

# Island Views

Vancouver Island District Council  
<http://www.vidc.cupe.ca>



## Special points of interest:

- *President's Message*
- *Unions Abroad*
- *Members in Action*
- *CUPE reaches deal*

## President's Message

### Welcome Back Brothers and Sisters!

What a great Vancouver Island summer it has been! I hope you had plenty of opportunities to enjoy our long hot days and that your summer was filled with lazy days enjoying time with family and friends.

Your District Council was busy throughout the summer having some fun while participating in some great Union activities. The weekend of June 23 – 24 was Miners Memorial weekend in Cumberland BC. What an honour to represent the Vancouver Island District Council at this annual event celebrating the life of Union Activist Ginger Goodwin. We hope to see even more VIDC delegates attending the 2014, 29<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Miners Memorial being held in conjunction with

the 2014 Pacific Northwest Labour History Association (PNLHA) Conference June 12-14, 2014. In addition to the diverse workshops and speakers that are part of the PNLHA Conference program, the 2014 event will feature a Thursday "Community Connect" arts event for early arrivals and the local community. Book campsites now as I am told they are already almost completely booked! This weekend is also a great opportunity to get to know other VIDC members on a more personal basis outside of meetings and conventions!

In July VIDC Executive and members joined with other area Locals and the Victoria Labour Council at the Victoria Pride Parade. It was a day filled with fun and Solidarity!

July also brought us Island Music Fest, and Michelle Favarger was there to coordinate distribution of public water sponsored by CUPE 556 and CUPE BC. In late July VIDC members worked hard during the CUPE BC Think Tank held in Whistler.

Several island CUPE Locals entered teams in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Childfind Michael Dunahee Tournament of Hope at Topaz Park in Victoria. Local 459 Team Captain Amber Leonard led her team to second place in the "A" Division while CUPE 374 took first place in the "C" Division.



Michelle Waite completed her last 2 weeks of Labour College this summer. Of course interspersed throughout these activities was planning and preparation for the September VIDC Strategic Planning Session and getting ready for the upcoming year! So much for a relaxing summer for our delegates! There is truly never a dull moment.

Our strategic planning session helps us develop a clear path for our upcoming year which outlines our goals and directions. I hope the new initiatives will focus on improved communication with our members, education directly relating to the labour movement, direction for our financial planning and social events to help us get to know each other better.

I invite each of you to be an active part of the plan. Join committees, submit articles to our Island Views and Safety Sound Off newsletters, provide feedback and let us know what **your** Local is doing.

It is my sincere wish that each VIDC delegate join me and the entire Executive in working toward providing sound leadership and a positive impact where we serve, support and encourage all members with dignity, equality and respect.

**In Solidarity,**  
**Amber Leonard**  
**President**  
**VIDC**





## Unions Abroad

An article by David Huxtable Local 4163

My recent research, involving interviews with labour activists and leaders in Europe and India, has led me to a couple of conclusions that I want to share here.

The first conclusion is that in Canada we have developed into a somewhat insular union movement, one that is largely disconnected from the world-wide movement of workers. This is not to say that we lack international relationships. On the contrary, we are members of massive international union federations, such as the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and Public Services International (PSI), that represent our interests internationally. We also have developed relationships through our very dedicated International Solidarity Committees. However, this work is generally on the margins of "union work" - respected, but not considered as important to our struggle as are bargaining and local lobbying.

The problem is we live and work in a world of global labour markets and supply chains. Capital only thinks in global terms, and we need to catch up. We need stronger and more strategic global relationships to match the global reach of capital and there are important lessons we can learn from the struggles of workers in other parts of the world. Organizations like the ITUC and PSI exist to help us do this, but we don't engage them because we haven't heard of them.

My second conclusion is related to the potential lessons we are missing through our limited engagement with the international labour movement. As we struggle to adapt to the constantly changing global economy that shapes our struggles here at home, we need to be open to new ways of fighting for justice, including new alliances with

those outside of the union family, and, perhaps, new ideas about what a union can look like, or what its central role in society is.

Many of the successful strategies I have found over the course of my research involve alliances between unions and non-union allies that operate both locally and internationally. The Self-Employed Women's Association of India (SEWA) is a great example. In my opinion, SEWA is the most dynamic union organization in the world, and I think we can take inspiration from their creative approaches to organizing in hard-to-organize sectors.

SEWA began in the textile industry, initially as the Women's wing of the Textile Labour Association, organizing self-employed female textile workers who worked out their homes through a piece-rate system. SEWA now represents women in a range of occupations characterized by such informal employment relationships. It has a system of retail cooperatives childcare centres, health centres, a system of midwives, a micro-lending bank, and a housing trust. It also has created a research department, and an education centre which provides its members with everything from basic literacy, to the technical and political education required for leadership locally, nationally, and internationally. All of these programs are run for and by their members, so SEWA members are also owners and service providers.



So, SEWA is a union, but it is also a cooperative with NGO status, which allows SEWA to seek financial assistance from charitable organizations

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outside of India, such as the Ford Foundation, and occasionally the Indian government to finance projects aimed at poverty alleviation and women's empowerment. The leadership of SEWA is very strategic about these relationships. It will take funding from charitable NGOs, but it will only develop political alliances with organizations that are membership-based and democratically run. They will accept government funding for projects, but will not be drawn into partisan politics.

SEWA's global impact is obvious when we examine the remarkable international campaign around the rights of domestic workers, a campaign that owes a great deal to the ability of SEWA and similar organizations to build international alliances between unions and NGOs. ILO Convention 189 concerning Domestic Work was adopted in 2011, and came into effect in 2013.

What is unprecedented about the Convention 189 campaign is that it only began five years earlier by a network of union and non-union labour activists led by SEWA. The International



Trade Union Confederation coordinated campaigning at the ILO, and the "12 by 12 Campaign" taimed at getting countries to adopt the convention. It is one of the largest campaigns ever pursued by the ITUC and also the most diverse in its supporters, a list which includes Human Right Watch, Anti-Slavery International, Amnesty International, Caritas, SOLIDAR, and Migrant Forum Asia. I believe that it is an unprecedented network in the history of international labour organizing.

However, the most important offshoot of this campaign is the impact it has had on organizing domestic workers, a very marginalized and difficult workforce to organize. The international campaign led to the establishment of the International Domestic Workers Network, an organization of union and non-union organizations which rep-

resent or support domestic workers. It is supported institutionally by the IUF, a Global Union Federation, and financially by a number of charitable NGOs.

This international activity has in turn had a profound effect on local organizing. When I was in India, a number of domestic worker organizers told me that local organizing efforts were galvanized by the existence of an international campaign and the adoption of the convention. Domestic workers who had previously been supported by charitable NGOs are now establishing their own unions - taking control of their collective struggle. Through the internationalization of their struggle, they found new resources, allies, and inspiration.

*\*David Huxtable is a member of Local 4163 at the University of Victoria. Before returning to school to study labour internationalism, he was an active member of CUPE 15 and CUPE 3999. He is extremely grateful for CUPE's financial support of his research.*

Cheers to all the union activists who dedicate their lives to creating a better world for workers everywhere.

Share this with the unionists in your life to thank them for their diligence!



ROTTENCARDS @unions4workers /unions4worker

Come explore the future of the **Municipal Pension Plan** at our annual meeting. Learn about the financial health of the Plan and preparing for the road ahead and more.

**What.** 2013 Municipal Pension Plan Annual General Meeting – Taking the Long View

**Where.** Victoria Conference Centre, 720 Douglas Street, Victoria, BC

**When.** October 17, 2013 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. For more AGM information, visit [mpp.pensions.ca](http://mpp.pensions.ca).



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## CUPE PRIDE

July 7<sup>th</sup> was a beautiful day for a parade in Victoria! Vancouver Island District Council members from CUPE locals 374, 382, 459 and 951 joined with members from CAW, PSAC and other members of the Victoria Labour Council at the Victoria Pride Parade.

We took our kids, our dogs and our CUPE Pride to walk the parade route with our LGBT brothers and sisters.

**Chelsea Fairbrass, Emily Cotterell and Sarah Fairbrass walking the Parade Route**



We supported and encouraged our children



**Doug Sprenger; President CUPE 951 with daughter Katryn Paris**

### The Parade Route

Everyone had a fabulous time! Many thanks to CAW and Victoria Labour Council for the float which carried our giveaway swag and lovely bottles of cold water!

**CAW Float/Trevor Davies; CUPE BC GVP**



**Kim Manton; Local 50; and Sandra Bowes; Local 459 pulling the VLC goodie wagon!**

And...  
Of course the Parade front entry.  
Total Beauty and Grace!



## TY WATSON HOUSE



Through the efforts of the Vancouver Island District Council, in which includes all CUPE local representatives, who meet quarterly in Nanaimo. The Ty Watson House (Hospice -palliative care) recently received a donation of \$1015.00 dollars.

This fundraiser is rotated around all communities where the VIDC delegates live, meaning the donation came from CUPE delegates from Victoria to Gold River, according to CUPE Local 727 President Laura Johnston.

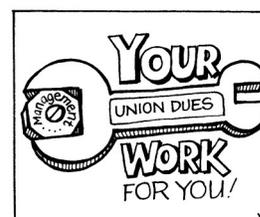
A late donation from Local 723 in Campbell River came through to combine with donations made by Locals 727, 118, and 3403 all from Port Alberni. Thanks again for all of the contributions from all of our delgates at VIDC together we can really make a difference in supporting our communities, and keeping them strong.

In Solidarity,  
Laura Johnston

## WHAT HAS YOUR LOCAL BEEN UP TO?

**T**he delegates of Vancouver Island District Council would love to hear what you did for your 'day of action' if one was held in your Local. Tell us your story, share your pics. Let us know if you have a facebook story we could share or post on our website. Simply contact a member of the **Communication & Technology committee** and they will help you submit your item. It's that easy!

- Sherrene Ross - [therosshut@shaw.ca](mailto:therosshut@shaw.ca)
- Michele Favarger - [favarger@shaw.ca](mailto:favarger@shaw.ca)
- Andrea Craddock - [randyc5@telus.net](mailto:randyc5@telus.net)
- Martha Higgins - [higginz@telus.net](mailto:higginz@telus.net)





## CUPE Makes Big Splash at 29th Annual Islands Folk Festival

An article by Michele Favarger Local 951

Island Folk Festival, held the third weekend in July every year at Providence Farm in Duncan, is a community-based event that draws almost 3,000 people, many of whom camp on site, to listen to or perform some very fine music. Presented by a cadre of 300+ volunteers, lead by a team of coordinators who start work in February, this is exactly the kind of Strong Community event that CUPE supports.



And support it we have! Seeing the success at Vancouver Island Music Fest five years ago, Michèle Favarger, of CUPE 951, started the Public Water program at Islands Folk Festival. This year, VIDC, CUPE BC and the Cowichan Valley Locals 358 continued supporting this program - keeping people hydrated while getting rid of plastic water bottles and stressing the importance of keeping public water public.

From humble beginnings of three carboys (those great big plastic bottles), two pumps and a hand-drawn cart four years ago, the program has expanded to 28 carboys, 20 pumps, a refrigeration trailer, a golf cart and a regular distribution schedule to 18 locations on the 400-acre venue at Providence Farm. And this year, CUPE was more visible than ever.

When the Province moved the gaming grant distribution back by 6 months, the future of the non-profit 2013 IFF festival was in jeopardy. Ian McLean, National Rep, moved by the plight, connected with Ron Salvati, President, CUPE 358, who stepped in with a generous contribution of \$10,000 from their local, sponsoring the Heritage Stage and allowing the festival to bridge the financial gap. CUPE 358 also provided their water distribution cart. Placed next to the CUPE event wagon (on-site for the first time under the watchful eye of Jeff Lawson, National Rep and his wife Jocelyn) and located in the main concert bowl, the cart gave great visibility to our Union. With VIDC and other CUPE banners flying, the CEBerry Mobile!



became a gathering place for the public. CUPE came through again when first aid arranged for the event failed to materialize and the Event trailer became the official first aid station, ably manned by well-trained security staff. CUPE members attending the festival even stepped in to fill gaps left by unanticipated

absences and have offered to join the crew for next year!

While Michèle was zipping around in a golf-cart, distributing car-

boys and coordinating the Water crew, Michelle Waite, Regional VP, Jeff Lawson, Ian McLean and Ron Salvati spent much of the weekend enjoying the music of Judy Collins, Shawn Phillips and many others, talking with the public and handing out CUPE swag at the CUPE Event trailer. With a commitment of CUPE support already in place, we look forward to continuing this fine partnership for next year's 30th Islands Folk Festival.



CUPE Rocks!!!

## Vancouver Island District Council's Fifth Annual Socks for Homeless Teens Drive

A reminder that at our November meeting we will be collecting socks for Sanctuary Youth Center in Victoria. Hats, gloves, scarves and gently used warm hoodies are also welcome, but socks are the biggest need. Last year's donation yielded 479 pairs of socks, which were delivered to Sanctuary Youth Centre in Victoria – a timely donation, as Sanctuary staff had indicated that the sock supply had run out in late October. Let's stock those shelves again this year. Let's aim for **1000 PAIRS OF SOCKS!**



## IN THE NEWS...

### Temporary Foreign Workers doubled despite high levels of unemployment

Despite high levels of unemployment in Canada, the number of temporary foreign workers has more than doubled in the past six years. The research was compiled by the Conference Board of Canada to ask why the federal government relies on external workers when there a clear need exists in Canada. After the Alberta Federation of Labour exposed how many companies were using temporary Foreign Workers, the federal government removed the allowance to pay these workers 15 per cent less than Canadian workers and established new rules for employers to follow before they can be approved to hire temporary foreign workers.

### Federations of Labour presidents meet alongside the Council of the Federation

While provincial and territorial leaders met in Niagara-on-the-lake for a meeting of the Council of the Federation, labour leaders held a parallel meeting where they **demand**ed that the federal government improve EI, the Canada Pension Plan and the Temporary Foreign Worker program. Labour leaders also added their support to the premiers' demand that the federal government hold an inquiry into the more than 500 missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada.

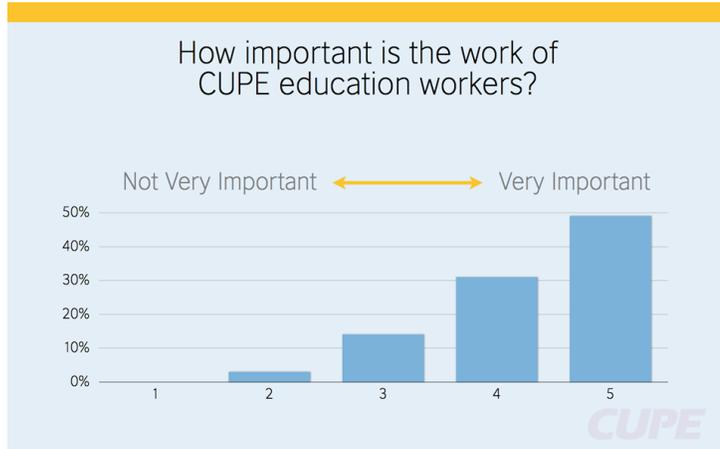


<http://www.tenpercentshift.ca/>



## Tentative deal reached for CUPE's public school education workers!

September 19, 2013



**80% of British Columbians think that the work done by CUPE education workers is either "important" or "very important".**



### CUPE's Back-to-School Strike Averted, For Now

But the union that represents secretaries, bus drivers, remains on job action alert should talks break down again. By [Katie Hyslop](#), 28 Aug 2013, [TheTyee.ca](#)



Nice turnout in North Vancouver for Local 389's street party to support members locked out by the North Shore Winter Club. — with [Paul Faoro](#), [Brenda Coombs](#), [Karen Ranalletta](#) and [Ian Norton](#).



So great to have CUPE members out to support the United Way at our annual Campaign kick off this morning!!



RICHMOND, BC—The Canadian Union of Public Employees has reached a tentative Provincial Framework Agreement with the BC Public Schools Employers' Association (BCPSEA). The Framework Agreement was unanimously endorsed by the CUPE BC K-12 Provincial Bargaining Sub-Committee and will be recommended to the CUPE BC K-12 Presidents' Council for endorsement.

Each CUPE union local will then take this provincial agreement to their respective tables with school districts to conclude collective bargaining.

“Over two years this agreement provides our members a total 3.5 percent wage adjustment, with no concessions,” said CUPE BC K-12 Presidents' Council Chair Colin Pawson. “We were also able to work with the employer on a pay direct drug card.”

“As well, the agreement recognizes the professional role of Education Assistants through formal changes to the School Act and collective agreements,” added Pawson.

The agreement provides a 1 percent wage increase on July 1, 2013, 2 percent on February 1, 2014 and 0.5 percent on May 1, 2014.

“CUPE BC's 27,000 education workers are vital to keeping our schools clean, safe and inclusive,” said CUPE BC President Mark Hancock. “I want to thank all 85,000 of our members across the province, and our K-12 members in particular, for their solidarity. It's only because we held together that we were able to negotiate a fair and reasonable contract, despite demands for concessions from the government.”

“I would also like to thank the BC Teachers' Federation for their unwavering commitment to public education in our province and for their strong support during these difficult negotiations,” added Hancock.

Key Provincial Framework Agreement details. The agreement's term is July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2014.

- It provides a wage increase of 3.5 percent.
- The introduction of a pay direct card for up-front drug expenses for virtually all Locals.
- There are no concessions for CUPE members.

The Canadian Union of Public Employees represents more than 27,000 education workers in BC's K-12 system. This agreement covers union members in 69 bargaining units across BC. CUPE represents members in 57 of those bargaining units.

IUOE Local 963 Business Manager Tim DeVivo represented the 12 other education worker union locals in this process.

[cope491](#)

See more at: <http://cupe.bc.ca/news/31599#sthash.wfHil4Ce.uI4YrRjC.dpuf>