



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Vancouver Island

Quarterly Newsletter

Since 1902

We Are Wisconsin

With a Federal Election in early May, a Municipal Election in November, and the looming possibility of a Provincial Election this year, we can't afford to ignore what is going on politically down south, in Wisconsin and other states. We are a Country rich in resources and many of our jobs are in resource industries. This keeps us in the mind of rich industrialists looking at making their next billion on our labour. Backed by Koch Industries (who also have interests in Canada), and Bank of Montreal subsidiary M&I Bank, and elected on January 3, 2011 with 52% of the vote, Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker started out his term on January 25th with \$137 million dollars in tax cuts to business. Not 3 weeks later Governor Walker introduced his "budget repair bill" robbing many union members of their basic rights like collective bargaining, saying this bill will save the State \$30 million dollars. Recognizing this as an obvious pro-corporate anti-worker attack, undermining good jobs and living wages, three days later tens of thousands of trade unionists began protesting in the State. By the end of February over 100,000 protestors had descended on the state capitol, and the protests have not really let up since. They are getting louder.

This is a struggle for democracy and basic rights, the right to belong to a union, the right to bargain collectively, and the right to earn a fair wage. For the last few decades multi-national corporations are running amok around the world backing political parties to keep working people oppressed. This isn't by chance; this is a

well organized and well financed attack on middle class North America.

400 obscenely rich Americans have as much loot now as half of the United States citizens (155 million people). Our countries aren't broke; we just keep electing politicians who give more and more money back to the banks and other mega-business groups, so they can stash it under their mattresses, instead of creating jobs. Some business sages say unions are no longer needed; we've run our course and served our purpose, that we have too much power. Unions like ours lobbied governments hard for things like statutory holidays,

vacations, and many other things most of us take for granted, but we never agreed to stop increasing our standard of life when we achieved the eight hour day, or the weekend! And that we were able to lift our neighbors up with us. Our purpose taken right out of the Local 230 playbook at our first meeting in Victoria February 13, 1902 was, "*to place Labour*

and its rewards on an equal basis with Capital, and conscientiously believing that Organization is the just and right means thereto," so we continue to work to put us on equal footing, for the safety, and well being of our membership, their families, and communities. Our Constitution says one of our objects are to seek a higher and higher standard of living, not get to a point we're all comfortable and complacent and hold it there. So, when you go to the polls this year vote for those that will keep; money in your wallet, services like health care for your family, and respect and value for our work.



Spring 2011

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Information Meeting

Port Alberni July 19, 2011

Tyee Motel

4151 Redford Street

**Nanaimo Office Shared
with the Plumbers Local 324**

Suite 310 – 477 Wallace St.

(250) 716-0372

Open Monday Afternoons

Business Manager's Report



Philip M. Venoit
Business Manager/Financial Secretary

We wrote Federal Finance Minister, Jim Flaherty on another important issue, workers mobility Tax Credit, an amendment to the Income Tax Act. Bill C-227 seeks to allow construction workers

the ability to write off their expenses traveling to and from construction sites when working away from their primary residence. (Such expenses would include meals, fuel, airfare, accommodations and a reasonable time to set up a temporary accommodation while away).

In Organizing Local 230 Business Representatives; Banman, Scott and Rousseau, along with President Chris Baker, Treasurer Cheryl Arseniuk, Nanaimo Chairman John Kitchen and I attended an IBEW First District Organizing Course "Enhancing Membership Development" held in Victoria, where we discussed traditional and new ways to Organizing various markets which would complement our Local Union.

I'm also pleased to welcome; Automated Electrical Installations and Howling K-9 Electric from Nanaimo, and **Alberni Valley Electric** from Port Alberni who have all signed a Voluntary Recognition

this year with Local 230 to honour the construction Collective Agreement.

There are certain business interests looking at privatizing our Health Care system, please take a few minutes out of your time and check out the |Canadian Healthcare Coalition website at www.healthcoalition.ca and send Prime Minister Harper a message to leave our Health Care system in public hands. As you read over the Sector Report you may realize we are carrying on with a good chunk of work in the Local, and it is looking pretty good with a number of other locals throughout western Canada as well, as we have had several dispatches to locals, 993, 529, & 2038. I would like to thank those locals for the work for our membership.

Have a great spring!
Fraternally, Phil Venoit

Changes to the Construction, Private Shipyards, and Motor Winders Medical and Dental Plan

The Construction, Marine, and Motor Winder Health and Welfare Trustees met and after months of discussion and consideration of our Baby Boomer members moving towards retirement. We have adopted a **new IBEW Group Retiree Health and Welfare Plan** for our members who are at the point of retirement beginning this year, the Plan will have four options for our members to decide based on their needs (explained on page 39 of the Health and Welfare Pamphlet). We have also been considering the necessity of creating a Member **Family Assistance Program** for counseling needs and we have contracted with Shepell-fgi to provide this

Shepell·fgi™
work. health. life.

very important service with benefits like legal aid, financial and dietary advice, child care and elder care support. You should have received recent information on this directly from Shepell-fgi, and we will be installing links and other contact information from our website on this very important service to make it easier for you to contact them. We were also able to increase the orthodontia dental coverage to \$3,000 per member and dependents. Now, this stuff doesn't come free, we were able to create these new benefits by changing the dispensing fee cap on prescription drugs to \$7.00

were there was no cap before, the \$7.00 is an average dispensing fee charged by drug stores around British Columbia. Another growing concern in the prescription drug business is some pharmacists are beginning to offer compounding services, and when you go to get them filled they may tell you our electronic card will not work with compounded drugs, in fact they will, they really just don't want to go to the additional administrative work to break down the covered drugs (compounded drugs are a mixture of different drugs and have fillers), in those cases claiming compounded drugs save the receipt and use the **Extended Health Benefits** and send the receipts into DA Townley and they will do the work to get your reimbursement.

Sector Report

Appliance Repair – Direct Energy could not carry on with the downturn in the residential market and has reported going out of business.

Cablevision – Shaw has recently let go an

astonishing 500 managers throughout their cable system, including the Campbell River Manager. Our members are fairly busy regardless.

Construction: Commercial/Institutional – E.H. Emery Electric picked up the Victoria

High School, University of Victoria Knowledge Infrastructure Program, Langford Osh Kosh, ; Canem Systems picked up the West Shore Cineplex in Langford, Starfish Medical Centre, Port Place Mall Landlord portion renovation in Nanaimo, Ripple Rock School addition in

Sector Report (Continued)

Campbell River, Costco and the new Kia car lot in Courtenay, RBC in Duncan, Home Sense in Victoria, Jenner Chevrolet in Colwood, Langford Wal-Mart, Mazzei Electric has picked up the Community Corrections Office in Port Alberni, the Lighting upgrade for the City of Nanaimo. Houle Electric picked up NRGH Emergency Ward and Cancer Clinic Reno, Port Alberni Senior Secondary School.

Light/Heavy Industrial – E.H. Emery Electric picked up the Portage Inlet Sanitary Lift Station, Mazzei Electric picked up the Bing Creek Solid Waste in Duncan. The Gold River Waste to Energy Cogeneration plant Covanta project has been slightly delayed by the BC Environment Ministry; however we should see some positive news about the project around June. Four companies have been short listed; Bechtel, Commonwealth, Aecon and Lockerbie & Hole. We have received several calls for Saskatoon, Regina and Kamloops heading into the Yukon for Industrial work. Remember; if you want to travel make sure Len in Dispatch knows you're interested.

Residential – Although some work is going to the drawing table remains slow.

Dockyard – The membership ratified the renewal of the Collective Agreement negotiated by the Dockyard Trades and Labour Council early this year with a 1.5% increase in both of the two year Agreement, they did a great job on holding back on a controversial severance package change, and as it dragged on for so long, it puts the negotiating team back at the table early this summer. We also have our BC Supreme Court Charter Challenge late in April. It's unfortunate when your employer is the government, and when we go to negotiate with them they refuse to recognize our members skill sets to the point we have to go to binding Arbitration and we get awarded an additional 5.2% from the Arbitrator, then before our members get to buy their first cup of coffee with their extra 5.2%, the government (their employer) legislates it away from them.

Prompting for us to get a lawyer and a judge to hopefully see things our way!

Motor Winders – Our Motor Winder members ratified the renewal to their Collective Agreement mid-February the Agreement goes for two years includes an increase to Vacation time for employees with ten years of service and more, ninety cents in the first year and one dollar in the second year. I would like to thank Brother Darwin Dzuba from Beaver Electrical Machinery for helping in this set of negotiations.

Municipal Government – We are currently moving into bargaining with the City of Victoria and have our first dates set for April 12, 2011 more to report on this later. The City has hired some new staff in the electrical department and SCADA.

Private Marine – Victoria Shipyard has announced a name change, abandoning the Washington Marine Group for "Seaspan Marine" which is more internationally known and less confusing when dealing with Ottawa. To get your Security Clearance please Email Andrea Koschreck – Victoria Shipyards ltd. at: akoschreck@seaspan.com Andrea will set you up with a personal web account to access the

Security form, you will need to provide your; Full name, Date of Birth, Trade, & Contact Information. We attended a full day Labour Management Meeting with Victoria Shipyards where we received reports on the Sub-marine program which will be renewed based on our performance; the 12 vessel FELEX program moving forward this Spring, which will amount to a good portion of employment for our members over the next several years, each vessel is an 18 month refit, there are 5 vessels to do on each coast with two up in the air, so there is a possibility of scooping 2 other vessels from the east coast based on performance, price, scheduling and operational needs; and New Construction the last 5 MLB's came in way over their negotiated price, the vessels were budgeted at 15,000 man-hours and the lowest of the 5 came in at 17,000 man-hours, there is plenty of reasons to point to why this

happened, but in the end the bid simply didn't reflect those considerations. Looking forward we still have the Support Vessels (JSS), and the Arctic Off-shore Patrol Vessels (AOPS) to consider, and several other vessels to build for the federal government. Near the end of the day we discussed Victoria Shipyards core strengths and weighed that against diversifying into other markets to help with the highs and lows of employment levels. We also continued to drive home that their initial safety indoctrination needs to be expanded; we discussed many other smaller issues throughout the day as well.

Provincial Health Care – The criminal records check fee grievance with Health Employers Association of BC was sent to Arbitrator John Steeves. The Facilities Bargaining Association argued that the cost of the criminal records checks was a business cost so under the Employment Standards Act the Employer could not collect the fee from the employees and as the Employer paid the fee up to this time that any change in this practice needed to be subject to negotiations. The Health Authorities argued that the changes to the Criminal Records Review Act have expanded the list of offences that must be checked as well as requiring a new record check every five years, that because of these significant changes they should not be bound by past practice and that the fee was not a business cost. In his decision the arbitrator ruled that the Health Authorities were not required to pay the fee under the provisions of the facilities collective agreement, that the fee is not a business cost, the changes to the Criminal Records Review Act are substantial enough to warrant a departure from past practice and that since employees are responsible for granting authorization for the criminal records checks they are also responsible for paying the fee. He further ruled that if the individual being offered employment fulfills the condition of a successful completion of a criminal record check process and there are no other conditions to the offer of employment, then the individual becomes an employee under the Collective Agreement. However, until that condition is fulfilled the individual is not an employee. As the arbitrator ruled that the employees are responsible for granting authorization for the criminal records checks and that they were also responsible for paying the fee.

Railway – We joined the [campaign to bring rail across the new Johnson Street Bridge](#).

Wholesale – Nanaimo and Port Alberni Westburne are reporting to be fairly busy.



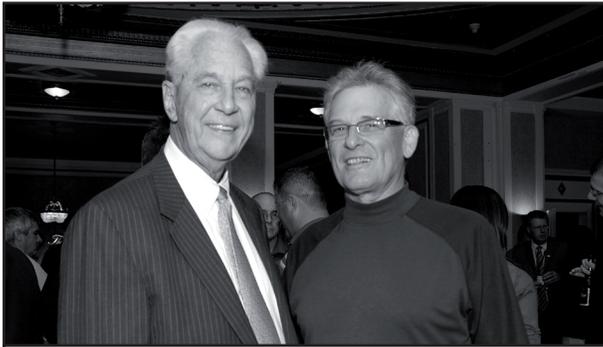
Have Card Will Travel t-shirts now available.

Provincial Building Trades 41st Convention

President Chris Baker, North Island Business Representative Shane Scott and I attended the 41st Building Construction Trades Convention held in Nanaimo, where Executive Director Wayne Peppard provided us with his retirement speech capturing some of the challenges and wins of the Construction Trades, and one thing we can all be thankful for is Wayne providing us with strong leadership during the last eight tumultuous years. Wayne has brought the British Columbia

Building Construction Trades international recognition on topics of Training, Apprenticeship and Asbestos awareness. We owe Wayne more than we can ever repay. With Wayne leaving we have a old friend coming back Tom Sigurdson who was the BC Building Trades Executive Director before Wayne and left to go out to Ottawa and his return should signal stable and committed stewardship. University of Utah Economics Professor Peter Philips was in attendance to provide a fantastic report and analysis of Project Labour Agreements (PLA's) and their importance in gaining market share putting our members to work.

We had a panel discussion on the Canadian Council of Directors on Apprenticeship who are reviewing the Red Seal, chaired by Industry Training Authority CEO Kevin Evans it makes many of us nervous knowing he is not the strongest supporter of full Apprenticeship but would allow people to simply write multiple guess exams and if they pass would receive a Red Seal Certification in their chosen exam of choice. When I asked Mr. Evans, "Who was the driving force behind such a review?" he avoided the question by saying it is an open collaborative process. Apparently, according to Mr. Evans we were all asking for a review of the Red Seal Program.



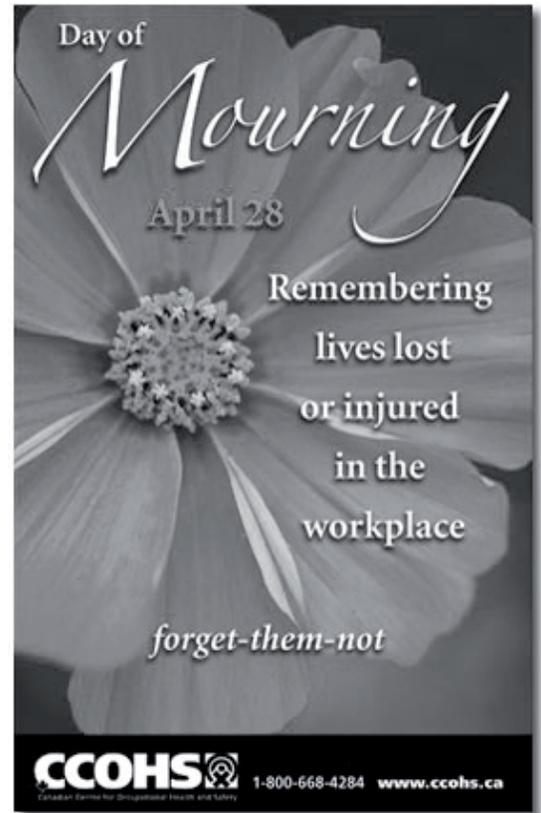
IBEW International President Hill with Wayne Peppard



Nanaimo NDP MLA Leonard Krog



Business Manager Venoit confronts ITA CEO on the Red Seal review.



Our Hearts go out to the Families of our 2010 Fallen Brothers.

May they Rest in Peace

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|-----------------|---------------|
| Robert Floyd | Howard Cahill |
| Bill Hadfield | Lorne McBride |
| Robert Ellis | Tom Hartford |
| John Pynn | Bruce Ingram |
| Frederick Smith | |

What I do know is we certainly didn't ask to look at ways to divide or diminish our trade. We know there are corporate interests looking at doing this for several trades; this is simply an attack on our trade jurisdiction allowing for wire pullers and pipe benders which will simply serve to find a way to pay us less. There will be an opportunity in the near future for all of us to let them know what we think as when they finish their review they will provide for an open electronic forum and it is our intention to provide that link and the information for our members to voice their concerns.