

OUR VOICE

WINTER 2009

A MESSAGE FROM THE NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Well, hello there, we're glad you could join us. We trust you all had a happy Christmas and a Merry New Year and are ready to tackle the back half of the 09/10 school year.

What you are holding in your hands right now is the inaugural issue of Our Voice, a newsletter for all members of CUPE Local 606. It's been a long time since we've had our own newsletter. Too long a time, in our estimation, so we decided to get to work.

There are numerous reasons as to why we decided to come up with a newsletter. One of the main ones being due to the landscape of our workplace, it becomes very easy for a disconnected feeling to sink in. How often does the secretary at Seaview see the caretaker at Davis Road, or how many times during the school year does an EA at Coal Tye come in contact with the shop guy in our carpenter's shop?

We realize that there's nothing we can do to change the geography of our situation, but we hope a newsletter will at least help a little in bridging the divide. It's been fun, too, getting Our Voice on its feet. And now, brothers and sisters, we invite you to join in on the fun.

We need your feedback, your ideas, your articles, your views. Pass on tidbits, events, pictures, and news. (See that? We're poets and we don't know it.)

Now, we're hoping that since we are all brothers and sisters of the same union, we will respect each other enough not to backstab or slag one another (Right, everyone?) but to be on the safe side, we came up with a policy for contributions to Our Voice:

"While we welcome your contributions, we ask that they be constructive. All articles should contribute positively to the welfare of this Union and its members, and we will accept no attacks on any employee of School District 68. We will accept a thoughtful discussion of all related issues, and reserve the right to reply to those that seem to reflect a misunderstanding of the Union and its policies."

Now let's hear what you have to say. Our contact info can be found on page 2.

So long until our next issue. We hope you'll return for more.

Yours in Solidarity, The Newsletter Committee

SUPPORT STRONG FOR PARAMEDICS

BURNABY – A new poll shows solid support for B.C.'s ambulance paramedics in their demands to improve ambulance service in B.C. and negotiate a collective agreement.

When the provincial government passed Bill 21 "back to work" legislation on Nov. 7, the 3,500 ambulance paramedics had been on strike for seven months, but were already working under Essential Services orders. By a margin of more than 2-1, British Columbians said that the Government's legislation was not justified.

According to the Strategic Communications poll, an almost 3-1

margin of British Columbians called the legislation unnecessary.

According to the poll commissioned by the Canadian Union of Public Employees, 70-80 per cent of British Columbians are aware of the dispute and most said they didn't think the government was justified in imposing a contract on our ambulance paramedics (with Bill 21).

More than 75 per cent of British Columbians say that ambulance paramedics should have their contract determined by an independent third-party arbitration process similar to the one already in place for B.C.'s fire-

fighters and police.

Despite repeated requests by CUPE 873 Ambulance Paramedics of BC to use that mechanism for paramedics, the provincial government has refused.

Poll respondents expressed strong concerns about what they said was unjustified political interference in the collective bargaining process by the Vancouver Olympic Organizing Committee (VANOC).

A memo from VANOC to the government demanded an end to the legal strike by paramedics in order to ensure the 2010 Winter Games.

The results are compiled from a Strategic Communications telephone poll conducted November 16-18, 2009. Interviews were conducted with 406 adult BC residents selected by the random-household sampling method. The overall results are considered accurate to within 4.9%, 19-times-in-20, of what they would have been had the entire British Columbia adult population been polled. The margin of error will be larger for sub-groups of the survey population. This data was statistically weighted to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the actual British Columbia population.

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Please call the CUPE office if you need assistance:

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NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Ron Farino
 Don Hartwig
 Kristin Houvenaeghel
 Jeff Virtanen

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter or have the newsletter emailed to you, please email us at: our-voice@live.com

NEWSLETTER POLICY

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

I want to take this opportunity to welcome you back to a New Year and a new decade. I hope you all had a chance to spend some quality time with your family and friends over the Christmas break.

As I ponder what the New Year may bring, two things come to the top of the agenda, next year's school budget and bargaining. I for one would like to try and be optimistic and hope that the Provincial Government would see how wrong they are when it comes to underfunding Public Education. Even in times like this, when governments are running deficits,

they can ill afford to turn a blind eye when it comes to providing a quality public education system. We as support staff employees must work together to assure our voices are heard and that Trustees understand that we are also an integral part of the education system. Trustees should be reminded that, when it comes to setting the budget this year, they may want to consider not adopting a balanced budget and asking the Government to provide the district with the funding they need to prevent layoffs and possible changes to the school calendar to save money.

This year will also be about bargaining a new collective agreement. Once again CUPE members are being told by the government that we must accept a 0% wage increase even though the cost of living still rises. What more will they ask us to give up? We must ask our sisters and brothers from all sectors to join us in standing up together to tell this Government this is not acceptable. I truly hope that by standing together we can make a difference.

In solidarity,

Rob Zver

President, CUPE 606

GREETINGS FROM THE REGIONAL EXECUTIVE

In June of 2009, I was elected as CUPE 606 1st Regional Vice President. I am privileged to support and work with you in this position. I am one of four executives for the region. Our goal as the Regional Executive is to be visible, approachable, informative, supportive and connected with you, the

members.

I believe we all have something in common; the will to make a difference. The strength within us connects us as a union. This strength expands to the schools, students, teachers, our families and our communities. We are all in this together, creating our environment and

culture. Let's work together to do the things we cannot do alone.

In Solidarity,

Ron Farino

On behalf of the Regional Executive

POINT OF VIEW

This section will be used as a letter to the editor section, featuring CUPE 606 Member's opinions.

Greetings to fellow members of CUPE 606. I am looking forward to being a part of the newsletter committee, especially in these very trying times.

With our contract getting ready for negotiations, and our daily negativity and cut backs from our provincial

leader, I am very optimistic that we will be receiving input from many of us on a variety of topics. With the latest, renegeing of special project funding from the Provincial Government, I can't get out of my mind what you know who said in a TV news hour a few weeks ago, "I know what's best for British Columbia". Not WE, not US, but I. It makes me think of a story I read about a leader in Europe during the 1930's

and 40's. That chap made a very similar statement.

With these situations occurring (on what seems like a daily basis), it couldn't be a better time to start a newsletter that may unite us a little more, and at least give us something to read on our coffee breaks.

Yours in solidarity,

Don Hartwig

UNDERSTANDING YOUR CONTRACT

Grievances

In this section, we want to tackle any questions you have regarding our contract, procedures, protocols, etc. that you may not be totally clear on.

Since this is our inaugural issue, we didn't have any submitted queries to tackle, so we thought we'd attempt to give a clearer picture on a procedure that many of us might not fully understand. That procedure is the grievance.

In short, a grievance is a

claim or complaint involving the interpretation, application, or alleged violation of our collective agreement.

Now, for starters, both the union and management agree that it is best that any complaints or grievances be settled as quickly as possible.

Here are the steps that go into solving a grievance:

Step 1- This is where the shop steward (preferably of your choice) discusses the alleged grievor with your immediate supervisor.

Step 2- If step one is unsuccessful, the Director of Human Resources or designate and the supervisor will meet with no more than three members of the Union in an attempt to solve the issue.

Step 3- If step two doesn't bear fruit, a Grievance Committee meeting will be held. The Grievance Committee consists of no more than three members of the Board and three members of the Union.

If all three steps fail, the matter may be referred to an Arbitration Board.

Now, because of space constraints, this is a simplified showing of the grievance procedure. Go to pages 14-16 of our Collective Agreement for a more in-depth description of the grievance procedure.

All grievances are held by the Local, not the member.

Please send us any questions or areas that you may be unclear on. We'll do our best to answer those questions in up-coming issues of the newsletter. Our email is:

ourvoice@live.com

LET'S SHOW OUR COMMUNITY CUPE CARES

While I was at the Loaves & Fishes Food Bank the other day, dropping off some posters to support their upcoming clothing drive, I asked the manager to show me what a single person receives. The manager told me they are allowed to get a bag of food once a week. The bag he showed me consisted of one can of soup, one can of tuna, one bargain brand macaroni and cheese, one loaf of bread, one pint of milk and a few tea bags. The bag for a mother with children would

contain a few more items – a small jar of spaghetti sauce and a small package of pasta, and one more pint carton of milk. The manager told me that they are currently serving 800 more people per month than they did at this time last year. It was all I could do not to cry.

I would like to appeal to you to think of what you could do to help families who are less fortunate.

Monetary donations can be cash, cheque or online credit

card donations by going to www.canadahelps.org You can also donate right at the checkout at Thrifty Foods or Country Grocer.

And finally, the food bank is having a clothing drive and are seeking any donations of winter clothing in good condition, such as clothes, sweaters, jackets, toques, mitts, socks, or footwear.

Please give me a call at 250-741-5276 if you need to make arrangements to have your donation picked up or

for more information about the most needed items.

Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Kristin

And

Loaves and Fishes.



OUTSIDE THE GATES

As the title of this section implies, we would like to use this space to shine a spotlight on things our members are doing outside the gates of our daily work duties.

For example, Darren Angell, a carpenter and fellow Local 606 member, recently coached the Bantam Girls' BC Lacrosse team to second place in a national Lacrosse Tournament in Ontario (narrowly losing to Ontario, 3-

2 in the gold medal finals. We would welcome your articles about what you do in your spare time, your hobbies and interests, or to highlight a great cause that you feel other SD68 support workers might be interested in.

To start things off, Kristin Houvenaeghel, Secretary for Occupational Health and Safety, raises purebred English Springer Spaniels, is a member of the Nanaimo

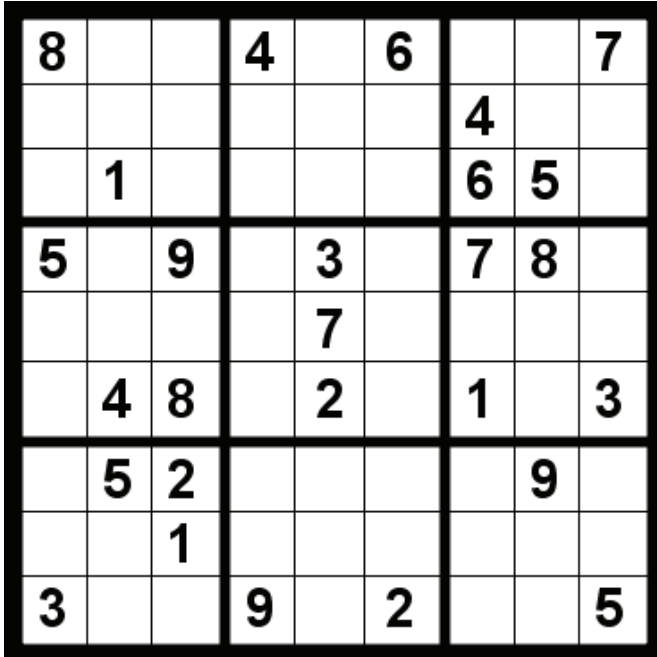
Kennel Club, and operates a home business, Kristext Virtual Assistant and Computer Services. She is also a member of IAAP, International Association of Administrative Professionals and does some volunteer work for the Loaves & Fishes Food Bank. No rest for the wicked here!

So please send us a little story about your interests and passions so we can all get to know each other a little

better.

If you would like to see yourself or a workmate highlighted in this section, please send us an email at ourvoice@live.com.

JUST FOR FUN



The object of Sudoku is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, and each 3X3 box contains the same number only once.

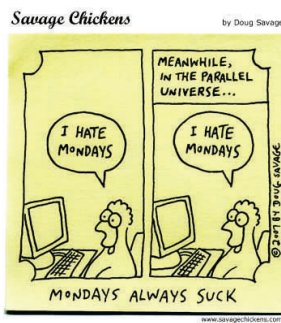
CUPE CLASSIFIEDS

For Sale

If you have something to sell or barter and would like to see your ad here, please email it to ourvoice@live.com

Brass and glass fireplace screen for sale. Good condition. \$100 or best offer. Please contact Don at 250-618-2223.

What do you get when you cross the wonderful temperament of the Labrador with the intelligence and energy of the Springer Spaniel? **Wonderful Labradingers!** Will be ready to go in February. \$500 includes shots and deworming. Call Kristin at 250-722-2085



Sudoku Solution

3	7	4	9	6	2	8	1	5
6	8	1	3	4	5	2	7	9
4	5	2	7	8	1	3	9	6
7	4	8	5	2	6	9	1	3
1	2	3	6	7	8	5	4	9
5	6	9	1	3	4	7	8	2
4	1	7	2	6	9	3	5	8
2	9	6	8	5	7	4	3	1
8	3	5	4	1	9	6	2	7

THE HOT LIST

British Columbia Federation of Labour

Boycotts:

Please respect the following disputes and do not patronize these businesses until the boycott is settled:

- **CUPW**—Non-Union Postal Outlets
- **USW**—Local 7812—Philips Electronic Products

Current Strikes and Lockouts:

Please respect the Union picket lines in the following disputes and do not patronize these businesses until the dispute is settled:

- **United Steelworkers (USW)** - Wages
- **Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)** - BC Ambulance Service—Benefits Concessions Wages
- **United Food & Commercial Workers Union (UFCW)**, Extra Foods Maple Ridge—Job Security, Wages
- **Construction and Specialized Workers' Union**—Wescon Enterprises Ltd. (Trivern, Armstring) - Benefits, Concessions, Seniority.

Ode to the Public Servant

Ten public servants, standing in a line,
 One of them was downsized, then there were nine.
 Nine public servants, who must negotiate,
 One left the union, then there were eight.
 Eight public servants, thought they were in heaven,
 'Til one was redeployed, then there were seven.
 Seven public servants, their jobs as safe as bricks,
 But one was re-classified, then there were six.
 Six public servants, trying to survive,
 One of them was privatized, now there were five.
 Five public servants, ready to give more,
 But one golden handshake reduced them to four.
 Four public servants, full of loyalty,
 Their jobs were combined, then there were three.
 Three public servants, under review,
 One left on secondment, then there were two.
 Two public servants, coping on the run,
 One went on stress leave, then there was one.
 One public servant, agreed to relocate,
 Replaced by ten consultants at twice the hourly rate.

Author unknown