

# Teacher

## Features

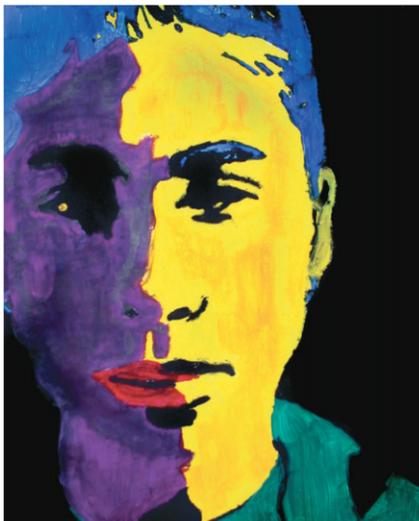
Britain provides glimpse of Campbell's vision	3
President of France saved by B.C. teacher	4
B.C.'s workforce is getting much younger	5
It takes a community to raise a child	5
B.C. teachers attend BCFed convention	6
Underfunding a first-rate education system	9
Support from across Canada	10
Aboriginal educators say BCTF should take action against racism	10
Report spotlights need for media literacy	11
BCTF financial report	13
Project Overseas: Sierra Leone	20

## Columns

President's message	2
Readers write	2
Looking back	3
Health & Safety	8
Teachers' tips	8
Retirement seminars	12
Yours for the asking	12
Ten new BCTF lesson aids	12
Classified	19
PD Calendar	19

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## Students partner to create stunning portraits



Clockwise from top left: Jason Tam, Grade 11, Windermere; Emily Wong, Grade 12, Magee; Van Pho Huynh, Grade 11, Windermere; Kaylah Zander, Grade 9, Templeton; Kevin Xu, Grade 11, Vantech; Alyssa Guevara, Grade 7, Waverly; Mimi Li, Grade 11, Vantech

by Nancy Knickerbocker

*Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist, once we grow up.*

— Pablo Picasso

These wise words grace the first page of *Portraits of Our Culture*, a new art book created by Vancouver students from Grades 1 through 12. No doubt Picasso would applaud wholeheartedly if he could see the free creative spirit that leaps off of every page.

The book both delights the eye and warms the heart, as the reader comes to see that the creative collaboration was as much about building friendships as making art. Certainly it's been a labour of love for art teacher Malcolm McTaggart, along with many colleagues and supportive parents. The fourth in a series of books produced by Vancouver art teachers and students, this one portrays how young artists see themselves in an ever-changing world.

Art teachers at 32 different schools helped secondary students mentor elementary students on a variety of collaborative projects around the theme "portraits of our culture." The students painted their portraits on everything from paper to stone, ceramic tile, and found objects. They did wool felting, photography, sculpture, and multi-media.

Whatever the medium, the children enthusiastically depicted their diverse cultures in brilliant colour.

"When [the portraits] are done they will be great. I just know it!" said Hannah Ker, a Grade 1 student at Kitchener.

"The Grade 1 students were full of imagination and not afraid to put their ideas down," observed Kevin Chan, a Grade 12 at Ker's partner school, Prince of Wales.

Clearly, the students gained confidence through shared creativity and new friendships. "One of the goals was to create a real variety of art forms, and to create relationships so that younger students would have a feeling of belonging when they go on to high school," said McTaggart.

A tiled bench created by students of Van Horne Elementary in the courtyard of Eric Hamber Secondary is just one of the very successful projects in the book. It began with students' researching the indigenous fauna and flora of our province and then choosing images to paint onto bisque tiles. The students sketched, painted, glazed, and fired their tiles, then set them into place, grouted and sealed the bench. The result is a cheerful patchwork of B.C. images—orca, loon, seal, deer, dogwood, bluejay, and cherry blossom.

The project has been so successful that two other feeder schools plan to involve their students in tiling additional benches at Hamber. The bench created a concrete link between

younger students and their future high school. An elementary student wrote to the secondary art teacher:

"Please help me, Amanda, to tell Vicky hello and see if she still remembers me. Please inform her that my friend Sarah and me still have Vicky in our mind and will never forget her. Please tell her that. This is very important. Tell her I wrote a lot of special things about her in my journal."

"Tell the high school students that painting tiles with them has been most enjoyable for me and I am looking even more forward to becoming a student at Eric Hamber," another student wrote.

Laura Super, a Grade 12 student, wrote: "It was interesting to see what my Grade 1 buddy thought about. I think this project is one that bridges the gap between elementary and secondary schools. Co-operative art projects like this one should take place because both older and younger students benefit from it."

Facing funding cutbacks and escalating accountability measures, art teachers are working even harder to maintain their programs. Certainly this book is a wonderful reminder of how crucial the arts are to students and to society at large.

McTaggart is quick to credit others who collaborated on the project. Dr. Valerie Overgaard, associate superintendent, championed the book from the start. Usher Hammer, a retired teacher, has been instrumental

in the book projects since 1990. Similarly, David Friesen and his nephew Curwin, owners of the Friesen family yearbook print shop, have kindly agreed to print the book at cost. Alison Prendergast, another retired art teacher, created a CD of the book. Lana Hill did liaison with the Pendulum Gallery in the Hong Kong Bank building, while Ana Dispirito and Alex Baillie organized the exhibition.

It was a great experience for students, parents, and teachers alike to show their portraits at such a great venue right downtown, McTaggart said.

Many who read the book are clearly moved and impressed by it. Chris Kelly, superintendent of Vancouver schools, wrote:

"The images in this collection are powerful in so many ways; as compelling statements of cultural experience and perspective; as evidence of the remarkable creativity and insight of these young artists; as testimony to the quality of learning, performance, and achievement in our schools; as signals as well as symbols of the life and times of our community and society."

*Portraits of our Culture* is available for \$35 from the Vancouver School Board's District Learning Services, 1595 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC V6J 1Z8, by phone at 604-713-5206, or via e-mail at [portraits@fourculture@hotmail.com](mailto:portraits@fourculture@hotmail.com).

Nancy Knickerbocker is the BCTF's media relations officer.

## President's message



Neil Worboys

At press time, we are still working hard to resolve the College of Teachers dispute and ensure that members' rights are protected. Education Minister Christy Clark has announced her intention to restore democratic governance to the college council, but we have yet to see any legislative change and or to receive a positive answer to one of our many requests for a meeting.

Nonetheless, we can all take heart from the success of our campaign so far. The feeling of unity and professional pride has been, as the kids say, awesome! In addition, the willingness of teachers to take action and to speak out publicly, despite the many pressures to silence us, has been truly inspiring.

I'm very proud of the many members who wrote to their trustees, MLAs, and the minister herself. As well, teachers have contributed to letters-to-the-editor columns of newspapers all over the province, expressing our concerns while maintaining a professional manner.

And speaking of professionalism, please take the time to read page 4 of this issue, where you'll meet a colleague of whom we can all be proud. He's Langley teacher Mohammed Chelali, recently made a Knight of the Legion d'Honneur by the government of France for disarming a neo-Nazi assassin aiming to kill President Jacques Chirac.

For me, Mohammed epitomizes the ideals of professionalism, grace under pressure, and solidarity. I very much appreciated being invited along with the Chelali family and friends to share in a celebratory evening at the French consulate in Vancouver. I was touched that, in his moment of honour, Mohammed made sure to include his colleagues, his students, and his union.

## Retired teachers names missed

The following names were inadvertently left off our listing of retired teachers printed in the Nov./Dec. 2003 issue of *Teacher*: Peter Andres, Fraser Cascade Ken Harshenin, Boundary

## Teaching about elections

Are you interested in improving interest in elections, increasing media literacy, student awareness of election issues and the policies of political parties? Get involved in constructing a survey where students compare their "vote" with their knowledge of party policy. The project will be particularly relevant should a federal election be called this spring. We are looking for interested teachers from throughout B.C. Contact Don Sparks, [kfyfkyfe@yahoo.com](mailto:kfyfkyfe@yahoo.com).

You also may be interested in Kids Voting Canada, an initiative that aims to nurture our students to become citizens and renew the public spirit of democracy. The Student Vote program series incorporates the operation of parallel student elections during the official election periods, em-

powering students to "practise" their citizenship. Visit the web site [www.kidsvotingcanada.com](http://www.kidsvotingcanada.com)  
**Don Sparks**  
Langley

## No per diem for pioneers

During my teaching career in the 1950s and the early 1960s, I was privileged to serve on many Department of Education committees. Later, when I was a BCTF employee, the privilege continued but always without honorarium. To serve, to try to give, seemed to be an honest personal commitment, though I recognized that many teachers felt that a modest honorarium of recognition would be appropriate and personally appreciated.

No one in those innocent and pioneer days imagined that the newly and politically appointed members of the Clark College of Teachers (formerly known as the majority elected B.C. College of Teachers) would instantly rush to Whistler and in secret, vote themselves what has to be a reprehensible honorarium of \$250 per day for working to destroy the current structure.

This is about denying teachers control over their own college

and "double dipping" into the public purse! Need I say more?  
**John Church**  
Vancouver

## Congratulations

We regularly receive your delightful newsmagazine. The informative and entertaining content is a terrific resource for teachers and others, like our environmental education group. We commend your continuing efforts to keep social justice and citizenship skills in the forefront of education issues.

Please accept our congratulations on winning the Canadian Educational Press Association's Gold Leaf Awards. We applaud the *Teacher* newsmagazine staff on your significant achievement in receiving such a tribute from education communicators.

We wish you continued success in the future.

**Cheryl Ziola**  
President, FORED BC

## Coming out at school discussion

GALE BC (Gay and Lesbian Educators of B.C.) are hosting an open meeting on February 20, 2004, in the Marpole area of Vancouver. The evening is open to

any BCTF members, student teachers, and any other interested educators. Come and share your experiences in a lively discussion. We will provide some light refreshments and appetizers. For details on the venue, call James Chamberlain (604-873-2303) or Steve LeBel (604-688-0924).

**Steve LeBel**  
Vancouver

## Thank you

As previous staff rep for many years and as a concerned member, I thank all of my colleagues who signed the yellow card in my district and have paid their \$90 this week to the BCTF Democratic College Fund. Our solidarity is what will maintain our determination and keep us strong against all those who would break us down and destroy our pride and professionalism.

I am proud to be a teacher with those of you who understand the function of a union (with all its imperfections) and the importance of democracy during these troubling times.

Thank you to each and every one of you for your support.

**Jody Krehel**  
Surrey

## Notice of AGM 2004

As required by the Society Act, the following formal notice of the 2004 AGM is made to all BCTF members pursuant to By-law 8.1 by publication in this edition of *Teacher*.

The 88th Annual General Meeting of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation will be held in the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Vancouver, beginning on Saturday evening, March 13, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. and continuing to Tuesday, March 16, 2004.

### AGM 2004 deadlines

- February 2: deadline for candidate statement copy for *Teacher* newsmagazine.
- March 2: deadline for withdrawal of candidate names from ballot and agenda.

## International Women's Day

On March 8, Canadians, together with others around the world will celebrate International Women's Day (IWD). Established by the United Nations in 1977, this special day provides an opportunity to celebrate the gains women have made and to reflect on the work and challenges that remain.

The Honourable Jean Augustine, secretary of state (multiculturalism and status of women), announced in March 2003 that the Canadian theme for IWD/IWW 2004 would be "World-Wide Women (www): Surfing the Digital Revolution!" She stated that the theme will encourage Canadians to take a closer look at

the impact of information and communication technologies on women and ICTs' use as tools to empower women and to promote women's equality.

Watch for a poster to celebrate International Women's Day in the January school mailing. Ideas to celebrate can be found in the BCTF Gender Equity Guide available from BCTF Lesson Aids.

For a listing of various activities happening across the country to mark International Women's Week, check the Status of Women web site at [www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/dates/iwd/index\\_e.html#calendar](http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/dates/iwd/index_e.html#calendar).

— Margaret Ross

## Call for nominations for G.A. Fergusson Memorial Award

The award may be made annually, at the AGM. Nominations of candidates for the award may be made by any Federation member or by a local of the Federation.

See Page 151 of *Member's Guide to the BCTF* or call Donna Coulombe at the BCTF for more details.

Deadline for nominations is Friday, February 20, 2004.

## B.C. limits welfare to two years

On April 1, 2002 the B.C. Liberal government implemented a two-year time limit policy on welfare. This means that thousands of people on income assistance will receive their last cheque, their last source of

income, on February 26, 2004. As teachers, we need to be sensitive to children in our classes whose lives will be disrupted by this government initiative.

B.C. is the only province in Canada to have such a policy in place. Time limits on welfare are a cruel attack on the most powerless members of our society. It is the flip side of the tax cuts for the wealthy. The tax cuts introduced on the first day the B.C. Liberals came to power provide \$200 million a year to the top 8,000 income earners in the province. Corporate tax cuts have reduced government revenues by billions.

- Time limits resulting in reductions in assistance mean that more children will come to school hungry and more will be homeless.
- Welfare time limits will mean more people sleeping in the streets and panhandling.
- It will also overburden the foster-care system as many children may be apprehended because their parents will not be able to provide for them.

Please email, write or Fax Murray Coell, the Minister of Human Resources to tell him to End Welfare Time Limits

Phone: 250-356-7750, Fax: 250-356-7292, Address: PO Box 9058 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria BC

W8W 9E2, E-mail: [murray.coell@gems3.gov.bc.ca](mailto:murray.coell@gems3.gov.bc.ca)

For further information on how to fight back, call Lisa at End Legislated Poverty at 604-879-1209 or visit our web site at [bctf.ca/social/poverty/WelfareTimeLimit/](http://bctf.ca/social/poverty/WelfareTimeLimit/).

## Research: Korean students in B.C. schools

The country with the largest number of international students in B.C. schools is Korea.

The Korean Teachers' Union and the BCTF have established a working relationship through the BCTF International Solidarity Program. Part of that includes working together on issues that arise for students from Korea in B.C. and for the schools that host the students.

The BCTF International Solidarity Program will be holding a focus group with teachers who currently have or recently had Korean students in their classes. The purpose of the focus group will be to identify issues that we want to explore with the Korean union. If you would like to be a part of the focus group, contact Leona Dolan at 604-871-2250 or [ldolan@bctf.ca](mailto:ldolan@bctf.ca).

## Don't do the surveys

The Representative Assembly, November 2003, decided "that teachers no longer participate in the government's satisfaction survey."

There were no educational benefits for students from teachers participating in the

survey last year. There were no questions about class size, resources to support learning, or the reductions of options and choices available to our students.

Last year, the minister used the surveys to claim that people are satisfied with her government's initiatives in education.



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# Britain provides glimpse of Campbell's vision



by Tina Anderson

How will B.C.'s education system look in 10 or 20 years, given the current path of this B.C. Liberal government? We need only look across the pond to the crisis in the English public education system for a multitude of examples of the long-term effects of drastic underfunding and detrimental decision making.

Since Margaret Thatcher's neo-conservative program of privatization, deregulation, union-busting, and getting rid of all things public sector, Britain has been on a path of social and economic destruction. And nowhere in the country have her policies manifest themselves more drastically than in the public education system. From the masses of paperwork to the blaming of teachers, from the overcrowding of classrooms to the giant steps toward privatization, English public schools are in desperate shape with no hope of a future on their present road. These are lessons *we must embrace and act on* if we are to avoid the same fate in B.C. schools.

The problems of the English school system are many, but all can be attributed to drastic underfunding. One of the largest and most concerning obstacles to the English system is the recruitment and maintenance of teachers. Given the demands of an extreme workload and little pay, few British citizens are willing to become teachers, thus creating the need to recruit internationally. When British teachers do enter the profession, many leave in the first year or less as they feel incapable of coping with the masses of paperwork and endless hours of preparation on minimal wages. The starting salary for a newly graduated teacher is approximately £17,000 (\$38,000), a pittance to live on with the cost of living almost double that of Canada. The thousands of international teachers throughout the country, mostly from Australia and New Zealand, are mainly recruited through employment agencies. One of

the few areas of growth in the British economy, these parasitic agencies were demanding anywhere from £1,000 (\$2,300) for providing the name of a teacher to a school, to £30 or £40 (\$69-\$92) per day for every day an international teacher works. Prior to January 1, 2003, most international teachers were employed by agencies rather than the schools they taught in; however, given widespread abuse and the millions of educational pounds that should have been going into classrooms instead of feathering the pockets of people who contribute nothing to education, international teachers must now be employed by the schools in which they teach. Employment agencies

*Underfunding is camouflaged in bulk funding to schools.*

recruit teachers from all over the globe, promising the world, and delivering little or no support once a teacher begins his or her job.

Underfunding is camouflaged in bulk funding to schools. Bulk funding and having elected boards of governors for each school, rather than elected trustees for a district are two giant steps toward the privatization of the system. Bulk funding allots money to each school to administer as it sees fit, rather than a per pupil amount to the district, whereby district standards and regulations must be met. Operating like small businesses, the schools do their own hiring and firing. British public schools are forced to stretch every penny as far as it can go. Most schools do not replace teaching and non-teaching staff when they are absent; instead they reorganize existing staff for internal coverage.

Bulk funding has also manifest itself in an intense and unfriendly competition among schools. That funding is directly tied to the English education system's fanaticism about testing and league tables (amalgamated

and published test scores), which has forced teachers, particularly in secondary schools, to "teach to the test" rather than teach a well-balanced, engaging, and quality curriculum. Test results are published in the national newspapers so that parents can determine where to send their children; theoretically, to the schools with the highest test scores. The more students a school enrolls, the more money it receives in bulk funding, creating have and have-not schools, mainly along socio-economic lines. Recruitment based on test scores has resulted in many students' being refused at their neighbourhood schools.

Teaching to tests is certainly not the only concern of educators in England. The dreaded national curriculum, which sets the educational standards across the country, has eroded almost all teacher autonomy from the classroom. While not so long ago teachers had the ability to teach in a pedagogically sound manner that looked at the needs of their students and allowed an engaging and in-depth study of interest, teachers in primary, for example, are now bound to a time-lined set of very specific units with a huge focus on rote learning: memorization, repetition, regurgitation, and worksheets.

*With classes of 30 and more four- and five-year-olds, teachers have little individual time to assist those who require extra help.*

The national curriculum also mandates the necessity to differentiate students. That means segregating a class population into three identifiable groups: capable students, average learners, and strugglers. In most classes, teachers will prepare separate activities for each group, tripling preparation time; however, when teaching new materials and concepts,

they target the most advanced group. Beginning in *reception* (a pre-Kindergarten program that is part of the public school system), this mandated method of teaching leaves most students who struggle far behind, from subject to subject and year to year, never having the opportunity to build on the very basics. With classes of 30 and more four- and five-year-olds, teachers have little individual time to assist those who require extra help. The students who struggle and have had few positive experiences or successes during their primary and intermediate years often enter secondary school laden with social and behavioural problems, so much so that secondary teachers complain they can scarcely teach because of students' unruly and often violent and abusive behaviours. Such students drop out of school and have few opportunities for employment. Britain has the highest teenage pregnancy rate in Europe, and the highest single-mother rate in the world.

The inadequacies of the British education system and the consequent difficulties of many of its students have resulted in an unprecedented blaming of teachers for the failures of their pupils (a tactical move by the British government to divert public attention away from drastic underfunding). Educators are forced to do a massive amount of paperwork in the name of "accountability." Every lesson in every subject is detailed on provided forms, identifying how the teacher will differentiate among the three groups and what the mandated objectives, starter activity, main teaching and activity, summary activity, and assessments will be. Educators spend more time writing out what they plan to do than doing it, with next to no time for actual preparation. The plan is expected to be posted on a classroom wall, and heaven help the teacher who is not following his or her plan when an administrator or OFSTED (the ministry of education's notorious assessment force)

inspector walks into the classroom.

The weekly plans, term plans, term assessments, detailed incident and accident reports, field trip planning, care plans for students with special needs, IEPs, staff training and development records, parent consultation records, teacher evaluations of their teaching assistants, end-of-year subject leader reports, and anything else a school sees fit to document, burden the British teacher daily. Hence the need for an international teaching pool in England.

Unlike their B.C. counterparts, British teachers have few advocates against the travesties in education. To ensure no opposition to her reign of terror on working people, Margaret Thatcher got rid of "closed-shop unionization" and she severely limited a union's ability to organize and represent its members. Sound familiar? Unions were rendered almost ineffective, and among teachers,

*The Campbell government is well on its way to implementing most aspects of the Thatcher blueprint...*

four unions vie for the voluntary membership of a workforce too overburdened with the day-to-day demands of their drowning profession and classrooms to devote any time to addressing the source of their crises: decades of drastic underfunding.

The Campbell government is well on its way to implementing most aspects of the Thatcher blueprint, and already we can see some of those policies creeping into our education system. Teaching in England has been like looking into a crystal ball, and the future for B.C.'s schools looks frightening if we remain on the current path of this B.C. Liberal government.

*Tina Anderson is a Richmond teacher, currently on recall status.*

## LOOKING BACK

### 70 years ago

This is an age of slogans. A catch phrase is presumably more effective than logic. One of the most popular of such slogans is "Balance the Budget." Obviously the principle of balancing the budget, or living within our income, is simple and fundamentally sound, but as is the case with many such principles, its practical application is not necessarily either simple or fundamentally sound.

In the City of Vancouver the budget was balanced only because the teachers agreed to teach without salary during the month of December. The point is that the teachers balanced the budget by giving up their undoubted rights under their salary agreements.

January 1934, *The BC Teacher*

### 50 years ago

Merit rating! Pay the teachers by the excellence of their work. Let's pay the best what they are worth. We want

to give the teachers a monetary incentive to improvement.

Mr. Cooper examined research reports from nine school systems and discovered that merit ratings: undermine teacher morale, attack teacher integrity, stifle teacher initiative, encourage partisanship and politics within the school, increase the insecurity of teaching, divide teachers, relegate teachers to becoming items of debits or credits on principals' registers, and are designed to balance school budgets by granting fewer and smaller increments.

February 1954, *The BC Teacher*

### 30 years ago

Can you imagine a school day beginning and ending with teachers and students doing nothing except sitting with eyes closed for 15-20 minutes? It may sound fanciful and impractical, but if a simple system of meditation were adopted by the schools, the results would be anything but impractical. The

Science of Creative Intelligence is the theoretical aspect of the technique of Transcendental Meditation (TM). Both SCI and TM have, I believe, much to contribute to our educational systems.

January 1974, *The BC Teacher*

### 10 years ago

The face of the employer on the other side of our teacher bargaining table is changing. Government passed Bill 78—the *Public Sector Employers' Act*—in July 1993 to ensure that not school boards, but the provincial cabinet itself, has the main say in teacher collective agreements. Bill 78 limits even more the autonomy of the local school boards we face. It also opens the way for boards or government to establish provincial or regional employer structures.

January/February 1994, *Teacher* newsmagazine

*Chris Bocking, Keating Elementary School, Saanich.*

# President of France saved by B.C. teacher

by Laurence Greeff

**M**ohammed Chelali, a Langley Teachers' Association member teaching at Aldergrove Community Secondary School, was named a Knight of the Legion d'Honneur, having demonstrated outstanding bravery for the good of France.

He was honoured at a special ceremony on November 28, 2003, at the residence of the French Consul General in Vancouver.

The ambassador of France in Canada, Philippe Guelluy, on behalf of the president of France, Jacques Chirac, presented Mohammed Chelali with his honour, in recognition of the courage and composure Mohammed Chelali showed by intervening on the Champs Elysées in Paris when an attempt was made on President Chirac's life on Bastille Day, July 14, 2002.

*"I think a citizen has a duty to do this, to protect people." Chelali told the media.*

The medal of Knight de La légion d'Honneur also rewards Mohammed Chelali for the distinguished duties he has offered France and, for his sense of civic responsibility and the devotion he demonstrated during his teaching career.

I felt very honoured to be invited to the special ceremony at the consular general's residence along with Mohammed Chelali's staff rep and the BCTF president. Local specialist association members and provincial specialist association members were also present as were students and other colleagues.

In the moving ceremony, Chelali acknowledged the president of the B.C. Teachers' Federation and shared his honour and medal with the teachers of British Columbia.

He spoke about the impact of Canada's tolerance and diversity on his life. A Muslim, he has close friendships with people of diverse ethnic backgrounds. He spoke about the critical importance of valuing one another's culture and of teaching tolerance, compassion, and respect. As Mohammed Chelali firmly believes, "We have a duty to bring peace to the world."

To put everything into perspective, one must go back to July 14, 2002, when Chelali and his family were in Paris en route to Lebanon to teach at an international school for that school year.

Chelali and his children were about two metres away from the gunman when he saw the rifle taken from the guitar case. Chelali jumped on the gunman, who had aimed at Chirac with a .22 sporting rifle. The gun

discharged as he wrestled the shooter to the ground.

He said that after the shot was fired, someone standing next to the shooter hit the gunman's hand while he hung onto the weapon. A third person held onto the top of the rifle. The three held the gunman until police arrived.

"I jumped on the person and tried to take away his gun. And I took the charger/magazine, and all the bullets fell on the ground. We pushed him to the ground, and everyone was screaming and calling for the police," Chelali said.

It was only afterward, when the adrenalin stopped flowing, that he considered the risk he'd taken. "If I had stopped to think about things, I probably wouldn't have done anything," he said.

"I thought, imagine if I took that gun from him and I was holding it and snipers were all around the Champs Elysées and if they saw someone with a face like me, they will say this is the guy who is the assassin. It's a good thing I wasn't thinking."

Mohammed said he wasn't frightened about getting involved, but his children were. His son, Ines, 12, was crying and his 15-year-old daughter, Tarik, was shouting.

"I think a citizen has a duty to do this, to protect people," Chelali told the media.

The gunman was identified by police as Maxime Brunerie, 25, a member of "a violent neo-Nazi movement called Group Union Defense." He was arrested and committed to a mental institution.

French media reported that Brunerie had run in municipal elections as a candidate of the far-right National Republican

*The day after the attack, Chirac called Chelali on his cellular telephone to express his gratitude.*

Movement, an offshoot of Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front, which stunned France by surging at the polls.

The day after the attack, Chirac called Chelali on his cellular telephone to express his gratitude.

"My cell phone rang, and someone said, 'Is this Mohammed Chelali?' This is Jacques Chirac.' Thinking it was a joke, Chelali replied, 'Come on,' before recognizing the French president's voice.

"Permit me to express my profound gratitude for what you have done," said Chirac.

"I replied that I was only doing my duty," said Chelali.

"No, no, no," said the French president. "Not everybody would do this!"

Chelali met with Jacques Chirac in Beirut, when the French leader participated in a



(Top) Langley Teachers' Association President Laurence Greeff, Langley teacher Mohammed Chelali, and BCTF President Neil Worboys celebrate Chelali being named a Knight of the Legion d'Honneur for stopping an assassin from firing at the French president. (Above) Mohammed Chelali accepts the honour from the ambassador of France, Philippe Guelluy. Guelluy travelled to Vancouver from Ottawa to make the presentation at the French Consulate in Vancouver.

meeting that brought together leaders of 55 French-speaking nations and told him that he, Chirac, is the real hero. He is a hero for having won the elections and defeated the extreme right. By doing so, he maintains France's position as the land of human rights.

To me, Mohammed Chelali is the real hero for risking his life to assist the French president. He was awarded the Medal of Bravery by Governor-General Adrienne Clarkson. The Medal of Bravery is awarded for acts of bravery in hazardous circumstances.

Mohammed Chelali is a proud member of the Langley Teachers' Association and the BCTF, and when he said that he shares his honour awarded by France with the teachers of British Columbia, it brought tears to my eyes.

Mohammed, we are proud of you and honoured and humbled to work with you.

Three days after his great award, in the quiet solitude of his classroom, Mohammed Chelali gave his staff rep his cheque to the Democratic Teachers College Fund and smiled.

We hope that his message of peace will be heard forever.

Laurence Greeff is president of the Langley Teachers' Association.

## Chelali accepts award

The president of France, Jacques Chirac, on behalf of the citizens of France, has bestowed upon me a great honour which I accept with much humility. With others, I participated in an act of citizenship that saved many lives and foremost the life of the highest symbol of the French republic. Without any pretentiousness, I hope that this action will serve as an example not only in France but also elsewhere.

Fate, if fate there be, is that this action occurred on July 14, the celebration of the French Revolution. It so happens that on this day the intended victim, the President Jacques Chirac, had set up barriers to the forces of evil and hatred so that France would remain France. It so happens that on this day, the culprit was a neo-nazi, a racist who wanted to assassinate democracy in the country of human rights. Some will say later that the culprit was deranged; but racism and the negation of others, are they not clinical symptoms of a grave illness—hatred. It so happens that on that day, my two children were with me and at very close proximity to the gunman, and with them was a little girl, Emma Kotzer, who

was traveling overseas and seeing France for the first time. And, as if there were not enough symbols in this unbelievable journey, Emma is a Jewish girl, my daughter's best friend and the daughter of my best friends.

And finally, to complete the circle, it so happens that I am also Algerian, Arab, and Muslim! As if one symbol was not enough, before you is a waterfall of symbols to remind us that human nature always triumphs, for human nature, in essence, contains only that which is good and pure.

Your Excellency, once again, I would like to thank you for this great honour that you have bestowed upon me today on behalf of this great country to which I once belonged and to which I still belong. It is there that I met my first love, my wife Nora, and where my two dear children, Ines and Tarik, were born. They were born in the region of your birth. I am therefore a Northerner or a "Chti" by adoption.

I would like to conclude by saying that a country that has given me love, and today has given me this honour, will forever be a country that I carry in my heart.

— Mohammed Chelali

## Is work working?

The Law Commission is launching its third annual Roderick A. Macdonald Contest on the theme "Is Work Working?" Youth are very vulnerable when it comes to employment in Canada. Many laws and policies dictate the age at which one can work, how much the pay will be, and what protections and benefits will be offered. Sometimes they don't go far enough. Many youth remain unemployed. Young people are frequently injured or killed on the job. They face serious discrimination and harassment in job interviews and on the job.

Through the 2003-04 Roderick A. Macdonald Contest, the Law Commission of Canada is asking to hear the perspectives of young people regarding employment and the law. For example:

- Why is workplace injury and death so high among youth?
- What can be done to better protect youth from discrimination, harassment, accidents, and other dangers in the workplace?
- What is needed to help youth prepare for work?

- What are the causes of poor working conditions for youth?
- What have some employers done to help youth in their workplaces?
- What have some organizations done to help youth in the workplace?
- What could be done to assist youth who are working "under the table" or on the streets?
- In some provinces, minimum wage is different for adults and youth. What are your thoughts about this?
- What issues have arisen in your workplace that you think should be (better) addressed in Canada's laws?

The contest is open to all students in their last two years of high school. Submissions may be made in either artistic or written categories. The prizes range from \$500 for First Prize to \$200 for Third Prize. The contest opens January 5, 2004, and the deadline for submission is April 30, 2004. The winners will be announced in June 2004. See the web site for more contest details: [www.lcc.gc.ca](http://www.lcc.gc.ca).

## B.C.'s workforce is getting much younger



by Helesia Luke, Rev. Bob Korth, and Graeme Moore

On December 14, 2003, new labour regulations came into force that position British Columbia as the most child-labour-friendly jurisdiction in North America.

In a move resembling a chapter from Dickens's *Scrooge*, the provincial government has reduced the standard for child protection and dropped B.C.'s work-start age from 15 years to 12. Under new legislation, a child as young as 12 may wind up selling you a loaf of bread at 2:00 a.m. in your local convenience store, picking up debris on a construction site, or hawking goods door to door—all as government willfully turns a blind eye.

At a time when more and more families are struggling with unemployment and poverty, government is making it easier to hire children. The government's claim that mandatory fines on employers will protect

*Children, between 12 and 15, can work up to four hours on a school day.*

kids fails to recognize the intense financial pressures on B.C. families. Encouraging child labour with less government oversight is a recipe for disaster.

Under the previous system, an employer was required to apply to the Employment Standards Branch director for a permit to hire a child under the age of 15. That process allowed branch employees to conduct worksite inspections and place restrictions on the type and hours of work. The branch would consider whether or not potential employment opportunities would have a negative impact on the child's education, health, or safety.

Contrary to the minister of labour's claims, branch officers frequently declined permit applications or imposed conditions on employers before issuing permits.

In addition, parental consent and school consent were required before a child under 15 could legally work. Through the

permitting process, government had a direct role to play in protecting children and determining what work opportunities were safe and appropriate. In doing so, government created a cautionary environment where children's rights were given priority over work.

*On non-school days, children can work seven hours.*

In defence of lowering child labour standards, Minister Graham Bruce claims that many employers were breaking the law and hiring children under 15 without a permit anyway. That explanation poses questionable logic: Many motorists disobey stop signs. Is removing stop signs the solution?

The changes end 50 years of direct government oversight of children in the workplace. Now, employers are required only to obtain a parent's consent; that's a parent—only one, to hire a child between the ages of 12 and 15. It's the parent's responsibility, Bruce claims, to make sure that work is right for the child. While most parents would never knowingly put their child in harm's way, most parents do not have access to in-depth knowledge and training to assess worksite safety.

A startling example of this occurred several years ago when an employment officer visited a butcher shop to assess whether job-related tasks were

*No occupations are prohibited under the new system.*

safe for a young teenage boy. On the site, the officer discovered that while the boy could easily enter the walk-in-freezer, he was not strong enough to operate the internal lever to exit the freezer. In that instance the boy's parents had already consented to his employment—highlighting the fact that many well-intentioned parents simply don't know what questions to ask and how to ensure that their child is doing tasks suitable to ability and maturity.

Now, B.C. parents will be on their own when it comes to

protecting their child's best interests in the workplace. Minister Bruce asserts that new regulations protect children. It is hard to imagine that any reasonable person would interpret the regulations as protections. Children, between 12 and 15, can work up to four hours on a school day. When added to school time, that turns into a 10-hour workday before homework or extra activities. On non-school days, children can work seven hours. In some circumstances, the branch may waive those limits. Educators have been removed from the process, and children do not need permission from school authorities to work. Even more troubling: No occupations are prohibited under the new system. Unlike Alberta's and Washington's, B.C.'s regulations do not list jobs that are

*Bill 37 puts children at risk as never before.*

obviously unsuitable for developing children, including operating machinery or tasks that require strength or mature judgment.

Bill 37, the legislation behind this, was enacted without consulting the many organizations and individuals who expressed serious concerns about the dangers of loosening restrictions on hiring children. While the rest of the world is implementing United Nations' recommendations for more restrictions on child labour, B.C. is marching in the opposite direction.

Bill 37 puts children at risk as never before. It violates the government's responsibility to its younger citizens and puts its own agenda of deregulation before the health and safety of the most vulnerable members in our society.

For more information on the new regulations, visit the BCTF web site: [bctf.ca/social/ChildLabour](http://bctf.ca/social/ChildLabour).

Helesia Luke, Rev. Bob Korth, and Graeme Moore are members of the coalition against child labour.

## It takes a community to raise a child

This poster cites some of the many cuts to services and programs for children, young adults, and families in our province. We hope you find many uses for the poster and the information on the back. A few suggestions are printed below, and you will undoubtedly come up with many more uses:

- Post front and back on school and community bulletin boards, and any other public location in your community.
- Use as the basis of a speech to members, parents, trustees, and other municipal and community organizations.
- Use as a "leave behind" in a visit with your MLA.
- Use in social justice work with members and the community.
- Use as a handout at community events and/or

professional days.

- Give a copy to the PAC chairperson.
  - Use the information on the poster as the basis of a discussion at a school planning council meeting.
- Copies of the poster are being distributed to local presidents and staff reps. More copies are available to locals on request. We will also be distributing the poster to provincial coalition members (B.C. Society for Children and Youth, Anglican Diocese—Peace and Social Justice Unit, End Legislated Poverty, UNICEF, Aboriginal Women's Collective.) and unions as well as giving out the poster at public events.

The poster can also be found on the BCTF web site: [bctf.ca/action/cuts/ittakesacommunity/](http://bctf.ca/action/cuts/ittakesacommunity/).

—Kathleen MacKinnon



Next provincial general election  
Tuesday, May 17, 2005

# Teachers attend B.



BCTF President Neil Worboys addresses the B.C. Federation of Labour convention.



For the first time in 47 years, public school teachers attend the B.C. Federation of Labour convention. The BCTF was represented by 122 delegates who had the opportunity to bring our concerns to the attention of representatives of almost 500,000 British Columbians. It was also an opportunity to find out what is happening in other parts of our communities.

## "We walk over bridges others have built"

by Sandra Davie

Those words were spoken by Ken Georgetti at the B.C. Federation of Labour Convention, November 24-26, 2003, in Vancouver. I was privileged to attend as one of the 900 delegates. As a teacher, I felt great pride Monday morning when the 100-strong BCTF delegation took its place on the floor. We wore blue t-shirts that said "Proud to be a teacher" and "Proud to be Affiliated," and our presence was acknowledged by a standing ovation. Little did we realize what an intense intellectual and emotional experience we were in for in the next three days.

A BCTF resolution asking for support against Bill 51 was first on the agenda. We asked other members of the Fed to support us in our opposition to Bill 51 and to the dismantling of our democratic and representational college. It was heartening to hear speeches of support and understanding, and when the vote was called, our motion was endorsed. We had walked

*Leckie decried the actions of Campbell's government and compared what is happening here to what happened in Britain under Maggie Thatcher.*

together over one of Georgetti's "bridges." Having our resolution so heartily endorsed was emotional enough, but that was only the beginning.

As the convention continued, we heard speaker after speaker talk about the dismantling of their unions and the destruction of services for those in need. This is truly the era of dispos-

able people, with working people, the young, the weak, the sick, and the elderly taking the brunt of the cuts. Particularly jarring were the descriptions of people having to leave their jobs, with no clear sense of what will happen to them, and having to abandon the people who rely on them for professional and compassionate care. Losing your job is bad enough, but losing your friends and knowing that the people who replace you will be paid at a considerably lower salary were wrenching for many of the brothers and sisters who shared their pain and anger with us. We all began to realize that the bridges that had been

*"What we desire for ourselves, we desire for all."*

built for us by others were being dismantled. We all began to realize the necessity of taking a stand together to stop the dismantling and to build more bridges for those who come after us.

On the second day of the convention, we attended workshops designed to help us in our struggle to fight the Liberal agenda. Highlights of the workshops for me were the messages that we can fight back and that we can win. Danny Mallet and Lilly Olson spoke of the campaign mounted in Saskatchewan that resulted in a fourth term for the NDP Lorne Calvert, the newly elected premier, acknowledged the work of the Labour Movement and its campaign. The united labour campaign, which stressed that the province works and that economic progress should be for the many not just the few, was crucial to the NDP victory. Touching core values that support a system of universal healthcare and educational opportunities and reaching out to the population that has lost faith in government were lessons that were emphasized as critical to the election victory. The Saskatchewan campaign, which began 18 months before the election, began because no one at the time felt that the NDP could win

the next election. But instead of capitulating and accepting defeat as inevitable, many people walked across bridges and engaged the young, the downtrodden, and the cynical. The campaign was built around issues and values and a discussion of the type of society that we both want and need. The lesson was obvious: we can do the same in B.C. And it's time to get started.

Another powerful workshop presenter was Carolyn Leckie, member of the Scottish Socialist Party and sitting member of the Scottish Parliament. Leckie decried the actions of Campbell's government and compared what is happening here to what happened in Britain under Maggie Thatcher. Thatcher went after the unions, and when she broke the miners' strike, she effectively disarmed the British Labour Movement. It has taken 20 years for the Labour Movement to recover, but it has rebuilt bridges and is reaching out in communities to build bridges for the future. Leckie related horror stories of public-private enterprises, privatization of public works, and the destruction of working conditions.

*"Our goal should be to build more bridges for others to walk forward."*

Her ultimate message, however, was that by standing together we can fight back.

A third workshop also emphasized the importance of reaching out to individuals, groups, and organizations that do not share a Labour perspective but who do share a concern for the quality of life that we want in this province. We need to engage one another in discussing our similarities and to build alliances from our shared perspective. Given what is happening to workers who have seen their contracts ripped up and work of 20 years thrown away, to people who rely on a strong social support network, to children whose education is being jeopardized by under-

funding, to the sick whose health is compromised by lack of adequate services, and to the elderly whose final years should be ones of comfort and support not loss of service and support, we must stand up and fight back together. If not us, then who?

The motto of the B.C. Fed is "What we desire for ourselves, we desire for all." I thought of those words over the three days of the convention as I thought of Ken Georgetti's "bridges" and I thought of Lorne Calvert's words: "Our goal should be to build more bridges for others to walk forward." Now that's truly a lesson for a group of teachers, isn't it?

Sandra Davie teaches at Prince George Secondary School, Prince George.

## Our t-shirts said it all

by Susan Fonseca

I don't know why we left the B.C. Federation of Labour 47 years ago, but I do know that I'm glad we're back. It was a very proud and emotional moment for B.C. teachers when we were welcomed back by President Jim Sinclair at the opening plenary of the BCFed convention. Our t-shirts said it all: Proud to be a Teacher (on the front), and Proud to be Affiliated (on the back).

When we rose in a wave of blue and white at Sinclair's behest, we were welcomed back with a hearty, standing ovation by our new "brothers and sisters" in the B.C. family of Labour: nurses, college educators, firefighters, healthcare workers, postal workers, ferry workers, forestry workers, and many, many others in both private- and public-sector unions who contribute to the health, safety, and welfare of our communities every day.

Our resolutions, including those to endorse the *Charter for*

*Public Education*, to call on the provincial government to restore fair and adequate funding for the public education system, to rescind changes to *B.C. Child Labour Law* in Bill 37, and to condemn Christy Clark and her government for their blatant attack on the teaching profession by taking over the BCCT

*As teachers, we've seen that when we hold the line together in the interests of public education, we win.*

with political non-elected appointees were all unanimously endorsed by the convention. Our fellow delegates understood those issues because they are all under attack by a government bent on destroying the Labour Movement in B.C., and many of them have children and grandchildren in our classrooms.

We were struck by the passion and the eloquence of delegates from all affiliates, and we cheered as our own members took to the mikes.

We heard about the crisis in funding for women's shelters. We heard from the nurses and other healthcare workers about the cuts in healthcare and often found ourselves on our feet in support of their resolutions. One HEU worker moved many of us to tears with her stories of the impact of the cuts on her colleagues and their patients. After working for 17 years at Women and Children's Hospital, she lost her job, which was then contracted out for lower wages. A palliative-care nurse was deeply distressed and spoke movingly about the enormous cuts to her department and the impact on B.C. families and people who are being denied care in their final days.

CLC President Ken Georgetti reminded us that we are all "walking on bridges built before us" by earlier members of the Labour Movement, and that we have a duty to preserve and strengthen those bridges so that our children can live in a society

# C. Fed convention



*Carolyn Leckie, a member of the Scottish Parliament, describes how the Campbell government attack is similar to Thatcher's assault on British society.*



*BCTF delegates to the B.C. Federation of Labour convention wore blue t-shirts with "Proud to be a teacher" on the front and "Proud to be affiliated" on the back. Teachers were warmly welcomed by other delegates at the B.C. Federation of Labour convention.*

where people earn a living wage and where services valued by our communities are protected.

Former NDP Leader Joy MacPhail and new Leader Carole James explained how the sell-off of B.C. Rail will hurt our economy and northern communities in the long run. This government's vision for economic renewal, is to privatize our commonly owned public assets, often by bringing in American CEOs to attack the unions and to make a quick cash grab up front, damming the consequences in the future once all our Crown corporations are in foreign hands. The message from this convention, clearly posted all around the cavernous hall, is that "Our B.C. is NOT for Sale"—not our highways, our hospitals, our schools, our government buildings, or our Crown forests!

We passed a flurry of emergency resolutions calling on the government to back off the sale of B.C. Rail, and to support, rather than cut, services to B.C. students, patients, seniors, women, people with disabilities, drivers, injured workers, pensioners, and those in need of a social safety net.

For the most part, workers in B.C. have grown used to being

*...Gordon Campbell's Liberals' vision is more of a "Just Us Society."*

ignored by this government, which only responds to demands from corporate interests. More disturbing, this government seems to openly enjoy humiliating workers. For example, Kamloops MLA Kevin Kreuger called HEU hospital support workers "toilet cleaners" and Canadian Alliance/B.C. Liberal advisor Rod Love announced publicly that the government had been given an electoral mandate to "crush Labour like a bug." Thus, they gleefully tore

up contracts with teachers and healthcare workers and set about rearranging the whole social contract in the province. Emboldened by wins in the early skirmishes, the Neo-Industrial Revolution is now on in full force in B.C., with the government on the attack against workers in all sectors of the economy. As one speaker reminded us, however, we are not the first to fight such critical battles. We were reminded of Gandhi's long struggle against imperial interests, and his ultimate advice in victory: "First they ignore you. Then they laugh at you. Then they fight you. Then you win!"

Though many delegates were ready for a general strike to

*We made the right choice, and we're back just in time.*

protest this government, described by one speaker as "77 weapons of mass destruction sitting in Victoria," ultimately, cooler heads prevailed. Most union leaders favour an action plan with many more complex features than a strike, and a majority of the delegates gave the executive the mandate to work with affiliates to intensify our fightback campaign by moving forward with an eight-point action plan working up to the next election. There is much work to do during that time to defend the "bridges that we walk upon."

As teachers, we've seen that when we hold the line together in the interests of public education, we win. Just think what a powerful force we will be when we all hold the line with the rest of the "brothers and sisters"—those whose work is the foundation of a civilized society.

Pierre Trudeau's "Just Society" has no resonance for the B.C. Liberals, whose vision of B.C. is one of a corporate jungle where only the strong and the rich survive and thrive. Gordon Campbell's Liberals' vision is more of a "Just Us Society." I'm glad that teachers have chosen to come home to

join the rest of the Labour ranks to fight for a civilized British Columbia where all workers are respected and valued. We made the right choice, and we're back just in time.

*Susan Fonseca teaches at Langley Education Centre, and she is a member of the Teacher Newsmagazine Advisory Board.*

## We all benefit by joining

by Simon Truelove

To anyone who is concerned about the way teachers are portrayed to the general public, I highly recommend a visit to the BCFed Convention. Here was an opportunity for us to gather with hundreds of our potential best allies from all over B.C.—and we certainly made the best of that opportunity. The Hospital Employees' Union stood out because of their blue jackets. Nurses formed a vocal group. There were boilermakers, pipefitters, office workers, and longshoremen, to name just a few.

What impact did we have on the other delegates? They gave us the warmest of welcomes. They kept rising to give us standing ovations! (The assembled members leap to their feet at every possible opportunity. It's simply the way they do business.) We were able to let them know our biggest complaints about Christy Clark—particularly the college—and we received unanimous support. We greatly influenced a couple of votes on contentious issues.

There were many opportunities to talk to delegates from other unions over coffee outside in the hall. I suppose that is what's meant by "lobbying." A CUPE friend from Richmond expressed concern over the way IWA had signed up former HEU workers in an exclusive backroom deal after they had been laid off by the government. HEU certainly had our support on that one. A Surrey member of the college educators was concerned that her members

were definitely not ready to agree to join a general strike. Teachers agreed with her and supported the adoption of a much more strategic and long-term motion.

Surrey firefighters are small in numbers but are well respected in the community. They seemed very pleased about the potential effects of the inclusion of teachers. Teachers will bring much needed balance to the BCFed, I was told. It will take years to gauge the effect. The more experienced delegates perceive us as a potent force on the provincial stage. This is a perspective that may come as a surprise to many teachers, because we're so used to getting beaten up by the media.

A huge theme of the convention was the reaction to a whole range of actions taken by the Campbell government. The entrance to the convention was picketed by enthusiasts for a general strike. They were selling t-shirts. I did not buy one.

Many speakers described the hardship imposed on them by various cutbacks. They voiced

*From their point of view, teachers arrived as welcome allies in a universal struggle of ordinary citizens against oppression.*

outrage at the lies told by the government minimizing the damage. They stood up and promised to continue the fight against the damage that is being done to our society. From their point of view, teachers arrived as welcome allies in a universal struggle of ordinary citizens against oppression.

After all, are we not professional communicators? We talk and write all day long.

I really got a kick out of a speaker at the New Westminster Labour Council who informed the teacher table how great it felt to be able to speak uninterrupted to a whole group of seated teachers. As Robbie Burns said, "Oh would some

power the giftie gie us. To see ourselves as others see us."

Anyway, our recent response to the college debacle, having garnered almost 90% support from our members, is a source

*Their greatest virtue to us as an organization is that they are willing, even eager, to listen.*

of some envy among other unionists. They would like to know how we did it. In time, it seems clear that we have much to offer the B.C. Federation of Labour.

By comparison, what do they have to offer us? In recent years, the BCTF has been increasingly concerned with public advocacy. We have to counter some of the poison that is printed about us in the papers. Where could we find a better conduit than an organization representing half a million workers, most of whom are also the parents or grandparents of the children we teach? Their greatest virtue to us as an organization is that they are willing, even eager, to listen.

*Simon Truelove teaches at Senator Reid Elementary School, Surrey.*

## Union workers more productive

A study of nearly 1,200 building projects in the U.S. found that union construction workers are 17% more productive than their non-union counterparts.

"That might come as a surprise to people who don't know the construction industry," says James Williams, general president of Painters and Allied Trades. "But the difference is not surprising to people who know about our ongoing partnership with employers who support very demanding union apprentice programs.

—Maritime/AFL-CIO/CALM

## Health and Safety

# Fighting back is a wellness activity

by Maureen L. MacDonald

There it was, "The urgency for teacher wellness," an article by Julia Johnson, from Quesnel, right next to my Health and Safety column in the Nov./Dec. 2003 issue of *Teacher*. Great stuff. So true. She asks an important question: "How do you keep well enough to do the job of teaching, well enough to avoid becoming an extended-medical-leave statistic, well enough to enter today's classrooms with peace and joy instead of living in the future vision of retirement, well enough to inspire our youth to become life-long learners?"

Several colleagues were discussing wellness in the BCTF staffroom just after that newsmagazine was distributed. Christina Schut (Field Service Division) said, "Fighting back is a wellness activity." We all agreed. Chris recalled reading an article by a psychologist who said, in effect, that standing up for your rights is good for your self-esteem and your physical health. That makes sense. So, without forgetting the healthy lifestyle and all the other physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual choices teachers can make to relieve stress, we must also remember that changing of the stressful condition is what we want, and we make change happen by taking action.

Fighting back is something that BCTF members do often and do with success. Is it really a wellness activity? Certainly. If it improves the learning and working conditions in schools, then it improves personal wellness. If fighting back makes

us feel less like doormats and more like members of a union of professionals, our self-esteem rises and every one of us is better for it.

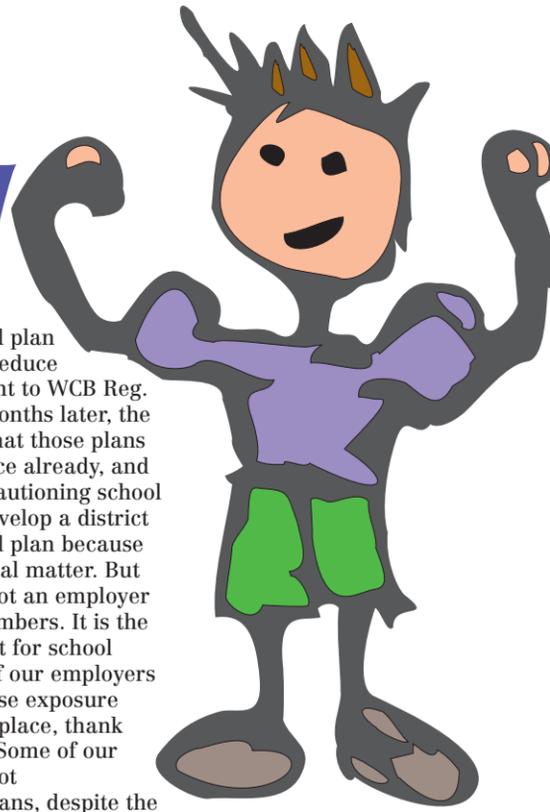
Teaching and learning are best done when the indoor temperature and humidity are "within acceptable comfort ranges..." (WCB Reg. 4.80) The WCB standard for thermal comfort in winter is from 20° to 24°C with 30 to 50% relative humidity, or 20° to 23°C if the relative humidity is 60%. So do everyone a favour if the heat fails at school. Fight back. Stick together with the staff. Refuse unsafe work. And call your local president.

"Being a victim is bad for your health," says Margaret McMaster, a BCTF Health and Safety training associate. Case in point: A member told his local president that he was sick and had to stay home from work the day after spending a frigid day in his unheated school. My advice was that he be told to file a WCB claim for a work-related illness, and seek to have his sick leave reinstated. Maybe he didn't know that every worker has the right to refuse unsafe work. (WCB Reg. 3.12) He knows now.

Fight back against exposure to Fifth Disease by pregnant members with no Fifth antibodies, and by others with suppressed immune systems. (If you missed my column on Fifth Disease last April, you can find it on the BCTF web site at [bctf.ca/ezine/archive/2002-03/2003-04/support/06FifthDisease.html](http://bctf.ca/ezine/archive/2002-03/2003-04/support/06FifthDisease.html).) The WCB recognizes Fifth Disease as "biohazardous material" for certain employees, and says that employers must

implement an exposure control plan to eliminate or reduce the risk, pursuant to WCB Reg. 6.34. Now, 10 months later, the BCTF believes that those plans should be in place already, and the BCPSEA is cautioning school boards not to develop a district exposure control plan because this is a provincial matter. But the BCPSEA is not an employer of any BCTF members. It is the bargaining agent for school boards. Some of our employers have Fifth Disease exposure control plans in place, thank you very much. Some of our employers are not implementing plans, despite the WCB ruling, because of the BCPSEA advice. Is there any choice but to fight back? Would you want to belong to an organization that let it ride?

Violent incidents in classrooms are not to be tolerated. ("Fight back" seems like a violent term when considered alongside violent incidents, but you know what I mean by fighting back with logic and reason and it does not involve violence at all.) Members who have put up with biting, spitting, hitting, kicking, screaming students in the past are fighting back. They file violent incident reports to the WCB and the school board. They report physical injuries such as bruises and bites to the first-aid attendant to be noted in the school's first aid log. They document all incidents. They report their concerns to the Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee at the worksite. They use Section 91 of the *School Act* to medically



exclude a student who has a "physical, mental, or emotional condition that would endanger the health or welfare of the other students..." They involve others who are able to resolve the problems.

Teachers are not afraid of fighting back against chronic underfunding to get safer and healthier schools. Whether it is having hot and cold running water, reinstating high standards of cleanliness in school buildings, removal of mould and mildew, getting new lights that don't hum, seismic upgrading, or any other health and safety issue, we'll be there. That's "we." That's not "they." That's you and you and you and you and me. Together. Count on it.

Maureen MacDonald is the prevention officer in the BCTF Health and Safety Department.

If you would like your name added to the BCTF occupational health and safety e-mail list, please contact Whitney Burgess at [wburgess@bctf.ca](mailto:wburgess@bctf.ca).

## Teachers' tips

### Managing your marking load

by Steve Naylor

Marking is one area of teaching that can easily get out of control. Teachers of English, social studies, and other subjects that require lots of writing may be overwhelmed by the volume of reading, correcting, and grading they must do. Here are 10 ways to manage your marking load:

#### Don't mark everything

If students are working on a series of similar assignments—for example, descriptive paragraphs—have the students decide which one or two are their best. They can still hand in all five, but you mark the ones the students have chosen as their best work.

#### Use portfolios

Nothing improves the quality of your students' work as well as portfolios do. Students use their portfolios for work in progress or as the place to showcase their best work. You can ask the students to choose one piece from the portfolio that they think deserves to be evaluated. You can tell the students to rework five pieces from the first term and re-submit them in the portfolio. Since you have already seen the work, you can easily see what growth has occurred without re-correcting everything. Students can receive a portfolio grade at the end of a term based on criteria you and the students create. There are many creative ways to use portfolios.

#### Have a marking session with the class

Students can be taught to recognize good writing. Show them examples of A, B, and C writing. Have them produce a piece using a code name. Mix up the papers, and put the students in marking groups. Watch them as they negotiate with their peers. If you have more than one class of the same subject, exchange between classes.

#### Turn an in-class essay test into a take-home assignment

If you believe that students need practice in writing in-class essays or other timed assignments, prepare the students for the test day and have them spend the period writing. At the end of the allotted time, ask the students if they would like the chance to take their essays home to make them even better. Of course the majority will say "Yes!" The assignment has now become a take-home paper, the students have had the experience of writing under pressure, and you get one paper to mark instead of two. If you feel you need to see the work done in class, initial the rough copy and have the students staple it to their revised writing.

#### Don't circle every single error all the time

Although you may mark some assignments very intensively with lots of red ink, you don't have to mark that way all the time. Research suggests that many students don't look at the

# It's all about relationship

by Julia Johnson

In a recent telephone conversation, my son, a civil engineer working for a land developer in Florida, recounted a troubling situation at his workplace. One of his colleagues, in a supervisory position, habitually yells at contractors at the job site. My son finished his story with, "Who would want to work with someone who treats people like that?" Later in that week, a friend said that her child is in a classroom where the teacher yells. In the next week, I attended an Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) workshop where the presenter said that 50% of Canadian marriages end in divorce and that "relationships" is one of the major problem areas in which their counsellors have to provide guidance. Being well or unwell is directly affected by the quality of the relationships we have as we journey through life.

The word *relationship*, for most people, conjures up images that fit the definition as found in the dictionary: "1 the quality or state of being related;

2 connection by blood, marriage, etc.; 3 a particular instance of being related, kinship." Most of us use *relationship* when we describe the situation we have with someone with whom we are close or intimate. I have come to appreciate the value of

### *Honest and truthful relationships carry people through difficult times.*

*relationship* as expressed by the definition, "connection... etc." In that context, the word *relationship* has a more general perspective and goes beyond the close and personal intimacy two people share. This general perspective is an inclusive definition and takes in all the connections we make with everything around us as we go about our daily living: connections with people, with small and large groups, with organizations, with things, with ideas, and with our planet, Earth. Even an innocuous conversation with a passer-by is a relationship.

We are social beings, and being connected to something or someone is necessary for our

survival. However, a relationship can be the very thing that can erode our wellbeing. Everything one does, thinks, or says is a result of the relationship experiences one has with someone or something. In the life of a teacher, relationship experiences become the intuitive guide to how classrooms are managed, how interactions with students and colleagues occur, how curriculum is taught, how communication is thwarted or encouraged, how new ideas are accepted or rejected, how support is provided, how quality is recognized, and how perceptions are formed. We are the sum total of our relationship experiences, and it is from this context that teaching occurs and the degree of personal wellness is revealed.

We teach who we are. In the classroom, this view of teaching is easily lost when the focus becomes the course material that needs to be taught, the skills that need to be learned, the tests that need to be given, and the grades that need to be achieved. None of these teaching activities is as important as they are deemed to be. What is important is nurturing relation-

ships. Honest and truthful relationships carry people through difficult times. The effort invested in building relationships at work brings joy to the workplace. Even more important is modelling reverence of relationship to our youth, not only as relationship relates to humanity, but also as it relates to the scientific and economic world in which we live. When the reverence of relationship is modelled, compassion is learned. And when compassion is the product there is greater respect and understanding for the need

### *When the reverence of relationship is modelled, compassion is learned.*

to care for oneself, to care for others, and to care for the planet upon which we live. Thus begins the wellness journey for one and for all.

Julia Johnson, a learning resource teacher, Red Bluff School, Quesnel, is a BCTF PD wellness associate.

corrections, and some students find such intensive correcting demoralizing. Leave some assignments completely untouched, but place a sticky note on each paper briefly pointing out strengths and problem areas.

#### Ask the students to come in during tutorial period for a one-on-one reading of their paper with you

After you have returned a set of papers with sticky notes attached, tell the students that they may come in to see you during tutorial period or some other time to go over their writing. This is the time real learning takes place, but not every student will take advantage of the opportunity.

#### Use small numbers for grading papers

If you mark out of 50 or 100, you are indicating that you can see 50 or 100 distinct levels of achievement. Nobody can do that. If you mark out of 10 but then end up giving half marks, you still are saying there are 20 different categories into which you can place the papers. Don't agonize over such miniscule divisions. Instead, mark out of five or six with half marks if you feel you must. The fewer the categories, the faster the marking will go. Multiply the students' marks by whatever factor you want after the papers are graded. Government exam essays are marked that way.

#### Limit the criteria for each assignment

Using three criteria for an assignment is surely better than using 10. The more things the students are worried about getting right, the more frustrating writing becomes. The more things you are looking for, the more frustrating marking becomes.

#### Don't correct work that comes in late

Although you may still have to grade late work, tell the students that one of the perks for getting their work in on time is a paper returned with your comments. If they can't get their work in on time, they have to accept the consequences, which may be an evaluated paper with a grade but no comments, corrections, etc.

#### Have the students do a self- or peer evaluation before you see the assignments

Give the students the criteria or rubric for marking the assignment. Have them grade their own paper and/or a fellow student's paper using the rubric. Remember to have students use a code name. The students then fold and staple their assessments to the back of the essay. You mark the papers with the same rubric. When the papers are returned, students can open up the folded papers and compare the two or three marks they received.

Steve Naylor teaches at Salmon Arm Senior Secondary School, Salmon Arm.



# Underfunding a first-rate education system

by Norm Gleadow

I wrote this letter to the editor of *The Coast Reporter*, September 8, 2003, in response to the full-page ad placed by the Ministry of Education headlined "Funding a first rate education system."

*...our students outperform those of almost every industrialized nation in the world. To maintain that costs money; it is an investment we need to make.*

If you are a teacher, an administrator, a parent, a community member, or have anything to do with the educational system, then you will know from first-hand experience that the educational funding the government is allocating to schools is wholly inadequate. In our district, despite the best efforts of the teachers, parents, administrators, and the board office, we are seeing reduced bussing services, increased class sizes at the secondary and upper elementary levels, inadequate resources for supplies in the schools, almost no money to purchase textbooks for classrooms, fewer librarians, fewer special education teachers, reduced support for special education, less counselling, many split classes, and insufficient money for new equipment, equipment replacement, or equipment maintenance.

The ministry said in the ad: "This year school boards received \$117 million more than in 2000-01." This means that the provincial education budget in three years went from

\$4.73 billion to \$4.85 billion, a total increase of 2.5%. Can anyone (other than Christy Clark and her Liberal colleagues) claim that an increase over the past three years of 2.5% represents a real increase in funding? During the same period, the inflation rate or CPI in Canada was 8.87% (Bank of Canada figures). So, if we have had a 2% reduction in enrolment in the province and an 8% reduction in the number of teachers, let's be generous and say that the system should then cost 3% less than it did in 2000-01. Therefore, the dollar increase needed to maintain the system at the same level that Christy Clark has identified as "First Rate" would be an increase of 5.87% over the 2000-01 year. The system should receive \$5.0 billion, or \$150 million more than she has allocated. She is saying that in 2005-06, the budget will be \$5.0 billion. By then, the system will be severely damaged and distorted. A system that was first rate in 2000-01 cannot continue to be first rate if resources allocated to it are decreased.

*This government is underfunding education. Its advertisement in this newspaper was a deliberate attempt to mislead us all.*

The Ontario government, as part of its "Common Sense Revolution," rapidly introduced a new funding formula, reduced funding, a standard centrally defined curriculum, a standard report card, and province-wide testing starting in Grade 10. It emphasized greater accountability with fiscal restraint. It combined that with continual attacks on the professionalism of teachers. Sound familiar?

Generally its policies have failed and stressed the system to the point where it is now scrambling to repair it. Our government is doing the same thing. Indeed, much of its agenda is a direct copy of Ontario's. Unfortunately, it is not paying attention to the damage it is doing.

We do have a first-rate system; but it is under siege. By every international measure, our students outperform those of

almost every industrialized nation in the world. To maintain that costs money; it is an investment we need to make. Our children deserve no less. This government is underfunding education. Its advertisement in this newspaper was a deliberate attempt to mislead us all.

*Norm Gleadow is president of the Sunshine Coast Teachers' Association.*

## The cost of those government ads

In October we filed a Freedom of Information request to find out how much taxpayer money the government payer to try to convince British Columbians that they had increased funding for schools and to promote their new web site—AchieveBC.

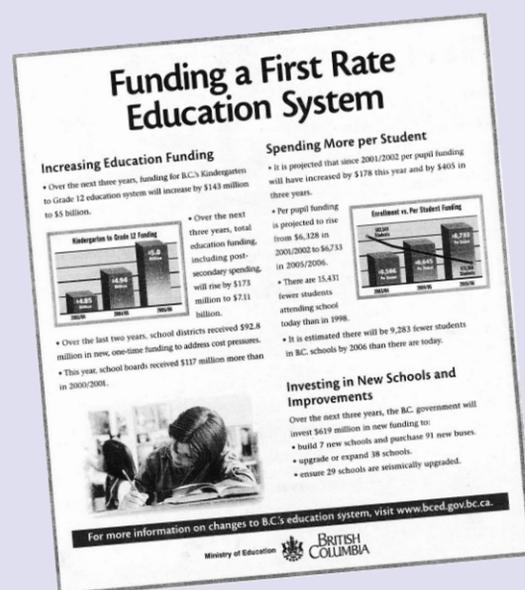
On December 22, 2003, we received the information.

The print ads with the mystifying graphs showing the gigantic increases in funds for schools cost British Columbians

\$545,099.

The TV and print ads to promote the government web site AchieveBC cost British Columbians \$954,876.

The B.C. Liberals are also using government money to try to convince British Columbians that healthcare is improving under their administration. This represents yet another broken promise by Gordon Campbell. He was severely critical of the former government for spending tax dollars on advertising.



## Quelle est votre préférence : labo ou ordi en classe ?

par Paule Desgroseilliers

Voilà la question d'actualité dans plusieurs écoles canadiennes.

Selon certains intervenants en éducation, le temps des laboratoires d'information est révolu. Puisque le dialogue pédagogique est à l'intégration des matières, le respect du rythme d'apprentissage, l'approche par projet, la configuration de laboratoire d'informatique n'est plus utile. D'autres, toutefois, dont plusieurs au secondaire, s'opposent au démantèlement du laboratoire informatique, citant l'utilité du labo pour démarrer un projet, enseigner les techniques de base à toute une classe, offrir des cours à option et combler le temps libre des élèves entre les cours.

Les enseignants qui préfèrent avoir quelques ordinateurs plutôt que de se déplacer au laboratoire informatique défendent leur choix en présentant les inconvénients du labo et les avantages des ordinateurs en classe. Au labo, les élèves posent souvent des questions en même temps et le professeur essaie de les gérer

une à la fois. À l'occasion, ceci mène à des comportements indésirables chez les élèves impatientes, cherchant à se faire aider tout de suite. Ceci mène à une interruption de l'apprentissage, le temps de faire la discipline. On relate aussi les problèmes techniques qui se produisent assez fréquemment et qui embêtent l'enseignant non-spécialiste en technologie. Et même si l'expertise y est, c'est le manque de temps pour régler ces 'bogues' qui frustre car souvent, on doit quitter pour céder la salle à un autre groupe. Un autre inconvénient que signalent les enseignants, c'est celui des élèves absents auxquels il faut offrir une session de rattrapage en-dehors des heures de classe.

Ces mêmes enseignants optent pour les ordinateurs en salle de classe parce que cet arrangement leur accorde la liberté d'organiser leur enseignement à leur gré et de mieux gérer l'apprentissage des élèves. Sachant que l'ordinateur est à leur disposition au moment voulu et pour le temps nécessaire, ils ont une grande flexibilité pour mettre cet outil au bénéfice de chacun de leurs

élèves. Avoir des ordinateurs à portée de main permet de trouver une réponse sur Internet immédiatement, de fournir des défis aux élèves qui travaillent rapidement, d'offrir un soutien ponctuel à un élève en besoin de renforcement et de différencier les apprentissages. Et dans une classe bien gérée, on peut voir l'impact de projets et d'activités exécutés à l'ordinateur sur le développement de l'autonomie, de l'initiative et de l'entraide.

Enfin, maintenir un laboratoire en bon état exige des ressources physiques, financières et humaines. Pour les conseillers scolaires qui doivent fermer des écoles et transférer les élèves dans les écoles restantes, le laboratoire représente un espace spacieux qui pourrait être aménagé en salles de classe ou en salles à besoins particuliers.

Dans un monde idéal, toutes les écoles auraient leur laboratoire et plusieurs ordinateurs dans chaque classe. Ceci respecterait les préférences de chaque enseignant. Toutefois, nous vivons dans des temps de compressions budgétaires et de gestion de budget équilibré.

C'est vraiment le moment propice pour réfléchir à cette question. Peut-être que dans un avenir rapproché, vous allez devoir vous exprimer par rapport à ce sujet dans votre milieu scolaire. Accordez-vous le temps maintenant pour réfléchir à cette question, à savoir si avoir un laboratoire informatique ou avoir plutôt des ordinateurs en classe est un principe pédagogique ou un facteur dépendant de ressources financières ?

Le débat est ouvert. À vous la parole !

#### Synopsis

In these times of cutbacks and school closures, some schools are having to consider whether they can maintain a computer lab or whether it is preferable to equip classrooms with a small number of computers. Should this be a decision based strictly on funding or are there sound educational reasons for one or the other?

*Paule Desgroseilliers is an assistant director in the BCTF's Professional and Social Issues Division (French Programs & Services).*

# Support from across Canada

**We fully support the principle that the governing council of the College of Teachers be composed of a majority of teachers elected by members of the teaching profession.**

—OTF

## Alberta Teachers' Association

The creation of the BCTF Democratic College Fund is creative, courageous, and unfortunately not without peril for your members. The degree of support shown by teachers and the general public illustrates the correctness of the position of B.C. teachers.

On behalf of the ATA, I lend our voice of support to the B.C. Teachers' Federation and all B.C. teachers as you work to achieve fair representation on your College of Teachers.

Best of luck to you as you work to correct a government action that is clearly headed in the wrong direction.

President Frank Bruseker

## Canadian Teachers' Federation

We congratulate the members of the B.C. Teachers' Federation for the principled stand that they have taken regarding the government's changes to the composition of the B.C. College of Teachers. You have all demonstrated incredible leadership on this issue, which will provide an important platform for all teachers in Canada. The teachers' vote of support reaching almost 90% speaks volumes about their commitment to a democratically structured college.

Again, BCTF has led the way in standing strong for its principles. The 240,000 members of the Canadian Teachers' Federation both congratulate you and thank you for your efforts.

President Terry Price

## Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario

We trust that all B.C. teachers will face this attack from the government standing tall together and will be steadfast in all actions that attack the democratic rights of teachers.

We teachers in Ontario recognize that it is not easy to fight a giant, but together we can make a giant difference.

President Lila Paddock,  
Rerew Country Teachers' Local,  
ETFO

## Manitoba Teachers' Society

The Federation is to be commended for making the decision to establish the BCTF Democratic College fund. The fact that your members are prepared to support that decision demonstrates solidarity and their determination to defend their rights as professionals. It takes great courage to take such action.

The teachers of Manitoba wish you success in your struggle to challenge Bill 51.

President Brian Ardern

## Montreal Teachers Association

Our representative assembly on November 25, 2003, passed the following motion: *That the Montreal Teachers Association*

*express its support for the solidarity with the teachers of the B.C. Teachers' Federation in your struggle over the College of Teachers, as well as our pride and admiration for the excellent work the BCTF is doing to fight this very meaningful battle.*

As teacher unionists, we all stand together. We know how important it is to be reminded of that when facing serious challenges and ramifications, such as you are dealing with in not paying dues to the College of Teachers. We have never forgotten the assistance and support we got in 1983 from teachers across Canada, and we want to stand with you as you face the upcoming December 1 deadline.

Please convey this message of support to union locals of the BCTF and please feel free to take up upon our offer of more practical support.

President Ruth Rosenfield

## Nova Scotia Teachers Union

We commend your representative assembly for taking the decision, in overwhelming fashion, to establish a BCTF Democratic College Fund. The fact that teachers in B.C. are prepared to follow this path, despite the obvious risks, speaks volumes for their determination to defend their rights as professionals.

On behalf of over 10,000 members within NSTU, I offer you and your membership the unqualified support of the NSTU. We recognize the justice of your cause, identify with the objectives of your undertaking, and encourage you to stay the course until you realize total victory through your ongoing campaign.

President Brian Forbes

## Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association

You and your members are to be congratulated on the decisive and daring step you have taken in refusing to pay your college of teacher fees while that institution remains a creature of the government.

As you are well aware, Ontario's teachers have been fighting an all-out battle with the Ontario College of Teachers since 2001, when that arm of the government (not a self-regulating professional body) imposed the Professional

Learning Program (PLP) on all teachers in the province's publicly funded elementary and secondary schools. The PLP threatens teachers with de-certification if they do not complete an endlessly repeating five-year cycle of 14 courses. In other words, perpetual probation. Now, with the election of a new government, we expect to see an end to this oppressive regime and the transformation of the college into a true self-regulatory body.

What has worked here in Ontario is what is already working for you in B.C., and that is the solidarity of your members, the majority of whom are backing your fee refusal strategy.

You have our best wishes and the assurance that we will provide any assistance that you and your colleagues request from us.

President Donna Marie Kennedy

## Ontario Teachers' Federation

The OTF represents 144,000 full-time, part-time, and occasional teachers in the publicly funded public, Catholic, and francophone schools in Ontario.

We fully support the principle that the governing council of the College of Teachers be composed of a majority of teachers elected by members of the teaching profession. The experience in Ontario has shown that this element is critical if the college is to have any credibility with teachers. We would therefore like to extend our support to your Federation for continuing to uphold this principle.

We also congratulate your members who have decided to take the very bold step of rescinding their agreement to have their college fees deducted by employers. While we understand that a decision of this magnitude is not easy for the individual teacher to take, we are sure your members know how important it is to show solidarity. We applaud BCTF and its members for taking this decision and hope that your actions will send a clear message to your government about the serious problems created by its meddling in the affairs of the profession.

President Yvan Roy

## Prince Edward Island Teachers' Federation

PEI teachers stand in solidarity with all BCTF members as you pursue your strategy of dealing with an unreasonable government that refuses to make education a priority for its citizens. Our membership wishes you every success in your efforts to challenge Bill 51. We realize that your situation and its outcome may have serious implications for all Canadian teachers.

Good luck with your efforts!

Maurice Poirier, on behalf of  
the PEITF Executive

## Quebec Provincial Association of Teachers

As the representatives of teachers working for Anglo-phone school boards, QPAT expects to face its own challenges from a government intending to impose a College of Teachers in Quebec. Your successful defense of the interests of teachers will surely resonate across the country including the province of Quebec.

Our teachers remember your support during our struggles with the Quebec government in 1982-83. Consequently, QPAT is proud to be able to offer support to the members of BCTF. As we all know only in solidarity can teacher unions be victorious in their struggles against government obstinacy.

I am confident that the B.C. teachers will succeed.

President Ardèle Warr

## Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation

I believe you are engaged in a struggle that will have reverberations throughout the country. As teachers, we have observed that actions undertaken in one province are often imitated by officials in other provinces, therefore, it is critical that we stand together in opposition to ideas that are wrong-minded and not conducive to the teaching and learning process, nor in the best interests of education overall.

Please understand that we, as Saskatchewan teachers, support our colleagues in B.C., and I hope you will have an opportunity to communicate this to your members as well.

President Murray Wall

## Aboriginal educators say BCTF should take action against racism

Teachers of Aboriginal ancestry say that the BCTF should take action to challenge the racism that is still present in some school situations. This is one of the messages from a survey carried out among the 325 B.C. teachers who self-identified as Aboriginal.

Participants in the survey were asked, "Do you believe that Aboriginal students face racism in the school(s) where you work?" Sixty-six percent said yes, 23% said no, 11% said they do not know or did not respond. When asked to identify which groups are sources of racism, participants identified students as the largest, but a number also identified teachers and administrators.

## Systemic elements of racism were identified by some respondents.

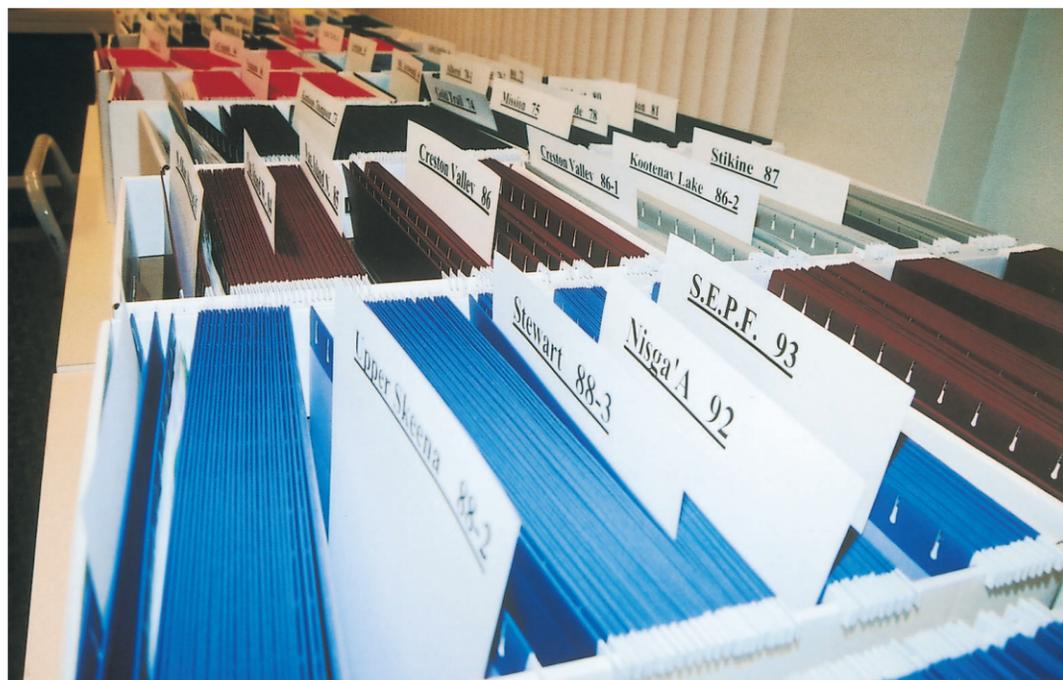
Systemic elements of racism were identified by some respondents. Comments ranged from "very little awareness of privilege, power, and race relations" and "systemic by its exclusion of Aboriginal curriculum" to "I am not seeing any in my school." Others feel its presence but that it is "not intentional, but (due to) lack of knowledge of issues of First Nations culture and history; denial of differences."

"Racism experienced by Aboriginal students has come in the form of verbal and physical threats," one respondent said. Another said it is seen "on the school bus to and from home/school." Invisibility was also identified as an indicator that racism exists: "Those who can avoid letting people know they are Aboriginal still do. A sure sign of no acceptance."

A number of respondents identified racism faced by Aboriginal teachers as an area that the BCTF should address. They suggested training on how to deal with racism involving staff, colleagues, or parents. Non-Aboriginal staff should be "made aware of what being Aboriginal means: history since colonization, including residential-school experiences and/or fallout from the residential-school system (i.e., loss of parenting skills, abuse, loss of culture)." Cross-cultural training for all teachers and employment equity at local levels were also suggested.

The BCTF has recognized concerns of Aboriginal teachers and communities through the work of the BCTF Task Force on First Nations Education. Following the report of the task force, the BCTF Aboriginal Education Program and Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee were created. The task force report, "BCTF policies on Aboriginal education and links to teaching resources," can be found at [bctf.ca/social/AboriginalEd/](http://bctf.ca/social/AboriginalEd/).

The co-ordinator of the BCTF Aboriginal Education Program, Merle Williams, points out that the BCTF has a number of workshops available to school



*Over the winter break the government paid college fees on behalf of BCTF members who had submitted their fees to the BCTF Democratic College Fund. The government is requesting the money from the BCTF Democratic College Fund but is refusing to meet to discuss teachers' concerns.*

staffs and school districts. In addition, the First Nations Education Steering Committee has an antiracism program and workshops headed by Nora Greenway, former staff person in the BCTF Program Against Racism.

Most Aboriginal teachers are also concerned that the cuts to general educational services will have a significant impact on the education of Aboriginal students. Several areas of possible

*Most Aboriginal teachers are also concerned that the cuts to general educational services will have a significant impact on the education of Aboriginal students.*

impact stand out in the responses: loss of resource teachers and learning assistance, particularly one-on-one LA time; more students "slipping through the cracks" and less support for "grey area" students; and less attention from teachers in classrooms because of increased class size.

Improving the achievement and success of Aboriginal students falls into several categories in the survey. Work with families and provide extra supports for students were common suggestions. More curriculum content for all students throughout K-12 should focus on Aboriginal history and culture. Culturally relevant materials that meet First Nations needs are important. Positive results will come only when teachers, administrators, students,

*Positive results will come only when teachers, administrators, students, parents, and First Nations communities work together.*

parents, and First Nations communities work together.

The full research report on the survey is on the BCTF web site: [bctf.ca/social/](http://bctf.ca/social/).

Information about the Aboriginal Education Program and workshops is on the BCTF web site at [bctf.ca/social/AboriginalEd/brochure/brochure.html](http://bctf.ca/social/AboriginalEd/brochure/brochure.html).

Merle Williams, BCTF Aboriginal education co-ordinator, can be reached at 604-871-1854, toll free: 1-800-663-9163, fax: 604-871-2286 or [mwilliams@bctf.ca](mailto:mwilliams@bctf.ca).

Nora Greenway, FNEC antiracism officer, can be reached at 250-675-2866 or [norag@fnesc.ca](mailto:norag@fnesc.ca).

Eric Wong, FNEC antiracism co-ordinator, can be reached at 604-873-4095 or [ericdwong@telus.net](mailto:ericdwong@telus.net).

## Unnatural disasters

"Natural disasters" that affect people and their environment are sometimes not really natural. Rather, they are a consequence of human action. Whole communities are wiped out by landslides as a hurricane sweeps through

Central America—because people have built on cliffs above them and weakened the soil. Wildfires sweep through large areas where homes are built in the forest.

CoDevelopment Canada has developed a teaching unit called "Not So Natural Disasters" to deal with such issues and is offering teachers a free workshop on using the unit.

The teaching unit helps students develop awareness and understanding of natural disasters and climate change (and their consequences) in Canada and on a global scale and the relationship of human activities to those changes and disasters. Two versions exist: one for elementary, and the other for secondary grades.

CoDevelopment Canada is offering the workshop on the elementary version of the unit on Saturday, February 28, at the BCTF building in Vancouver. Participants will receive a free copy of the unit. The workshop is co-sponsored by the BCTF International Solidarity Program.

The unit includes student handouts ready for copying, and it has links with B.C. Ministry-of-Education-prescribed learning objectives in several subject areas. Details of this and other CoDevelopment Canada units are available on [www.codev.org/codev/](http://www.codev.org/codev/). The units have been developed with the support of the Canadian International Development Agency.

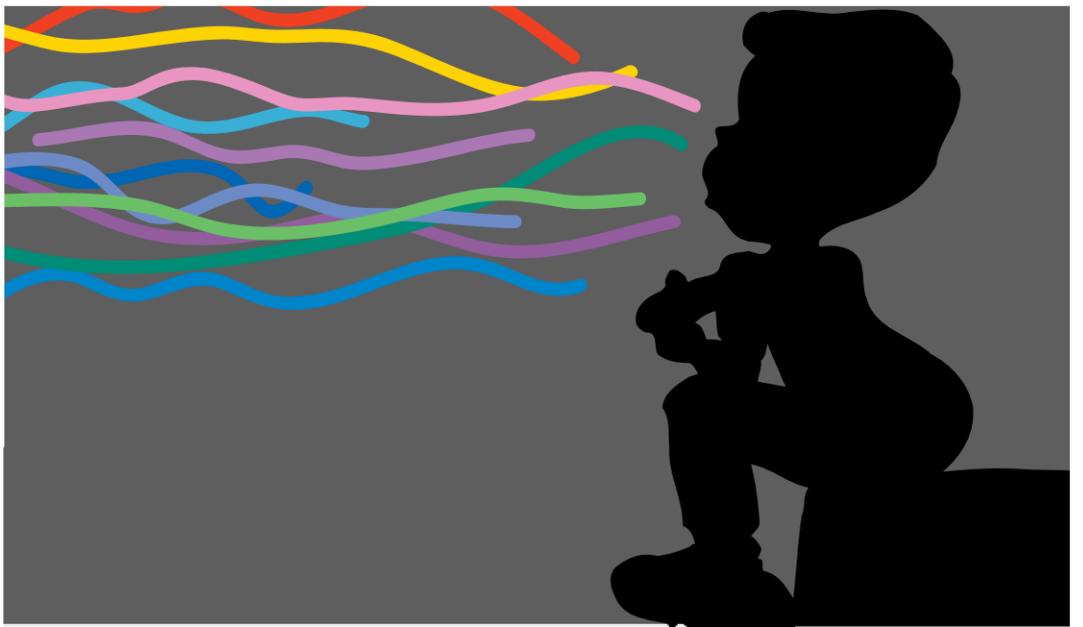
Although there is no cost for the workshop, pre-registration is required. To reserve a place, contact Leona Dolan at the BCTF, 604-871-2250 or [ldolan@bctf.ca](mailto:ldolan@bctf.ca).

### Do you speak Portuguese?

The BCTF International Solidarity Program, along with the CTF is developing a new program to assist teachers and their union in Mozambique. There may be opportunities for Portuguese-speaking teachers to offer professional development programs in Mozambique. If you are interested, please contact Leona Dolan at [ldolan@bctf.ca](mailto:ldolan@bctf.ca).

## International solidarity award honours Mexican teachers

CoDev's International Solidarity Award went to the Mexican Section of the Tri-National Coalition to Defend Public Education (representing teachers from Mexico, Canada, and the U.S.) in recognition of their solidarity with the B.C. Teachers' Federation. The Mexican teachers responded when the B.C. government denied teachers their right to collective bargaining, an action that the United Nations and the International Labour organization ruled a violation of international conventions. The Mexican teachers organized a demonstration at the Canadian Embassy in Mexico City and wrote a letter to the B.C. government in protest. Those acts of international support are an excellent illustration of how important solidarity is within international partnerships and how critical it is for the strengthening of civil society in our increasingly global economy.



## Report spotlights need for media literacy

by Dan Blake

Which of the following statements do you think are true?

1. *The Simpsons* is the most popular TV show for both boys and girls of all ages.
2. For both boys and girls, reading for pleasure decreases consistently with age.
3. Forty-eight percent of children have their own TV set, and 35% have their own VCR.
4. In Grades 3 to 6, roughly 30% of kids claim they never have any adult input about what TV shows they can watch.

All four are true. Those findings, along with a host of equally startling ones, can be found in a survey of about 5,700 children conducted for the Canadian Teachers' Federation and released in November. Children in Grades 3-10 from every province in Canada were asked a broad range of questions on their use of different media. The findings make compelling reading for teachers and parents who are concerned about how the mass media shape children's understanding of the world.

One of the most interesting findings in the report, *Kids' Take on Media*, is the discrepancy between boys' and girls' consumption of media.

*What can we learn from the socialization of girls that might help us to raise boys who are less "addicted" to simulated violence?*

"Almost 60% of boys in Grades 3-6 play video or computer games almost every day; even in Grade 10, 38% of boys chart it as a daily activity. For girls, the picture is very different: 33% of Grade 3 girls play interactive games every day; by Grade 10, the figure has dropped to 6%."

Those findings have important implications for teachers. Although most of the popular video games have little redeeming value, boys become more comfortable in using computers as a result of playing video games and are thus likely to have better careers in the computer industry.

Although the CTF report does not mention it, girls in my

secondary school classes spend a lot more time using computers for "instant messaging" with their friends than boys do. That is consistent with the report findings that older girls prefer social activities over the more solitary game playing boys favour. In response to survey questions, boys speak of enjoying the competitive aspect of game playing. Boys say they like to win.

*Clearly, parents must become more involved in their children's media consumption.*

Another interesting dimension to the gender difference in consuming media products is in the attitude to violence in the media. Boys' video and TV choices are three times more likely than girls' to have violent content.

"One of the top choices for both Francophone and Anglophone boys in Grades 3-6 is *Grand Theft Auto*, an ultra-violent action game aimed at mature audiences, which involves murder, bludgeoning, and prostitution. For Anglophone boys in the Grade 7-10 category, *Grand Theft Auto* is the run-away favourite title, being chosen by one-third of the respondents in this group. It is much less popular among Francophone boys, for whom hockey rates number one."

A master's degree student in the Communication Department at SFU recently produced a video for his coursework that examined the behaviour of groups of 10- to 12-year-old boys while playing video games. In the video, we see a group of 10-year-old boys enthusiastically "whooping it up" while playing, and watching others play, a violent video game. The boys took on a pack mentality, urging their fellow game players on as they pursued their simulated killing and maiming rampage.

The CTF report notes that violence is well down the list of ingredients that boys identify as qualities of a game they might choose to buy. Clearly the report doesn't provide adequate insight into what motivates young boys to choose violent games.

Girls, as the report notes, see violence as a negative attribute and have very little appetite for violent video games. What can we learn from the socialization of girls that might help us to raise boys who are less "addicted" to simulated violence?

The major responsibility for children's media consumption lies with parents. According to the children interviewed for this survey, parents are failing to exercise their responsibility.

When parents *do* monitor their children's media consumption, they are more likely to monitor TV viewing than video games. In fact, a majority of parents know little or nothing about the content of video games. Yet video games are much more violent and antisocial in content than TV programming.

Clearly, parents must become more involved in their children's media consumption. It's not a question of censorship. Rather, parents need to engage their children in discussions about the media they consume. That includes what they see on TV or at the movies, the music they listen to, the magazines they read, and most of all, the video games they play.

The CTF produced a very useful guide for parents based on the findings of the survey. The guide recommends that parents ask the following questions when watching TV with their kids. The questions can be adapted regarding playing video games.

Do you like it? How is this going to end? How does it make you feel? Could that really happen? How would you solve that problem?

Although the survey recognizes the central role for media literacy in helping children

*The CTF produced a very useful guide for parents based on the findings of the survey.*

become more informed and critical media consumers, it gives no advice to teachers on how to teach it. While every province in Canada has an organization that struggles to provide in-service education on how to teach media literacy, teachers receive no training at the pre-service level. Nor have the provincial teacher organizations played a significant role in promoting the teaching of media literacy among their members.

For more information on the report, go to the CTF web site: [www.ctf-fce.ca](http://www.ctf-fce.ca).

Dan Blake teaches at Earl Marriott Secondary School, Surrey, and is president of the B.C. Association for Media Education.

## 2003–04 Retirement planning seminars

Our **NEW** and **IMPROVED** seminars now end at noon and staff will provide individual counselling following the seminars.

Seminars cover topics such as the Teachers' Pension Plan, purchase options, pension options, the pension estimators, and retirement information. Bring your personal pension information. Preregistration is not required.

Date	Location
February 7, 2004	Vancouver, Plaza 500 Hotel
February 14, 2004	Surrey, Aston Pacific Conference Centre
February 21, 2004	Kamloops, University College of the Cariboo
February 21, 2004	Nanaimo, Coast Bastion Inn
March 6, 2004	Penticton, Penticton Lakeside Resort
March 6, 2004	Prince George, Inn of the North
March 27, 2004	Richmond, Abercorn Inn
March 27, 2004	Williams Lake, Overlander Hotel
April 3, 2004	Victoria, Holiday Inn
April 3, 2004	Fairmont Hot Springs, Fairmont H.S. Resort

## Yours for the asking

### Free teaching resources to prevent tobacco use

The Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (Health Canada, 2002) reports that 18% of 15- to 17-year-olds smoke; 178,360 (14%) of those young people smoke 12 or more cigarettes a day. Research shows that a well-developed and well-implemented school anti-tobacco program can reduce tobacco use among youth.

The Canadian Association for School Health has prepared web-based summaries and a collection of lesson plans and several student web quests. They can be found at [www.safehealthyschools.org/tobacco.htm](http://www.safehealthyschools.org/tobacco.htm).

Several excellent teaching and learning resources are available from Health Canada and provincial/territorial governments. Go to [www.gosmokefree.ca/prof](http://www.gosmokefree.ca/prof).

### Paralympic schools program

A free on-line educational resource for Grade 4–9 teachers, provides Canadian students with a unique opportunity to learn about the paralympic movement and paralympic athletes.

Travel the road to Athens with Canadian paralympic athletes as they prepare for the games!

Ready-made lesson plans, fun and interactive activities including video clips, athlete interviews, and games photos are a few of the features of this schools program—transporting students and teachers to the heart and soul of the 2004 Paralympic Games.

Each lesson plan addresses the educational needs of students in Grades 4–6, and students in Grades 7–9.

To learn more about the program or to register, visit [www.paralympic.ca](http://www.paralympic.ca), or contact Karen McMillan at the Canadian Paralympic Committee at 613-346-1325 for more information.

### Spreading the word 2003

CBC Television, Vancouver Foundation, and the Vancouver International Writers Festival are offering two new video resources that brings the Vancouver International Writers Festival's school events into the classroom. The videos are available free to B.C. schools and libraries (quantities are limited). *Two in the Morning* (K–3)

B.C. writers Bill Richardson and Chieri Uegaki bring young readers a sampling of their work. Young children will be enchanted as the two authors tell their stories.

### Reality meet fantasy (Grades 6–9)

Pender Island author Andrea Spalding (*Finders Keepers*, *The White Horse Talisman*, *Solomon's Tree*) lets imaginations soar to encompass supernatural horses, talismans, and old magic.

Each video, of approximately 30 minutes, includes curriculum resources. To order your free copy of a *Spreading the Word* video contact [education@writersfest.bc.ca](mailto:education@writersfest.bc.ca), or call 604-681-6330. Indicate which video you would like.

### Introducing Green Star!

Green Star! provides students and teachers with regionally specific, ongoing environmental education support and inspiration. Through Green Star! students are challenged to think critically about ideas and issues, and to identify and participate in stewardship activities—making the leap from ideas to action.

Green Starr! offers visits to your school, e-mail and Internet support, newsletter kit, and an eco-challenge contest.

Register free at [www.greenstreet.ca](http://www.greenstreet.ca). Log on, click on Approved Programs, then Elementary Schools, and then British Columbia. Scroll down to the Green Star! section and then follow the instructions on "Fill Out The Form."

Contact [greenstar@sierraclubbc.org](mailto:greenstar@sierraclubbc.org). Registration is ongoing until April 1, 2004.

GreenScene is the secondary-level environmental club program; Project Wolf, our secondary-level in-class program, and TREE Team (Temperate Rainforests) and ESP! (Environmental Stewardship) elementary-level, in-class programs. To find out more about all the programs, visit [www.sierraclubbc.org](http://www.sierraclubbc.org) or e-mail [education@sierraclubbc.org](mailto:education@sierraclubbc.org).

### Global education project grants

Small grants to support classroom and school global-education projects are available. The grants, to a maximum of \$1000 per project, come from the BCTF International Solidarity Fund and are administered by the BCTF International Solidarity Committee. They are aimed at increasing student understanding of the challenges of less developed countries and the value of international co-operation.

The criteria for the grants and the process for application are on the BCTF web site at [bctf.ca/social/globaled](http://bctf.ca/social/globaled).

## 88? Don't wait!

Teachers who have reached the age of 64 or the factor 88, age plus contributory service with the teachers or municipal pension plan, *may* voluntarily withdraw from the BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan: Long Term.

If you have reached age 65 or factor 90, you are no longer eligible for long-term benefits and *should* withdraw. It is necessary for you to apply to withdraw.

Send a completed form, available from Income Security, local presidents, or online at [bctf.ca/pensions/salary/LT-WithdrawalForm.shtml](http://bctf.ca/pensions/salary/LT-WithdrawalForm.shtml) to the BCTF Income Security Division.

## The BCTF Assistance Society

The BCTF Assistance Society exists to help past, present, and retired BCTF members who require emergency financial assistance. The assistance also extends to their dependents and spouses (including common-law and same-sex partners). It is another example of "teachers helping teachers."

The BCTF Assistance Society, an entity separate from the BCTF, was incorporated as a society in 1971, with residual funds from the former provincial and Vancouver Teachers' Medical Services Associations (prior to creation of the B.C. Medical Services Plan), as well as some bequests and donations. BCTF staff administer the society, and the BCTF bears those costs as its contribution. The BCTF also appoints six active BCTF members as directors to the society's board each year. Another six directors are elected directly by the society's members at the society's AGM every April. The directors and the staff members who work with them treat every application for assistance with respect and confidentiality.

The society usually offers a modest, interest-free loan; in special circumstances, an outright grant. Recipients are expected to repay their loans within a reasonable time, so that other members can access the same services. A repayment schedule is based on each applicant's finances, and if the circumstances warrant, the time period can be extended or shortened.

Financial assistance is usually requested because of a personal disaster, such as a sudden medical or housing emergency, or a family crisis. Assistance is *not* available for such things as debt consolidation, summer expenses, or education costs. Financial assistance is generally not available for situations arising from strikes or lockouts, and there is an expectation that any applicant will have already sought other avenues for borrowing money.

To obtain an application form for assistance, or to get further information, please contact the assistance society directly at 604-871-1921, or call the BCTF toll-free at 1-800-663-9163, and ask for the assistance society secretary. To be considered by the directors, an application form must be completed in full, and the applicant must sign a release authorizing a credit check.

## 10 New BCTF lesson aids

**1 LA 2049** *Snapshots of 19th Century Canada* co-produced by The Critical Thinking Cooperative and B.C. Ministry of Education, 154 p. ©2002. This unit of eight critical thinking challenges examines the social, political, and economical conditions throughout the 19th century from four groups' perspectives—English Canadians, French Canadians, recent immigrants, and Aboriginal peoples. Among the activities, students prepare a report card on the implications of nine selected events from each group's perspective; create a giant annotated timeline; write an "authentic" diary/journal entry about an assigned event; and prepare a one-page definitive assessment of the 19th century from the four perspectives. Grade 10 \$15

**2 LA 2054** *Deceptive Beauty: A Look at the Global Flower Industry* by Victoria International Development Education Association, 38 p. ©2001. The international flower trade is big business in the global economy. We often mark a special event with a gift of flowers. Flowers mean love, respect, recognition, celebration but rarely do we think about where the flowers we buy come from. This resource booklet encourages an appreciation of labour and environmental issues in the global flower industry, including trading conditions, health and safety of workers, use of pesticides, repression of union activists, and strategies to support flower workers. Grades 8 to adult \$8.50

**3 LA 3219** *Learning by Designing—Volume 2* by Jim Gilbert and Karin Clark, ©2002, 170 p. This reference book gives the reader additional understanding of the highly developed, sophisticated Pacific Northwest Coast First Nations two-dimensional art styles. The authors have attempted to put the art into a more spiritual and cultural context by including First Nations' ideals on ethics and philosophy and by interviewing members of an Aboriginal family. Also included is a 16-page colour section, which includes a Native Indian version of creation. It is hoped that this addition increases the clarity and shows the great beauty of the art. This book is offered as a supplement to the traditional apprenticeship training process. Four major art style regions of the Pacific Northwest Coast are included. Grades 4–12 \$34.95

**LA 3219A** *Four Worlds* by Jim Gilbert, Ron Stacy and Wedliid Speck ©2002. This full-colour booklet, is an insert for LA 3219 Learning by Designing. \$10

**4 LA 8083** *Take It to Your Seat Centers—Literacy Centers, Grades 3–4* Produced by Evan-Moor Educational Publishers 192 p. ©2003. This book includes step-by-step teacher directions for making and using 12 centers to practice reading and writing skills, full-colour patterns to construct the centers and full-colour and reproducible student task cards. No special center area is required, the centers can be made ahead of time, and they can be used for small group and individual skill practice. The skills practiced include the following: analogies, multiple-meaning words, prefixes, suffixes, main idea and supporting details, antonyms, synonyms, combining sentences and alphabetical order. Note that the book is published in the USA and may contain some US-based standards. Grades 3–4 \$19.95

**5 LA 8243** *I Can Make a Difference, Grades 2–3* co-produced by The Critical Thinking Consortium and B.C. Ministry of Education. ©2002, 151 p. The nine critical thinking challenges in this collection support primary students in undertaking responsible "social" action—in the home, at school, and in the broader community. The focus in the first section is on fulfilling one's responsibilities in the face of a problem situation. The second section focuses on pro-active efforts to enhance the community. These challenges include deciding how to cheer up an elderly person, assembling a care package to support a homeless person and passing along an act of kindness. Grades 2–3 \$15

**6 LA 8444** *Take It to Your Seat Centers—Math Centers, Grades K–1* Produced by Evan-Moor Educational Publishers, ©2003, 192 p. Includes step-by-step teacher directions for making and

using 12 centers to practice beginning math skills, full-colour patterns to construct the centers and full-colour and reproducible student task cards. No special center area is required, the centers can be easily stored in colourful gift bags for future use, the centers can be made ahead of time, and they can be used for small group and individual skill practice. The skills practiced include the following: sorting, addition, number order, number recognition, counting by 1s, 2s, 5s, and 10s, money, geometric shapes, patterning and graphing. Note that the book is published in the USA and may contain some US-based standards. Grades K–1 \$19.95

**7 LA 9971** *Discovering Connections: A Guide To the Fun of Bridging Disability Differences* by Linda Hill, 105 p. ©1998. Based on a course called Rebuilding Fun Into Life where people come together for fun and community participation. This illustrated guidebook is written as a curriculum for bringing youth and adults of different abilities together through a shared focus on community recreation and leisure. This book is a resource for parents, educators or professionals interested in building bridges between people. It is written to reach a wide diverse audience, from individuals to organizations, to schools and suburbs, to young and old. The activities can be easily adapted to purpose. K–12 \$24.95

**8 LA F2002** *Humanités 8e année - 12e année, Intégration au secondaire, Consortium du Bas Fraser* 291 p. ©1995. Document d'appui pour le personnel enseignant du secondaire préparé par une équipe d'enseignantes et d'enseignants. Le but premier est d'intégrer l'étude de la langue et celle des sciences humaines dans les classes d'immersion et du programme francophone. 8e et 12e année \$22.95

**9 LA 9543** *Exploring Space*. Produced by Engaging Science, a joint venture of the H.R. Macmillan Space Centre, Science World B.C. and the Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre, 40 p. ©2002. Outlines ideas for teachers to stimulate aspects of space travel in the classroom. Includes a variety of activities to help students understand the difficulties of piloted space exploration, including communication, confined space, co-operation, and restricted resources. Through a series of eight missions, students compare different types of astronomical observations, from Earth-bound to unpiloted fly-bys to piloted sample return missions. Also students can build models of Canada's contributions to the International space station including robotic arm, hands, and eyes; build an exact replica of the end effector (grabbing device) on the space station's remote manipulator system—the new version of the Candam. K–7 \$11

**10 LA 9322** *Not So Natural Disasters: Elementary School Edition*. Produced by Co-Development Canada 106 p. ©2003. A teaching unit on the links between natural disasters and climate change, environmental degradation and global inequality. Aimed at elementary teachers with the following objectives: to have students empathize with people who are impacted by natural disasters; to explore the human factors in natural disasters as linked to global inequality, climate change and environmental degradation; and to empower students to identify solutions, voice their concerns and take action. The unit consists of five sections. Each section has identified core activities that are central to the objectives of the section, as well as some optional activities. The unit is planned as a progression of activities, moving from empathy, to knowledge, to action. Grades 5–7 \$22.95

Many curriculum resources and information are available at [www.bcimer.ca/](http://www.bcimer.ca/).

For a complete listing of over 1000 BCTF Lesson Aids, consult the catalogue in your school library or the Lesson Aids online catalogue. [bctf.ca/LessonAids](http://bctf.ca/LessonAids)

To order any of the above lesson aids, enclose a cheque payable to the BCTF or authorized purchase order to BCTF Lesson Aids Service 100-550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2. GST and postage/handling are included in the prices. Orders are sent by return mail.

## BCTF Financial Report for the Year Ended June 30, 2003

### President's comments

The accompanying financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2003 have been prepared in accordance with the by-laws of the Federation and the provisions of the Society Act. They reflect the stewardship of the Executive Committee over the resources of the Federation and the committee's accountability to the membership for the effective management of those resources.

On a combined (all funds) basis, revenue exceeded expenses (a surplus) by \$2.2 million for the 2002-03 year compared to a deficit of \$4.2 million for the 2001-02 year. The improvement in operating results was due mainly to lower expenditures in the Collective Bargaining Defence Fund (CBDF) in 2002-03 as compared to 2001-02.

The General Operating Fund expenses exceeded revenue (a deficit) by \$495,000, which represented an increase to the \$172,000 deficit budget approved by the Representative Assembly. This increase in the deficit was due mainly to lower fee revenue as a result of a greater FTE membership loss than budgeted as a result of provincial government actions impacting public education. At their January 2004 meeting, the Executive Committee will be considering the Finance Committee 2004-05 total fee recommendation of 1.40%, which represents an increase of .02% from the 2003-04 fee of 1.38%.

The CBDF surplus was \$2.3 million for the 2002-03 year due to lower expenses than occurred in previous years. This increased the fund balance from \$16.5 million at June 30, 2002 to \$18.8 million at June 30, 2003.

The Provincial Bargaining Fund surplus was \$391,000 for the 2002-03 year which eliminated the negative fund balance of \$295,000 at June 30, 2002 resulting in a positive fund balance of \$96,000 at June 30, 2003.

The operations of the Salary Indemnity Fund reflect a deficit of \$24.8 million for the 2002-03 year compared to a deficit of \$32.5 million for the 2001-02 year. The deterioration in operating results in the last few years was due to significantly higher claim expenses, lower investment income, and lower membership fee revenue compared to previous years. The fund balance has now decreased from \$31.6 million at June 30, 2002 to \$6.8 million at June 30, 2003. Based on the rapidly declining fund balance over the past several years, the 2003 AGM approved a fee increase from 1.20% to 2.00% for 2003-04.

Neil Worboys

### Auditors' Report

To the Members of British Columbia Teachers' Federation

We have audited the statement of financial position of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation as at June 30, 2003, the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Federation's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Federation as at June 30, 2003, the results of its operations, and the changes in its financial position for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. As required by the *Society Act of British Columbia*, we report that, in our opinion, these principles have been applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

The comparative figures for the year ended June 30, 2002, were audited by other auditors, who expressed an opinion without reservation in their report dated November 1, 2002.

SmytheRatcliffe, Chartered Accountants

October 28, 2003

Vancouver, BC

### Management Responsibility for Financial Statements

The accompanying financial statements and all other information contained in this annual report are the responsibility of the management of the Federation. The financial statements have been prepared by management in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and have been approved by the Executive Committee.

Preparation of financial information is an integral part of the ongoing operation of the Federation. A system of internal accounting controls is maintained to ensure that transactions are accurately recorded on a timely basis, are properly approved and result in reliable financial statements.

The Finance and Audit Committee reviews the financial statements and recommends them to the Executive Committee for its approval. In addition, the Finance and Audit Committee meets with the officers of the Federation and the external auditors, and reports to the Executive Committee.

The financial statements have been examined by the Federation's auditors who are engaged by the Executive Committee on recommendation of the Finance and Audit Committee and whose appointment was ratified at the Annual General Meeting. The auditors have free access to the Finance and Audit Committee, without management present, to discuss the results of their audit work and their opinion on the adequacy of internal accounting controls and the quality of financial reporting.

Ken Novakowski, Executive Director

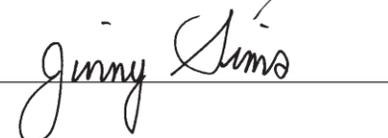
Rob McLaren, C.A., Treasurer

### STATEMENT 1 Financial Position as at June 30

	2003	2002
(in thousands)		
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Cash	\$ 5,623	\$ 3,028
Marketable securities (Note 3)	11,028	11,028
	16,651	14,056
Membership fees and other receivables	3,088	3,623
Inventories and prepaid expenses	323	315
	20,062	17,994
<b>Due from Salary Indemnity Fund</b>	1,238	339
<b>Capital Assets (Notes 5 &amp; 6)</b>	16,531	17,301
	<u>\$ 37,831</u>	<u>\$ 35,634</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 1,334	\$ 1,666
Due to Provincial Specialist Associations	929	921
Deferred building revenue	358	—
	2,621	2,587
<b>Members' Funds</b>		
<b>General Operating Fund (including investment in capital assets) (Schedule 1)</b>	14,761	15,256
<b>Restricted funds:</b>		
<b>Collective Bargaining Defence Fund (Schedule 2)</b>	18,801	16,519
<b>Contingency Fund (Schedule 3)</b>	1,434	1,468
<b>Provincial Bargaining Fund (Schedule 4)</b>	96	(295)
<b>Public Education Defence Fund (Schedule 5)</b>	47	77
<b>William R. Long Memorial International Solidarity Fund (Schedule 5)</b>	58	5
<b>Ed May Memorial Social Responsibility Fund (Schedule 5)</b>	13	17
	35,210	33,047
	<u>\$ 37,831</u>	<u>\$ 35,634</u>

Approved by the Executive Committee





### STATEMENT 2 Statement of Changes in Net Assets for the Year Ended June 30

						2003	2002
	General Operating Fund		Restricted Funds			(in thousands)	
	Operating	Invested in Capital Assets	Collective Bargaining Defence Fund	Contingency Fund	Provincial Bargaining Fund	Other Funds	Total
<b>Balance, beginning of year</b>	\$ (2,045)	\$17,301	\$16,519	\$ 1,468	\$ (295)	\$ 99	\$33,047
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	474	(969)	2,282	(34)	391	19	2,163
Purchase of capital assets	(294)	294					(4,224)
<b>Balance, end of year</b>	<u>\$ (1,865)</u>	<u>\$16,626</u>	<u>\$18,801</u>	<u>\$ 1,434</u>	<u>\$ 96</u>	<u>\$ 118</u>	<u>\$35,210</u>
							<u>\$33,047</u>

# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## STATEMENT 3

### Statement of Operations for the Year Ended June 30

	2003	2002
	(in thousands)	
<b>Revenue</b>		
Membership fees	\$ 26,369	\$ 26,893
Net investment income	803	905
Donations	47	144
	<u>27,219</u>	<u>27,942</u>
<b>Operating expenses</b>		
General Operating Fund (Schedule 1)	22,776	21,763
Collective Bargaining Defence Fund (Schedule 2)	345	8,929
Contingency Fund (Schedule 3)	313	142
Provincial Bargaining Fund (Schedule 4)	369	863
Other funds (Schedule 5)	1,253	469
	<u>25,056</u>	<u>32,166</u>
<b>Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses</b>	<u>\$ 2,163</u>	<u>\$ (4,224)</u>

## STATEMENT 4

### Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended June 30

	2003	2002
	(in thousands)	
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	\$ 2,163	\$ (4,224)
Item not affecting cash — depreciation	1,064	955
	<u>3,227</u>	<u>(3,269)</u>
<b>Changes in non-cash working capital items</b>		
Membership fees and other receivables	535	(357)
Inventories and prepaid expenses	(8)	(64)
Due from Salary Indemnity Fund	(899)	278
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(332)	125
Due to Provincial Specialist Associations	8	(114)
	<u>(696)</u>	<u>(132)</u>
<b>Cash flow from investing activities</b>		
Building revenue	358	—
Purchase of capital assets	(294)	(550)
	<u>64</u>	<u>(550)</u>
<b>Change in cash and marketable securities</b>	2,595	(3,951)
<b>Cash and marketable securities, beginning of year</b>	14,056	18,007
<b>Cash and marketable securities, end of year</b>	<u>\$ 16,651</u>	<u>\$ 14,056</u>

## Schedule 1

### General Operating Fund Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Fund Balance for the Year Ended June 30

	2003	2002
	(in thousands) (Note 8)	
<b>Revenue</b>		
Allocation of membership fees (Note 4)	\$ 22,472	\$ 22,639
<b>Divisional operating expenses</b>		
Management	2,296	2,442
Communications/Campaigns	3,642	3,720
Finance and Administrative Services	2,277	2,100
Research and Technology	1,934	1,945
Income Security	363	312
Professional and Social Issues	3,818	4,440
Field Service	2,149	1,512
CA Protective Services	2,137	2,342
	<u>18,616</u>	<u>18,813</u>
Grants to Locals	4,160	2,950
	<u>22,776</u>	<u>21,763</u>
Net interest expense	191	415
	<u>22,967</u>	<u>22,178</u>
<b>(Deficiency) excess of revenue over expenses</b>	(495)	461
<b>Fund balance, beginning of year</b>	15,256	14,795
<b>Fund balance, end of year</b>	<u>\$ 14,761</u>	<u>\$ 15,256</u>

## Schedule 2

### Collective Bargaining Defence Fund Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Fund Balance for the Year Ended June 30

	2003	2002
	(in thousands)	
<b>Revenue</b>		
Allocation of membership fees (Note 4)	\$ 1,720	\$ 2,818
Net investment income	907	1,253
Donations	—	65
	<u>2,627</u>	<u>4,136</u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Legislative intervention response	342	3,752
Third party dispute	3	—
Bargaining mobilization	—	4,797
Support to locals	—	137
Legal costs over GOF budget	—	128
Protest day GOF fees	—	115
	<u>345</u>	<u>8,929</u>
<b>Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses</b>	2,282	(4,793)
<b>Fund balance, beginning of year</b>	16,519	21,312
<b>Fund balance, end of year</b>	<u>\$ 18,801</u>	<u>\$ 16,519</u>

## Schedule 3

### Contingency Fund Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Fund Balance for the Year Ended June 30

	2003	2002
	(in thousands)	
<b>Revenue</b>		
Allocation of membership fees (Note 4)	\$ 190	\$ 387
Net investment income	89	76
	<u>279</u>	<u>463</u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Legal costs over GOF budget	187	16
Bills 50 and 51	74	—
Surrey book ban defence	20	—
Citizens for Public Power campaign	15	—
Guatemala strike support	10	—
UBC TA strike support	5	—
Grainworkers' Union Christmas fund	2	—
Cariboo Chilcotin commission	—	46
Campaign B.C.	—	45
Bulkley Valley TA grant	—	16
Oxfam/Afganistan relief	—	10
Columbia	—	5
Pension joint trust vote	—	2
Special grants	—	2
	<u>313</u>	<u>142</u>
<b>(Deficiency) excess of revenue over expenses</b>	(34)	321
<b>Fund balance, beginning of year</b>	1,468	1,147
<b>Fund balance, end of year</b>	<u>\$ 1,434</u>	<u>\$ 1,468</u>

## Schedule 4

### Provincial Bargaining Fund Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Fund Balance for the Year Ended June 30

	2003	2002
	(in thousands)	
<b>Revenue</b>		
Allocation of membership fees (Note 4)	\$ 765	\$ 586
<b>Expenses</b>		
Provincial negotiations	369	863
Net interest expense	5	9
	<u>374</u>	<u>872</u>
<b>Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses</b>	391	(286)
<b>Fund balance, beginning of year</b>	(295)	(9)
<b>Fund balance, end of year</b>	<u>\$ 96</u>	<u>\$ (295)</u>

## Schedule 5 Other Restricted Funds Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Fund Balance for the Year Ended June 30

	Public Ed. Defence Fund	W.R.Long Memorial Fund	Ed May Memorial Fund	Total 2003	Total 2002
(in thousands)					
<b>Revenue</b>					
Allocation of membership fees (Note 4)	\$ 765	\$ 425	\$ 32	\$1,222	\$ 463
Donations	45	2	—	47	79
Investment income	3	—	—	3	—
	<u>813</u>	<u>427</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>1,272</u>	<u>542</u>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Public education advocacy	609	—	—	609	—
Charter for public education	137	—	—	137	—
Affiliation with labour	97	—	—	97	—
Grants	—	374	36	410	469
	<u>843</u>	<u>374</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>1,253</u>	<u>469</u>
<b>(Deficiency) excess of revenue over expenses</b>	(30)	53	(4)	19	73
<b>Fund balances, beginning of year</b>	77	5	17	99	26
<b>Fund balances, end of year</b>	<u>\$ 47</u>	<u>\$ 58</u>	<u>\$ 13</u>	<u>\$ 118</u>	<u>\$ 99</u>

## Notes to Financial Statements Year Ended June 30, 2003

### 1. BACKGROUND AND BASIS OF COMBINATION

The British Columbia Teachers' Federation (the BCTF or the Federation) is incorporated as a society pursuant to the Society Act of British Columbia, and is a trade union pursuant to the Labour Relations Code of B.C. and the Public Education Labour Relations Act. The Federation is exempt from income tax.

The financial statements of the Federation include the results of the seven funds described below.

**General Operating Fund:** The purpose of the fund is to meet the goals of the Federation through program expenditures planned in advance and approved by the Representative Assembly. This fund also holds the investment in capital assets.

**Collective Bargaining Defence Fund:** The purpose of the fund is to pay costs directly related to strikes, lockouts, the honouring of picket lines in third-party disputes, and contract enforcement in accordance with policies and procedures approved by the Representative Assembly.

**Contingency Fund:** The purpose of the fund is to meet, without delay, special or emergent expenses that could not reasonably have been anticipated and to promote the cause of public education by providing the financial means to respond effectively to any crisis in education. Expenditures from the Contingency Fund are made in accordance with policies and procedures approved by the Representative Assembly.

**Public Education Defence Fund:** The purpose of the fund is to ensure adequate resources are available to effectively respond to the attack on public education launched by the government and to support the implementation of the Federation's Public Education Advocacy Plan. Expenditures from the fund are planned in advance and approved by the Representative Assembly.

**Provincial Bargaining Fund:** The purpose of the fund is to pay costs related to provincial contract negotiations. Expenditures from the fund are planned in advance and approved by the Representative Assembly.

**William R. Long Memorial International Solidarity Fund:** The purpose of the fund is to improve public education in developing countries.

**Ed May Memorial Social Responsibility Fund:** The purpose of the fund is to promote socially responsible teaching practices.

The Salary Indemnity Fund is reported to the membership in a separate set of financial statements and is not included in these financial statements. The purpose of the Salary Indemnity Fund is to meet the obligations of the Salary Indemnity Plan which provides income benefits to members disabled from employment as a result of illness or accident. The total fee allocated to the Salary Indemnity Fund was 1.20% of gross salary for the 2002–2003 membership year. Any fund deficiency is the responsibility of the Federation. The financial statements of the Salary Indemnity Fund should be read concurrently with these financial statements.

### 2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Significant accounting policies used in the preparation of the financial statements are summarized below. These policies are in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and the recommendations of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants.

#### a. Fund Accounting

The Federation follows the restricted fund method of accounting for membership fees whereby fees are allocated to each fund on the basis approved annually at the Annual General Meeting.

#### b. Revenue Recognition

Membership fees are recognized as revenue of the appropriate restricted fund as received or receivable. Investment income from the Federation's investments is recognized as revenue as earned and is allocated to the appropriate restricted fund based on the investments held for the fund.

#### c. Marketable Securities

Marketable securities are originally recorded at cost. If there is an other than temporary decline in value, these investments are written down to provide for the loss.

#### d. Inventories

Inventories of lesson aid materials are valued at cost or net realizable value, whichever is the lower.

#### e. Capital Assets

Capital assets are recorded at cost. Depreciation is calculated on the straight-line method based on anticipated useful lives:

Building	30 years	Furniture & equipment	3–15 years
Renovations	9–10 years	Computer hardware &	
Tenant improvements	10 years	software	3–10 years

#### f. Employee Future Benefits

The Federation maintains a defined benefit registered pension plan for all support staff of the Federation including casual and temporary employees and any administrative and excluded staff who are not eligible to join the Teachers' Pension Plan.

The pension expense and plan funding requirements are determined tri-annually by independent consulting actuaries. The cost of pension benefits earned is determined using the projected benefit method pro-rated on service and is charged to expense as services are rendered. Adjustments arising from plan amendments,

changes in assumptions, experience gains and losses, and the net pension assets are amortized on a straight-line basis over the estimated average remaining service lives of the employees.

In addition, the Federation provides non-pension benefits to qualifying retirees consisting of supplementary health insurance benefits. The cost of post-retirement benefits other than pensions is recognized on an accrual basis over the working lives of employees. The expense reported in the current year, based on tri-annual independent actuarial assessment, is an allocation of estimated future benefits under these plans related to the service of employees in the current year. Future obligations for these benefits are funded when they occur.

#### g. Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires the Federation to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates and would impact results of operations and cash flows.

### 3. MARKETABLE SECURITIES

The market value of marketable securities at June 30, 2003 was \$11,287,265 compared to a carrying value of \$11,028,370 (June 30, 2002 market value—\$11,174,175; carrying value—\$11,028,370).

### 4. MEMBERSHIP FEE

The membership fee for the year ended June 30, 2003 was 1.38% of the gross salary of each member.

The following summarizes the fee allocations:

	2002–2003	2001–2002
General Operating Fund	1.20%	1.185%
Collective Bargaining Defence Fund	0.09	0.145
Contingency Fund	0.01	0.020
Provincial Bargaining Fund	0.04	0.030
Public Education Defence Fund	0.04	—
	<u>1.38%</u>	<u>1.380%</u>

The General Operating Fund allocates 1.86% of its fee revenue to the William R. Long Memorial International Solidarity Fund. In addition, the fund allocates \$1 per member per year to the Ed May Memorial Social Responsibility Fund.

### 5. CAPITAL ASSETS

	Original Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	2003 Net Book Value	2002
(in thousands)				
Land	\$ 4,430	\$ —	\$ 4,430	\$ 4,430
Building	12,736	(2,825)	9,911	10,386
	<u>17,166</u>	<u>(2,825)</u>	<u>14,341</u>	<u>14,816</u>
Renovations	860	(372)	488	574
Tenant improvements	540	(230)	310	403
Furniture and equipment	1,013	(784)	229	362
Computer hardware & software	1,770	(607)	1,163	1,146
	<u>\$21,349</u>	<u>\$(4,818)</u>	<u>\$16,531</u>	<u>\$17,301</u>

### 6. NET ASSETS INVESTED IN CAPITAL ASSETS

Net assets invested in capital assets are funded as follows:

	2002–2003	2001–2002
(in thousands)		
General Operating Fund	\$ 9,053	\$ 9,493
Collective Bargaining Defence Fund	7,478	7,808
	<u>\$16,531</u>	<u>\$17,301</u>

In 2000, the Representative Assembly authorized a loan of \$8,400,000 from the Collective Bargaining Defence Fund to the General Operating Fund to finance the purchase of the remaining interest in the Federation's building. For presentation purposes, the inter-fund loan payable and receivable are eliminated in the combined statement of financial position.

The loan bears interest at an effective annual rate of 3.56% and is repayable in monthly principal and interest payments of \$49,773.32. The current term is renewable on December 31, 2005. Loan interest for the year 2002–2003 was \$267,709.

### 7. EMPLOYEE FUTURE BENEFITS

The following tables pertain to the Federation's employee future benefit plans, and provide fair value of plan assets, benefit obligations, and funded status for the year ended June 30, 2003:

	Pension	Non-pension	Total
(in thousands)			
Fair value of plan assets	\$ 22,240	\$ —	\$ 22,240
Accrued benefit obligation	(15,864)	(9,487)	(25,351)
Funded status—plan surplus (deficit)	<u>\$ 6,376</u>	<u>\$ (9,487)</u>	<u>\$ (3,111)</u>

The net expense for the Federation's future employee benefit plans is as follows:

	Pension	Non-pension	Total
(in thousands)			
Plan expense (recovery)	<u>\$ (907)</u>	<u>\$ 1,366</u>	<u>\$ 459</u>

The actuarial determinations were based on the following assumptions during the year:

Discount rate	6.5%
Expected long-term rate of return on plan assets	7.0%
Rate of compensation increase	2.5%
The assumed healthcare cost trend rate at June 30, 2003 was 10%, decreasing to 5% after five years.	

### 8. COMPARATIVE AMOUNTS

Certain of the prior year's figures have been reclassified for comparative purposes.

### 9. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

#### a. Fair Value

The Federation's financial instruments include cash, membership fees and other receivables, due from Salary Indemnity Fund, accounts payable and accrued liabilities, due to Provincial Specialist Associations and deferred building revenue. The fair value of these financial instruments approximates their carrying value. The fair value of marketable securities is disclosed in Note 3.

#### b. Interest Rate Risk

Financial risk is the risk arising from changes in interest rates. The Federation is exposed to interest rate risk due to the long-term maturity of certain of the investments. These investments are interest rate sensitive although this risk is actively managed by both management and professional investment advisors.

## Salary Indemnity Fund

### Auditors' Report

To the Members of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation

We have audited the statement of financial position of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation Salary Indemnity Fund as at June 30, 2003, the statements of revenue, expenditures and fund balance and changes in cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Federation's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In our opinion these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Fund as at June 30, 2003, and the results of its operations and the changes in its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. As required by the *Society Act of British Columbia*, we report that, in our opinion, these principles have been applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

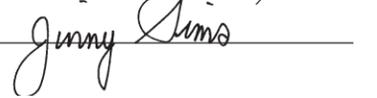
The comparative figures for the year ended June 30, 2002 were audited by other auditors, who expressed an opinion without reservation in their report dated November 1, 2002.

SmytheRatcliffe  
Chartered Accountants  
October 28, 2003  
Vancouver, BC

### STATEMENT 1 Salary Indemnity Fund Financial Position as at June 30

	2003	2002 (Note 9)
(in thousands)		
<b>Assets</b>		
Accounts receivable	\$ 2,749	\$ 2,741
Investments (Note 3)	167,708	183,210
Capital assets (Note 4)	793	879
	<u>\$171,250</u>	<u>\$186,830</u>
<b>Liabilities and Fund Balance</b>		
Bank indebtedness (Note 5)	\$ 664	\$ 759
Accounts payable	388	326
	1,052	1,085
Due to General Operating Fund	1,238	339
	2,290	1,424
Provision for claims (Note 6)	162,168	153,805
Invested in capital assets	793	879
<b>Fund balance</b>	<u>5,999</u>	<u>30,722</u>
	<u>6,792</u>	<u>31,601</u>
	<u>\$171,250</u>	<u>\$186,830</u>

Approved by the Executive Committee

### STATEMENT 2 Salary Indemnity Fund Statement of Revenue, Expenditures, and Fund Balance for the Year Ended June 30

	2003	2002
(in thousands)		
<b>Revenue</b>		
Membership fees (Note 1)	\$22,431	\$22,701
Teachers' share of employment insurance premium reductions	1,616	1,794
Investment income	279	7,242
	<u>24,326</u>	<u>31,737</u>
<b>Expenditures</b>		
Short term claims paid	9,211	8,791
Long term claims paid	25,705	23,978
	<u>34,916</u>	<u>32,769</u>
Increase in actuarial valuation of provision for claims (Note 6)	8,363	25,902
Total claim expenditures	43,279	58,671
Deficiency of revenue over claim expenditures	<u>(18,953)</u>	<u>(26,934)</u>
Administrative expenses	5,404	5,056
Investment management and trust company expenses (Note 7)	452	518
	<u>5,856</u>	<u>5,574</u>
<b>Deficiency of revenue over expenditures</b>	<u>(24,809)</u>	<u>(32,508)</u>
<b>Fund balance, beginning of year</b>	<u>31,601</u>	<u>64,109</u>
<b>Fund balance, end of year</b>	<u>\$ 6,792</u>	<u>\$31,601</u>

### STATEMENT 3 Salary Indemnity Fund Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended June 30

	2003	2002
(in thousands)		
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
Deficiency of revenue over expenditures	\$(24,809)	\$(32,508)
Items not affecting cash		
Increase in actuarial valuation of provision for claims	8,363	25,902
Depreciation	116	107
	<u>(16,330)</u>	<u>(6,499)</u>
Changes in non-cash working capital items		
Accounts receivable	(8)	118
Accounts payable	62	(88)
Due to General Operating Fund	899	(278)
	<u>953</u>	<u>(248)</u>
	<u>\$(15,377)</u>	<u>\$ (6,747)</u>
<b>Cash flow from investing activities</b>		
Purchase of capital assets	(30)	(272)
Decrease in investment portfolio	15,502	7,792
	<u>15,472</u>	<u>7,520</u>
<b>Change in bank indebtedness</b>	95	773
<b>Bank indebtedness, beginning of year</b>	<u>(759)</u>	<u>(1,532)</u>
<b>Bank indebtedness, end of year</b>	<u>\$ (664)</u>	<u>\$ (759)</u>

## Notes to Financial Statements Year Ended June 30, 2003

### 1. BACKGROUND AND FEES

The purpose of the Salary Indemnity Fund is to meet the obligations of the Salary Indemnity Plan which provides income benefits to members disabled from employment as a result of illness or accident.

The membership fee for the year ending June 30, 2003 was 1.2% of the gross salary of each member. For the year ending June 30, 2004, the 2003 Annual General Meeting approved a fee of 2.0% of the gross salary of each member.

The financial position of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation is reported to the membership in a separate set of financial statements and is not included in these financial statements. The financial statements of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation should be read concurrently with these financial statements.

### 2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Significant accounting policies used in the preparation of the financial statements are summarized below. These policies are in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and the recommendations of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants.

**a. Fund Accounting:** The Salary Indemnity Fund follows the restricted fund method of accounting for membership fees.

**b. Revenue Recognition:** Restricted membership fees related to the Fund are recognized as revenue of the Fund in the year they are earned.

Investment income on the Fund's net resources is recognized as revenue in the year it is earned.

**c. Investments:** Investments are originally recorded at cost since they are held as long-term investments. In the event of a permanent decline in market value, the investments are written down to reflect the decline in market value. The resulting balance is known as the carrying value. The carrying value is not increased to reflect any subsequent increase in market value.

**d. Capital Assets:** Capital assets are recorded at cost. Depreciation is calculated on the straight-line method based on anticipated useful lives:

Furniture and equipment	5 to 15 years
Computer hardware and software	3 to 10 years
Renovations	10 years

**e. Use of Estimates:** The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and

assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates and would impact future results of operations and cash flows.

### 3. INVESTMENTS

The market value of long-term investments as at June 30, 2003 was \$176,897,030 compared to a carrying value of \$167,707,956. (June 30, 2002 market value—\$186,374,987; carrying value—\$183,210,092).

### 4. CAPITAL ASSETS

	Original Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	2003 Net Book Value	2002 Net Book Value
(in thousands)				
Furniture & equipment	\$ 177	\$ (64)	\$ 113	\$ 111
Computer hardware & software	602	(161)	441	498
Renovations	306	(67)	239	270
	<u>\$1,085</u>	<u>\$ (292)</u>	<u>\$ 793</u>	<u>\$ 879</u>

Depreciation expense for the year ended June 30, 2003 was \$116,237 (2002—\$107,205)

### 5. BANK INDEBTEDNESS

The British Columbia Teachers' Federation maintains consolidated banking arrangements with its financial institution for overdraft and interest calculation purposes. At June 30, 2003 the combined bank account balance was positive.

### 6. CLAIM EXPENDITURES AND PROVISION FOR CLAIMS

The estimate of accrued liabilities and provision for claims is based upon an actuarial valuation as of June 30, 2003 performed in accordance with standards established by the Canadian Institute of Actuaries using data supplied by management of the Plan. This valuation uses standard claims tables modified to reflect Plan experience. In subsequent periods the accrued liabilities and provision for claims are adjusted based upon actual Plan experience. These adjustments can be significant. The estimate of accrued liabilities and provision for claims for the individual segments of the plan are set out below:

	June 30 2003	June 30 2002
(in thousands)		
Short term claims	\$ 3,984	\$ 3,607
Long term claims	158,184	150,198
Total provision for claims	<u>\$162,168</u>	<u>\$153,805</u>

As a result of the current period's actuarial review, adjustments were required for claim benefits and pension contributions attributable to prior periods. These adjustments are included in the operations of the current period.

	June 30 2003	June 30 2002
(in thousands)		
Decrease related to current period	\$ (3,575)	\$ (5,827)
Increase related to prior periods	11,938	31,729
Total change in provision for claims	8,363	25,902
Opening provision for claims	153,805	127,903
Closing provision for claims	<u>\$162,168</u>	<u>\$153,805</u>

### 7. INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT AND TRUST COMPANY EXPENSES

The investments of the Salary Indemnity Fund are managed by independent investment management firms in accordance with investment policies and restrictions as established by the Federation and the Trustees' Act (B.C.) and are lodged for safekeeping with a trust company.

### 8. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

**a. Fair Value:** The Fund's financial instruments include accounts receivable, bank indebtedness, accounts payable and due to General Operating Fund. The fair value of these financial instruments approximates their carrying values. The fair value of investments is disclosed in Note 3.

**b. Interest Rate Risk:** Financial risk is the risk arising from changes in interest rates. The Fund is exposed to interest rate risk due to the long-term maturity of certain of the investments. These investments are interest rate sensitive although this risk is actively managed by both management and professional investment managers.

### 9. COMPARATIVE FIGURES

The comparative figures were reported on by another firm of chartered accountants. Certain of the comparative figures are reclassified to conform with the current year's presentation.



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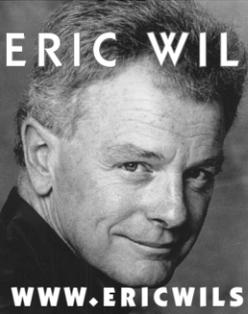
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# PD CALENDAR

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## TEACHER EXCHANGE

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## FEBRUARY 2004

**5-7** Vancouver. The Early Years: Relationships, how relationships influence a child's emotional experiences and lifelong well being. How do our services contribute to a family's growth and happiness? How do we promote the physical, emotional, and spiritual growth of a child? As service providers, how do our relationships with families support the health and happiness of children? Coast Plaza Hotel & Suites. Contact Heather, 604-822-2801 f: 604-822-4835, [ipsec@cehs.ubc.ca](mailto:ipsec@cehs.ubc.ca), [interprofessional.ubc.ca](http://interprofessional.ubc.ca).

**12-14** Delta. B.C. Music Educators' Assn (BCMEA) Annual Music Conference, Delta 2004—Music Meets the Challenge, Seaquam Secondary. Keynote speakers are Allan McMurray and Jim Austin. Contact Kathy Fester, [kathy@fester.ca](mailto:kathy@fester.ca).

**13** Squamish. Tools for Teaching, full-day workshop with Dr. Fred Jones for all K-12 teachers and administrators. Contact Julie Wallace, 604-892-3056, [pd48@bctf.ca](mailto:pd48@bctf.ca).

**16** Mission. Mission Teachers' Union and SD 75 District PD Day, with keynotes Cris Tavani, and Gordon Neufeld, Heritage Park Secondary School. Large variety among 44 workshops for all grades and programs. Registration fee includes refreshments, door prizes, and lunch. Contact Cathy, 604-826-0112.

**19-21** Richmond. B.C. Art Teachers' Assn. (BCATA) Conference, Navigation, 3 keynote speakers, 60 workshops for primary, intermediate graduation, media, photography, lunches, evening socials, McMath Secondary. \$150 early-bird registration. Contact Nicole Porter, 604-718-4050, [nidcent@telus.net](mailto:nidcent@telus.net).

**20** Kelowna. B.C. Math Teachers' Association (BCAMT) Interior Math Conference, K-12 top-notch workshops, new resources and publishers' displays, keynote: Rob Sidley, variety of workshops for all grades, technology, door prizes, lunches, Mount Boucherie Secondary. \$65 early-bird reg. Contact Lorraine Baron, 250-712-7040, [barongrodzki@shaw.ca](mailto:barongrodzki@shaw.ca), or Chris Van Bergeyk, [cvanberg@sd23.bc.ca](mailto:cvanberg@sd23.bc.ca), or [bctf.ca/bcmt/imc/](mailto:bctf.ca/bcmt/imc/).

**20-21** Vancouver. Microbial Discovery Workshop for Biology 11 teachers, hands-on, inquiry-based classroom activities with bacteria, yeast, lichens, and slime moulds, UBC, Dept. of Microbiology and Immunology, \$100, by January 30, 2004, includes lunch, snacks, and resources. Contact Diane Oorebeek, 604-931-8705, [microbiology.ubc.ca/mdw](mailto:microbiology.ubc.ca/mdw).

**21** Vancouver. 8th Annual Adult Educators' PSA Conference, 2915 Commercial Dr., Keynote: Maximizing Student Learning; Pru Moore, Vancouver Community College. Contact Lynda Toews 604-592-8391 or [lmtoews@dcnet.com](mailto:lmtoews@dcnet.com), or [bctf.ca/aepsa](mailto:bctf.ca/aepsa).

**27** Victoria. Shaping Character: Creating a Culture of Virtues in Our Schools, teaching social responsibility and good character in a way that boosts academic achievement, reduces bullying, and creates a caring school climate, Victoria Truth Center, 1201 Fort Street. Contact instructor Nancy Watters, p/f: 250-746-3626, [VirtuesConsulting.com](http://VirtuesConsulting.com).

## MARCH 2004

**6** Victoria. Teaching Respect and Responsibility: Ten Tools for Success using the proven methods of The Virtues Project to train children to be caring, courteous, and socially responsible, Victoria Truth Center, 1201 Fort Street. Contact instructor Nancy Watters, p/f: 250-746-3626, [VirtuesConsulting.com](http://VirtuesConsulting.com).

**11-12** Vancouver. Special Education Assn. (SEA) Conference, Crosscurrents 2004, keynote by B.J. Wise (Difficult Students: What's a Teacher To Do?), Westin Bayshore & Conference Centre. Contact Madeline Pohlmann, [madelinep@fnesc.bc.ca](mailto:madelinep@fnesc.bc.ca). Registrar is Liz Sparling, [sparw@telus.net](mailto:sparw@telus.net).

## APRIL 2004

**2** Kelowna. LATA Spring Conference 2004 with Trevor Calkins, creator and author of Power of Ten, an innovative and creative approach to teaching and learning how to use numbers, Grand Okanagan Resort and Conference Centre. Contact Brenda Bell, 713 Nahanni Place, Kelowna, BC V1V 1N5, [bellbg@shaw.ca](mailto:bellbg@shaw.ca), f: 250-860-4526.

**20-24** Victoria. B.C. Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy, offered by the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia to 15 selected B.C. teachers to spend 3.5 days at the Parliament Buildings participating in parliamentary democracy. Discover your Legislature. Contact Public Education & Outreach, 250-387-8669, or visit [www.leg.bc.ca](http://www.leg.bc.ca) and click on Public Education & Outreach. Application deadline is January 15, 2004.

**22-24** Penticton. MYABC Connections 2004, Middle School Educators' Conference. Visit [www.myabc.bc.ca/connections2004](http://www.myabc.bc.ca/connections2004).

**25-27** Victoria. Focus 2004, Leaders & Healers II, Reaching Success Through Adversity, Victoria Conference Centre. Contact Barbara Smith, 250-598-1039, f: 250-598-

2368, [barbarasmith@focusconferences.com](mailto:barbarasmith@focusconferences.com), [www.focusconferences.com](http://www.focusconferences.com).

**28-29** North Vancouver. Fast Forward 2004—Educational Media Showcase. Preview and evaluate the latest in educational videos, DVD, and multimedia programs on a wide array of subjects. Capilano College, Sportsplex, North Vancouver, BC. Contact Susan Weber, 604-323-5533.

## MAY 2004

**1** Vancouver. Investigating Our Practices 2004, 7th Annual Conference. Teachers from different educational contexts convene at UBC to share their investigations, understandings, and questions, Neville Scarfe Building, 2125 Main Mall, UBC. \$20 (students \$10) includes refreshments and lunch. Contact Judy Paley, 604-822-2733, [judy.paley@ubc.ca](mailto:judy.paley@ubc.ca), [oep.educ.ubc.ca/wcs/c\\_investprac.html](http://oep.educ.ubc.ca/wcs/c_investprac.html).

**6-7** Vancouver. All Together Better Health: Progress in Interprofessional Education & Collaborative Practice, an international conference for health practitioners and academics to enhance knowledge and skills, share innovations, deepen understanding of positive outcomes, and determine future directions for collaborative research. Coast Plaza Hotel & Suites. Contact Heather, 604-822-2801 f: 604-822-4835, [ipsec@cehs.ubc.ca](mailto:ipsec@cehs.ubc.ca), [interprofessional.ubc.ca](http://interprofessional.ubc.ca).

**7-8** Richmond. Catalyst 2004, B.C. Science Teachers' Association (BCSCTA) conference for K-12 science educators, Vancouver Airport Conference Resort. Keynote by James P. Delgado, executive director, Vancouver Maritime Museum. Contact Tim McCracken, 604-668-6430, f: 604-668-6132, [tmccracken@richmond.sd38.bc.ca](mailto:tmccracken@richmond.sd38.bc.ca), or Karen Morley, f: 604-582-7956, [morley\\_k@fc.sd36.bc.ca](mailto:morley_k@fc.sd36.bc.ca), [bctf.ca/BCSCTA](mailto:bctf.ca/BCSCTA).

**13-15** Ottawa. CTF National Conference, Moving from a Culture of Testing to a Culture of Professional Accountability. Plenary sessions by Alfie Kohn, Ken Leithwood, Lorna Earl and Anne Rodrigue, Andy Hargreaves, and Lise Charland. \$428 includes continental breakfasts, lunches, materials, and GST. Reduced-rate hotel reservations at Ottawa Marriott (1-800-853-8463). Visit [www.ctf-fce.ca](http://www.ctf-fce.ca).

## JULY 2004

**12-14** Creston. Assessments for Career Choice and Job Success, a series of assessments to assist practitioners to understand themselves and therefore better understand the students they work with (includes minor assessments for students' self-discovery), College of the Rockies. Includes a catered lunch and tour of Creston Valley Wildlife Centre. Contact Rand Archibald, [rarchibald@cotr.bc.ca](mailto:rarchibald@cotr.bc.ca), Kathy Tompkins, [ktompkins@cotr.bc.ca](mailto:ktompkins@cotr.bc.ca), 250-428-5332.

**19-21** Creston. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, a workshop with Barbara West on understanding FAS, planning effective interventions, rethinking behaviours, and planning for a useful future, College of the Rockies. Includes a catered lunch and tour of Creston Valley Wildlife Centre. Contact Rand Archibald, [rarchibald@cotr.bc.ca](mailto:rarchibald@cotr.bc.ca), Kathy Tompkins, [ktompkins@cotr.bc.ca](mailto:ktompkins@cotr.bc.ca), 250-428-5332.

**26-28** Creston. Building Self-Management Skills, exploring intrapersonal and interpersonal skills for working with students, family, and co-workers, College of the Rockies. Includes a catered lunch and tour of Creston Valley Wildlife Centre. Contact Rand Archibald, [rarchibald@cotr.bc.ca](mailto:rarchibald@cotr.bc.ca), Kathy Tompkins, [ktompkins@cotr.bc.ca](mailto:ktompkins@cotr.bc.ca), 250-428-5332.

## AUGUST 2004

**1** Burnaby. Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication (Eecom) conference, hosted by the Environmental Educators' PSA (EEPPSA) at Simon Fraser University.

**9-13** Maple Ridge. Science World's Loon Lake Science Camp for Teachers, Malcolm Knapp Research Forest. \$325+GST. Registration fee covers food and accommodation, and participants receive a travel subsidy. Contact 1-800-363-1611 or 604-443-7552, or Caedmon Nash, Science World, 1455 Quebec Street, Vancouver, BC V6A 3Z7, 604-443-7440, f: 604-443-7430, [cmash@scienceworld.bc.ca](mailto:cmash@scienceworld.bc.ca).

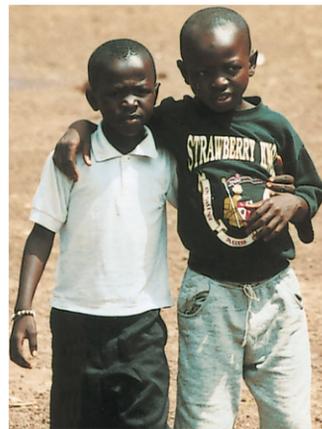
**26-27** Port Coquitlam. Literacy Connections: Comprehension Across the Curriculum. Thursday: all-day sessions with Stephanie Harvey and Debbie Miller; Friday: choice of sessions with respected B.C. educators. Terry Fox Secondary School. Contact Barbara Kolbus, 604-291-5795, [bjkolbus@sfu.ca](mailto:bjkolbus@sfu.ca), [www.educ.sfu.ca/fp/elnetwork](http://www.educ.sfu.ca/fp/elnetwork).

**PSA PD Day—October 22, 2004**

**PD Calendar web site**  
<http://pdonline.bctf.ca/conferences/PD-Calendar.html>

**Additions/changes? E-mail**  
Debby Stagg, [dstagg@bctf.ca](mailto:dstagg@bctf.ca)

## Project Overseas



LYNDA SHIOYA &amp; IAN MCINTYRE PHOTOS

Clockwise from top left: eager students in playground of Wilberforce School; Project Overseas team, left to right: Ian McIntyre, Debbie Williams, driver Skeka, Lynda Shioya, Barry Muir; Lois Marrah, co-tutor with some student teachers at Stadium Hostel; neighbourhood children near Posseh's residence; inside classroom, Wilberforce School.

# SIERRA LEONE

by Lynda Shioya

Before I went to Sierra Leone in July as part of the Canadian Teachers' Federation Project Overseas team, I thought my focus would be on teaching and contributing from my professional experiences. By the time I left Africa, I realized I had learned and received a great deal as well.

*We taught 60 untrained and unqualified teachers from various regions of Sierra Leone.*

Barry Muir (Saskatchewan), Ian McIntyre (Manitoba), Debbie Williams (Newfoundland), and I, went to Sierra Leone to share our experiences as teachers and our culture as Canadians. We also learned much from the people with whom we interacted. Our students had survived a brutal civil war. They face large classes, no salaries, no resources, no supplies, broken furniture, no plumbing,

and daily power failures, yet, they are always ready and willing to see the humour in the human condition.

Upon our arrival at Lungi Airport outside the capital, Freetown, we were cordially greeted by members of the Sierra Leone Teachers' Union (SLTU). After an uneventful but noisy helicopter ride in torrential rain, we were bundled into a car and driven to a guesthouse called "Posseh's Residence," which was to be our home for the next three weeks. Over the following days, we made the requisite courtesy calls to various labour and education officials and, at our request, made two impromptu visits to local schools.

Our 10-day course of instruction began on July 14 with an official opening that included representatives from the SLTU and the ministry of education. Each day, we taught from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with an hour lunch break, and then we had a steering committee meeting from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

We taught 60 untrained and unqualified teachers from various regions of Sierra Leone. The participants are attempting

to fill the void left by the exodus of qualified teachers from the country and the overwhelming number of children attending school. There are often 50 to

*There are often 50 to 100 children in one class because the ministry of education has mandated universal education...*

100 children in one class because the ministry of education has mandated universal education, with an emphasis on educating girls and integrating all children who are war veterans (kidnapped and forced to fight or to be "wives") into the schools.

The Canadian team co-taught and collaborated daily with instructors from Njala, Bo, and Freetown teachers' colleges in math, science, social studies, and language arts. We concentrated on the primary grades, under the broad topics of syllabus (curriculum), teaching methodology, classroom management, motivation, lesson

planning, and practice teaching. In addition, we held workshops on HIV/AIDS, peace education/human rights, and gender equity at the end of the first week.

We ended the course by giving participants certificates of completion and educational supplies. In appreciation of our efforts, the SLTU and participating students gave us generous gifts of African clothing.

In our students, and in the people we met, we saw the human spirit overcoming all obstacles. The SLTU's hospitality was overwhelming. They made us feel safe, comfortable, and welcome.

The needs of Sierra Leone are great. Here is a wish list from some of the teachers I met:

- Volunteer to help set up preschool teacher training course at Njala College (Dr. Tom Dugba, Dean, Faculty of Education, Njala University College, Freetown, Sierra Leone, [nuclib@sierratel.sl](mailto:nuclib@sierratel.sl)).

- Send professional teachers' books (all were confiscated from the teachers' colleges and sold for pennies) to Lois Marrah, Inservice Co-ordinator, NCRDC, Ministry of Education Science and Technology, Tower Hill, Freetown, Sierra Leone.

- Send lesson plans that can be repurposed and published by the SLTU to Morris Conteh, Deputy Secretary General, SLTU, PO Box 477, Freetown, Sierra Leone, [emesconteh@yahoo.com](mailto:emesconteh@yahoo.com).

- Set up a sister-school program to provide supplies for front-line teachers, [L\\_shioya@telus.net](mailto:L_shioya@telus.net).

*In our students, and in the people we met, we saw the human spirit overcoming all obstacles.*

As the country's infrastructure is rebuilt, we hope the teachers of Sierra Leone will develop their own curriculum to meet local and global education needs.

If you would like to help, there are many opportunities. If you have a sense of adventure and willingness to share professionally, I encourage you to volunteer for Project Overseas.

*Lynda Shioya is a retired Surrey teacher.*