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Message from BCGEU president, Stephanie Smith

Hello to all BCGEU members in Operational Services – Component 10. As the president of the BCGEU and our 67,000 members, I want to thank you for the work you do all across our province.

A large portion of the component are the men and women who maintain our provincial highways.



SMITH

Round the clock, and year round, you are out there keeping the roads safe. I know it's not always easy.

We have already seen dissatisfaction from the public with roads in the East Kootenay this winter driving season.

Most travellers realize that highways workers are doing the best they can and are taking their complaints to the ministry and the privatized highways contractors.

I also want to thank the members who worked at Air-Care. The BCGEU lobbied

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Rory Smith, BCGEU vice president, Operational Services (Component 10).

Meet your new Component vice president

My name is Rory Smith. I was elected in June to represent the BCGEU members in the Operational Services Component (10).

With the support of your local chairs I believe that your component can have a proactive approach in solving the challenges we face today and work on building a future for you, your family and your community.

At every opportunity I will try to go with your local representative to meet you in your worksite, at a local meeting or at any other opportunity. I want to hear your issues, concerns in your workplace and the provincial issues that are challeng-

es for a lot of our members.

I want to have a conversation about how we can improve two way communication between members and their union.

My involvement in the BCGEU started in my workplace and that opportunity helped me grow over time by learning, listening and acting on behalf of my co-workers.

I hope I can support and help others to do the same.

It is our actions and hard work that can make a difference at work, in our community and in our own lives.

*Rory Smith
Component 10 vice president*

“Focus 90% of your time on solutions and only 10% of your time on problems”

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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hard to keep this important emissions testing program.

The provincial government steadfastly refused to revisit their decision to cancel AirCare.

Some of you have worked at AirCare for many years. You were a key part of the important service AirCare provided. The air we all breathe in the region is cleaner because of your work.

I'm looking forward to working with your component and your new component vice president Rory Smith.

Bargaining at Protrans is an immediate concern and your union will bring its full resources to negotiate a fair and reasonable collective agreement.

I will spend a lot of time in 2015 touring our province. I hope to meet many of you.

*Stephanie Smith
president, BCGEU*



Make sure you're able to receive regular email bargaining updates.

To update or add your email address visit www.bcgeu.ca/email

And remember to check www.bcgeu.ca often for Component 10 news!



Government ignores evidence, cancels AirCare

*By Dave Cumming,
Chair, Local 1003*

As the government has gone against the advice of the scientific community and the overwhelming evidence to support the continuation of the AirCare program, it will be shutting down on the 31st of December. Cancelling the program will result in the loss of 150 direct jobs and numerous indirect jobs in the automotive industry.

The program currently fails 50,000 vehicles annually and there are 20,000 vehicles which have failed AirCare and have not been registered, scrapped, or insured in other locations. In other words they are sitting in backyards and garages ready to be brought back on the road in 2015. This will result in reduced automobile sales and less money going to the repair and parts industry as people will no longer be forced to keep their vehicles in

a decent state of repair or replace them.

Mechanical defects such as no rear brakes, exhaust leaks underneath the vehicle, and vehicles emitting visible smoke which were often detected prior to or during testing will no longer be identified. The result will be more unsafe vehicles on the road and a marked deterioration in air quality.

Next year is an election year for the local and I would encourage those of you who work in the highways sector, Protrans, or West-coast Express to get involved in the local union. It is the place where you can have the biggest impact on the future of your workplace.

I will be conducting the local elections early next year and I would encourage you to show up at the meeting. In closing I have enjoyed being local chair for the past decade and I thank you for your support.



Kelly Darin, grader operator, in Fort St James.

BC Federation of Labour Summer Institute for Union Women

I found the experience enlightening and beneficial. The structure of the events was compact and kept us busy from the start of the day to the end. Below is a brief review of each course I took.

As I was involved with collective bargaining during my time with Envirotec Canada, I chose to take the Level 1 Collective Bargaining. It was interactive and I was able to bring to the course my personal experiences and to take from it many others' experiences as well.

I found the Aboriginal Relations course to be my favourite. It was insightful and broadened my understanding of the Aboriginal movement. I recently found out that I have Metis ancestors in my family.

The Sign Making for Rallies course was pretty straight forward as the title says. It provided me an understanding of how to make signs that are catchy and impacting. We made signs for the Stroller Brigade Rally at the BC Legislature.

The Self Care, Avoiding Burn Out as an Activist course taught me how to handle personal stressors as a union rep. The course gave participants an opportunity to provide their experiences and challenges in their personal settings.

Overall, it was a great experience and I would do it all over again.

*Toni Campbell
Local 1003*

The true cost of highway's privatization

Since privatization of highway, road and bridge maintenance in 1988 by the Social Credit government, we have seen a steady decline of infrastructure.

These deficiencies became even more prevalent in 2001 when the liberal government started shredding legally binding healthcare agreements with workers and cutting taxes that would provide revenue to fund our infrastructure.

A recent Global TV story on Ontario's privatized highways maintenance said the Ontario government is looking at returning privatized maintenance to public administration.

What has brought this about in Ontario sounds very familiar here in BC. Deteriorating roads and road maintenance is angering Ontario drivers.

There is more to road maintenance and safety than the bottom line profitability of contractors.

The Kootenay region of Local 1008 has also seen an increase in employees either moving on to greener pastures or retiring. It's the same in most regions of the

province where we are losing long serving highways workers.

What's happening to replace these experienced workers?

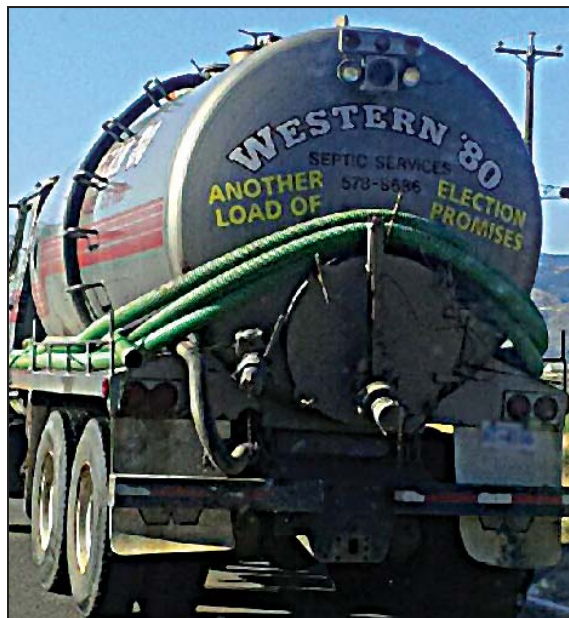
Recruitment and retention is difficult when you are competing for workers with better paying oil and mining companies. We have to come up with a better way.

One way is to encourage young workers that maintaining the roads,

bridges and highways is a good career choice.

As of now the industry needs to do a lot of work on that part. Low-ball tendering is not the way to go. Neither is giving the contracts to fly-by-night, non-union, out-of-province contractors.

*Kevin Staneland
chair of Local 1008*



KEEP ON TRUCKIN:
some political commentary on the back of a honey wagon.

Winter Driving

According to ICBC data collected over the last four years of car crashes causing serious injuries or fatalities

- The Lower Mainland averages 49 crashes in October, 64 crashes in December
- Northern Central BC averages 24 crashes in October, 44 crashes in December
- The Southern Interior averages 24 crashes in October, 97 crashes in December
- Vancouver Island averages 22 crashes in October, 29 crashes in December

Winter is a dangerous time of year for drivers!

Start by asking yourself: Do you really need to go?

In winter, sometimes the best defensive driving is staying at home. Can your trip be delayed or switched to another day?

If not, the best defense is to prepare yourself. Follow these eleven steps:

- Check the current road conditions and weather forecast.
- Plan your route ahead of time.
- Get your car winter ready with a maintenance check up.
- Leave lots of time so you're not rushing to get to where you need to be.
- Learn winter road skills.
- Use winter tires.
- Keep at least four seconds

distance between you and the vehicle in front of you.

- Be extremely cautious when approaching highway maintenance vehicles such as snow plows and salt and sand trucks. Maintain a safe following distance. These vehicles throw up snow and spray, making it difficult to see.
- Wear comfortable clothing that doesn't restrict your movement while driving. Bring warm clothing (winter boots, coat, gloves and hat) with you in case you need to get out of the vehicle.
- Make sure your vehicle is properly equipped in case you become stranded.
- Have an emergency plan. If you get stuck or stranded, don't panic. Avoid overexertion and exposure. Stay with your vehicle for safety and warmth and open your window slightly to make sure you have a supply of fresh air. If necessary use a survival candle for heat (with appropriate care). If you have a cell phone and it is an emergency, call 911. Otherwise, call for roadside assistance. Use caution when running the engine with the windows closed given potential exposure to exhaust fumes (exhaust systems can be blocked or damaged after a crash or loss-of-control situation). Set out a warning light or flares.



Do you have money in unclaimed accounts?

Each year, millions of dollars in British Columbia goes unclaimed in dormant credit union and bank accounts, forgotten insurance payments, unclaimed wages, overpayment to debt collectors as well as unclaimed proceeds from courts, tax offices and administered estates and intestates (death without a will and next of kin cannot be notified). The British Columbia Unclaimed Property Society (BCUPS) helps reunite British Columbians with their forgotten or unclaimed assets. They hold unclaimed property as the custodian for rightful owners under the Unclaimed Property Act.

Their office assists holders of unclaimed property to locate the rightful owners as well as those searching for unclaimed funds. Their searchable database allows members of the public to identify whether unclaimed funds are held in their name. There is no limitation period to claim funds from BCUPS – monies are always available to the rightful owner – and there is no cost for the service.

Here are two links to websites to see if you have any unclaimed monies that you are entitled to. It doesn't cost to check and who knows? This article is information to component 10 members who I thought might find this interesting.

- <http://unclaimedpropertybc.ca/>
- <http://www.bankofcanada.ca/unclaimed-balances/>

*Kelly McDonald
Local 1006 chairperson*



Kelly McDonald with ferry and aerial tram operator Dave Ryan at the Big Bar Ferry.

Your Roads, Your Future

In 1988 the maintenance of highway infrastructure in BC was privatized and the members of Component 10 entered a new era in highway maintenance. The challenges from then until now have been numerous and grand in scale at times, but we have always come together to face those challenges and overcome them.

Today is no different. We are now facing the challenge of how retendering a service area will affect our members, and all the stakeholders that use the infrastructure today and possibly changing the future as we know it. Speaking to our members and from personal experience it is very clear to me that the work our members do is much more than a job. There is pride in knowing they do everything possible to make the roads safe. Their families, friends and community members travel on the roads and bridges they maintain doing their

best to keep everyone safe.

The component is planning a campaign to highlight our members, their commitment, experience and knowledge. These jobs are a career choice. It takes our members years to fine tune their skills to the areas and conditions they work in, and the equipment they use.

We have formed a committee to start building a campaign to highlight the value, commitment and pride of our members in the highway maintenance sector. The work of the committee will be presented in the weeks ahead.



Protrans report

The BCGEU Protrans bargaining committee and the BCGEU are currently in bargaining with our employer for our second collective agreement. A strike vote information meeting was held in December.

Negotiations continue to be stalled around the issue of statutory holidays. In November arbitrator Mark Atkinson ruled in our favour. But that decision has since been appealed by the employer.

In the meantime, any questions or concerns should be addressed to a steward. Elections for stewards were held at the end of October and the updated shop stewards list should be on union bulletin boards.

*Lana Vincent
Local 1003*

Jim Manson Retires

I met Jim at a Highways bargaining conference back in 1989 and we both quickly became friends. Jim and his wife Marla have two sons that are a few years apart. My wife and I have two sons about the same age difference. I like golf. Jim loves golf. We both like to sit and have a coffee and reflect on things that are going on in the world, our lives, and in our union.

Jim and I both became active in the union right after the privatization of the highways maintenance in 1988. Jim was a steward and local chair and became the Component treasurer in the early 90's. Jim also served for many years and continues to serve on the BCGEU Pension Plan as a trustee. Jim always represented his members in the best possible way against some very aggressive employers. Jim continues to take phone calls



(l to r) Mike Nuyens (BCGEU Executive Vice President), Rory Smith (BCGEU Vice President Component 10) and Jim Manson.

from members seeking his advice on what they should do in order to fight and protect their rights.

Jim and I have talked about writing a book of the trials and deliberations of our struggles and challenges in the highways sector. Maybe now with some time on his hands that book will get written.

On behalf of the members of Component 10 and all the members of the BCGEU, I would like to thank you for your hard work, dedication, and your ear for all those that called you for advice.

*Your friend and union buddy,
Mike Nuyens – Executive vice president BCGEU*



Component 10 executive visiting the Pacific Regeneration Technologies worksite in Prince George.



Component 10 executive meeting in Prince George.



WORDSEARCH – STOCKROOM

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| BASES | HYDRAULIC |
| BLADES | IILLUMINATION |
| BREAKAWAY | PAINT |
| CALCIUM-CHLORIDE | PIPE |
| CALCULATOR | PROCUREMENT |
| CERTIFICATION | SALT |
| CHEMICALS | SAFETY |
| COMPUTER | SCREWDRIVER |
| CONCRETE | STANDARDS |
| CO-WORKER | SUPPLIES |
| DESK | TIRE-CHAINS |
| ELECTRICAL | THERMOMETER |
| FASTENERS | UNION |
| FILTRATION | WELDING-SUPPLIES |
| FITTINGS | WIPER-BLADES |



Rick Sudlow (left) and Earl Heyward in the Atlin highways yard.

RETIREMENTS



Mike Nuyens moves on to new role with BCGEU

When I became involved at the component level about nine years ago, Mike Nuyens was the component chairperson. Mike is a very knowledgeable person and led the component with an even disposition. The future of the members was always the main reason for Mike to make any decisions.

He also supported others to become the people they wanted to be. With the support of his family Mike gave a lot of time and energy to the component and our members while doing much of this work away from home.

Mike was elected to Executive Vice President in June and now represents all members in the BCGEU.

I would like to thank Mike for the support he has given me and all the members of Component 10. We all wish him all the best in his new role.

*Rory Smith,
Component 10 vice president*

READ SECORD

Read Secord retired from Allison Pass after working there for 35 years.

We all had a great get-together at our yard for his send-off. Read is going to spend his retirement in Keremeos where he and his wife Linda will be enjoying some trips to warmer climates.

Read will be missed greatly with his happy nature and knowledge for teaching all new hires. Good wishes from all your brothers at Allison Pass and from all your fellow highway workers.

TED OLSEN

We would like to acknowledge your years of dedication and service as a Component 10 activist as shop steward, local chair and bargaining committee chair. You made a significant difference in Local 1012 by standing up for the rights of our members by letting the employer know, in no uncertain terms, that they must follow the collective agreement. Thank You. We wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

Earl Haward, Local 1012

JIM (SKULLY) SULLIVAN

I worked with **Jim (Skully) Sullivan** for nearly twenty years at the Bridge Lake Highways maintenance yard.

Jim was always supportive of the union and was also a member at large on the local executive.

The crew at Bridge Lake will miss your wit and humour, however we all must decide when it is time to retire and you did just that. Good Luck my friend.

Kelly McDonald



Steve Budd, longtime shop steward at the Bridge Lake yard, getting ready for retirement.

OBITUARY

DON BARRETT

Long time highways worker and BCGEU member **Don Barrett** passed away on August 16, 2013. A celebration of his life was held at Christ Church Trinity in Invermere. He is missed by his family and many friends.



BCGEU members with questions should call BCGEU Direct at 1-888-991-6062 (toll free). Lower Mainland members can call 604-291-6062.

Story ideas and comments for the Comp-Ten Report can be submitted to comp10report@bcgeu.ca