

Advocate

Official news magazine of the B.C. Federation of Retired Union Members (BC FORUM)

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A Fond Farewell



**John Horgan
reflects on
his time
as Premier**

**BC FED
CONVENTION
HIGHLIGHTS**

**It's time: end
gender-based
violence**

**PRAISING
SOLIDARITY,
COUNTING
SUCCESSES**

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Advocate

The Advocate is published by the B.C. Federation of Retired Union Members. BC FORUM – supported by WE Consulting and Benefits and affiliated with the B.C. Federation of Labour – is dedicated to representing the interests of members and their families, continuing into retirement the relationship they enjoyed with the union movement.

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In this edition

We are very proud to present this last edition of The Advocate for 2022. There is a lot to take stock of, achievements to account for, and fights to ready for. We are so pleased to be able to share some final words from outgoing Premier John Horgan, and Laird Cronk, outgoing BCFED President and chair of our own BC FORUM. We share some highlights of the 60th BCFED Convention, and give tribute to BC FORUM members new and departing.

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WE FIGHT FOR FAIRNESS

Reflecting back and looking forward

By Sam Wiese
President, BC FORUM

I write these words to BC FORUM members, friends and affiliates, reflecting over this past year and looking forward to 2023. It is fitting that in this edition we give thanks to board members who have stepped down and to those who have joined. Marion Pollack, CUPW Director, who also sits on your executive as Secretary, did a lot of work compiling brief bios for outgoing board members Miriam Olney, Fred Girling, and Linda Forsythe, as well as newly appointed board member Agnes Jackman. New board members Rosalind Kellett, Denise Chisholm and Michelle Laurie provided introductory information about themselves and with the assistance of our steadfast Administrative Officer Theresa Couture, and Treasurer, Danny Bradford, I hope to have done justice to Russell St. Eloi, Tony Brown, Bill Sylvester, and Gerry Tiede. Sadly, we have also had to say a final farewell to District Labour Council Regional Representatives John Colbourne and Doug Gibson.

If any of you have interesting tidbits of information you wish to share about yourself or your community involvement, send it along to the office and The Advocate committee will review its suitability for inclusion in upcoming editions.

On the note of farewells, we are pleased to have a few words from two very prevalent, influential individuals

who are stepping back from the spotlight; outgoing Premier John Horgan, and outgoing BCFED President Laird Cronk. I am so very thankful to have had both of them in the leadership roles they chose to take on. They faced challenges head on with integrity; made decisions for the betterment of all British Columbians; stood fast when needed; and acquiesced with aplomb when appropriate. I know John and Laird are stepping back, however I am confident they will still be fighting the good fight along with the rest of us.

The 60th Convention of the BC Federation of Labour (BCFED) commenced November 21, 2022. It was the first in person convention since 2018. I was honoured to represent BC FORUM with Danny Bradford as your delegates. Specific COVID safety protocols were developed for the event to keep us all safe and healthy. It was labour's chance to review the successes of the past two years, develop our priorities for the upcoming convention cycle, have hearty debate over resolutions, and not least of all, to elect the new BCFED President and Secretary- Treasurer.

In keeping with labour's successes, at the beginning of November CUPE education workers across Ontario walked off the job in protest of Bill 28 – the Ford Conservative government's legislation stripping CUPE educa-

tion workers of the right to strike and collectively bargain. After a two day walkout by CUPE members, Ontario Premier Doug Ford did a complete reversal and promised to repeal the legislation. At the time of writing this, collective bargaining has resulted in a tentative offer to CUPE Ontario education workers. The upcoming vote is only happening due to the positive effect of collective action, which saw workers across Canada stand together in solidarity against a draconian attempt to undermine rights so hard fought for.

Talking about rights hard fought for, BC FORUM worked with its affiliates in support of Bill C-228, An Act to Amend the Federal Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, 1985. I am very pleased to report that on November 23, 2022 this private member's bill unanimously passed its third reading.

Bill C-228 will protect workers by ensuring employees are protected in the event of a company collapse. If a fund is insolvent, the company will have to declare bankruptcy and give priority to pension payout, and transfer funds into the pension plan to make it solvent. Currently, when the assets of a bankrupt or insolvent company are divided, secured creditors and banks are paid first. Bill C-228 addresses this by giving pensioners super-priority status in corporate insolvency, which means pensioners move closer to the front of the line, improving the likelihood they will receive their full pension.

Our work on Bill C-228 now turns to convincing the Senate to pass this very crucial bill and to ensure it receives Royal assent.

Other Federal issues that BC FORUM is involved in include: anti-scab legislation; Private Member's

(cont. on page 14)

Acknowledgement of territory

We respectfully acknowledge that the BC FORUM office is located on unceded lands of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), səliłwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nations.

Food and environmental service workers are welcomed back at Vancouver Health

This is an ongoing process as the provincial government has repealed an old law from 2002 and replaced it with a new one. Updated on Oct. 28, 2022

People accessing health care in the Lower Mainland, North Shore, Sunshine Coast and Sea-to-Sky will benefit from more stable, consistent and supportive patient care as 864 environmental services and food-service workers return to the public system as Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) employees.

Health authorities and Providence Health Care continue to repatriate workers under Bill 47, bringing an estimated 4,000 workers back into the public system.

On Oct. 28, 2022, 864 environmental services and food-service workers will be repatriated at 31 VCH sites.

“The work of environmental services and food-service workers within the health system directly contributes to the well-being and safety of patients and staff who are

shown that employees who feel secure and safe in their jobs provide higher quality care for people and, in turn, employers can attract and retain staff at a higher and more consistent level.

Following the initial announcement on Aug. 30, 2021, health authorities and Providence Health Care served notice under the terms of 21 commercial service contracts and began a phased approach to repatriate housekeeping and food-service contracts, beginning with Island Health.



The change comes after almost 20 years of workers having services contracted out to private companies.

“A strong health-care workforce begins with workers who have stable, well-paying jobs and are respected as integral part of the care team,” said Adrian Dix, Minister of Health. “That is why we have been working hard over several years to transition workers back to the public system with better wages, better benefits and better working conditions. Welcoming them back to Vancouver Coastal Health is a critical step forward, creating a stronger health-care system for all of us.”

there,” said Mable Elmore, Parliamentary Secretary for Seniors' Services and Long-Term Care. “Bringing these workers back to the health team at Vancouver Coastal Health recognizes their importance and ensuring that they are compensated fairly is the right thing to do. I am very proud of all the work done under Bill 47. This is great news for all British Columbians.”

To address inequality and enhance working conditions for employees in health-care facilities, government is ensuring that workers have the benefits, pension and wages they deserve to be able to help patients. Evidence has

Work to bring health-care service workers back into the public system began in 2019 when the Province brought Bill 47 (Health Sector Statutes Repeal Act) into force. Bill 47 repealed the Health and Social Services Delivery Improvement Act (Bill 29) and the Health Sector Partnerships Agreement Act (Bill 94), which had facilitated contracting in the health sector and caused labour impacts.

In 2020, the process was started with the North Island Hospitals, which spearheaded the move independently of Bill 47 to bring 150 contracted workers in house at the Campbell River and Comox Valley hospitals.

This article is reprinted by kind permission of the Ministry of Health, Communications. Read the full press release and access additional news and information at <https://news.gov.bc.ca/ministries/health>

Working together, we can accomplish great things – a better province for all

By John Horgan
Premier, British Columbia

I am thankful to have one last opportunity to write to The BC Federation of Retired Union Members as Premier. By the time you read this I will have joined eight other former premiers in political retirement – and I will have passed the torch on to Premier David Eby.

Since becoming Premier in 2017 we've gone through a lot together – including a global pandemic, a toxic drug crisis, a deadly heat dome, atmospheric rivers, wildfires, and landslides.

It hasn't been easy. And yet, even as we faced these challenges, we also made great strides towards making the province a better place to live, for everyone.

We worked hard to bring down costs for people – including by eliminating bridge tolls and Medical Services Plan premiums. And we're still delivering savings for people. In December 2022, families will see their child care bills cut again by up to \$550 a month for each child in licensed care.

Keeping money in people's pockets is important, but so is providing access to opportunity. Over the next decade there will be over a million job openings. Expanding access to education and skills training will be key to filling those jobs.

That's one of the reasons we brought in supports like the tuition waiver program for young people leaving foster care.

Before we formed government, these resilient young people had a better chance at becoming homeless than of pursuing education or trades training. They were all but abandoned by government at age 19. We're changing that.

Around the province, new infrastructure projects are creating jobs and



John Horgan at the 60th BC Fed convention. Photo Josh Berson. Use by kind permission of the BCFED

opportunity. Over the last five years, we embarked on the largest building program in B.C. history – building the roads, bridges, public transit and internet infrastructure needed to keep the province connected and moving.

And we have been working hard to build new homes to address the housing crisis. Even though it's tough to make headway – with 100,000 people moving here just last year – I know building homes for middle-class families is a key priority for the incoming Premier and he'll continue working hard to deliver.

We also made great strides towards a fair deal for working people in B.C. – by bringing in single-step certification, raising the minimum wage, and becoming the first province to require employers offer a minimum of five days paid sick leave.

I'm proud of everything we've accomplished together in the last five years. But more than anything – I hope my time as premier is defined by what happened on Oct. 24, 2019.

That day – in the Legislature on the territory of the Lekwungen peoples, the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations – we introduced Bill 41, the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. It was passed unanimously.

As I look back at what we have accomplished together – and forward to the challenges yet before us, this unanimous decision to pursue true reconciliation leaves me hopeful. It shows that by working together, we can accomplish great things – and build the stronger B.C. that we all want and deserve, together.

Back again: 60th BCFED convention

By Sam Wiese, BC FORUM President

With a delegation of over one thousand, including guests and speakers, the convention was one of the most vibrant and efficient I have attended in my 40 some years of doing so. Seriously, I believe the number of resolutions presented, discussed and voted on may be record breaking. Even constitutional and structure resolutions that were referred back were worked out, brought back to the floor, discussed, and passed – unanimously!



Jagmeet Singh, Leader of the NDP. Photo: Josh Berson. Used with kind permission of the BCFED

That word unanimously is significant as it denotes the level of respect, kinship and agreement that I have felt growing over the term of Laird Cronk's leadership of the BCFED and it was certainly evident this past week. During resolution debate differences of opinions were voiced and listened to without the threat of being cajoled (as well it should always be). This conviviality, indeed true solidarity, culminated in the election process being one of acclamation to all positions up for offer. While some may feel



Elder Larry Grant of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nation welcomes the delegation. Photo: Josh Berson. Used with kind permission of the BCFED.



Sussanne Skidmore and Hermen Kailley accept nominations for president and secretary-treasurer. Photo: Josh Berson. Used with kind permission of the BCFED

that a good electoral campaign and election is a cornerstone of democracy, there are situations where a "one horse race" is actually best. Such is the case now, when it is incumbent on the union movement to show our undivided strength and purpose to those who would see us crumble under their weight in pursuit of power and wealth. So, by acclamation; Sussanne Skidmore, BCFED Secretary-Treasurer, is the new President, and Hermender Singh Kailley, from ILWU Local 502, is the new Secretary-Treasurer.

The words from speakers Jagmeet Singh, NDP MP Burnaby South and

Leader of the Federal NDP; David Eby, Premier; April Sims, President, Washington State Labour Council; Bea Bruske, President, Canadian Labour Council; John Horgan, former premier; Harry Bains, Minister of Labour; Grand Chief Stewart Phillip; and Elaine Alec, author of "Calling My Spirit Back"; all had a similar vein wound through. We should be proud of the work we have done to better the lives of all Canadians but must remain ever vigilant to maintain and strengthen those gains lest we lose them to unprecedented corporate greed and divisive talk.



April Sims, President, Washington State Labour Council. Photo: Josh Berson. Used with kind permission of the BCFED



Laird Cronk, outgoing President. Photo: Josh Berson. Used with kind permission of the BCFED



Washington State Labour Council. Photo: Josh Berson. Used with kind permission of the BCFED



Delegates sing Solidarity Forever. Photo: Josh Berson. Used with kind permission of the BCFED



President. Photo: Josh Berson. Used with kind permission of the BCFED



Sam Wiese and Ray Haynes. Photo: Lori Mayhew

Ray Haynes, Past President of the BC Federation of Labour and long serving BC FORUM Regional Representative at the Sunshine Coast District Labour Council was a special guest at the BCFED Convention. On behalf of the BC Labour Heritage Centre, labour reporter and author Rod Mickleburgh provided a brief biography of Ray's hard fought battles on behalf of labour.

I will sign off with a couple of my personal convention highlights

On this 4th day of the BCFED Convention Premier Emeritus John Horgan addressed the plenary. In the early stages of hand over to Premier David Eby, John appeared slightly more relaxed than the last time I saw him.

Much in the line of the message John provided us in this edition of The Advocate, he reminded delegates of gains won over the past five years and was cautionary against apathy in light of Kevin Falcon's re-tagged "BC United" party. Remember friends, leopards....spots....

Sam Wiese and John Horgan.
Photo: Jamey Mills

Delegates to convention were then lucky to have Ray share a few words of wisdom and encouragement.

It's been 3 years since we've sat side by side at a BC FORUM board meeting so I was especially happy to share a couple minutes with Ray.

For great synopses of daily convention proceedings visit BCFED's Facebook page and the MoveUp website: <https://moveuptogether.ca/the-latest/follow-along-2022-bc-federation-of-labour-convention/>

For convention materials, including resolutions, visit <https://convention.bcfed.ca/2022/>



Time to end gender-based violence

By Sam Wiese, BC FORUM President

November 25 is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and the first day of the United Nations' 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) is continuing its work addressing gender-based harassment and violence in the workplace by shining the spotlight on third-party violence. Today and every day, workers are saying #NeverAgain: End Gender Based Violence at Work.

"Canadian workers urgently need a gender-responsive and intersectional approach to address this issue," continued Bruske. "The Canadian Labour Congress is encouraged by the news that the Federal government

is taking action to implement International Labour Convention 190 on harassment and violence at work. This convention offers a comprehensive framework for addressing harassment and violence and recognizes the disproportionate impact on women and gender-diverse workers."

Internationally, the brutal and senseless murder of Iranian Mahsa Amini by a repressive state has become a symbol of what restrictive and violent attitudes toward women can manifest.

During this past week at the BC Federation of Labour (BCFED) Convention, several speakers shared emotional stories about the impact gender-based violence has had on

them or loved ones. Many referred to themselves or victimized friends as survivors, and many, as "thrivers". I hearkened to that moniker "thriver" and believe I too continue in that vein.

So, dear friends; I implore you to do your part to end gender-based violence. Take part in community events on December 6th, the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women; send letters to your MPs and Marci Ien, Minister for Women and Equities and Youth; sign on to CLC and the BC Federation of Labour actions; reach out to someone in need, and know that asking for help is strength.

Battered Women's Support Services – 1-855-687-1868 24/7 crisis & intake line



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From the office of the Seniors Advocate

The following are a few highlights of news from the BC Seniors Advocate, Isobel Mackenzie. Full details can be found under the News tag on the website Document (seniorsadvocatebc.ca)

The Office of the Seniors Advocate of BC has released an updated long-term care home directory which now also includes information on all publicly funded assisted living facilities in British Columbia.

Seniors Advocate Participates in Long-Term Care Survey

Isobel Mackenzie recently joined the efforts of volunteer surveyors in Downtown Vancouver by interviewing seniors living in long-term care about their quality of life. Read more about a volunteer's experience working with the Seniors Advocate, as well as her reflections on patient centered care in residential care homes. OSA will be seeking volunteers until spring 2023. Find out more about volunteering on the project website.

Long-Term Care Update

Most visiting restrictions have been lifted at long-term care facilities



To find out more, speak to your pharmacist and bring your government-issued ID, Personal Health Number and your prescription paperwork or medication packaging.

COVID-19 Boosters and Flu Shots

in B.C. and people who meet the visitation requirements are permitted. Visitors must provide proof of vaccination and a negative rapid antigen test, which may be taken at home up to 48 hours before the visit, or on arrival at the facility. Please review each facility's restrictions before your visit.

Prescription Renewal Now Available at B.C. Pharmacies

You can now renew or change most prescriptions at your local pharmacy. Your pharmacist can assess your clinical needs and change the dose of your medication or substitute another medication. Note there are exceptions for some prescriptions.

The Province is now rolling out its new COVID-19 fall booster campaign. Everyone five years and older is encouraged to get a fall booster at a 6-month interval from their last dose. Adults 18+ and high-risk youth aged 12-17 will be eligible to receive a new bivalent vaccine. Vaccination invitations will go out through the Province's Get Vaccinated System.

Rapid Antigen Tests

Free COVID-19 rapid antigen tests are available to people of all ages at B.C. pharmacies. No ID is required. If you are concerned about exposure to COVID-19, please consider asking those you will be in close contact with to take a rapid test before your visit.

From Kamal Khara, Minister of Seniors

Fraud alert

Did you know that fraud is the number one crime committed against older Canadians?

Unfortunately, online scammers prefer to target seniors. With phishing attacks growing at an alarming rate, the focus of this year's Cyber Security Awareness Campaign launched in October was indeed timely. Phishing attacks are designed to trick victims,

often seniors, into giving away sensitive information such as passwords or credit card numbers to the attacker or to install malicious software on the victim's devices.

If you suspect that you have fallen victim to a phishing attack or other cybercrime, contact your local police and report it to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre's online reporting system, or by phone at 1-888-495-8501.

Travel and COVID-19

As of October 1, 2022 all COVID-19 border measures for all travellers entering Canada by air, land or marine mode have been removed. This includes vaccination, testing, quarantine and isolation requirements.

For complete and regular updates from the Minister of Seniors you can sign up for the newsletter on line at [Updates from the Minister of Seniors - Canada.ca](https://www.seniors.gc.ca/newsletter)

Happy welcomes and sad goodbyes

By Sam Wiese, BC FORUM President

In this last edition of 2022 we give thanks to those who have served the membership, welcome to those who have come aboard, and mourn those we've lost.

Thank you

Russell St.Eloi – BCTC

Originating from UA Local 170, Russell (Russ) St. Eloi was the BC FORUM Director representing BC Building Trades. Anyone fortunate enough to have heard him speak on topics that he is passionate about will undoubtedly recognize his memorable phrase “pigeon poop”, used in lieu of being censored. Russ seldom missed a board meeting, always intent on ensuring that we were kept current on matters pertaining to trades and apprenticeships. An avid motorcyclist, expect to see him out riding come warmer, sunnier weather.

Tony Brown – ILWU

A bit of a contradiction, one would hardly believe such a soft spoken individual came to BC FORUM as a director representing ILWU. But never let that calm demeanor fool you. When battling injustice and inequity Tony is one you want on your side. Stepping down from his role on the BC FORUM board will undoubtedly give Tony more time to do the things he has planned to do in retirement, take a few trips and watch his grandkids grow.

Linda Forsythe – FPSE

Linda was the BC FORUM Director representing the Federation of Post Secondary Employees (FPSE). Although no longer on the board, Linda continues to be a committed and passionate voice for seniors and retirees. She is on the Executive of the Council of Senior Citizens Organization of BC (COSCO), advocating for seniors throughout the province. Linda is also a member of the

Voice of Burnaby Seniors group working to improve the lives of seniors in that city. She was instrumental in the campaign to preserve 425 units of affordable Burnaby co-operative housing for seniors and people with low incomes. An avid reader, we expect Linda to enjoy many a good book over the days while continuing in her role as mother to two sons, and a proud grandparent.

Fred Girling – USW

Fred just retired from the BC FORUM board after more than ten years representing the United Steelworkers (USW). However, Fred is still one of the leading voices advocating for free hospital parking, an issue BC FORUM and the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) have been actively involved in. Fred is also very involved in SOAR; he works hard to be a strong voice for USW retirees and their families and continues to be a mentor to many.

Fred is a strong and involved supporter of the NDP, for whom social activism is as pertinent as union activism. May sees him participating in Red Dress Day, which honours the memory of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people, and calls for more action at all levels of society to address the endemic violence threatening them.

A proud father and doting grandfather and great grandfather, we wish Fred the best spending more time with family and friends.

Miriam Olney – UFCW

As one of the founding members of BC FORUM, Miriam was our longest standing director. Prior to her retirement she was a staff member with the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW). We are thankful that through her contacts and influence UFCW continues to actively support

BC FORUM, most significantly with the printing of The Advocate and the loan of the UFCW hall for our AGMs.

Miriam served on the Executive as Secretary and active member of our education committee. A strong advocate for seniors, she was one of BC FORUM's delegates to the Council of Senior Citizens Organizations of BC (COSCO). Miriam is finally going to rest, relax, and spend even more time with her children and grandchildren.

Gerry Tiede – BCTF

As the BCTF Director on the BCFORUM board, Gerry was always ready to help BC FORUM with input on various submissions we have made to governments. As past president and chair of the Pensions and Benefits Committee of the BC Retired Teachers' Association his knowledge and insight around public education and pension plans has indeed been helpful as BC FORUM has fought for poverty reduction and income security knowing that this issue can only be addressed if we get an early start. While Gerry may be stepping down from the BC FORUM board, I have little doubt he will carry on with his contributions toward the state of public pensions.

Bill Sylvester – USW/TWU

Bill came to the board as a former USW/TWU member. A mentor to many within his home unions, Bill brought his special blend of compassionate activism to his role as Director and later as 1st Vice President. Always there to lend a helping hand, Bill was often seen behind a BC FORUM booth celebrating Labour Day, getting the word out at various conventions, and willingly carting the “heavy stuff”. Bill, a Life Member of BC FORUM, has stepped down from the board but remains an active member. Let's hope to see his smiling face out and about and continuing to promote BC FORUM.

John Radosevic – UNIFOR

Of all the BC FORUM board directors, I have worked the longest with John, not just at BC FORUM, but back in his days with UFAWU and my days as the “UI Fishing expert”. He is as dedicated to the Union Protein Project as much as he is to a safe, sustainable, wild West coast fishery, passions he brought to BC FORUM.

I’ve done my best to remain somewhat impartial while doing these brief “so longs” but in this instance I am unable to do so. John, I wish to thank you for everything that you have done and continue to do for the West coast fishing industry; those that rely on food banks for sustenance; and for brightening so many days of those honoured to call you friend.

Coming aboard

Denise Chisholm – USW

Denise was introduced to unions by her mother, who brought her to all the “TWU” conventions. This is where she first met Bill Silvester and other fantastic leaders, like Bill Clark, a wonderful mentor to her mother. Denise’s mother was a key inspiration for her union activism, successfully running for seven consecutive terms as a TWU Union Business Agent.

With 35 years at Telus and over 25 years in various union roles, Denise enjoyed serving USW members as a regional executive officer for BC, a unit vice-president, co-chair of the Women of Steel committee, and a facilitator. She was an appointed board trustee for My Union Plan @ Work and completed a year of Foundations of Trust Management Standards (FTMS).

Saying of her nomination to be USW Director for BC FORUM: “I am both humbled and excited to be considered for this role. If accepted I look forward to working diligently and enthusiastically for retired union members.”

Rosalind Kellett – BCTF

While a member of the BC Teachers’ Federation, Rosalind taught in the districts of Kamloops, Surrey and Vancouver. Early in her career she became involved in school and local association councils and was active on their executive boards, serving in a number of positions over the years. This also meant being a representative to the Vancouver School Board on various committees, including Anti-racism, PRIDE and the Bicycle/Alternate Transportation committee. Since retiring, Rosalind remains active in social justice causes and is on the Education committee of the Suzuki Elders in Vancouver.

Michelle Laurie – USW

Michelle comes to BC FORUM with a long history of activism. Working in jobs in mining, fish-processing, electrical utilities and as a part-time paramedic, to being president of Local 258 of IBEW followed by 13 years as staff representative at USW, Michelle has a notable history of labour activism. Indeed, her willingness to serve the union movement lead her to offer for the position of president of the BCFED back in 2012.

Agnes Jackman – HSA

Agnes is new to the board of BC FORUM but not new to BC FORUM. Prior to becoming the BC Health Science Association (HSA) Director she was our representative to the Vancouver and District Labour Council (VDLC), which she still attends on our behalf.

Agnes is one of BC FORUM’s representatives to the Council of Senior Citizens Organizations of British Columbia (COSCO) and sits on the executive. She has been a key organizer of the October 1 International Day of the Older Person events and activities. She is involved with the NDP, and, as a supporter and former

board member of Co-Development Canada, is well versed in the global need for social change and the global education and solidarity it takes to build a better world. Agnes tirelessly works to support seniors and retirees. She is very involved in her family as a mother and grandmother.

Sad goodbyes

John Colbourne 1940-1922

John represented BC FORUM as our Regional Representative at the South Okanagan- Boundary Labour Council. A steadfast NDP supporter, he displayed his pride in party membership by wearing his much coveted Tommy Douglas T-shirt. On April 28 the National Day of Mourning, commemorating workers who have been killed or injured on the job, I often think back to John’s bravery as one of the first ones on scene when the Ironworkers’ Bridge collapsed. A community, political and union volunteer, John did much in his lifetime to promote a better Canada for everyone.

Doug Gibson 1931-2022

I leave it to the words of our true friend, Doug’s widow, Louise, who wrote as part of his obituary:

“Doug was a long time member of BC FORUM for which he represented the North Okanagan Labour Council for the last 20 years. He was a mentor to young and old alike and an advocate for any that requested help. He was a proud Honourary life time member of the New Democratic Party. His belief in social justice and fairness for all working people never varied. Anyone that knew him was aware of his dedication and we will all remember his hundreds of stories over the years.”

To both John and Doug, our sincerest gratitude. May you both Rest in Power.

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Are you a Union Member? Are you interested in a FREE home insurance quote?

We are pleased to announce that Working Ventures Insurance Solutions has just acquired new Insurance Companies that offer discounts to union members. We now represent many Insures and have several options for you to choose from. One of our unionized brokers would be happy to assist you in selecting which company best fits your budget and coverage needs.

We can even help you insure some of the harder to place homes such as stand-alone rentals, tiny homes, and high valued dwellings. Not to mention the savings you will see from bundling your property together, for instance your primary and seasonal dwelling, or your condominium and RV.

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We look forward to hearing from you. We are available by phone, email, in person, or we can set up an online meeting through TEAMS or another platform of your preference. We encourage you to visit our website www.wvins.ca which provides additional information about our organization including our guiding principles and insurance services. Our website also includes the following:

- Online quoting of Home, Condo, Tenant insurance
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- Loss prevention tips
- Insurance company claims contact information
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Written By Nicole Lychak-Smith, Branch Manager
Working Ventures Insurance Solutions

The importance of seniors' well-being

By Dave J. A. Porteous

With the COVID-19 pandemic still lingering among us and flu season hovering over us, our lives are changing in many ways. Adapting to change is hard; it can affect your emotional, psychological, and social well-being. On top of this, the Government of Canada is saying the economy could go into a recession! Inflation has risen to a height not seen in over twelve years. The Bank of Canada has increased interest rates six times this year.

Most seniors live on a fixed income. Some have had to move to other regions because of the high cost of living. Over past years many seniors have helped family members financially, putting a strain on their own finances. While fixed incomes remain almost flat, the cost of living has

exploded. Pensions and wages are not driving up inflation. It is big corporations taking advantage of COVID and the war in the Ukraine among other global issues and uncertainties.

Around the world big corporations' profits are exploding! Is this a money grab? Are corporations trying to get back income lost during the pandemic? Is the federal government allowing this, as a payback for political donations? There is a difference between profit and profiteering! It is time for governments to be aggressive and go after big corporate profits.

With all this happening, ask yourself – is there a possibility your mood and behavior have changed in the past six months? We seniors have seen this before. Often, it drives us

to become politically active. Seniors already politically involved can become even more dedicated to their cause! A check-in with BC FORUM via your union's appointed Director; your Labour Council Regional Representative on the Facebook page or at the office will let you know how you can participate in ongoing campaigns.

Above all, remember; your mental well-being is crucial. Perhaps reevaluate what is important to you. Keeping within your social bubbles can help; try to maintain positive relationships and as healthy and active lifestyle as you are financially and physically able.

David is a Licensed Insurance (Nominee) and an Elder Planning Counselor, and a charter member of the Canadian Initiative for Elder Planning Studies.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

(cont. from page 3)

Bill C-292, An Act respecting transparency for online algorithms; Bill C-229 Banning Symbols of Hate; and Motion -14 Anti-hate crimes and incidents measures.

On bills C-229, C-292 and M-14, tabler MP Peter Julian, puts it best:

“My NDP caucus colleagues and I believe that we cannot stand by and allow hate, discrimination, and systemic racism to flourish in our communities, putting lives at risk. But this fight is not about a single MP or political party – it’s about the lack of action from the federal government to fight systemic racism.

The purpose of Bill C-292 is to ensure that online communication service providers do not use algorithms and personal information in a manner that results in the adverse differential treatment of any individual or group of individuals based on one or more prohibited grounds of discrimination or on any other grounds.

...we must make sure that social media platforms are legally responsible for the removal of hateful and extremist content before it can do harm.”

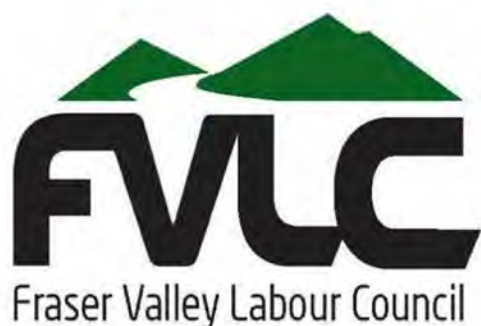
On the anti-scab issue, the federal government has committed to introducing legislation by the end of 2023 prohibiting the use of replacement workers in federally regulated sectors, and consultation is currently open. Sister Marion Pollack and I are working together on a submission from BC FORUM. More information on this topic is available at:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/labour-relations/replacement-workers/discussion-paper.html>

If you have input you would like us to consider please email me by December 3, 2022.

I will close with a reminder to check out our Facebook page, especially while we await the development of our new webpage.

Finally, all the best to you and yours over the coming weeks. If there are special holidays you observe, I wish you do so to the utmost. A safe and happy New Year to all.



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Membership: ☐ Application ☐ Renewal ☐ New address

Name: _____

LAST FIRST INITIAL

[illegible]

Phone: | | | || | | | | | | **E-mail:**| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

[illegible]

Spouse's name: _____ **Spouse's birth date:*** _____
DAY MONTH YEAR

Card number: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

.....
SIGNATURE

Date of application: / /
 DAY MONTH YEAR

* Required for Accidental Death & Dismemberment group insurance coverage to age 86.

* Credit card companies now require the CVV for payment to be processed.

Solidarity—unions together for better

By Laird Cronk, President, BC Federation of Labour

As I write this article, we are in the all-consuming final stages of preparation for our upcoming BC Federation of Labour Convention, which will be in-person for the first time in four years. This will be my last convention as BCFED President and will also mark the end of my time as Chair of BC FORUM, given my recent decision to pursue what I have been fighting to achieve for workers over the last thirty years as a labour activist – a decent pension, good health and time spent with loved ones.

As the clock ticks down on my time in this office, it is naturally a moment to reflect on the last four years, and what a time it turned out to be.

Just over a year into our first term, and seemingly out of nowhere, COVID hit us with everything it had and the world as we knew it changed forever. From a Federation of Labour lens, the path, albeit devoid of a playbook, was eminently clear; it was our responsibility to bring and hold the labour movement together as we collectively scrambled to figure out how best to protect and represent working people throughout BC. No easy task! From then until this very moment, we haven't stopped advocating on parallel yet distinct paths – working in the best interests of workers specific to COVID, while never losing focus on the pre-existing challenges for workers borne of the 17 years of BC Liberal attacks.

Looking back, I am exceedingly proud of the solidarity and cohesiveness of our movement, including the exceptional advocacy work of BC FORUM in supporting our work.

We worked urgently with the BC NDP Government to achieve critical worker protections (and to make the political room for them), including job-protected COVID leave, paid COVID leave, and protected time off for vaccination once vaccines were available. We also managed to convince both the WCB and the Minister of Labour

to fast-track presumptive WCB coverage for workers who contracted COVID simply going to work. No small feat and incredibly important!

In the meantime, we never took our eyes off the ball with respect to sorely needed improvements to the Labour Code, Employment Standards Act and WCB provisions. The list of accomplishments is long, but some highlights include raising the minimum wage from the lowest in Canada to the highest, ensuring children as young as twelve were no longer subjected to working in even the heaviest of industries, additional presumptive WCB coverages for workers across a myriad of industries, single-step union certification (card-check), five days paid sick leave for all workers, asbestos licensing and training protections, and a return of ten compulsory trades, to name a few!

None of these changes would have happened without singularity of purpose from the Labour Movement, the type of solidarity that simply could not be ignored by our government. And of course there was an extraordinary



Laird Cronk @BCFED

amount of behind-the-scenes work creating public space and providing credible and detailed information on exactly what needed to be done.

Through this solidarity the Federation, BC FORUM, Labour Councils, and our affiliate unions have achieved incredible results and I am exceptionally grateful to have had the opportunity to work alongside all of you as we made labour history together!

There is still much more to be done, as there always has been and always will be. To that end I am confident and excited for the path ahead, knowing we have an amazing team of activists already working on the list of great achievements to come. We will never back down and never step back. And with our renewed solidarity, the future is indeed as bright as it is challenging.

Thank you, my friends. This journey together has been the honour of a lifetime. Your support and assistance along the way have been remarkable and deeply appreciated.

In solidarity, Laird.

New address? New e-mail address?

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Please check the expiry date on your label. Is your membership due for renewal?