

Island Views

Vancouver Island District Council
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President's Message

Happy New Year and Welcome to 2014!

Vancouver Island District Council is one of the most active councils in British Columbia. We would like to applaud our delegates for being such a committed group of Trade Unionists!

Our members sit on both Provincial and National CUPE committees: **OBCM**

...he Tournament of Hope, and distributing Christmas Donations. And still found time to have lots of fun!



short flight of stairs took me to the entrance. An adjacent, well-built wheel chair ramp ensures this building is fully accessible. Once inside, I was warmly greeted by John, a bearded man with a unruly mop of blond hair, sporting a very much worse-for-wear, plastic apron. This was one of two John's I would meet that day, both of whom are part of the cadre of volunteers who make this place tick. In fact, over 1,400 hours are volunteered each month to keep this place running, for an astounding total of 16,800 volunteer hours per year.

John was delighted to accept our donation, taking the time to write out a receipt, assuring me that our contribution was meaningful. Our funds would be stretched to feed many mouths.



John ladling soup for a hungry client.

The Bread Basket feeds over 150 people per day. Each client can have a prepared sandwich, and as many bowls of hearty soup as they want. Soup de Jour this day was tomato vegetable with lentils. There are also toasters and a good supply of bread, peanut butter and jam, which I was assured by one of the clients, is always available during open hours and is pretty much endless. There is also an area for 'snacks'. Around the corner is an area for food donations, which like the snacks, are available while supplies last.

This resource is open to the community Monday through Saturday, from about 11 in the morning until 3 or 4 in the afternoon, depending on food and volunteer limitations.

It was an honour and a privilege to deliver our donation, and to share with you the difference we make in people's lives.

In solidarity,
 Michèle Favarger, CUPE 951,
 And Trustee for VIDC



Each year we attend and participate in numerous community and labour activities like; the Joseph Mairs Memorial, National Day of Mourning, Pride Parade, Miners

Memorial and the Islands Folk Fest.



In 2013 some of our delegates

went on a workers' tour of Cuba with Co-Development Canada. While others went to Labour College.

We attended CUPE Provincial and National Conventions, and closer to home, we



still found time to help out in our communities: supporting the United Way, Michael Duna-



We would like to thank all of you for your hard work and dedication in making this council so very successful! Together we rock. Looking forward to sharing with you a fabulous 2014!

In Solidarity;
Amber Leonard-President & Sarah Fairbrass-Vice President VIDC

The Story of a VIDC Donation

While my husband and I have previously donated food to the Cowichan Valley Bread Basket Society, I had never actually gone past the back door. I was delighted to visit the Cowichan Valley Bread Basket Society to present the Vancouver Island District Council's cheque for \$100.

This soup kitchen/food bank is located in a former restaurant building in a residential neighbourhood of Duncan. A



BE THE DIFFERENCE!

Sometimes it is really hard to be a committed union activist: you don't shop at Walmart, you don't shop at Target, and now sadly now not Ikea either. You avoid the Gap and Lulu Lemon because they refuse to sign the safety accord after the collapse of buildings in Bangladesh. You understand the real reason Lulu Lemon quality has changed is they used to be a great Made in Canada company, who sold out, going for profits over quality, moving production to the third world where they refuse to put their workers lives before their obscene profits.

As a committed activist, you don't book trips with Sunwing and you check your pet food to be sure ingredients are not sourced from China, even when it says produced in the USA. You buy local, Canadian or US made and stand proud because you are supporting a way of life in which you believe.



This is challenging when we all have to make our dollars stretch a little further. However, if you want trade unionism in Canada to continue to provide you with a decent job, fair wages and benefits, safety in the workplace and representation when your Employer breaks the rules, you take a stand. Take a stand now before things go the way of Wisconsin and we live under the glory of "right to work legislation" (another term for the complete annihilation of unions).

So, next time before going into that anti-union store to save a couple of dollars, ask yourself, is this really the future I see for myself and my family? Am I a trade unionist or just someone who belongs to a union? There really should be a difference! BE the difference you believe in!

Sarah Fairbrass, Vice-President of CUPE Local 374, was proudly Made in Canada



Regional Vice-Presidents What's it all about?

Serving in my first term as a Regional Vice-President (RVP) is an amazing experience. Let me outline our mandate under the CUPE BC and VIDC constitutions, and explain some of what an RVP does.

RVPs liaise between CUPE Locals and the CUPE BC Executive Board. We chair at least one CUPE BC Committee. RVPs also liaise with the District Council members, forwarding concerns and queries to CUPE BC.

Many affiliated locals attend quarterly District Council meetings which is a great opportunity to hear about activities and decisions of CUPE BC, and to offer feedback or information to take back to CUPE BC.

This can be on topics you believe CUPE BC might be able to assist your local with or issues you believe CUPE BC should know about. The topics vary but some examples are contract negotiations, local issues (grievances, arbitrations, etc.), special projects/campaigns, or

issues that may affect other locals or CUPE BC. Some of this information is gathered at District Council meetings and some is heard directly from you or your local.

The next CUPE BC Executive Board meeting is February 27 & 28. If you have an issue to share with the Executive Board, please talk to one of the RVPs. It can be a good-news story or campaign your local is rolling out. Perhaps your local is needing some 'political' support. There are resources and guidance available from your National Representative and CUPE BC.

Want to know more? Talk with Doug Sprenger, who has many years of experience as RVP, or Ali Pringle to get her perspective as Alternate RVP.

In solidarity, Michelle Waite, RVP
*Michelle can be reached at
pres.cupe3479@nic.bc.ca*



Happily receiving donations from Jan McDougall of CUPE 727 and VIDC, is Sister Laura Distaso of the St. Francis of Assisi Church in Tofino. Sister Laura is one of three women who spearhead the Christmas Food Hamper Program and Food Voucher Support Program in this community.

