



Off The Shelf

Newsletter of Vancouver and Gibsons Library Workers

The Elusive Promise Of Solidarity

By D'Arcy Stainton, Past President

It happened about once a week while I was union president. The hand on my shoulder, the angry look and the question "...can you tell me WHY our union is doing [insert your own stance on a controversial issue here]."

I try very hard to be a diplomatic person. My gut reaction would be to say, "Where were you when this was debated and voted on at a general meeting?" What I normally say is more along the lines of "our union is a democracy, and democracies are messy and require active participation to work well." Now, our members are very reasonable people, and the people who complain almost always acknowledge their lack of participation in the democratic process. However, this is commonly followed up with:

"That's not a union issue. The union needs to stick to its business...just dealing with the collective agreement and grievances."

To which I may reply – who made those rules? Our collective agreement is woefully thin. If we constrained ourselves to dealing within its scope, we would not be able to address the needs of much of our membership.

"Well, then, just stick to labour issues."

Alright, but what's a labour issue? As union members are all, by definition, working class people,



New 2006 CUPE 391 Executive:

President: Alex Youngberg
 Vice-President: Gerard Batty
 Vice-President: Ed Dickson
 Secretary Treasurer: Steven Turner
 Recording Secretary: Mike DePaoli
 Member at large: Peter de Groot
 Member at large: Aliza Nevarie
 Member at Large: Laura Safarian
 Member-at-large: Mark Whittam
 Trustees: Jennifer Kuun
 Inder Pannu

See *Solidarity* on next page...

Solidarity...

then almost any social issue that affects working class people can be construed as a labour issue.

“Okay...but just stick to issues that affect our members directly.”

Hmmm....okay. Let's look at what affects our members directly. Everyone can probably agree on workload, pay, hours and conditions of work. What about threats to pensions and health care plans? Okay, probably not much controversial about that. What about access to abortions? The reproductive rights of our members clearly affect their ability to work. What about a shift to more conservative government? This will obviously affect labour laws that will directly impact our working conditions.

And finally...what about the choices management makes? Don't those decisions directly impact our members?

The short answer is that the union (and when I say “union” I mean all of its members) decides what issues are important for it to address, and then does so. Where do we get the authority? Partially by legislation, but mostly by the ability to act in unison – the much-trumpeted solidarity.

This does not, by any stretch of the imagination, elevate the union to a position where it dictates everything that happens in the workplace, or in government (if it did, Jack Layton would probably be prime minister, and we would be gossiping about Carole James' \$50 shoes rather than Carole Taylor's somewhat pricier footwear). What it does is give our members a single seat at the table with the decision-makers, a somewhat equal platform to attempt to ensure that the needs of all workers are at least acknowledged and at best addressed.

And what if, God forbid, the membership decided to take a stand to which an individual member was absolutely opposed?

There are a few options. First, you can't just “quit” the union. You can certainly opt out, but you would become what is called a “Rand formula” employee.

Long ago the Supreme Court ruled that anyone working in a unionized workplace benefits from the work of the union, so that regardless of one's views on affiliation, one must still pay dues. Opting out, then, would be like choosing not to participate as a Canadian citizen. The government will still take your taxes, whether you vote or not.

Another option would be to quit the workplace entirely. Certainly, some feel stymied as they feel they are working against the grain, and sometimes it is better to stop banging your head against a wall and try something else.

The best option, however, is to get a bunch of like-minded people together and go to a general meeting to alter the course of the union. Is the next general meeting too far in the future? Then call your own...read our Local's constitution and bylaws on the web page at www.cupe391.ca to find out how.

Like our democratic country, our constitution serves as a backbone to ensure that the rights of all members are protected. Take a minute to learn about it.

I insinuated in the title of this piece that solidarity is elusive. This is because of the democratic nature of unionism, and the nature of socialist policy (and certainly trade unionism belongs in this camp). Whereas conservative ideologies tend to be very focussed (by their nature, they concentrate on the good of the individual first) – social/union ideologies are scattered across a broad spectrum (because they focus on the greater good for large groups of heterogeneous people).

The trick is to know how to be heard in our Local – by approaching the Executive, by approaching an appropriate committee, by initiating debate at general meetings. Then, once you've been heard, the vital piece to ensuring our union is strong is maintaining solidarity – even if things don't go your way, we never air “dirty laundry” in global e-mails, letters to management, or to the press. Because, after all, none of us are rich. None of us has extensive political influence. And when we decide our individual interests trump the will of the majority, then the only true influence we have – a strong, unified voice – is damaged, and nobody wins.

Counterpoint to...

"Why Management acts the way it does...."

(An article written by D'Arcy Stainton in last issue of OTS)

Submitted by Ross Bliss

I respectfully submit a response to the recent essay by D'arcy Stainton in the Spring issue of Off the Shelf.

He accurately and fairly described the desire of most workers for long term security and stable wages. However I don't believe that defines the core of everyone's motivation, and it is not true that change holds no inherent rewards for us. To explain this I need to first address his over-simplification of the complex relationship between management and staff.

It may be true that managers are categorically willing to assume a higher reward/risk ratio. However it is not fair or accurate to narrowly define their individual career motivations as being exclusively or even inherently driven by a personal ambition. This assumption negates both their professional integrity and their many community connections that are plainly evident. What is hopefully clear is that management is not primarily accountable to staff.

The library itself does not exist primarily for the benefit of its employees, so it should not come as a surprise that management's priorities are directed externally towards our customers. It is a strategic necessity that so much of management's activity involves their up-line stakeholders (The Board, City Council etc.), but I see no evidence to suggest that their end goal is anything but satisfying and serving the taxpaying public.

There is no disputing that we have been delivering a highly valued service to our public. However it is equally true that we can't expect it to be obvious to most people we currently serve that recognizing and adapting to change is essential for our survival as a publicly funded institution. We are not in a position to wait for circumstances to force change upon us. We have to try to anticipate and prepare for evolving public needs.

Forecasting and long range planning are not exact sciences, and they are often catalysts for innovations that are initially uncomfortable. However, I believe that the sometimes unsettling changes initiated by management actually do offer inherent rewards for staff. Aside from the various improvements intended by these changes, our jobs depend on the future for the library that these decisions are intended to secure.

This is only a brief and hopefully constructive general comment on the challenging process we have embarked on, intended mainly as an alternative to what I perceive as an unhealthy and inaccurate definition of the relationship between staff and management.



"Well...maybe we can waive your overdue fines this one time only..."

Day of Mourning, April 28, 2006

By Mike DePaoli

I carried a coffin with my father-in-law today. Not a real coffin, thankfully, as a genuine wood coffin would have been too heavy for the two of us to bear. It was cardboard, painted black, with a blood-red rose on top. It was one of nearly two-hundred such coffins, carried by union members wearing black armbands and hard hats, from the Vancouver Art Gallery to Canada Place, closing half of the busy downtown streets we walked at rush hour, slowing the crashing freight train of the economy for at least a little while.

I was late today for the convention, which started with this somber march. I hadn't expected to carry a coffin; I hadn't signed up for it the previous day. I hoped to at least catch up with it somewhere. But then I saw my father-in-law, Gary Campbell, retired member of CUPE 23, who inspired me to become active in the union. He was at the art gallery with other unionists, prepared to carry one on his own. He didn't even have to be here, he had done his duty fighting for the rights of workers everywhere. But he arrived, knowing there was nowhere else he'd rather be. He despaired that there were not many thousands more workers off their job this morning to march. I silently despaired that one day he will leave this world with conditions no better or perhaps worse than they were when he was younger, that social justice everywhere was not a reality as he wished.

The only black item I could find to wear was a T-shirt with the word "human" printed in white. I originally bought it as a tongue-in-cheek commentary, because it also had a white barcode beneath the word, and the word "commodified" among the numbers beneath the barcode. But as I walked toward the shores of Burrard Inlet on this gorgeous sunny day, I couldn't help but realize how apt the shirt was.

April 28, the Day of Mourning for workers killed or injured on the job, reminds us we are used by our employers. The labour climate in this province, and even more so around the world, is such that workers are made to feel like they are commodities, to be used and abused by employers just because they receive a paycheque. Indeed, cannon fodder can be a more appropriate term; see the maquilladoras in Mexico. Make no mistake: were the governments in this country able to take advantage of our complacency long enough to push legislation through, their friends in business would enjoy the same "paradise" of corpocracy they enjoy in those no-mans-lands that are not bound by Mexican or U.S. laws, feeble as they are.

Witness the fact that so many of those coffins represented forestry workers, more and more employed by small contractors doing anything they can to cut corners and stay out of the red. Faster, faster is the order coming out of the radio in the logging truck. Never stop taking those logs out. Never stop to question the safety of the operation. Fellers working alone and far apart from each other. Debbie Geddes spoke at the gathering at Canada Place about the loss of her fiancée in a forestry accident; his partner and first aid attendant was 45 minutes away downhill.

Witness Chett Crellin, retired teamster, who fought so hard to create safer work environments, voice shaking as he spoke of his grandson, Grant DePatie, killed when dragged by a fleeing car whose driver attempted to avoid paying for gas late one night. The policy of the gas station he worked for was supposed to prevent him from even leaving the station, but the policy was never communicated to him, and he was too honest to allow a shortage in the till. What greater irony is there when the young fall while the old struggle wearily on?

Everyone has lost a relative or friend in a workplace accident, or knows someone who has. My wife never got to know her grandfather because he was decapitated when a tree fell on him while he was logging. My uncle in Italy died of black lung at 52, a victim of the mines. Everyone has a reason to remember. If we haven't had a moment of silence or stopped working for a moment at our workplace this April 28th, let us take a moment after reading this unworthy report of today to remember all those killed on the job, remember that we are not commodities but human beings, and resolve to take action to assure safe workplaces everywhere, so that no one who leaves for work will be afraid of not coming home. It took carrying a coffin with my father-in-law to make me think about the dangers workers face, and the injustices, but I know I'll never forget.

Laurie Robertson will be very much missed by co-workers and patrons at Carnegie, as well as others she worked with throughout her dedicated years of service and professionalism with VPL and the union.

Best of luck in your retirement Laurie

From all CUPE 391 Members

My retirement tea at Carnegie was perfect in every way. To those Union members who arranged for, transported there and back and later washed, dried and stored away again our local's lovely old tea cups and saucers: thank you very much! It was a stunning surprise to see them set out on a table in the Carnegie Theatre, looking beautiful and pleased to be there.

Thank you to everyone I've worked with over my years at VPL in Central and in the branches, and in the Union on the Executive and on the Grievance Committee. I've always known I was fortunate to be a member of a union and being a member of CUPE 391 has made me proud over the years.

Thank you to the outgoing Executive for all your hard work and dedication to the local, and best wishes to the incoming Executive.

In solidarity,

*Laurie Robertson
June 3, 2006*



2006/7 General Meetings

Tuesday, July 18, 2006
Peter Kaye Room, Central Library – 5:30 pm

Tuesday, September 25, 2006
Peter Kaye Room, Central Library – 5:30 pm

Wednesday, November 22, 2006
Oakridge – 6:00 pm

Thursday, January 18, 2007
Peter Kaye Room, Central Library – 5:30 pm

Wednesday, March 7, 2007
Time and location to be announced

Annual General Meeting

Sunday, April 29, 2007
Alice MacKay Room, Central Library – 10:00 am

Including the Socially Excluded

A session at BCLA

By Janis McKenzie

At the British Columbia Library Association conference in April, VPL's Sandra Singh and Annette DeFaveri talked about the Working Together project, an initiative to "include the socially excluded" by bringing down the barriers that prevent so many people from using library services.

I went to this session the way I go to most conference sessions, expecting some intellectual stimulation and maybe inspiration, ideas I could apply in my own job. I didn't expect to feel deeply upset and shaken up. But then Sandra told a story about a homeless family that was living in a car. The children were having trouble doing their homework under the streetlights, and Annette invited them into the library to study. Rather than jumping at the offer, the parents were terrified. What if someone questioned them, found out who they were and where they were living, and notified the authorities? If there was even a small chance of their children being taken away, why would they set foot in the library?

This little story can be a bit of a shock to library workers, because after all it's our job to hook patrons up to resources (including social agencies), and we really want to help people. The story shocked me too, but for a different reason. It brought me back quite forcibly to a time I usually manage to remember only in a safe intellectual kind of way: the six months when I was homeless myself.

I was sixteen, a Grade 10 drop-out, with no job or any real skills. Every day I was consumed with worry about where I would sleep that night. But even worse was my fear that the police might pick me up and force me to return to my family.

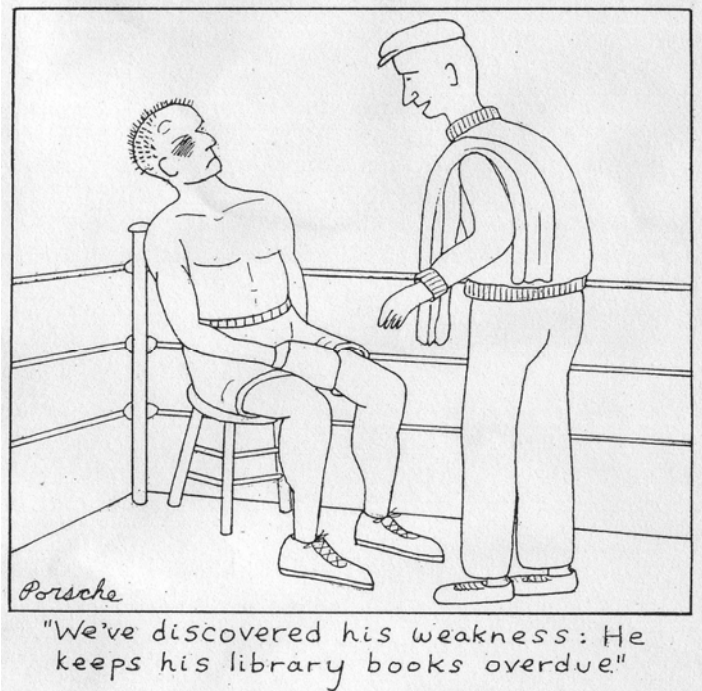
There weren't many places to hang out during the day. I remember standing in front of the North Vancouver City Library and wishing I could go inside. In my previous, middle-class life I had read everything in the

children's and Young Adult sections in my local Lynn Valley branch. The staff there was friendly, but they also knew everyone's name, who our parents were, and exactly where we lived.

Without a job or school, with no one to talk to but young people who were drug addicts, mentally ill, or had problems even more serious than mine, I was dying for something to read, something to think about, something to do. But there was no way I was going in a library where someone was bound to ask me for ID or, at the very least, why I wasn't in school.

In those days I never would have guessed that I would go to university, let alone that I would become a librarian who would have some say in how we serve homeless people. But when I was head of the Hastings Branch, this was something I thought about quite a bit.

See *Socially Excluded* on next page...



Socially Excluded...

There was the homeless man who came in every morning and looked over the sale books with great care. I always smiled and said hi, suspecting that he was only in the library to use the washroom, but I still wonder if I should have said something to let him know that he was welcome to come in, regardless of the reason.

There was a mother and her young daughter, who looked generally unwashed and wouldn't meet anyone's eyes. A part of me felt that if I was a good librarian I would find out more and do something. Were they hiding from an abusive husband and father?

Had they fallen a few rent payments behind? Surely there was some agency that could be of assistance—how could I help? But I remembered—just a little bit—being sixteen and homeless. I only gave them my name, told them I was there if they needed anything, and smiled at them every chance I got.

And those are just the people who *do* come in. Since that session at BCLA I've been wondering what would have convinced me to go into that library in North Vancouver when I was sixteen and homeless. I don't know the answer. But at least now I'm thinking about the question.

HELP!!!

EAC is looking to expand our list of "help"

We need people with cars that live near, or don't mind going to, Richmond or Surrey/Ladner area to return some recycling materials.

Fine Arts division goes through a lot of **Jewel cases** or **CD's** that are not recycled by VPL but can be recycled IF taken to B.T.R. Recycling in Richmond, B.C.

Another bunch of recycling that falls into this category is our computer Styrofoam packaging. Systems have been able to get some of it returned to the company, but there is a lot that remains on our side. These are light but bulky and can take up to 8 large (30"x48") bags full per trip. The recycling place is in Surrey (really Ladner) and has taken up to an hour each way.

Anyone game?

Mansonville Plastics B.C. Ltd.
19402 56th Avenue Surrey, B.C.
M-F 8-5 pm.
Ph: 604-534-8626

and/or

B.T.R. Recycling
1999 Savage Road
Richmond B.C.

M-F 8:30 - 4:30 pm
Ph: 604-273-7889

If anyone is willing to help rotate the responsibility with our few dedicated recyclers, contact Keith Edwards at QIS (till May 2007 @ 331-3790) or email me (keithedw@vpl.ca) and I will be grateful. Any recycling that was sent to me via Central/Level 6, please now send it to me via Central/QIS(Lower Level).

Early Library Days in Small Town Vancouver

By Jennifer Haines

I started in the library on Feb. 1st, 1975 as a full time LAI. It was at the old Hastings Branch on the current site of the newer Hastings Branch. All the shelves were wooden and we had a recordak to check out people's books. The supervisor who hired me remembered me as a child coming into the Hastings branch to borrow my 10 books for the 4 week loan period. Once during the summer holidays between grade 4 and five I snuck in an extra book before carefully opening each book before being handed to the library worker to check out. I knew I could read 11 books in the 4 weeks and thought I'd try and break the rule of 10 books per child. I felt very daring, but at the same time afraid for I knew how strict the library staff were. Sure enough the library worker slowly started to count my stack of library books. My face slowly got redder and redder. The library worker's face became stricter and stricter. Once she realized that I had tried to sneak an extra book out to read she strictly told me in a very firm, loud voice that I had to give up one book. So several were laid out for me and it was such a hard choice, for I would read a lot of the children's books that were part of a series, like Lenore Mattingly Weber, Linda Lovelace, Mary Norton, Walter Farley, Arthur Ransome, Eunice Young Smith and many others. They had to be read in order, for I felt it ruined the whole effect of the story if it wasn't in order. I grudgingly gave up one book and of course felt very bad for what I had done. After that I always approached that tall circulation desk with some trepidation. I never remember going to the librarian's desk to ask a question either because they looked either scary, busy, mean, snooty or had their nose in a book. I always had no trouble in finding my reading material, for I had a big sister and brother to help me if I needed any suggestions for good books. I was luckier and richer (even though we were poor) than some poor kids who grew up where they could not get a library card. (like Ireland :)

Working in the 1970's was certainly a different time. The branches had a very neighborhood feel to them. We used to put on Easter Day Parades for the children. We would invite a football star, a weatherman like Norm Grohmann and another celebrity to be the

judges. We would have many children enter the contest. There were prizes for the most beautiful Easter hat, the funniest and I believe the weirdest. There was of course a lot of preparation on the part of the staff. We'd have an Easter tree displayed in the front large glass window of the library all decorated with Easter eggs . Many of the staff during breaks and slow times would sit around the large workroom table and decorate the eggs. We had two large full size mirrors on closet doors where we hung our coats. . One mirror was opened a certain way so that a library worker could see the checkout side of the counter and the other mirror was opened in a certain way in order for another library worker to see the checkin side. That way we'd be up right away to help any borrower that came in. It was actually quite a funny way to do it, for we'd see the borrower's quizzical expressions when they realized there were no staff on the library counter. Imagine, we were all having a whale of a time doing crafts! The same would happen during the month of December for Christmas crafts. It was all done to decorate the branch and make it a beautiful sight to behold when the borrowers of all ages came into the library. It was especially grand when we held special events such as the Easter Day Parade. The creative hats that the children made were something else and everyone involved had so much fun. It really promoted reading, the library and as a place where people of all ages could go and enjoy themselves. I remember two summers in a row I was in charge of a once a week craft program for children. I would pour over all of the library craft books to come up with good ideas to use for the program. Of course the books I used would be displayed beside the crafts made. Also which delighted me greatly was being allowed to paint on the huge library window. Whatever I painted I put a caption with the picture which in some way promoted reading. Even though I had a very strict but fair Scottish supervisor she would let me paint all day long on a closed Wednesday in the library. Usually the display would change every 6 weeks or so. I know the maintenance man was not always pleased to be

Se *Early Library Days* on next page...

Early Library Days...

removing all of the watercolor paints I put all over the window.! Those were the days when the library opened at 9 a.m. and closed at 9 p.m. and yes we were closed on the old fashioned day called Wednesday. The staff started at 8 a.m. and the whole library would be shelf read, shelves balanced and checked for reserves before opening at 9 a.m. Yes, we were well staffed. I was told that I had one of the best shifts in the whole system by my supervisor. It was Monday, Tuesday, off Wednesday, in on Thursday and Friday. All day shifts and every sat and sun. off.! Four day work weeks were great! We'd start at 8 a.m., have half hour for lunch. Then leave at 5:15.

On Robbie Burns day our supervisor, being Scottish, would bring in a Haggis. She'd have it boiling away on the stove up in the staff room. Yes, we had a stove! The smell would waft over the whole library and we would tell all the borrowers that it was a Haggis being cooked. They would get a chuckle and we were all used to the strange looks from our borrowers anyways. One thing that hasn't changed! Most borrowers think of library workers as being a bit barmy (an old English expression for those odd few who don't know that). When I started working there was a librarian who worked just Friday evenings, she had long flowing blonde hair and wore long flowing skirts. She was a real hippie type. Funny to think that she's been retired for a few years now. Before I started at the Hastings branch back in the days where I was just a regular borrower I heard a funny story about a head librarian who would come down the stairs from

her afternoon tea a bit tipsy. You see with the branch being in an old Italian area of the East End sometimes the borrowers would bring in gifts. Well one borrower brought in some good old homemade Italian wine. I guess the head librarian didn't realize how strong the wine was or else she just figured it was a good way to have an enjoyable afternoon! I guess that never got downtown! Even if it had I'm sure nothing much would have come of it for the Library Directors were quite well known for keeping a well stocked supply of booze in their fancy offices. Maybe it was the norm and eased things out when entertaining dignitaries or who knows what else!. Well on the show Da Vinci's Inquest the mayor always seemed to be making himself up a drink! Then we had a funny English lady for a head librarian. She had absolutely no qualms in banging on borrower's doors at home if they were particularly bad with their overdue books. Now she was a hoot. Even though at the same time she could have the rest of the staff quaking in their boots if she was displeased about something! Fear and laughter seemed to be the norm back in those days. I guess the expression I still hear about the library police getting after the bad borrowers must have been true in the old days. Well, it certainly happened in the 1970's to a select lucky few borrowers who heard a strict firm knocking at their doors.

One thing that intrigued me about the old Hastings branch was the ancient furnace down in the dungeon (the basement that is). It really looked like a dungeon. The LA's had to take the boxes down these wooden stairs to put them away or to get more to bring upstairs. I remember vaguely someone opening these heavy creaky doors and looking at the flames inside. It had a real Hansel and Gretel feel to it. Also no matter what time of year it was all the windows up top had to be opened for 10 minutes each morning. We used this long metal pole to open the windows up top. We still have the odd few libraries out there that still use long metal poles. I think in the old days those long poles were actually used to push the odd bad child (or bad LA) into the flames of the old furnace in the dungeon of the old Hastings branch library..... a new story next month.

Pride Parade

12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Sunday, August 6, 2006

Theme: "The Librarian"

Wanted: Grey skirts, White blouses, Brassieres, Wigs, Reading glasses, other
Contact Ross Bliss (rossbli@vpl.ca) if you'd like to participate, donate attire, or find out where to meet up with other library folks before commencing on parade route.

Photo Caption Contest Winners!!!

Nen Jelacic and Devin Ng

Runner Up: Gail Buente



Top Three Submissions:

Nen Jelacic and Devin Ng:

"Stephen Harper Eats Babies"

(Nen claims that if you stare at it long enough you can see an image of 'Stephen Harper chewing on a baby,' but I *still* only see Stephen Harper chewing on his foot. Sorry Nen and Devin! Nonetheless, it still qualifies in the Weirdest Caption category, and also because Stephen Harper *really does like to eat babies* as everyone knows. The plumper the better!)

Gail Buente ILL

"....and when you have a few extra minutes, would you please shelf-read this section?"

Nen Jelacic and Devin Ng:

"EAP anyone?"

Thanks to everyone who submitted captions!

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue of *Off The Shelf*.

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Labour Peace Forum inspires activists

NEWS RELEASE - June 26, 2006, from CUPE BC

VANCOUVER—For two busy days on a sun-drenched campus at the University of British Columbia, labour activists from around the world enjoyed a once-in-a-lifetime networking opportunity they won't soon forget. The Labour Peace Forum (June 25 & 26), organized by the Vancouver and District Labour Council as part of World Peace Forum 2006 (June 22-28) offered international union activists a chance to share histories, identify common goals and develop strategies for a collective position on the issues of war and peace and the impact of war on working families.

The event, sponsored in part by CUPE National, CUPE BC, and various CUPE locals, has set a major precedent for union activism in this country.

"Unlike similar 'big picture' issues such as globalization and sustainability, the Canadian labour movement has not developed a solid analysis of war and remains on the periphery of the peace movement," says VDLC president Bill Saunders, one of the Forum organizers.

"We simply do not regard it as a high priority item in the daily struggle to defend our members' economic and political interests."

Thanks to a bold program agenda that encouraged debate on such topics as the economics of war, the military industrial complex and how to organize for world peace, that may soon change.

During a time when unions, including CUPE, have been bashed by the mainstream media for getting involved in international issues, the forum confirmed for many delegates how the simple act of building bridges and forming links across borders and time zones can prove the crucial difference in securing human rights, improving wages and working conditions, or organizing the unorganized.

During a time when right-wing commentators declare that union activism is on the decline, the Monday sessions in particular offered reassuring evidence to the contrary.



CUPE 391 member Lily Gee (in middle)
with other Labour Peace attendees

Delegates who filled UBC's student union building ballroom were visibly moved during a screening of Jonathan Levin's documentary "Meeting Face to Face: The Iraq-U.S. Labor Solidarity Tour," which follows six senior Iraqi labour leaders on a 25-city tour through the United States in June of last year.

And Kent Wong of the UCLA Labor Centre offered much food for thought during a working lunch address and power point presentation on organizing undocumented workers in the U.S. Delegates applauded the sight of half a million people attending an immigrant rights rally in Los Angeles on May 1.

"But what does it mean that the largest ever May Day rally was organized not by the labour movement but by immigrant workers?" he asked the crowd, before challenging each table of delegates to come up with ideas on what their union could do to increase support for immigrant workers.

A table of CUPE members suggested translating union documents into more languages and insisting on clear language policy, pushing for employers to enact equity hiring policies; and providing more union activities, such as CUPE BC's "Include Me" campaign, that promote inclusion both in society and the workplace.

During an evening session on Peace and Sustainability, CUPE Research representative Blair Redlin was part of a panel discussion called "Beyond Peak Oil: A Proposal to Avoid Increased Violence, Ecological Degradation and Social Inequity."

Redlin's talk focussed on the social and economic impacts of competition for fundamental, life-sustaining resources like water, and how union activists can become part of the solution in advocating for alternatives to privatization.

Happy Retirement Brian!



King Brian Enthroned

Todd Wong's Top 8 List of Summer Reads:

1. 1001 albums to listen to before you die (because I like lists, and I love listening to albums)
2. 1001 books to read before you die (because I love lists...)
3. Outlander - by Diana Gabaldon (read it again!)
4. X-Men comics by Marvel (not the movie) Because they are incredible!!!
5. David Suzuki - the autobiography (Because Suzuki is amazing... the Greatest Canadian - still living.... and because a signed copy was gifted to me as a present)
6. The Golden Spruce (because I bought the book, love Haida Gwaii - but haven't found the time yet)
7. Da Vinci Code (not the movie)... in case you still haven't read it.
8. There is Season by Patrick Lane... (because it is the OBOV choice after all)

