

February, 2013



Island Views

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

Special points of interest:

- *Vice President's Message*
- *Socks for Kids*
- *Countdown to E Day*
- *Walmart hits 50*

Vice President's message

Happy New Year!

I hope that the holidays have rejuvenated all of you. And that you were able to enjoy some time with family and friends. I have an abundance of hope and optimism for the upcoming year. There are many busy times ahead. Whether it be getting ready for your own campaign at convention or maybe you are working on the upcoming Provincial election in May. Even if it is going to the many conferences and educational opportunities that await us. Please ensure that you take the time to tell the people around you that you love them. For it is their support that enables us to come together as a council and work for the communities that we live in.

As many of you are aware CUPE BC President Barry O'Neil has announced his retirement for April. VIDC is very proud of the work that Barry has done for all of us provincially as well as his work with the District Council. Barry has had many accomplishments. To name just a few Barry's initiative and implementation of the 10% Shift, raising community awareness and the value of spending locally. His dedication to fighting P3s and his work with his home local CUPE Local 606. Barry has left a legacy and some big shoes to fill. We hope that he enjoys a well-deserved retirement and time with his family.

This year is CUPE BC's 50th Convention. It will be hosted in Victoria at the Convention Center. There will be many activities to highlight all the projects and campaigns that CUPE BC has taken on over the last 50 years. There will be past pres-

idents and dignitaries. We will also be having an Island delegate caucus at Convention where we will be electing our Regional Vice Presidents for Vancouver Island and Powell River. Date and time to be announced at Convention.

Make sure to mark your calendars for May 14th, 2013. It is the BC Provincial Election. CUPE BC has mobilized the Zone Coordinators to work on the member to member campaign for the election. We will need to ensure that the message to get out to #1. Register to Vote #2. VOTE #3 Vote for the NDP. The BC NDP lost the 2009 election by 8 seats. We can do it! We have 4 CUPE BC Zone Coordinators that are VIDC delegates. If you have any questions about how to get out the vote or even how to engage your membership please just ask.

ZONE COORDINATORS - Vancouver Island & Powell River

Andrea Craddock, Lisa McPherson, Sherene Ross, Amber Leonard

I look forward to seeing all of you at our February meeting where we will be electing a new President for the council. I will be running for the position and I hope that I have done you proud with all my efforts. I look forward to a new year with all of you working towards a brighter future.

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

MEMBERS AT WORK!



Amber Leonard; VIDC Vice President, Edie Charley; Diversity Chair, & Sarah Fairbrass; VIDC Women's Committee Representative delivering VIDC Christmas donations to Sanctuary Youth Center in Victoria.

Thank You Brothers & Sisters of Vancouver Island District Council

Your donations to our 4th annual Socks for Kids drive yielded 479 Pair of Socks which were delivered to Sanctuary Youth Center in Victoria Saturday, December 8th.



Sanctuary staff shared that their sock supply had run out in late October. The blessing of our donation allowed them to restock their shelves for another year. They were very grateful for your generosity! CUPE Local 374, who began the tradition of the Sock Drive for Sanctuary, made another donation the following week. Members donated in total 305 pair of socks, 2 pair of slippers, 4 toques and \$665 in cash donations for a **total VIDC donation of 784 pair of socks!** Special thanks to an anonymous CUPE 374 Executive Board member who made a \$525 personal donation!

We would also like to give a Shout Out to the individual members of each Local who coordinate and encourage members to donate. Without you this annual drive would not be as successful. **Our members ROCK!**

Sanctuary Youth Center is indeed a sanctuary for Vancouver Island Street Youth. Sanctuary provides a safe haven, meals, clothing, a place to shower as well as a homey versatile space where youth can be welcomed and engaged. Sanctuary is possible in every aspect because of the generous giving of supporters; everyday people who want to make a difference in the lives of Youth in Victoria's downtown core.



Colleen Martin
Local 2045

As the needs don't stop when the Christmas season ends, CUPE 374 would like to continue to be a supporter of Sanctuary throughout the year. They are always in need of donations to supply clothing and individual personal hygiene products.

Victoria's street youth range in ages from 13 – 19. During the winter months Hoodies, warm coats, boots and runners are always in demand to help Youth stay warm. **If you have any of these items that are clean and gently used, they can be brought to any VIDC meeting and given to Sarah Fairbrass who will deliver all donations to Sanctuary following each VIDC meeting.**

VIDC's generosity did not stop with Sanctuary Youth Center. We also delivered food donations to the Mustard Seed Food Bank and Personal Toiletry items to Peers.





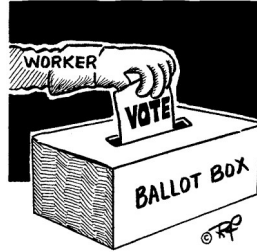
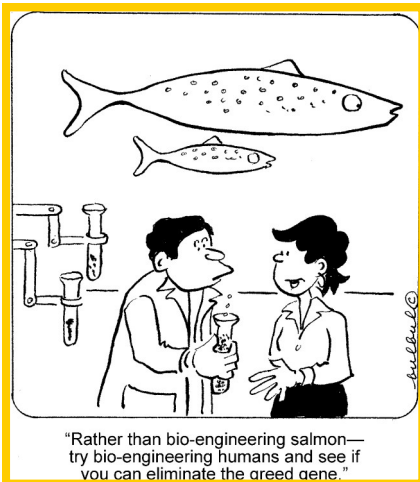
Time's Up for the BC Liberals

Submitted by Paul Faoro, CUPE BC GVP and Chair, Political Action Committee

May 14th 2013 will be an historic day for workers in British Columbia. After 12 years of attacks on working families, time's up for the BC Liberal government. That's the message we hope to deliver on Election Day. It won't be easy though.

While the BC Liberals remain unpopular, big corporations continue to back them. With big money rolling in, we can expect the BC Liberals to saturate television and radio with negative ads attacking Adrian Dix and the BC NDP. They have already spent \$15 million of your tax dollars on ads promoting a non-existent jobs plan.

It's time for CUPE members to step up. In the 2009 election, the BC NDP lost government by just 8 seats – and they lost those 8 seats by a combined total of fewer than 3500 votes. Approximately 7500 CUPE members live in those 8 constituencies. This highlights how crucial it is that we talk to our members about the coming election, and it shows that our members can make a difference. CUPE BC is conducting a member-to-member campaign, aiming to contact our 85,000 members to talk about the election. Through this direct contact, we can motivate our members to vote for candidates that will represent their interests.



Our efforts can't stop there. BC NDP candidates need our help. Volunteers are essential to any NDP campaign, whether it's helping with office work, putting up signs, phoning supporters, knocking on doors, or helping on Election Day – all efforts in this election are vital if we want to take power away from the BC Liberals.

I have been very impressed with Adrian Dix's leadership and the strong team of BC NDP candidates working hard to create change for the better. The shameful record of the BC Liberals has seen child poverty continue to rise, cuts to health care and education, stagnant wages and job losses, and an agenda to privatize services and sell off public assets. Adrian has committed to turn our province around and run a government that works for everybody, not just a privileged few.

Adrian is saying plainly what a BC NDP government will do, and how to pay for it. Fairer taxes will shift more responsibility to BC's largest corporations so the government can re-invest in our communities and our people. Most notably, the BC NDP's economic agenda takes into account the real creators of wealth in our province – the workers. That's why top of the list for Adrian Dix and the BC NDP is a bold commitment to enhance education and skills training across the province, making sure all British Columbians can take full advantage of the opportunities before us.

It's an exciting time for CUPE members in BC, but we can't allow our optimism to make us complacent. CUPE BC has 25 Zone Coordinators helping our Locals reach out and mobilise every member. They need your help. Contact your Zone Coordinator or visit www.cupe.bc.ca to find out how you can be a part of making history on May 14th.

Strong Start in our Communities

Submitted by Lisa Paine Local 3570

On January 7, 2013 CUPE Local 606 (Cowichan Valley) and Local 3570 (Qualicum) had the opportunity to engage in a collaborative conversation in regards to Strong Start programs within School Districts 79 and 69. We met at Nanaimo Regional office with Kirk Oates and John Malcolmson and conference called with Bill Pegler. A corporate search for School District 69 has resulted in learning there is a non-profit society running the Strong Start program within the Parksville Qualicum area with five centres in full operation. Cowichan Local 606 will also be doing a corporate search of the School District 79 Strong Start programs with five centres in full operation and one Resource Bus. Each Local will be having more conversations with their respective employers and finding out more information about the Strong Start programs, as well as completing the survey that John prepared for each Local. There are currently 38 in-house union Strong Start programs within the province and 11 contract programs.



Walmart At 50

Canadian Association of Labour Media

Fifty years ago, Sam Walton began a store with a vision. Walton believed that if you worked hard anything is possible, but that vision doesn't jibe with the behemoth company's actions in today's world. Walmart's business model tramples the human rights of workers, discriminates against women, damages small businesses and the environment.

Walmart's lack of quality—destroys quality everywhere

Last November, an environmental online magazine, *Grist*, ran an article about Walmart entitled, "Is Your Stuff Falling Apart? Thank Walmart." The article pointed out how Walmart's price undercutting



and the shoddy construction of the products it sells have forced retailers to compete by lowering the quality of their merchandise. Since 1994, apparel prices have fallen 39 per cent, but the quality has fallen as well, meaning that consumers end up discard-

"Walmart's business model tramples the human rights of workers, discriminates against women, damages small business and the environment."

ing the products quickly, creating an endless revenue stream for the retailers, but polluting the environment. The offshoring of manufacturing and the general demise of union-wage jobs in the U.S. have forced Americans to shop for cheaper goods. Walmart has taken full advantage. They have forced some manufacturers to make separate, cheaper lines to sell in their stores. Seeking the higher quality product at a department store when an identical-looking (but more cheaply made) version is available at the big box store seems foolish to the consumer. The store's reputation for quality suffers, and, WalMart demolishes another competitor. The manufacturer then depends more and more on Walmart to keep their business afloat and must accede to their demands. Manufacturers who try to resist are marginalized and Walmart wins.

Walmart: largest recipient of social services in U.S.

Workers at Walmart are paid so little that now over \$2.66 billion in food stamps and other taxpayer assistance goes to WalMart employees, approximately \$420,000 per store.

It is estimated that as many as 80 per cent of Walmart employees in some stores qualify for food stamps.

Walmart's health care plans don't cover hundreds of thousands of associates. In 2009, Walmart claimed that 52 per cent of associates were covered under their healthcare plan. They've refused to disclose coverage rates for their 1.4 million U.S. employees since then. Walmart stopped offering health insurance to part-time employees (working less than 24 hours per week) in 2012.

Taxpayers are forced to provide healthcare for Walmart's Associates. Hundreds of thousands of associates and their family members qualify for publicly funded health insurance. Indeed, according to data compiled by Good Jobs First, in 21 of 23 states that have disclosed information, Walmart has the largest number of employees on the public rolls of any employer. Photo courtesy of Neil Jacobs/ LA County Federation of Labor,



Pledge yourself to the
10% Shift Movement.

<http://www.tenpercentshift.ca>