



# CUPE CONNECTION

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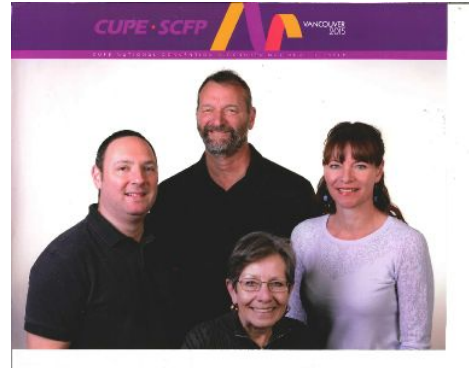
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CUPE Local 3523 Table Officers at CUPE National 2015 Convention in Vancouver.

Wendy Johnson (seated), Kieran Fahy, David Tether and Treena Harley



## CUPE National Convention 2015

By: Treena Harley

### ***New President - Mark Hancock***

National convention, held every 2 years, was convened in Vancouver this year. Over 2,100 delegates, representing 634,000 members, from all over the country converged for one week of union business. CUPE members work in libraries, municipalities, universities, public utilities, emergency services, health care, social services, airlines and education.

The Canadian Union of Public Employees was founded in 1963. Since then, there have been only 5 Presidents. Paul Moist, elected in 2003, recently decided not to run again. Paul has been a CUPE member for over 40 years and has been exemplary in his fight for workers' rights. A very spirited election was held between Fred Hahn, CUPE Ontario President and Mark Hancock, CUPE BC President. With only 300 hundred votes deciding the election, Mark Hancock was declared the 6<sup>th</sup> CUPE National President. Charles Fleury was acclaimed as Secretary-Treasurer.

Notable mentions of the convention:

- General Vice Presidents elected are Marle Roberts, Fred Hahn, Lucie Levasseur, Kelly Moist and Danny Legere
- Passionate speeches by Lee Saunders, Hassan Yussuff, Mohamed Fahmy, Justice Murray Sinclair and Tom Mulcair
- Sharing challenges and successes in sector meetings and caucuses
- Adopted [Strategic Directions](#) for the next two years
- A resolution was passed to reorganize the defence fund while also protecting our strike fund
- Showed support and signed onto the [Leap Manifesto](#)
- The Equality Statement will now be gender neutral

Please email Treena Harley with your personal email address to [recording.secretary@cupe3523.ca](mailto:recording.secretary@cupe3523.ca) if you would like to be included on the email list for CUPE Connection. (We can't use the District system for Union business). You can also access the newsletter at [www.3523.cupe.ca](http://www.3523.cupe.ca) and copies will be delivered to each worksite.

## President's Message



It's sometimes hard to believe that we're nearing the halfway mark on another school year. Although MyEdBC made the first part of the year extremely difficult for most SD 23 staff, things seem to be settling down now. Our Clerical staff continues to be praised by the Board of Education for their extraordinary effort in getting students registered and timetabled with a system that did not perform at all well. Our Grounds staff in the Operations Department are geared up for plowing, sanding and snow removal. Let's hope we don't see any snow days like we experienced last year!

The District continues to struggle with hiring enough EAs to meet the needs of our students. This puts considerable strain on our existing EAs who do their utmost to cover all of those student needs. The dedication shown to their jobs and their support of students is awesome.

The Delivery Drivers out of Central Stores are operating at a maniacal pace right now, hauling staging supplies for Christmas Concerts to every school site.

Although only a few support staff work groups have been mentioned, every employee has been acknowledged and thanked by the Board of Education. The CUPE Local 3523 Executive wishes all members a safe, happy and enjoyable holiday season.

## Contract Language Explained

### Collective Agreement – Retirement Benefit

Article 32 (d) contains language that your Union bargained for you many years ago.

Employees who are contributing to the Municipal Pension Plan are eligible to receive one week's pay for every year of service to School District No. 23 (Retirement Benefit). This entitlement is capped at a maximum of 20 years of service.

Employees must be at least 55 years of age, and have been employed by the District for at least 8 years prior to retirement in order to be eligible for this benefit.

For those employees in 10-month or part-time positions, the benefit amount is adjusted downward to actual time worked.

Employees who are not contributing to the Municipal Pension Plan will be granted one and one-half (1½) days' pay

for every month of service to the District. Although mentioned in previous newsletters, this information bears repeating. If you contribute to the Municipal Pension Plan, you can access their website to view your pension contributions and your earliest retirement date. As well, there is a pension calculator on the website that enables you to enter various retirement dates. You will be provided with a pension amount for that date.

Your yearly MPP benefit statement provides a user name (numerical) and temporary password for the website. Simply google MPP on the internet and proceed to logon.



## CUPE ISSUES – WOMEN'S EQUALITY

Women's equality is at the heart of what CUPE does. CUPE advocates for women's rights in all areas of our society. Our vision is one where women receive the same compensation as men, with full opportunity to advance in discrimination-free workplaces and communities. CUPE's membership is comprised of over 60% women.

Please visit the website at [www.cupe.ca](http://www.cupe.ca) to read articles and print off pamphlets on a wide array of issues affecting women.



## CUPE BEHIND THE SCENES



Darcy Egeland, Wilf Fischer, Davis McNasto work in the millwork shop. Many projects are finished in-house and are completed to perfection!



Darcy Langhorn is in the tool crib. We have electricians, plumbers, mechanics, irrigation, horticulturists, carpenters, furniture repair and many others who need tools for their job.

## CUPE Member Highlight – Richard Gauthier

By: Treena Harley

**Who:** Richard Gauthier is a man with many interests and talents which makes CUPE very lucky to have him as one of our members.

**What:** Richard is from Winnipeg and worked in human resources. He received his Bachelor of Arts in counseling and biblical studies. While he was ordained, he performed his sister's and son's weddings.

**Where:** Richard is currently working at Central Stores as a temporary warehouse person. Richard enjoys challenges and this was a chance for him to try something new and different. His regular posting is Aboriginal Advocate at Central Schools. The work Richard does with students and their families brings great hope and joy to him. Richard has seen an increase in graduation rates for aboriginal students but he "won't be happy until we have exceeded the general population's grad rate."

**When:** Richard has been with School District No. 23 since November 20, 2000. When he moved to Kelowna, his brother-in-law was a teacher with SD23. He mentioned to Richard that he would be a great Advocate. Once Richard started

working with aboriginal students, he told his sister Simone to also apply. What a dynamic brother and sister duo!

**Why:** He and his wife Andrea are busy taking care of their dog Remie. Two children, Richie and Micaela live in Chilliwack. Jenn lives in Maple Ridge and Danny lives in Kelowna with his 7 year old daughter. When Richard isn't playing the guitar and writing his own songs, he is working part time at Global Fitness as a racquetball professional. Richard is a Level 2 Coach and also has his Competition Into Training certification. He is the only person in BC with those qualifications. He is Team BC's coach and has taken them to Nationals for the last 3 years. Richard is working toward his Level 3 Coach in order to be a National Coach. He is currently ranked #90 in the country as a racquetball player.



## 2015 EXECUTIVE

### TABLE OFFICERS

PRESIDENT - Wendy Johnson

VICE PRESIDENT - David Tether

SECRETARY TREASURER - Kieran Fahy

RECORDING SECRETARY - Treena Harley

### SHOP STEWARDS

SERGEANT AT ARMS - John O'Flaherty

OPERATIONS – Dick Beetlestone

CLERICAL/LIBRARY ASSISTANT – Julie Melia, Elaine Soroka

TRANSPORTATION – Duane Wheatley

STUDENT SUPPORT – Margaret Varga and 1 vacancy

CUSTODIAL – Jim Anderson

GENERAL – vacant

### TRUSTEES

Ian Gordon  
Sandra Ryan  
Michelle Noel

OFFICE CLERICAL – Shirley Fears

CUPE NATIONAL REP – Rob Hewitt

211 – 1889 Springfield Road  
Kelowna, BC V1Y 5V5

250-860-3523

## Health & Safety Tips

**Psychological Injury** - Provided by CUPE National Health & Safety Branch and information from a session during the CUPE 2015 National Convention attended by Treena Harley

Psychological injury in the context of work-related incidents, refers to any psychological disability resulting from a real or perceived as real, traumatic experience at work. As of July 1, 2012, Bill 14 came into effect. Bill 14 is trying to address bullying and harassment as well as mental disorders. There has been a 300% increase in workers compensation claims for mental disorders since Bill 14 came into affect.

This “silent” illness still carries a stigma and often may not be reported. There are many barriers to reporting; a psychologist must diagnose the mental disorder, age, gender, medical conditions and the claims process takes longer than a physical injury claim does.

Members that do have a psychological injury may come back to work on what is called the Return to Work. RTW is often not easy. The employee may not feel supported by co-workers, there is a

feeling of inadequacy because they may not be able to perform the same duties as before and they may worry that the injury will happen again. Return to work accommodations and the monitoring may have to be done on a long-term basis.

Resilience is key when it comes to a successful recovery. Employees will need support from family, friends and co-workers and they may need to learn new tools in order to adapt to stressful circumstances. Our Employee and Family Assistance provider, [Morneau Shepell](#) is an excellent source for accessing help.

Privacy is very important in situations like these. But if you do notice a co-worker that seems to be struggling, please be kind and patient. If you yourself need to get some information regarding psychological injury, please contact CUPE 3523's office. There are also many courses and articles CUPE offers that relate to mental health issues. Please visit

[www.cupe.bc.ca/committees/occupational-health-safety](http://www.cupe.bc.ca/committees/occupational-health-safety)

If you do not have a CUPE rep for your Joint Health and Safety Site Committee, please contact Treena Harley, District Support Staff Safety Advisory co-chair.



## CUPE BC News

### How Not To Invest In Public Infrastructure

Mark Hancock, CUPE BC and now CUPE National President, wrote an article that was published in the Vancouver Sun, November 2, 2015. In it he discussed P3, which stands for “Public, Private Partnerships.” P3 projects are business ventures funded through government and the private sector. University of Toronto Professor Matti Siemiatycki found that P3's cost an average of 16% more than traditionally tendered contracts.

Mark is urging the new Liberal Government to make sure that public infrastructure stays public, and the higher costs associated with P3's be a deterrent to using them. Having the money being spent back in the community by workers receiving a fair wage, rather than being kept by private corporations is the best way to kick-start our economy.

By: Treena Harley

## Events

**December 18, 2015**

**Last day of school before winter break**

**January 4, 2016**

**First day back to school**

**January 9, 2016**

**General Membership Meeting** at  
Hollywood Road Education Services, 9:30 am  
1040 Hollywood Road – Room 2

**February 8, 2016**

**Family Day**