

Summer conference 2012

## Teachers build a better world...that's what we do!

"Regroup, resist, rise up!" These were the three themes of the BCTF's annual summer conference held in Kamloops from August 22 to 26. Despite the difficult school year just passed, teachers there exuded a lively spirit of solidarity in keeping with the new three Rs: regroup, resist, rise up.

More than 450 BCTF members came together for four intense and inspiring days of workshops and meetings held at the Thompson Rivers University. In her keynote address, Federation President Susan Lambert offered a scathing indictment of the increasing pressures toward privatization and commercialization in public education and indeed in every element of society today.

From the privatization of warfare in Iraq and Afghanistan, to the global trade in food commodities that means starvation for poor children and families, to the ownership of entire national watersheds, it all creates "an economy of fear," Lambert said.

In this context it's all the more crucial that we defend and nurture the four institutions that form the basis of democracy: "universal adult suffrage and a robust electoral process; legal rights to which all citizens are equally entitled; a free press; and, of course the most critical institution, comprehensive universal public education." All of these institutions are under threat, none more than public education.

The current debate over the "flexibility and choice" reform agenda is a "dishonest... smokescreen for privatization," Lambert said. "Our BC Ed Plan is a panicked and reckless call for rapid change for change sake. The plan emphasizes teacher effectiveness and ignores the context of child poverty, class size, and composition."

As in the USA, the government here in BC is also "eager to open up public education to

the highest bidder," she said. "Entire public school systems in the States have been sold to private, for-profit corporations. And we're buying into the most powerful privateer in the world—Pearson International." (See summary of Donald Gutstein's, "Pearson's Plan to Control Education," page 7 of this issue.)

Teachers were given much food for thought by the plenary panel, which included Rafael Feliciano, former chair of the Teachers' Federation of Puerto Rico; Dierdre Kelly, a UBC education professor specializing in teaching for social justice and democracy; and Will McMartin, a veteran political analyst and writer in BC.

Feliciano drew on the experience of his union in standing up to the combined

*...Federation President Susan Lambert offered a scathing indictment of the increasing pressures toward privatization and commercialization in public education and indeed in every element of society today.*

pressure of the government and the media against the teachers. Two essential elements were building alliances with parents and strong and committed teachers organized at the school level.

Kelly shared some fascinating stories of social justice research conducted by her graduate students and made the case that critical teacher inquiry is the best form of professional development.

For example, in a study entitled "Free Run Children," a teacher with experience in a westside Vancouver school, moved to an inner-city school and soon noticed that playgrounds in the affluent neighbourhood were twice as large and used by half as many students. He worked with his Grade 7 social studies students to calculate the ratio of green space and sports equipment to the number of students. They discovered there were 325 students per soccer goalpost in the inner city, compared to 55 children per goalpost in the wealthy part of the city. Children's drawings vividly illustrated this systemic inequity.

Kelly posited the notion of students as "apprentice citizens" who ought to be given opportunities "to do democracy within and beyond the school." She said: "If...we keep alive the purpose of public education as preparing democratic citizens, then teachers need to be valued as creative thinkers and capable of a pedagogy of dialogue and inquiry."

McMartin made the case that the deficiencies in public services, including education, are a result of policies of the BC Liberal government to cut expenditures in order to make tax cuts. It has ignored the reality that there are economic and social benefits of co-operative activity—and that is primarily organized through government services.

If a future NDP government is going to repair damage from the last decade, it is going to require more revenue, McMartin said. Even the carbon tax that is supposed to be revenue neutral actually returns more tax breaks to corporations than to low-income families.

*Nancy Knickerbocker, Larry Kuehn, BCTF staff*



GEORGE PETERS & KAREN STEEL PHOTOS

## 22 Marathons to protest Bill 22

By David Halme

North Vancouver teacher, Ian Cunliffe, finished his 25-day journey of 22 marathons, to the cheers of a noisy crowd of supporters and colleagues August 31, 2012, at Canada Place. After hugs and kisses from his family, he thanked his colleagues who supported him along the 1100 km route. The final leg of his journey began earlier that morning when he left the Burnaby Teachers' Association office and made his way to the foot of Burrard Street.

Cunliffe set out from Sparwood, near the Alberta border, on August 8 to begin the first of 22 marathons to protest Bill 22. His aim was to draw attention to the impact of a decade of education funding cuts on students. One of his colleagues proudly announced, "Ian Cunliffe has chosen to put his feet where his mouth is...in a good way. He's not just talking the talk...he's running!" Cunliffe was not a novice when it came to ultra marathons, having completed a number of them, including the world's toughest race, The Marathon Des Sables (a 240 km self-sufficiency race across the Sahara) while raising money for a refugee-camp school in Africa. Cunliffe was confident he would complete the 22 marathons across BC and have time to get his classroom ready and prepare for his new teaching assignment in September.

Choosing the route was not easy; it was not going to be the typical flatland journey experienced by most marathoners. Cunliffe had to consider the safest and shortest route over the many high summits but also visit as

many communities as possible along the way. The support from locals along the way was crucial. Members volunteered to drive and escort Cunliffe safely along the route, provide a place to stay, and notify the media. A big surprise in the planning came when Cunliffe discovered a permit from the Ministry of Transportation was necessary.

From the beginning, Cunliffe wanted communities to become engaged in a meaningful and sincere discussion about maintaining the quality of public education.

Clearly, the public needed to know the decade of cuts to education

funding was not only affecting their communities but impacting classroom support for students and decimating the ranks of specialized teachers who provide support. While running through Mission, Cunliffe met a teacher whose son is taking a Grade 10 physical education class through distributed learning. "Can someone please tell me how it's okay to have a 16-year-old boy self-reporting on PE?" said Cunliffe. "The chronic pressure of funding cuts year after year has caused us to



See CUNLIFFE page 2

## On the inside

The beginning of a new school year inevitably begins with a certain degree of apprehension. Thoughts of what has been achieved, what lies ahead, and what we might hope for, abound.

In their various ways a number of articles in this edition reflect those thoughts. The terms of the Memorandum of Agreement achieved at the very end of a torturous year of "bargaining" are clearly documented. A survey of the many disastrous decisions of the current Liberal government is a timely reminder of the upcoming provincial election.

The BCTF summer conference is a time for the renewal of energy and hope. Speakers at the conference, including young activists drawn from across Canada, provided the analysis, inspiration, and determination to continue to press for improved conditions in education, in governance, and civil society.

A number of other articles reveal the many efforts active members and retired teachers make in the cause of highlighting pressing current concerns and pursuing the social justice goals of our union.

What have we achieved in the last round of bargaining	4
The BCTF is a political organization: True or false	5
Pearson's plan to control education	7
A review of the Liberal's 11 years in office	8
Bully capitalism runs rampant	10
Return to court on class size	12

## President's message



Susan Lambert

It's a new school year. We've turned a fresh page and even got a new Minister of Education. One who is himself a teacher. As a classroom teacher, Don McRae raised the issue of large class sizes and troubling compositions publicly when he was in the classroom, before he chose to run for the Liberals in the 2009 election. We can only hope that this background and experience will inform his role as minister.

McRae phoned me very shortly after his appointment was announced. He was very clear that he wanted to meet very soon and establish a good relationship though he cautioned that he only had an eight-month window and would have to be realistic about what opportunities such a short time-frame afforded.

His phone call interrupted a meeting we were having with BCPSEA to implement the 2011-13 contract we signed at the end of June. It's the juxtaposition of such conversations that make my work life—well I guess the word is—challenging. On the one hand we have, again, a new minister pledging his wish to establish a positive relationship and on the other we are attempting to implement a contract that was achieved under the threat of exorbitant fines and doesn't address our main bargaining objectives of alleviating class-size and composition issues and addressing our salaries that continue to lag behind those of our colleagues across the country and of comparative occupations in the private sector. And public schools in BC are facing another \$100 million shortfall this year.

And so the struggle goes on. The rhetoric

and the reality again clash. Which is why we need to look at every action and every policy very carefully. The BC Education Plan is a case in point. There are aspects of the plan we all welcome. But there are aspects of the plan we all are very worried about. First and foremost we have to be worried when a plan like this is developed in the absence of teacher representative voices. When teachers voices are absent, you get policies such as the crazy idea of online learning for Kindergarten students, the "Bring Your Own Device" notion which ignores the reality of child poverty, and the cynical "Cash for Kids" scheme. When teacher voices are heard you get a reduction in the number of PLOs and the attempts to address the "crowded curriculum", concerns that teachers have been raising for years.

This year is our Year of Provincial Action. It is a year in which we are making a concerted effort to have our voice heard. We will be using traditional media and social media platforms. We will be taking direct action. We will be meeting with everyone who has a role in, a responsibility for, and a commitment to, public education. Our goal is to make public education a topic of debate

and a central issue in the May provincial election.

We will be using our own education platform "Better Schools for BC" ([bctf.ca/AdvocacyAndAction.aspx?id=27743](http://bctf.ca/AdvocacyAndAction.aspx?id=27743)) and highlighting a "plank" from this platform each month. September is "Class Size and Composition" month. We are filing class-size grievances, advocating that the Learning Improvement Fund be used to hire teachers, and attending school board meetings this month. In subsequent months we will address the remaining planks: a child poverty reduction plan, learning specialist teachers in every school, authentic student assessment, respect for diversity and equal opportunities for all, increased investment in public education, and full scope collective bargaining rights.

Each month will feature actions you can take to help highlight these issues—the issues our profession has identified as fundamental aspects of a strong, universally equitable high quality public education system. Working together we will hold politicians to account and bridge that gap between the rhetoric and the reality.

## Readers write

### Don't give up

Thank you so much for including my piece, "Dear CHEKpoint," in the April *Teacher*. I have received many heartfelt e-mails concerning the topic. It is nice to confirm that people actually do read it.

One letter, from a first-year teacher, almost brought me to tears. She explained her frustration, and possible search for a new job, until she read my letter. She has reconsidered.

It just reinforces my own belief that the experienced teachers need to take the new teachers under their wings. Support them and give them the survival tools to do the job that they envisioned as their career.

It is the most rewarding profession on earth. To have a heart-to-heart talk with some of the students I care for can change their lives. To explain that the toe-stubbing unsure pathways that they think they have will even out. They will become productive human beings and be successful in their life goals.

I have had this talk with many students who, in later years, told me that I was a teacher who really believed in them. This made a difference.

We are here for a good purpose. Many of us are disheartened at the moment, due to the total lack of personal regard shown by the ministry. It will change. Many of us wonder just where public education is headed. We can change this. We can have a positive effect on the overall outcome. After all, we are teachers. That is what we do.

Even ministers of education can learn. Even Christy Clark can learn. I am sure that she went into politics with some lofty goals in mind. I cannot, in all conscience, think that what is happening to our system is what she really had in mind.

It has gotten out of hand. She could stop it and we, as teachers, can help her do this.

Her personal poll would skyrocket if she was to say, "I have made a mistake." All it would take would be for her to say, "Let's reconsider public education. Let's take a new track."

Teachers are so tired of having to fight for our system. Teachers are so tired of having to stand up and be counted. Teachers are so tired of having to deal with the behaviour problems, and the IEP's for those who cannot understand much of what goes on in a regular classroom.

Some of my colleagues who I worked with this past year left the profession in June. They are retiring, or just quitting, to take on new employment. They have given up. They want out.

I regularly hear from students who I taught 30 years ago. I get e-mails from kids who are all over the world.

As teachers we have to be a self-reinforcing lot. We have to reinforce ourselves because we do not hear from parents and administrators often enough, if at all, that we are doing a good job. I make a point of leaving thank you messages in other teachers' and administrators' mailboxes. Believe me, that little effort goes a very long way.

There are many times, in the past, that we could have given up. Susan Lambert, don't give up. There are many people supporting you. It is easy to tire when the pressure is on. George Abbott said on the recent news that the "teachers are just holding things up." He is a master of spin. That is what politicians do. They seize the moment and profit from it. George Abbott is more politician than teacher. If he was a real teacher, and enjoyed doing it, he would still be doing it.

I am a teacher. I love going to work every day. Until that changes, until I wake up one day and think that I don't want to do this anymore, I will go to work. I will face the kids and say "Good morning" and really

mean it. I will face them with the understanding that many of them have faced horrendous problems already that day. I will face them with the understanding that we are in this together and we can help each other. In many of our discussions, the kids realize that others have the same problems; they realize they are not alone, and from these discussions they come to a new resolution. They can change their own lives. They can be in control of their own lives. This is the effect that a teacher can have.

Don't give up hope. You are a teacher. There is a reason for your being here. Not everyone understands that. I do, and many others do. Let people know that you understand.

**Greg Murray**

Port Hardy

### CUNLIFFE from page 1

compromise our ethics and integrity, and the line of what is acceptable keeps on shifting."

In each town he passed through, Cunliffe said he received overwhelming support from local teachers and the public. Sometimes the support was unexpected, "I had what I call a drive-by friending...I was running on the highway by myself, and this van starts driving up beside me without completely slowing down, and the door opens up, and I thought: Oh this is going to end badly. Instead, two total strangers jumped out and started running with me."

The interest in Cunliffe's journey increased day by day, as people checked the "22 Marathons' facebook" site chronicling Cunliffe's epic feat. There is no question the comments from around the world were encouraging him every step of the way. By dedicating each of the marathons to real issues facing teachers, students, and parents,



Pam McLeod, one of Cunliffe's North Vancouver colleagues greeted him at the finish line.

## Newsmagazine print versions reduced

The May 2012 Representative Assembly voted to reduce the budget for *Teacher* and limit the number of issues that will be printed this year. We will produce six issues (down from seven) and only three will be in print—September 2012, November/December 2012, and March 2013. The October 2012, and January/February 2013, will be online versions only. A special pre-election issue will be printed in April 2013.

Watch for the October issue online at [bctf.ca/newsmag](http://bctf.ca/newsmag) on October 23, 2012.

**Teacher**  
 Newsmagazine of the BC Teachers' Federation,  
 100-550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2  
 604-871-2283, toll free 1-800-663-9163, F: 604-871-2289  
 E-mail: [newsmag@bctf.ca](mailto:newsmag@bctf.ca), Web: [bctf.ca/newsmag](http://bctf.ca/newsmag)

**Editor**  
David Denyer

**Assistant editor**  
Kathleen Smith

**Copy editor**  
Vanessa Terrell

**Graphics**  
BCTF Graphics Dept.

**Staff writers**  
David Denyer  
David Halme  
Richard Hoover  
Nancy Knickerbocker  
Larry Kuehn

**Teacher Newsmagazine Advisory Board**  
Richard Beaudry  
Tara Ehrcke  
Jack MacDermot  
Jennifer Wadger  
Hayley Waring

**BCTF Executive Committee**  
 Mike Ball  
 Glen Hansman  
 Jim Iker  
 David Komljenovic  
 Susan Lambert  
 Joanna Larson  
 Denise Moffatt  
 Teri Mooring  
 Paul Steer  
 Christine Stewart  
 Wendy Turner

**ISSN 0841-9574**



Articles contained herein reflect the view of the authors and do not necessarily express official policy of the BC Teachers' Federation. The BC Teachers' Federation does not endorse or promote any products or services presented in the advertising sections of the newsmagazine. All advertisements will be reviewed and approved by the BCTF. They must reflect BCTF policy and be politically, environmentally, and professionally appropriate.

<b>Volume 25</b>	<b>Copy/Ad deadline</b>
1 September 2012	August 17, 2012
<b>2 October 2012*</b>	<b>September 21, 2012</b>
3 Nov./Dec. 2012	October 26, 2012
<b>4 Jan./Feb. 2013*</b>	<b>December 14, 2012</b>
5 March 2013	January 29, 2013
6 May/June 2013	TBA

\* Online version only

**CEPA** Canadian Educational Press Association  
**CALM** Canadian Association of Labour Media  
 PRINTED IN CANADA BY MITCHELL PRESS LIMITED

## Canadian Education Press Association awards

BCTF communications and *Teacher* newsmagazine won four awards from CEPA this past year. Congratulations to all the winners.

**Feature article**—Ken Novakowski for "1939-40: The Langley affair—Women take an early lead in struggle for teachers' bargaining rights"

**Feature article**—Nancy Knickerbocker for "Victimization goes viral on social networks"

**Illustration**—Jennifer Sowerby for "Victimization goes viral on social networks"

**Broadcast advertising in a public relations campaign**—NOW Communications for "Problem/Solution"



GEOFFPETERS PHOTOS

Cunliffe was able to engage local and provincial media. The daily livestream from each leg of the journey allowed him to express his personal feelings on the issues and the daily challenges he experienced.

With 14 marathons completed in 15 days, Cunliffe took a day to rest when he reached Hedley to attend the BCTF Representative

*“Right now, the education system funding has been cut so badly that it’s being held together by goodwill and duct tape. And my kids deserve better than duct tape.”*

Assembly in Kamloops. For Cunliffe the timing was perfect. He had been nursing sore ankles since he left Grand Forks. Greeted with a hero’s welcome and standing ovations from delegates, Cunliffe thanked his colleagues for their support and told them to meet him when he completed the final marathon in Vancouver at Canada Place. In an emotional address to the summer

conference delegates, Cunliffe explained why he would keep pushing himself to finish the journey. “I think the public deserves to have the honest facts about what’s going on in public education,” he said. “Right now, the education system funding has been cut so badly that it’s being held together by goodwill and duct tape. And my kids deserve better than duct tape.”

Cunliffe had broken his run into geographical segments. Getting to Hope in decent condition was the original objective. “If I can get to Hope, the rest is downhill!” While Cunliffe could walk and run in a forward direction, he found he did not have the agility and speed to react to the traffic. To avoid the busy and dangerous Trans Canada, he took to the side roads when he reached Agassiz and then cut over to Abbotsford, Langley, and then on to Surrey. In a morning call to a close friend, Cunliffe proudly declared, “To be still running August 31 on the final leg of the 22 marathons is simply a fantastic feeling!”

Cunliffe’s family was waiting for him at the finish line, with his young son holding a sign—Thank you Dada, for running for kids like us.

*David Halme, assistant director, BCTF Communications and Campaigns Division*

## Looking back

### 70 years ago

Millions of little hands are at work throughout the United Nations for the defeat of Fascism. When Moscow’s darkest hour struck, her children were found in the icy streets digging trenches and stuffing sandbags. And British Columbia’s young war savers have bought enough War Savings certificates to purchase two giant PBV bombers. Teachers must not be squeamish about telling the pupils the money they raise is to kill Nazis, or why Nazis must be killed. As they grow up our pupils will be aided in building and safeguarding the brave new world if from childhood they have shared in the struggle against the enemies of the people. – September, 1942, *The BC Teacher*

### 50 years ago

Many delegates to the Workload and Working Conditions Workshop thought that noon-hour supervision was a non-teaching activity that could be carried out by other than professionally trained teachers. All agreed that the efficiency of a classroom teacher was lowered when his noon-hour was shortened by the time required for supervision duties, and this was detrimental to the learning situation. Class size and pupil-teacher ratio was discussed, and all agreed that multi-grade classes should be avoided where possible, and, if it is impossible, there should be fewer pupils per teacher in such classes than in single-grade classes. – Sept./Oct. 1962, *The BC Teacher*

### 30 years ago

Teachers are in the midst of a fight for survival of the public education system in B.C. Most of us who have been teaching for a few years have been through the periodic

crises that the system faces. No one active in the school system now, though, has been confronted with a threat of the magnitude of the path of destruction charted by the provincial government in recent weeks. We have been asked to take a 25 per cent cut in our standard of living over the next year (during the depression teachers were asked to take pay cuts during a time of deflation; we are asked to take pay cuts in a time of inflation). And the cuts of staff from the system, although they probably won’t produce a wholesale closing down of the grade levels in the system, will dramatically decrease both the quantity and quality of educational service. – Sept./Oct. 1982, *The BC Teacher*

### 10 years ago

It is perhaps not widely enough known that the five non-instructional days in the school calendar are there as a result of an extension of the school year in the early 1970s. These days were not a gift, not a perk to make teaching an even easier job than some people already perceive it to be. Professional days are now seen as an opportunity to cut costs. Loading these days into the summer, in lieu of longer breaks during the school year, has become quite popular. Many teachers like the idea. There is, however, a dark side. Summer PD is starting to look like in-service or staff development. In other words school-district administrators and principals are taking on more and more of the organization of these days, and teachers are effectively losing their jurisdiction over the form and content of professional development. – Sept./Oct. 2002, *Teacher newsmagazine*

*Compiled by Chris Boeking, Keating Elementary School, Saanich*

## Young activists inspire and educate

By Nancy Knickerbocker

From the hushed scarlet chambers of the Senate to the noisy streets of Montreal, young activists have been making headlines across Canada and around the globe with their creative and spirited resistance to neo-liberal policies on education, the environment, and more.

Brigitte DePape, the rebel page who stood up in Parliament with a sign saying “STOP Harper,” and Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois, spokesperson for the militant Quebec student union CLASSE, both inspired summer conference participants with their stories and analysis.

DePape said that many teachers had inspired her as she grew up in Winnipeg, but especially her Grade 9 Spanish teacher, Don Carlos, who introduced her to social movements and progressive politics. “He provided the fuel to spark the fire.” After graduation she headed to Ottawa to work in the Senate page program as a first step toward her goal of becoming a change-maker through politics.



Brigitte DePape

“But I saw what the Conservative government is doing to Canada, to First Nations, to the environment.... I saw them reject the Climate Change Bill and that’s when I got the idea to take action,” DePape said.

On June 3, 2011, as the Governor-General read the Speech from the Throne, she stepped up, pulled her “STOP Harper” sign out of her uniform, and stood in silent but strong protest before the Prime Minister and so many other powerful people.

“I felt so afraid. I was terrified I’d lose my job. I was afraid of what my parents would think. How would my action be perceived? I was afraid of legal charges too. I was told that the worst case scenario would be 20 years in jail,” she said. “But then I thought of all the workers, the people of colour, the children and women being attacked by this government and I got a sense of our collective strength. I learned that solidarity is stronger than fear.”

After being hustled out of Parliament and questioned by the RCMP, DePape was indeed fired from her job. And, yes, her parents were upset with her. But the most affirming reaction came the next morning.

“I opened the Winnipeg Free Press and there was a letter to the editor from my teacher Don Carlos, saying he supported me and my action, and understood why I did it. That meant so much to me!”

Since her protest catapulted her into the public eye, DePape has been speaking out across Canada, collaborating with other young activists and working to debunk the myth that young people are apathetic. “I really feel we are at some kind of a turning point, an exciting moment of people power that began with the Arab Spring, the Occupy movement, and the Quebec student movement.”

“As teachers you hold a key to young people and their engagement,” DePape said, acknowledging the difference teachers made in her life. “Teachers and young people coming together—that’s when we will take back our future!”

Quebec teachers also played an important role in supporting the student movement throughout 20 weeks of strikes and massive demonstrations. “Profs contre la hausse

(Teachers against the tuition increase) were one of the major lobby groups that helped us in our struggle,” said Nadeau-Dubois.

So how did the “Maple Spring” transform a student strike into a popular movement? Coming after years of tuition freeze, the proposed increase would still have kept Quebec fees among the lowest in Canada. But what the students understood was that the increase represented not a fiscal goal, but an ideological one.

“We saw it was the first step toward breaking the social democratic culture of Quebec, where the gap between rich and poor is smallest,” said Nadeau-Dubois. “Ours was a fight to keep the historical difference in Quebec education.”

Quebec’s CJEP system provides universal access to free colleges and supports the strong network of universities, all of which charge very low fees. As a result, Quebec has a 10% higher participation rate in post-secondary education than the rest of Canada, and the best accessibility in North America, especially for middle- and working-class, rural, and immigrant students. “Many Quebec students are the very first in the history of their families to be able to go to university,” Nadeau-Dubois said.

It was also a fight against privatization of universities, he added. With the global economy now based on skills and knowledge rather than industrial production, “universities are more important to global capitalism as the source of research and knowledge.”

He pointed to the offloading of responsibility for funding post-secondary from governments onto corporations and individual students. When funding is privatized, the public interest is threatened. In exchange for their philanthropic support of universities, corporations can gain control over what research is conducted and which faculty are hired. Similarly, when universities raise tuition fees, they create student debt and with it “a very efficient disciplinary process to control the youth,” said Nadeau-Dubois.



Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois

“Facing a debt of \$40,000 you’ll choose sciences or marketing or engineering so you can make a big salary and pay it off. Debt modifies the relationship between the student and his education. If you are trained to see your education as an investment in your personal capital...and as a commodity, you are ready to see yourself in the cycle of debt and credit and capitalism.”

Nadeau-Dubois decried the transformation of universities into businesses and education into a commodity as threats to democracy and freedom. “It blocks the last places of free thinking and free speech,” he said. “The capitalist system is killing the very institution that allows us to be free together.”

Summer conference participants leapt to their feet with rousing applause and standing ovations for both DePape and Nadeau-Dubois. Some Francophone teachers banged pots and pans, echoing the exuberant “casseroles” protests on the streets of Quebec.

*Nancy Knickerbocker, BCTF media relations officer*

# What have we achieved in this last round of bargaining?

By Richard Hoover

At the end of February this year, after a year of fruitless bargaining with BCPSEA for a new collective agreement, the government introduced Bill 22, the so-called *Education Improvement Act*.

Bill 22 ended teacher strike action and imposed a cooling-off period, during which the BCTF and BCPSEA were required to continue bargaining under a restrictive and management-biased framework with the assistance of a mediator appointed by the Minister of Education.

The Bill specified that failure to end our limited essential services strike would result in unprecedented fines of more than \$20,000,000 a day for teachers, local and provincial leaders, and the BCTF.

The bill further mandated that the new collective agreement would be for a two-year term; not contain any salary increases or added costs of any kind; must include concessions regarding evaluation and discipline, professional development, posting and filling of vacancies, transfers, and layoff and recall.

The government also threatened to legislate the terms and conditions of work for teachers as set out in the bill should no agreement be reached by June 30.

Dr. Charles Jago was appointed by government to act as “mediator” between BCPSEA and the BCTF, and meetings began in the spring. The government representative on the BCPSEA team remained engaged in the process.

Bill 22 had the effect of suspending teachers’ right to full and free collective bargaining, including even the right to engage in a limited essential services strike that had been approved by the Labour Relations Board. Our hands were tied, teachers were forced to resume full duties, our salaries were frozen, and we were required to bargain the government’s contract concession demands. To call the meetings mandated by the *Education Improvement Act* with Dr. Jago, government and BCPSEA “bargaining” would require a suspension of one’s understanding of the English language.

After five days of intense and difficult meetings near the end of June with a government representative involved in the process, a tentative Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was signed and subsequently ratified by a vote of BCTF members and by BCPSEA.

Key elements of the MOA include:

- a two-year term beginning July 1, 2011, and ending June 30, 2013.
- improved leave provisions for bereavement, unpaid discretionary, compassionate care, family responsibility, and union business including TTOCs conducting union business.
- \$2.63 million to establish a standardized extended health benefits plan with improvements for about 75% of the membership.
- a process to clarify local and provincial bargaining matters.
- a process that could lead to enhanced local bargaining of local issues and the establishment of a provincial professional growth plan through continued discussions.
- no concessions.

A note on this last one. One of the major road blocks throughout this round of bargaining were government concessions. Government removed these from the table on the last Monday in June, allowing for progress to be made.

Aspects of the standardized extended health benefits plan, including retroactivity

and application, will be worked out with BCPSEA over the next little while. Each local will decide whether or not to keep their current plan or join the new standardized plan.

So, what have we accomplished, what have we yet to achieve, and what will we be facing in the next round of bargaining, which begins in March 2013, just seven months away?

## What we have

- two-year agreement
- government abandoned plan to legislate contract strips
- up to 75% of the membership have gained improvements in extended health benefits
- improved leave provisions
- hours of work provisions have been restored in local collective agreements
- our determination to make things better has not been extinguished.

## What we don’t have

- restoration of class-size/composition and staffing ratios illegally stripped in 2002
- right to bargain improvements in class-size/composition and staffing ratios
- much needed improvements in salary and prep time
- compensation from government for a decade of deteriorating working conditions under unconstitutional legislation
- right to full collective bargaining, including the right to withhold services.

## What we are facing

- an estimated loss of over 150 more FTE teaching positions this year
  - larger classes, fewer specialist teachers, fewer supports for students with special needs
  - government’s new “cash for kids” scheme that would see teachers offered extra pay for oversized classes
  - fewer resources
  - an effective cut in wages considering rising costs and frozen salaries
  - erosion of autonomy as administrators attempt to expand their management rights
  - government’s “cooperative gains” mandate for next round—another name for “net zero”
  - BCPSEA and government may put strips back on the bargaining table.
- The BCTF Representative Assembly has approved the development of a two-year strategic plan that has as its goals:
- Renewal of the social contract based on equity, partnership with public education, and public services.
  - Restoration of free collective bargaining.
  - Engagement of the public in defining what it wants from public education.
  - The public’s and the government’s respect for the autonomy of teachers.

There will be local general meetings in September where you will be able to learn more about the details of the MOA, this year’s new round of bargaining, the strategic plan, and the challenges we face. Become informed. Get involved. Make a difference.

Further details of the MOA, including all aspects of the standardized extended health benefits plan are available from your local union office or the BCTF web site through the BCTF Member Portal at [bctf.ca](http://bctf.ca). Look for “Agreement-in-committee.”

Richard Hoover, director,  
BCTF Field Services Division

## Viva la educación publica!



CHRISTINE STEWART PHOTO

## Mexican teachers and parents struggle to provide quality education

BCTF continues to strengthen solidarity between teachers across the Americas

By Nancy Knickerbocker

OCOTEPEC, Mexico—The jacaranda trees were in bloom and purple bougainvillea spilled over the walls surrounding Escuela Secundaria No. 8 in this village about two hours drive south of Mexico City. A couple of lazy dogs were asleep in the courtyard, but the atmosphere in the classrooms was alert and purposeful as two dozen visitors arrive from the Tri-National Coalition in Defence of Public Education.

Students Miguel Angel and Maria Guadalupe, wearing their uniforms of crisp white shirts, green sweaters, plaid pants, and kilt, welcomed us. They explained to us that their school is named for Pablo Torres Burgos, a teacher who risked everything to fight alongside the revolutionary hero Emiliano Zapata for agrarian reform and the rights of campesinos, and was assassinated by federal agents in 1911.

The students and staff were immensely proud to show us around their school, but they didn’t hesitate to point out the many challenges they face in asserting the right to quality public education for all.

Teacher Claudia Rebolgar Estrada explained that the school operates in two shifts daily, welcoming children from Ocotepc and a number of surrounding villages. A staff of 90 teachers are responsible for the 750 middle-school students who attend in the morning shift and 500 more in the afternoon.

Rebolgar Estrada said teachers here in the state of Morelos have been speaking out loudly about the need to reduce class sizes, and have had an impact. The state’s new education minister, a former teacher activist, recently brought in regulations that cap class sizes at 25–30. However, with current staffing and funding levels, schools have no capacity to implement the limits. Class sizes remain unmanageable at 40–45 or even higher. One geography class we visited had 47 students.

Teachers in Morelos and throughout Mexico struggle to meet the needs of their students while trying not to place too heavy a burden on their parents, most of whom cannot afford to pay extra for the learning resources their children need. There is a close relationship between schools and communities, but, with so little provided by government, it’s an uphill battle for everyone.

Access to resources is highly political, said Rebolgar Estrada. Fine promises are made at the beginning of every six-year election cycle but, inevitably, they are later broken. For example, before the last election candidates promised funding for equipment to fulfill the dream of creating a computer lab for the school. After voting day they did indeed receive the monitors, but not the computers themselves—much to the frustration and disappointment of teachers and students alike!

Teachers’ wages are low and working conditions are difficult. Teachers only get one 20-minute break during the working day. They are paid a scant 50 pesos, about \$3.65, per instructional hour. Thus, a full-time teacher working 42 hours a week earns only 2,100 pesos—roughly \$155. However, very few teachers have full-time positions.

José Martín Medina, a young physical education teacher, only works 20 hours a

week. He says his situation is typical, and many colleagues get as few as 10 hours a week so they have to teach at more than one school or take other part-time jobs to survive.

As well as the lack of a living wage, Medina lamented the lack of resources to do the job properly, whether it’s teaching physical education or academic subjects. For example, his students love soccer, but the only ball they have to use is made from wads of newspaper wrapped in duct tape.

Medina and other Mexican teachers expressed deep concern about the high drop-out rate. Although university education is free or almost free in Mexico, few young people have the opportunity to attend. He said many children from the surrounding villages are growing up in deep poverty, so by age 12 or 13 they face a lot of pressure to leave school and go to work to help their families.

Students are also required to pay for many school supplies that would still be covered in BC, such as the costs of chemicals needed in the science lab. Even if ice is required for experiments, students must bring it to school—an amazing expectation in the heat of the Morelos hillsides!

Mexican students with special needs face additional challenges. Traditionally they have been segregated in special education classes, but recently government has been proposing a policy of integration.

Teachers Graciela Rangel from the state of Michoacan and Josefina Martinez from Morelos see this policy shift as just another way for government to cut costs at the expense of teachers and their most vulnerable students. Rangel pointed out that there is no training for teachers to help students with special needs, and no extra pay for teachers who are able take on the challenge.

“There are no conditions for integration, and no budget for adaptations,” Martinez said. “Our school doesn’t even have a ramp so that a student in a wheelchair could enter our doors.”

Over a delicious lunch of salad and pozole, the typical pre-Columbian corn soup served with chicken, avocado, and chiles, both Rangel and Martinez agreed that no matter what the issue—special needs or class size or working conditions—they are united in their union as agents for fundamental social change.

“What really impressed me was the enthusiasm for teaching and learning displayed by both the teachers and students under incredible, adverse conditions,” said BCTF 1st Vice-President Jim Iker. “It was also neat to see the respect and affection shown by the students for their teachers.”

“Our Mexican colleagues reinforced for me again firsthand, the importance of speaking out and advocating for strong, quality public education systems with better resources and improved working and learning conditions,” he said.

Iker was also inspired to witness how the Mexican teachers are struggling against such severe odds to make a difference in student’s lives: “It made me feel proud to be a teacher.”

Nancy Knickerbocker,  
BCTF media relations officer

# True or false? The BCTF is a political organization

By Ken Novakowski

A provincial election will be held on May 14, 2013, and again the BCTF will attempt to secure public support for a stronger, better-funded, and more inclusive public education system, and for the election of a government that respects teachers and supports them in the important work they do each and every day in their classrooms and schools. The BCTF has long been recognized as playing an important role in shaping the politics of this province; it possesses a significant capacity to communicate with members and with the public and uses that capacity to advocate for an improved public education system.

So I thought it would be helpful in the months leading up to the next provincial election to clarify some of the realities and debunk some of the myths about BCTF involvement in the political process. I devised five important true or false statements. Read on and see how you score!

**Since its inception, the BCTF has always participated in some form of electoral political action. True or false?**

During the first 50 years of our history (1917–1967), there is no evidence of any organizational intervention by the BCTF in the electoral processes of the province. As a teacher organization we had a close working relationship with the Department of Education and the government of the day. However, the Federation's role was most often subordinate and non-critical. That changed in the 1969 election when the BCTF, on the heels of its "Over 40" campaign, geared to raise public concern about large class sizes, ran its "Apple Campaign," granting an apple designation to education-friendly candidates.

This electoral action debut was followed by a dramatic intervention in the subsequent 1972 election when then BCTF president Adam Robertson publicly declared that "We won't live with it." He was referring to changes introduced by the Social Credit

government of the day, changes that would: restrict a school district's ability to raise revenue (they had the right to levy local taxes then); chip away at teacher tenure rights; and impose a government ceiling on teacher-arbitrated wage settlements (local bargaining). Teachers were opposed to the government's actions and strongly supported their organization's move to influence the upcoming election by calling for the defeat of that government. Thousands of teachers responded by working for opposition parties in that election. The government was defeated.

And even though the BCTF ran public "pro-education" campaigns in the 1979, 1983, and 1986 elections, it was not until 1991 that the organization fully mobilized to help defeat the government of the day, the very Vander Zalm Social Credit government that had given teachers full statutory collective bargaining rights at the local level a mere four years earlier. The issues were the same—reductions in education funding, legislative limits to teacher salary increases, and marginalization of teacher influence in educational decision-making. An estimated 6,000 teachers participated in the Federation's "Teachers Make a Difference" campaign. Teachers clearly did make a difference in that campaign and once again the government was defeated.

Ten years later, along came Gordon Campbell and the BC Liberals. His government set out to cut taxes primarily for corporations and middle- and high-income earners and to launch major cutbacks in education and healthcare to pay for those tax cuts. This included major contract stripping of freely negotiated collective agreements of healthcare workers and teachers. His government closed schools, reduced the number of teaching positions, unilaterally legislated teacher terms and conditions of employment, and reduced overall funding and support for public schools. In the 2005 election, the BCTF spent \$5 million on a public media campaign to help defeat the Campbell government. The effort fell short of changing the government but helped to ensure a strong opposition in the previously one-sided Legislative Assembly. **FALSE**

**The BCTF has been non-partisan in its electoral political action campaigns. True or false?**

While the BCTF has frequently called for the defeat of sitting governments because of their regressive education policies and legislative infringements on teacher rights, as an organization, the BCTF has never called for the election of a particular political party or donated money to a political party. Hence it remains non-partisan. Many other unions openly support the New Democratic Party and some are even affiliated to the NDP. They donate money directly to the NDP. When there are effectively only two parties in BC vying for power, the BCTF electoral stance of opposing the policies and record of a government or calling for its defeat is often misconstrued as support for the other party. Yet the BCTF to date has not endorsed or financially contributed to the election of any political party. **TRUE**

**The BCTF constitution and by-laws prohibit the BCTF from financially contributing to or endorsing a political party. True or false?**

In 1972, the BCTF Annual General Meeting voted to levy a day's pay from every member to help defeat the Social Credit government of the day. When the action was challenged in the courts by dissident members, the court ruled that the BCTF could not levy members for the purpose of giving monies so raised to political parties. Because the Federation's planned levy was thwarted by the courts, teachers formed the Teachers' Political Action Committee, a group separate and independent from the BCTF but involving many of the BCTF provincial and local leaders. TPAC raised money voluntarily from teachers, gave money to opposition political parties, hired organizers to work in opposition campaigns, and went on to make a big difference in helping to defeat the government. The BCTF constitution provides

for "the attainment of the purposes of the Federation by participation in educational, social, co-operative, electoral, political, economic, bargaining, or other activity authorized pursuant to the by-laws of the Federation." By-law 4.3 prohibits the use of a levy "to finance political parties or their campaigns," but otherwise does not prevent the BCTF from endorsing a political party or financially contributing to its campaign. Successive generations of leaders and members of the BCTF have simply chosen to maintain the organization's non-partisan position. **FALSE**

**The BCTF offers education policy advice to both government and opposition parties. True or False?**

The BCTF has a policy book full of positions on educational issues taken by teachers over many years through their democratic organizational structures. Officers of the Federation frequently meet with government and opposition representatives to advocate for teacher positions on a wide range of professional, social, and economic issues, regardless of the party in power or in opposition. For example, when the NDP was in office in the nineties, BCTF representatives met with NDP ministers and the NDP caucus. But, we also met with the education committee of the opposition BC Liberals and even attended their convention as observers. **TRUE**

**Teachers today have good cause to work for the defeat of the current provincial government.**

Elaboration not required. **TRUE**

*Ken Novakowski, retired teacher, former BCTF executive director, BCTF past president, currently on the board of the Labour Heritage Centre.*

## Starving the reading tree

Minister wants BC schools to make reading top priority in early grades, *Vancouver Sun*, July 26, 2012.

Once upon a time there was a Liberal education minister—in fact five Liberal education ministers—who were so enamoured with their love of reading that they boldly proclaimed the promise of a "New Era" of North American leadership for British Columbia in the field. Sadly, this promise was not to be, as minister after minister, neglected to nourish the reading tree with their cumulative cuts to programs and services so that slowly, over a decade, the tree lost its essential sustaining support.

But along came magical George Abbott, our new education minister, with a promise to reinvigorate the reading tree; however, unfortunately once more the government onus was put on the dedicated workers who had already won international accolades for their superb work in the field.

Magic George, regrettably, had a brief senior moment, when interviewed by a Vancouver radio station host and could not recall the repeated and cumulative losses the field workers experienced as their colleagues—1,500 in all—across the literary landscape disappeared from view: teacher-librarians (277); ESL teachers (328); special education teachers (737); school counsellors (106); Aboriginal teachers (10). Not to mention the shortage of tools and the

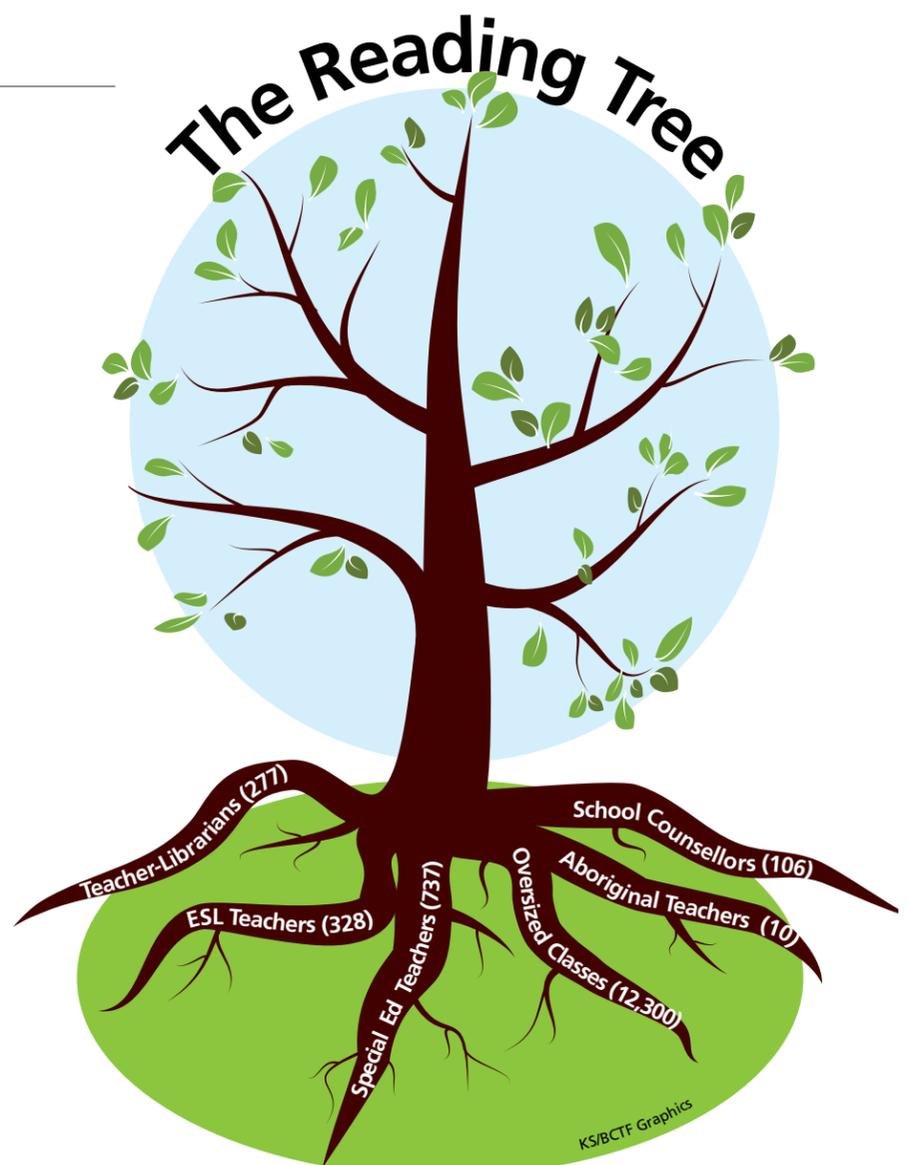
stressful conditions the workers experienced—the 12,300 oversized classes; the shortage of pre-literacy, read-aloud books, basal instructional readers, plus school library books; the loss of inner-city head start programs; and the loss of access to school-based learning assistance services as well as specialized and intensive, district remedial reading programs.

Indeed the workers and their parent helpers often had to initiate fundraising drives to sustain the materials and supplies the reading tree needed.

But Magic George, wise in the ways of the world and knowing that a provincial election was in the offing—indeed the minister being the current co-chair of the party platform—had to do something tangible, so he and the elves in Victoria decided to appoint yet another superintendent, this time in reading, to oversee the workers.

And so the sad tale of the undernourished reading tree in British Columbia continues unchanged, with the weary workers hoping in the spring to see a change of government.

*Noel Herron, former Vancouver trustee and school principal*



# Education is a big winner in copyright changes



By Larry Kuehn

The copyright environment is suddenly much freer when it comes to using materials in education. A combination of a new law and Supreme Court of Canada decision changes the rules for teachers.

The new copyright law has expanded dramatically the range of materials that can be copied and used for education without getting permission or paying fees. The “fair dealing” provisions are now closer to the wider permissions that teachers in the US have long had under “fair use” rules.

These are some of the new education-related elements:

- The law expands “fair dealing” to include education, dramatically widening the materials that can be copied without permission or payments.
- As a matter of principle, both producers and users have rights that should be balanced, not primarily on either side.
- The Supreme Court decision provides that a teacher can copy for students material for research and private study. Justice Abella in the decision says:

*Teachers have no ulterior motive when providing copies to students. Nor can teachers be characterized as having the completely separate purpose of “instruction”; they are there to facilitate the students’ research and private study. It seems to me to be axiomatic that most students lack the expertise to find or request the materials required for their own research and private study, and rely on the guidance of their teachers. They study what they are told to study, and the teacher’s purpose in providing copies is to enable the students to have the material they need for the purpose of studying. The teacher/copier therefore shares a symbiotic purpose with the student/user who is engaging in research or private study. Instruction and research/private study are, in the school context, tautological.*

Further, Abella states:

*...photocopies made by a teacher and provided to primary and secondary school students are an essential element in the research and private study undertaken by those students. The fact that some copies were provided on request and others were not, did not change the significance of those copies for students engaged in research and private study.*

Abella also refuses to limit “private study”:

*With respect, the word “private” in “private study” should not be understood as requiring users to view copyrighted works in splendid isolation. Studying and learning are essentially personal endeavours, whether they are engaged in with others or in solitude. By focusing on the geography of classroom instruction rather than on the concept of studying, the Board again artificially separated the teachers’ instruction from the students’ studying.*

- However, fair dealing does not give an unlimited right to copy, even for education—education ministries should produce information on fair dealing that clearly provides guidelines for teachers.
- The Court defined a new principle of technological neutrality, meaning that the same rules should apply for online and hard copies. Michael Geist describes the intent as “copyright law should not stand in the way of technological progress and potentially impede the opportunities for greater access afforded by the Internet through the imposition of additional fees or restrictive rules that create extra user costs.”
- Limits to the use of publicly available material on the internet are removed. Contents on millions of web sites can be used without permission or compensation. All created material—in print or online—has long automatically had a copyright without the need for the creator to claim it.

To be clear legally, educational institutions needed to seek permission and sometimes pay fees to use web content. That is no longer a requirement.

- Public performances in schools are entitled to some new exceptions—that will reduce licensing costs for schools for music and drama productions.

## Two negatives for education in the new Copyright Act—digital locks and electronic disposal

Despite extensive lobbying, the new act prohibits breaking digital locks. These are limits built into the software to stop access outside of a specified use. These locks are possible to break with other software—existing or to be developed when new locks are invented.

The act makes it illegal to break these locks, even if the user has the legal right to the content. For example, content that could be used in education under the fair dealing provisions could not be used because it is behind a lock that is illegal to break.

A huge campaign had dozens of organizations oppose the provisions, but corporate interests were successful in getting the Conservative government to leave those provisions in the new law.

The other negative is a requirement that some digital course content, such as in online learning, must be destroyed within 30 days after the offering of the course is completed. This provision presumably applies to online material with a copyright and which is being used using the fair dealing education provisions.

The wording of the Copyright Act is:

6) The educational institution and any person acting under its authority, except a student, shall

(a) destroy any fixation of the lesson within 30 days after the day on which the students who are enrolled in the course to which the lesson relates have received their final course evaluations.

This is not just unclear (“fixation of the lesson”), but makes no sense from the practical perspective of courses that are offered more than once—requiring the teacher to start over every time the course is taught?

*The new copyright law has expanded dramatically the range of materials that can be copied and used for education without getting permission or paying fees.*

## Getting the word out

The new rules require information for teachers about the practical implications. The ministry should undertake an information campaign such as the one carried out when the Access Copyright licensing was adopted.

Because the new rules will allow copying without charge under rules similar to the current license with Access Copyright, the province should not renew the license as it is. The millions of dollars saved should be shifted to funding school libraries for the purchase of resources. The funds would still go to creators, but with access for students to more learning materials.

Larry Kuehn, director,  
BCTF Research and Technology Division

## Resources

- Contact North publication, “The Perfect Storm: Canadian Copyright Law 2012.” [contactnorth.ca/sites/default/files/pdf](http://contactnorth.ca/sites/default/files/pdf)
- Michael Geist blog, [www.michaelgeist.ca](http://www.michaelgeist.ca)

# Rio +20 Dodging global sustainability using a green economy narrative

By Louise Gonsalvez

In June, 2012, world leaders, non-government agencies, Supreme Court judges, corporate executives, academics, Indigenous peoples, and a broad representation of civil society converged on Rio, Brazil, to attend meetings, conferences, and protest marches. Unfortunately, few leaders of the official Rio +20 summit were willing to move beyond national interest, corporate pressures, and green economy narratives thus disregarding their call to reconsider the trajectory that current economics, governance, and socio-environmental systems are taking us.

*What was lacking at these meetings was not only the moral and ethical imperative to make necessary changes, but also an epistemological vision and belief that another way of being (e.g., culturally, economically, and environmentally) is possible...*

Underpinning many of the dialogues was an accountability agenda that wanted to quantify (\$\$\$) all systems (e.g., social, environmental, and cultural) rather than transform them. “Apparently worker bees are worth 190 billion dollars a year! Now we all know that when a bee or a butterfly pollinates a flower, it does not send you an invoice or issue a receipt!” (Nnimmo Bassey, Nigerian activist, architect, and winner of the alternative Nobel Prize). What was lacking at these meetings was not only the moral and ethical imperative to make necessary changes, but also an epistemological vision and belief that another way of being (e.g., culturally, economically, and environmentally) is possible—something that is so smugly shirked by those who claim to know what isn’t possible and benefit substantially from perpetuating such a myth.

On the brighter side, Rio’s People’s Summit provided an engaging forum for substantial dialogue on how we must rethink the cultural, social, environmental, and economic intersections of development, well-being, and prosperity and how we define each of these concepts. Flamingo Park provided an engaging space (flamboyant costumes, political signage, and large open tents) for civil society to address the complexities of sustainability (e.g., forums on water, population control, women’s empowerment, climate change, deforestation, Indigenous rights, poverty, alternative energy choices, food security, human rights), to network and organize solidarity activities such as lobbying government leaders to adopt new policies. Over 200 non-governmental agencies joined in the People’s Summit and all of them worked together to provide meaningful solutions to counter our

infinite growth patterns that are at odds with our finite planet. There were a number of protest marches throughout the week and I was able to participate in one sponsored by local Brazilians. They were challenging the presence of Iranian President Ahmadinejad at the Rio Summit given his aggressive position on a number of human rights (e.g., homosexuality) and peace and security issues (e.g., Israel).

There were a number of academic, corporate, and legal conferences taking place alongside the mainstream Rio +20 event. I attended and presented at the International Society for Ecological Economics Conference and the sessions were fabulous—the Prime Minister of Bhutan’s speech was profound). Many economists are seeking to integrate environmental, social, and cultural dynamics into economic practices, teaching, and learning. The Corporate Social Responsibility Conference in Rio brought upward of a thousand CEOs to the cosmopolitan contrasts of Rio (towering mountains/white-sand beaches; opulent hotels/tin-roofed flavalas; smoke-heaving trains of buses on Rio Branco Avenue/downtown bike paths along Ipanema, Guanabara, and Copacabana beaches). A very historic and little known meeting took place in Rio—the Supreme Court justices from various countries gathered for talks on sustainability. As Stanley Johnson of *The Guardian* states, “Yet this reporter can testify to the fact that Lord Carnwath’s subtle chairing of one of the world congress’s key sessions led to possibly the congress’s most important recommendation, namely that it was time to strengthen public participation in decision-making, and also to improve access to justice and

*A very historic and little known meeting took place in Rio—the Supreme Court justices from various countries gathered for talks on sustainability.*

information. The session considered the vital role of the judiciary (including public prosecutors and auditors) in the implementation and enforcement of environmental law.” I believe Rio +20 has brought us to a convergence where activists, educators, researchers, policy-makers, courts of law, unions, and sustainability-minded corporations, and governments recognize that we need to transform the downward-spiraling economic models that are failing us. I look forward to exploring the newly emerging intersections—environmental justice, socio-economic sustainability, and law—as they pertain to oil spills in the Niger Delta. The Centre for International Law and Global Sustainability, University of Ottawa, is hosting a conference in the fall and has asked me to present my paper.

Louise Gonsalvez,  
Sparwood Secondary School, Sparwood



Hundreds of activists marched along Rio’s famed Ipanema Beach to protest Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s attendance at the UN summit on sustainable development, June 17, 2012.

# Pearson's plan to control education

Report to the BC Teachers' Federation

By Donald Gutstein

The following is the executive summary of a research report on Pearson plc and their plans for education.

Pearson plc is the world's largest education company, with operations on nearly every continent. The company earns the bulk of its revenue from digital texts, online learning tools, virtual schools, student and teacher testing programs and services, student information systems, instructional management systems, and much more. It became large by buying up its competitors. It dominates the huge American education market and probably now has its eye on British Columbia, as the province charts a course from print to digital, to what BC Education Minister George Abbott calls 21st century learning using technology. (That's what Pearson calls it too.) This report traces Pearson's corporate strategies and how they might impact BC's public education system, particularly through the BC Education Plan.

According to investment research firm Sanford Bernstein & Co., Pearson is pursuing a variety of growth strategies, including one that will "revolutionize how education is delivered to students around the world, starting with the United States." It is an ambitious attempt to further commercialize education by claiming its products and services will raise student and teacher performance while at the same time cutting spending. If successful, Bernstein argues, "it would make every teacher and school student in the United States a potential customer" by "personalizing education in US

schools through technology and best practices." And since British Columbia is part of the North American Education division, it too will become a target for the new strategy.

In October 2011, Education Minister Abbott announced his government's plan "to transform education so that every student can excel and thrive in a rapidly evolving world." An analysis of the plan's elements indicates the plan may be designed, not for students or teachers, but for the corporate sector, in which Pearson is a leading player. The plan consists of five elements, each of which could become a profit centre for Pearson (as well as other technology and education corporations).

*This report traces Pearson's corporate strategies and how they might impact BC's public education system, particularly through the BC Education Plan.*

## Personalized learning for every student

Pearson's partnership with adaptive learning company Knewton is at the heart of efforts to personalize learning. Knewton builds its software into online classes that watch students' every move: scores, speed, accuracy, delays, keystrokes, click-streams, and drop-offs.

Pearson was selected by the OECD to develop the framework for the 2015 PISA assessment, whose main focus will be testing the scientific literacy of students

around the world, making greater use of computer-based testing—a Pearson specialty.

## Quality teaching and learning

Pearson is the provider of the set of rubrics used to assess teacher performance in New York and the provider of the model for teacher evaluation used in Tennessee.

In 2006, Pearson bought National Evaluation Systems, the leading provider of customized state assessments for teacher certification in the US.

The company scaled up its exposure in this market through an agreement with Stanford University to develop a national licensure procedure that assesses pre-service teacher candidates. More than 25 states and 90 teacher-preparation programs have signed on to outsource teacher assessment to Pearson-Stanford.

## Flexibility and choice

Pearson is the second-largest operator of virtual schools, achieving this position by purchasing leading player, Connections Education, in September 2011, crossing the line from supporting schools to operating them. The Connections Academy division operates online charter schools in 21 states with 40,000 student-customers.

## High standards

Pearson dominates the US school-testing market. If BC moves in the direction of online testing on a large scale, Pearson will likely be first in line to win contracts.

Pearson has another product that fits into the Education Plan's call for high standards, the Schoolnet Instructional Management System. (See discussion earlier.)

## Learning empowered by technology

Pearson leads the student information systems (SIS) industry because of its purchase of Apple Computer's PowerSchool and Burnaby, BC-based Chancery Software, in 2007.

*Pearson is the provider of the set of rubrics used to assess teacher performance in New York and the provider of the model for teacher evaluation used in Tennessee.*

In 2010, Pearson purchased The Administrative Assistants, the Ontario-based company that designed the province's student information system, BCeSIS, giving it a dominant position for student information systems in the Canadian market.

The company probably tops the list of candidates to win the contract to build and operate BC's SIS.

The discussion of the Education Plan in this report is speculative because the BC government has not yet implemented the plan's elements. It should be known within a year, though, if Pearson wins the student information system contract. And if the company's record is any indication, once it has its foot in the door, look for other Pearson products to follow.

*Donald Gutstein taught in the Communications School at Simon Fraser University for 20 years. His most recent book was Not a Conspiracy Theory: How Business Propaganda Hijacks Democracy. He has written articles on a range of topics, including a look at how the Fraser Institute has been trying to influence education in BC. His articles are available at donaldgutstein.com. E-mail: gutstein@sfu.ca*

For the full report: <http://tinyurl.com/8rmu8ct>

# The world matters and teachers care: Rewards of international volunteering

By Marian Dodds

"Are you a mercenary?" I asked. He mumbled something else. "Oh, a missionary." No, he shook his head. Finally I got it "Ah, you do masonry!" A few years back, I would never have envisioned myself having this conversation with a stranger wanting to practice his English on an overcrowded minibus careening through the stunningly beautiful northeastern highlands of rural Ethiopia. But here I am, happily retired, having a grand adventure as a Cuso International volunteer in Ethiopia.

In September 2010 I found myself in Woldia, a rural town 520 km north of the capital city, assigned to teach the Higher Diploma Program (HDP) to the staff of the Woldia College of Teacher Education. The HDP is a Ministry of Education sponsored diploma designed to enhance the skills of university and teachers' college instructors in active learning, reflective practice, continuous assessment, and action research. A lot like the Principles of Teaching I had once taught as a faculty associate at both SFU and UBC and something any BC teacher would find familiar.

I shared a house and classroom with Shelagh from Nottingham who was there to set up the college's English Language Improvement Center. Together, as the only ferengi (foreigners) in the town, we shared a year of memorable experiences: everything from befriending a goat named ChoCho, enjoying Doro Wot (chicken and egg stew in very hot sauce) for breakfast with our landlady on religious festival days, juggling six invitations to people's homes for Easter dinner, drinking endless tiny cups of coffee at coffee ceremonies, weekly Amharic lessons from an amazing Grade 12 boy to celebrating the birth of a colleague's daughter. With good humour we coped with water and power cuts and got creative by improvising tasty meals on a hot plate using locally available ingredients.

At the end of June we were all proud to celebrate the graduation of the HDP candidates.

And yes, we did our best to follow the mantra "Sharing Skills, Changing Lives." Certainly our lives changed with this experience and we continue to keep in touch now that Shelagh is back in England. Since I am still in Ethiopia I have had visits from some Woldia teachers and others connect by phone. Thanks to world-shrinking technology we also use e-mail and Facebook even if Ethiopian Internet remains "slow speed"! Will this change the world? Certainly not on any seismic scale. As teachers, we

*Cuso International is currently recruiting teachers for placements starting in January 2013. To learn more about these opportunities go to [www.cusointernational.org](http://www.cusointernational.org)*

know that we can never really gauge the differences we have made in the lives others; we do it because we are driven by our passionate belief in education as the path to a better world. That's my intrinsic reward and, I imagine, what sustains most teachers. I guess I could have told the guy on the minibus I was a mason too—putting in some building blocks to strengthen the foundations of these teachers' professional practice.

When a new position came up as a Gender Advisor to the Ethiopian Ministry of Education for 2011–13, I leapt at this opportunity to pursue my passion for gender equality and my transfer was arranged for a two-year appointment to the MOE Gender Directorate in the capital city, Addis Ababa. Once I had adjusted to the pollution and traffic chaos in a city of three million, established good working relationships with my colleagues, and slowly learned the inner workings of the bureaucracy, I began to find my place. The Ethiopian proverb "Slowly,

slowly the egg will walk" went through my head a lot those first few months.

It is absolutely fascinating to be in a place where the United Nations Millennium Development Goals are not just words on paper but the driving force for our work. And work there is! MDG #3: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, guides our activities from the primary to secondary schools, in regional education bureaus, post secondary colleges, universities, and technical and vocational colleges. There's a long road ahead for Ethiopia with wide gender gaps in education. Despite impressive improvements in enrolment in primary schools over the past 10 years and legislation and government policies to support gender equality, rampant sexual harassment, harmful traditional practices, such as child brides, and community attitudes that often do not value education for girls, remain key challenges.

Now living what I once only read about, while sitting in my office at the BCTF working with the Status of Women program in the 1980s and Social Justice for the last four years of my career, I thank the BCTF for encouraging me on the path that has led to where I now sit, in Room 309 of the Ethiopian Ministry of Education. The experience I gained working on BCTF staff to co-ordinate women's rights and social justice initiatives including CIDA funded Global Classroom Initiatives, and by participating on CTF Project Overseas teams in Belize and Sierra Leone, all compounded to ignite in me a passion to pursue, in retirement, long-term international work on the ground in Africa.

Climbing the stairs to my office on the third floor of the massive Ministry of Education building in Addis Ababa, I think how much BC teachers have to offer the volunteer world. For fit and healthy retirees, volunteering presents an ideal opportunity to share skills we have developed over our careers, to give back to the wider world and to expand our own horizons. As with any voyage into the unknown, there are highs and lows and surprises that can horrify



Buying onions

(especially the toilets!), amaze or delight, no matter how much pre-departure preparation one does. A sense of humour, adaptability, being open to other worldviews, empathy and compassion are essentials for the volunteer's inner backpack. The rewards are fascinating new learning, amazing cross cultural experiences, new friendships, a sense of purpose, and beyond borders interconnections to last the rest of one's life.

You are invited to experience my volunteer life through my blog: [www.spiderwebsunite.wordpress.com](http://www.spiderwebsunite.wordpress.com).

Marian Dodds, retired teacher

Cuso International is a non-profit development organization that works through volunteers. Each year, Cuso sends hundreds of global citizens to work on collaborative development projects in more than 20 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

Cuso International engages committed, highly skilled volunteers, placing them with carefully selected organizations where a two-way knowledge exchange has a life-long impact on the volunteer, their colleagues, the organizations, and the communities in which they are based. Cuso International is currently recruiting teachers for placements starting in January 2013. To learn more about these opportunities go to: [www.cusointernational.org](http://www.cusointernational.org)

## Opinion

## A review of the Liberals' 11 years in office

Scandals, snafus, shenanigans, and secrecy sink Liberal run at fourth term in office; profound lack of trust dogs party as support crumbles



By Noel Herron

As the May provincial election approaches and the downward slide in almost every poll continues unabated, the BC Liberals desperately seek to shore up their political support (up to and including a possible name change) among its core supporters and conservative voters. Despite Premier Christy Clark's best efforts, the long and enduring presence of Gordon Campbell still casts an ominous shadow over the political landscape in BC.

Elected two years ago by Liberal supporters, Premier Clark has seen her political honeymoon gradually dissolve in ashes until she now has reached an historic low in her personal ratings. While the prospect of a quick provincial election at the time of her ascension may now look good in the Liberals' rear-view mirror, the upcoming provincial test in May 2013, after 12 years at the helm, is proving a daunting task for the embattled party.

*And the BC Liberals wonder why they are in trouble as their electoral birds fly home to roost.*

The reasons for this are many and varied: a sharp and unhealed split with the conservative voters who previously formed part of the party's successful coalition; a mistaken, if not arrogant, decade-long, sense of entitlement that surfaces occasionally; quick policy fixes that often fail to gain support; sheer administrative ineptitude with repeated gaffs by inept cabinet ministers; never-ending electioneering by a new and grandstanding premier; over-the-top spinning; a failed ad hominum assault on the leader of the opposition; a pervasive lack of openness and accountability and, above all, a profound lack of trust by the ruling party in its dealings with the electorate.

A look back at many of the scandals, shenanigans, and missteps that have marked the Liberals' dramatic downward path in the polls proves instructive as we approach the upcoming election:

### The HST fiasco

Of all the initiatives undertaken by the BC Liberals, this stands out as the most damaging and enduring of the scandals that have weakened the once powerful coalition. Born in deception and nurtured in deceit, this fiasco led to Gordon Campbell's ignominious ouster and his replacement by a waffling Christy Clark. The ham-fisted implementation of the tax (the Liberals spent \$5 million in advertising defending the HST) and the subsequent defeat in a province-wide referendum marked the start of the sharp decline in the Liberals' fortunes.

The former finance minister, Colin Hansen's "explanations" on the origins of the HST were masterpieces of doublespeak. The fact remains, that every single Liberal MLA, who plans to run again and who voted for the hated tax, will have to account for it. The HST controversy promises to be one of two defining issues (along with the Enbridge brouhaha) of the 2013 election.

### The Basi/Virk scandal

Yet another enduring fiasco that still remains fresh in the memory of many voters, thanks to the province's auditor general's ongoing legal efforts to obtain access to internal government documents. This led to the outrageous \$6.5 million plea bargain deal on BC Rail with disgraced Liberal aides Dave Basi and Bob Virk. Never mind the fact that the original sell-off of BC Rail itself was a broken promise by the Liberals, the suspicion, indeed anger, remains that the Liberals had much to hide if this potentially explosive trial proceeded on its full course. A parade of former ministers and MLA's, who were slated to testify, was cut short by what is now widely regarded as a shoddy back-room deal. The NDP opposition is promising a full public investigation, which the Liberals have flatly refused.

### Community Living (CLBC) shenanigans

Victoria's *Times Colonist* newspaper won a national award for its exposé of the shocking mishandling of government support for people with developmental disabilities. Victoria shamefully forced adults with developmental disabilities to move from group homes to cheaper accommodation. This scandal greatly embarrassed the Liberals forcing them to add \$40 million to improve services and introduce policy changes. It led to the demotion of the then minister of social development, the hapless

Harry Bloy, and the subsequent inept handling of generous raises for CBLC directors of the organization has tarnished the current minister—Stephanie Cadieux.

### A secretive government

The Liberals frequently boasted that BC had "the most open provincial government in Canada," which is not saying much, given our low international rankings in this area among industrialized nations. Victoria, with its foot-dragging and prohibitive access fees, specifically designed to deter access to official documentation, has literally mocked the province's *Freedom of Information Act*. Auditor General John Doyle, an independent officer of the legislature, has been forced to take the government to court to obtain information, while Vincent Gogelek, head of the BC Freedom of Information Association, has followed him on the same path. Add to this, Mary Ellen Turpel, the province's independent child advocate, who forced the government, through the courts, to turn over documents relating to the deaths of foster children in care. Part and parcel of this debate is the repeated reluctance and refusal of the Liberals to accept advice from any independent panel and, in particular, to ignore completely the investigative bodies mandated by the BC legislature.

What else have the Liberals tried to hide from us?

- Three egregious examples will suffice:
    - The attempt to withhold promotion information on a \$780,000 HST pamphlet (paid for by taxpayers and later shredded) on the flimsy excuse that the pamphlet was originally an advisory to cabinet.
    - A \$300 million closed-door, technology contract with IBM (teachers will have particular interest in this hidden contract, which funded the BCEsis fiasco in our schools).
    - The current ongoing battle to obtain crucial data related to the infamous BC Rail scandal (as noted above).
- Little wonder that cynicism toward this government now seems to multiply exponentially.

### The BC Hydro caper

This jewel in the BC economic crown has been badly tarnished under the BC Liberals. After a decade of behind-door political interference in the affairs of the crown corporation, a huge cloud of uncertainty hangs over the potential debt that the corporation is being forced to carry. Locking

in long-term contracts with private power producers at prices higher than the current market is a major concern. Hydro's \$18 billion plan to refurbish and expand its own generating and transmission facilities deserves much closer scrutiny. The uncertainty among some members of the public on smart meters remains, especially with regard to installation. The increased needs for electrical power in an expanding province are also a growing concern. And the direct and repeated interference by cabinet in the affairs of the BC Utilities Commission, the independent Hydro regulator, charged with upholding the public interest, is ongoing. This has led to the cancellation of Hydro's scheduled spring public hearings to approve increases in electricity rates and it underlines the mishandling of one of this province's greatest economic engines by a secretive government.

*Thanks to the politicization of public education and the disrespectful treatment they have received, since the Liberals came to power, hundreds of public school teachers will now actively campaign against them in May of 2013.*

### Cuts to K-12 education programs

The items are many and varied:

- closure of upward of 200 schools, without any attempt to review their impact, with many of these schools forming the heart of rural communities;
- cancellation for two years of the \$100 million facilities grant to school boards;
- harsh and repeated underfunding of kids with special needs programs and services;
- emerging funding crises in inner-city schools as documented by a searing series in *The Vancouver Sun*;
- shredding of teachers' contracts by none other than Christy Clark, who, as former education minister, has led to the worst relations with public school teachers in living memory (the previous contract shredding exercise by the Liberals of hospital employees (HEU) contracts, cost the province \$80 million);
- the phony provincial education round table, presided over by none other than Gordon Campbell, with many round-table issues, four years later, still unresolved on class size and composition; the sharp decline of professional development programs in school district after school district;
- the layoff of 1,500 learning assistance, ESL, special education teachers, and counsellors;
- the downgrading of long-established community schools;
- the studied neglect of playground repairs and reconstruction only to recompense weary parent fundraising groups on the eve of an election;
- the record level of parental and staff fundraising efforts (variously estimated at between \$40 to \$50 million across the province over 11 years) to purchase basic school supplies, materials and resources;
- the surreptitious and repeated downloading of contractual and other expenses on to school boards;
- the false and repeated claims by a revolving door of education ministers (five in all) on the adequacy of education funding (the recent firing of the Cowichan school board undermines this claim)—these are some, but not all, of the low points, over more than a decade, which amount to a disgraceful handling of our vibrant but struggling K-12 public school system.

Thanks to the politicization of public education and the disrespectful treatment they have received, since the Liberals came to power, hundreds of public school teachers will now actively campaign against them in May of 2013.

## Massive over runs in public projects

"On time, on budget" became a standing joke with regard to most of the huge public projects undertaken by the BC Liberals over 11 years. While the billion dollar extravaganza of the 2010 Winter Olympics was mostly on time, its massive budget and related expenses (the Liberals refused to include the costly Whistler highway upgrade, among other items), were, despite Victoria's claims, mostly over budget. The Olympic Village fiasco left the City of Vancouver with \$462 million listed as its debt for the project at the end of 2011. It has now been left to the province's auditor general to deliver an anticipated full and accurate accounting of this event. Two other flawed projects deserve particular mention: the \$514 million roof makeover of BC Place stadium (originally estimated at \$350 million) and the notoriously overbudget Vancouver Convention Centre that cost provincial taxpayers \$900 million. The latter three projects, according to a July *National Post* article, have one thing in common—all three are leaking or have leaked, within the past year. Lastly, into this category falls the granddaddy of them all: the \$3.3 billion, tolled, Port Mann Bridge with its \$400,000 advertising budget telling commuters that they will save up to an hour in travel. As we roll along, this province, under the BC Liberals, has given new meaning to the slogan, "on time, on budget"; however, most concerning of all is the veritable mountain of future, locked-in, financial commitments and "off-the-books" debts, rarely mentioned, and mostly hidden from the public, which could undermine a brighter economic future for BC.

## Enbridge waffling

Nowhere is Christy Clark's waffling more apparent than on the Northern Gateway Pipeline application for permission to transverse more than 700 waterways across some of the most pristine lands in this province. After the recent Enbridge disastrous spill on the Kalamazoo River in Michigan, which will cost an estimated \$800 million and could take years and possibly decades to clean up, our premier still waffled. The province did not seek full provincial submission status in the current federal inquiry and has accepted a lesser intervenor status. It missed a key deadline to provide evidence at the federal review program. Only under pressure did Clark stiffen her resolve with a qualified five-point plan. However, despite high profile posturing at the mid-summer Halifax premiers' national conference, this did not gain her the political traction the Liberals had hoped for. She has refused to take a clear position on the issue, employing a wait and see attitude. The outcome of this ongoing controversy is still very much in the balance. Final arguments before the federal panel will begin in April 2013, a month before the May 14 provincial election. And even if approved, a new government could still require provincial permits and authorizations under BC's land, water, and forest laws, which could delay the project for many years. Currently a majority of BC residents oppose the Enbridge plan.

## Rush to the exit door

As many as 17 or more Liberal MLA's are expected to signal their intention to retire, according to a party spokesman, over the course of the next seven months. Five current or former cabinet ministers, Kevin Falcon (finance), George Abbott (education), Mary McNeil (children and family development), John Les (parliamentary secretary and former solicitor general), Blair Ledstrom (transportation), as well as House Speaker, Bill Barisoff have recently jumped ship. This rush to the exit door is no doubt being hastened by the ongoing, disheartening polls; there is one factor, however, despite the cumulative impact of the items chronicled here, namely, the partisan rancour and the inappropriate personal behaviour of some Liberal MLAs and the premier's refusal to disavow such conduct that may even be more damaging than policy missteps by the governing party. What one columnist labelled "an uncensored spew" of mudslinging by exiting Liberal MLA's now appears to have had a very negative impact on the general electorate.

Leading the parade in this regard is

outgoing Liberal pit bull, Kevin Kruger, with his deeply offensive remarks (among other references), to arts advocates as "needle-wielding junkies"; to hospital workers as "toilet cleaners"; and to MLA John van Dongen, who quit the Liberals to represent the BC Conservatives, as a man "with a really nasty streak and no integrity"; and of course there is the demoted and pratfall-prone Harry Bloy, who accused Opposition Leader Adrian

*What one columnist labelled "an uncensored spew" of mudslinging by exiting Liberal MLA's now appears to have had a very negative impact on the general electorate.*

Dix of fraud and theft and was later forced to apologize; not forgetting MLA Rich Coleman, who in a fit of partisan pique and red-baiting, labelled all opposition members "Communists." Not only do remarks such as these cross the boundaries of acceptable political discourse and civility, they reinforce the perception of distain for both the electorate and elected representatives. Here is Christy Clark's response to this type of outrageous conduct: "On the BC Liberals side of the House, MLA's express their views about things. In my government that is not an unacceptable thing." Indeed, when this type of conduct is condoned at the highest level of government it is a clear sign of the decline of a political party.

## Christy Clark's leadership

Hailed as engaging and intelligent by supporters and as dismissive and indecisive by her opponents, Christy Clark's penchant for grandstanding, in her role as premier, has done her no favours. Blaming Gordon Campbell can go so far. Clark, in the view of many has come up short in the job. The gap between helming a popular radio program and occupying the premier's chair, with its tough administrative demands, has not been successfully bridged. Under sharp and persistent scrutiny by the media, she often appears defensive and ill-prepared with some decisions emerging as if they were made on the fly. She has given the impression that she is on a non-stop electioneering binge for two years, with photo-ops dominating her agenda. She has worn out her welcome with many voters and lost the support of many female voters. Her sharp drop in her personal popularity from her honeymoon high could be attributed, in part, to her predecessor's authoritarian legacy; however, she pointedly and repeatedly distanced herself from Gordon Campbell at the outset, and her claims to bring about a "fresh start" with openness and

accountability in government have fallen flat. She had served as deputy-premier under Campbell. Several within her own party including her two rivals while running for the leadership (who, incidentally have jumped ship), doubted her ability to deliver, and she obtained the backing of only one Liberal MLA—the hapless Harry Bloy.

While cynicism about lack of political honesty is rampant in this province—unquestionably due to the Campbell legacy—Clark has failed to alter the overall narrative. No doubt, she was let down by some less-than-stellar cabinet members, but her penchant for flip-flopping on key issues did not enhance her image; some examples include: changes in her handling of the HST albatross; her refusal to take a clear position on issues; her sloganeering ("Free Enterprise Friday"); her mishandling of the Catalyst Paper file and the kerfuffle over the TELUS renaming of the BC stadium at a loss of \$40 million to the taxpayers; the evasion of accountability on the Boss Power fiasco in which the province paid a \$30 million settlement—\$21 million over the original estimate. Not only has her signature family-first agenda gone off the rails due to a combination of the CLBC fiasco, cuts to education and youth programs, and the unfortunate, provincial ad hoc poverty pilots, but alienation has now spilled over into rejection for the party as a whole with its endless over-the-top spinning and

misleading statements. The BC Liberals are now held, not only in disregard, but in contempt by many voters. John Cummins, the Conservative leader cites the need for "being honest and truthful" in government "as one of the reasons for the conservative rupture within the BC Liberal coalition." Adam Radwanski writing in an August 9, 2012, issue of the *Globe and Mail* about Canadian political parties that have "fallen apart" excoriates Gordon Campbell for his "dishonesty" around his HST plans. The BC Liberals, collectively, have only themselves to blame for their potential disintegration. Trust is the glue that holds a society together and the absence of this in politics spells the death knell for any party.

Two years ago Christy Clark ran in Gordon Campbell's Vancouver Point Grey riding, promising a "fresh start" together with a plan to do business differently. She flatly and repeatedly refused to publicly debate her opponent on the hustings or engage in a meaningful public dialogue on key issues affecting her constituents.

In May of next year she will not be able to employ this evasive strategy.

And the BC Liberals wonder why they are in trouble as their electoral birds fly home to roost.

As the French say, *plus ça change...*

Noel Herron is a former Vancouver school trustee

# inspire experience explore





**Whistler Athletes' Centre**

The Whistler Athletes' Centre offers two unique accommodation options – an Athletes' Lodge and Townhomes – and access to the High Performance Centre. The HPC features a strength and conditioning gym, gymnastics hall, and more. We welcome groups or individual bookings for athletes, coaches, educational, arts, and cultural organizations!

The 75-room Lodge and three Townhomes are ideal for accommodating large groups and offer a number of fully-accessible rooms. Lodge guests also receive free parking, ample secure storage space, and access to our new state-of-the-art, self-serve kitchen facility.

**Whistler Sport Services**

Whistler Sport Legacies is excited to introduce Sport Services – an exclusive service dedicated to fulfilling the sport needs of athletes and teams.

Whether an independent athlete or a team, Sport Services offers what you need to ensure that your experience in Whistler is seamless. After you train or compete in Whistler once, you'll never want to go anywhere else.



STAY



TRAIN



FUEL



MEET

Whistler Sport Legacies is responsible for three of Whistler's 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Venues: Whistler Sliding Centre, Whistler Olympic Park, and Whistler Athletes' Centre.

[whistlersportlegacies.com](http://whistlersportlegacies.com)

[whistlerathletescentre.com](http://whistlerathletescentre.com)

[/whistlerathletescentre](https://www.facebook.com/whistlerathletescentre)

**604-964-0040**



# ENCORP PACIFIC'S BC SCHOOL RECYCLING PROGRAM

**EVERY BEVERAGE CONTAINER YOUR SCHOOL RECYCLES TURNS INTO AWESOME STUFF.**

Sign your school up for the BC School Recycling Program at [return-it.ca/youth](http://return-it.ca/youth)

IN CASH PRIZES TO BE WON!  
 \$20,250  
 ELEMENTARY Sept. 4, 2012 – May 31, 2013  
 SECONDARY Sept. 4, 2012 – May 10, 2013



ENCORP  
Return-It™  
It's Worth It.

## Corporate power on display

# Bully capitalism runs rampant over disempowered workers

By Armine Yalnizyan

Capitalism has entered an ugly new era, one that may work well for the shareholders of the world, but not for the rest of us.

I couldn't help but notice that, on the very same day Caterpillar shuttered the doors of its London, Ontario, locomotive plant and headed to low-wage Indiana, the *Wall Street Journal* reported federal corporate tax receipts as a share of profits had dropped to their lowest level in at least 40 years in the United States. Sadly, that's not just an American story.

Lower taxes and lower wages: it's a one-two punch that has been hard to duck in the post-crisis period, and not because business is on the ropes. Like Caterpillar, the American business sector as a whole has been booking record-breaking profits.

Stubbornly high unemployment, talk of austerity, and huge household debt levels have got people worried, on both sides of the border, and some employers are using that fear to their advantage. Newly aggressive demands that workers give up income join the decades-old demands that governments give up revenue. The implicit deal is that lower taxes create more investment and competitive cost structures create more demand. Both supposedly create more (good-paying) jobs. Lower taxes, check. Lower payroll costs, check. More good-paying jobs here at home: Insert sound of crickets chirping.

*Stubbornly high unemployment, talk of austerity, and huge household debt levels have got people worried, on both sides of the border, and some employers are using that fear to their advantage.*

According to the Congressional Budget Office, the effective tax rate on the business sector in the US—federal corporate tax receipts as a share of domestic profits—had fallen to 12.1% by fiscal 2010–11. It had averaged 25.6% between 1987 and 2008.

In Canada, too, federal taxes on profit have been falling for decades, dropping to 16.6% by fiscal 2010–11 after briefly dipping to 13.2% in 2008, a level not seen since the Great Depression.

Unlike the 1930s, corporate profits in Canada have rebounded since the 2008–09 crisis, nearing the previous high-water mark (\$204 billion in the third quarter of 2011—hit by roller-coaster stock markets—up from \$135.8 billion in the second quarter of 2009 but shy of the peak, \$247 billion in 2008's third quarter).

Back in the 1960s, a successful corporation could expect to turn over at least 25 cents on every dollar made to the federal government, to help build Canada. It didn't

seem to stop them from building business and profits, too. In fact, the economy was on a growth spurt.

Despite growth today, there is no shortage of profitable firms telling workers they can keep their jobs only if they agree to get less in pay and benefits. Yes, growth today is slower, and yes, more companies now compete on a global stage. But slow growth is exacerbated by a view—dominated by business interests, and shared by many bureaucrats and politicians—that lower taxes and lower wages are the best way forward. Call it sociopathic economics.

Boiled down, the Caterpillar story was about a company making a union an offer it had to refuse: cut wages in half, eliminate cost-of-living adjustments, eliminate defined benefit pensions, and increase co-pays on benefits. It was all end-game, no discussion. Production headed for Muncie, Indiana, where wages are \$12.50 to \$14.50 an hour, less than half the \$35 skilled welders in Canada were making until December. The local daily in Muncie notes how tough it is to find and retain skilled workers at that pay.

The Cat fight released fresh blood in the water for the sharks. But it's just the latest, most egregious example in a string of similar stories that have emerged in the aftermath of the global economic meltdown.

In Quebec, Rio Tinto wants to increase the number of contractors in the workforce from 10.7% now, to 27%. They are paid at half the wages of unionized workers. Company earnings over the last year, at \$15.5 billion, beat records and market expectations.

In BC, workers at Extra Foods are resisting Loblaw's attempt to cut wages in half. Loblaw's, with almost \$40 billion in annual business, announced a 19.8% increase in quarterly profits in November.

In Fort Frances, Ontario, workers with Resolute Forest Products (aka Abitibi Bowater) took a \$10/hour pay cut, lost vacation pay, and now pay \$180 a month for short-term disability pensions, totalling an 18% pay cut last year. The company is not hurting. It's buying another firm for \$71.5 million.

Global mining giant Vale saw its revenues double to \$46.5 billion in 2010 from the previous year while withstanding a 14-month strike in Ontario and an 18-month strike in Voisey's Bay, Labrador. Vale sought, and got, concessions that brought Canadian operations more in line with the rest of its production network, which is mostly in developing nations.

From casino workers in Atlantic City, to electricians in England and meat-packers in New Zealand, hugely profitable firms are telling workers they can't keep what they've got.

These stories display, at their core, a shockingly naked desire to reduce the incomes and bargaining power of workers. It's not because there is no money.

To these blatant ways of redistributing income, from poor to rich, add other, more subtle strategies.

Domestic and foreign firms are "insourcing" low-wage workers, through temporary foreign work permits for low- and higher-skilled jobs. Others are creating two-

and three-tier workforces, the better to reduce payroll costs and divide workers' interests.

These trends are not just happening in the US.

Ontario's Society of Energy Professionals stood its ground against Hydro One for a 105-day strike in 2005 to prevent two-tiering of the workforce, hoping to protect the next generation of hires, mostly young women and racial minorities. They won then, but two-tiering has become staple fare at the collective bargaining table in the last couple of years, a routine demand of employers in both the public and private sectors.

The use of temporary foreign workers has also exploded since the recession began, strictly a matter of federal public policy. Different compensation for people doing the same job is increasing in unionized settings and non-unionized settings alike, partly due to the accelerating use of contractors and temporary workers. The result: Newcomers and youth are pitted against workers with more seniority and job permanence, and everyone's attention is distracted from the employer's ability to pay.

The wage floor is sagging, pulling the prospects for everyone but the elite downward. Where is the middle class supposed to come from for our children and the immigrants, the people on whom we will rely and who will create the new Canada?

True, this is not the first time employers have told workers to suck it up. After the free trade deals of the 1980s and 1990s,

*It's like a bad joke: the more successful the business sector is at driving down its costs, the harder it gets for families and communities to go about their business.*

companies simply moved operations to lower-wage climes, shedding hundreds of thousands of good-paying Canadian jobs in the process. Back in the 1930s, when such options were not so readily available, bosses fought unions mightily, but to stave off paying more, not ram through cuts.

You have to go all the way back to the robber barons of the 1880s and 1890s to see growing, successful companies boost profits further by extracting wage concessions from existing workers.

Today, a growing number of employers in advanced economies are demanding terms of employment that roll the clock back decades. Keeping your job means accepting wages and working conditions that narrow the margin between workers here and in emerging markets.

Some (not all) corporations view both governments and unions as pesky impediments to making money. These corporations don't talk. Or give. But they'll take—and there is no end to what they'll take—it's a real concern if their numbers keep growing.

Democracies and collective bargaining

provide ways to air multiple views and find a working balance between interests. Without processes of talking, giving, and taking, the bullies prevail. Of late, there has been a rise in the number of bullies, and a celebration of corporate strength...as if that is all that matters to an economy or a society.

The snatch-and-grab ethos that has emerged in the wake of the global economic crisis may fatten an individual corporation's bottom line; but if too many companies play this game, everyone but the giants lose.

As these big corporate players drive down their costs and rack up ever-higher profits, they build up their war-chests to buy up the competition. That turns workers, suppliers, and governments alike into price-takers, and has us all scrambling to attract capital and jobs with—you guessed it—lower taxes and lower wages.

It's like a bad joke: the more successful the business sector is at driving down its costs, the harder it gets for families and communities to go about their business.

The chart shows the scorecard of success on the tax front. Rapidly escalating income inequality will track the legacy of the new war on labour, making past trends look like a walk in the park.

This is not the type of capitalism anybody should be rooting for, in the search for enduring recovery, growth, and prosperity.

Armine Yalnizyan is a CCPA economist.

Reprinted with permission: CCPA Monitor, April 2012.

## Exchange Teaching

*Are you seeking a unique career opportunity? Are you a permanent teacher with 5 or more years teaching experience?*

Consider exchanging your job with an overseas or Canadian teacher in order to:

- immerse yourself in a different education system.
- develop yourself professionally by exchanging ideas and knowledge.
- renew your professional enthusiasm.
- broaden personal experiences by travelling, working, and living in a different community and culture.

### Orientation meeting

Saturday, October 20, 2012,  
9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
Cloverdale Learning Centre  
5741-176 Street  
Surrey, BC

Carol Wilkins, from the Canadian Education Exchange Foundation, will be presenting information about exchange opportunities.

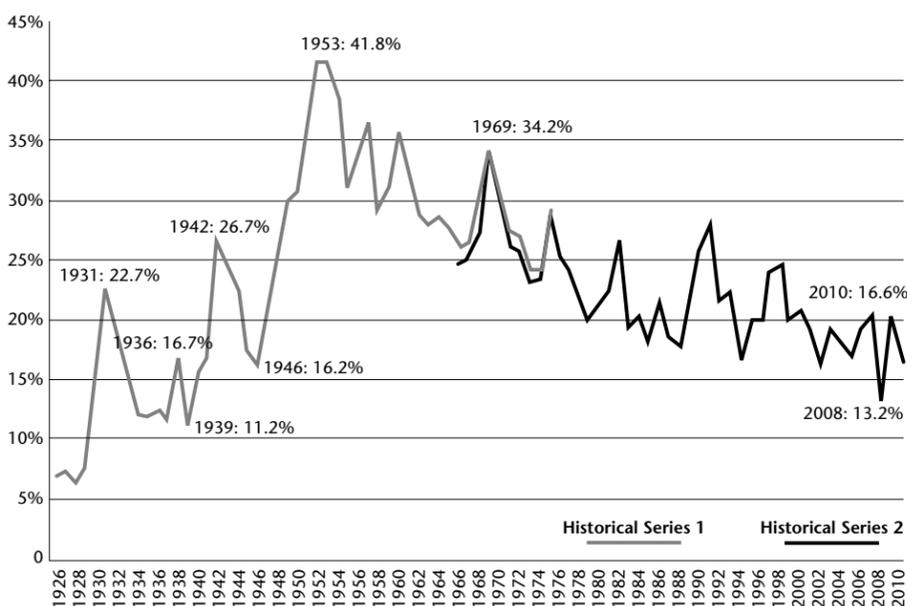
Teachers currently here on exchange will be attending to answer questions specific to their country.

To register, contact:

Kulwant Toor, president, BCETA  
toor\_k@sd36.bc.ca  
604-574-4141 or 778-847-4453

For further information, guidelines, and an application form, visit [www.ceef.ca](http://www.ceef.ca)

Canadian Education Exchange Foundation



**"It's a fantastic opportunity to learn, stretch yourself and be immersed in creative energy."**

Leslie Kemp  
BCTF Member

One & two week media intensive programs for adults or youth.



The Gulf Islands Film & Television School  
Since 1995

1-800-813-9993; [www.GIFTSfilms.com](http://www.GIFTSfilms.com); [gifts@giftsfilms.com](mailto:gifts@giftsfilms.com)



Dates to Remember:

- Pro-D Weekend: October 19-21
- Spring Break Youth Programs: March 2013
- School Groups: April thru June (incl. French Immersion)
- Youth/Adult Summer Programs: July & August 2013

# Class afloat

By Nadia Dale

When I was eight years old, the Canadian Tall Ship *SV Concordia* was docked in Steveston. My swimming coach at the time took our group on a tour of the ship. He had been a student on board when he was in Grade 11. He told us stories of his adventures while abroad with Class Afloat, and since that day, I was hooked.

I applied for Class Afloat, despite my mother's insistence that I would never be allowed to go. I was awarded a full scholarship to attend (\$42,500) and my parents quickly gave in. I left in August and returned at the beginning of May.



## What is Class Afloat?

- Class Afloat is a Canadian program for students from Grades 11, 12, and first year university.
- They sail around the world for eight months on a majestic tall ship, visiting 22 ports of call worldwide.
- Who? Forty students are from Canada and all over the world, seven teachers, and ten professional maritime crew
- We learned seamanship, navigation, global citizenship, traditional school courses, sociology, living in close quarters, agility, cooking and food prep, cleaning, woodwork, rope work, etc.
- More information: [www.classafloat.com](http://www.classafloat.com)

## Ports of call

*First semester:* Kristiansand, Norway; Stornoway, UK; Belfast, UK; Falmouth, UK; Brest, France; Oporto, Portugal; Cadiz, Spain; Barcelona, Spain; Mallorca, Spain; Agadir, Morocco; Las Palmas, Spain; Dakar, Senegal;

*Second semester:* Dakar, Senegal; Fernando De Noronha, Brazil; Belem, Brazil; St. Georges, Grenada; Portsmouth, Dominica; Samana, Dominican Republic; Freeport, The Bahamas; Hamilton, Bermuda; Ponta Delgada, Portugal; Valletta, Malta

## The ship

*SS Sorlandet:* Home port—Kristiansand, Norway, built in 1927, full rigger (3 masts, square sails), and traditionally used to train Norwegian navy cadets.

For more information, facts and history: [fullriggeren-sorlandet.no/en/facts](http://fullriggeren-sorlandet.no/en/facts)

## Highlights of the trip

- learning about the history of Northern Ireland at Queen's University in Belfast
- riding camels in the Sahara, camping overnight, and then waking up to watch the sunrise
- welcoming the Canadian Ambassador in Senegal to the ship
- working on cultural projects with the Peace Corps in Senegal
- staying at the SOS Children's Village in Louga, Senegal
- crossing the Atlantic Ocean
- crossing the Equator (first time in the ship's history)
- travelling up the Amazon River (pirate-watch duty)
- swimming in the Amazon, hiking through the jungle, sleeping in hammocks on a river boat
- painting houses and building a playground with the Mahatma Gandhi Foundation in the Dominican Republic
- sailing through the Bermuda Triangle
- swimming in the middle of the Atlantic
- graduating in the historic city of Valletta, Malta

Nadia Dale, 16-year-old French immersion student, *McMath Secondary School, Richmond.*

More information and journals about my trip are on my blog: [fairwindsnadia.blogspot.com](http://fairwindsnadia.blogspot.com)

# Si les profs pouvaient...

par Stéphane Laporte

De la part des membres du Comité consultatif des programmes et services en français et des employés du Bureau des programmes et services en français, nous vous souhaitons une bonne rentrée scolaire. L'article de M. Stéphane Laporte parle des ingrédients nécessaires pour une bonne année : un prof qui trippe sur sa matière et accroche les jeunes et une société qui valorise les profs. 'C'est en aidant les professeurs à être meilleurs que les élèves le seront. C'est la seule réforme possible.'

C'est en septembre que ça se décide. Parfois même dès le premier cours. La cloche sonne. Trente élèves s'assoient à leur pupitre. Trente paires d'yeux fixent la porte de la classe. Impatients de savoir de quoi a l'air le prof. Parfois sa réputation le précède et elle entre en premier. Les jeunes ont déjà peur. Les plus vieux leur ont dit qu'ils allaient passer par là. Ça peut aussi être le contraire. Les jeunes sont déjà turbulents. Baveux. Les plus vieux leur ont dit que c'était un mou.

Le professeur arrive, les élèves l'analysent. Ils le scannent de la tête aux pieds. Sa démarche, son habillement, ses cheveux, son poil aux oreilles, son manucure, ses mèches, son parfum, son accent, ses tics. Ils n'ont que ça à faire. Le regarder. Durant toute la période. Alors ils le font. Quand le premier cours est terminé, leur idée est faite. Ils vont aimer ou pas le français, les mathématiques, la chimie, la biologie, la géographie ou l'éducation physique selon qu'ils aiment ou n'aiment pas M. Proulx, Mme Boily, M. Dutil ou Mme Bernier.

Je me demande à quel point les profs sont conscients que l'école c'est eux. Ce sont eux les stars. Ils sont les Guy A. Lepage, Julie Snyder, Marc Labrèche, Louis-José Houde de leur matière. Ce sont eux qui l'animent. Ce sont eux qui y donnent vie. Qui rendent ça intéressant ou ennuyant. Qui partagent leur passion. Si le prof est sur le pilote automatique, le cours va crasher, c'est sûr. Mais si le prof fait de la haute voltige à la Luchini, en récitant des vers ou en déclamant ses dictées, les élèves seront au septième ciel. Bien sûr, personne n'est condamné à être génial. Les profs sont comme les sportifs, les politiciens, les plombiers, les chroniqueurs, ils font ce qu'ils peuvent avec ce qu'ils ont.

Mais on ne devient pas cuisinier si on n'aime pas manger. Alors on ne devient pas professeur si on n'aime pas enseigner. Si on n'aime pas donner un cours. Donner une représentation. Pas besoin que le cours de physique devienne un spectacle du Cirque du Soleil, il faut juste que les élèves sentent que leur maître trippe sur la matière. Ça prend de l'entrain. De l'enthousiasme.

Combien d'heures j'ai passé à dessiner des bonshommes dans mon cahier parce que le prof lisait ses notes sans lever les yeux. Monotone. Fatigué. Résigné. Le courant ne passait pas parce que le prof était en panne. D'inspiration. Il n'y a qu'une seule façon d'apprendre, c'est en aimant. Si on ne fait pas aimer aux élèves ce qu'on leur demande de retenir, ils ne s'en souviendront jamais. L'indifférence n'a pas de mémoire.

Si j'aime autant écrire, c'est beaucoup à cause de Mme Lamoureux au primaire, M.

Your school can team up with Make-A-Wish® BC & YK to sponsor a wish in your community!

Student driven, kids learn valuable lessons in teamwork, leadership, organizational skills, compassion and empathy as they grant a wish for a child with a life-threatening medical condition.

To find out more about Kids for Wish Kids email: [bcchapter@makeawish.ca](mailto:bcchapter@makeawish.ca) or call 1-866-277-9474

## TEACH IN SINGAPORE!



### CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHER RECRUITMENT 2013 - 2015

Find out more about us [www.cis.edu.sg](http://www.cis.edu.sg)

### INTERVIEW LOCATIONS

Vancouver Nov 15 - 16

\*Candidates will be notified of specific date and location

### MINIMUM: CERTIFIED TEACHERS ONLY 2 YRS. QUALIFIED EXPERIENCE SINGLES AND TEACHING COUPLES MAY APPLY

**\*\*Only those selected for an interview will be contacted.  
Please apply by email.**

Send resume and references by:

**OCTOBER 31, 2012**

Attention to: **Jim Gibson**

E-mail: [teachersrt@cis.edu.sg](mailto:teachersrt@cis.edu.sg)

Canadian International School Pte. Ltd. | CPE Registration Number: 199002243H  
Period of Registration: 8 June 2011 to 7 June 2015

## GARDEN HARVEST CONTEST

### Ready for your School Garden Harvest?

You've planned, planted and are prepared to share your school garden bounty!

Let us help you with how to's, lessons, and ideas to make your Fall harvest (and next year) a success.

Check us out at:

[www.schoolgardennetwork.ca](http://www.schoolgardennetwork.ca)

Visit often as we launch our Fall photo contest soon!



School Garden Network

Saint-Germain au secondaire et de M. Parent au cégep. Des profs qui l'avaient. Ce n'était pas des bouffons. Oh que non. Mais leur vocation était sincère et bien visible. Car c'est de cela que l'on parle. Tenir assis sur des sièges une trentaine de ti-culs pendant toute une journée, faut le faire. Même les parents ont de la misère à captiver leurs enfants durant un week-end. Imaginez durant une semaine, des étrangers se relayent pour essayer de transmettre connaissances, culture et savoir-vivre à un auditoire qui ne rêve qu'aux vacances de Noël. Faut le faire.

Et il n'y a qu'une seule façon de le faire. Pour intéresser, il faut être intéressant. Bien sûr, il y aura toujours des cancre qui resteront insensibles à un cours d'anglais même si c'était Angelina Jolie ou Brad Pitt (c'est selon) qui l'enseignait. Mais la grande majorité des élèves ne demandent pas mieux que d'embarquer. Encore faut-il que le monsieur ou la dame en avant veuille les mener plus loin que la fin du cours. Plus loin que la charge de travail imposée.

Le Québec est le royaume du décrochage. C'est peut-être parce que les jeunes ne sont jamais accrochés. C'est plate, mais c'est aux adultes de le faire. Les médecins ont la

responsabilité de guérir les patients. Les profs ont le devoir d'intéresser les élèves. C'est bête de même. C'est beau de même.

C'est sûrement la plus noble des tâches. Permettre à un individu de grandir. Dans tous les sens du terme.

Si c'est le devoir des profs de stimuler leurs élèves, c'est le devoir de la société de stimuler les professeurs. En valorisant leur tâche. En structurant les écoles autour de leur talent. En leur permettant d'être imaginatifs.

Un professeur peut changer la vie de quelqu'un. Peu de gens ont ce pouvoir. Il peut être un allumeur de réverbères. Comme il peut être un éteignoir.

C'est en aidant les professeurs à être meilleurs que les élèves le seront. C'est la seule réforme possible.

L'école, qu'elle s'appelle l'école Champlain, l'école Élan ou l'école Sainte-Jeanne-D'Arc, c'est l'école Pierre Dubois, c'est l'école Mlle Provencher, c'est l'école Virginie. C'est l'école des professeurs.

Quelqu'un devrait l'apprendre aux directeurs de commissions scolaires et aux sous-ministres.

Stéphane Laporte, *La Presse*

# They will come after you

By Janice Neden

I am the president of the Learning Assistance Teachers' Association of BC, a provincial specialist association of the BCTF. I am a staff rep, an executive member of the Kamloops-Thompson Teachers' Association, and a committee member of the Professional Issues Advisory Council of the BCTF. All of these are volunteer positions; however, because of these volunteer positions I am one of the members who was threatened with hefty fines by the government. I am a product of the BC public school system and have taught in it for over 30 years.

However, the most important role I fill is that of a learning assistance resource teacher to the most vulnerable students, as well as supporting their parents, their teachers, and administrators. When I first began working as a learning assistance teacher our mandate

*So when you hear Minister Abbott say that "special needs students are receiving the support they need" it is not because the government has adequately funded the system but rather that educators continue to carry the system on their backs.*

was to teach those students who were struggling with academic learning. Then learning assistance roles were blended with special education roles and our new mandate was to support children who struggled academically as well as students with autism, learning disabilities, physical disabilities, behaviour challenges, and mental health issues as well as those

students who were in the process of being identified. This was prior to 2002, when school boards were obligated to ensure that there was one learning assistance teacher for every 395 students. Then came 2002, when our contract was illegally stripped and learning assistance ratios were eliminated under "flexibility and choice"—code words for reduced funding as the government removed targeted funding for some of these areas.

Our mandate grew to include providing support for students with English as a second language, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, complex developmental disorders, and chronic health. However, boards were no longer obligated to provide one LAT for every 395 students and with diminished funding, our caseloads increased and service levels dropped.

The numbers of students with special needs continue to grow; however, the number of learning assistance resource teachers has dropped provincially since 2002 by over 700 teachers.

## So what does this all mean today?

It means that very few experienced teachers fill the ranks of special education. Due to job fragmentation (very few LATs are full time but spend their days fulfilling other roles), impossible caseloads (most full-time LATs have over 100 students on their caseloads), and faced with dwindling resources, experienced LATs have fled the field. Some have left for early retirement, many have returned to the classroom because there, at least, there was a caseload limit, and some are on stress leave. In the words of one of our members who left for early retirement, "I can no longer carry the education system on my back." So when you hear Minister Abbott say that "special needs students are receiving the support they need" it is not because the government has adequately funded the system but rather that educators continue to carry the system on their backs. However, the situation has become so bad this is now impossible to do.

It has been said that the value of a society can be judged by how its most vulnerable are treated. How does this government treat the most vulnerable students? By removing those specialized supports vital to success

and stating that the only barrier is teachers and language that says three Individualized Education Plans per classroom. By eliminating this language it would appear that the government feels it has solved the many challenges that a student with special needs faces on a daily basis and that is all that is necessary.

The \$165 million Learning Improvement Fund that Minister Abbott likes to talk about, in reality will be \$30 million this year, but it will not be universal as districts have to compete with each other to demonstrate how bad off they are. Curious though, if education is adequately funded, then why do districts have to demonstrate their dire need? Thirty million dollars next year does not begin to reach what the government has removed from special education. According to the government's own records, in 2002 they expected to save the most from reduction of specialized staff including librarians, counsellors, and learning assistance teachers.

There is a passage from *Catcher in the Rye* that serves as a good description of the role of a learning assistance resource teacher, it goes: "I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids, and nobody's around, nobody big, I mean—except me. And I'm standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff—I mean, if they're running and they don't look where they're going I have to come out from somewhere and catch them. That's all I'd do all day. I'd just be the catcher in the rye and all. I know it's crazy, but that's the only thing I'd really like to be."

I listened to the second reading of Bill 22 and I cried. Not out of anger or frustration like many of my colleagues but out of utter sadness. Because when you teach in special education you lead from the heart and with a

quest for social justice that can only be achieved by ensuring that all children receive an excellent education and that no child falls over the cliff. Our job is to make sure they don't—and we are sacrificing ourselves and our families in order to do this.

We fight the fight alongside our courageous students because in the end we

*...it takes the students who face the most challenges in school, chips away at the few resources that are available to them, and then mandates the teacher to be successful.*

are teachers and our contract is with the student.

However, this is not just about vulnerable students. It's about values. Who we are, what we are, and how can it be that we have come to a point where we are willing to forgo the success of these students and write them off as a causality? This is what Bill 22 will do—it takes the students who face the most challenges in school, chips away at the few resources that are available to them, and then mandates the teacher to be successful. Change does not occur because of legislation, and when Bill 22 fails (and it is doomed to failure) the government will blame teachers with yet another example of how unreasonable we are and how they are not responsible.

John Ralston Saul wrote, "As goes public education so goes democracy."

Janice Neden, president, Learning Assistance Teachers' Association of BC  
Reprinted: LATA E-LINK, May 2012.

## Return to court on class size

More than a year after a BC Supreme Court ruling that provincial legislation violated teachers' Charter rights, the BC Teachers' Federation is having to go back to court seeking a fair remedy for the impact of the unconstitutional legislation.

In April 2011, Madam Justice Griffin ruled that provisions of Bills 27 and 28 and other government legislation were unconstitutional and invalid. The legislation stripped teachers' collective agreement of class-size limits and guarantees for services for students with special needs, resulting in the loss of thousands of teaching positions, including many learning specialist teachers such as teacher-librarians, teachers of English as an additional language, special education teachers, and more. The legislation also prohibited collective bargaining on those issues into the future. Justice Griffin gave the government one year to remedy the Charter violations.

"Because this government has completely failed to deal with the repercussions of last year's ruling, we have to go back to court," said BCTF President Susan Lambert. "Given the ruling, we believed that we had regained the right to bargain class size, class composition, and the provision of services by specialist teachers, and thereby drive much-needed funding back into our public school system. But government refused to recognize the decision and yet another year of cuts has further eroded the quality of services to students."

Particularly troubling is the fact that, while Bill 22 purports to repeal certain unconstitutional provisions of the earlier legislation, it immediately reinstates these provisions in identical terms in the same section of the same law. The BCTF also asserts that government failed to address the repercussions within the time limit imposed by the court.

The BCTF is seeking restoration of the provisions that were unconstitutionally deleted from the teachers' collective agreement, a declaration that the provincial government has failed to address the repercussions of the decision, and damages for losses suffered.

The case will be heard December 3–6, 2012, in BC Supreme Court. To read the full text of the notice of application, please have a look here: <http://tinyurl.com/9w2kd3a>



**SCHOOL TATTOOS**  
Temporary tattoos with your school's art

schooltattoos.ca email: info@schooltattoos.ca  
call: 613.567.2536 - Ottawa, Canada

## Teacher exchange

### The world is your classroom

Live and teach in another country for a year while remaining employed and paid by your Canadian board and retaining all benefits! The Canadian Education Exchange Foundation, as mandated by the British Columbia Ministry of Education, facilitates reciprocal teacher exchanges to the United Kingdom (including England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales), Denmark, Germany, Australia, and some US states.

Applications are now being accepted for the 2013–14 school year.

For information visit [www.ceef.ca](http://www.ceef.ca), e-mail [cwilk@ceef.ca](mailto:cwilk@ceef.ca), or telephone 705-739-7596.

**Teachers' Tutoring Service**  
A non-profit society  
**Working with teachers and for students for 29 years.**



one-to-one in-home tutoring  
**604-730-3410**  
[teacher@tutor.bc.ca](mailto:teacher@tutor.bc.ca)  
[www.tutor.bc.ca](http://www.tutor.bc.ca)

## 51st Northwest Mathematics Conference

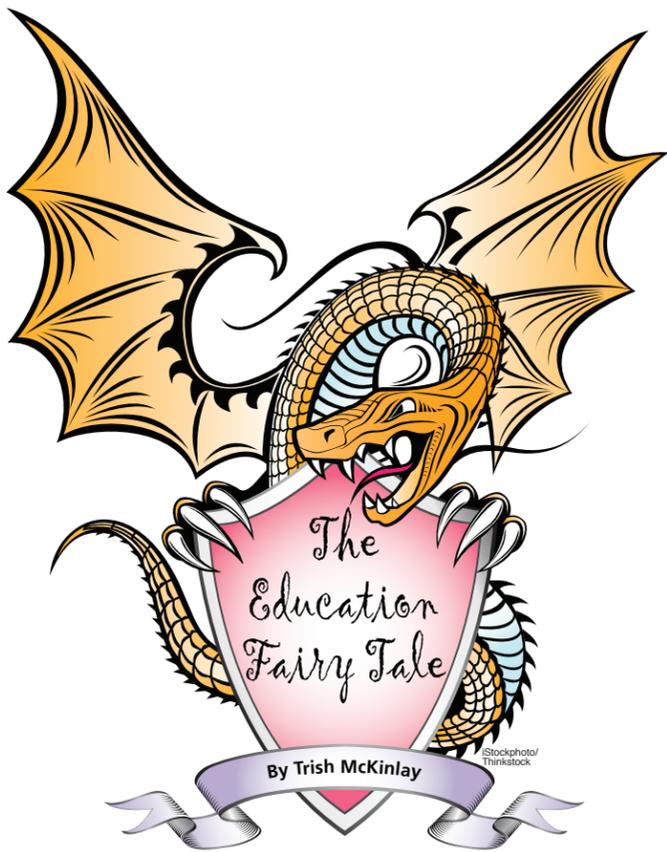


Victoria, British Columbia  
**October 18-20, 2012**  
Victoria Conference Centre

### Come to Victoria next fall and...

- Smell the roses with keynote speakers: Catherine Fosnot, Dan Meyer and Patrick Vennebush.
- Restore your enthusiasm and expand your knowledge with workshops and sessions.
- Renew acquaintances, build networks, and share ideas...

[www.nwmc2012.com](http://www.nwmc2012.com)



## Once upon a time...

...teachers had a contract with the old bosses, which meant no extra pay, but better learning conditions for students. Then, new bosses arrived and decided they didn't like the contract, so they ripped it up and rewrote one which suited them better. They declared that teachers would have larger classes and more students with special needs, with less support. When teachers complained and went on strike, the bosses made laws to stop that. Eventually, the new bosses were told that the Supreme Courts of British Columbia and Canada, both said they'd violated teachers' rights, and that they'd violated some of the United Nations Rights of the Child (Bills 27 and 28).

Now, the bosses have made a new law—Bill 22—which is the same as the bills they got in trouble for, before. Teachers have to accept the new law, or else! To help everyone "cool off," the bosses said they

would get one of their friends to decide what was fair. Then, the bosses said they hoped teachers would continue the volunteer work they'd been doing for years, even though their democratic rights had been taken away.

But, deep down, what the bosses really wanted was to destroy the system—public education. After all, when a situation is guaranteed to fail...chronic underfunding, fewer student support service professionals, fewer teacher-librarians, fewer educational assistants, larger classes, and more students with special needs per class, the system will eventually reach a breaking point.

So, nobody lived happily ever after, but everyone believed the teachers were selfish and greedy; that made the bosses smile.

— The End

Trish McKinlay, retired teacher, Nanaimo

## Adult ed programs all but eliminated

By Lynda Toews

The level of education of parents directly impacts the well-being of their children. It impacts their ability to provide for their children, and the degree of success those children are likely to have in school.

There is an invisible but growing issue regarding poverty and access to education among adults. The issue isn't so much that we see impoverished students, although we do, but over the years, we see fewer and fewer of them. The adult programs have become less and less accessible to families, communities, and individuals struggling with poverty. In fact, the numbers of adult education students living in poverty is diminishing (my observation and that of many of my colleagues—who would fund

mental health issues, or greater educational needs. What these programs could never provide is excess revenue. It is not possible to give one-on-one instruction to the equivalent of 30 students per class.

The students who most desperately need these programs will not find success in overfull, structured classes. They become another statistic, another example of the poor success rates in adult education programs, which are, of course, the teacher's fault.

In Surrey, we are told that these programs have been dropped because they are "unsustainable." In Vancouver, we read of the consultant's recommendation of "ending continuing education programs that don't make money." ("Deloitte review of B.C. education spending prompts concerns about privatization," Janet Steffenhagen, *Vancouver Sun*, August 16, 2012)

This is an astonishing phrase; it isn't enough that the program overall is more than self-sustaining, but that each part of the program must be revenue-generating. Aside from the tragedy that this represents for those adults sinking deeper into poverty, it reveals an attitude endemic to the administration of adult education programs: the prime objective is not education, but profit.

*There are two groups of adults who desperately need access to appropriate adult learning opportunities—Aboriginal adults and immigrant adults.*

such a study?) because of various factors, most especially the hydra heads of funding and accessibility.

There are inadequate spaces for the need, but this fact is lost because the programs have become less and less accessible to the people who need them the most.

Location is a key aspect of this. People living in poverty don't have the time or the resources to access transit to travel to a remote location for classes. Adult education programs in a number of Lower Mainland districts are located well away from the neighbourhoods of highest need. They are accessible to adults who drive cars, and who either have no young children, or who can arrange or afford childcare while they are not earning wages.

Furthermore, self-paced programs have been all but eliminated in the Lower Mainland. These were programs that provided flexibility to students working shifts, those whose employment was insecure and irregular, or those with health or transportation issues. These programs also provided the one-on-one attention required by students struggling with substance abuse,

There are two groups of adults who desperately need access to appropriate adult learning opportunities—Aboriginal adults and immigrant adults. Drop-out rates are high among both of these groups of people, as is the incidence of poverty. Access to appropriate education services for each group would have an impact on their poverty, and that of their children, but it might not be easy or inexpensive to provide.

These students don't need "continuing education"—they need to be able to successfully complete their education as adults in a more appropriate and responsive environment than the one that failed them before. A self-paced program may not be the appropriate model for these adults, but rest assured, the appropriate environment is unlikely to generate income.

Why should it be? No one should make a profit on the poverty of others and fixing your mistakes should never be considered a revenue-generating opportunity.

Lynda Toews, chairperson, BCTF Adult Education Advisory Committee



Free, no obligation, home evaluations. Let me help you with your buying or selling needs. Put my Accredited Buyer Realtor and Senior Real Estate Specialist Credentials to work for you. Refer your friends to someone you can trust and receive the greater of \$500 or 5% of my gross commission.

Alan Andrews, Prudential United Realty  
Ph: 604 240-4050 or email: alanandrews@shaw.ca

## LEGION YOUTH REMEMBRANCE CONTEST ART-VIDEO-WRITING

### ATTENTION TEACHERS:

Please let your students know about the Legion's **Poster-Essay-Poetry-Video Contests**. We call upon you to inspire your students about "Remembrance."

The Legion is offering winners prizes in many categories and age groups - cash, a trip to Ottawa or Victoria, iPad, iPod Touch, Macbook, and gift certificates.

**YOUR STUDENTS COULD WIN**  
An Apple Macbook, a trip to Victoria or Ottawa, Cash & more!



For all the details and contest rules please visit [www.legionbcyukon.ca](http://www.legionbcyukon.ca)

Deadline for all categories in this contest is **NOVEMBER 15, 2012**.

Apply now to begin May 2013! Deadline is Feb 1st. Visit [www.sfu.ca/mate](http://www.sfu.ca/mate) for more information.

ATTEND OUR INFO SESSION  
ON NOVEMBER 14, 2012!

## Master of Arts for Teachers of English (MATE)



SFU

As a full-time English teacher, I wondered where I would find the time to return to my studies and continue to work full time. When I first heard about MATE, I knew this program was designed with me in mind. One of the things I appreciate the most is the willingness of the professors to accommodate the needs of working teachers when scheduling the classes and assignments. The coursework is stimulating and challenging, and the structure of the cohort has generated a supportive and encouraging learning environment.

Deborah Stellingwerff, MATE Alumni

NEW RELEASE

asian publications

**LARGEST SELECTION OF SOUTH ASIAN BOOKS IN VARIOUS LANGUAGES.**

- Astrology • Cinema • Cooking • Music
- Festivals • Health • Yoga
- Learning Languages & Dictionaries (Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Bengali & Gujarati)
- Dance • Sikhism, Hinduism & Islam
- Novels in Punjabi, Hindi & Tamil • Books for Children

sales@asianpublications.com  
[www.asianpublications.com](http://www.asianpublications.com)  
604-597-5837

# Classified

## TRAVEL/VACATION

**TRANQUIL SEASIDE** retreat. Quadra Island. Full facilities and Internet. Serene mountain and oceanview. [www.otterhouse.ca](http://www.otterhouse.ca)

**WHISTLER** condo. Sleeps 4, views, close to village, 604-943-9423, [preddyplace@telus.net](mailto:preddyplace@telus.net)

**SUNSHINE COAST** modern 2 bdrm waterfront cottage. Winter/Summer rates. "Google" A cottage at Secret Cove. [fjbishop@gmail.com](mailto:fjbishop@gmail.com), 604-885-0651.

**MAUI HAWAII**, Great S. Kihei location, 1 bdrm. with ocean view, across the street from great beaches. For more information 209-599-5248 or [www.maui342.com](http://www.maui342.com)

**FRANCE**. Ultimate vacations, privately owned, beautiful furn. 1 bdrm. central Paris. Wkly/mthly. 604-738-1876, 604-879-4936, [irene.roland@gmail.com](mailto:irene.roland@gmail.com), [www.ultimateparis.com](http://www.ultimateparis.com)

**SOUTH OF FRANCE** villa in lively, lovely market town of Limoux. 4 bdrms. Sleeps 8. 2 bathrooms. All mod cons. Near lake and river swimming and historic Carcassonne. Great rates. Deep discounts for long-term, off-season. [www.southoffrancere.com](http://www.southoffrancere.com)

**MAUI, KIHAI**, Privately owned, fully furn. 2 bdrm, 2 bath condo, across from Kamaole Beaches. Great complex, Great location. 250-598-6955.

**WATERFRONT CONDO** Birch Bay, WA. 2 bdrm, 2 bath, for week or weekend rentals. Complex has indoor pool, hot tub, games room. \$150/night or \$900/wk (plus \$50 cln. fee), [birchbayrentals.com](http://birchbayrentals.com) or call Teresa@ 604-831-4080.

**THE ADVENTURE TRAVEL COMPANY**. Tour, cycle, trek, walk, volunteer, culture and more! As an individual, family, or group—we have the perfect adventure for you! Call Laura or Amy at 604-659-2887, e-mail: [broadway@atcadventure.com](mailto:broadway@atcadventure.com), [www.atcadventure.com](http://www.atcadventure.com)

## FOR RENT/EXCHANGE

**VANCOUVER** Clean, bright, quiet, centrally located condos at Robson & Bute. 1 bdrm. \$95. daily/wkly/mthly rates. 604-608-4268. [dbemc@hotmail.com](mailto:dbemc@hotmail.com)

**ELGIN PARK, SURREY** Beautiful carriage house, \$900 incl. all utilities. [Hollis\\_9@hotmail.com](mailto:Hollis_9@hotmail.com)

## MISCELLANEOUS

**VARIETY – THE CHILDREN'S CHARITY** Working with children is your passion. Leaving a legacy to Variety in your Will for BC's kids is your gift of a lifetime. There are estate planning benefits too. Contact Peter Chipman or Paul Spelliscy for information. Toll free 310-KIDS (5437) or 604-320-0505 or e-mail [peter.chipman@variety.bc.ca](mailto:peter.chipman@variety.bc.ca)

**HOME-BASED TUTORING** Referral Agency. Immediately awarding franchises in the Fraser Valley, Vancouver Island, Okanagan and Prince George. Good income, flexible lifestyle, proven system. 1-877-ITS EASY or visit: [www.schooliseasy.com](http://www.schooliseasy.com)

**SCHOOL TATTOOS** temporary tattoos printed with your school's art. Free Graphic Service and Free Tattoo Proof. Website: [www.schooltattoos.ca](http://www.schooltattoos.ca), E-mail: [info@schooltattoos.ca](mailto:info@schooltattoos.ca) or call 613-567-2636.

**FIELD TRIP**. Book a Burns Bog field trip today! A two-hour guided tour costs \$150 per class of up to 30 pupils. Visites guidées en français aussi! Buy *For Peat's Sake*, our educator's resource guide to peatlands. [www.burnsbog.org](http://www.burnsbog.org), 604-572-0373, [info@burnsbog.org](mailto:info@burnsbog.org)

**TILING & PAINTING**. Want to get the job done right? Call Vito. Glass and slate specialist. Indoor, outdoor painting. Serving the Vancouver area since 1996. [www.tile-rific.ca](http://www.tile-rific.ca) or call 604-831-4013.

**RETIRED?** Stay connected by presenting school programs at the Fraser River Discovery Centre. All the teaching fun without the prep and admin work! [www.fraserriverdiscovery.org](http://www.fraserriverdiscovery.org)

**SPORT UNIFORMS** (numbers, names, logos) custom t-shirts, embroidery. [allieddezeign.com](http://allieddezeign.com), [maria@allieddezeign.com](mailto:maria@allieddezeign.com)

**AGRI-TOURISM** – Classroom in the Corn and Pumpkin time. Anti-bullying theme story "Spookley the Square Pumpkin." Contact Chilliwack Corn Maze for tour options in the fall and spring. 604-845-7771 or [info@chilliwackcornmaze.com](mailto:info@chilliwackcornmaze.com)

**TEACHERS' TUTORING SERVICE** is looking for qualified high school teachers for one-to-one in-home tutoring in all areas of Metro Vancouver. Teachers must be BC Ministry of Education certified. For more information and to apply online, visit "Join Our Service" page at [www.tutor.bc.ca](http://www.tutor.bc.ca). TTS is a non-profit society.

## Factor 88? Don't wait

A member who has attained age 64, has reached factor "88" (age plus contributory service), or is in receipt of a retirement pension under a registered pension plan, may voluntarily withdraw from the long-term portion of the Salary Indemnity Plan. Withdrawal may be made during any school year in which one of the foregoing conditions has been met and upon the completion of the appropriate withdrawal form. Withdrawal will be effective, upon approval, in September for applications received in that month. Applications submitted later will be effective the month following approval of the application.

In making application for withdrawal, you should ensure that in the event of serious illness or accident you have sufficient accumulated sick leave which, when combined with 120 days of benefit from SIP short-term, will protect your salary to the end of the month in which you reach factor "90" or the end of the month you attain age 65, whichever comes first.

Principals and vice-principals should contact their HR department to inquire if they are members of the BCTF SIP or the disability plan offered through the BCPVPA. The BCPVPA plan will have its own withdrawal guidelines.

Applications are available online at: <http://tinyurl.com/7qrrnxx>, or call the BCTF Income Security Division at 604-871-1921.

## From The War Amps Military Heritage Series

### Grandpa's War in Bomber Command

By Jack W. Singer, DFC

With candour, insight, and a healthy dose of humour, Singer describes the grim realities of his job as a bomb-aimer in a Lancaster crew and the life lessons he learned along the way.

"We had to fight back and I do not regret having done my duty."  
(Memoir – \$15)

Excerpts from Singer's memoir are featured in *The War Amps* documentary **The Boys of Kelvin High: Canadians in Bomber Command**. (DVD – \$14)

Order separately or as a set (\$25) by contacting:

**The War Amps**     
1 800 250-3030 • [waramps.ca](http://waramps.ca)

## ENJOY EXCLUSIVE MEMBER PRIVILEGES!

As a BCTF Member you qualify for enhanced coverage and an additional 10%\* off your home insurance.

We offer very competitive rates and coverage customized to meet your needs.

To take advantage of your member benefits simply call 1.888.225.5234 and identify yourself as a BCTF Member.

We also have great rates on optional auto insurance and travel insurance!

Call us at 1.888.225.5234  
email us at [bctf@canadiandirect.ca](mailto:bctf@canadiandirect.ca)  
or visit [bctfadvantage.com](http://bctfadvantage.com)

BCTF Advantage

 CANADIAN DIRECT INSURANCE  
Canadian Western Bank Group

\*maximum combined policy discount 60%

# WetlandsLIVE

## A DISTANCE LEARNING ADVENTURE

### LIVE FROM BOUNDARY BAY

**Delta, British Columbia**

### Wading into Wetlands

**October 10, 2012 - 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Pacific Time**

What exactly is a wetland? How does it function to benefit wildlife and people? We'll visit some special wetlands to learn about wetland ecology, watersheds, their importance to migrating fish and birds, and much more. Watch this live and interactive program from Boundary Bay on ShawTV or the Internet and send us your questions.

**CLASSROOM RESOURCES • LESSON PLANS • VIDEOS**  
To register, go to: <http://WetlandsLIVE.pwnet.org>

**FREE Broadcast and Webcast for Students - Grades 4-8**



Brought to you by  
USDA  
Forest Service  
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

IN COLLABORATION WITH  
Pacific Wildlife Foundation  
Bird Studies Canada • Pacific Joint Venture  
Environment Canada

PRODUCED BY  
  
**SHAW**

## the LEARNING LEAF EDUCATION PROGRAM

### ZAJAC RANCH FOR CHILDREN

Looking for something fun and educational to do with your students? Why not visit Zajac Ranch for Children and enjoy 40 acres of pristine forested land on the shores of Stave Lake. The Ranch features an equestrian centre, high & low ropes courses, archery, climbing wall, playing fields, outdoor amphitheatre, petting zoo, indoor pool, gym, and easy waterfront access. Participate in the Learning Leaf Program which features articulated lesson plans for Grades 5 through 9, with Prescribed Learning Outcomes identified and an easy delivery format suited to outdoor learning and activities.

Open year-round. Accommodation for up to 120 guests.  
For more information call 604.739.0444 or visit [zajacranch.com/learning/](http://zajacranch.com/learning/)







### Articulated lesson plans for Gr 5-9 available!

Overnight Stays, Day Rates & Off-Season Discounts Available

# PD Calendar

## OCTOBER 2012

**18–19** Kamloops. **BCBEA** (BC Business Education Association) Annual fall conference “Digital Learning Tools—Everyone’s business.” Keynote: Darren Weeks from *Rich Dad Poor Dad*. Junior Achievement—Titan Simulation at Thursday evening wine and cheese at Kamloops Coast Hotel. Conference location: Thompson Rivers University. Contact Ishtar Litt, [illitt@sd73.bc.ca](mailto:illitt@sd73.bc.ca) or Terry Downton, [tdownton@sd22.bc.ca](mailto:tdownton@sd22.bc.ca) or 250-309-1867. Go to [www.bcbea.ca](http://www.bcbea.ca) to register online.

**18–19** Vancouver. **BCSCA** (BC School Counsellors’ Association) Annual fall conference “Connect ‘12.” Keynote: Dr. Stuart Shanker, distinguished psychologist from York University. Workshops, intensive sessions, and social/professional gatherings for elementary and high school counsellors at Coast Plaza Hotel, Comox at Denman near Stanley Park, Vancouver. Contact: [info@bcscaconference.ca](mailto:info@bcscaconference.ca), or visit [www.bcscaconference.ca](http://www.bcscaconference.ca).

**18–19** Port Coquitlam. **BCTLA** (British Columbia Teacher-Librarians’ Association) Annual fall conference “We’re In!: Inspire, innovate.” Featuring keynote speakers, including Dr. David Loertscher (San José State University School of Library & Information Science), a Thursday night social event, vendor displays, and over 50 sessions on learning commons, inquiry, technology, media, authors, and more. Location: Riverside Secondary, 2215 Reeve Street, Port Coquitlam. For more information, visit [bctlacoquitlam2012.weebly.com/](http://bctlacoquitlam2012.weebly.com/) or e-mail [psac49@bctf.ca](mailto:psac49@bctf.ca).

**18–20** Richmond. **APPIPC** (Association provinciale des professeurs de l’immersion et du programme francophone BC) Conférence annuelle “Sur la route de l’APPIPC.” Conférencière: Michèle Marineau, auteure. La conférence aura lieu à l’hôtel Exécutive Airport Plaza, 7311 Westminster Hwy, Richmond. Pour plus d’information, contactez Sophie Bergeron, [sbergeron@sd43.bc.ca](mailto:sbergeron@sd43.bc.ca) ou inscrivez-vous en ligne au [www.congresappipc.ca](http://www.congresappipc.ca).

**18–20** Burnaby. **BCTELA** (BC Teachers of English Language Arts) “Teaching for Joy and Justice: Re-thinking language arts.” Featuring Darren Lund, Faye Brownlie, Sharon Jeroski, Susan Crichton, and Carl Leggo. Events include wine and cheese evening, main conference, and Saturday Institutes. Location: Cariboo Hill Secondary, 8580 16th Avenue, Burnaby. More information and registration available in June 2012 at [www.bctela.ca/](http://www.bctela.ca/) or contact Leyton Schnellert at [leyton.schnellert@ubc.ca](mailto:leyton.schnellert@ubc.ca) or Shelley Moore at [smoore@sd38.bc.ca](mailto:smoore@sd38.bc.ca).

**18–20** Victoria. **BCAMT** (BC Association of Mathematics Teachers) “51st Northwest Mathematics Conference: Math in bloom.” Keynotes: Dan Meyer, Catherine Fosnot, Patrick Vennebush. The three-day long Northwest Math Conference is held in BC every three years. With three well-known keynotes and many thought-provoking workshops, it will be a great chance to learn some new ideas, share thoughts with colleagues and have some great discussions about teaching and learning mathematics. Victoria Conference Centre and Fairmont Hotel, downtown Victoria. Register at [www.nwmc2012.com](http://www.nwmc2012.com), or contact Jack Showers, conference chair, [jackshowers@shaw.ca](mailto:jackshowers@shaw.ca).

**18–20** Richmond. **BCMEA** (BC Music Educators’ Association) “Unison 2012: Coming together for music education.” Keynote speaker: Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser. As educators we strive to promote higher learning and development! Join us at Unison 2012 where we hope you will be inspired and challenged while we come together as one. Location: River Rock Conference Centre. To register go to [www.bcmeaconference.com](http://www.bcmeaconference.com), or for more information, contact Angela Toth or Ethan Shoemaker at [info@bcmeaconference.com](mailto:info@bcmeaconference.com).

**19** Kelowna. **THESA** (Teachers of Home Economics Specialist Association) Annual fall conference “Fresh: 21st century approaches to teaching home economics.” Keynote and workshops featuring a variety of topics related to foods, nutrition, textiles, and family studies and a conversation about the past, present, and future of home economics education in BC. Location: Okanagan Mission Secondary, 4544 Gordon Drive, Kelowna. For more information, contact Mary Anna Cimbaro at [mcimbaro@sd23.bc.ca](mailto:mcimbaro@sd23.bc.ca) or register at [www.thesaconference.ca/](http://www.thesaconference.ca/).

**19** Burnaby. **BCATML** (BC Association of Teachers of Modern Languages) “Celebrating Languages.” A broad range of workshops. Topics of interest to teachers of all languages: Curriculum and the CEFR, culture, technology, communication strategies, assessment and more. New this year, “World Café” discussion forums structured on Edcamp model. Location: Delta Burnaby Hotel, 4331 Dominion Street, Burnaby. For more information: Presenter information—Stacey Sveistrup, [ssveistrup@vsb.bc.ca](mailto:ssveistrup@vsb.bc.ca); exhibitor information—Tina Tsai, [tina.tsai@sd41.bc.ca](mailto:tina.tsai@sd41.bc.ca), or Pepi Kotsalis, [kotsalis\\_p@sd36.bc.ca](mailto:kotsalis_p@sd36.bc.ca); registration—Rome Lavrencic, [rlavrenc@sd40.bc.ca](mailto:rlavrenc@sd40.bc.ca), or go to: [www.bcatml.org](http://www.bcatml.org).

**19** Burnaby. **LATA** (Learning Assistance Teachers’ Association) Annual fall conference “Healthy Minds Matter: Education and youth mental health.” Main presenter: Don Buchanan, along with others from BC Children’s Hospital. Location: Byrne Creek Secondary, 7777 18th Street, Burnaby. For more information, contact Alan Peterson at [lataconference@hotmail.com](mailto:lataconference@hotmail.com). Register at [bctf.ca/lata/conference/events.htm](http://bctf.ca/lata/conference/events.htm).

**19** Vancouver. **BCDEA** (BC Dance Educators’ Association) “Spirit of Movement—Connections through Dance” conference 2012. Keynote speaker: Yoshi Hisanaga. Workshops will be offered in a variety of levels and styles, for both elementary and secondary teachers of dance. Gladstone Secondary School, Vancouver. Online registration at [bctf.ca/bcdea](http://bctf.ca/bcdea), contact Kim Wolski ([kwolski@sd35.bc.ca](mailto:kwolski@sd35.bc.ca)) or Whitney Deacon ([sdeacon@sd39.bc.ca](mailto:sdeacon@sd39.bc.ca)).

**19** New Westminster campus. **PE-BC** (Physical Education—British Columbia) Annual Quality Daily Physical Education Conference, hosted by Douglas College, New Westminster campus. Check out [www.douglas.bc.ca/qdpe](http://www.douglas.bc.ca/qdpe) for more info. Contact Sue MacDonald, PE-BC president, [smacdonald@sd57.bc.ca](mailto:smacdonald@sd57.bc.ca), or David Munro, conference chair, [munrod@douglas.bc.ca](mailto:munrod@douglas.bc.ca).

**19** Vancouver. **BCPTA** (BC Primary Teachers’ Association) “Mindful Play.” The conference will include self-regulation, restitution, mindup, classroom strategies, practical ideas and hands-on learning. Keynote speaker: Dr. Stuart Shanker. Location: Marriott Pinnacle Vancouver, 1128 West Hastings, Vancouver. Register online soon at [www.bcpta.ca](http://www.bcpta.ca). For more information, contact Grace Sinnema, conference co-ordinator, at [bcptaconference@telus.net](mailto:bcptaconference@telus.net), or Joy Silver, registrar, at H: 604-941-2606 or [odetojoy@telus.net](mailto:odetojoy@telus.net).

**19** Richmond. **BCTEA** (BC Technology Education Association) “Gearing Up for the Future.” This exciting PD opportunity will include workshops on surfboard building, VEX robotics, the Richmond Cravers Society and Makers from the Hacker space in Vancouver. Location: Cambie Secondary, 4151 Jacombs Road, Richmond. Register at [www.bctea.org/](http://www.bctea.org/). For more info, contact conference chair, Allan Byres at S: 604-668-6430, or registrar, Randy Grey at [randy.grey@sd71.bc.ca](mailto:randy.grey@sd71.bc.ca).

**19** Vancouver. **BCSSTA** (BC Social Studies Teachers’ Association) “Thinking and Acting Locally and Globally.” Keynote speakers: Romeo Dallaire and Peter Seixas; special guest presenter: Amy Burvall. Conference is focused on educating our students about their rights and responsibilities as citizens in the 21st century. Workshops provided for both English and French Immersion teachers

of all age and grade levels. Location: Vancouver Technical Secondary, 2600 East Broadway, Vancouver. For more information, go to [www.bcsstaconference.ca/](http://www.bcsstaconference.ca/), or contact Dale Martelli at 604-809-6929 or [bcsta@gmail.com](mailto:bcsta@gmail.com).

**19** Vancouver. **EEPSA** (Environmental Educators’ Provincial Specialist Association) will be offering some workshops at the BCSSTA conference. See “October 19 Vancouver BCSSTA.”

**19** Vancouver. **AEGTCCBC** (Association for Educators of Gifted, Talented and Creative Children in BC) “Guiding the Gifted Child.” Keynote speaker, Stephanie Tolan, is a well-known author of novels for children and young adults (*Surviving the Applewhites*). Location: Holiday Inn, 711 West Broadway, Vancouver. Register online at [aegtccbc.ca/](http://aegtccbc.ca/). For more information, contact Elizabeth Ensing at W: 604-533-2222, H: 604-574-0465, or at [ebbensing@gmail.com](mailto:ebbensing@gmail.com).

**19** Vancouver. **CUEBC** (Computer-Using Educators of BC) Co-sponsored by EDLPISA (BC Educators for Distributed Learning PSA) Annual fall conference “Digital Technology that Works.” Keynote: Ian Jukes. Over 30 sessions, vendor area, lunch and door prizes at John Oliver Secondary, 530 East 41st Avenue, Vancouver. Registration and/or contact information at [www.cuebc.ca](http://www.cuebc.ca).

**19** Vancouver. **PAGE** (BC Teachers for Peace and Global Education) Annual fall conference “How to Make a Better World.” From 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.—two sets of morning workshops, followed by the AGM. Location: Eric Hamber Secondary, 5025 Willow Street, Vancouver. For more information, contact Susan Ruzic at [sruzic@bctf.ca](mailto:sruzic@bctf.ca) or [www.pagebc.ca](http://www.pagebc.ca).

**19** West Vancouver. **ESLPSA** (English as a Second Language Provincial Specialist Association) Annual fall conference “I’m More Than a Colouring Person: Empowering English language learners.” Keynote: Dr. Margaret Early. All-day workshops at West Vancouver Secondary, 1750 Mathers Avenue, West Vancouver. For more info, contact Marc Tremblay at [mt4919@gmail.com](mailto:mt4919@gmail.com). To register, go to [ellpsa.ca/?page\\_id=26](http://ellpsa.ca/?page_id=26), or for more information, contact Marc Tremblay at [mt4919@gmail.com](mailto:mt4919@gmail.com).

**19** Fort Langley. **AEA** (Aboriginal Education Association) Annual fall conference “Truth, Healing and Reconciliation: The legacy of residential schools.” Amazing workshops and keynote. Location: Fort Langley Elementary, 8877 Bartlett Street, Fort Langley. Visit our blog to see updates on the conference [aborigined.blogspot.ca/](http://aborigined.blogspot.ca/) or e-mail [gstromquist@sd35.bc.ca](mailto:gstromquist@sd35.bc.ca).

**19** Burnaby. **BCCLPSA** (BC Co-operative Learning Provincial Specialist Association) “Social and Emotional Learning in Our Schools: What do we know? What do we do?” co-sponsored by the Dalai Lama Center for Peace and Education, and SRCLE (Social Responsibility in Collaborative Learning Environments). This conference is being offered by a network of Lower Mainland educators and educational researchers focusing on social emotional learning. Location: Michael J. Fox Theatre/Burnaby South Secondary, 7373 MacPherson Avenue, Burnaby. Register online at [bctf.ca/bccla/](http://bctf.ca/bccla/): \$95 for teachers/\$80 for TTOCs and student teachers. Contact: Mike Galliford at [mgalliford@sd43.bc.ca](mailto:mgalliford@sd43.bc.ca).

**19** Mission. **BCCASA** (BC Culinary Arts Specialist Association) Annual fall conference “The Mighty Fraser.” It is a guided river safari up the Fraser River in a heated boat. Explore the shores of the river for wildlife, listen to stories passed down over the years and learn about the history that carved a rich legacy for the province. Part of the adventure will take you to Kilby Historic Site to tour the museum and farm. We will end by meeting at Mission Springs for a talk from Ocean Wise on sustainable fish and seafood. Our AGM will also be there. Rooms are available at the hotel across the street. Contact Brian Smith, [bsmith@sd42.bc.ca](mailto:bsmith@sd42.bc.ca).

**19–20** BCATA (BC Art Teachers’ Association) joint conference with 62 Drama. “Across the Arts Fall Conference 2012.” See “ABCDE” for conference information. Check website for registration—[www.bcata.ca](http://www.bcata.ca), or contact Jane Skipsey, [jskipsey@telus.net](mailto:jskipsey@telus.net).

**19–20** Delta. **PITA** (Provincial Intermediate Teachers’ Association) “Bright Ideas: Inspiration for every classroom.” Over 30 different presenters to choose from. Practical, engaging, and informative workshops cover all subject areas for intermediate and middle school teachers. Location: North Delta Secondary, 11447 82nd Avenue, Delta. To register, or for more information, go to [www.pita.ca](http://www.pita.ca). Any questions? E-mail [president@pita.ca](mailto:president@pita.ca).

**19–20** Lower Mainland/TBA. **ABCDE** (Association of BC Drama Educators) and **BCATA** (BC Art Teachers’ Association). “Across the Arts Fall Conference 2012.” Artist and arts education keynote, as well as dance and theatre performances. Two fine arts disciplines come together to offer workshops for teachers of elementary and secondary art drama. All teachers welcome! Check websites for registration link: Art—[www.bcata.ca](http://www.bcata.ca), Drama—[www.bcdramateachers.com/](http://www.bcdramateachers.com/). For more information, contact: Drama—Cheryl Causley: [ccausley@croftonhouse.ca](mailto:ccausley@croftonhouse.ca); Art—Jane Skipsey [jskipsey@telus.net](mailto:jskipsey@telus.net).

## FEBRUARY 2013

**14–15** Vancouver. **BCEA** (BC Alternate Education Association) “Challenge and Change.” Keynote speaker: Gabor Mate. Thirty different sessions focused on helping at-risk youth presented in varying styles and topics including technology, film-making, art, outdoor education, and mental health. Location: Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre, 1088 Burrard Street, Vancouver. Register online starting October 2012 at [www.bctf.ca/bcaea/conference.html](http://www.bctf.ca/bcaea/conference.html). For more information, contact DJ Pauls at [djpauls@shaw.ca](mailto:djpauls@shaw.ca).

**21–22** Richmond. **SEA** (Special Education Association) Annual spring conference “Scattered Minds, Beyond the Medical Model: A bio-psychosocial view of attention deficit disorder and other childhood developmental disorders.” Keynote: Gabor Mate. Two-day conference at Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel, 7551 Westminster Highway, Richmond. Contact information: Alison Ogden, conference chair, [seaconferencechair@gmail.com](mailto:seaconferencechair@gmail.com). Please see our website [www.seaofbc.ca](http://www.seaofbc.ca) for conference program information starting November 1, 2012.

**BCSCTA** (BC Science Teachers’ Association) has a conference every second year. They will have one next year.

Future October PSA days (BCTF procedure statement 30.A.14)

30.A. 14 That for the purposes of a province-wide PSA day, the BCTF supports the third Friday in October as the day on which all districts hold a professional day, except in years in which Thanksgiving Monday falls in the same week, in which case the fourth Friday would be the designated day.  
2012 - 2013: October 19, 2012  
2013 - 2014: October 25, 2013  
2014 - 2015: October 24, 2014  
2015 - 2016: October 23, 2015

## PD Calendar website

[bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/ProDIPD-Calendar.cfm](http://bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/ProDIPD-Calendar.cfm)

Additions/changes:  
Contact Betty Goto at  
[bgoto@bctf.ca](mailto:bgoto@bctf.ca)

# World Teachers' Day

Journée mondiale des enseignants

October  
Octobre

5

Teachers build a better world  
We inspire our students and we nurture the love of learning every day.

