

# BCTF Newsletter

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Complete  
W/LC Survey  
September 30

SEPTEMBER 21, 1983

## Joint committee opposes gov't control plan

Provisions in the provincial government's repressive new legislation which would tend to isolate principals and vice-principals from other BCTF members have been strongly attacked by a joint BCTF committee studying the role of administrators.

At a meeting on August 25-26, the Joint Committee to Examine the Role of Principals and Vice-Principals in the BCTF condemned the government's intention to centralize education decision-making and reaffirmed the importance of community-based shared decision-making.

The committee adopted a statement for presentation to the BCTF Executive Committee and to the Executive Committee of the B.C. Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association.

"Centralization of educational decision-making serves neither educational nor financial goals; decentralization serves both," the statement read. "The budget and legislative package currently before the House fails to provide adequate funding to meet educational needs, inhibits economic recovery, incorporates a funding formula that is divisive, works against educational effectiveness, and transfers major decision-making powers from local to provincial jurisdiction. The package is unacceptable and must be withdrawn."

The joint committee went on to say that it is essential that all BCTF members take unified, coordinated action in concert with such organizations as Operation Solidarity, the Solidarity Coalition and the Defend Educational Services Coalition to achieve withdrawal of the legislation.

"Public education and local decision-making  
See "Education" page 2



*While the situation is feared to worsen in January, reports indicate that many class sizes have already deteriorated to above 30 students. The Working and Learning Conditions Survey aims at gathering accurate data on how bad conditions have become.*

*Paul Little photo.*

## Province-wide survey

# BCTF to document decline in B.C. school conditions

The BCTF is out to show the provincial government and the public just how bad teaching and learning conditions have become in B.C. schools under the so-called restraint program.

And how much worse they will become under the government's new fiscal framework unless there is a drastic reversal of policy toward public education.

That is why on September 30 teachers throughout B.C. will be asked to complete a BCTF survey of working and learning conditions.

"This is a most important program at this time and we hope that all teachers will cooperate," said Wes Knapp of the BCTF bargaining division. "Information is power and this will strengthen us in our fight with the government."

Specifically, the survey is being undertaken to:

- help identify and resolve problem areas in working and learning conditions;
- assist in informing local and provincial governments of the actual working and learning conditions in schools;
- assist in the preparation of 1984 budget analysis.

The survey will gather data on class size, preparation time, supervision duties, staffing levels, support services and special education. Each school staff representative will forward completed school profile forms to the local working and learning conditions chairperson, who in turn will submit a district profile to the federation. A report on the province-wide findings will be presented to the Representative Assembly on November 4-5.

"We want to get a real sense of the deteriorating working and learning con-

ditions in the province," said Knapp, "and to use that information at the local and provincial level to resolve those intolerable conditions."

One important aim of the survey, he said, is to develop the federation's own figures on class sizes so as to be able to compare them with the ministry of educa-

tion's figures when they are released this fall. Another aim is to use the data to clear up public confusion over PTR and class size.

"The ministry keeps focussing on PTR which doesn't tell the whole story," said Knapp. "And the public has the perception that there are only 17 to 18 students to a class which is simply not true — we all know class sizes are much larger."

There are already indications, he noted, that the size of classes in many schools around the province are becoming excessive under recent budget cuts. In Surrey, some schools have intermediate classes in the range of 30 to 34 students; in Coquitlam some elementary classes are in the 34 to 35 range; in Smithers there are some junior-secondary classes in the 34-student range and in Kelowna some elementary classes have 30 to 35 students while some secondary classes have 36 to 39 students.

The public may think so, said Knapp, but the class size issue is not new for teachers. A major concern for over three decades, the BCTF waged a massive cam-

paign for smaller classes in the mid-60s to early-70s which ultimately succeeded in reducing classes from the 40-student range to more reasonable sizes. But the struggle continues said Knapp: "We're refighting the class size campaign."

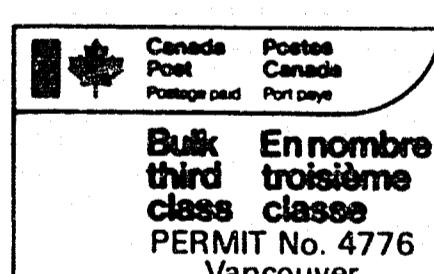
The government has so far conveyed the impression that it is simply a matter of

**"We're refighting the  
class size campaign"**

numbers but classroom teachers are in no doubt that it is a matter of fundamental importance to the quality of education, he said. Research on the issue may not be agreed on the exact optimum number of students in each class, said Knapp, but there is a strong body of research showing that smaller classes lead to greater instructional variety, more individual attention, fewer discipline problems and higher average achievement.

Knapp noted that the federation's policy goals on class sizes are far from universally achieved. As set out in policy statement 9.2, they call for maximum sizes for split classes in kindergarten of 15 students, in primary 20 students, in intermediate 25 and for single grade classes, 20 for kindergarten, 25 for primary, 10 for special classes including ESL and 30 students for all other classes.

This is why teachers must and will continue to fight for smaller classes — and certainly against any reversion to 40-plus classes, which is feared under impact of the new fiscal framework.



IF UNDELIVERED, return to 2235 Burrard St., Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3H9

## Fees now based on actual salary

Members puzzling over some of the deductions on their paycheques are reminded that the method of calculating annual BCTF membership fees has been changed.

Membership fees are now calculated as a percentage of the *actual* salary of members, rather than the estimated mean salary.

This change was made by the '83 AGM following lengthy debate in which the majority of delegates decided that the new system would be more equitable to all members. For the 1983-84 year the fee was set at 1.075 per cent of actual salary, with \$14 of that fee going to the reserve fund.

At the same time, the annual meeting adopted a provision that could assist substitute and unemployed teachers maintaining their involvement with the federation. It was that the annual fee for voluntary active members would be \$25 and that the fee for unemployed teachers could be waived on request.

## Education benefits through shared decision-making

From page 1

making in education are best served when all teachers, including principals and vice-principals, are members of the same organization," the statement continued. "Shared decision-making within the educational community, including the school setting, is essential."

"The designation in Bill 3 of some BCTF members as 'senior managers' must be rejected as being inconsistent with a style of educational leadership that includes shared decision-making."

The statement also rejected the section in Bill 3 which would have given the provincial cabinet the responsibility for setting the salaries of administrators. Instead, the joint committee maintained that the salaries and allowances of all federation members, including principals and vice-principals, must be determined by collective bargaining.

The joint committee is composed of, on the BCTF executive side, Larry Kuehn, Pat Clarke and Elsie McMurphy, and on the BCPVPA side, Ken McAtee, Tom Krall and Gordon Moffat.

## Psychiatric nurses plan recruitment

The Registered Psychiatric Nurses Association of B.C. would like to tell students about career opportunities in psychiatric nursing during school career days. If you are planning a career day or are interested in more information contact: RPNABC, Recruitment Committee, Suite 200, 508 Clarke Road, Coquitlam, B.C. V3J 3X2.

## Editorial

# Who's next?

On the 16th of September Bill 20, the College and Institute Amendment Act 1983, passed third reading in the B.C. legislature, and its provisions will come into force whenever the cabinet so desires. The bill ensures that all members of college and provincial institute boards will be appointed by the provincial cabinet and gives the Ministry of Education complete control over all programs offered by those institutions.

Those who have yet to be convinced that the government does not intend to alter the course it has set to centralize control over every aspect of education in this province, should mark well the passing of this act. Firstly it is unnecessary, because the provincial government already appoints a majority of members on the boards of colleges and institutes. Secondly, the debate on the act could have been used by the government as a signal that it was willing to approach governing this province with a little more sensitivity than it has displayed in recent months.

The opposition moved a number of amendments that if passed, would have inserted a definition of consultation (taken, ironically enough, from the Administrative Handbook for Schools) in the act, would have ensured that a majority of college board members were elected school trustees and would have made the boards of provincial institutes representatives of a broad spectrum of the government did not support the amendments.

The only meaningful conclusion that can be drawn is that the government is deepening its patronage trough. It wants only its own compliant appointees on those boards, people who will not object to whatever illogical and unwise decisions the government takes. The bland serving the blind. As legislation, the act must have more to do with the next provincial election than the good government of colleges — part of the grand design to wipe out local initiative and control and stifle any organized criticism of the actions of the provincial government.

Who's next? School boards don't have any real power left — they are agents of the provincial government now and can only implement policies dictated by Victoria. So they are probably safe for the time being. But if local communities are foolish enough to elect people or keep electing people to school boards who might stand up and be counted, watch out. This is a government that does not believe that opposition keeps liberal democracies healthy or that local communities should run their own affairs.

Jim Bowman  
Government

## BCSTA exec attacks funding plan as "inflationary, counterproductive"

The BCSTA executive believes that the minister of education's new education funding scheme is "inflationary and counterproductive" of maintaining services.

In their meetings August 25-28 in Vancouver, the trustees' association executive committee adopted a statement of principle placing the BCSTA on record as supporting economic restraint and that the "provincial government must govern provincial resources in the management of restraint."

"Restoration of local taxation incentives (and the accountability that goes with them) is essential to overcome the inflationary mechanisms which are built into the proposed funding formula and Bill 6.

"When this essential criterion has been satisfied, the funding formula can be improved to meet restraint objectives. The BCSTA wishes to assist the government in this process."

## Hi-Tech Rec'83 aids neurological services

Vancouver Neurological Centre will stage its first Hi-Tech Rec show October 26-30 as a unique means of raising funds to continue its programs and therapy.

On October 26-28 the fair, which will be held in the Robson Square Media Centre, will place its emphasis on education.

It will feature educationally-oriented computer hardware and software, workshops, seminars and films related to computer programming, computer-assisted education and high technology careers,

state-of-the-art electronics displays and a school open video competition. Special group rate for classes is \$2 per person. For information: 734-6554.

## BCTF Newsletter

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION  
2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3H9

CLIVE COCKING Editor

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MEMBER: EDPRESS

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## Rep Assembly to hear FOMCA president on Central America crisis

Thelma Uriarte, president of the Federation of Teachers' Organizations of Central America (FOMCA), will address the November 4-5 Representative Assembly on the challenges facing teachers in her strife-torn region.

Uriarte will also speak on the role of FOMCA, which was established a year ago with the assistance of the BCTF and the CTE.

Following a recommendation from the W. R. Long Memorial International Solidarity Committee, the BCTF Executive Committee last spring approved a \$31,500 grant to FOMCA to assist it in establishing a central office. This was augmented by a \$10,500 grant from the CTF International Assistance Fund. The membership of FOMCA is comprised of teachers' organizations from Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa Rica and Panama.

The BCTF/CTF grants will not only be used to aid FOMCA in setting up a central office but also to help its member organizations in professional development and refugee relief. FOMCA's goals are to eradicate illiteracy, improve teachers' resources and working conditions and to achieve higher quality, more democratic education systems in the region.

Thelma Uriarte, who arrives in late October, will also be available to speak to local associations on Central America. Local associations interested in having Uriarte speak to their members should contact Ken Aitchison at the BCTF office or Julia Goulden, chairperson, W. R. Long Memorial International Solidarity Committee, at her school in Burnaby, 433-9333.

## Vancouver Foundation offers \$125,000 aid to school arts programs

The Vancouver Foundation has offered a further \$125,000 in matching grants to school districts throughout B.C. to help students continue to attend musical, dramatic and visual arts programs created for young people by B.C. arts organizations.

Last December the foundation made available \$100,000 for this purpose and 56 of the 75 districts in the province were able to take advantage of this offer.

"We appreciate that last time it was difficult for some districts to participate because the foundation was not able to make the offer sooner. By releasing the 1983-84 funds now we hope that almost every school district will find it possible to participate" said Executive Director Dr. J. D. McGann in making the announcement.

Superintendents in the 75 school districts in the province will receive letters providing details of how much money in matching grants is available to their areas. Deadline for applications is December 16, 1983.

head at David Thompson Secondary School, was presented the Sheila E. Cameron Award at the BCBEA annual meeting. In making the award, Mrs. Cameron lauded his outstanding rapport with students, student teachers and colleagues and his leadership in curriculum committees, workshops and conferences.

Ellis, a past president of BCBEA, is the 10th recipient of the annual award.

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## Bob Ellis wins award for business teaching

Vancouver teacher Bob Ellis has been named Business Educator of the Year by the B.C. Business Educators' Association.

Ellis, business education department

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Rep Assembly to hear FOMCA president on Central America crisis

# Bennett's attack on human rights

It was a candlelight vigil for human rights in British Columbia. The Solidarity Coalition crowd were clustered on the steps of Vancouver's old courthouse, their hands cupped to protect the flickering flames from the wind.

Speaking clearly, precisely, Father James Roberts spoke into the microphone condemning the Bennett government's anti-human rights legislation in terms the crowd would not soon forget. "It is," he said, "the moral equivalent of the neutron bomb. It leaves the buildings unscathed but it savages people."

Paris attacked Bill 27 as having nothing to do with the oft-touted reason of economic restraint. "This is a deliberate philosophical attack on the very concept of human rights legislation," he said. "What is happening is that they're giving carte blanche to employers and landlords to do what they please without having quote do-gooders unquote hanging around their necks."

Similarly enfeebled is the provision of an abbreviated range of investigation powers over what is currently provided under the code. "Our concern," he said, "is that the proposed powers are insufficient to ensure that all necessary information is obtained for a hearing," said Bolton. "Human rights cases are for the purpose of protecting the public as well as the individual complainant and so it's appropriate for the government to assist in the proceeding."

Bolton also pointed out that the new legislation eliminates damages for humiliation or loss of respect caused by discrimination. There have been cases where cabarets have discriminated against patrons on the grounds of race and under the present Human Rights Code, he said, individuals whose complaints have been found justified have been able to receive damages up to \$5,000 — a money award being the only available remedy.

Another serious weakness, Bolton said, is that the new legislation makes no provision for a staff of investigators to look into complaints. "It's obvious," he said, "that the proposed five-member council could not itself have time to investigate all complaints made."

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It was perhaps the most ringing denunciation yet of what the provincial government is doing to the protection of human rights in B.C. and Fr. Roberts, who is co-chairperson of the Solidarity Coalition, was by no means a voice crying in the wilderness. Ever since that afternoon in July when the government crudely signalled its intentions by directing virtually all human rights branch employees to clean out their offices, hand in their keys and be gone — effectively dismissing 20 staff — the government has been attacked by a growing contingent of human rights officials, labour leaders, lawyers, journalists and even politicians right across Canada.

It drew fire, for example, from Gordon Fairweather, head of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, who attacked the Bennett government's methods as "emblematic of a police state" and said he "deplored the denunciation of human rights in B.C."

Vancouver lawyer Michael Bolton has studied Bill 27 in his capacity as chairperson, civil liberties section of the B.C. branch of the Canadian Bar Association and has found it to be a disaster that in many ways actually undermines human rights protection in B.C. A brief from the civil liberties section of the B.C. bar has been sent to Labour Minister Bob McClelland calling for major strengthening of the bill.

In an interview, Bolton pointed out that the existing Human Rights Code, with its procedures and mechanisms, has worked well and has made an important contribution to the protection of human rights in B.C. He went on to condemn the new legislation root and branch.

He began by noting that Bill 27 eliminates the B.C. Human Rights Commiss-

ion and statements would be available to investigate and settle complaints."

The proposed council will deal with complaints from individuals, said Bolton, but it will not commence complaints as the human rights commission did, nor will community groups and unions be able to file complaints unless the group or union itself has been discriminated against.

"This means that the victim of discrimination will be required to file the complaint in all cases," he said, adding that many people will be fearful of complaining, particularly against an employer, and that this will make the legislation less than effective.

Individual complainants will be further thrown back on their own, said Bolton, as Bill 27 makes no provision for the proposed council to be represented at boards of inquiry with counsel to pursue the complainant's interest, as did the human rights director. "This may mean that bona fide complainants will be without counsel and may be deterred from pursuing remedies on the basis of the expense of the investigation under the existing code."

The overriding concern with the proposed bill is that powers of investigation, remedies and means of enforcement have all been so diluted under the proposed bill that it will constitute mere lip service to the human rights problem in this province," said Bolton. "The bottom line is that the government should withdraw it and restore the commission and the director and look to ways of improving the situation under the existing code."

around the province. From Fort Nelson to Prince Rupert to Port Alberni to Kimberley, local coalitions are bringing together labor, teachers and community groups in the fight to oppose the government's July 7th legislative package.

In response to the government's proposals, the Solidarity Coalition has launched a massive province-wide petition campaign and a series of focus action weeks to occur during September and October. Petitioning will take place through unions, employees groups and associations by an on-the-job solicitation in mills, shops, hospitals and schools. As well, local community coalitions will be organizing door-to-door petition canvassing as well as shopping centre and busy street corner solicitation. Teachers will be asked to help circulate the Solidarity petitions throughout the communities of this province.

The Solidarity petition provides an important opportunity for opponents of the July 7th budget and legislative package to organize themselves into effective community coalitions. Canvassing for signatures gives Solidarity supporters an opportunity to inform all British Columbians about the repressive, anti-democratic nature of government legislation.

For teachers, the major focus week remaining is the week of October 10 to October 15, set aside by the Solidarity Coalition to pinpoint the adverse effects of the government legislation on social services, medicare and education. Teachers will be organizing with other education groups in their communities to inform parents and others of the harm being done to public education by the government actions. School-based parent meetings, "Street Corner Schoolhouse" activities and widespread teacher participation in the petition campaign are being planned for that week.

SEPTEMBER 21, 1983

# Young artists exhibition opens

The British Columbia Young Artists '83 Exhibition opens its provincial tour in Vancouver at the Robson Square Media Centre, September 19-30, 1983. The third biennial BCYA '83 Exhibition, coordinated by the Emily Carr College of Art and Design, will feature 168 paintings, prints, photographs, drawings and two-dimensional collages by young artists aged 2 to 18 from 32 B.C. communities.

More than 3,000 works of art were submitted by individuals in private and public schools, arts centres and art galleries and by correspondence students. Some 626 entries, from 69 communities, achieved special recognition: 458 of them were cited for honourable mention, and 168 were selected for exhibition.

Twelve school districts continued their unbroken record of having works accepted for exhibition and cited for honourable

mention in BCYA exhibitions. They are Kamloops, Cariboo-Chilcotin, Richmond, Burnaby, West Vancouver, Sunshine Coast, Courtenay, Summerland, Fort Nelson, Shuswap, and Greater Victoria and Vancouver.

The "theme" work this year was created by Trudy Ann Budzon, 10, a grade 4 student at G.W. Carlson Elementary School in Fort Nelson.

The BCYA '83 Exhibition, after its opening in Vancouver, will visit 18 communities over a period of 13 months. They are Abbotsford, Kimberley, Cranbrook, Kelowna, Quesnel, Merritt, Kamloops, Castlegar, Fort St. John, Dawson Creek, Whitehorse, Smithers, Terrace, Kitimat, Prince Rupert, Langley and Victoria. The exhibition returns to Vancouver for a second showing at the Chinese Cultural Centre in August 1984.



Theme art is the creation of Ft. Nelson Grade 4 student Trudy Ann Budzon.

## Nfld finds collective bargaining works, rejects oppressive back-to-work law

The World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession has laid a number of complaints before the ILO this year against governments which have used legislation to frustrate or over-rule collective bargaining.

The WCOTP was recently pleased to report one success in its efforts to defend teachers' collective bargaining rights. It

came in a telegram from the government of Newfoundland sent in response to WCOTP's expressions of support for the Newfoundland Teachers' Association in a dispute which was eventually settled.

"In the end," the telegram read, "the collective bargaining process, which is not an easy one, won out. Government did not have to use oppressive back-to-work legislation... The ultimate victor in this dispute is the collective bargaining process — it can and does work in this province."

The WCOTP concluded in its publication, *Echo*, that: "When these sentiments can be honestly uttered by the governments of the Canadian provinces of Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia, and the national governments of Honduras, El Salvador, Morocco and a long list of others whose treatment of teacher unions falls far short of international norms, we shall have reason for real satisfaction."

On the B.C. case, Norman Goble, secretary general of WCOTP, has submitted copies of B.C.'s anti-public sector legislation with a letter pointing out how it destroys collective bargaining rights to the ILO in support of the complaint filed earlier this year.

Goble, concluded, in part: "This combination of legislative measures is correctly seen by the labour movement as a direct attack on the union movement and the principle of collective bargaining... We submit that these actions are clearly in contravention of the Constitution of the ILO and inconsistent with the commitment made by Canada in joining the organization."

## Lesson Aids awards open for computer curriculum materials

Awards of \$500 for microcomputer software development and \$750 for curriculum development are available from the BCTF Lesson Aids Service, through its materials development fund.

Curriculum projects must be developed by groups of BCTF members and software packages may be developed by individual teachers. Projects should be completed by August 31, 1984.

Information and application forms can be obtained by contacting the BCTF Lesson Aids Service, 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, BC, V6J 3H9 or by phoning 731-8121 or toll-free 112-800-663-9163. Deadline for submission of applications is December 31, 1983.

## BCTF has not endorsed any firms offering financial counselling

Beware of financial counselling agencies who leave the impression they are approaching you with the endorsement of the federation.

The federation has not given the endorsement to any agency.

The federation does work closely with the Teachers' Investment and Housing Co-operative and the B.C. Teachers Credit Union on financial concerns of members.

## Canada Pension Plan changes aid homemakers

Homemakers who drop out of the work force to raise children who are under the age of seven will now suffer no penalty on their Canada Pension Plan benefits. This change for anyone receiving CPP benefits is retroactive to January 1, 1978. Applications are available at federal income security program offices.

## El Salvador releases 32 jailed teachers after WCOTP protests

Protests to the El Salvadorean government by the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession and member organizations have won the release of 32 imprisoned teachers in that country.

Last summer WCOTP documented "a case study in repression" involving the arrest without charges and brutal treatment of members of ANDES, the teachers' union.

Most of the imprisoned teachers immediately left the country upon their release because of threats from extreme right groups, already responsible for the assassination of 300 teachers. WCOTP assisted by asking the International Committee of the Red Cross to help the teachers travel safely to the airport.

WCOTP was also active in a similar manner in Chile this summer. During a meeting with the Chilean minister of education concerning the return of exiled teachers, the WCOTP deputy secretary general, at the request of the Confederation of Copper Workers, protested the arrest of the copper workers' secretary-general, Rodolfo Seguel. A few days later Seguel was released on bail.

## BCTF awards honour top education grads

The BCTF has honoured the top six graduating teachers of 1983 with the Maxwell A. Cameron Memorial Awards.

The award, comprised of a silver medal and \$100 to start a professional library, is given annually to the top graduates in the elementary and secondary programs in the education faculties of B.C.'s three universities.

The winners at the University of B.C. were Heather Clark of Vancouver, elementary program and Sebastian Ribeiro of Kitimat, secondary program.

At Simon Fraser University, the recipients were Alison Walkley of North Vancouver, elementary, and Roni Haggarty of Vancouver, secondary.

At the University of Victoria, the awards went to Darrell Letourneau of Elkford, elementary, and Leonard Dueck of Abbotsford, secondary.

The BCTF award is in memory of the late Dr. Maxwell A. Cameron, the first director of UBC's school of education and author of the Cameron Report on Education.

## Universities Week set for October 2-8

The week of October 2-8 has been designated National Universities Week to celebrate the role universities play in Canada's educational, scientific and cultural life.

In B.C., the week will feature an open house at Simon Fraser University (October 1-2), an arts festival at the University of B.C. (October 3-7) and a day of classes open to the public at the University of Victoria (October 8). The three universities will also sponsor a lecture series at Vancouver's Robson Square (October 3, 5-7) on the development of high technology in B.C.

## Subs, part-timers can earn pension credits

Even if you contribute to the Teachers' Pension Plan as little as one day a month, you will receive credit for that month in determining your eligibility for a pension.

If you teach half-time, just ask your board to deduct the contributions.

The minimum number of contributory months for eligibility for any benefit is 100 months. Although the benefit will be based on the equivalent of full-time months, it is worthwhile to be a contributor whenever you work in anticipation that you would have sufficient months to add up to 100.

## Are you getting your Newsletter?

Now that the BCTF Newsletter is being distributed by first-class mail, address errors can be costly — please help us keep up-to-date.

All members: If your home address has changed, or if we don't have it correctly, please give us your proper address:

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