



### Inside this Issue:

- From the President ..... 1
- CAUT Librarians Conference ..... 2
- Open the Doors Campaign..... 3
- Open to Learning Conference..... 3
- Committee reports ..... 4
- Board elections ..... 6
- Jacinda Mack presentation ..... 6
- Transportation plebiscite..... 6
- LFA AGM & Retiree social ..... 6

### The LFA Board

- Lynn Carter, President
- Scott McLean, Vice President
- Deborah Filleul, Treasurer
- Darrell Kean, Secretary
- Cheryl McKeeman, Chief Steward
- Peter Babiak, Member at Large
- Alison Curtis, Steward
- Stephen Phillips, Member at Large
- Jessie Smith, Steward

### Co-editors

- Alison Curtis
- Stephen Phillips

### Contact Us

For more information about the LFA contact Amy Kwan, Executive Assistant, 604-323-5343.



Our office is in Room A212.  
Website: <https://www.lfaweb.ca>

### From the President



I want to thank all of our members for the remarkable turnout for our recent strike vote. It is very gratifying for the LFA Board and your LFA bargaining team to know that you are overwhelmingly supporting us to get a reasonable and fair settlement for faculty in the current collective bargaining process.

Faculty at Langara live in one of the most expensive areas in the country and recently this fact has been further compounded by two major changes specific to Langara: parking and daycare.

**Parking:** As a result of a benefits audit by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), faculty are now being reassessed for back taxes related to parking. We have already received or will receive tax notices about unpaid taxes back to 2011, including interest. None of us knew that parking passes at Langara were a taxable benefit when we applied for them in 2011, 2012, or 2013. To find out that they are now a taxable benefit and that we are liable to pay hefty back taxes plus interest is quite a shock. None of us were given the opportunity to make an informed decision when we applied for parking passes at the College over the past three years. Had we known about the tax liability, we could have chosen to apply or not. The LFA believes that the College has been negligent in managing this issue. The College made a submission to the CRA regarding the value of parking at Langara. Unfortunately after receiving that submission, the CRA decided that the value of parking here is significantly higher than at other Lower Mainland post-secondary institutions. It is a shame that we all have to rely on an appeal by the College to the CRA to remedy the situation. In the meantime we have to pay these taxes and do the work to launch our own individual appeals.

The LFA has delivered a grievance on this issue to the College President. We hope that the College will address this issue now with the commitment and expertise it deserves. The LFA has also asked for the college to provide support to members with their individual appeals.

*Continued on page 2*

## From the President *(continued from page 1)*



**Daycare:** Daycare fees have been increasing significantly and a notice given to parents in February indicates that the fees will continue to rise significantly in future years; apparently far in excess of likely wage increases.

By May 2016, the college will have, over a 4 year period, increased per-child fees by an average of \$3,800 per year to a total annual cost of \$12,600 (a 43% increase in 4 years). The College has told parents to expect an increase between 2% and 5% per year after 2016. These changes create risks to attracting and retaining new faculty, community engagement and leadership development, and they add financial stress to members with young families. The LFA board will be taking steps to respond to these changes.

**FPSE:** At the March 13 Presidents' Council meeting, Cindy Oliver announced that she will be stepping

down as FPSE President at this year's AGM, to be held in Kelowna May 12-15. Cindy has served as FPSE President for 14 years.

**Your Bargaining Team** (Cheryl McKeeman, Scott McLean, Darrell Kean and Lynn Carter) will be back at the table on March 26th and we have several days booked into early April. The College has been threatening not to give any retroactive wage increase (due April 1st according to other public sector settlements) if we don't ratify a Collective Agreement by April 30th. Having checked with a number of other locals who are also bargaining right now, it seems that the Langara Faculty Association is the only local subjected to this arbitrary deadline.

The College is going to have to step up their efforts to get an agreement if their efforts so far are an indication of their commitment to a fair settlement here.

We are grateful for your support.

*Lynn Carter*

---

## CAUT Librarians & Archivists Conference 2014

*Report by Joyce Wong*

Under the sponsorship of FPSE, I attended the CAUT Conference *From Talk to Action: Building Successful Campaigns* held in Ottawa last October. Although intrigued, I was initially unsure how relevant media campaigns would be to my professional practice.



But after two intense days of presentations and hands-on workshops, I found many of the skills transferable to the work I do at Langara. We learned about the steps of conceptualizing a campaign from goal to tactics, which can be applied to communicating any library (or academic) issue on campus. Some mock scenarios for which I and other participants created mass media campaigns include:

- A hazardous building ignored by Administration despite repeated alerts from employees
- A non-librarian hired to replace a librarian
- A librarian facing dismissal because of a critical blog post

The conference also covered very practical topics such as staying on message while speaking with media and effective campaign graphics.

Beyond practical skills, the conference prompted me to think in new ways about the ability of the union movement to affect change on a wider scale. Speaking with colleagues from other parts of the country, it became clear that we face many similar issues, including the erosion of funding for public post-secondary education and the lack of resources to support the growing number of international students mandated by the government. My takeaway from the conference? It's important for the LFA to be a member of larger post-secondary union organizations to join in speaking out on these issues.

## Open the Doors Campaign Kicks Off

FPSE launched the first stage of its “Open the Doors” campaign on March 16th with videos and an online petition demanding the reversal of recent cuts by the province to Adult Basic Education. Approved in principle by delegates at last year’s AGM, the campaign aims to mobilize public support, and exert political pressure, for a properly funded, accessible system of public post-secondary education throughout BC.

For details and updates, visit the campaign website at [www.openthedoors.ca](http://www.openthedoors.ca).

BC can afford to  
invest in education\*

\*but won't

Take action at:  
[OpenTheDoors.ca](http://OpenTheDoors.ca)

## FPSE Open to Learning Conference, January 24

*Report by Stephen Phillips*

Attended by delegates from around the province, including four LFA reps, *Open to Learning* aimed to reflect on the evolution to date of public post-secondary education (PSE) in BC and to identify ways in which faculty can change the terms of debate over its future. For FPSE it marked the first stage of an ambitious campaign to build public support for a revitalized, accessible system of public PSE. The conference heard from speakers with backgrounds in teaching, administration, government service, policy analysis, and political activism.



In his overview of public PSE in the United States, keynote **Dr. Gary Rhoades** of the University of Arizona described a system in which institutions increasingly rely on contingent faculty who are denied job security and benefits, while tuition fee hikes and mounting levels of student debt are stratifying the system increasingly along class and racial lines. Meanwhile, administration now claims a higher share of university income than ever, a development he dubbed “the revenge of the managers.” While Rhoades considered Canada’s circumstances to be less dire, the US experience is a cautionary tale (“the educational equivalent of acid rain”).

Useful insights into the development of public PSE in BC were provided by **Jim Soles**, former Assistant Deputy Minister of Advanced Education, and **Jim Reed**, President of BC Colleges, a consortium of BC College presidents. Soles described the development of BC’s PSE system over the past 50 years, noting that accessibility has been a dominant theme for most of that period. Since the late 1990s, however, the province’s grant increases to PSE have failed to keep up with inflation - a gap that has been getting wider. **Iglika Ivanova**, an economist with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, stressed the significant benefits that public PSE confers on society in terms of knowledge and skills, including the ability of citizens to adapt to changing circumstances. Contrary to popular belief, she disclosed that humanities graduates are less vulnerable to fluctuations in the economy than many others.

To influence the future of PSE policy, speakers offered a range of suggestions. Rhoades said there are natural alliances to be formed with students, for whom faculty are “first responders,” and with parents. As well, educators need to make common cause with other public employees. Soles added that given their important role in workforce training, colleges should also enlist the support of business. Since college administrators are obliged to work largely behind the scenes, Mira Oreck of the Broadbent Institute stressed the need for faculty associations to advocate publicly for PSE and demonstrate the availability of viable alternatives. In that regard, Ivanova noted that while government grants in Canada account for less than 60% of university funding, the comparable figure in such countries as Norway, Finland, and Denmark is over 90%.

All in all, the conference was highly informative and served as an effective springboard to FPSE’s **Open the Doors** public campaign on PSE. For more details on the conference, see the **full report** posted on the LFA website.

## FPSE Standing Committee Reports

FPSE Standing Committees met in Vancouver in January and February. Here are selected highlights - full reports from all committees are posted on the LFA website. To learn more about a committee or how you can get involved, contact the relevant rep.

### Education Policy Committee

The main issue was the provincial government's decision last December to cut base funding for Adult Basic Education (ABE) courses. At the same time it authorized colleges to start charging tuition fees for ABE courses, which have been tuition-free since 2007. To date not all colleges have chosen to make use of this new power, but VCC and Langara have: at its January 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting, the Langara College Board voted to start charging full tuition fees for its ABE English and Math courses starting 1 May.

All local reps were appalled by the government's ABE decision, which will impose a financial barrier on students needing access to *secondary* school education. There was unanimous support for motion recommending that FPSE launch a campaign calling on Victoria to restore full funding for ABE programs.

N.B. FPSE co-sponsored a public forum on ABE on March 5 at the Croatian Culture Centre attended by hundreds of concerned citizens. - *Stephen Phillips for Peter Babiak, local 5761*

### Pension Advisory Committee

Over two days, PAC met to receive an update on the pension plan from FPSE trustees, to recommend a candidate for an FPSE trustee position, and to elect the next PAC chair.

Trustees reported that the pension plan financial returns have been strong recently and that the plan is anticipated to be assessed as fully funded in the actuarial valuation due at the end of August. This is good news: if the fund is fully funded, we will likely not see an increase in pension contribution rates.

PAC recommended Doug Birtwistle from Okanagan College to the trustee position, for a term of 3 years. I was nominated as PAC chair by a VCCFA member and elected for the next 2-year term. - *Scott McLean, local 5355*

### Professional & Scholarly Development Committee

Main work centred on improving the PD and Scholarly Activity Comparison Chart to make it more useful for bargaining purposes. Comparing these provisions across collective agreements is a daunting task, as each local has different terminology and structures in place. Nevertheless committee members updated the Chart by refining column headings and clarifying the information being sought for each column. FPSE staff will send the modified chart to member locals with a request that they supply the necessary information, including relevant CA article numbers, by the end of the summer. Once completed, local bargainers will be able to view the Comparison Chart on the FPSE website and, where possible, click hotlinks to individual CAs for more detailed information.

The committee also had a roundtable discussion on applied research provisions in collective agreements. Universities have specific CA language, whereas many colleges do not. - *Giselle Lemay, local 5430*

### Status of Women Committee

Local reps discussed different institutions' policies to safeguard faculty facing student harassment, especially when it occurs over the Internet. With student-on-student harassment, a key challenge is how to issue "warning" messages to students, regarding such issues as drink spiking and sexual harassment, without creating a sense of permanent victimization, particularly among female students. Ideally colleges will strike a balance between raising student awareness and providing students with tools to empower themselves (e.g. women's self-defense courses, panel discussions with women in non-traditional industries, etc.). Ideas generated by individual locals will be shared on the SWC listserv.

The SWC is a valuable forum for sharing experiences across BC post-secondary institutions. It helps us to recognize things Langara does very well (e.g. the Behavioural Intervention Team) while helping to identify areas requiring future effort (e.g. creating a Dec 6<sup>th</sup> commemorative ceremony, or preventative programs for incoming and international students regarding safety). - *Lealle Ruhl, local 5392*

## **FPSE Standing Committee Reports** (continued)

### **Workplace Health, Safety & Environment Committee**

Local reps reported a number of health and safety concerns, including radiation emissions from printers and photocopies, the spread of germs by high-speed washroom hand dryers, and the hazards posed by asbestos removal. Given the health risks of excessive computer use, the Committee endorsed the idea of establishing fixed times for checking and responding to work-related e-mails; such expectations could be set out in course outlines and included in the policies of institutions.

The Committee heard two presentations. The first, by Tom Rippon of Local 12, addressed the health risks of electro-magnetic fields and radio frequency radiation. Rippon lamented the dearth of reliable data in this field owing to the lack of scientific research on human subjects. Dr. John Calvert, a political scientist with the SFU Health Sciences Program, discussed Canada's role in the promotion of asbestos abroad as well as the risks to Canadians exposed to chrysotile asbestos. He said the greatest risk today of coming into contact with asbestos fibres is posed by building renovations and demolitions. - *Sal Albanese for Mark Smith, local 5908*

### **Human Rights & International Solidarity**

FPSE staff member, Weldon Cowan, gave a presentation on ethical investing and our pension fund. Our pension trustees along with trustees from many other pension funds are working to try to steer our pensions in a more socially responsible direction.

We also discussed the possible consequences of Bill C-51, which has been dubbed the secret policemen's bill for the increased powers it gives police to monitor and meddle in our personal lives. The definition of terrorism includes any interference to the economy or government of Canada. This has obvious impacts on academic freedom and everyone's freedom of speech.

Each year HRISC organizes a speaking tour around the province. This year we brought Jacinda Mack to 12 campuses across the province to speak about the Mount Polley Mine Disaster Response. - *Bradley Hughes, local 5502*

### **Joint Benefits Committee**

This joint committee of Langara College and Vancouver Community College oversees the management of the benefits plans. It typically meets once per year to review the Group Insurance Anniversary Renewal Report prepared by the Colleges' consultants, Western Compensation & Benefits Consultants (WCBC). That report documents the financial experience of the benefits plans and announces the new premiums for each plan that result from negotiations between WCBC and the insurance carriers.

At present, Pacific Blue Cross provides insurance coverage for Extended Health Benefits and Dental Plans while Sun Life Financial provides coverage for the remaining plans. - *Fulton Tom, local 5763*

### **Non-regular Faculty**

At its meeting on January 23, a number of locals reported having launched grievances over non-regular faculty (NRF) issues, such as the denial of benefits and disputes over the granting of longer-term contracts. The increased incidence of such grievances at some locals is thought to reflect ongoing attempts by administration to find ways of saving money at the expense of the job security and benefits of faculty. As locals entered bargaining this year, NRF issues were a priority, especially with regard to regularization and access to benefits.

Most FPSE locals arranged events in February to mark Fair Employment Week, a national effort to draw attention to the plight of non-regular faculty. On February 25th, adjunct faculty in the US, who now teach a majority of post-secondary courses, staged a national walkout to protest poor working conditions. In Canada, where roughly one-third of courses are taught by non-regular instructors, CAUT helped to organize events in solidarity with our US counterparts. Here at Langara LFA members did their part by setting up a booth in the main foyer and posting a petition in the Mailroom. - *Niall Christie, local 5832*

## 2015 LFA Board Elections

Annual elections to choose 9 members of the LFA Board of Directors take place every spring. Faculty wishing to put their names in nomination should take note of the relevant dates below. Elections will be held if the number of nominees exceeds the number of positions to be filled. For more information, contact the LFA Office.



	<b>President</b>	<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Board Members (7)</b>
Nominations	March 2 – March 6	March 17 - 23	April 7 – April 13
Ballots out	March 16	April 2	April 22
Ballots in and Count	March 20	April 10	April 28

## Mount Polley Mine Disaster Response with Jacinda Mack

On August 4, 2014, Imperial Metal's Mount Polley Tailings Pond breached, releasing 25 million cubic meters of water and slurry into Polley Lake - causing one of the biggest environmental disasters in modern Canadian history. Jacinda Mack is the Mining Response Coordinator at the Northern Shuswap Tribal Council, whose territories have been directly impacted by the disaster. On March 9, Jacinda presented at Langara as part of the FPSE HRISC's Environmental Solidarity Speaker's Tour.

Jacinda's presentation started with a welcome onto Coast Salish lands and the traditional territory of the Musqueam Nation by Debra Sparrow, along with the gift of a hand spun blanket. With thanks, Jacinda noted that since the tailing's contamination of the Quesnel River Basin, the Musqueam have also generously shared salmon with Shuswap elders. Jacinda spoke about the devastating impact on the region and the Northern Secwepemc response to the breach and its cleanup. To date there has been little accountability in the extractives industry in this spill clean-up and she encouraged the audience to work toward maintaining water as a public trust, both in the north and in our own communities.



## Transportation Plebiscite and Student Voting

*By Murray Mollard, instructor in the Criminal Justice program*



Langara students will have an important opportunity to shape their city and make their voice heard in 2015 via a plebiscite on transportation funding (March 16 to May 29). The Mayors' Council Plan proposes extensive new improvements to Metro Vancouver's transportation infrastructure, many of which will affect students. The Plan will also require federal and provincial funding. See details at: [mayorscouncil.ca/transportation-investments/](http://mayorscouncil.ca/transportation-investments/)

However, as you know, student and youth voter turnout in elections is generally significantly less than the general population. Faculty members can make a difference by encouraging our students to engage in democratic life and by explicitly encouraging them to get information about and vote in the upcoming plebiscite. We invite you to make announcements to your students about the plebiscite. Note that in order to receive a ballot, students must be registered by midnight May 15. To register online or by phone, students can contact Elections BC: [www.elections.bc.ca/plebiscite/](http://www.elections.bc.ca/plebiscite/).



## LFA AGM and Retiree Social May 7, 2015

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend!

### Annual General Meeting

1:00 pm in A130

### Retiree Social Reception

Starts at 2:30 pm in the Employee Lounge  
Presentations start at 3:00 pm

