



VANCOUVER and DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL



REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2013

- 1. LOCATION:** Maritime Labour Centre, 1880 Triumph Street, Vancouver, BC
- 2. CHAIRPERSON:** 1st Vice President Terry Engler
- 3. ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**
MSC that the minutes of the February 19, 2013 meeting be adopted.
- 4. CREDENTIALS:**
The following credentials were received since the last meeting: (* = recredentialled, A = alternate)
BCGEU Local 103
Jasbir (Jerry) Basi

BCGEU Local 2003
Rick Barnett

CAW Local 2200
Mariegold Rondeau

CUPE Local 389
Tony Volpe (A)

CUPE Local 1936
Sheryl Burns *
Michael Lanier *

CEP Local 464
Carmella Allevato *
David Halme *

HEU – St. Paul’s
Christine Arcand
Kelly Knox

Vancouver Musicians Local 145
David Brown
David Owen

MSC to obligate/seat the delegate(s).

5. GUEST SPEAKER(S):

Marion Malcolmson – Jane Tyler Legacy Fund

The Jane Tyler Legacy Fund is seeking support from the VDLC to rescind regressive legislation. The legislation prohibits single parents from attending school or training full-time without being cut from social assistance.

Jane Tyler immigrated to Canada with her two daughters and lived a life of severe poverty in Vancouver for many years. A group of friends pooled together funding for her to return to school. She became a kindergarten teacher, dramatically altering the life of her and her children. When Jane passed away her daughter established this legacy fund in honour of her mother and what she accomplished. The intent was to give grants to single parents (predominantly women) on income assistance for training and/or education. However, they soon learned that every dollar they were giving out in grants was being clawed back by the Liberal government, or recipients were being cut off income assistance. They have approached the Clark government with the hope of showing them how this perpetuates the cycle of poverty – they have yet to hear back.

They are asking the VDLC to lend its voice to their campaign by passing a motion of support and by sending individual letters to MLAs and NDP candidates.

President Joey Hartman assured Marion that a motion of support was forthcoming.

Sage Aaron for Jane Shin, NDP Candidate Burnaby Lougheed

Jane sends her regrets she was called away for an event with Adrian Dix. Sage is the Director of Communications at COPE Local 378 and is Jane Shin's campaign manager. Burnaby Lougheed has not been held by the NDP for a long time but they've been close, only being beaten by 700 in the last election despite being outspent by nearly \$50,000.00. Jane emigrated from Korea as a child with her family. She was educated in genetics and cell biology at UBC and received her doctorate of medicine in 2007. Jane's family chose Vancouver not only for its beauty but for its education and universal health care. They truly understood the value of that health care system when Jane became very ill at 16. Had they not had healthcare, treatment would have cost upwards of \$150,000.00. All they had needed was their Care Card. When Jane's parents were in their 50s they had to start again when their small business failed; they returned to school and received credentials in the health care field with the help of student grants and loans. Jane feels that this would not have been possible if not for the NDP's commitment to keep education accessible for everyone. Being a medical doctor and teaching at BCIT and VCC she has seen first-hand what the Liberal government is doing to our health care and education system. The Liberal government has made life more difficult and less affordable; user fees have shot up across the board from medical premiums to transportation costs, housing is more unaffordable than ever and the provincial deficit has doubled. Seeing this she decided to step forward and be a part of the political process. She hopes to be a part of the new NDP government that will take the steps towards improving skills training, healthcare, environmental protection and land base and grow a sustainable economy. With everyone's help she can be the new MLA for Burnaby Lougheed.

6. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Joey Hartman reported on VDLC activities since the February 19, 2013 meeting.

Job Action and Bargaining Support

- CUPE 4627 at VCC – continued rotating job action
- BCGEU, HEU, CUPE, UFCW et al - Community Social Services – settled
- BCGEU and BC Place – in mediation
- BCGEU and SFU Child Care Society – commenced job action February 12
- UNITE HERE Local 40 and Richmond Sheraton– ongoing efforts to reach a settlement
- BCTF and Government – negotiated a framework agreement and commenced bargaining

Remembering Ken Davidson

Brother Davidson, who served on the VDLC and CUPE Local 1004 executives for many years, died on February 14. At Ken's request, a "roast" rather than a memorial was held on February 21 to reflect on his life and contributions.

Provincial Election

Brother Gary Jarvis began working on Craig Keating's NDP pre-campaign organizing in North Vancouver Lonsdale, as per the VDLC motion and \$4,000.00 budget allocation for this book-off.

In addition, we will have a dinner meeting on March 27 with invitations to the 11 unions that the BC Fed has information about for the number of members living in Fraserview, Fairview, Point Grey and North Vancouver Lonsdale. The hope is to have a member from each union per constituency to begin collaborating labour's role in each of those four campaigns and beyond.

International Affairs

Guatemala: the VDLC and Amnesty International co-hosted an international affairs lunch on March 12 with Lolita Chavez from Guatemala. Over 30 people attended. Ms. Chavez spoke about the massive referendums her organization has conducted where the Maya people have overwhelmingly voted "no" to increased extractive industries, regardless of the increase in national GDP and jobs this might mean. Gold Corp and other Canadian companies make up 88% of all mining there. She also visited Ottawa to ask the government to stop supporting the Canadian companies that are hurting and killing her people and asked for the assistance of those at the lunch meeting to express our support for the Maya people in Guatemala. A motion from the VDLC executive is being brought forward in response.

Metro Vancouver Alliance

MVA held a leaders summit on March 14 that was very successful. The meeting brought together top level representatives from labour, faith, and community organizations.

April 28 Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job

VDLC executive members are encouraged to promote and attend the annual commemoration. It will be held at Garry Point in Steveston starting around 10:30 am on Sunday, April 28.

May Day

The VDLC's May Day march and rally will start at 5:30 pm on May 1 with a march down Commercial Drive to a rally at Grandview Park. Speakers will be invited from the VDLC, BC Fed, and Idle No More.

7. EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS:

a) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Donations and Spending Approvals

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL approve the following expenditures:

- Donation to Our Times Magazine of \$100.00
- Donation (\$50) and membership renewal (\$75) to BC Health Coalition for a total of \$125.00
- Donation to Camp Jubilee "Send a Kid to Camp Campaign" 2013 of \$100.00
- Donation to the Golden Tree Monument Project (statue in Abbotsford dedicated to farm workers) of \$400.00

b) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Green Jobs BC

BECAUSE the labour movement has been working with environmental organizations for several years and have now jointly formed an organization called Green Jobs BC; and

BECAUSE Green Jobs BC has an open letter that they are asking unions, environmentalists, faith groups, First Nations, local governments, businesses and individuals to sign on to; and

BECAUSE this open letter calls for a Green Jobs Plan for BC that is sustainable, low-carbon, adaptive, and worker focused; and

BECAUSE at least 17 labour organizations have already signed on to this open letter, including the CLC, BC Federation of Labour, BCTF, BCGEU, Brewery Workers, CEP, CEU, CUPW, CAW, FPSE, HEU, HSA, IBEW 213, Insulators, ILWU 400, PSAC, UBCP, UFCW 1518, UNITE HERE!, USW and the Victoria Labour Council,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL add its name to the Open Letter Calling for a Bold Green Jobs Plan for BC authored by Green Jobs BC.

c) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Solidarity with Guatemalan Human Rights Defenders

BECAUSE the VDLC and Amnesty International co-hosted an international solidarity lunch on March 12 with Guatemalan human rights defender Lolita Chavez; and

BECAUSE Ms. Chavez explained how her life is at risk for advocating against foreign companies extracting and exporting natural resources from Guatemala because of the high environmental and social costs; and

BECAUSE mining operations are the most common industry, with Canadian companies responsible for 88% of all mining in activity in Guatemala; and

BECAUSE Ms. Chavez specifically asked Canadians to support the Counsel of K'iche Peoples in their efforts to protect their lands,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL:

1. ask affiliates to review where their pension plans are invested and seek to divest from mining and other industrial activities that threaten the health and futures of all Guatemalans, both indigenous and non-indigenous; and
2. call upon the Canadian government to stop funding development organizations through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in partnerships with mining companies to deliver social services, which serve to undermine rather than support good development practices; and
3. further call on the Canadian government to enact laws to effectively regulate Canadian mining companies overseas; and
4. finally, ask its affiliates to learn about and remain vigilant about the human rights situation in Guatemala.

d) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Income Assistance and Education

BECAUSE, until 2002, single mothers were specifically recognized as a group in need of social assistance while engaging in full-time studies, but since 2002 have been cut off benefits if they enrolled in educational programs since attending classes conflicts with the concept of "employability" (ie. full availability); and

BECAUSE about one-third of the recipients of income assistance in BC are single parents, and almost ninety percent of those are single mothers; and

BECAUSE a comprehensive poverty reduction plan must include training and education, it makes economic and social sense to allow single parents to both to provide for their families and to significantly upgrade their employability,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL work to achieve government policy that guarantees single parents receiving income assistance, with a child under the age of thirteen, the right to:

1. Enroll in full-time or part-time secondary or post-secondary education programs, and
2. Receive educational bursaries or scholarships with no penalty to their income assistance; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL encourage its affiliates to support this proposed change to provincial income assistance policy.

e) *MSC that the following motion be adopted:*

Subject: Federal Government Role in Reality TV Raids

BECAUSE the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) agents were filmed by a reality TV show as they conducted worksite raids and apprehended undocumented workers on Vancouver construction sites last week; and

BECAUSE the workers who were apprehended face deportation, loss of livelihood and separation from their families, while the employers who hired them illegally face no negative consequences; and

BECAUSE migrant workers signed forms agreeing to the public filming and airing of the events believing they were required to do so under Canadian law and without legal representation or advice; and

BECAUSE the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) has expressed concerns for the safety of their members being filmed as part of reality TV shows; and

BECAUSE it has since been revealed that the federal Minister of Public Safety, Vic Toews, signed the documents contracting the reality TV show to film the CBSA raids, at a cost to taxpayers which the federal government refuses to reveal,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL condemn the federal government for exploiting vulnerable migrant workers and devaluing the important work of PSAC members working for the Canadian Border Services Agency through purposefully targeting their work for entertainment; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL further condemn the federal government for using taxpayer dollars to contract a reality TV show in a public relations exercise and for their failure to prosecute employers who hire undocumented workers while imposing severe consequences for the workers.

8. REPORT OF UNIONS: *(in order reported)*

a) Health Sciences Association – Reported by Agnes Jackman

The Community Social Services Bargaining Association will be holding a ratification vote on their tentative agreement. The Health Science Professions Bargaining Association had their ratification vote, which passed by 83% in favour of accepting a new collective agreement that includes wage increases totalling 3% and protects the wages of hospital pharmacists who were threatened with wage roll-backs of up to 14%. The contract also brings a return to a 37.5 hour work week and a return of a pay-direct at the pharmacy card instead of the current system of reimbursement of payment for prescribed drugs. There will also be a modified pharmacare tie-in with full implementation delayed to the end of the month. Bill 18, entitled the Health Authority Amendment Act, legislation that fundamentally alters the structure of bargaining associations in the health sector, was passed at the end of the last day the House met in March. Prior to Bill 18 being presented in the early March, the Liberal government only consulted with the BCNU. HSA, which represents Registered Psychiatric Nurses in the bargaining association, was not consulted; nor were other unions like HEU and BCGEU who will also be affected by Bill 18. This is especially disturbing since the Supreme Court of Canada expressly ruled in 2007 that government had an obligation to consult in these circumstances. This legislation will arbitrarily change negotiated terms of appropriate representation for members of all unions in collective bargaining.

b) BCGEU Local 303 – Reported by Mike Clarke and Stephen Wagner

Local 303 recently wrapped sectoral bargaining for Community Social Services resulting in mediocre wage increases for a group of already under-paid predominantly women workers. Ratification votes will continue into April. Tentative agreements have been reached for General Services, Child Care Workers, and Community Living; ratification votes started March 19. Aboriginal services are still bargaining. Community Social Services Association will have information tables at Metrotown Centre, Coquitlam Centre, and at the BCTF Convention at the Hyatt.

On the political action front, the main theme for the next number of weeks will be a significant member outreach program. The union has 6 members running throughout the province. BCGEU's intention is to contact their members in every riding, with an intense focus on key ridings, and those ridings that BCGEU members are running in. They hope to touch base with as many of their 66,000 members as possible. The Liberals out-spent the NDP by as much as 5 to 1 in the last election, magnifying the need to hit the streets and get out the vote!

c) CUPW – Reported by Fruma Sloan

In the 1980's and 1990's, the federal government closed approximately 1500 public post offices. Once again, it looks like the Conservatives are planning large scale closures approving Canada Post's plan to close an unspecified number of public post offices in urban areas. Canada Post Corp recently announced that it will be reviewing every post office across the country. The changes to service include a new design where there is a window wicket for customer service with all the products behind the clerk and one cash register - this can only mean long lines and wait times. This model is expected to bring in less revenue and provide less service. The union is facing the biggest assault on public post offices it has seen in decades. The postal network is one of Canada Post's biggest assets and Canada Post should be expanding these services. Polls show that people continue to believe that Canada Post should remain in the public sector.

d) CUPE Local 1936 – Reported by Sheryl Burns

Community Social Services bargaining association achieved a tentative settlement after 13 straight days of bargaining. They achieved increases of 1.5% April 1, 2013; 1.5% January 1, 2014; and an extra 1% for all Step 1 employees April 1, 2013. They also achieved mileage and meal allowance improvements and improved language for union rights and lay-off and recall. They are currently conducting ratification votes and are holding a town hall meeting on Thursday, March 21.

e) CUPE Local 391 – Reported by Gary Jarvis

The local ratified their new collective agreement with the Vancouver Public Library by 92%.

f) TWU Local 50 – Reported by Sheila Gorman

The TWU-STT voted by referendum whether to approve merger talks with the United Steel Workers; they did not achieve the 66% approval required to go ahead with those talks, however, there was significant interest in merger talks' issues. The Executive Council will be discussing the best way to move forward and look forward to continued debate in the days to come and at the TWU Convention in May.

The following verbal reports were presented but not submitted for the minutes:

- a) TFEU – Reported by Margaret White
- b) Musicians Local 145 – Reported by David Brown
- c) BCTF – VSTA – Reported by Sylvia Metzner

MSC to adopt the reports of unions.

9. REPORT OF COMMITTEES: (in order reported)

- a) Women's – Reported by Ingrid Kolsteren

IWD Dinner on March 8 was a success and a complete sell-out with 390 tickets sold. On March 26, the committee is having a potluck meeting and debriefing. It was something to hear the impact that feminism and labour has had and yet how far there still is to go. Women Transforming Cities is planning a conference May 30, to be able to voice what is needed to make cities in this country responsive to meeting the needs of women and girls. They have been gathering info from the Cafés they've been holding. In the interest of having labour's voice heard the VDLC Women's Committee is hosting a Women Transforming Cities Café on Monday, April 15 at the Britannia Community Centre.

- b) Young Workers' – Reported by Erin Searle

The committee will be focusing on political action. They are holding a weekend March 23 and 24 for Craig Keating's riding of North Vancouver Lonsdale, door knocking and whatever is needed. They have tapped into an idea of the BC Fed Young Workers' of setting up a task force – Monday nights they'll be working for different ridings – Burnaby North, Vancouver Fairview, Vancouver Fraserview and North Vancouver Lonsdale so far. The committee is planning a sit-in, in protest of the watering down of Grant's Law, April 12. For more information please contact Stephen Von Sychowski or Kassandra Cordero. The World Festival of Youth and Students in Ecuador is this December and the committee will be holding lots of fundraisers for that, including an on-going bottle drive; an aeroplane miles donation program; the auctioning off young workers for some sort of work; as well as the raffle for the handmade wooden box.

MSC to adopt the reports of committees.

OTHER REPORTS:

- a) BC FORUM – Reported by Sandra Bauer

BC FORUM is still working hand in hand with the BC Fed on the upcoming election. New copies of "the Advocate" are available. Recognizing some new faces Sister Bauer took the opportunity to introduce the BC Federation of Retired Union Members; their membership is made up of retired union members and active union members over the age of 50. BC FORUM offers insurance (life, medical, dental).

- b) COPE – Reported by Matt Damario

Their AGM is April 7, 1:30 to 5:00 pm at the Maritime Labour Centre

- c) CLC – Reported by Ron Stipp

See attached report

MSC to adopt the other reports.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NIL

11. NEW BUSINESS: NIL

12. NOTICE OF MOTION: NIL

13. GOOD AND WELFARE:

- 50/50 proceeds of \$35.00 to benefit the Young Workers' Committee fundraising to attend the World Festival of Youth and Students in Ecuador, December 2013.
- IUOE website – www.labourspeaksout.com – about reforming the Temporary Foreign Worker program
- Union Sisters – Monday, April 8 featuring Jane Shin, Sue Hammell and Janet Routledge at the CAW Hall, 326 12th Street, New Westminster – tickets \$15 – contact Kassandra Cordero
- Community March Against Racism – March 23 gather at 2:00 pm at Clark Park

14. MEETING ADJOURNED: *MSC to adjourn at 9:15 pm.*

15. NEXT MEETING: [TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 2013](#), 7:30 pm, Maritime Labour Centre.

Pizza Educational
Doctors for Medicare
April 16, 2013
6:00 pm
Maritime Labour Centre
(immediately preceding the VDLC Regular meeting)

When the Shift Hits the Fan: Health Care in Crisis and Transition in 2013

Health care in BC is in need of transition from a hospital-based to a community-based system, yet government continues to trim spending on health without visionary or targeted investment, leaving gaps in the system increasingly being filled by a two-tiered system in BC. This year, our public system is going to court: Doctors in private clinics continue breaking the law, challenging that it is unconstitutional to prevent people from buying their way to the front of wait lists, and there is plenty of demand for their for-profit services. Where is our health system headed?

Dr. Vanessa Brcic is a family physician committed to serving populations in need. She is a Clinician Scholar in the Department of Family Practice at UBC, researching approaches to addressing inequities and poverty in clinical practice. She also advocates for a strong and equitable public health care system as an executive board member of the Canadian Doctors for Medicare. Having spent years navigating the health system as a patient, she has seen the increasingly two-tiered health system from both sides, and believes that there is room for all of us at the table - patients and health providers alike - to discuss how to deliver better care for patients and communities.