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THE 2005/2006 EXECUTIVE

Lizz Lindsay
PRESIDENT (06)

Frank Cosco
VICE-PRESIDENT (06)

Perry Taylor
TREASURER (05)

Colleen van Winkel
SECRETARY (05)

Ingrid Kolsteren
CHIEF STEWARD (06)

Vinit Khosla
NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE CHAIR

Brenda Appleton (06)

George Rudolph (05)

Lorna Downie (06)

Orest Semeniuk (06)

Settimio Sicoli (05)

Virginia Monk (05)

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



LIZZ LINDSAY
VCCFA PRESIDENT

Good Bargaining News at Last

We have a collective agreement. Congratulations to Vinit, Ingrid, Mark, Rose Marie, Maggi and Karen and thanks to each of you for your hard work. Thanks too to Frank who was with the committee when I was unable to be there. This round of bargaining has taken so long we had to re-appoint our negotiating committee and work with two staff reps. Thank you Linda Sperling and Weldon Cowan for your support and advice.

We are pleased both with the outcome and, especially with the process over the last couple of months.

It is always better to negotiate than to leave the outcome of any issue in the hands of an arbitrator. Hopefully, this new problem solving approach will carry forward into future labour relations issues.

The BCTF Strike

Thanks to many members who attended our special meeting around the BCTF strike. It is good to see the teachers back at work after being able to get the government to a table to discuss their concerns. Frank has more on the strike and some comments from members and the executive in this issue.

Small Group Meetings

We have hosted meetings with the new and incumbent Education Council representatives, a lunch for our IRA's and a reception for our non-regular faculty in the last few weeks. We've had coffee with members to discuss various issues and meetings on both campuses to discuss our new agreement. We are always ready to meet with members individually or in groups. If you have an issue or concern you wish to discuss or are unable to come to meetings, just give us a call and we'll be happy to meet with you on either campus.

Giving through the United Way

Watch for your United Way envelope in your mailbox this week. While the United Way campaign has been scaled back this year as the College is focused on the Family Campaign, the needs of the community haven't been scaled back so I'll urge you to give generously as you have in the past.

One thing you may want to consider is to look at your giving last year. All your gifts to various charities including international disaster relief such as is sorely needed in Guatemala and Pakistan right now can be directed through the United Way. On one form you can designate gifts to charities such as the YWCA, Cancer, Kidney, Alzheimer's, various VCC Scholarships (including the VCCFA's) as well as to the United Ways' great community outreach.

If you like to travel as I do, you can pay your donation through your credit card and get air-miles. Early birds are eligible for a draw for a dinner at JJ's so get your pledge form in before the deadline. Donating to the United Way can be a win/win for all concerned.



~ VCCFA ANNUAL MEETING & HOLIDAY SOCIAL ~

Thursday, December 1, 2005
2:30 pm
Italian Cultural Centre
3075 Slocan Street

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Municipal Elections, Saturday the 19th

Municipal election signs are dotting the landscape, a good reminder to seek out an all-candidates meeting. Voter turnout is traditionally low and yet local politics have an incredible impact on our lives. Let's remember our civic duty and vote on the 19th. Our Labour Council publishes a list of progressive candidates that they endorse. If you wish a copy for your area, give us a call and we'll put it in the mail for you.

Lobbying MLAs in Victoria

Last month the Presidents' Council of FPSE met in Victoria for a day to do regular business and to prepare for lobbying at the legislature the following day. Faculty association presidents from around the province had preset meetings with their MLAs to remind them that our public colleges are well able to help meet the upcoming skills shortage.

We were very graciously received at our meetings, we were introduced to the House during question period and we all came away with some good contacts for future discussions.

Congratulations to our president, Cindy Oliver, for spearheading this initiative on our behalf.

We hear that the College Presidents used a similar outline in their recent lobby. It is important to remind the government that the public sector Colleges make a significant contribution to our students, the economy and our communities.

Your Executive

Our Executive has one more meeting this year which will be an all day planning meeting where we have an opportunity to reflect on our effectiveness in many areas and renew our plan for the next six months. This time also gives us the opportunity to debate issues more fully than we are able at our regular weekly meetings.

At that meeting we will be saying thank you to Vinit Khosla, Perry Taylor and Colleen van Winkel, our Negotiating Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, who are taking a well-earned rest after many years of service on the Executive. Please make a point of thanking them for all they have done on your behalf when you see them in the halls and at the AGM.

BC Federation of Labour

The BC Federation of Labour Convention is being held Nov. 28-30. Frank, Ingrid, Maggi and I will be attending along with other delegates from FPSE. It is always interesting to hear the broader perspective and to be part of a large, progressive convention.

The 2005 AGM and Social

Planning is well underway for our AGM and Social at the Italian Cultural Centre on December 1 at 2:30 pm. The College has given permission to our members to leave students with an assignment in order to attend. We look forward to seeing many of you there.

All the Best

As this is probably our last newsletter of 2005, I'd like to take the opportunity to wish each one of you and your families the very best this holiday season. Have a relaxing, refreshing and renewing break and a healthy, happy New Year.

~lizz



**~ VCCFA ANNUAL
MEETING & HOLIDAY
SOCIAL ~**

Thursday, December 1, 2005
2:30 pm
Italian Cultural Centre
3075 Slocan Street
at Grandview Highway

NON-REGULARS & FAIR EMPLOYMENT WEEK

Non-Regulars and Fair Employment Week

Bonita Eberl, our rep to the FPSE non-regular committee, represented the VCCFA at its fall meeting. Local reps discussed plans for marking North America's Fair Employment Week in late October. Each local was to sponsor activities or publicity designed to raise awareness of continued unfairness in the treatment of non-regulars and where possible to celebrate successes. For us, Bonita designed some "martini" posters, we put out a special bulletin and we had a success-

Next August, Vancouver is hosting COCAL, a North American conference on non-regular rights, part time pay and issues in post-secondary education. We have done so much work in this area that it would be great to be able to make a contribution. We are always looking for interested folks for a local non-regular/new instructor group, let us know.



The Issue of Increment Accrual for Part-Timers: Commentary

Recent discussions with a 75% part-timer highlighted what I think is a misconception around increments for part-timers. Our agreement has good provisions for pro-rata pay, pro-rata weekly workload, we have a pending arbitration on pro-rata annual workload, and we have equitable access to benefits, at least for people at half time or more.

For increment accrual, we have a long-standing consensus that full-timers get an increment a year and part-timers should earn increments pro-rated to their level of work. So, a 75% person would get an increment in 18 months, while a 50% person would get one in two years. Sounds fair. But is it really? Shouldn't a half-time person make half of what a full-timer makes over the years?

Given they're at the same step, if one looks at this system over a number of years, what do we find? Using the new April '06 scale, if a full-timer starts at step 6, then after 6 years they'll have been at step one for a year and have had gross income of about \$406,000. A half-timer, having also started at step 6 will, after six years, only be starting step 3 and will have had gross income of about \$189,000. Over the same time, given no other changes, their income is 47% of full-time, \$14,000 lower than half of a full-timer's salary. If we take the model out 11 years, when the part-timer has finally been at step one for a year, the difference is greater.

The half-timer will have made about \$368,500 while the full-timer has made about \$784,000. That's \$23,500 behind half of a full-timer's salary. Since both instructors are at the same step again, from this point on the part-timer's salary stays truly pro-rated to the full-timers but they can never make up that more than \$23,000. Why should that happen? They start at the same step, they end up at the same step, everything else about their work is precisely pro-rated, shouldn't they be able to keep their salary truly pro-rated over time?

I would agree that at some point it does seem reasonable for a low time-status person not to simply get an increment every calendar year. If one only worked 10% a year it would not seem fair to get an increment every calendar year. However, one could certainly argue, as we already have, that a half-time commitment is significant enough to warrant regular status so annual increments should be in order for anyone half-time or more. For those at lower time-status we would have to consider further what would be fair.

fc

Any comments? Email us at vccfa@telus.net.

MEMBERS' LETTERS ON THE BCTF STRIKE & THE VCCFA

Dear VCCFA,

I came away from yesterday's (October 20th) emergency meeting feeling quite uneasy with our union's response to this huge labour event phenomenon - the teachers' strike.

I've been supporting my good friends who are teachers and support workers by visiting the lines and have made a point of writing a letter a day to different people and organizations involved. At this point, I think Jinny Sims has shown brilliance, incredible commitment and exquisite leadership. I have been appalled at the "bully boy" response of Minister DeJong and Premier Campbell. I have been sickened by Mr. DeJong's continual reference to the fact that so many of the public sector workers "settled" their contracts - this includes the VCCFA - which somehow proved how unreasonable the BCTF was being. Our "settling" and the "contentment" of our sister and brother unions was used by this labour minister as ammunition against the BCTF, a union which has now had more impact on this anti-democratic and anti-worker government than any other single union.

I'm really not clear on why we didn't have a meeting earlier in the week to at least brainstorm ways to respond to the strike. The message seemed to be that individual effort was good enough. Was the problem legal liability? If so, is it fair that so many other unions and workers stuck their necks way out their - CUPE, the bus drivers', Telus, the Crown Counsels -and we hung back because of legal liability?

I'm also concerned about the "top downess" of our process. I'm glad the FPSE allocated money for food vouchers, but could we not have met and sent other suggestions to our provincial body?

I really felt I needed to express these concerns before going to the rally today (October 21st). I don't know what will happen with the court decision. I really hope the BCFED and all of us haven't shut this whole thing down prematurely and let down the union warriors - the teachers.

Yours,
Nora Ready
ESL

Comment

The member is right to point out that we did not take overt action as the VCCFA (some FPSE locals did, see pages 8 and 9). We had planned to have a General Meeting early in the second week of the strike but we were advised to temporarily not have meetings while the ramifications of the Supreme Court ruling not to directly support the teachers were studied. When that freeze was lifted, we went ahead with our meeting. In retrospect, it may have been a better idea to have had a meeting much earlier to brainstorm around our position

The member is essentially correct when she comments, "...and we hung back because of legal liability." We did not stick our neck out.

As for the concern around the "top-downness" of the process, we are members of the BC Federation of Labour through FPSE. FPSE is a federation and can't really direct its locals to do anything they do not want to do. A bit earlier, FPSE locals had been asked what action could be taken in support of the BCTF, we responded that given the appropriate chance to discuss options and to vote at a general meeting, that we would most likely be able to do whatever might be reasonably asked of us. There were not many locals that made even that commitment; and consequently, FPSE involvement was centered on financial support.

~The VCCFA Executive

To the VCCFA:

The recent teachers' strike brought to my attention several disturbing issues relating to the VCCFA. Most of the following concerns relate to the recent "flyers" about the teachers' strike, distributed to the members of the VCCFA by the VCCFA, and I personally, as well as other members of staff, would be grateful for clarification and explanation about their intent and content.

1. Who makes the decisions about the content of such "flyers"? In view of the very serious legal nature of the issues they raise, it is imperative that

cont'd on page 6

MEMBERS' LETTERS ON THE BCTF STRIKE & THE VCCFA

there must be consultation with the members of our union before such decisions are posted in print. The decision to "support" or "not support" other unions is not a matter to be taken lightly or unilaterally by the elected representatives of the VCCFA, and, therefore, certainly not without thorough consultation with the members of the union first.

2. I have previously mentioned that these flyers contained matters which have become legal tender outside the college. Let me elaborate. In a recent flyer we were told to support the teachers, even though they were in contempt of court, were involved in an illegal strike, and obviously felt they were "above the law" (none of which was mentioned in the flyer). Many members of the VCCFA I spoke with did NOT support the strike. They may, like me, support the teachers' frustration and need for change, but they, like me, did NOT support the strike and especially did NOT support the teachers' defiance of the laws of the Supreme Court of BC.

3. It is clear from the flyers that the present VCCFA representatives have taken upon themselves decisions about very serious legal matters without consulting the VCCFA who thus become intimately involved with the dire consequences. There are many of our members who DON'T necessarily agree with some of the VCCFA's views on this matter and we want our voices heard. If the present representatives are not willing to hear our views, whether they agree with them or not, then perhaps it is time to decide whether they should continue in office.

4. How do we address the fact that meetings to air the views of dissenting VCCFA members MUST be held at a time when all members can attend. Anything else is unacceptable. For instance, a recent meeting of members was held at 4PM on a Thursday, and at that time I personally was teaching. Even better, is there a policy or procedure in the VCCFA's constitution for members' opinions to be submitted in writing before meetings, so that they may be presented impartially to ALL members of the VCCFA at a convenient time? If not, then there should be.

5. In view of the very serious legal situation that faced the teachers, and into which some VCCFA members were drawn without a voice in the policy-making of the FA executive, I feel there is an urgent necessity for FA members to have the unfettered opportunity to decide

on all important issues - especially this recent case, as it involved civil disobedience. At present there is an appearance that policies involving important legal matters appear to be created by the office-holders of the VCCFA without constitutional authority or, alternatively, majority approval of members. Some of the VCCFA members feel the executive has the authority to inform us that "this is the union's position whether you like it or not", and find that unacceptable.

I have been a member of the VCCFA for over 15 years, and only recently have I started to think about how my 15 years of union dues have been spent. Up until now I have been very quiet about union matters, but because of the VCCFA's response to the teachers' strike I am of the opinion that it is time for radical change if my union representatives are instructing me to support those who disobey the law.

Yours sincerely,
Gareth Williams
Electronics

Comment:

The flyers the member refers to were the President's Bulletin of October 11th and a "celery-green" flyer from FPSE that went out later. They both echoed the call of the BC Federation of Labour and the Vancouver Labour Council to support the BCTF. They did not mandate or insist on any specific action but offered a list of possible support measures. Members were free to follow those voluntary encouragements to the degree they wished.

At a FPSE Presidents' Council meeting, Lizz endorsed a motion to buy food vouchers for the teachers and CUPE. The Executive did and does support her action. There have been many positive comments about this financial support.

The member is not correct in writing, "... VCCFA representatives have taken upon themselves decisions about very serious legal matters without consulting the VCCFA." As another letter in this issue points out, it can be argued that the VCCFA did not overtly do very much during the teachers' strike. Rhetorical calls for support are not illegal.

MEMBERS' LETTERS ON THE BCTF STRIKE & THE VCCFA

The Executive was ready to respond to a call for overt action, from either within or from outside of our union, but not without meeting with its membership. As it turned out, by the time of our meeting, our proposed action was to encourage people to attend the CUPE rally on the last Friday of the strike. That was approved unanimously both by our Executive and by the members at the meeting.

We also reminded ourselves of the requirement (backed up in our bylaws) to respect any picket lines that might appear.

As for the points about the timing of the meeting, we do the best we can. We had mentioned that we would likely have to call a meeting at very short notice. There is no perfect time or place for a meeting. Instructors in our various departments work a huge variety of shifts. All of our actions and decisions, including the calling of meetings take place within the context of our bylaws, to which we are always accountable. Any member can request an agenda item, or make a motion to have an agenda item added, and present their views on it. Members may also comment on any item in the manner they see fit.

Our upcoming Annual Meeting on December 1st, 2:30 pm at the Italian Cultural Centre offers another great chance to discuss issues, to run for office and to vote. Members also have permission from the college to leave alternate work for their students in order to attend, (that is one reason why we have a sign-in sheet). So, we hope to see as many members as possible at the meeting.

~The VCCFA Executive



**British Columbia
Teachers' Federation**

The BCTF Strike of October 2005: COMMENTARY

BC Labour history will often look back on October 2005. Who would have thought that teachers would be able to complete a two-week total strike in the face of legislation and court orders against them and maintain such a high level of support? This was a month that will be referred to for quite a while. The democratic nature of BCTF decision-making also sets a fine example to unions everywhere. This fall, the leadership of the TF faced two or three referendums on the positions they were taking. One to get the strike mandate, two to go out in face of Bill 12, and three to end the strike based on Ready's points, failure of any one of these votes would have seriously damaged the credibility of the TF leadership. Perhaps, and this is not an argument for constant referendums, if the government was as accountable for its actions during the same time period, it would have taken a much more considered stance.

The nature of the dispute stimulated for the level of public discussion in our province, people chatted about the nature of democracy and law for over two weeks. Letters in this issue to our Executive indicate the range of opinions.

Lip-Service

It often seems that collective union rights are given lip-service acknowledgement by many, until it gets inconvenient and then they are easily dismissed by pundits. Commentators on CKNW for example, which did quite a fair job of representing the facts, often very easily found fault with the teachers on moral or legal grounds. They rarely went after the government at such a level, usually limiting their critique to the government's hastiness or lack of finesse.

Civil Disobedience

Sadly, Rosa Parks has recently died. Her simple act of civil disobedience in 1955--"She sat, so we could stand." -- Sparked waves of organized mass protest and decades of change. In October, many criticized Jenny Sims for invoking Parks' name. "How dare she equate this strike with the civil rights movement?" Vaughn Palmer after Vaughn Palmer intoned.

While there may be a hierarchy of rights and most may agree the rights to strike and take collective action do not rank as high as human rights to dignity and equality, the analogy to civil disobedience remains useful.

The collective rights of workers do exist. They are important. They are sanctioned by the Charter of Rights and by International Treaty. If unions such as the BCTF do not stand up for them, who will? Once that stand is taken, the situation becomes very analogous to a human rights issue. Bill 12 became a law when was passed by a duly-elected government. If it, however, violates more fundamental laws and rights, then it is suspect. Should it be challenged? Sometimes yes, sometimes no. It depends on the context. Perhaps, if the teachers had been striking legally for a long time and there was no resolution in sight and all connected had been suffering too much then it might be fairly argued that it was necessary for a government to end a strike and have a mediator make recommendations for settlement.

However, that was not the case here in BC in 2005. We had a government invoke a Bill before an actual legal strike under essential services rulings had even started and the Bill didn't just prevent a strike, it imposed conditions by extending the current agreement between School Boards and the BCTF. Furthermore, it was the second time in this government's mandate that they had done this. This time the situation was clear, the government had to be challenged. In the long run, we in the college sector will probably be very thankful the BCTF was there to take on the battle.

The Courts

The government then used the courts as a shield. The Supreme Court's only option was to enforce the law. In this case, a law that did not even exist in September, a law which was brought in specifically to control the TF for the convenience of the government. The TF never challenged the courts' role, or the fact that there would be punishment. They appropriately tried to keep the focus and the heat on the government. As far as we know, the BCTF has now paid its \$500,000 fine and there is no further legal action pending.

FPSE and the BC Federation of Labour

The BCTF is a member of the BC Federation, as are we, through our provincial body, the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators. Our president, Cindy Oliver, is on the Executive of the Federation. The BC Fed called for support of the teachers and started planning what form support would take. When the Supreme Court cut off teachers from their union funds, FPSE authorized a major contribution of \$200,000 for

The BCTF Strike of October 2005: COMMENTARY

the support of teachers. This support took the form of \$50 food vouchers. At least half of the amount has been spent this way. FPSE also collected further contributions from others and has been able to donate \$50,000 to CUPE BC for its support of its members. These are significant contributions and we understand they have been allocated by those unions to the neediest of their members and we know, because we have been told, that they have been greatly appreciated.

The BC Fed held major rallies through the first week and during the second week took major picketing and walkout actions on Monday and Wednesday. On Thursday, when the mediator's proposal was in front of the parties, the Fed called off any action planned for Friday.

What FPSE locals actually did varied widely. Most of the action occurred outside the Lower Mainland and was directly related to what CUPE was doing.

CUPE's Role

Each day from Monday to Thursday during the week of October 17th, CUPE locals in different areas of the province took on a major and separate role from the BC Federation of Labour in picketing major institutions around the province. They had a direct interest in the strike since tens of thousands of their members were being picketed out. By Friday, when Ready's recommendations had been accepted in principle by leadership on both sides, members were encouraged to leave work to attend the big CUPE rally at the PNE.

If a FPSE local had a CUPE staff local at its college or university which was walking out, then it was clear that they were to respect the picket line and they did. During the week this happened at Camosun, North Island, Northwest, Rockies, Selkirk, and Nicola Valley.

A few FPSE locals notched up their support action by voting to go out on their own account and join their CUPE line mates. This happened very successfully at Rockies and Thompson Rivers. At Northwest, there's the odd situation of our FPSE local, the Academic Workers Union also being a CUPE local (yes, they pay two sets of dues) so it was clear very early that they were going out with other CUPE locals. TRUFA additionally donated all its local strike pay for the day's action to the teachers' support fund.

Right up to our general meeting on Thursday afternoon, the 20th, the VCCFA Executive was not exactly sure what our situation on Friday the 21st was going to be. As it

happened, Ready's recommendations were in front of the teachers and a couple of hours before our meeting the BC Fed called off any of its planned actions. Furthermore, the CUPE local at VCC informed us that afternoon that they would not be picketing and were also not calling for a walk out to attend the rally.

The day previous, our Executive had considered what action to recommend to our members. We drafted a motion for support similar to what happened at Camosun and North Island. The motion asked for our members to show their strong support for the province's teachers by respecting any picket lines as a group, and furthermore, to consider joining any line as individuals, and to consider attending the PNE rally. This motion was passed unanimously at a well attended meeting.

We were in a different situation from Thompson Rivers and the Rockies because we were not certain that there would be any sanctioned action. In the end, there was not.

Did We Do Enough?

Some members, including some executive members, argue that FPSE could have done more within the BC Fed's sanction at a provincial level. Indeed, that we should have done more. During a historic couple of weeks, we missed the chance to define and distinguish ourselves as the second major federated union of educators in the province. In some ways, the BCTF fight was closer to our fight than it was to CUPE's. The same law that cleared class size and other learning conditions out of the BCTF collective agreements still hangs over us. To be sure, we did well, we did a lot, but we could have done more.

In retrospect, at our local VCCFA level, it also seems that we could have encouraged ourselves to consider at least the possibility more overt action.

In any case, we owe a debt of thanks to the BCTF and its leadership in taking on this government in a principled, measured way and being resolved to suffer the consequences. Hopefully, we have seen the end of draconian legislation.

fc



GENERAL MEETING AND SPECIAL MEETING

We have had two well-attended membership meetings this fall. We thank the CCA Department, especially Perry, for helping make space available for our September 29th meeting. A highlight was Bob Aitken's presentation advocating for a change in mandatory retirement at 65. It will be interesting to see what developments may come from government on that issue. We got updated on the work of our bargaining committee and the Executive and our budget for our 2005-06 fiscal (October to November) was passed. Sadly, it was Perry's last budget in his current role as Treasurer, as he's not running for the Executive in December. Nobody presents a budget like Perry does, he'll be missed.

Our Special Meeting on October 20th dealt with the BCTF Strike and its impact on us and what we might do. There are letters and commentary on it elsewhere in this newsletter. Can't remember the new name of the place where we met because it will always be the Biltmore for many VCCFA members.

Next is our Annual Meeting, Thursday, December 1st, Italian Cultural Centre, 2:30 pm. It is followed by our annual social, good food and company, see you there. You are permitted to give alternate assignments to your students in order to attend.

Bargaining: Settlement of Local Issues and Hopefully the 0.6% PD Fund

You will have received bulletin #18 from the negotiating committee which outlines the settlement of remaining local issues. A very important point is that it is a negotiated settlement that both sides can feel they own, rather than an arbitrator's ruling. In labour issues, it is significant that arbitrary and arbitration have the same root. Moreover, just as this is being written, it looks like we are close to agreement on the use of the new PD fund. That's significant, almost \$200,000 more in new money, to be used in parallel ways to our current Adjudicated PD Fund. Watch for details soon.

It's hard for members who are not closely connected to their work to realize how well served they have been by this committee over this long, long haul that started in June of 2003. Mark Goertz, Karen Griffiths, Ingrid Kolsteren, Maggi Trebble, Rose-Marie Watson; and, of course, Vinit Khosla have just done a pile of work for us, and they've done it with tremendous integrity.



**~ VCCFA ANNUAL
MEETING & HOLIDAY
SOCIAL ~**

Thursday, December 1, 2005
2:30 pm

Italian Cultural Centre
3075 Slocan Street

Translink's Employer Pass Program

Effective February 2006, VCC employees are eligible to join in. Apparently an annual pass will save about 15% from the cost of the normal monthly passes.

Check the Translink website www.translink.bc.ca for info
and for enrolment info contact Facilities local 8319
email jbrowne@vcc.ca



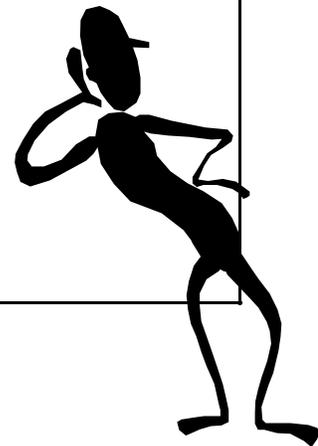
VCC's Strategic plan

The College President's updating of the 2002 Strategic Plan is still before the College community.

The VCCFA executive is not endorsing it. We have distributed a separate bulletin on our position. The bulletin is also on the homepage of our website.

The Plan is still before Education Council and they will be discussing it at their next public meeting, on Tuesday, December 6th, 3:30, in 5025.

Faculty are encouraged to copy their EdCo faculty rep on any input that they might have or might be sending in to the President.



OPERATIONS COUNCIL/COMMUNITY ACTION COMMITTEE

Operations Council

This council deals with non-educational college functions and is made up primarily of managers and directors. The VP Finance, Trish Pekeles (whose departure has just been announced), is the chair. Through our collective agreement we have voting status on the council. We raised the issue of a rash of thefts right out of locked classrooms and have been happy to note a level of concerned action by the college. Students and instructors have to also be careful to mind their valuables. Please keep us informed on this or any other operational, equipment or facility issue of concern.

Community Action Committee

A group of volunteer members is meeting to start to work on how to allocate the \$8,000 members have set aside for this purpose. The committee's task is to find worthy projects or agencies within the neighbourhoods of our two main campuses and have cheques written for them. Cheques usually top off at about \$1000. A satisfying job indeed.

Examples of their work include large scale toys for a downtown eastside daycare, supporting the hot lunch program support at Queen Alexandra school, and equipment for a school's field trip program. John Shayler, the very able chair of the committee since its start is handing over his knowledge and files to the new group and we know he will stay connected to its work. Thanks so much for what you have done John.

Letters from Retirees

Dear VCCFA ,

I was very happy to hear of the support given by the VCCFA and FPSE to the teachers in the recent BCTF dispute. It is important that we support those who find themselves in the unenviable position of being in the frontlines of the struggle to maintain basic union rights such as free collective bargaining and the integrity of contracts, free from the specter of a government passing draconian legislation whenever the going gets tough.

What happened to the teachers could easily happen to the college sector or to any of the unions whose contracts will be up next spring. An injury to one is an injury to all.

Keep up the good work!

Eva Sharell

Greetings to all my former colleagues in the VCCFA.

Two years have flown by since my retirement. I am happy to be in a different phase of life but have fond thoughts and memories of my life with you and am reminded sometimes of our accomplishments.

Two weeks ago I had to go to emergency because of a vision disturbance. I was whisked past bloody bodies and warmly greeted by name by an RN who had been in my classes; just like many of our students, she was mother, wife and career woman. As I was being checked out, she reminisced about those good old student days.

I hope you all are having a good term and I know you are making the world a better place.

In peace, Grace Shaw

FPSE membership does have its privileges...

Greetings from the “**Inn at False Creek**” – Quality Hotel Downtown Vancouver!



- *Best location in Vancouver
- *Steps from Public Transit
- *250 Airmiles with every stay
- *Wheelchair accessible rooms
- *Free wireless Internet access
- *We are a Union Property!

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Yours truly

Michelle Johnson

Sales Manager

DECEMBER 6TH MEMORIAL

DECEMBER 6 MEMORIAL

December 6, 1989, at the Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal, a gunman walked into a classroom of engineering students and began to gun down 27 women, killing 14 women engineering students. This incredible act of violence led to the murder of 14 young women.



In response to this, December 6 has been proclaimed the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women by the Canadian government. Across Canada there are commemorative events to remember the women and to continue action to end violence in all its forms.

At VCC, this year as we have every year since 1989, a group of women, faculty & staff will make the Memorial table in memory of the 14 young women who died.

There will be a memorial table at KEC and CC outside the library. As well there will be a table at IEC.

Please take a few moments to stop by and remember the women who died and who have been victims of violence.

VCCFA Status of Women Report

At last we have resolved three long outstanding grievances related to maternity leave and temporary recall. Thanks to the perseverance of our members and our chief steward and the support we received from FPSE. This resolution extends the concept of women not being denied employment rights because they are pregnant. It now applies more transparently to our temporary recall language.

This year like every year, we will be having memorial tables for Dec. 6, funded by the VCCFA (flowers, candles, information pamphlets). These memorials take place at City Centre Campus and King Edward Campus, and for the first time last year, at our International Education Centre. They are organized by an ad hoc group of women from both VCCFA and CUPE.

VCCFA women attended the VDLC Women's Day dinner, as well as participated in the rally. Overall, women are well represented in our Local: on the Executive (6 women, 6 men), as Stewards (11 women, 5 men), on the Bargaining Committee (4 women, 2 men) and generally at the Department Head and Coordinator level. Perhaps this is why we do not have a separate Status of Women committee within the VCCFA.

The layoff situation that has mainly affected ESL and ABE instructors, many of whom are women, has calmed down. Currently all laid off ESL instructors have either been recalled or have left the College, some with severance, some without. Only one instructor, by her own choice, remains on the recall list. While there is some stability now, we all notice the reduced size of our departments. The fact that there are fewer seats for students in the Developmental areas does impact disproportionately on women, since we have a majority of female students in ABE and ESL.

I welcome your emails on any VCCFA information of interest to our faculty women.

Respectfully submitted by
Virginia Monk, Executive Member and VCCFA Rep on the FPSE Status of Women Committee
vmonk@vcc.ca

Split Shift Lounge

Are you working split shift?

Tired and need a rest between shifts?



Don't forget there is a split shift lounge at KEC right beside the Union office. The space is quite with a comfy couch for you to relax on.

This space came out of bargaining. See Appendix XI

STEWARD NOTES

We've been busy with a variety of issues and activities. Here is a brief report on some of the stuff that we've been dealing with.

Non-regular instructors

Welcome to our many new instructors, both auxiliaries and non-regs. We've been getting lots of questions about step placement, evaluations, scheduling, seniority and many other issues that are of particular importance for non-regular instructors. It is so great to be back dealing with these issues instead of lay-offs and recalls.

IRA Elections & Selections

Close to a dozen positions are up and stewards will be chairing election meetings and participating on selection committees. These are always interesting, and although we have done literally hundreds of elections over the years, each one is a little different. If your department is about to elect or select an IRA and you have any questions, please call the steward or call the union office.

Accommodations (No, not Housing)

We continue to work with the College and individual instructors requiring some sort of accommodation due to health concerns. Accommodations require medical documentation for the period of time the accommodation is needed. An example might be the college providing a particular piece of equipment needed by an instructor.

New Grievance: *Jurisdiction*

We've had to file a policy grievance this month around a jurisdictional issue. The College has posted an administrative position, for a manager, that looks very much like bargaining unit work. We will be following up on this as we take seriously any attempt to reassign bargaining unit work out of the union. In another area, the college is also proposing a somewhat similar managerial appointment, but the union is still being consulted in that case, and we hope we will be able to work out that particular posting.

Workload Arbitration

This is our grievance reaffirming the right of non-regulars to have the same annual workload, or prorated workload, as regular instructors in their departments. We had arbitration dates for this month, November 22 and 23, but have recently learned that the College witness is not available on those dates, so this arbitration is now postponed.

This is disappointing because while we wait for this to be resolved, our non-regular instructors in at least three areas of the college are being denied the right to fully participate in their departments and work under the same workload as the regular instructors in the area.

Recall and Leaves

In our last newsletter, we reported that we settled our sick leave and recall and maternity leave and recall grievances. We are still working on two of these and finishing loose ends. We are happy to be able to settle these grievances without going to arbitration. The settlement includes seniority for the time the instructors would have been working, ability to buy back pension for that period of time, step placement accrual, reimbursement for monies spent on benefits. It is important for us that these grievances have been settled and that our college has recognized (albeit on a without prejudice basis) maternity rights. We will continue to be vigilant on all ramifications of maternity leave and other such right.

Meetings and Members

A number of our members have had meetings with the college. Issues include, but are not limited to: use of email, communications, and scheduling. We're happy to be able to report that most of these have been resolved informally.

We've also had numerous meetings with Deans to discuss issues before they become problems and to establish good communications.

Section 12, In other words being sued through the Labour Board

We've received a section 12 complaint from a former instructor who was fired for abuse of sick leave. Section 12 is the part of the Labour Code which puts an onus upon unions to use all reasonable due diligence when dealing with the rights and potential grievances of their member. We anticipate that this complaint will be dismissed before it goes to a hearing since we treated this member's issue in a very thorough and careful manner. In the event that this does go forward to a full hearing, FPSE will be supporting us completely.

STEWARD NOTES

VP Selection Committee

I am the FA rep on the selection committee for the VP of Education. The details are confidential, but I can report that the committee has short-listed and interviewed a number of candidates. As of this writing, the process is not complete.

Developmental Education Conference

At our last annual general meetings of FPSE, we proposed a successful motion to have a second conference around issues of Developmental Education. We had a successful one last fall and the second one will take place this December. This time the focus will be on ABE.

Meetings, Meetings and More Meetings

Stewards go to many meetings and talk on the phone a lot. These include:

A meeting between Sun Life reps, the College and Lizz and I. We learned more about how our disability plans work and raised questions,
Contract Administration and Review Committee The semi-annual meetings of the chief stewards of all FPSE locals
Member Steward Drop Ins scheduled open sessions at the various campuses at
Appearances at department meetings. We especially enjoy these opportunities and are available to come to meet with you in your departments, just give us a call.

We like to hear from you, so do call if you have any questions, concerns or issues.

for the stewards
ing

DID YOU KNOW?

Reappointment Rights for Term Instructors.

After 6 months of contract work, term instructors who have been recommended by an Area Hiring Recommendation Committee (AHRC) have the right to reappointment by seniority. This is in article 4.4.

Bargaining Results

A number of the issues we bargained for at the local table are of particular interest to non-regular instructors. Here are a few:

Longer period for review of initial placement

New instructors now have up to 6 months to challenge the original step placement.

Seniority for non-regular instructors will hold for 24 months after one's last appointment.

The cap on initial placement of step 6 will be removed one step per year, till there is no cap at all at the time of hiring.

Do you have any questions?

Not sure about your rights or what the Collective agreement says?

Call a steward.

PARTICIPATE

VCCFA welcomes your input. Send your letter, comments and pictures to the editor.

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The views found herein
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**Ingrid Kolsteren
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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: _____
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Effective Date: _____
Division: _____
Department/Area: _____
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