

Report from the Association Executive

November 2012 –

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John Hall

This last year started off with most PEA bargaining tables not yet completed from the 2012 round. As the year progressed agreements were made. All tables have now settled. That said of course we are gearing up for the next bargaining round set to start early 2014.

The 2013 Convention was held in Victoria on April 12th and 13th. This convention was well attended and focused on union renewal with good keynote speakers. Iglika Ivanova from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives talked about the BC fiscal situation, Kevin Galichon facilitated a renewal exercise, and Joel Bakan, author of *The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power* which later became an award winning documentary, spoke about resisting privatization. UVic had 16 delegates in addition to the 4 members of our Chapter Executive who serve on the Association Executive. The election process returned UVic PEA member Susan Dempsey as Second VP and John Foxgord as Secretary-Treasurer. Frank Kohlberger, from the Government Licensed Professionals chapter, was returned as President and Daphne Laboucan, from the Prince George School District chapter, was elected as First VP.

Many motions were debated at convention. In particular the following motions were passed.

1. Revision of the constitution to allow for electronic voting.
2. Approval for using investment income to be used to cover the expense of affiliation to bodies and labour organizations, such as the BC Federation of Labour.
3. Our UVic motion about developing a strategy and committing resources to fight for accessible and high quality publically funded post-secondary education.

Following this successful convention our first electronic vote was held on the question of affiliating with the BC Federation of Labour for a 3-year trial membership. The membership voted in favour and we are now affiliated.

The Association Executive has a number of wonderful committed staff who provide administrative support, communication expertise, financial review, and of course the LabourRelations Officers and the Executive Director that you may have seen on campus. The PEA staff support members, chapters and the PEA as a whole in responding to member queries, conducting surveys and electronic votes, arranging and providing training to local reps and bargaining teams, crafting communication materials, and the labour relations work with employers supporting member's contract rights. Recently the PEA staff

attended the annual strategic planning retreat, and contributed to this important process.

The PEA continues its tradition of giving back to the communities where our members live and work and to organizations that make a real difference. This past year, the Grants and Donations Committee distributed \$9,600 to community organizations. Members expressed their views by nominating organizations and voting for preferred ones. A full list of recipients is available on the PEA website: www.pea.org As well, \$11,500 in bursaries and scholarships were given to students and members. The names of these recipients were announced in the Professional and are listed on the association website: www.pea.org.

PEA staff and UVic Chapter Executive members attended a Canadian Labour Congress training session focusing on ‘right-to-work’ and other anti-union legislation that is being drafted and debated across Canada. The key message from states to the south where they have right-to-work laws is that you are best to fight it before it happens because you are hamstrung after. You should expect unions across Canada to engage their members and the public in support of the fair and balanced legal frameworks that unions and employers have worked within for almost 70 years.

The PEA is going into its 40th year so you can expect to see some wonderful materials and events promoting this. It’s also the 18th anniversary for our chapter. Upcoming, this Spring, will be an educational conference that I encourage members to attend.