

**IMPORTANT
MEETING ON
BARGAINING
PROPOSALS AND
PROCESS**

**THURSDAY
MARCH 11, 2004**

3 PM

**CROATIAN
CULTURAL CENTRE**

THE 2004/2005 EXECUTIVE

Lizz Lindsay
PRESIDENT (04)

Frank Cosco
VICE-PRESIDENT (04)

Perry Taylor
TREASURER (05)

Colleen van Winkel
SECRETARY (05)

Ingrid Kolsteren
CHIEF STEWARD (04)

George Rudolph (05)

Settimio Sicoli (05)

Robert Kunka (04)

Brenda Appleton (04)

Cheryl Draper (04)

Virginia Monk (05)

Vinit Khosla
NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE CHAIR

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



LIZZ LINDSAY
VCCFA PRESIDENT

OUR THANKS GO out to the over 60 members who attended the General Meeting on February 10, 2004 at KEC. Thanks as well to the CCA Department for letting us use their classroom. It is a smaller space than the auditorium, which made the meeting feel much friendlier.

THANKS TOO TO the members for passing the Constitutional changes that will allow us to do your business without waiting for a quorum of fifty each meeting. Hopefully the great attendance and interest will continue and we will not have trouble meeting the lower target of 30.

THERE IS A lot of interest around our bargaining preparation. Vinit and our Negotiating Committee have been meeting regularly to prepare. We had an overwhelming number of responses to the questionnaire, thanks for taking the time to fill them out.

THIS MONTH WE have dealt with three separate lawyers on three different issues, two preparing for upcoming arbitrations, and the other on our governance suit against the College.

WE ATTENDED A very successful new Employee Orientation and had an opportunity to meet with some of our new members. If you are new to the College and haven't had a chance to meet us, give us a call and drop in to the office for a chat.

THE DRAFT COLLEGE budget is out with the two options for tuition fees

- 0% and 2% - and a new fee called the College Initiative fee that is actually a 3% increase. Either tuition fee option leaves the College with more surplus funds than they have ever had. We feel that this money should be put back into education – reaching the training targets set by the government.

GREAT TO SEE some more VDIs being offered. Hopefully they will allow some folks to leave and create greater employment certainty for our group of “yo-yo” instructors.

IT IS FAR too early to quantify, but there might be a small ray of sunshine breaking into our dreary three-year winter of lousy relations with the College. Stay tuned, it could just be my desire for spring to get here. We, who suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder, long for sunshine and springtime.

SPEAKING OF DISORDERS, we now have the definitive book on adjudicating disability claims, the Presley Reed Medical Disability Advisor. It lists every possible disability from an abscessed tooth to explosive personality disorder. Insurers use this guide to adjudicate claims, set the length of the disability coverage and weigh the medical evidence. If you'd like to see it or have us send you a copy of your favourite disorder or condition, call the office. It has helped us understand how Sun Life looks at a claim and what medical evidence a specialist must provide.

Lizz for the Executive

Looking forward to seeing you at our special meeting to ratify bargaining demands on March 11th, Croatian Cultural Centre, 3 pm

In the meantime, if we can be of any assistance to you, give us a call at the office.

WHAT'S IT LIKE TO BE A YO-YO?

In the January Newsletter we commented that even after term instructors were cut and after dozens of regular instructors lost their jobs in 2001 and 2002, the College was so fixated on making sure they kept costs to an absolute minimum that they kept a large group of regular instructors on notice of layoff and recall status for most of the two years since then. That has provided management with maximum flexibility; people on recall become regular in name only--they can be moved on and off the payroll very easily. The VCCFA has argued and grieved that this action is unreasonable. The College has racked up over \$3 million in surplus in 03-04 and wants to do the same in 04-05: stop keeping people on notice and recall unnecessarily! There's almost always been enough classes for them to work to their normal time-status. On the few occasions when there hasn't been they could have been assigned to other duties or to curriculum development or CD replacement. More ERIs and VDIs could have solidified their status. We mentioned that these people have been treated as "yo-yos"-- kept on a string but tossed in and out at will. The College has gained financial flexibility at enormous cost to these people. We asked a couple of them to submit first person accounts of what it has been like.....

PURGATORY: WORKING ON LAYOFF NOTICE OR RECALL AT VCC

HI THERE, MY name is Mud and I'm a yo-yo. I've been a yo-yo for over a year now. At the moment, I'm in the down position—it's not a great place to be. You get stepped on, passed over, overlooked, overworked, and undervalued. However, even when you're in the up position, nothing changes much as you never know how long you'll be there for. At the beginning of last year, I received my first layoff notice. When the not-much-anticipated date approached, the notice was extended. Again, when that time was almost upon me, the dreaded date was re-extended. I then went through four months of indecision until I was told the layoff date would be final in December. The next month, January of this year, it was rescinded. At the same time, I received an advance notice of layoff again. In February, I was given a new 3-month layoff no-

get the picture? Wanna be in it? I doubt it! It wreaks havoc upon your emotional wellness. Its effects are far reaching. Your family, friends and co-workers suffer with you and because of you. When friends and family call, the first question is "Are you still working?" In the years that I've been working at VCC, I've learned a lot and have become a skilled and knowledgeable instructor. I don't understand why my employers would not place more value on their investment in me. Some people have said, "Why don't you just take the severance and get another job?" I don't want another job. I have a lot to offer in my present job and I would like to continue here where I am respected and valued by both my colleagues and students.

Mud at KEC

ON THE YO-YO PRINCIPLE

I can't remember when I received my first layoff notice—a year or two ago, more or less. That notice was rescinded. Then I received another layoff notice. Then I was reduced. Then rescinded. Laid off again. Or something like that. I stopped paying attention soon enough, because regardless of the papers I received, I kept on working, often at more than my part-time regular status. I figured—or at least hoped—that one way or another, I'd keep on working.

In late November, 2003, I was told by my Dean that my latest layoff notice would go into effect on January 2nd, a Friday. At this point, the department head where I usually work was virtually certain there *would* be work for me (not to mention for a handful of others also due to be laid off on January 2nd). Nevertheless, the Dean said that because there was not a 100% certainty of work in January, the layoff notice had to go into effect. It was explained to me that because registration in some departments took place a few days after my layoff date, the College actually wouldn't know until sometime between Monday, January 5th, and Wednesday, January 7th.

cont'd on page 4

WHAT'S IT LIKE TO BE A YO-YO?

I also learned that if I was laid-off, I was to be paid out for the two full months of vacation I had earned (on the recommendation of the college, I had taken no holidays in that fiscal year). That meant I would lose two months of medical benefits I felt I had earned. It also meant that if there were no work, my EI claim would be delayed because of the pay-out. It also meant that I would pay a whack of income tax.

Most important from the College's point of view, it also meant that, if the department head was right, if there were work, the College would then be able to recall me. As a laid-off instructor on recall, I could then be laid-off again with impunity, since instructors on recall do not get advance notification of lay-off. As a laid-off instructor on recall, I would accrue no vacation-with-benefits.

I suggested that they could have waited the few days to see what registration was actually like but no; apparently, devising simple ways to keep loyal long-term instructors regularized had never occurred to this administration. I assume they were too busy figuring out ways to minimize their responsibilities to these instructors. The administrator answered by re-iterating the College's position: A layoff date was a layoff date. Can't do much about it. Sure, I'd been here 15 years. Sure, I had been loyal to VCC in that time. Sure, I loved my job. Sure, I had qualifications up the ying-yang.

Yeah, sure.

With the union's help, I lodged a grievance. Within a week or two, my layoff notice was rescinded, along with those of a number of other instructors right below me on the seniority list. Come January 5th, there was work for all of us, plus various other already-laid-off instructors and even a couple of term instructors. I got the vacation with benefits I had earned.

Fine. Am I happy? Not really. I love teaching at VCC—I think of myself as a career college teacher—but during the month of December, 2003, I seriously asked myself if I wanted to work under an administration so adept at convincing its employees that it doesn't respect, like or want them. The whole thing has left a bad taste in my mouth. Do the policy makers at our College think that loyal long-term instructors devoted to their profession are really no more than pawns to be pushed around on some shadowy, distorted chessboard of their own design? Or perhaps yo-yo's to be laid-off and recalled as it suits their bottom-line interests?

Apparently, yes.

Gordon Cavenaile



SPECIAL MEETING AND UPDATES

Special Meeting to Ratify Bargaining Demands

The committee is finalizing the VCCFA demand package including items that the joint CEIA-BCGEU bargaining conference agreed may be bargaining at a common table and our own local table. We have also received the proposed Agreement of Association for common bargaining. Members will be asked to vote on ratifying the demands and the Agreement at a Special General Meeting.

RATIFICATION MEETING

THURSDAY,
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3 PM

CROATIAN CULTURAL CENTRE

Early Retirement Incentives: Update

Thanks to the dozen or so people who responded to our call to put in letters requesting an ERI. The college has written them back effectively saying that they don't have to offer them so they will not. You can read in the Stewards' update about our new grievance on behalf of those eligible.

Program Review: Update

At the February Education Council meeting it was good to hear VP Joan McArthur-Blair say that she was withdrawing the proposed policy so that a better conception of the philosophy and rationale behind any review and renewal policy could be formulated.

We applaud that decision. It is a good first step and we hope to be involved and contribute to the process.

Multicultural Education Presentations at U.B.C. (free) (7 pm)

“Race” and the Use, Misuse and Abuse of Multicultural Policy and Practice in Canada

Wednesday, March 3, 7 pm
Buchanan A204, 1866 Main Mall, UBC

Dr. Esmeralda Thornhill, Dalhousie

Native Bodies, Post-colonial Dialogues; The Impact of Colonialism, Valuing Indigeneity

Wednesday, March 10, 7 pm
Sty-Wet-Tan (The Great Hall)
First Nations' Longhouse
1985 West Mall, UBC

Drs. Brian Thorpe and Peter Newbery

International Perspectives on Achieving Educational Equity in the Midst of Competing Ethnic, Cultural, and Linguistic Interests

Wednesday, March 24, 7 pm
Sty-Wet-Tan (The Great Hall)
First Nations' Longhouse
1985 West Mall, UBC

Yvonne Brown (UBC)
Euphrates Gobina (Cameroons)
Zuochen Zhang (China)
Belidson Dias (Brazil)

Actions and Work of the Executive

The Executive has met six times this year.

OUR NEWSLETTERS AND other reports comment on the main provincial and local issues we have been dealing with such as grievances, bargaining preparation, legal action, on-going departmental and management-labour issues, program review, etc. What follows is a bit of a review of other items we've dealt with so far this year..

Internal

LED BY TREASURER Perry Taylor the Executive have worked with our lawyer to review the **liability insurance** we have and what changes may be necessary to our by-laws.

PLANNING IS UNDERWAY for our **annual appreciation dinner**, our way of thanking members who have been elected to union positions or have volunteered in various capacities over the past year

WE HAVE CHANGED the amount of the **retirement allowance** from \$10 to \$15 per year of service for those retiring or those who have been laid off and taken their severance.

WE HAVE INVITED the leadership of the new **CUPE local 4627** to a get-to-know-you event.

WE SUPPORTED THE **Diversity Week** events through preparing wall tiles and the beautiful bouquets of flowers at the Art Show, which we requested be raffled off to student participants.

SECRETARY COLLEEN VAN Winkel has become our **Privacy Officer** as required by the new privacy legislation that goes under the acronym PIPA.

THE EXECUTIVE HEARD from two instructors who were representing the views of their department in requesting an extension in service for their Department Head. Because of the unique situation this Department is in, the Executive agreed to propose a one year extension to the College, who have since agreed.

We appointed

--**PERRY TAYLOR** as non-voting rep to the committee selecting a new Human Rights Officer

--**BARBARA KNOX** to the Learning Centre Service Review

--**BRENDA APPLETON** to attend the ACCC symposium on Program Renewal

External

WE ARE TRYING to connect with a lecture series that occurs through the Vancouver Library called **Necessary Voices**.. We hope to be able to sponsor a lecture connected to labour or education issues.

THE EXECUTIVE SENT members to the **Robbie Burns Dinner** put on by the Vancouver and District Labour Council, the proceeds of which go directly to support the children of Queen Alexandra School at Broadway and Clark.

THE EXECUTIVE IS sending two of its members to the Annual Celebration and Fundraising Auction for the **Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives**. We were among their earliest institutional members in BC.

WE HAVE RENEWED our endorsement of **StopWar.ca** a wide ranging coalition that has been working for about a year and a half to organize against the war in Iraq and for peace and justice in the Middle East. Their work includes education, mass mobilization and lobbying. Their next mass event is a Peace March and Rally on March 20th that features Noam Chomsky as a speaker.

WE ARE LINING up members who can be resource people for a study by Shauna Butterwick, UBC Assistant Professor of Adult Education. She is working with CIEA to look at the effects of the cuts to programs and policies that supported low income students, a specific example was the **Institution-Based Training** program.

WITH THE HELP of former executive member Thomas Macleod we are looking at ways we can support the need for continued education and community involvement to support those dealing with **AIDS and HIV infections**. This follows from a resolution we presented to the last CIEA AGM.

Actions and Work of the Executive/General Meeting

WE HAVE ENDORSED a call from the BC Health Coalition for support in their campaign to have their Board, the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, hold more **open meetings** with a minimum of their business being done in-camera.. We can certainly empathize with what it is like dealing with Boards that do not like to deal with their public.

LIZZ ATTENDED A support rally for workers of Modern Auto Plating, members of United Steelworkers of America 2952 who have been on strike for two years now.

LIZZ, INGRID AND FRANK marched with students and tried to keep our banner straight in the **CFS Day of Action** against high tuition fees, great to run into Sonja Alton--retired former Chief Steward--who was also there supporting students.

IN RESPONSE TO a request forwarded by a member we have agreed to contribute \$100 to the **Remembering Rwanda** 10th Anniversary Memorial Project, 1994-2004. This is a Canadian project that seeks to commemorate the genocide of 94 and to continue the work of education and documentation. There will be a lecture on Thursday, April 8th entitled "Ibutsa" (Remind) given by Ms Ester Mujawayo co-founder of a Rwandan widows' association. The lecture will be hosted by the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy, former Canadian Foreign Minister and new President of the University of Winnipeg.

General Meeting

MANY THANKS TO the **College and Career Access Department** who lent their large room to us for our February 10th meeting. Thanks also to the 'runners' who rounded up a few wayward members to help us exceed our quorum. We then passed the **quorum reduction** motion which should make it easier for us to conduct formal business.

THE NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE reported on the just completed provincial bargaining conference and the wonderful response to their survey. You will be hearing from them shortly on the bargaining demand ratification process and the special meeting in early March where there will be a vote.

A NOTICE OF motion was introduced for subsequent discussion and voting. It would increase the **picket pay maximum** from \$200 per week, set in 1990, to \$400 per week.

AMONGST MANY OTHER items in her President's Report, Lizz reported on the meeting she and Ingrid along with those responsible in Human Resources and a representative of our benefit consultants, Western Benefits, had had with SunLife about difficulties some of our members had **accessing short term disability benefits**. She felt it was a useful, clarifying meeting which should lead to better processes and information. There will be at least two more meetings.

FRANK'S VP REPORT included a request for **new faculty** to start thinking about forming a group that could engage themselves in union activities and advocate for their issues. He also joined Lizz in discussing our take on the College's Strategic Planning process with the Calgary consultant the College had hired.

He reported that the Joint Steering was completing its work on new evaluation and appraisal of IRAs. Many thanks to Ruth Behnke **are due** who's also on the JSC.



Sarcasm: The gulf between the author of sarcastic wit and the person who doesn't get it.

Reintarnation: Coming back to life as a hillbilly.

Giraffiti: Vandalism spray-painted very, very high.

2003 Washington Post's
Style Invitational

PENSION NOTES

BY NOW YOU should have received your Member's Benefit Statement from the College Pension Plan. Make sure that the amounts for pensionable service earned between September 1, 2002 and August 31 2003 and the total pensionable service are correct and include any service purchased or transferred.

ON JAN. 30-31 I attended a meeting of **CIEA's Pension Advisory Committee**. I'd like to pass on some of the things that I learned there. We received the 2003 performance report for the College Pension Fund. The market valuation of the Fund's basic account, which provides for our basic, defined pension benefits, is at about the same level as it was in 2000. This reflects the downturn in market returns in 2001-2002 and the modest recovery in 2003. An actuarial evaluation will be conducted this April, and we should learn the results by the summer. As I mentioned in my last report, the last actuarial evaluation conducted in 2000 determined that contribution rates for both employees and employers needed to be raised by 1.5%; however, this increase was delayed because surplus funds in the plan were used to give us a contribution increase "holiday". **It is possible that the holiday will end following this spring's evaluation**, which would mean a larger Pension Plan deduction from our pay cheques. We'll keep you posted.

AS A RESULT of increased health benefit costs, retirees in our plan will now be paying the full premium for the basic MSP. (Until now the Plan paid up to 50% of the premium.) On a brighter note, the Plan has amended its rules to allow for dual coverage for the dental and extended health plans.

THE PENSION PLAN has greatly simplified the retirement planning and pension application process. There is much less paperwork, and the information in the new retirement kit is easier to understand. This should be especially helpful to members in figuring out their retirement options (single life, joint life etc.). Members who are planning to retire should contact the College Pension Plan several months before their expected retirement date.

TWO SIGNIFICANT RECOMMENDATIONS were made at the meeting. The first was that CIEA, as a Pension Plan partner should develop and advocate social/ethical guidelines for the investment of pension funds. The other was that lump sum payments made to members in lieu of salary should be treated as pensionable salary (this may assist people retiring or being terminated mid-year).

FINALLY, THE VCCFA has asked John Wilson, the Chair of the Pension Advisory Committee, to give our members a workshop on Pension Plan-related issues.

The Pension Workshop will be held on Friday, April 23 from 9:00 am to noon in Room 112 at City Centre. Eugenie Wong, from VCC's Human Resources Department, has kindly agreed to help us host this workshop. **If you're interested in attending, please contact Eugenie at 871-7136 or at ewong@vcc.ca.**

FOR YOUR INFORMATION, the College Pension Plan is also hosting a number of Retirement Planning Seminars around the Lower Mainland and other parts of the province from March to October. These will cover similar ground to the workshop planned for VCC. A schedule of the seminars is available from Eugenie Wong. We have also asked the College to consider hosting another workshop on dealing with lifestyle changes that accompany retirement. Details will follow.

Vinit Khosla
VCCFA Representative to the Pension Advisory Committee
871-7255/ vkhosla@shaw.ca

College's Third Quarter Report & Budget Forums

VCC continues to show increasing Surplus/Excess/Profit

"Results for the nine-month period (April-December, 2003) reflect a net surplus from the operating accounts of \$4.6 million compared with the budgeted surplus of \$2.3 million, a variance of \$2.3 million."

--Trish Pekeles, Chief Financial Officer and Bursar and Peter Legg, Director, Financial Services.

That's how the report starts. The cumulative assets where the positive asset balance from previous years is included is listed as \$12.1 million. Because the level of student fees is so high, some programs are not filling as predicted and the 9-month total of tuition is actually \$1.77 million less than budget.. The report adds, "Other variances such as higher-than-budgeted investment income, a one time parking revenue adjustment and lower-than-budgeted usage of the sick replacement and maternity leave accounts, more than offset the decreased tuition revenue we experienced earlier in the year."

These results reinforce points that we have been making.

--The higher tuition is both driving away students and paradoxically producing a surplus.

--The surplus is being saved for mostly capital initiatives that will not be completed till long after current students leave the college; there is in effect a hidden capital tax on tuition.

--The college is not using surplus to effectively invest in its people.

Budget Forums: Report and Questions

VCC President Dale Dorn held 2004-05 budget forums at both main campuses on Wednesday, February 18th. The highlights of his verbal presentation (no paper, no projections) were that

- 1) The proposed budget is balanced.
- 2) Curriculum development funds will go up 80% to \$224,000
- 3) We are planning on serving more students as expressed in the terms the Ministry uses, production of student FTEs, from 7180 in 03-04, to 7650 in 04-05. Those numbers represent 91 and 97 % of the Ministry's target of 7900.

4) Dean Barbara Ash will become the Dean of Student Services with new responsibilities to improve our recruitment and retention of students; of which aboriginal and ESL students will merit special attention.

5) As the government has changed funding from line by line to block funding, VCC will use about \$1 million of our grant for capital equipment.

6) The Board will choose from two options on tuition fees, no increase or a 2% increase. In addition there will be fees for "returning" students in high school level courses and an "initiative" fee of \$2 per credit or equivalent. More money (\$250,000) will go to financial aid

VCCFA Executive who were there ...

1) challenged the use of the word "balanced" when the budget documents show a \$2.5 million surplus even after a million is taken out for "initiatives."

2) questioned how clear and transparent access to the enhanced CD fund will be....in response to this question the president said that it would be allocated after a "needs analysis" not necessarily by an equitable divisional formula.

3) questioned why student fees should go up at all, especially since the 2% proposal would bring in less than \$200,000 this year, the free advertising we would get by being different would more than make up for that loss.....in response the president said they were considering that but it also had to be balanced against the possibly negative perception about the quality of VCC offerings if we were the only one not raising fees,

There were also questions on the proposed addition to KEC, on the state of the Apprenticeship and Trades Training Authority (respectful of the colleges' role but no clear direction yet), on the possibility of enhancing or increasing ESL offerings (need to bring some 'science' to that and the perception that higher fees have kept students away), and on replacing lost services such as the First Nations' Coordinator and IEPA (the new Dean of Student Services will be examining all questions of recruitment and retention).

ADMINISTRATORS' INCREASES STILL OUTPACE FACULTY

Administrative Pay Increases compared to Faculty Top Step: Analysis

As reported at the General Meeting, it's our custom to keep track of administrative pay amounts. For comparison purposes we use those administrators who are at or above our top step rate. In spite of all the downsizing at VCC, these administrators have continued to number about 32 since 2001, which is up from 23 in 1997, a 40% increase.

Notes:

- ⇒ Percentage increases are over December 1997 amounts
- ⇒ Number in Parentheses refers to the number of the administrative pay grade
- ⇒ Only Administrators with salaries comparable to and above top-step faculty are included

	Dec '97	Apr '00	Apr '01*	Apr '02	Oct '02	Apr '03	Apr '04
Pres	117,200	120,000	159,400	159,400	159,400		165,000
					+36%		+40.8%
V-Pres	97,941 (8)	99,441 (8)	101,430 (9)	116,464 (9)	121,955 (9)		
					+24.5%		
Deans	87,229 (6)	88,947 (6)	82,221 (7)	99,513 (7)	104,205 (7)		
					+19.4%		
Directors	79,019 (5)	80,599 (5)	82,221 (7)	99,513 (7)	104,205 (7)		
					+31.8%		
Others	605,47 (4)	61,758 (4)	62,993 (5)	69,073 (5)	72,330 (5)		
					+19.5%		
Faculty	61,900	65,200	66,504	71,000	71,000	73,257	
					+14.7%	+18.3%	

*In April 01, the administration was restructured. Most of the former Deans became VPs and the VP position moved to a newly-created Pay Grade 9. A new category, Pay Grade 7, was created to include both Directors and newly-appointed Deans. Pay grade 4 became 5. One former manager's job has been given a larger portfolio and reclassified as a Director, which has therefore resulted in a 72% increase in potential pay from \$60.5 K to \$104.2K.

REMINDERS, NEWS & VIEWS

Selection of Administrators: Commentary

VCC Policy B.2.2 states that its purpose is to "ensure the selection of the best possible candidates for administrative positions through a consistent and equitable process."

It sets out procedures for postings, with external postings to be the norm and procedures for search and recommendation committees that for President, Vice-President, Deans and Directors call for balance in that appropriate employee group and student participation are guaranteed. The policy states that the "College will follow these procedures." It is only in "extraordinary circumstances" that the President may assign administrators to other positions.

In our view the extraordinary has become the ordinary at VCC. There has been over a decade of presidential assignment for most VPs and Deans. We hope that pattern will be broken.

Vancouver and District Labour Council

February's meeting of over 100 people featured passionate and principled debate about the terrible effects the concessionary contracts the IWA has signed with Health Care Providers is doing to those who remain in the sector and how they've denied the HEU the chance to continue to represent its laid off workers. A motion passed that will ask the Canadian Labour Congress to suspend the IWA if a solution is not found quickly. Another motion called upon the CLC and the union for its staff to attempt to iron out their differences as soon as possible as the dispute is hurting the labour movement across the country. There were several informative updates from local unions and the highlight for our local, the reelection of Lizz Lindsay to the VDLC executive. Congratulations.

Reminders:

- ⇒ **PD Funds in by the end of February**
- ⇒ **Education Leave Requests in by the end of February**
- ⇒ **VCCFA Scholarship for family members in by the end of March**
- ⇒ **We are collecting non-VCC email addresses: send yours to vccfa@telus.net**

Coffee Sale:

- ⇒ **We are re-selling Café Etico, certified organic, fairly-traded, shade grown, bird-friendly coffee (\$10/400g)**
- ⇒ **Next beer and video night: March 10th Downtown Office — 4:00—5:30 pm**

Dinner in Celebration of International Women's Day

The Vancouver & District Labour Council is pleased to host this dinner to be held **Monday, March 8, 2004, 6 pm, Fraserview Hall (8240 Fraser Street at Marine Drive, Vancouver).**

Special introductions by:

Libby Davies, MP Vancouver East
Ellen Woodsworth, Vancouver City Councillor
Patti Ducharme, Regional Director, PSAC

Entertainment:

Laff Riot Girls, Solidarity Notes Sisters

This year's theme is Women Fighting Back!! Please call the office if you're interested in attending.

PUBLICITY AND ACTION WORK: UPDATE

While not as noisy as this time last year, advocacy work continues on a number of fronts.

~Lizz has sent letters to all local Liberal MLAs updating them on the situation at VCC and lamenting that they probably do not get much respect from the government either.

~We have sent out a couple of news releases on the huge tuition fees increases and the hidden capital taxes that are now within them. The Vancouver Courier ran that story and the West Ender mentioned it.

~ We facilitated some contacts for a Ottawa Citizen reporter who's doing a series slated to appear in the Toronto Star this fall

~ We intervened to get Nina Kozakiewicz interviewed as a contributor to a week long series CBC radio was doing on obstacles to immigrants

~ Lizz has sent letters to the editor on the lack of regulation for BC private schools and on the tuition crisis. The Sun and the Province picked them up.

~ Lizz spoke at the VCC students' rally before joining the march against high tuition fees.



Intaxication: Euphoria at getting a tax refund, which lasts until you realize it was your money to start with.

Bozone (n.): The substance surrounding stupid people that stops bright ideas from penetrating. The bozone layer, unfortunately, shows little sign of breaking down in the near future.

Inoculatte: To take coffee intravenously when you are running late.

Hipatitis: Terminal coolness.

Osterpornosis: A degenerate disease. (This one got extra credit).

Karmageddon: It's like, when everybody is sending off all these really bad vibes right? And then, like the Earth explodes and it's, like, a serious bummer.

Decafalon (n.): The grueling event of getting through the day consuming only things that are good for you.

Glibido: All talk and no action.

Dopeler Effect: The tendency of stupid ideas to seem smarter when they come at you rapidly.

2003 Washington Post's Style Invitational

COMMENTARIES: Educational Leadership?

New Education Dean at SFU Speaks Out: Commentary

It was interesting to read of the appointment of Paul Shaker as the new Dean of Education at SFU in the February 11th Vancouver Sun. Reporter Janet Steffenhagen summarized more than a decade of intense change and political action on education but as she put it "despite a burning need in the province for informed, objective debate," few academics or academic leaders have offered their views."

Shaker's appointment was put in the light of a "new effort by the education faculty and the university to reconnect with the community." One of SFU's education professors said, "we now have a dean who is a public intellectual, who's prepared to go into public spaces to argue for what he believes are the right things in public education." Mr Shaker, an American, is quoted extensively, some samples:

"If you are interested in bald competition and the naked acquisition of wealth, no doubt the US is a better place to be...but if you are interested in a more balanced approach to life and living in a society where there is more social justice and better safety nets for everyone, Canada is better."

"Canada has made better choices..."

"(in the US) gradually those who believe the free market is the answer to everything have sought to everything have sought to introduce that dynamic to the public schools and I object to that."

"...good people must speak up and join in efforts for progressive reform. If they do not, in the vacuum that ensues, persons with less sound motivation may dominate in culture and politics."

Mr Shaker works primarily in the K-12 sector. After thirty years, one wonders why we have not had anyone like him speaking on behalf of our sector, the non-University part of the post secondary system. From all those Deans, Vice-Presidents and Presidents we have had in the unique and exciting college sector of B.C. has there been anyone who will speak truth to power, who will speak for the public good of what we do and will speak it wherever and whenever they can?

We seemed to have a group of publicly silent institutional managers rather than a group of publicly engaged educational leaders.

Maybe it's unfair to expect so much. After all, they are more like well-paid middle managers than educational leaders. It really is too bad how the system has devolved over the past thirty years.

Tuition Fees

The College's Website is still soliciting feedback on tuition fee proposals. You'll find the links on the homepage--throw your two-bits worth in.



VOLUNTARY DEPARTURE INCENTIVES (VDIs)

To be offered

The union and the College have agreed again to using Voluntary Departure Incentives as a way of mitigating the continuing lay-off crisis at VCC.

Over the past few months the union has consistently raised this issue and requested that the College offer a second program of VDIs. So, we were pleased that on February 16th, the College & Union signed a letter of understanding that commits the College to a program of VDIs in areas impacted with lay offs.

VDIs derive from the concept of "voluntary severance" which is listed in the Common Agreement (Art 6.4.2) as a strategy that must be considered in order to minimize lay-offs. It offers an incentive to a more senior instructor who is not on layoff notice or recall to in effect retire with the result that someone who has been laid-off can be recalled or someone's notice can be rescinded.

(NB: A VDI is not the same as an Early Retirement Incentive. ERIs can go up to a full annual salary and are available to any eligible instructor in the college with the main eligibility criteria being age and seniority. See stewards' report.)

In VCC's plan, the Voluntary Departure Incentive is 95% of the leaving person's severance to a maximum of \$40 000. In the spring of 2003 the College offered a similar incentive program which about 15 instructors took advantage of.

The incentive this time is much the same but there are tight time lines. Only members who are in areas where there are instructors on recall or on notice--advance notice or actual notice-- are eligible over 15 areas

The deadline for applications is March 15, 2004. Shortly thereafter, the College will offer the VDIs, which must be accepted and take effect by August 1st this year. One may apply by sending a short note addressed to Rob Henderson, Director of the Human Resources Department.

--Ingrid Kolsteren

If you are interested, have questions, or are not sure if you are eligible, please call the union office for more information. 688-6210; or come to the

Steward Information Drop-In

Thursday, February 26 (12 to 1:30)

KEC union office

Tuesday, March 2, (12 to 1:30)

at the downtown office

You can also call the Human Resources Department and speak to

Rob Henderson or Gail Schmalz.

BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING THE COMPUTERS

Some time this month security camera will be installed in the Computer lab at CC, rooms 622 & 630, and the labs will be locked when not in use. The College is taking these steps as a deterrent because "a number of computers have been broken into and parts stolen in the computer lab."

The College has assured us that "the camera will be for the sole purpose of identifying the thief, and will not be used to monitor people for any reason". If you have questions or concerns, please give us a call.

--IK

DID YOU KNOW?

Applications for PD Funds & Education Leave

must be in by the end of February

STEWARD NEWS

It has been a busy year so far. Some of the activities we've been involved in are

- ◆ New member orientation
- ◆ Advocating and providing information to members on sick leave
- ◆ Answering work-related questions
- ◆ Trying to facilitate communication between members
- ◆ Trying to resolve issues and grievances

Continuing Layoff Issues

Much steward time and many of our issues continue to arise from the lay offs and cuts. It is our position that the College laid off many more people than was needed. Many instructors are working on recall. And, although we are pleased that they are working, in fact many of them have been working virtually nonstop and should never have been laid off in the first place. The distress & dislocation caused by this pattern of on going lay offs, recalls, lays offs, recall, and then again notice of lay off is unconscionable. It is very difficult for instructors & departments. We want the College to stop laying people off 'just in case' and to demonstrate support and confidence in our programs. It certainly can afford to do so.

Grievances

We have had to file our 4th grievance of the year recently.

--The first was against the College's attempt to place a department head on probation for their second term of appointment. It was resolved with the department head is not on probation.

--Most recently we have filed a grievance on behalf of a recall instructor who was not able to take temporary recall work and go on maternity leave. We believe that the collective agreement and Employment Standards Act entitle her to access to her maternity leave while she is on temporary recall.

--Another grievance also involves a recall instructor. In this case the instructor is sick and again we

believe the instructor should be able to access sick leave while on temporary recall; the college has a different interpretation.

--Our fourth grievance this year is around the Early Retirement Incentive. There is a surplus and there are many reasons why offering ERIs is a good thing for both the college and union members. The College is taking the position that they are not obligated to offer any Early Retirement Incentives, so they will not.. We disagree and have filed a grievance on this. (See the January newsletter--it's on our website--for more information on ERI)

E-mail—Think Twice

Another concern we are working on is the use of college email. One of our members has been called in to meet around 'inappropriate' use of college email. Please, before you push the send button, check what you have written. If you need to communicate something that could be misinterpreted, or has an emotional tone, we advice you to speak directly to the person.

Arbitrations and Near-Arbitrations

As well as these new grievances we continue to work on our long-standing ones.

--This March we will finally have our days at arbitration for our International Education Department PD grievance. We look forward to it being resolved, as our members have had to take their PD under protest for over a year. We hope soon they will be able to initiate their own PD activities

--We still have 6 other outstanding grievances that may end up in arbitrations.

Area and Hiring Criteria

We are meeting with the college around areas and hiring criteria and making clear our process around issues to do with areas. Our position is that there be no changes in hiring criteria that could impact on those facing layoffs.

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The College has accepted this. Unfortunately, layoffs continue. This week another advance notice was issued as a result of a senior instructor returning from leave. We will be meeting with the department to see if there is any way to mitigate that lay off.

CIEA Provincial Meetings

In my role as Chief steward, I attended the CIEA committee of Chief Stewards and along with Lizz & Vinit attended the recent Bargaining Conference. These meetings are very interesting and give us a perspective on labour relations in our colleges and the issues.

Please Call

Of course as always there are many issues that stewards work out informally, including question around scheduling, leaves, pd, elections etc.

If you have questions, call a steward.



**Steward Training Session
October 2003**

Upcoming Steward Drop Ins

Bring your questions and concerns

**Thursday, February 26 (12 to 1:30)
KEC Union Office**

**Tuesday, March 2 (12 to 1:30)
downtown Union Office**

Dopeler effect: The tendency of stupid ideas to seem smarter when they come at you rapidly.

Arachnoleptic fit (n.): The frantic dance performed just after you've accidentally walked through a spider web.

Beelzebug (n.): Satan in the form of a mosquito that gets into your bedroom at three in the morning and cannot be cast out.

Caterpallor (n.): The colour you turn after finding half a grub in the fruit you're eating.

2003 Washington Post's Style Invitational

CONFERENCES

The Education We Need for the Future We Want

Thanks to Lyn Lennig and Nina Kozakiewicz who presented on adult immigration and ESL issues. The conference is led by the BCTF and includes CIEA and other education sector unions. Thanks also to Ken Morrison of Music for suggesting four student performers who wowed conference goers at the opening reception.

CIEA's Spring Conference

This conference included presentations on toxins in the workplace, student poverty, colleague mentoring and copyright with a keynote talk on Work Life Balance from Barb Byers, Vice President of the CLC. It was preceded by standing committee meetings. Reports will follow. Here's one from Brenda Appleton.

CIEA's Standing Committee on PD

The PD Committee, with representatives from every CIEA local, met on the evening of Friday, February 20th, 2004. The committee meets once in the fall and once in the spring. At many locals a faculty release position coordinates many PD activities, we will be hearing from them at our fall meeting.

We updated our chart of what each local has in terms of PD related rights. VCC maintains its last-place status among the public post secondary colleges. We have the poorest PD funds available to us (only the private schools come close...they allow \$250.00). In addition, it is also clear that even with the \$50,000 Adjudicated PD Funds now available, we still have much poorer contract language than others. We also fare poorly in the areas of educational leave and sabbatical, as well as faculty control of P.D. activities. Most colleges offer much better access to educational leave, including more leaves and higher pay for those on leave. Many colleges also have provision for partially or fully paid sabbaticals....a far cry from VCC's renewal leaves, which have no salary, and only have a \$1200 stipend to cover off the cost of benefits.

Finally, many colleges have P.D. committees where all requests for P.D. activities are vetted. In some colleges, these committees are only faculty, while

in others, the committee has both administrative and faculty representation. VCC seems to be the only college where P.D. activities are approved by administration, with no peer input.

Conference Workshop on Copyright and Intellectual Property

On Saturday, I attended this workshop presented by Paul Jones of CAUT. Paul is a lawyer, specializing in Intellectual Property.

In the workshop, he defined Intellectual Property and spoke about the public policy direction of the commodification of knowledge. This has definitely been the agenda of most post secondary institutions.

Previously, there was little concern about copyright in universities and colleges. Now it has become a much larger issue, because institutions have realized that they have the ability to bring in revenue dollars. Many are demanding that faculty sign agreements waiving copyright, including moral rights, or licensing to the institution. Paul stressed that it is important to have language in our collective agreements about copyright, as well as workload, right of first refusal, etc. protecting faculty and job security as institutions move more and more into providing courses online.

Paul also stressed the failure of Canadian copyright law and the differences between Canadian and American law. Copyright law was intended to balance the rights of the creator, the holder of copyright (often not the creator), and the user. Canadian law has shifted considerably to protecting the rights of the copyright holder, at the expense of the creator and user. American law, using a broader interpretation for Fair Use, as opposed to the more limited Canadian Fair Dealing, provides many more exemptions for educational institutions to use copyrighted materials.

~Brenda Appleton

We're on the web
www.vccfa.ca

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**To all VCCFA members:
Please print any changes that may apply to you
and forward through intercampus mail to the VCCFA office
Attention: Audrey**

Notice of Address Change

Last Name: _____
First Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ Province: _____
Postal Code: _____
Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____
Effective Date: _____
Division: _____
Department/Area: _____
Status: _____