



Executive Reports

PRESIDENT'S REPORT
ON BEHALF OF PRESIDENTS' COUNCIL

Cindy Oliver

SECRETARY-TREASURER

Dileep Athaide

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

George Davison

SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT

Dominique Roelants

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Terri Van Steinburg
Bill McConnell

A climate for learning, A climate for change

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

CINDY OLIVER

OVER THE LAST YEAR OUR FEDERATION HAS CONTINUED TO BE A STRONG voice for faculty members from across the province. Whether it has been pushing back on the failings of the provincial government or senior administrators at our institutions to properly fund and manage post-secondary education or working with students and community allies to find better ways to improve programs, access and affordability, through our advocacy – FPSE has been pressing for better solutions.

This year's report details the actions we have taken as well as the gains we have secured. It highlights the need to strengthen our efforts to make public post-secondary education a higher priority in BC. It also underlines the essential role that our members play in not only delivering high quality learning opportunities for students, but also providing advocacy and insight on the needs of the communities in which our post-secondary institutions operate.

Chronic underfunding: from bad to worse

Since taking office in 2001, the BC Liberals have overseen a steady decline in real per-student operating grants for public post-secondary institutions. Their approach to funding was part of a broader strategy that

has severely undermined effective access for all students seeking post-secondary education. It also included the reckless deregulation of tuition fees, a policy that has forced thousands of students into debt, part-time studies from full-time programs, or complete abandonment of their post-secondary education.

While all of these consequences were predictable, none of them was necessary. BC's fiscal capacity to invest in post-secondary education has always been strong. What was behind the decline in real per-student operating grants was the government's preference for tax cuts, especially cuts for high-income earners and the province's business community, instead of investing in valuable public programs, like post-secondary education. As well,



the provincial government shaped its policy and funding choices to force students to shoulder more of the cost of their post-secondary education than was the case thirty years ago. The government also encouraged the expansion of private colleges and universities by introducing a “self-regulation” regime for these institutions.

The cumulative impact of these changes has been a steady erosion of access, the loss of valuable programs and services for students, and the gradual undermining of enrolments. Rural community colleges have suffered the most, but university transfer programs in all institutions have also seen steady declines, as these students find skyrocketing tuition fees and fewer program options a barrier to either entering or completing their post-secondary education.

Against this backdrop, the 2008 provincial budget was yet another step along an all-too-familiar path of chronic underfunding. Real per-student operating grants to post-secondary institutions were projected to fall over the three years of the Ministry of Advanced Education’s Service Plan.

As in previous budgets, the Finance Minister focused attention and media scrutiny away from the funding shortfalls by concentrating on “new initiatives”: the greening of her 2008 budget. Although the government’s carbon tax was a significant policy shift, it represented about 2 per cent of the total provincial budget. Lost in the hype over these green initiatives was the fact that in the other 98 per cent of her budget the Finance Minister had nothing good to offer. Whether it was health care or education, her 2008 budget showed no attempt to match funding commitments with growing needs at the local level.

The bad news from the February 19, 2008 budget got a lot worse in mid-March when the Minister of Advanced Education announced that initial funding commitments for post-secondary institutions would be cut by approximately 2.6 per cent. For most public post-secondary institutions the mid-March funding cut has put them in a deficit situation. Those deficits are now driving the largest cut in post-secondary programs since 2001-02 when the BC Liberals first took office.

The funding cuts appear to have hit all post-secondary institutions, including universities. The cuts also were largely unexpected, a factor that has created new tensions within the ranks of post-secondary senior administrators and institution Board members. Many of these individuals had been champions of the BC Liberals' approach to post-secondary education, especially the deregulation of tuition fees. They now find themselves on the receiving end of a very blunt and unilateral decision by the provincial government to further reduce already inadequate funding to provincial institutions.

FPSE has worked with locals to push back on the government's proposed funding cuts. With the help of local executives, local activists, student groups, supportive community organizations and the broader labour movement, we are highlighting the wrong-headed decisions of both senior administrators and the provincial government.

In Prince George, for example, we worked with the local executive to oppose proposed cuts at the College of New Caledonia (CNC). We pointed out that the program cuts would do serious harm to post-secondary students in that region. We noted that current deficits at CNC also reflected a growing trend found in many public institutions: an expansion of senior administrative positions and salaries at the expense of programs and access for students.

The Prince George event has sparked similar actions in other locals. In the Lower Mainland, for example, FPSE has worked closely with the Vancouver Community College Faculty Association to protest the cuts to programs, especially English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) programs. In the case of Vancouver Community College, we have stressed the vital role that it plays in ESL – it is the largest public

ESL provider in Western Canada – and the urgent need to do more in this area, not less.

The Minister of Advanced Education has been frantically trying to portray the 2.6 per cent cut in funding as an increase in funding. In what can only be described a fiscal shell game, the Minister's office has been issuing fact sheets and backgrounders to bolster their version of events. At the receiving end, senior administrators at our institutions are detailing how the latest news moves their current budget further into the red. Local media are puzzled by the inconsistency, not quite sure who to believe.

Our response has been unambiguous. Somebody isn't telling the truth because we are seeing program cuts and faculty layoffs in virtually every institution. Either the Minister is bending the facts and not admitting that the 2.6 per cent cut is indeed a cut in funding or senior administrators are using this confusion to jettison programs that need to be supported and maintained at public institutions. If the Minister is confident in his version of the facts, then he should, at the very least, fire the Boards of those institutions that are cutting programs. The public post-secondary education system deserves far better leadership than is being shown at this point by either the Minister or senior administrators.

The funding cut decision was further complicated by announcements in mid-April that three post-secondary institutions – Malaspina University College, Kwantlen University College and the University College of the Fraser Valley – would be made into universities. However, in all three cases the announced changes included no additional funding for the local institution. In effect, the government was announcing a change in name only, a move that calls into question

the rationale behind such a change. Why establish new universities if you are not prepared to properly fund them? Why make the change unless you have a demonstrated commitment to providing the new institutions with the capacity they need to meet the new mandate?

It's clear, as the proposed changes show, that the provincial government has no coherent plan for post-secondary education in BC. Instead, the government is taking a piecemeal approach designed to portray some sense of leadership, even though the fiscal and policy commitments are not there to back it up.

While our actions and push-back may not force the government to completely reverse its planned reduction of operating grants, those actions are an important reminder to government MLAs and the broader voting public that two terms of BC Liberal policy in post-secondary education have done serious damage to the learning prospects and opportunities for thousands of post-secondary students. At a time when forecasters are telling us we need to increase participation rates in post-secondary education as a way to address a growing skills shortage, BC Liberal policy and funding choices have only increased the barriers to post-secondary education. That approach must change and these latest cuts are more evidence in support of that change.

FPSE campaign for change

At last year's AGM delegates approved a significant budget to deal with a major issue facing the post-secondary education system: the Campus 2020 Report. That report recommended sweeping changes in post-secondary education policy. Unfortunately many of the recommended changes would, if fully implemented, tilt the public post-secondary education system more

towards privileged access as opposed to more public access. The report's author, Geoff Plant, envisioned post-secondary education as primarily a university-centred undertaking. Community colleges would, in Plant's report, be stripped of any degree-granting status.

Embedded in Plant's report was the view that BC's three largest universities (UBC, SFU and UVic) would become the hubs of research, a move that would completely eliminate colleges, university colleges and institutes from any meaningful participation in research funding from either provincial or federal sources. The recommendation completely ignored the valuable research activity already being done by colleges, institutes and university colleges. The recommendation also reflected a biased and ill-considered approach to scholarly activity that refuses to recognize the full breadth of what post-secondary educators do, either in a college or at a university.

Our campaign plan was to continue building awareness about the importance of post-secondary education with the messaging developed by the "Better Funding, Better Futures" campaign. As well, the campaign anticipated the use of our Policy Table as part of a broader effort to lobby government on specific problems in the Campus 2020 recommendations.

Our campaign efforts had some early successes. We were able to convince the Minister of Advanced Education that stripping colleges of their degree-granting status would be a mistake. We were not alone in advancing these arguments. Senior administrators from the college system along with some within the Ministry shared our concern, a development that certainly had an impact on the Minister's final decision.

We were also successful in having Adult Basic Education become tuition-free. Credit for this change needs to be shared with a number of groups, especially the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) who along with us have campaigned tirelessly for this change.

Our campaign efforts also led to another important policy change: the full funding of sixteen Regional Literacy Coordinators across the province. This change, which was announced in early March, effectively repatriates the work of regional literacy program coordination back into the community college system where it began more than 20 years ago. The move not only ensures that regional literacy programs are delivered in a consistent, high quality way, it also ensures that the work of those coordinators is properly compensated in line with our provincial salary scale and benefits.

Our campaign plan also used the Fall 2007 legislative session to emphasize the importance of post-secondary education. In the weeks leading up to the session, FPSE worked with our locals to make presentations to the Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services. As part of the pre-budget consultation process this legislative committee held a series of regional hearings to gather public input on the priorities for the 2008 provincial budget.

During the Fall 2007 legislative session our Presidents' Council convened a full-day lobby of government MLAs, the Minister of Advanced Education and his Deputy, and Opposition MLAs. The meeting with the Minister was particularly useful because it provided us with an opportunity to link our Policy Table process with the internal policy review process that the Ministry was preparing to initiate.

Provincial Policy Table

In late November, we convened the first meeting of our Policy Table. This process was secured as part of our 2007 provincial bargaining. Our concern at the time was that ongoing, system-wide issues within post-secondary education have direct employment consequences for our members. Whether it is technology in the classroom or the problems facing university transfer programs, these issues affect the quality and security of the employment of post-secondary educators, and our members deserve effective input if policy makers are reviewing these issues.

Although there was initial resistance from government and employers to the concept and scope of a provincial Policy Table, our bargainers managed to secure an initiative that provides us with terms of reference that will enhance our capacity to lobby the Ministry of Advanced Education on a wide range of issues. At that first meeting, we detailed nine policy areas that we wanted this initiative to address. Those nine areas included trades training, university transfer programs, regulation of private colleges, regionalization, affordability, ESL/ABE/literacy, funding for post-secondary education, and federal transfers.

Given the structure of the Policy Table, which includes representatives from the Ministry of Advanced Education, PSEA, college, university college and institute presidents, as well as representatives from FPSE and the BCGEU, we pushed for a third-party facilitator to help guide the discussions. All sides agreed to the appointment of Rick Connolly, the former Deputy Minister of Labour, to act as the facilitator. His experience within government and with collective bargaining ensures the effectiveness of this process.

One of the first substantial discussions at the Policy Table dealt with the problems in trades training and apprenticeships. Despite the government's so-called new model for trades training – the Industry Training Authority (ITA), and sizeable increases in the funding of the ITA – its budget increased by almost one-third at a time when other Ministry's were seeing absolute or relative declines in their budgets – completion rates of trades training were still less than those recorded under the previous system, the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission (ITAC).

One of the obvious problems with the ITA is its dysfunctional relationship with public post-secondary institutions which deliver more than 90 per cent of trades training in the province. ITA has made unilateral decisions about the amount of program weeks it is prepared to fund for various trades programs, a move that typically leaves a local college or institute forced to cover the shortfall. ITA has also left the public post-secondary system out of the loop when it comes to curriculum development and program reviews.

The problems within ITA will be highlighted in a soon-to-be-released report by BC's Auditor General's Office. Similar to the review of the government's move to add 25,000 new spaces in post-secondary education, the report on the ITA will certainly focus on its failure to increase completion rates despite sizeable increases to its budget.

The Policy Table will continue to occupy a central role for FPSE in the coming year. Our objective will be to use this opportunity to provoke policy reforms within the Ministry that strengthen access, improve affordability, and continue to expand opportunities for high quality post-secondary learning for students.

Defending our Collective Agreements

Although provincial bargaining was concluded well over a year ago, the process of defending our collective agreements remains a central priority within FPSE. Through grievances and arbitrations we not only protect the rights of those directly involved in the process, we also are able to establish important interpretations and precedents for the scope of existing contractual benefits or provisions.

Our efforts on this front are bolstered by the work of our Labour Relations Staff Representatives who often handle not only the initial stages of a grievance but also the presentation of a case before an arbitrator. Their work is also supplemented by outside legal services, on which we have expended \$310,000 over the last twelve months.

Deploying those resources have yielded some very positive results for our members. At North Island College, for example, we were successful in defending local contract provisions that required administrators to give preference to "qualified local candidates" when filling a vacancy for the position of Dean. North Island College administrators had tried to by-pass those provisions, but our success forced them to fill the vacancy with one of our members who was fully qualified for the position.

At Kwantlen University College we secured a major victory in our ongoing fight to advance the rights of non-regular faculty members. As every local is well aware, employers try to avoid their obligation to regularize faculty by obscuring the thresholds that non-regular faculty must clear to achieve regularization. As well, employers try to blur the assessment of "ongoing work". In the Kwantlen case, we were successful in having replacement work included in the

calculation of whether a non-regular faculty member has met the required work threshold. While the Kwantlen case by no means ends the fight for regularization, it does provide an important platform from which we can address other problems facing non-regular faculty members.

Not all of our labour relations work is confined to formal grievances and arbitrations. FPSE Labour Relations Staff Reps also devote considerable effort to negotiated settlement of grievances. At Vancouver Community College, for example, that work led to a significant settlement in the area of maternity leave. At issue was whether non-regular faculty members could receive the full maternity leave benefits that regular faculty members receive. The outcome was to give them full access to maternity leave benefits, a development that strengthens our ability to have that provision apply at other institutions as well.

Spring Conference

At this year's Spring Conference, we used the opportunity of bringing together members of our Standing Committees to broaden the skill base of those activists. The emphasis this year was driven by the commitment outlined in our Action Plan, a commitment to strengthen our activist ranks in the lead up to 2010 bargaining.

The range of skills building included steward training, health and safety, and bargaining strategies. We also wanted to introduce new topic areas such as Web 2.0 and its implications for our work as instructors and activists. We also used the conference to discuss in more detail some of the ongoing work FPSE has done in policy areas like disability management, and trades training and apprenticeships. The success of this skills building effort will be extended to next year's Spring Conference as well.

Standing Committees

An important part of the work done within FPSE is undertaken by our Standing Committees. Over the last twelve months many of those committees have helped shape and advance our understanding of critical issues within post-secondary education. For example, the Education Policy Committee has circulated two important discussion papers: one on the problems within the provincial system of trades training and apprenticeships, and the other examining the status of university transfer programs. Both papers will support our ongoing lobby efforts and help articulate solutions to critical system-wide issues. Our Professional & Scholarly Development Committee organized a recent conference on scholarly activity. The issue has become increasingly important as senior administrators try to shape a definition of scholarly work that often ignores the critical work we do as instructors. The conference will produce discussion that will help inform FPSE's response to this emerging issue.

Our Status of Women Committee is working with the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) to enhance the CLC's campaign called "Equality Once and For All". The committee has also worked to ensure that materials, research and advocacy on women's issues are incorporated at both a local and institutional level.

Our Non-Regular Faculty Committee continues to advocate on issues of concern to non-regular faculty members. The committee used this year's Fair Employment Week to highlight some of those issues with posters and information fact sheets on the problems of non-regular faculty. The committee has also developed a longer-term campaign that has received the full support of Presidents' Council and will help strengthen our

efforts to improve conditions for non-regular faculty members in our 2010 round of provincial bargaining.

Organizing

One of the major commitments made at our 2007 AGM was to fund a renewed organizing effort that targeted private colleges and institutes. That commitment included separate funding of the organizing effort as well as dedicated labour relations staff support.

Those efforts have yielded some early successes. Earlier this year, we were successful in organizing and certifying a private ESL school. The organizing drive was coordinated by Staff Rep Jeff McKeil who worked with a sub-committee chaired by Frank Cosco, President of Local 15.

The Organizing Sub-committee also played a critical role in the efforts to have the Institute of Indigenous Government Faculty & Staff Association rejoin the ranks of FPSE. The organizing effort at IIG has also led to a new collective agreement which provides substantial improvements in salary scale, benefits and employment security for these members.

The organizing plan passed at last year's AGM stressed the importance of making our organizing effort a sustainable one. As activists we know it's not enough to sign up new members or even to win certification votes. The real challenge is securing a first collective agreement. To deal with that reality, our approach to organizing is measured with more emphasis on moving from certification to first agreement. We are pleased with the results so far and congratulate both the committee and the labour relations staff for implementing such a comprehensive approach to organizing.

Working with our allies

Our efforts to improve better funding support and policy choices for post-secondary education rely heavily on the alliances we have built over the years with the Canadian Federation of Students and the broader labour movement both here in BC, across Canada, and internationally. In July, for example, we were successful in working through the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) to have a resolution passed at an Education International (EI) conference. EI brings together unions in the education sector from close to 150 countries (both K-12 and post-secondary). The resolution that was passed dealt with the issue of contingent academic staff and the need to defend the basic rights of these workers. The significance of this resolution was that it addressed an important issue and it was the first time that a CAUT resolution received the full support of EI.

Most of our work with allies is much closer to home. Over the last several months, for example, we have been working very closely with the Canadian Federation of Students to highlight the impact of funding shortfalls that the Minister of Advanced Education announced in mid-March. Some of those efforts have been to identify the specific programs as well as individual students who will be hardest hit by the government's action. We also made student concerns about affordability and access a central theme in our Better Funding, Better Futures print ad campaign.

Working with provincial labour allies

One of the critical efforts we continue to pursue is to strengthen our connection to the broader labour movement. Within BC, much of that effort is

focused on our affiliation to the BC Federation of Labour.

For example, in January we convened our first public forum on the issues of English Language Training and Adult Literacy. The forum brought together senior leaders from the BC Federation of Labour, the BC Government and Service Employees' Union, the BC Teachers' Federation and the BC and Yukon Building Trades Council, as well as representatives from the Chinese-speaking community and the adult literacy community, to discuss ways to lobby both provincial and federal governments for better funding support in these areas.

The meeting featured a presentation by Scott Murray, an international post-secondary education policy analyst, who described the critically important role that literacy and English Language Training programs play in improving access to post-secondary education. The forum also highlighted the value of unions and community organizations collaborating to press provincial and federal governments in key areas like federal-provincial labour market and management settlement agreements.

Our work with labour allies within BC also includes working with Labour Councils around the province. Our participation in these local Labour Councils helps strengthen our community contacts with activists in the labour movement. It also ensures that those activists have a better grasp of post-secondary education issues and the role that our Federation plays in prompting government to make the right policy and funding choices for our public system. Our connection to Labour Councils has also helped reinforce our current effort to have local municipal councils support our call to have the provincial government restore the 2.6% cut in post-secondary operating grants.

Working with national and international allies

Through national and international affiliations FPSE continues to advocate for policy and funding strategies that improve access to our public post-secondary education system and strengthen the working conditions of post-secondary educators. In November, for example, we participated in the CAUT Federal Lobby in Ottawa. The event allowed us to make direct contact with federal MPs, both government and opposition, and detail our concerns about the need for more effective federal support for post-secondary education.

Through our affiliation to NUCAUT, FPSE maintains a strong voice within Canada's national labour organization, the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). FPSE local activists not only play an important role in NUCAUT, they also participate as representatives on the CLC's Executive Council.

The possibility of a federal election sometime in 2008 has put added emphasis on the CLC's efforts to mobilize the broader labour movement. The Harper government continues to push its agenda, a move that threatens to erode the core of our social programs and increase inequality. The CLC's Better Choice campaign is designed to target the issues that are of the greatest concern to workers and their families. As we did in the last federal election, FPSE will support the CLC's campaign and work to encourage our members to become as active as possible in that election campaign.

The CLC continues to monitor the issue of temporary foreign worker policies in Canada. Under new rules established by the Harper government, these workers are extremely vulnerable to exploitive pressure from employers. The CLC's efforts in this

area will ensure that these workers have access to the same rights, protections and benefits that all Canadian citizens enjoy today.

Part of our work on national issues includes our involvement in the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF). As a director of the Forum Board I have been able to stress the important role that the public post-secondary system plays in delivering trades training and apprenticeship programs. The June CAF Conference will be held in Victoria this year and will provide our delegates with an opportunity to talk about the urgent need for program reform in BC. Under the ITA, trades training has floundered and our public post-secondary institutes have been ignored. That needs to change and we hope the Victoria event will help focus national attention on that point.

On the international front FPSE has worked to ensure that our locals and activists remain important contributors on post-secondary issues. In April, we participated in the Tri-National Conference in Defence of Public Education in Los Angeles, an event that brought educators together from across Canada, the US and Mexico. It not only provided new insights into the challenges facing post-secondary education, it also provided an opportunity for us to reinforce the important role that collective bargaining can play in any push to reform post-secondary education. Whether the push is to deregulate or privatize, our experience shows that collective bargaining provides an important platform from which we can mobilize for better outcomes for faculty and students.

Special remembrance

It is with deep sorrow that FPSE acknowledges the passing of two individuals who worked for our organization: Linda Sperling, who passed

away in August, and Barb Brown, who passed away in October. Although Linda had retired from FPSE in 2004, her long service as a Labour Relations Staff Representative gave her a special connection to our Federation. Like Linda, Barb too had a strong connection with members and locals through her many years as a Labour Relations Staff Representative.

Both were shining examples of how activism and commitment can make a real difference in the lives of so many people. They will be deeply missed by family, friends and colleagues.

Thanks

Our Federation works because we encourage and support the input of members in a democratic decision-making process. It is an honour to represent this organization as its President. It's also important to acknowledge that, in an organization like ours, the talent, support and commitment of so many activists and staff make an enormous contribution to our overall success. I want to conclude this report by recognizing these individuals and thanking them for their dedication and hard work.

FPSE is well-served by a staff of professionals who are well known and respected in the larger labour community and who so diligently look after our members' needs. I want to acknowledge the contributions that they have made in a variety of capacities. The Staff Representatives who work on the labour relations front – Zoe Towle, Lesley Burke, Jeff McKeil, David Piasta and Weldon Cowan – and policy and communications Staff Representative Phillip Legg, are unparalleled in their ability to serve the locals and are regarded by many in the labour movement as some of the most talented in their fields. FPSE would not be as effective without our staff, and we are all indebted to them

for their talent, commitment and energy.

The Administrative Assistants—Mary Bruegeman, Angela Kenyon, Margaret Sutherland, Nancy Yip and Gisele da Silva—provide quality work and service to all, more often than not under tight timelines. Financial Assistant Matt Toma keeps our financial affairs in top shape. To all, I owe my gratitude. I consider myself extremely privileged to work with such talented, committed people.

Presidents' Council works tirelessly to keep the organization current and effective between AGMs. I want to thank all members of the Council, listed at the end of this report, for their dedication and support.

This year's Executive Committee contributed in so many ways to ably represent FPSE at external meetings and functions, and provided advice and help to me on many occasions. My

thanks go out to Vice-Presidents George Davison and Dominique Roelants and to Members-at-Large Terri Van Steinburg and Bill McConnell, whose advice and counsel I have often sought and whose help has been invaluable to me. To our Secretary-Treasurer, Dileep Athaide, I owe my sincere gratitude. Dileep's insight, dedication, diligence and his great sense of humour have been a cornerstone in the leadership of FPSE.

And finally, thank you to all who have worked on behalf of our organization. Your activism helps all of our members in so many ways, and your contribution to the larger labour movement gives FPSE a strong voice on so many fronts.

Respectfully submitted and
In solidarity,

Cindy Oliver
President
on behalf of Presidents' Council



*President Cindy Oliver with
CFS BC Chair Shamus Reid on
CKNW's Bill Good Show,
reacting to the February 2008
provincial budget.*

FPSE 2007-08 LOCAL PRESIDENTS

- ♦ **Pat Hodgson**
Local 01: Capilano College Faculty Association
- ♦ **Donna Petri**
Local 02: Thompson Rivers University Faculty Association
- ♦ **George Davison**
Local 03: Faculty Association of the College of New Caledonia
- ♦ **Susan Briggs**
Local 04: Douglas College Faculty Association
- ♦ **Terri Van Steinburg**
Local 05: Kwantlen Faculty Association
- ♦ **Kathy Bonell**
Local 06: College of the Rockies
Faculty Association
- ♦ **Scott Fast**
Local 07: University College of
the Fraser Valley Faculty & Staff Association
- ♦ **Dan McDonald**
Local 08: Malaspina Faculty Association
- ♦ **Doug Henderson**
Local 10: Selkirk College Faculty Association
- ♦ **Sheree Ronaasen**
Local 11: Academic Workers' Union (NWCC)
- ♦ **Susan Johnston**
Local 12: Camosun College Faculty Association
- ♦ **Lynn Carter**
Local 14: Langara Faculty Association
- ♦ **Frank Cosco**
Local 15: Vancouver Community College Faculty Association
- ♦ **Bill McConnell**
Local 16: North Island College Faculty Association
- ♦ **June Williams**
Local 17: BC Open University Faculty Association
- ♦ **Sharon McIvor**
Local 19: Nicola Valley Institute of Technology Employees' Association
- ♦ **Bari Blackhart**
Local 21: Private Sector Faculty & Staff Association
- ♦ **Tom Becher**
Local 22: Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design Faculty Association

Our financial climate and managing change

SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT:

DILEEP ATHAIDE

THE SECRETARY-TREASURER'S PORTFOLIO AT FPSE IS A COMPLEX ONE, with seemingly ever-increasing duties. These include responsibilities as the Federation's chief financial officer; personnel, office and events manager; primary back-up to the President on all political issues and policy implementation; member and recording secretary of the Executive Committee and Presidents' Council; and a myriad of internal and external committee work and representations.

At four regular intervals through the year, I present a Secretary-Treasurer's report to Presidents' Council, with a greater level of detail on my activities than provided here. This AGM report focuses on the 2007-08 year-end finances (accompanied by our Auditor's Report), on our proposed budgets for 2008-09, and on my other non-fiscal activities carried out on behalf of the Federation. I have refrained from providing opinion and discussion on issues, but would be most happy to exchange such with members at our AGM-Convention.

FPSE's 2007-08 fiscal year-end

As the accompanying financial statements indicate, our 2007 AGM approved an operating budget for the

April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008 fiscal period with total revenues estimated at \$2,650,173 and expenditures of \$2,702,700, for a projected deficit of \$52,528. At year-end, our actual operating revenues were slightly higher at \$2,744,041 and actual expenditures even higher at \$2,883,244, resulting in a net deficit of \$142,453. Our Operating Reserve Fund, which represents the cumulative result of operating surpluses and deficits over the years, now stands at \$283,049.

On the expenditures side, Presidents' Council meetings and the annual orientation-retreat cost more than anticipated, as did our 2007 AGM in Cranbrook, and attendance by members at conferences. These increased expenditures reflect a



combination of generally higher travel, accommodation and meal costs, as well as greater levels of participation by our members at these events.

By far the single highest expenditure in excess of our estimated amount was in legal fees: \$150,000 budgeted, \$323,795 spent. This large amount reflects the high number of grievances taken to arbitration by FPSE, in response to requests from Locals, which required external legal counsel, and an exceptionally high number of legal opinions sought in regard to political decisions, bargaining and contract administration. A line-by-line review of our financial statements, and the accompanying auditor's report, will allow members the opportunity to seek any further clarification from me at our AGM.

With regard to capital expenditures, FPSE budgeted \$24,000 and we spent \$41,960, the excess resulting from greater than anticipated computer work-station renewal costs and a much needed replacement of our aged office server.

A separate resolution at our 2007 AGM approved the expenditure of \$400,000 from our Defence Fund for our 2007-08 "Better Funding – Better Futures" political action campaign; at fiscal year-end \$361,242 had been spent for this purpose. Even with this second consecutive year of extraordinary expenditures on a public campaign, our Defence Fund stands at a year-end all-time high of \$7,160,335.

I may also add here that through the course of the past year I met often with representatives of Blackmont Capital, our investment brokerage firm, to discuss the nature and direction of their investment strategies and performance, and corresponding reporting practices to FPSE. I likewise met with our auditors to discuss the impact of changes in legislation with regard to the reporting of investment holdings and earnings, and also to request that the format of their Annual Report more closely coincide with the categories of revenue and expenses as expressed in our internal monthly and year-end financial statements.

FPSE's 2008-09 proposed budgets

Our annual budgets are prepared following careful examination and analysis of previous budgets and year-end reports, coupled with projected changes in our Federation's expected revenues and planned activities/expenditures for the coming year. The budgets presented here were modified and approved by the Executive Committee and Presidents' Council at their mid-March meetings.

In our operating budget, we have projected a 3.5% increase in membership dues, primarily as a result of higher salaries. Following an approximately 10% transfer to our Defence Fund, and the addition of estimated investment income, our total revenue is gauged to be \$2,737,049.

Our operating expenses reflect reasonable increases in officers' and staff compensation, and expenditures for meetings of Presidents' Council and our various Standing Committees. We have budgeted \$45,000 for the participation of our delegation at the triennial week-long NUCAUT and CLC Conventions in Toronto at the end of May. We have decreased the staff travel line, but correspondingly increased our legal costs estimate. There are no extraordinary lifts or decreases to our expenses in advocacy and public relations, affiliations and memberships, and administrative costs. The total expenditures are thus pegged at \$2,792,889.

We therefore present a budget with an overall projected deficit of \$55,840. Of course, I'd be much surprised if the line-by-line discussion does not lead to recommended alterations by members at our AGM!

On the capital side, we project a very modest budget for 2008-09, with expenses totaling a mere \$7000, in

anticipation of no major computer costs in this coming year.

Office and personnel management

FPSE has a complement of twelve office staff who serve our members very well. Last fall we suffered the tragic loss of Barb Brown who had been a Staff Representative at FPSE for five years. An extensive search landed Zoe Towle as her replacement. Coming to us from the BC Medical Council, Zoe started in January and has quickly become an effective member of our labour relations staff team.

Both Financial Assistant Matt Toma and Administrative Assistant Gisele da Silva scored impressively on their Performance Appraisals and consequently earned ongoing appointments at FPSE. With the benefit of experiencing a full fiscal cycle with us, Matt has now become far more capable and comfortable in his position compared with the time of our AGM a year ago in Cranbrook. Gisele is being trained by Matt to provide emergency and holiday financial back-up in his absence.

With the help of Administrative Assistant Angela Kenyon, I work closely with Raj Taneja of SSID Inc. to ensure the continuous smooth operating of all our Federation's computer systems. The purchase of a new office server was central to a significant upgrading of both hard- and software, and the signing of a new service contract with SSID. As a result of an audit of all our computer services, there are ongoing procedural improvements which are being undertaken.

I continue to liaise with the the BC Teachers' Federation, our landlord, on various building related matters. You may recall that shortly after our last

AGM, our office operations were significantly disrupted, albeit briefly, by the BCTF-CEP labour dispute and strike/lockout. Beyond the major traffic disruptions due to the nearby Skytrain tunneling operations, we continue to be very pleased with our FPSE office location and facilities.

Lastly, I commend Vice-President Dominique Roelants and Member-at-Large Terri Van Steinburg for their skill and effort in efficiently negotiating a renewed Collective Agreement with our CUPE 1004 staff this spring. I can confidently state that internal labour relations are likely better today than they have ever been at FPSE.

FPSE events, committees and member services

As I am sure most of our members appreciate, the logistical arrangements for our 2008 AGM-Convention here in Whistler were quite complex – from negotiating the contracts with the TELUS Conference Centre and the Westin (and previously the Coast Whistler) Hotel, to details such as meal menus and the approval of unusual travel and accommodation requests from members, to liaising with our Local 5 KFA host on the planning of the social components of this event; I've enjoyed doing this. Furthermore, preparations are well underway for our 2009 AGM in Victoria! Registration and logistical details have been finalized for our 16-member delegation to the NUCAUT/CLC Conventions in Toronto later this month, as have the arrangements for the Annual Presidents' Retreat scheduled for mid-June at Harrison Hot Springs.

Our Joint Committees Spring Conference this year was a huge success, with eight of our ten Standing Committees meeting concurrently on the Friday and coming together to participate in exciting skill-building

workshops the following day, at the Coast Plaza in Vancouver. Likewise, I was happy to help coordinate and participate in the FPSE Scholarly Activities Conference held on March 29th at the Inn at the Quay in New Westminster.

As mentioned earlier, much effort goes into the preparations for, reporting to, and the recording of proceedings of our roughly tri-monthly Executive Committee and Presidents' Council meetings. Once again, last October in Victoria, the PC meeting was combined with our lobby of government and opposition MLAs on post-secondary issues in BC.

I continue to serve as Executive Liaison to the Contract Administration Review Committee (CARC). This FPSE Standing Committee is very ably chaired by Shirley Ackland (Local 16) and staffed by David Piasta. My Secretary-Treasurer duties include the chairing of our Grievance Arbitration Review Committee (GARC), comprising our much-experienced complement of five labour relations Staff Representatives and our CARC Chair. This past year, GARC was convened very often and considered an unprecedented number of requests from locals for support in taking grievances to arbitration. The great majority of these requests are upheld, and in turn a good majority of the cases are resolved in our favour, either at a pre-arbitration hearing stage or as a result of an arbitration ruling. As noted earlier, many of our cases required the assistance of external legal counsel, expertly given, but at a very high cost – clearly one of the most significant privileges of FPSE membership to the affected locals!

At our last AGM, members approved an FPSE International Solidarity Fund, to lend our support to human rights and social justice causes in the developing world. I had the privilege of

chairing the ISF Committee and commend the work of the committee members, especially Rick Gordon (Local 14, and Chair of our HRISC), who drafted the Terms of Reference for the committee. We received a total of ten proposals but, guided by these Terms of Reference and the limited funds of \$15,000, it is with regret that we were able to lend support to only four of these all outstanding projects. As a result, FPSE has strengthened our relationship with Co-Development Canada, supporting projects in Central America as a Northern Partner, and will now also be involved in development work in Haiti, the Horn of Africa, and Timor Leste.

I very much appreciate invitations to locals, to participate at AGMs and other events and meetings. As such, I was privileged to visit Locals 1, 3, 5, 10, 15, 19 and 21 through the course of the year, and there were others for which my schedule would not permit attendance. It's particularly gratifying to notice the emergence of a new generation of committed union activists within most of our Unions.

BCFL, CAUT, NUCAUT and CLC

I believe our members generally appreciate the value of our affiliation with the BC Federation of Labour (BCFL), the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), and the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) through the National Union of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (NUCAUT). We receive significant benefits from, and make important contributions to, these organizations, and I summarize some of my own involvement here.

I am an active member of the BCFL Executive Council, participating in meetings through the year, as well as the annual strategic planning session on mainly political issues with the

affiliate ranking officers at Harrison Hot Springs. I continue to be the FPSE representative on the BCFL Education Committee, and mid-year was joined by Pat Hodgson (Local 1) when the Literacy Working Group was folded into the main committee.

I continue to chair the BCFL Human Rights Committee, and a highlight of our year was organizing the Federation's first-ever Human Rights Conference "Rights, not wrongs: The role of unions in creating a better world", this April. Five FPSE colleagues joined me in attending the conference which was jointly sponsored by the BCTF, and which included workshops on a wide range of human rights issues with excellent speakers headed by the always inspirational Stephen Lewis. Among other activities, the committee examined the ongoing impact of the absence of a Human Rights Commission in British Columbia, with successive presentations by Heather MacNaughton of the BC Human Rights Tribunal, Susan O'Donnell of the BC Human Rights Coalition, and MLA Raj Chouhan, the NDP House Critic on Human Rights.

I was an active participant at CAUT Council's Fall 2007 and Spring 2008 meetings in Ottawa, the former including CAUT's annual Parliament Hill Lobby with MPs on post-secondary issues. I also joined Cindy Oliver at a CAUT Executive meeting which specially addressed fallout from a rather anti-college membership discussion at the Fall Council meeting, and plans for strengthening the understanding among member-associations of the important commonality of post-secondary priorities across Canada. And being in Ottawa for another meeting last December facilitated me joining Shirley Ackland (Local 16) at CAUT's Senior Grievance Officers Annual Workshop, which included excellent

presentations and discussions on topics such as "Mental Disability and the Duty to Accommodate".

This has been my third year as Member-at-Large on the National Executive Board of NUCAUT, and also as NUCAUT's representative to the CLC Standing Committee on Training and Technology. This committee's focus this past year continues to be on literacy training and workplace learning, trades and apprenticeships, and grave concerns around the federal government's expansion of the foreign migrant-guest worker programs as an alternative to good immigration policy to address our growing skills and labour shortage in Canada.

Just last month I was privileged to represent NUCAUT at an invitation-only policy summit on access and success issues in post-secondary in Canada, "Not a Moment to Spare, Not a Mind to Lose", which was sponsored in Toronto by the Canadian Millennium Foundation and co-hosted by the presidents of the Association of Universities & Colleges of Canada (AUCC) and the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC). While Canada currently leads all OECD countries in post-secondary participation, other Western Developed nations are quickly catching up as a result of more progressive government funding support, and we ourselves do have an unacceptable discrepancy with regard to participation rates from the Aboriginal and economically poor demographic sectors.

Last October I was invited to the CLC-sponsored "Roundtable on Work and Learning" here in Vancouver, which focused on concerns stemming from both the federal and provincial governments' prioritizing of the private sector, and their inadequate support for our public post-secondary institutions' and union programming in the

areas of trades training and apprenticeships.

The CLC Winter Labour School at Harrison Hot Springs was well-attended by FPSE members and staff this year, in both learning and teaching capacities. I myself taught Union Counselling once again, and I am anxious to promote the implementation of some form of union counselling at many/all of our FPSE locals, starting with the KFA (Local 5).

FPSE will be sending a strong delegation of 16 members to the NUCAUT and CLC Conventions in Toronto at the end of May, lead by our own President and Maureen Shaw (Local 5), who nears completion of her outstanding tenure as NUCAUT's first President and member of the CLC's Executive Council.

Other external events and representations

As an officer of FPSE, I am invited to participate and contribute to many organizations and events in the broader educational and labour spheres. I briefly list some of these activities in which I have been involved over the past year.

I co-chaired the 2007 (and now also 2008) Campaign Labour Committee of the United Way of the Lower Mainland. This volunteer work involves very many meetings all through the year, and includes a seat at the Campaign Cabinet which last year helped raise more than \$31.2M to improve lives and strengthen communities throughout the region. Labour is proud of its strong partnership with the United Way, whose priority is to work with community partners to improve the lives of children and seniors, also supporting immigrants and people challenged by homelessness and poverty.

I was a guest at CUPE-BC's first ever, and immensely successful, Workers of Colour Conference, "Different Faces, Different Voices: Diversity in Action", held at the Coast Plaza in February. I twice co-presented a very well-received workshop, entitled "Walking the Walk with Respect to Workers of Colour and their Allies in our Unions".

We work closely with the BCTF on many issues of common concern in the area of public education in British Columbia. Both the BCTF and FPSE were well-represented at the Tri-National Coalition for the Defence of Public Education's triennial conference in Los Angeles in mid-April. I was a member of the planning committee and co-chaired a session of this conference, which brought together K-12 and post-secondary teachers as well as students, parents and community workers, to examine the ongoing challenges of maintaining a strong public education system in Canada, Mexico and the USA. Cindy Oliver and Staff Rep Weldon Cowan also presented at this event.

Closer to home, I serve as Vice-President of the Charter for Public Education Network Society, which focuses on these same issues here in BC. Last summer's CPEN Society AGM included a Public Forum "Who Sets the Public Education Agenda: Who Should, Why and How", at which Cindy did a panel presentation on FPSE perspectives on the Campus 2020 recommendations.

I represented FPSE at CUFA/BC's Fall 2007 and Spring 2008 Council meetings, reporting on our activities and bringing back relevant information to FPSE. I also attended their annual Distinguished Academics Award Night. Last fall, I participated in a forum on Campus 2020, hosted by CUFA/BC in Victoria, where Geoff Plant defended his recommendations and John Dennison, retired UBC Professor of

Education and former Chair of BCCAT, contrarily stressed the ongoing need for the role of colleges in providing a diversity of options for post-secondary education in our province.

I have been active in the area of ESL, Literacy and Essential Skills, representing FPSE at various venues, including a rather expensive but fruitless "Essential Skills and Learning Conference" sponsored by the Ministries of Education and Post-Secondary Education last Fall; an all-day meeting/workshop with Literacy BC officers and members of Lower Mainland colleges, hosted by Douglas College last November, which reaffirmed the traditionally strong role played by our urban public post-secondary institutions in providing a wide range of Literacy programming; and just last month a Pan-Canadian Interactive Literacy Forum which linked ten centres across the country with a lot of fanfare but questionable results.

I have been an active member of the Working Groups of the Canadian Council of Learning's Work and Learning Knowledge Centre. I attended their Annual Symposium in Ottawa last summer, and was also sponsored by them to participate in the "Integrating Equity: Addressing Barriers in Work and Education at the Workplace and in the Union" Roundtable this February in Toronto. Both Cindy and I were invited to attend the CCL-sponsored "Private Sector Roundtable on Work and Learning" last November in Vancouver; it was a follow-up to a similar meeting we attended a year earlier as senior labour representatives.

I was proud to be a participant at the "BC Climate Change - Take the Lead" conference last Fall. With government assistance, leaders from business, labour, aboriginal, environmental and faith groups provided a comprehensive overview and engaged in a conversation on climate change concerns and

possible solutions. The day included presentations by UVic geoscientist (and our FPSE AGM keynote speaker) Andrew Weaver, Environmental Minister Barry Penner, and NDP Leader Carole James. Unbelievably, the provincial government's newly created Climate Change Team completely excludes labour representation.

Last May I attended the Alberta Colleges and Institutes Faculties Association (ACIFA) AGM and Conference in Canmore. My address to the delegates was very well received, given our similar concerns and yet somewhat contrasting response strategies with regard to public post-secondary education issues in our respective provinces. It was also my pleasure to address the Canadian Federation of Students – BC Division, at their semi-annual AGM at the University of Victoria last August. We continue to work closely with the CFS, particularly on the issue of adequate and appropriate government funding support for our institutions.

All through the year I often join Cindy and Staff Representative Phillip Legg or another Staff Rep at meetings with officials from our Ministry of Advanced Education and other related ministries (like Finance on pension matters), and various government agencies (such as BCCAT), labour organizations and solidarity partners (like the VDLC's International Affairs luncheon with Afgan MP Malalai Joya), on issues of common concern and advocacy. Likewise, attendance at other AGM-Conventions and Executive Council meetings (like the BCNU, BCGEU, BCTF and COPE) also provide for valuable exchanges and relationship building.

In closing

It has been an honour to have served FPSE in the role of Secretary-Treasurer

for six years now and, if granted a final term, I hope to provide valuable assistance in succession planning for this important position in our Federation. I've enjoyed the opportunity to work with some wonderful colleagues, both members and staff, for which I express my gratitude. President Cindy Oliver and I have worked very closely together as a tandem, providing mutual support and strong friendship, and I salute her leadership at FPSE's helm. Vice-Presidents George Davison and Dominique Roelants and Members-at-Large Terri Van Steinburg and Bill McConnell round out an Executive team whose skills and support I have much admired and appreciated.

I am thankful to the members of Presidents' Council for both their diversity and cooperation towards common goals displayed all through the year. I likewise admire the Chairs and, indeed, all members of our ten Standing Committees, who volunteer their skills and precious time to improve the well-being of their co-workers, and for so many broader labour and social justice causes.

FPSE is fortunate to have an extremely talented and hard-working staff, with whom I have the pleasure to work on a daily basis. I extend special thanks to our Financial Assistant Matt Toma, and sincere gratitude to our Administrative Assistants Mary, Gisele, Nancy, Angela and Margaret, and our Staff Reps Phillip, David, Lesley, Weldon, Jeff and Zoe, for their continued dedication and support. Lastly, my thanks to all our individual members for the opportunity you have given me to serve you at FPSE.

Respectfully submitted,

Dileep Athaide,
Secretary-Treasurer

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

GEORGE DAVISON



THE PAST YEAR HAS BEEN RELATIVELY quiet – no provincial bargaining – but this year (my 11th on Presidents' Council, 6th on the Executive, and 4th as First VP), saw considerable work at the Policy Table and the Joint Committee on Benefits Administration (JCBA) falling out of the 2007-10 MID Agreement. It was also a sad year, as we lost Linda Sperling and Barb Brown, two Staff Reps who worked very closely with me and my executive at FACNC. Linda's passing hit hard because it happened so soon after she retired, Barb's because she was so young and had so much more to contribute. We miss them both.

In addition to the regular meetings of the Executive and Presidents' Council (last June's orientation meeting at Whistler, and September, October, January and March meetings), I headed a sub-committee on archiving/ updating the FPSE Policy Manual – Frank Cosco, Susan Briggs and I had many meetings, both in person and by phone and e-mail. We split up the work, agreed on a fundamental restructuring of the manual as part of the archiving and updating process, and the result you'll either see at this year's AGM, or next year's.

I presented to the Standing Committee on Finance in September and chaired a session with Shirley Bond (the only interior MLA who showed up) during our October lobby. Our representations, along with the Better Funding campaign, though raising our continued concerns about government policy, seemed to have little impact on their funding decisions in the 2008-9 budget.

There were two Policy Table meetings. These meetings are chaired by Ruth Wittenberg, AVED's Assistant Deputy Minister, and attendees include five institutional CEOs (BCIT, NVIT, COR, NL, MUC), five from FPSE & BCGEU (Dominique Roelants, Susan Briggs and I, and Danny Bradford and Anita Zaenker), and a host of Ministry, PSEC and PSEA folks. We agreed on an agenda of issues to tackle, the first of which is trades training, and our meeting on February 11 was a useful start, facilitated by Rick Connolly. The next meeting is on June 11, following the Auditor General's Report on the Industry Training Authority. After the meeting, we received information on the activities of the colleges' Trades Training Consortium (projects are underway on a common exam, a new apprentice registration and tracking

system, waitlist research, capital equipment inventory, common admissions process, ITO consultation, utilization work group, curriculum development, web development, and a catch-all called "new directions", exploring the feasibility of increasing class size, reducing program length, expanding summer delivery and community-based delivery, centralized registry, and industry donations of equipment and funds). Our concern continues to be that the Ministry of Economic Development, through the ITA, does not fund institutions for more than the direct student costs and some capital costs. The colleges claim to be as frustrated by this as we are but no-one expects changes to be made any time soon. We may have more ammunition to argue for a change in funding after the Auditor General's report comes out.

The JCBA began meeting again to implement the reviews set up under LOUs 7 and 11. We established an advisory sub-committee (Robin Wylie, Nancy Lucas and Lil McPhail, representing BCRC, CARC and DMRC); and after an initial meeting with them, Staff Rep David Piasta and I have had two meetings with PSEA, the second involving a lengthy presentation by Mercer's Eileen Beadle on the Extended Health benefit plan and costs. We are now waiting for Mercer, through PSEA, to give us disability stats. Our next task will be to examine what we might want to do for LOUs 7 & 11.

The Joint Administration Dispute and Resolution Committee met on March 19 for the first time since May 2006. Much of the agenda dealt with tidying up loose ends (we disagreed over the employers' view of use of sick leave for medical/dental appointments; we agreed that exemption from disability benefits coverage during unpaid leaves and the applicability of the *Employment Standards Act* are no longer issues). The employers drafted inter-

pretation bulletins on partial disability benefits and a harassment complaint timeline of six months – we said we'd get back to them. PSEA, Mercer & Manulife have agreed to remove references to substance abuse from the disability plan.

On the subject of post-65 health and welfare benefits, the employers are comfortable that the approach they have taken (reducing benefits) is non-discriminatory and *bona fide*: it is consistent with their reading of the *Human Rights Code* and Bill 31, and legal advice. If we disagree, the appropriate way to resolve it would be through the grievance process.

In response to our question about the role of PSEA in resolving local disputes, Labour Relations Director John Waters expanded on a 2004 letter PSEA sent to all faculty presidents about PSEA's role in contract administration, and David Shepherdson's 2006 letter about ratifying local LOUs. PSEA gets involved only if a local dispute has sectoral implications, though certain matters must receive PSEA approval. Finally, the employers suggested a joint harassment training workshop so unions and local employers could get a better handle on Article 2 processes; we suggested training directed at declining levels of civility in the workplace. No consensus was reached, and the subject was deferred to the next meetings, tentatively scheduled for October 24 and April 17.

I am the Executive's liaison for two Standing Committees: Disability Management & Rehabilitation and Workplace Health, Safety & Environment. I attended the two day disability training session put by on by Mercer in October, and the committee meeting that followed. I also attended both meetings of the WHSEC, and chaired the February meeting in the absence of the chair, followed by the Spring

Conference (where I chaired two sessions on federal politics). Thanks to both committee Chairs, Lil McPhail (Local 6) and Carolynne Fardy (Local 2), and Staff Reps David Piasta, Lesley Burke and Zoe Towle, for all their hard work in forwarding the goals of the Federation.

I also was one of FPSE's reps to the BC Federation of Labour Convention and last December's Lancaster Public Sector Bargaining Conference. I presented at CAUT's Contract Academic Staff Conference last May in Edmonton; and attended committee meetings in May, late August and mid-March.

I enjoyed attending Capilano College FA's general meeting on March 18, and I'm looking forward to the NUCAUT and CLC Conventions in Toronto in May, and COCAL in San Diego in August.

It has been a busy year as Local 3 President also, and I'm sorry to report that I've been given lay-off notice again – one way or another, my situation should work out, but my local has been hard hit over the last decade and it's time to say, "Enough is enough!" Thanks for the support from our brothers and sisters in AWU (Local 11).

Thanks also to my fellow Executive Committee members: Cindy Oliver, Dileep Athaide, Dominique Roelants, Bill McConnell and Terri Van Steinburg – they bring great credit to our Federation. Thanks also to Staff Reps David Piasta, Jeff McKeil, Phillip Legg & Zoe Towle – those I work closest with – and once again, thanks to my family, who continue to make my union involvement possible.

Respectfully submitted,

George Davison
First Vice-President



VCCFA President Frank Cosco speaking with CKNW radio's host John McComb about the recent budget cuts at VCC.

SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

DOMINIQUE ROELANTS



AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, I SERVED AS the Chair of the Malaspina Faculty Association (Local 8) bargaining committee for more than ½ of the last 20 years. This past year was the first in a decade where I was not on BCRC (now BCC). I moved from my role as Bargainer to Chief Personnel Steward. Other than that, my participation on FPSE Standing Committees remained unchanged: I participated in the Pension Advisory Committee, the Education Policy Committee, and the Non-Regular Faculty Committee. As well, I was appointed to the Finance Sub-committee of FPSE and, at the time of writing, I, along with Member-at-Large Terri van Steinberg, just finished negotiating the new collective agreement between FPSE and its staff union, CUPE Local 1004.

In addition to my FPSE committee work, I have been involved with JADRC, the College Pension Board, which I now chair, and the Provincial Policy Table.

Education Policy Committee

For obvious reasons, the work of the Education Policy Committee has overlapped with the work of the Policy Table. The EPC has been looking at issues around university transfer and

access, as well as educational technology. The committee has also been monitoring and providing some feedback on the Policy Table.

Philip Legg, the Staff Rep assigned to the committee, has been working on a draft discussion paper regarding the college system and its offerings of university transfer courses. It is clear that this committee, and FPSE as a whole, will need to fight to ensure that the college system continues to offer comprehensive university transfer options. Proposed cuts such as the elimination of History at the College of New Caledonia are short-sighted and harm those people who need to remain in their communities as they continue their post-secondary education. In my view, this fight should include the Policy Table.

Provincial Policy Table

The Policy Table was formed as a result of the 2007 round of negotiations. The Policy Table was created to discuss issues affecting the post-secondary sector. One third of the members on the policy table come from each of the government, the employer and the employees. FPSE appointed George Davison, Susan Briggs and I, with Phil Legg as our

alternate. The Policy Table is expected to meet quarterly and has met twice.

The first meeting of the Policy Table was mainly a discussion of scope. The government's initial draft on scope was very limited. We were effective in being able to broaden the scope and we convinced the committee that it was ok to discuss items that might have budgetary implications.

The second meeting was on the substantive issue of trades training. Many issues were raised including the fact that the Industry Training Authority (ITA) would unilaterally change the duration of programs. Interestingly, after we hammered them about the ITA failing to consult with the educators prior to making a decision to change the lengths of various trades programs, the government made an announcement that a BSc in Nursing will only be three years long. It makes me wonder what influence we might have.

Having said that, we do have another meeting scheduled for next month to further discuss trades training issues and we must use every opportunity we have to try and influence the government. If the Auditor General's report is as negative about the ITA and trades training as we expect, we may have the opportunity to do some good work that can be applied in other education sectors.

One of those sectors, and from my perspective a very high priority, is to define the role of Community Colleges to include comprehensive university transfer programs.

Joint Administration Dispute Resolution Committee

While the Policy Table is not a forum for discussing BC-wide labour-management issues, the Joint Administration Dispute Resolution Committee (JADRC) is. JADRC met once this past

year and very little was resolved. We had some initial discussions about post-65 benefits, including STD/LTD and life insurance. Effectively, management said locals can arbitrate to determine whether failure to provide those benefits post-65 is a breach of the *Human Rights Code*. We also had some discussion about PSEA's role in contract administration. PSEA claims they only meddle when the issue requires a letter of agreement to settle it or there are some system-wide implications. Unfortunately, I think they take a very broad view of what a system-wide implication is.

JADRC has agreed that two meetings per year are appropriate. The next meeting will be in October.

Pension Advisory Committee

Unlike JADRC, Pension Advisory Committee meetings are productive and interesting. Although I am not the Executive Liaison to the Pension Advisory Committee, I and the other FPSE Trustees are non-voting participants in the committee.

The committee has been looking at a number of issues lately including post-retirement benefits, phased retirement and indexing. At the fall PAC meeting I did a presentation on possible ways of addressing the indexing problems facing the College Pension Plan. In addition, I drafted a paper on the concept of an age neutral retirement formula. Part of the motivation for the age neutral retirement formula was the introduction by the federal government of the possibility of a phased retirement scheme where employees could both contribute to and draw from the same pension plan.

Another motivation for drafting the age neutral paper was as a result of some work done in preparation for a presentation I did for the Status of Women Committee on gender issues in

the Pension Plan. I have also started looking into issues around non-regular faculty and pension credits.

Non-Regular Faculty Committee

While pensions are an issue for Non-Regular Faculty, job security and equal pay and benefits are at the top of their list. The Non-Regular Faculty Committee has spent some time reviewing contract language from around the system and developed a spreadsheet showing what the salary and working conditions are for non-regular faculty around the system.

Several key areas have been identified as in need of work during the next round of negotiations, including the issue of secondary scales and the allocation of work. It is fair to say that the Non-Regular Faculty Committee was very disappointed in the last round of negotiations, but the committee is gearing up to ensure Non-Regular Faculty issues are a priority in the next round.

Other work

During this past year I have been involved with negotiations from a different perspective. As mentioned above, I was asked to negotiate the renewal of the FPSE - CUPE 1004 Collective Agreement. Terri van Steinberg was the other member of the negotiating committee. Although we were asked to do the negotiations last September, we only managed to start negotiations in early April. We set two

days for negotiations and, fortunately, by the end of the second day we had an agreement.

As well, I have been very active in the anti cutback campaign. As decided by Presidents' Council in mid march, FPSE wanted to bring attention to the cutbacks our system was facing. I took the opportunity associated with an announcement at Malaspina to start the ball rolling. On March 27th, after consulting with Staff Rep Philip Legg, I put out a news release about the possibility of extensive cuts at Malaspina and around BC at other colleges. The news release got strong coverage on Vancouver Island, including a number of radio stations and A-Channel News. The following week I was interviewed live on the CBC "On the Island" morning show. The Minister of Advanced Education was interviewed just after me. As of today (April 11), there is ongoing media interest in this story and President Cindy Oliver has been doing a lot of work on this issue.

Summary

As usual, there has been a lot of work to do over the past twelve months but it is valuable work. We have a great post-secondary education system – and we must do all that we can to protect it.

Respectfully submitted,

Dominique Roelants,
Second Vice-President

MEMBER- AT-LARGE REPORT:

TERRI VAN STEINBURG



I AM PLEASED TO MAKE MY SECOND report as FPSE Member-at-Large. It has been a challenging year for all of us as we face a myriad of issues that affect our work and our system as a whole.

The work of Member-at-Large means that I work within FPSE making contributions to the ongoing work of FPSE and representing the organization externally to our allies and partners.

This year I participated in the selection committee to hire a new FPSE Staff Representative, worked together with Second VP Dominique Roelants to successfully conclude bargaining with FPSE staff, who are members of CUPE 1004. A deal was reached after two days of productive negotiations.

I had the honour of participating in the inaugural meeting of the International Solidarity Fund Committee and make recommendations regarding the first disbursements of the fund.

Much of the work of our Federation is undertaken by our Standing Committees. I have been assigned to work with two of these committees as Executive Liaison to the Status of Women Committee and the Human Rights & International Solidarity Committee.

Status of Women Committee

The representatives on the Status of Women Committee worked hard again this year to discuss and advocate on behalf of women's rights. A number of initiatives were undertaken both at the Federation and local levels.

The committee has raised issues and developed strategies to deal with discrimination, intimidation, bullying and harassment on campus.

SWC members have also been working on an Equity Audit and initiated the production of an FPSE International Women's Day Poster that was distributed to all locals for International Women's Day, March 8th.

The members of SWC felt deeply the loss of Sister Barb Brown. Barb was a strong advocate for women's rights and her contributions are sorely missed.

I want to thank all of the women I have worked with on this committee this past year and congratulate Candace Fertile from Local 12 who was re-elected as Chair of SWC.

Human Rights & International Solidarity Committee

The representatives to the Human Rights & International Solidarity Committee are passionate advocates and activists on a wide range of human rights issues. This year the committee's work focused on a variety of issues including equality rights for non-regular instructors, the rights of war resisters, the Afghan War, and the Sharon McIvor case.

The committee developed a draft policy on Equity and, after spearheading the development of our International Solidarity Fund, elected Rick Gordon and Micé Albano to represent HRISC on the ISF Committee. Linda Duarte will serve as alternate.

Congratulations to Rick Gordon on his re-election as Chair, and a big thank you to all the HRISC members for their dedication to human rights issues.

In representing FPSE externally my duties this year have included:

- FPSE Floor Manager at the BC Federation of Labour Convention in November;
- attending CAUT Council;
- attending the Tri-national Conference in Defence of Public Education in Los Angeles;
- attending the NUCAUT and CLC Conventions.

In addition I have been nominated to represent FPSE on the CAUT Women's Committee and have been appointed to serve on the CLC Constitution and Structure Committee.

As a member of the Executive I also represent FPSE on two BC Federation of Labour Committees. Participating in these committees allows for an important exchange of information and strategies and informs our work.

BC Fed Women's Right Committee

The WRC is in the process of organizing the 2008 Summer Institute for Union Women. It will be a joint conference with participation from union sisters in California, Washington and Oregon, with a theme of Political Action, and will be held at the University of Victoria, July 9-13. I'd like to encourage the participation of all FPSE women who are able to attend. As a member of the organizing committee I can assure you it is shaping up to be an excellent program this year.

The WRC organized the Annual International Women's Day Breakfast. In conjunction, the Federation released an update to the 2005 Report *Losing Ground: The Effects of Government Cutbacks on Women in BC*.

BC Fed Political Action Committee

The BC Fed will once again launch the "Count Me In" campaign. This is an issues-based approach to political action, rather than a partisan one. The PAC is planning a two day seminar sometime in June 2008, dates TBA. Presenters will include two Australian activists who worked on their recent election campaign. PAC has also been following the implementation and implications of the new provincial electoral boundaries, as well as discussing the implications of the new legislation covering Municipal election reporting.

In closing, I'd like to thank my fellow Executive members Cindy Oliver, Dileep Athaide, George Davison, Dominique Roelants and Bill McConnell, for their leadership, wisdom and insights on the many issues we have faced and for the support they have provided to me this past year.

Respectfully submitted,

Terri Van Steinburg (Local 5),
Member-at-Large

MEMBER- AT-LARGE REPORT:

BILL McCONNELL



I WAS ELECTED AS MEMBER-AT-LARGE on the FPSE Executive Committee by Presidents' Council (PC) at the 2007 AGM in Cranbrook. I was assigned as Executive Liaison to two Standing Committees: the Professional and Scholarly Development Committee, and the Pension Advisory Committee.

Professional & Scholarly Development Committee

I attended the two PSDC meetings held this past year on October 26/27, 2007, and February 15, 2008. Details of the discussions, decisions and actions of the PSDC can be found in Committee Chair Lesley Watt's report to the AGM, which I encourage you to read.

The committee assumed an expanded mandate this year, incorporating a broader definition of scholarly activity into its terms of reference. In part as a consequence of this change, the committee organized FPSE's Scholarly Activity Conference held in New Westminster on March 29, 2008, at which I was privileged to present. The conference provided an overview of the nature of scholarly activity, a review of activities occurring within our system, and ended with a brain-

storming session on overcoming obstacles to engaging in scholarly activity. A paper based on the issues identified at the conference will be forthcoming.

I would like to thank newly re-elected Chair, Lesley Watts (Local 16), for her enthusiastic and dedicated leadership of this committee, Staff Representative Jeff McKeil for his expertise, guidance and input, and Administrative Assistant Nancy Yip for her support and assistance to the committee.

Pension Advisory Committee

I attended the two PAC meetings held this past year on October 19/20, 2007 and February 8/9, 2008. Details of the discussions, decisions and actions of the PAC can be found in Committee Chair Al Valteau's report to the AGM, which I also encourage you to read.

The committee continues to raise awareness of two key issues facing our pension plan: the longevity of post-retirement group benefits, and threats to the Inflation Adjustment Account (IAA). PAC recommended the presentation made by the Executive Director of the College Pension Plan on post-retirement benefits at the March PC

meeting, PAC proposed that PC strike an ad hoc committee composed of PAC and PC members to develop a plan to deal with post-retirement group benefits and the IAA, and PAC and PC will hold their September 2008 meetings on the same weekend to allow for joint attendance at a meeting with an actuary.

I would like to thank newly re-elected Chair, Al Valleau (Local 5), for his thoughtful and dedicated leadership of this committee, Staff Representative Weldon Cowan for his guidance, input and expertise in pensions, and Administrative Assistant Margaret Sutherland for her support and assistance to the committee.

Other Activities

I attended the 3rd Canadian Labour Congress Pension Conference in Ottawa, November 1-3, 2007. Drawing on the conference discussion paper "Move forward together or fend for yourself? The future of Canadian Pensions" (available on the CLC website), a mix of keynotes, panels and workshops focused on pension protection and retirement security. Given that less than forty percent of Canadians have workplace pensions, of particular note were discussions on proposals to expand CPP benefits, to increase access to defined benefit plans through unionization, and to increase access to affordable prescription drugs.

I attended the 63rd CAUT Council meeting in Ottawa, November 23-25, 2007. The first day included a meeting of NUCAUT locals, and a lobby on Parliament Hill, at which two FPSE

delegations met with MPs from Vancouver Island and the Interior, to advocate for public post-secondary education. The main council meeting was informative, focusing on regular council business, and included a spirited discussion on changes to eligibility criteria for joining the association.

I also attended the 51st BC Federation of Labour Convention in Vancouver, November 26-28, 2007, serving as caucus whip. I will chair the newly formed ad hoc committee that will develop a plan to deal with post-retirement group benefits and the IAA, and will attend the 3rd NUCAUT and 25th CLC Constitutional Conventions in Toronto in May, 2008.

Conclusion

I have thoroughly enjoyed my year as Member-at-Large. I have had the opportunity to work closely with Cindy Oliver, Dileep Athaide, George Davison, Dominique Roelants and Terri Van Steinberg, whom I admire and respect; to continue to work with the other members of PC, whom I also admire and respect; to connect with members of our organization and the larger labour movement; and to enhance my awareness of important issues facing our organization. I look forward to continuing to work within our organization as we fight collectively to protect our rights, and the vitality of public post-secondary education.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill McConnell (Local 16),
Member-at-Large