have to compete in daily. In a related BC Business Magazine article a roofing contractor, expressed, "various sectors of the BC economy are rife with widespread violations when it come to employment standards." "The construction industry is a particularly bad example, beset by rogue operators who flaunt labour laws". This shift of power into the hands of greedy and corrupt employers, results in workers being taken advantage of, at the same time forcing honest employers, employers who want to treat their employees fairly and with respect, some very hard decisions, whether to close their doors or join the ranks of the dishonest dish-rags. Meanwhile their employees are laid-off, many of whom helped build the business. It's a no-win situation for honest employers either. With the introduction of the Self-help Kits, a 2002 requirement for workers, whom it is incumbent upon them to attempt to work out their problems with their boss when the boss decides to steal

from them. This "Kit" has resulted in a significant reduction in complaints to the government, and not because they were all amicably resolved. Once faced with attempting to correct the problem the boss often terminates the worker and the worker finds themselves without Employment Insurance, no income and faced to find another job. The changes to the Employment Standards Act in 2002 was an act of treason against all workers in British Columbia, it is a failure to recognize and respect what workers have contributed to our Province and it continues to unfairly pit good employers against bad.

What TAPS has delivered to workers in the first year of operations has been inspiring and we're optimistic for the future of this innovative project against those who hold a disproportionate amount of power and control over workers lives. Since June 2014 TAPS has provided direct legal advocacy services to 253 Individual workers. A significant portion of those come from working in the construction industry, where non-union workers are abused daily. We have come a good distance from \$6 sucks, but workers still have a long way to go until we are considered equals in BC, and our construction members owe TAPS many thanks for helping other construction workers get the minimum legal standards they deserve.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS LEGAL ADVOCACY PROJECT



ALL WORKERS DESERVE TO BE TREATED FAIRLY

Have you been **fired for no good reason**? Does your **employer owe you money**? Do you need help **talking to your employer** about your **working conditions**? Do you need help with anything listed below? contact TAPS at **250-361-3521** or drop by our offices at #302 - 895 Fort Street to make an appointment as soon as possible!

MINIMUM WAGE • OVER TIME PAY • STAT PAY • FIRED WITHOUT JUST CAUSE •
 EMPLOYEE OR SUB-CONTRACTOR • VACATION PAY • UNSAFE WORK • STOLEN
 WAGES • SPLIT SHIFTS • CHARGED FOR UNIFORM • CHARGED FOR BREAKAGE/DINE
 & DASH • DENIED LEAVE • FORCED TO WORK EXCESSIVE HOURS



TAPS

TOGETHER AGAINST POVERTY SOCIETY

THIS PROJECT IS MADE POSSIBLE WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM:







