



# TACKBOARD

## President's Message

**"La commedia é quasi finito."**

*Leoncavallo*



I've delayed writing this message as so many things were up in the air in May. First let me thank all teachers for their patience and forbearance as we work through the complicated process with VSB budget, lay-off, department heads and the spring post and fill process (which naturally continues through to August

postings). We understand and accept that this uncertainty has caused more anxiety and often confusion in the last few weeks (when frankly we least need it).

Now that the Comptroller's Report has been released, the Board will be passing the budget within the next two weeks. The Comptroller's Report itself is controversial and makes many statements based on opinion, hearsay and innuendo. One of the most controversial from our perspective is that which suggests that stakeholders such as the teacher unions have a veto on Board decisions. This is quite simply untrue. The stakeholders who sit at the table at Board Standing Committees include, teachers, parents, principals and vice-principals, and other unions. Everyone who attends has voice and input but certainly no veto and never a vote (and committee minutes, of course, support that). The input of stakeholders and that model of consultation through the committee structures is an important component of the democratic structures of the VSB. The report also includes some spurious advice about seeking concessions from unions. VSTA expects the Board to negotiate in good faith with teachers and will not accept strips to our Collective Agreement to make up for chronic provincial underfunding. This is not to say that there aren't some areas of the report which do merit close attention. These include: overall administrative expenditures, the failure to look in a timely way at potential school closures, and the issue of long term strategic planning.

The other major issue circulating in this district currently is around leadership in schools and particularly on issues of growth, evaluation and accountability in principals. In the nearly five years I have been in this office, we have dealt with issues of concern with respect to **some** principals

and their disregard for process, their flouting of the collective agreement as if it is not a document to which both the Union and the Employer are signatories, and their lack of understanding of even a reductive form of transactional management, not to mention transformational leadership which builds capacity and embodies the norms of reciprocity, active trust and democratic deliberation. In the last five years there have now been 3 school-wide votes of non-confidence in principals, a school where 38 teachers transferred out in a year because of the principal, a whole school intervention by an Associate Superintendent and I, and more calls than I could even log in this office about issues to do with the way in which problems or concerns are dealt with in some schools. I have asked but cannot get an answer on whether principals are ever the subject of formal evaluation and this, in and of itself, is astonishing. I am on record (even in the letters section of The Province, April 2010) as encouraging and welcoming teacher evaluation on the part of management and that supports and mentorship are put in place where needed. We honestly cannot understand why the people in these important roles in schools would not be subject to some formal process of review and evaluation and concomitant strong mentorship and support other than the vaguely worded "growth plan." It is a question I am frequently asked by teachers and not one to which I am apparently entitled to an answer. Andy Hargreaves (The Fourth Way) says it best:

*"At times like these, the leadership we need is not leadership that turns us against others or hold us back in awe. It is leadership that lifts us up and turns us around together in pursuit of a common cause that expresses and advances our humanity."*

Hang in there campadres; have a great summer and well-deserved break.

*Anne*



Council Meeting, May 2010.

## BCTF welcomes appointment of college fact finder

The provincial government has announced the appointment of Don Avison, a Victoria lawyer, to investigate and report on the functioning of the BC College of Teachers.

The chair and registrar of the college, along with a number of council members, have worked to create a crisis of confidence in the college which is entirely unjustified.

Jim Iker, second vice-president, welcomed the announcement saying, "The BCTF looks forward to the opportunity to meet with the fact finder to express our concerns about the actions of the current chair and registrar that have needlessly heightened a sense of dysfunction within the college council."

The BCTF has worked tirelessly to address the concerns that have been raised but the college chair and registrar have shown no willingness to engage in constructive discussion and have resorted to pressuring the government in order to achieve their agenda.

Jim Iker again stressed that "Teachers, individually and collectively, take seriously the obligation to ensure the safety and well-being of students in our care. We are committed to setting and maintaining high professional standards and practices."

For more information go to Setting the record straight on the home page at [www.bctf.ca](http://www.bctf.ca).

## Annual General Meeting

The VSTA Annual General Meeting took place on Tuesday, May 11th at the Tupper auditorium. Members voted in favour of a constitutional change to the Honourary Membership bylaw by adding to the existing bylaw "Honourary membership may be granted to persons who have rendered signal service to the cause of public education and teacher advocacy through VSTA". The General Meeting also approved the association's operating budget for 2010-11, and elected the following acclaimed VSTA Executive Committee for 2010-11:

President	Anne Guthrie Warman
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	Debbie Pawluk
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Presidents	Sylvia Metzner (JO) & Shaun van der Hoop
Treasurer	Moira Ekdahl (DLS)
Local Representatives to the BCTF	Mary Filleul (WRE) Sylvia Metzner (JO) Anne Guthrie Warman
Members-at-Large	Victor Choy (WC) Sue Inglis (PG) Govan Keng (DLS) Susan McIntosh (GLAD) Raza Mirani (GLAD) Trish Mugford (MAGEE) Lisa Pacheco (GLAD) Christine Stewart (BRIT)
Teacher-on-Call Rep	Young Cheng (PG)

### *Standing Committee Chairs*

Professional Development	Brin MacIntyre (TEMP)
W/LC & Bargaining	Shaun van der Hoop
Health & Safety	Louis Jefferson (WC)
Social & Eco-Justice	Rosalind Kellett (EH)

Following the regular business of the meeting, door prizes were awarded and members enjoyed a social hour in the staffroom. John Oliver and King George had the highest percentage of staff turnout

We wish to extend our thanks to the 2009-10 Executive Committee for their dedication and countless hours of service over the past year. Also, we'd like to recognize and thank Susan Gallpen (Templeton) for her dedication and service to the Association as Treasurer, Local Representative and Member-at-Large on the Executive and her many years as a Staff Rep at Templeton. We wish Susan the very best of health and happiness in her retirement.

## TOC Workshop Employment Income (EI) Seminar

Monday, June 14th, 2010

4:00-6:00pm at the VSTA Office

The BCTF workshop will provide teachers teaching on call with the resources and information to enable them to successfully apply for employment insurance for the summer months.

Please RSVP to Kim ([kim@vstaweb.ca](mailto:kim@vstaweb.ca)) or call the office directly at 604-873-5570). Refreshments and snacks will be provided.

## Summer Interview Committees

Summer postings will be taking place from August 17th to the 23rd, and school interview committees will need to be convened to conduct these interviews. The VSTA position is that the school union representative on the interview committee *must* have attended the post-and-fill training provided at the April *School Union Rep Training* session. If none of your school's reps will be available for August interviews, please contact the VSTA office to arrange for a table officer to conduct the interviews. A limited amount of compensatory "time-in-lieu" will be made available by the VSTA for those staff reps who conduct August interviews.



Irene Lanzinger and Anne at Irene's leaving (as BCTF President) party, May 31, 2010.

## School Union Team Elections

As per established practice, elections for members of the VSTA School Union Team take place in the spring, or in the case of a school that expects significant staff changes, in the following September. Elections should take place at a Staff Organization Meeting and contested positions must be determined by secret ballot. Even if only one person is nominated or has volunteered for a position, it is important that s/he be openly acclaimed by the meeting. The School Union Team consists of:

- One (1) Staff Rep for every 25 teachers or fraction thereof on staff
- One (1) Staff Rep for parent contact
- Professional Development Chairperson (who will also represent the school on the VSTA Pro-D Committee)
- Up to two (2) Reps to the VSTA Working and Learning Conditions/Bargaining Committee (who will also represent the school on the VSTA WLC/B Committee)
- One (1) Rep to the VSTA Health and Safety Committee (who will also represent the school on the VSTA Health and Safety Committee)
- One (1) Rep to the VSTA Social & Eco Justice Committee (who will also represent the school on the VSTA Social & Eco Justice Committee)
- Staff Committee Chairperson (unless a school's Staff Committee Constitution specifies that Staff Committee elects its own Chair. In either case, the Staff Committee Chairperson is a member of the School Union Team).

Members of the VSTA Executive (from the school) are also considered to be members of the School Union Team.

Additionally, members of the School Union Team are reminded that VSTA provides a budget to the team of \$2.00 per member to facilitate meetings of the Team and/or Staff Organization meetings.

## School District No. 39 Vancouver Teachers' Salary Grid - Effective July 1, 2010

Step	Cat 5+			TQS 6
	Cat 4	Cat 5	Cat 6/PA	Cat 6/M
0	\$ 43,790	\$ 48,083	\$ 52,019	\$ 52,823
1	\$ 45,981	\$ 50,494	\$ 54,663	\$ 55,467
2	\$ 48,172	\$ 52,904	\$ 57,307	\$ 58,111
3	\$ 50,363	\$ 55,315	\$ 59,950	\$ 60,754
4	\$ 52,554	\$ 57,725	\$ 62,594	\$ 63,398
5	\$ 54,745	\$ 60,135	\$ 65,237	\$ 66,041
6	\$ 56,935	\$ 62,546	\$ 67,881	\$ 68,685
7	\$ 59,126	\$ 64,956	\$ 70,525	\$ 71,328
8	\$ 61,317	\$ 67,367	\$ 73,168	\$ 73,972
9	\$ 65,414	\$ 69,777	\$ 75,812	\$ 76,616
10		\$ 74,353	\$ 80,417	\$ 81,488

## VSTA Retirees' Dinner

Members retiring this June or who retired earlier this year are invited, along with one guest, to the annual VSTA Retirees' Dinner on Monday, June 21st at the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club. Also invited are VSTA staff reps, standing committee reps, and members of the executive. Personalized invitations have been sent to schools. Please RSVP by June 11th to [mo@vstaweb.ca](mailto:mo@vstaweb.ca) or 604-873-5570.



## VSTA Scholarship Winners

Thank you to all the candidates who applied for the VSTA scholarship. This year's field of candidates was outstanding, and it is unfortunate that we can offer only a limited number of awards. The recipients are as follows: \$1500 - **Sasha Bukszar** (Kathy Bukszar); and \$1000 for each **Marissa Rymer** (Robert Rymer), **Fraser Peterson** (Elizabeth Peterson), and **Madeleine Barois** (Philippe Barois). Congratulations to all candidates for their outstanding achievement. We wish you the very best in your future endeavours.



Anthony Larock (WC) at Council Meeting, May 2010.

## Retiring This Year?

### CHECK LIST

- Contact the Teachers' Pension Plan at 1-800-665-6770 for a Retirement Application Package. Send the completed application form to the TPP no later than the end of the month in which the pension is to start (preferably at least two months earlier) to ensure prompt pension payment.
- Contact VBE payroll to find out when your current health benefits end to ensure you have continuous coverage until the benefits associated with the Teachers' Pension Plan begin.
- Consider converting your current group life insurance to an individual life insurance policy.
- Join the BC Retired Teachers' Association (telephone 604-871-2260/2262 or 1-877-683-2243, or go to the web site at [www.bctf.ca/rta](http://www.bctf.ca/rta)). Contact the BCRTA re: starting/continuing Medoc travel health insurance. The Retired Teachers' Association has branches around the province. There are many advantages to membership, and you can have the annual \$35 fee deducted directly from your pension.
- Apply to the BCTF for Associate Membership.
- Maintain membership in the BC College of Teachers as a non-practising member on pension or as practising member if you intend to teach after retirement. For fee details visit [www.bcct.ca](http://www.bcct.ca).
- At age 60, if you are not working, consider applying for your Canada Pension Plan pension. For an application kit, visit the CPP web site at [www.sdc.gc.ca/en/isp/cpp/cpptoc.shtml](http://www.sdc.gc.ca/en/isp/cpp/cpptoc.shtml).
- At age 65, apply for Old Age Security (OAS). For an application kit, visit the OAS web site at [www.sdc.gc.ca/en/isp/oas/oastoc.shtml](http://www.sdc.gc.ca/en/isp/oas/oastoc.shtml)

Contact the BCTF Income Security Staff if you have questions related to any of the above. Phone: 604-871-1921; toll-free 1-800-663-9163, ext. 1921.

Wishing you a relaxing summer!



Anne, Debbie, Shaun, Kim & Mo