



# On Stream

Newsletter of the Selkirk College Faculty Association

## Reflections on the Past Year

As the end of the term approaches we all begin to breathe a collective sigh of relief...."Yes! We have made it through another year!"

It has been a busy and challenging year in terms of classes, meetings and various student focused activities. It has also been a busy year for our somewhat new SCFA executive who became involved in the escalation of BCTF's strike situation.

As a membership we were asked to support the. BCTF in their two week long strike by respecting the picket line/information line the BCTF placed in front of all Selkirk College campuses.

As I looked back on our one day of job action I considered the longstanding nature of this dispute between these two parties. . I have discovered further evidence that our historians were correct History is indeed repeating itself!

For your consideration I have included a "Report Card" done on the BC Liberal Government by the BCTF covering the period of 2001 to 2002.

Clearly, not much seems to have changed.

## Ponderings from the President

I thought it might be a quiet semester, but of course I was wrong. Fortunately, once events related to the BCTF job action were wrapped

up, and plans were put in place to resolve payroll issues, my energies became focused on a more pleasant prospect: the merging of Kootenay School of the Arts with Selkirk College. Members of the KSA Faculty Association (they are part of the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators) voted to join the SCFA bargaining unit. Negotiations then took place between David Lawson from KSA, Selkirk College management representatives, and SCFA representatives – myself, Lui Marinelli, and Sally Glock, with David Piasta from FPSE acting on behalf of both SCFA and KSA.

To date, we have a working draft of a Letter of Understanding and the College has sent a proposal to the Ministry for approval. Given the iconic role of KSA within the community, I will venture to say we all feel pretty good about the agreement. Now, let's hope the Ministry doesn't turn Grinch.

Do I think next semester will be a quiet one? I don't dare speculate. But I do know Santa brings presents to all good girls and boys. As SCFA President it's my job to be bad, but in a very good way. So I'll be looking under the tree Christmas morning.

Happy Holidays and Best Wishes,

Tracy Punchard

## Profile of People of Interest

### Interview with David Piasta: our FPSE Representative

**1. Please tell us about your personal life...**

*I have been married for 31 years, have three grown daughters, two grandsons and one granddaughter. I have been a staff representative for over 20 years, 13 years at the nurses union and just about 9 years with CIEA/FPSE. Prior to that I was a registered nurse and active in the union.*

**2. What are some of your favourite leisure activities?**

*I like to travel, both in and out side of Canada, but my passion is working with my hands, doing building, woodworking, gardening, and other creative things like cooking and wine making.*

**3. How did you get into the position of being our staff representative?**

*By choice. From time to time our assignments are changed and I choose Selkirk because I really like the Kootenays.*

**4. Can you tell us about the other duties in your job which you really enjoy?**

*I like the contact with members and the opportunity to do education. However, I do enjoy the times when you become part of a creative solution to solve problems.*

**5. When I or someone else contacts you with a problem to solve or favour to ask, what sorts of bribes/gifts should we bring?**

*None are needed.*

**6. What book is on your bedside table at the moment?**

*I have usually a number on the go at any one time, and generally they deal with wood working and or tools.*

*I am an avid Science Fiction reader, so I just finished the latest in the Dune sagas, Road to Dune. This is a compilation of short stories, essays, lost chapters and alternative endings to some of the previously published writings of Frank Herbert, the author and creator of the Dune series*

**7. Can you tell us what "words of wisdom" or "motto" you live by?**

*Word of wisdom, hmmm. "Learn to list more and talk less"*

### VP Negotiations

#### The Ongoing Saga of Bargaining

Although we signed our 2004 – 2007 collective agreement on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2005 we still are not finished with the 2004 process and it is almost time to start preparing for the 2007 negotiations.

The Bargaining Coordination and Review Committee of FPSE is presently undertaking a review of the last round of bargaining. The intent of this is to make recommendations for the 2007 negotiations. The BCRC has struck a subcommittee to do this. I am on this subcommittee and we are looking at the process of bargaining that we experienced this round and the viability of provincial bargaining in the future. We have just completed draft six or seven of our report and are almost ready to send it to the whole BCRC. From there it will go to the FPSE Presidents' Council for their consideration at their January meeting. After they have decided on the disposition of the report either Tracy or I will

report back to SCFA members. After that there will be another discussion of the report at a bargaining conference in March 2006.

At this time I cannot comment on the proposed recommendations. However, I will tell you that I supported some form of modified provincial bargaining. As one of the small college we need the support of the numbers that come from an alliance with the larger faculty unions. Having said that we need to look at ways of streamlining the provincial process, it is very difficult for the interior and island faculty associations to have bargainers be in the lower main land for extended periods of time. It is very disruptive to personal lives. We had a bargainer who phoned home every evening to read bedtime stories to his children. So we do need a better process.

On the local front we have discovered that this past summer the college's HR department did not distribute the new collective agreements to our member. So we are in the process getting copies printed for distribution. They will be in your boxes after the print shop gets through course manuals and final exams. If you need to see a copy of the collective agreement there is a copy on the SCFA web site.

And last but not least. At the end of this term I will not be continuing on as VP Negotiations. A replacement is needed. The term will be May 2006 to May 2008 and perhaps beyond. This lucky person will get to experience the 2007 bargaining. If you are interested in this position contact Tracy or me. It might be a good idea to attend the March

FPSE bargaining conference along with Tracy and Lui.

The saga never ends. The March conference will end the saga of the 2004 and start the 2007 saga.

Respectfully submitted,

Bev Onischak, VP Negotiations.

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### **The Federation of Post-Secondary Educators put their money where their mouths are**

President of the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators and Jinny Simms, President of the BC Teachers Federation will present a cheque for \$25,000 to Cheryl Prepchuk, Executive Director of the Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society, at 1150 Raymur Avenue.

"The money will be dedicated to our Kids Pick program that provides 1200 children between 18 months and 5 years with a bag of nutritional snacks each month," says Cheryl Prepchuk, Executive Director of the Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society. "Studies prove that hungry children cannot learn and this program was designed to provide children with a strong nutritional base."

During the recent fight for better education for the children in BC, money was put aside to help the striking BC teachers.

"We received tremendous support for our efforts from unions and faculty associations

across Canada. In keeping with the solidarity that contributed to this effort in the first place, the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators wants to donate the remaining funds to the Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society. We know that thousands of families depend on the food bank to make ends meet. Those families deserve our support and I'm happy that my union has made the commitment to provide some of that support, especially at this time of year," says Oliver.

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## FPSE PRESIDENT'S COMMENTARY

### Teacher's dispute: labour solidarity shines through...

The biggest teachers' dispute in BC's history is over and it's time to reflect on lessons learned. Certainly, those in the Premier's office are still trying to figure out what happened. In a dispute where the government was convinced that strike-bound classrooms would turn public support against teachers, the results were the exact opposite. Close to two-thirds of British Columbians supported teachers in their fight for better classroom learning conditions, even though that fight had been deemed illegal by the BC courts and had kept kids out of school for over two weeks.

The dispute was a wake-up call for the Campbell government. Bully tactics, like the legislative hammer embedded in Bill 12 (Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act), were not going to go unopposed by either those directly affected-BC teachers-or their allies in the

broader labour movement. As well, the BC Liberals were reminded once again that the public looks to government to find answers, not pick fights. Many thousands of parents knew all too well what the teachers were talking about when they said classroom conditions had deteriorated over the last four years. Parents wanted those problems fixed and knew that supporting teachers in this dispute was the only way to do it.

In the broader labour movement, the solidarity and support for teachers was nothing short of spectacular. Whether it was the protests in Victoria or the Kootenays, thousands of workers walked off the job to send a clear message to the Premier: bargain with teachers, don't ignore them. These workers risked a lot to send that message. In the Kootenays, for example, six Steelworkers were fired for participating in the protest. In other areas, workers faced suspensions and other forms of discipline for taking a stand in support of teachers.

Within the ranks of FPSE, support for the teachers was tremendous. Members on Vancouver Island, in Kamloops, and the Northwest as well as throughout the Kootenays joined with others to show their support for the teachers' fight. Hundreds joined in community rallies and walked the picket line with teachers. When the courts froze the teachers' strike fund, FPSE was quick to take action that provided direct support to individual teachers. We established the Feed the Teachers Fund and called on others in the labour movement to join our effort to help striking teachers. The initial commitment of \$200,000 has since climbed to almost \$300,000

with support from other unions, FPSE locals and CAUT affiliates from across Canada.

The response from teachers who received our support was equally heartfelt. Our office has received hundreds of calls, emails and letters from teachers. One Burnaby teacher wrote "Wow! What a wonderful gesture of support-thank you. I am a Burnaby Teacher-on-Call and a single mom so this is awesome for us."

Lessons learned? When we support each other, we're all stronger for it. Yes, collective action is never easy to mobilize, but it is a powerful reminder of what makes our movement so essential. There will always be room for improvement, but what we demonstrated to ourselves and to teachers is that solidarity is forever.

By Cindy Oliver, President, FPSE

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**Your SCFA Executive**

**President: Tracy Punchard**  
**VP Contract Negotiations: Bev Onischak**  
**VP Contract Administration: Lui Marinelli**  
**VP Liaison: Sally Glock**  
**Secretary: Rob Macrae**  
**Treasurer: John Stegman**  
**College Board Observer: Pat Gibson**  
**Retirement Issues: Ross Bates**



**In Closing**

On behalf of the SCFA executive I would like to wish all of you a restful and revitalizing holiday season, and all the best for 2006.

VP Liaison, Sally Glock



The British Columbia Teachers' Federation

# REPORT CARD

*on the* B.C. LIBERAL GOVERNMENT

Reading <b>C</b>	Needs significant improvement. Weak performance in simple word recognition and comprehension; e.g., "We are putting students first." Shows fundamental failure to grasp meaning of "first."
Writing <b>C-</b>	Tendency toward exaggeration and misrepresentation of facts. Shows promise at language manipulation, but has difficulty with plain English. Frequent use of inappropriate language; e.g., the "F" word — Flexibility, a code word for cuts.
Arithmetic <b>D</b>	Ought to show better judgment. Excels at subtraction but practises this skill ruthlessly, e.g., \$2 billion subtracted from government revenue in tax cuts means deep service cuts to citizens.
Geography <b>D</b>	Urban attitude limits understanding. Poor knowledge of B.C. geography threatens rural and remote schools, hospitals, social services, and courthouses.
History 19th Century <b>A</b> 21st Century <b>F</b>	Must learn from mistakes of the past, or be condemned to repeat them. Excellent understanding of 19th Century concepts; e.g., that education, health care, and justice are only for the privileged. Weak understanding of modern democratic principles. Faulty recall of commitments made prior to 2001 election.
Fine Arts <b>F</b>	Not meeting expectations. Complete failure to follow through on commitments to fully fund music and arts education.
Physical Education <b>D</b>	Doesn't play by the rules. Promised to strengthen physical education, but did not do so despite rising incidence of childhood obesity and diabetes.
Career and Personal Planning <b>D</b>	Fewer opportunities. Higher tuition fees and lower minimum wage mean fewer career paths open to youth, who will work longer hours with less union representation and weaker health and safety protection.
Business Education <b>B</b>	Enthusiastic approach, but short-term view. Improved opportunities for (big) business to access a highly skilled, poorly paid work force. Sees education and health care not as social responsibilities, but as commodities to be bought and sold.
Leadership/ Citizenship <b>F</b>	Disappointing performance. Often disregards rights of others. Breaks promises and contracts. Reluctant to accept responsibility for consequences of own actions. Needs to work on listening skills.
Behaviour <b>F</b>	A disruptive influence. Demonstrates bullying tendencies, lack of respect for others. Picks fights with nurses, teachers, lawyers, students, seniors, unions, and First Nations.
Attendance <b>Poor</b>	Frequent truancy. Enthusiastic attendance at meetings of chambers of commerce, but too often absent from meetings with all those who are dismissed as "special interests."

*"Governments... must be held accountable for their leadership in putting the rights and well-being of children above all other concerns. And those that fail to do so must also be held accountable."*

—The State of the World's Children 2002, UNICEF