



# The Comp-Ten REPORT

MAY 2011

Story ideas and comments for the Comp-Ten Report can be submitted to: [comp10report@bcgeu.ca](mailto:comp10report@bcgeu.ca)

## Issue number one for members: job security



by Mike Nuyens, Component 10 Chairperson

Over the last month, I have met with members in many Component 10 worksites around the province, including the Highways, at AirCare and the Canada Line. The meetings were very well attended. Thanks to all of you who were there – and for spreading the word, too. Almost everyone gave me feedback on the issues and concerns that they are facing every day. Everyone’s number one issue is job security.

In the highways sector, our members are faced with the elimination of successorship in the next round of maintenance contracts that will be tendered out in the next couple of years. Our AirCare members have until the end of this year to find out what is in store for them: their contract is also being tendered out, and despite our best lobbying efforts, we can’t rule out the program’s elimination yet. Workers on the new Canada Line are also looking at reductions due to a term-certain agreement with Translink that will result in the elimination of some station attendant positions.

Job security in all three areas of Component 10 are under attack. The component executive spent two days in early May discussing how we are going to respond. The union has already been proactively lobbying for AirCare workers, by lobbying Metro

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ProTrans BC bargaining committee members Kirsten Campbell, Ryan Heggs, Shant Khachadur, and Lana Vincent with BCGEU Staff Representative Gary Bennett.



## ProTrans BC members ratify first collective agreement

Nearly 200 workers on the Canada Line voted to approve their first collective agreement by an 87 per cent vote in favour at the end of March. “We are very pleased that our members who operate and maintain the popular Canada Line now have a fair contract in place. This is a very solid first collective agreement for our members at ProTrans BC,” says BCGEU President Darryl Walker. “We look forward to working together with the employer in implementing the contract,” he added.

This is the first collective agreement at ProTrans BC, the company operating the Canada Line. The three-year collective agreement is now in effect, and runs until December 31, 2013. The terms of the three-year collective agreement cover all usual areas, including wages, pension, health benefits, and occupational groupings. It also covers such areas as shift scheduling and overtime, and introduces a grievance procedure and joint occupational health and safety language for workers.

A Labour Relations Board mediator was appointed and made recommendations on some key terms of this collective agreement after a 15-month negotiation period. In January 2011, ProTrans BC workers voted 95 per cent in favour of strike action to back up their bargaining demands.

“We wish to thank all BCGEU members at ProTrans BC for their continued

support through this long negotiation process. Now that the first collective agreement has been ratified, we look forward to a constructive relationship between the union and ProTrans BC,” said BCGEU staff representative Gary Bennett. There will be some new processes at the worksite as the collective agreement provisions unfold, Bennett indicated.

One hundred and eighty BCGEU members work on the Canada Line, including control room operators, maintenance personnel and attendants. They joined the BCGEU when the Canada Line was launched in August 2009.

The Canada Line is the new 19 km automated rail-based rapid transit system connecting downtown Vancouver with central Richmond and the Vancouver International Airport. Daily ridership levels are estimated at over 100,000 people per day.

*over ....*

# Unlimited vision

by Mike Nuyens,  
Component 10 Chairperson

We all need a vision of the future. Most of us understand this means stepping up and leading. But to achieve this, we also need to take the time to understand where we are at and where we have come from. There is a process of listening and learning. Only then will we identify the outcome that is needed for everyone.

BCGEU highways maintenance workers have seen many changes and challenges during the last 23 years, since the privatization of highways maintenance in B.C. We need your vision today.

It's time for the members of Component 10 to step up to the plate, to express your views and contribute to the future, like others have done before you. We need you to become active in the union at the shop floor level. This is about getting members involved in the union – about becoming a shop steward, an occupational health and safety representative, or even becoming a member on your local bargaining committee.

Over the last couple of months the highways sector union members have been electing their bargaining committees to represent them in the upcoming round of negotiations. It has been a challenging time. Some areas of B.C. have six or seven members running for the three-member committee. Sadly, other areas can't even get a single person to run.

Remember, there are union members before you who risked it all to achieve the best they could for the members they represented.

Getting involved in the union does mean sticking out your neck. Yes, it means taking a risk. And it is definitely full of challenges. But at the end of every day, at the end of every week and at

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Phillip Legg, the labour representative on the WorkSafeBC Board of Directors, speaks at the “Leaders in Safety” conference.

## Component 10 at the BCGEU “Leaders in Safety” conference

by Mike Prystae,  
Component 10 OH&S Chairperson

On March 11 and 12, four Component 10 delegates attended the Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) conference in Richmond. The BCGEU and the Compensation Employees' Union (CEU) hosted the conference, headlined “Leaders in Safety”. There was strong participation from the OH&S committees from both unions.

As the title suggests, the conference focused on the role of OH&S committee members as the leaders in safety in the workplace, and the event offered a very informative and complete agenda. As committee members, we had an excellent opportunity to share our experiences, discuss our successes and challenges, and brainstorm ways to improve the work of our committee.

We had the opportunity to hear from a number of guest speakers. Opening remarks were from BCGEU President Darryl Walker and CEU President Sandra Wright. The conference had three keynote speakers, including Phillip Legg, the labour representative on the WorkSafeBC Board of Directors; the NDP labour critic Raj Chouhan, and Irene Lanzinger, the secretary treasurer of the BC Federation of Labour. The speakers addressed the important role unions play in lobbying for better health and safety legislation in B.C.

The conference also heard a number of presentations focused on workplace

violence and bullying. BCGEU Education Officer Lynda Morrice clarified bullying and harassing behaviours. CEU Safety Officer David Clarabut explained the role of Worker Compensation Board safety officers. Finally, BCGEU Vice President Mike Clarke and BCGEU OH&S Officer Sheila Moir spoke about working alone and workplace violence. All the presentations are posted on the BCGEU website at [http://www.bcgeu.ca/occupational\\_health\\_and\\_safety\\_news](http://www.bcgeu.ca/occupational_health_and_safety_news).

After each presentation, we had group table discussions that gave all participants the opportunity to share our knowledge and expand on the health and safety issues that are currently facing workers around the province of B.C.

Conference participants committed to take back a series of actions to their workplaces, including:

- taking their annual OH&S committee education course;
- learning more about their roles, responsibilities and OH&S legislation;
- improving communication with co-workers on OH&S matters;
- holding employers accountable to health and safety issues;
- encouraging workers to know the OH&S rights and to use them;
- using WorkSafeBC as a resource, including the [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com) website and their 1-888-621-SAFE phone number – and inviting them to committee meetings.



Highways bargaining conference delegates in Burnaby on April 9.

## Highways bargaining options discussed at conference

by Jim Manson, Component 10 Bargaining Council Chairperson

Over 45 BCGEU Component 10 bargaining committee chairs came together in Burnaby on April 8 and 9 to discuss upcoming bargaining in the highways sector. There was considerable discussion from all participants, with job security, benefits, auxiliary rights and wages being identified as particularly important issues.

They also engaged in significant discussions regarding successorship and the possibility of maintenance contract extensions. The lack of successorship provisions in the next round of tendering could be problematic for this round of bargaining and for service continu-

ity, the participants noted. The union and many highway contractors share this concern. A key unknown at this point is the position of the Ministry of Transportation.

Bargaining conference participants gave the bargaining council permission to move forward with caution, and to engage the ministry and the road builders in discussions, which will take place over the coming months.

Please note that a membership survey will be sent out in the coming months to seek

your direct input. Please take the time to fill it out. And stay tuned for more developments as they unfold.



Component 10 Chairperson Mike Nuyens makes a point at the highways bargaining conference.

### *Job security – continued from page 1*

Vancouver councillors on extending and expanding the program. They strongly endorsed our position, but we still don't know what Victoria thinks – and the government has the final say on the future of the program.

I just want you to know Component 10 is going to bat for our members. We are going to campaign for their jobs, we are going to put pressure on the government, on contractors and even on our own union, to make sure we do our best to protect our members' futures.

But we can't do it alone. We need your help. You need to stay informed, and get involved. Pick up the phone and contact your local representatives, attend a meeting or, better yet, get involved.

We do our best to keep members informed, whether through the Component 10 report or on the website at [www.bcgeu.ca](http://www.bcgeu.ca).

Above all, make sure your contact information – including phone numbers and email – are up-to-date (see [www.bcgeu.ca/change\\_of\\_address](http://www.bcgeu.ca/change_of_address)).

When an important development breaks, we need to be able to reach you fast.

### *Unlimited vision – continued from page 2*

the end of every year, you can look back and see the positive change you contributed to for the members you represent. To me, that is what having some "vision" is all about. That is what my "vision" has been: to be an active member of my union. Perhaps it can be your vision too. Get up and get active in the union. We need you!



BCGEU Pension Plan trustees Mike Nuyens, Jim Manson, Kelly McDonald and Rory Smith attended the Pension Boot Camp on February 28 and March 1.

Supplement (GIS) and Old Age Security (OAS). More details can be found at the CLC website ([www.canadianlabour.ca](http://www.canadianlabour.ca)).

Another part of the seminar focused on member communication: how to keep plan members informed of their plan and why full participation is important to maximize their retirement benefits. This was a good chance for us to look at communication styles. Even though pension reading may seem boring to some members, it is very important information. The BCGEU plan is very good at communicating information to plan members.

The final part of the seminar was focused on the future of occupational pension plans in Canada and the many challenges ahead, like the baby boomers coming into retirement age, volatility in the markets, and the importance to keep moving forward and evolving with the times.

The BCGEU Pension Plan is a defined contribution plan. The table below enables newer plan members to gain some understanding of what our plan looks like in comparison to a defined benefit plan.

# Pension Boot Camp

by Rory Smith, BCGEU Plan Trustee

The “Pension Boot Camp” is a seminar that covers key knowledge areas regarding pensions, such as key pension terminology used in discussions, understanding plan types and knowing pension plan strengths and weaknesses. Participants discussed many aspects of pension structures, and helped develop a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of plan trustees, and the duties that follow.

The seminar also covered the different types of pension plans that exist in Canada. These include defined benefit plans and defined contribution plans (see comparison table), Significant time was devoted to discussing defined contribution plans and investment advice, asset allocations, diversification, rates of return and governance of that type of plan.

On the second day, the seminar explained the different elements of the Canadian retirement system, which basically has four levels:

- 1. Old Age Security (OAS):**  
Benefits at 65+, may include GIS – very limited benefits
- 2. Canadian Pension Plan (CPP):**  
Final benefit based on contributions, for length of time and age
- 3. Occupational Pension Plans:**  
Funding + Investments = Benefits (e.g. BCGEU Pension Plan)
- 4. Other Savings:**  
RRSP/term deposits/savings bonds/tax-free savings accounts (TFSA's)

All of the levels help to contribute to a well-funded retirement, and help members to maximize their possible benefit at retirement. But it's impor-

tant to have a sense of what you can expect from each of these retirement funding elements.

The keynote speaker was Canadian Labour Congress President Ken Georgetti, who presented the “Retirement Security for Everyone” campaign. Too many Canadian workers are retiring in poverty, and there needs to be a low-cost retirement investment alternative that takes into account future cost of living increases. An expanded Canadian Pension Plan would best support retiring Canadian workers, he said. The campaign goal is to gradually increase the payouts from the Canadian Pension Plan until they are doubled, and immediately increasing the Guaranteed Income

## TYPES OF PENSION PLANS

**TYPE A** – Current BCGEU Pension Plan

**TYPE B** – Plans similar to Superannuation

**1. A – Defined contribution**

- Specific contributions paid to plan in individual accounts
- Benefits on retirement depend on the value of account
- Benefits depend on choices of retirement vehicle chosen

**2. A – Non-integrated plan**

- Pension paid in addition to CPP
- Early retirement affects the balance of account
- More common in private sector

**1. B – Defined Benefit**

- Contributions may vary, based on actuarial reports
- Specific benefit paid at retirement
- Can include a health plan

**2. B – Integrated plan**

- Pension calculations include CPP benefits
- Early retirement may need additional bridging calculations
- Common in public sector plans

One of the most beneficial strategies for a member is to start young; it is very difficult to make up for the time lost investing in your retirement, but it is never too late to start.

# Emil Anderson members support the United Way

*Rory Smith, Local 1004 Chairperson*

BCGEU members at Emil Anderson are happy to support the United Way of the Fraser Valley, an organization that covers the same geographic area as the Fraser Valley Highways District.

In March, United Way representative Lori Masse was joined by Rory Smith, Local 1004 chairperson, and Mary Partridge, BCGEU senior staff representative, for a three-day tour of Emil Anderson Maintenance's Fraser Valley locations. They started in Abbotsford on March 29, where Partridge, Smith and Masse spoke to the staff at the seven Emil Anderson Maintenance's Fraser Valley locations.

"Not only did Emil Anderson employees learn about what United Way is doing to make their community safer and healthier, but I learned what they are doing to keep it safe, as well," said Masse, who runs the annual United Way campaign.

United Way's efforts provide grants

to 27 local charities, and provide funding for programs that help ensure children up to six years of age succeed. They seek solutions to homelessness and the provision of affordable housing, and help alleviate poverty across the communities they serve.

The United Way recently entered into a partnership with Reading Tree to distribute free books to children in the Fraser Valley.

"People donate books by placing them in the blue metal bins you've probably seen pop up around the communities," said Masse. "They are sorted, and the children's books in good condition are sent to schools that have the greatest need."



Lori Masse speaks to Emil Anderson workers about supporting the United Way of the Lower Mainland.



Component 10 Chairperson Mike Nuyens and first Vice-Chair Rory Smith at the opening of the Canadian Labour Congress Convention in Vancouver on May 9.

The expectation is that with books available, parents will be more likely to read to their children, giving them a good foundation for further learning.

"Without your help, we are creating an unbearable stress on our social services in the future," said Masse.

United Way is supported by the BC Federation of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress. Any company interested in supporting the United Way through a workplace campaign is invited to call Lori Masse at:

- 604-852-1234 or
- email [lori@uwfv.bc.ca](mailto:lori@uwfv.bc.ca)
- more information is also available at [www.uwfv.bc.ca](http://www.uwfv.bc.ca)



**Remember to check [www.bcgcu.ca](http://www.bcgcu.ca) often for Component 10 news!**

## COMPONENT 10

### BCGEU member steps up to the plate!



WAGNER

Brett Wagner, from the small town of Anaheim Lake, is the newly elected bargaining chairperson for service area 17, which stretches from Bella Coola to Williams Lake in Northern British Columbia.

Brett is a machine operator with Interior Roads Ltd. at Anaheim Lake. He has been there

for a number of years, working more often than not, as a grader operator. Brett enjoys his job and looks forward to the challenge of the upcoming negotiations

later this year. Until then, Brett will continue representing the membership as best and fairly as he can.

Brett is very proud of the charitable work that he and his fellow workers have been doing for a number of years. For the past few years they have donated the \$25 gift certificate they each receive from Interior Roads Ltd. during the Christmas period to the 139 Children's Charity, which helps the less fortunate at a time when it is most needed. They have not decided where the gift certificates will go this year, but they are working on that.

Thank you Brett for bringing this issue to light and good luck with your new union duties!

## RETIREMENT

### Component 10 says good-bye to long-time BCGEU staffer and activist Paul Martin



Former BCGEU Pension Officer Paul Martin

Paul Martin began his career with BCGEU in 1984 as a social policy researcher, but soon after his specialty and interests came to

focus on pensions. Paul has been involved with the Public Service Pension Plan since 1988. He was instrumental in the creation of our BCGEU Pension Plan, to which he was appointed as a trustee as well.

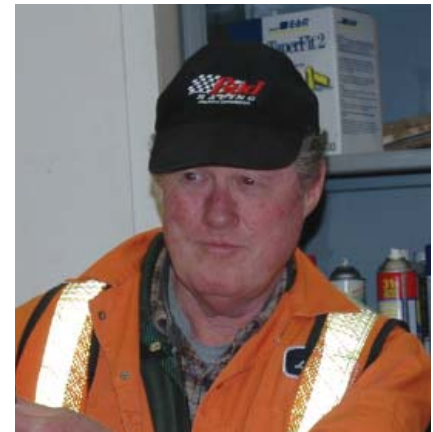
Paul has worn many hats representing our union. He has been on advisory boards to the Minister of Labour on pension benefits, a pension trustee on three different plans, a director of the BC Pension Corporation and a former director of the BC Investment Management Corporation, which manages the funds invested in public sector

pension plans in our province.

Paul is also an educator. He graduated from the University of Victoria with a Bachelor of Arts and a diploma in Public Sector Management from the School of Public Administration. He has taught at the Canadian Labour Congress Winter School and at numerous other organizations, including SHARE the labour-governed not-for-profit that works in the field of pension investments and workers capital.

Paul was always available to answer all the tough questions around pensions, benefits, and pension policy. As he moves into the next phase of his career, all Component 10 members should be in agreement in thanking Paul for everything he has done for our pensions, including the BCGEU Pension Plan that covers many Component 10 members. We wish you and your wife all the best, and much happiness in the future.

## OBITUARY



### Lawrence MacDonald 1944 – 2010

Lawrence MacDonald, a long-time machine operator, passed away on December 30, 2010.

He began working for the Ministry of Highways in the Revelstoke area back in 1974. He later worked for three private contractors, for a total of 32 years of service.

He had just retired in 2006 and was enjoying life and his family.

Lawrence never hesitated to help others. He could often be seen with his coffee group at their hang out.

Lawrence and his sense of humour will be greatly missed.