



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Vancouver Island

Quarterly Newsletter Since 1902

Grant's Law – Pay Before You Pump

On March 7, 2005 a couple of teenagers were out drinking when they decided they would steal a car, but the car was low on fuel so they stopped in at an Esso Station in Maple Ridge minutes before midnight. Twenty-four year old Grant DePatie was working alone on the graveyard shift, when the two teens pulled in for gas. A customer noticed the punched out dangling ignition system and tipped Grant off that the car may have been stolen; Grant went to take down the license plate number. The 17 year old driver noticed Grant writing down the license number, started the car after getting \$12.30 worth of gas and drove over Grant DePatie, caught in the undercarriage of the car as it sped to get away, Grant was dragged for seven and half kilometers screaming to his brutal death.



Later that Fall Ottawa teenager Jennifer Teague was found slain after gone missing at the end of her late-night shift from a fast food restaurant. January 17, 2006 Brigitte Serre, 17, was killed in the back room of a Montreal gas station where she was working her first overnight shift. Less than a month later in Winnipeg 17 year old Edwin Yue was shot and killed while working behind the counter in a family's convenience store in a robbery gone wrong. Working

alone after dark is one of the most dangerous jobs today; many young Canadian workers are victims of circumstance simply due to working the late-night shift.

Beginning February 1, 2008 new Worksafe BC regulations require British Columbians fueling their vehicles to pay before they pump twenty-four hours a day. Employers will also have to help ensure the protection of vulnerable late-night retail workers by scheduling at least two workers on shift from 10:00 PM to 6:00 AM or the employer must implement security measures creating a physical barrier like locked doors during these hours. Late night retail workers in BC owe their safety at work to the BC Federation of Labour for their investigation into the matter and lobbying effort with their findings, and Grant DePatie's parents and entire family for moving past their personal grief, despite suffering such a personal tragedy of losing their son and selflessly pursuing a safer workplace for every other late-night worker. Is prepay an inconvenience to the consumer? Maybe, but a small price to pay in comparison to the price those like Grant and the entire DePatie family has already paid.

Spring 2008

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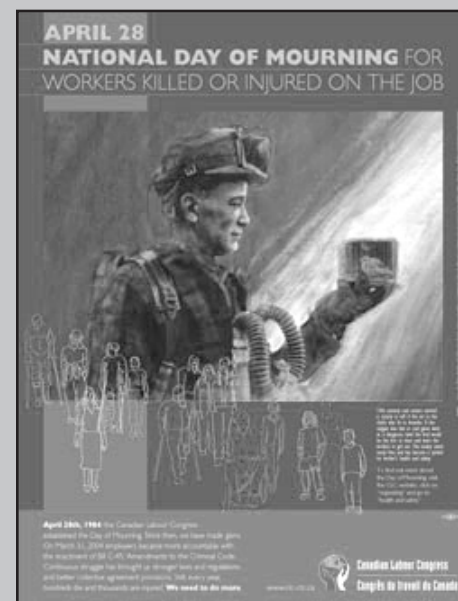
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Business Manager's Report



Philip M. Venoit
Business Manager/Financial Secretary

Early this year I received a call from the International Office wanting to know how we were able to **increase our membership by 10% last year**. The answer is quite simple when you look at our cities skylines; all of the high and low-rise condominium work which we predicted was coming in 2004 and prepared for finally hit the Island last year. We typically haven't been in this particular market since the late 70's and this was our chance to jump back into it. With interest lending rates at all time lows, speculative buying at all time highs along with gradually increasing retiring baby boomers dealing with empty nests and still others looking to relocate, its beginning to look like this condo craze could carry on for years to come.

We wrapped up our **Market Recovery Analysis** and found that we were able to obtain a sixty-eight percent (68%) market share in construction last year. In consideration of this along with our Motion we passed last year this translates into a sixty percent (60%) reduction to the market recovery dues.

We partnered up with the Ministry of Small Business and Revenue to hold information meetings out at Camosun College so the Minister's representative could inform our apprentices of the **Provincial Training Tax Credit Program**. Apprentices completing 3rd year schooling last year can claim \$2,000 and apprentices completing 4th year in 2007 can claim \$2500 with the use of a T-1014 form and filing it with your T-1 Income Tax. Unlike the Federal Apprentice Incentive Grant which provides for a convoluted taxable grant, the Provincial Tax Credit is untaxed so it's money that can go straight into your pocket to help cover off the tuition and books. The system to get these monies is simple and straight forward and is likely the easiest money you could make from last year. We also

facilitated four **RRSP Meetings** up and down the Island to better inform our members prior to tax time about this very important retirement vehicle. We will be holding ongoing **RRSP** and Provincial Tax Credit Meetings out at Camosun College with each apprentice intake throughout this year. We will also attempt to get the Ministry and Manulife to do the same in North Island College if a sufficient number of apprentices are in attendance. We've notified the Construction Labour Relations Association that the **new construction Journeyman rate on Vancouver Island is \$30.45**. We had the International facilitate a **Shop Stewards Course** south Island and will be facilitating a north Island course this summer or early fall dependent on the Instructors schedule, as a note we invited some mid-Island stewards to Victoria and others from mid-Island will be invited to the north Island course as soon as the date and venue have been set.

For thirty years April 28th has been recognized by countries around the world as the workers **Day of Mourning**. On that day at noon we should stop for a moment during our lunch break to remember those workers who rolled out of bed, put on the coffee, went to work and never returned home to their families. Many workers like Grant DePatie on the front page of this Newsletter was simply trying to get ahead make their community a better place and the best way we can honour their contribution is a workers remembrance. Remember to keep yourself and your job safe and look out for your union Brothers.

This is the end of our 3 year **Administrative term** and as I look back I'm proud of what we were able to **accomplish on behalf of the membership**; an historic settlement of \$8.00 an hour for our members working construction around the Province, along with many other great settlements and individual approaches to each of our bargaining units to maximize our goals set by our members at negotiations. This doesn't mean there was any lack of challenges at those negotiating tables, all too often there were times of thought provoking reflection and calculated threats, however we were able to maneuver (duck and weave in

some cases) our way through without having to exercise our collective right, averting a strike in every round. We do however have to confront one rather difficult situation on behalf of our Dockyard members, where our friends within that Council seem intent to bend the IBEW over to get ahead, we have retained Jim Shields of Shields and Hunt to help us change their minds as we will be taking action to correct this behavior, and I will be calling a meeting with our Brothers and Sisters from the Fleet Maintenance Facility in the very near future to lay out our strategy to achieve fair representation by this Council. We embraced a new and sensible approach to our Market Recovery Program, the stronger our market share the less we need to subsidize it! This change was further accepted by the International Office without a single amendment to it, this speaks volumes for our forethought and common sense, as it will likely be mirrored in the IBEW pattern bylaws around North America. We hosted the IBEW All Canada Progress Meeting in 2007 and many within the IBEW in Canada agreed we raised the bar for every year going forward, and although only a handful of members truly put this event together we can all be proud that every Delegate to that Conference will remember Vancouver Island and Local 230 as a historic and proud local within the IBEW in Canada. In Organizing over the last three years we now represent IBEW members at six more construction contractors, two more shipyards, and the Highways electrical maintenance. We partnered up with the First District Office to provide great free online training for our members and their families, and provided much needed post Journeyman Training like Field Service Representative courses and Better Foremen courses, at the same time we

took on political issues like the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, German built BC Ferries, a better Employment Insurance Program, the "looming skilled trades shortage" propaganda, tax relief for the mobility of construction workers, and our ongoing problems with the regurgitated apprenticeship system the Industry Training Authority (ITA). There is still plenty of work to be done and membership willing, I'll be returning to take it on.



Brother Tim Bragg accepts his 35 year long service pin from Business Representative Brent Strank.

Sector Report

Appliance Repair – On October 1, 2007 Sears Canada locked out about 70 Appliance Technicians in Vancouver represented by our Sister Local 213. Sears tried imposing a Collective Agreement which provided no increases for 4 years, allow Sears to split the work week up without 2 consecutive days off, eliminate some overtime premiums and remove a pre-existing paid holiday.

Sears is no stranger to dealing harshly with workers who simply want a union in their workplace. Sears carried out a particularly vicious ongoing war with the Teamsters Union throughout the U.S. for over twenty years. Sears was the training ground for Nathan Shefferman, who has been considered the founding father of the modern union avoidance industry and held the position of director of employee relations from 1934.

The locked out Technicians are asking North American workers to boycott Sears to pressure them to return to the bargaining table. Local 230 has leafleted both Sears's locations in concert with other IBEW Locals across Canada, and we have provided a link on our "Hot Stuff" page on our website, so our members could let Sears know what you think of their union busting actions.

Cablevision – On March 3rd the Union met with the CRTV Board of Directors to discuss what we can do together to help prepare for future attacks from larger Cable providers attempting to take over CRTV as a strategic gateway through to the north Island.

Construction – Commercial/Institutional – Canem Systems; has picked up the Law Courts in Victoria, a McDonalds renovation, the Scotia Bank in Cordova Bay, the Smith Clinic, Shaw Cablevision's new Studio at the Save-on Memorial Centre Arena, Municipal House, the Cancer Clinic Card Access upgrade, Goldstream Park washrooms, Victoria Shipyards Office Building, the Best Buy T.I. in Nanaimo and the North Saanich Municipal Hall; Emery has picked up the new A&B Sound at Millstream Village, the BC Transit Fuel Cell Bus project, Houle Electric has picked up the University of Victoria Support Services, the new Emergency Ward at the Victoria General Hospital, Ministry of Health Fire Alarm upgrade, lighting upgrade at 1810 Blanshard Street, the North Cowichan & Duncan Aquatic Centre, the Shoppers Drug

Mart in Campbell River and the Best Buy base building; Raylec Power; has picked up the Airport area Sewer & Water upgrade.

Industrial – Article 701 of the Inside Wiremen's Agreement ties mileage rates for initial and terminal travel to and from out of town jobs to the amount established by Canada Revenue Agency. March 1, 2008, the established rate went from \$0.50 - \$0.52 per kilometer. FMI has several Island Substations coming up around the Island;

they also have an Independent Power Project in Zeballos, and the Vancouver Island Transmission Reinforcement Project which is all the above water work from Tsawwassen to Duncan including the Gulf Islands; Vicar is re-wiring a crane from Prince George.

Residential – Mazzei Electric has picked up the DND Housing in Comox and the "Tin Wis" Resort in Tofino. Houle picked up the Vivo Gallery Residence in Nanaimo.

Dockyard – The Union has provided our Lawyer with the pertinent information to forward our case to oppose the biased and unfair way the Dockyard Trades & Labour Council bargained the collective agreement by negotiating a 5% increase for all trades except the IBEW classifications whom received a proposed 1.5% or ignored completely in consideration of the proposed Broader Employability reclassification, we're further considering Pay Equity in the traditional sense for our group as well.

Motor Winders – Beaver Electrical Machinery is currently rebuilding a Mining Drill from Perth Australia to be used on an Island Mine the frequency has to be changed from 50-60 Hertz and voltage from 1000v to 600v all the control wiring, and circuit protection needs to be changed to conform with the Canadian Standards Association.

Municipal Government – Our members working at the City of Victoria ratified the changes to their Collective Agreement. The new 4 year agreement basically

provided for 3% per year plus a reclassification which gave most classifications a greater initial increase, increases to their benefit Plan, we were finally able to secure some Contracting Out language, and the real benefit comes with a new Stand-By Pay which will amount to 25 hours of pay per week. At the same time we resolved an outstanding grievance during the process as well.

Private Marine – Victoria Shipyards has the majority of the work at this time with 86 members finishing up the Spirit Ferry sewage treatment plant, 6 of the 8 Orca Vessels is going to Sea Trials, the second TOTE Freighter is wrapping up, as is the Laurier, and the Algonquin is gearing up to come in for her 9 month refit. CME has picked up phase 4 of the Tully and the Pacific Sounder as well.

Provincial Health Care – the Provincial Health Care Unions have settled an agreement stemming from the Supreme Court Charter of Rights challenge. This settlement provides for a process through which employers and health care unions can fully assess any future proposals to privatize services, it includes a \$70 million compensation and training package for workers impacted by Bill 29 in the past, and another \$5 million has been set aside to retrain workers affected by any future contracting out. The Benchmark review for the electrical trade is proceeding with Local 230's participation and when finalized we will provide a summary of the decision or the review's findings.

Railway – On February 5th the Council of Railway Unions presented the proposed Memorandum of Settlement to renew their Collective Agreement, an interesting turn of events is that the Operating Trades (Locomotive Engineers and Conductors) voted 100% in favour of the changes, but the Non-Operating Trades (Signal Maintainers, Carmen and Track Maintenance workers) voted 100% to reject the changes who hold the majority of votes, so we will be going back to the bargaining table with Southern Railway in the near future to see if we can make some further improvements.

Electrical Wholesale – Gescan has advertised to re-open a new store in Langford and we have sent them off a letter reminding them of their commitment 10 years ago, that if they were to re-open a new store it would be union, we are awaiting their reply.



Brother Dan Bianci working on the Drill Motor Rig

ITA Bureaucracy Harms BC Economy

Attention: Kevin Evans, CEO

Dear Sir:

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your new post as the Industry Training Authority's Chief Executive Officer, and at the same time introduce ourselves to you. We are the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 230 with the geographic jurisdiction covering Vancouver Island representing union tradesmen in the construction, private shipyard marine, service and maintenance in all three levels of government as well as in the private sector, railway workers, motor winders, appliance repair and cablevision. We currently sponsor well over 300 apprentices (over 5% of all apprenticeships on Vancouver Island according to ITA statistics) directly with the ITA and represent a few dozen more that are sponsored directly by their employer.

I'm writing you today to inform you of what we perceive as a bureaucratic step introduced by the Industry Training Authority (ITA) approximately a year ago which amounts to nothing more than duplicitous red tape. This step requires the sponsor to fill out paperwork to simply confirm what they have already told the ITA, which is, the apprentice is ready for Journeyman status. This further step compounds the real problem which is the delay in the time for which it is taking apprentices' to receive their Certificate of Qualification.

We are providing the following examples so you can see for yourself we are simply not complaining from a lack of other things to do:

- Trade worker Registration #309020 / Apprentice ID #02-31873
- We originally applied December 13, 2006; we re-applied April 2007, then again in May 2007. (This occurred during the implementation of this new required Recommendation for Certification step.)
- Trade worker Registration #129381 / Apprentice ID #05-61006
- We applied to the ITA to generate the "Recommendation for Certification" November 26, 2007 and received the necessary paperwork February 18, 2008. (We then received another RFC for the same individual February 20, 2008).
- Trade worker Registration #299333 / Apprentice ID #00-22852
- We applied to the ITA to generate the "Recommendation for Certification" December 13, 2007 and received the necessary paperwork February 20, 2008 (after repeated phone calls).

With all due respect, in today's technical age of fractional second communication replies, a stone mason could have carved a graveyard full of granite headstones 100 years ago with a hammer and chisel in the same time the ITA is taking to generate a paper form document with a name today. Two months and more to simply receive what we have already stated should be unacceptable. Keep in mind it will still take a month or more for them to receive their Certification. These Apprentices are held in an ITA purgatory as the B.C. Safety Authority will not recognize them as journeyman unless they can prove it with the very documentation the ITA is supposed to provide.

Our understanding is that the construction industry represents approximately 12% of the Canadian Gross Domestic Product (GDP) alone, and the British Columbia construction crane

lined skyline provides tangible evidence of that statistic. When an Apprentice finishes his or her time, they receive their Journeyman status, and when that occurs the first thing an employer in that industry will do is hire another apprentice to help with the construction project of the day. We say the aforementioned delay has an adverse impact

on the ability of the construction industry and the employers working within it the ability to complete projects in the timeliest manner and the BC economy as a whole.

If this current Provincial Government's mantra truly is that "BC is open for business", this bureaucratic delay perpetuated by the ITA runs contrary to that message as it hampers the ability of construction contractors to complete their projects, it also helps to deal with the skilled Trades shortages industry and government seem so concerned about.

We are requesting that the ITA review and rescind any unnecessary paperwork so BC workers, primarily our youth who are simply trying to become accredited in their chosen field of employment be provided the best apprenticeship experience afforded to them.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this correspondence please, do not hesitate to contact me in our Victoria business office.

Sincerely,

Philip Venoit Business Manager/
Financial Secretary

