

First Edition, September 2008

A newsletter for  
Correctional Officers  
and Sheriffs of the



# Off the uff

## COMPONENT 1

### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

First of all, thank you for continuing to perform your duties, above and beyond. As BC's corrections workers and sheriffs we should be proud of how we've performed while out-numbered, under staffed, and in danger. All while our wages, benefits and pensions have ceased to be competitive.

During the remainder of my term, I will continue to try and bring our wages and benefits more on par with federal corrections and Alberta sheriffs, and our pensions on par with police and fire workers. Recruitment & retention, in both Corrections and Sheriffs continues to plague both agencies. I will continue to push for a market adjustment based on the existing language in our collective agreement that speaks directly to this issue.

It was inspiring to see so many of you sacrifice your breaks and lunches to respectfully protest our continuing recruitment and retention issues. Well done; it did not go unnoticed. Our brothers and sisters whose past efforts and solidarity helped get us this far, would be pleased. And it was equally encouraging to see the willingness of your newly hired brothers and sisters to contribute and participate, while enjoying the fruits of past union efforts.

Improving safety for corrections officers and sheriffs continues to be another priority for me. The BC Liberal government's cutbacks since 2002 have caused inmate-to-staff ratios to rise to dangerously high levels — in some cases up to 60:1. This has made our living unit officers' job very difficult and dangerous.

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**MAKING OUR CASE** (Victoria: February 13, 2008) — Component 1 chairperson Dean Purdy making the case for action on the recruitment and retention crisis for Sheriffs and correctional Officers in a media interview at a lunch time rally.

Remember, BC is the only province to follow the direct supervision model; our living unit officers co-exist with inmates under difficult and stressful situations every shift. Our sheriffs are also dealing with severe government cut-backs and shortages that have left many court houses without the first-responder rover positions, and without a deputy sheriff for every court room and cell lock-up. I will continue to fight these difficult and dangerous working conditions in Corrections and Sheriffs.

I will also continue to improve union communications with members in this component through worksite visits, regular website updates and now — this newsletter. I hope you like it.

As always, your feedback, ideas and involvement are critical to our success. Make sure you're on our email list by sending an email to [communications@bcgeu.ca](mailto:communications@bcgeu.ca). Thanks in advance.

**Dean Purdy, Correctional & Sheriff Services chairperson**

## ...on sheriff shortages

**O**n July 17th *the Province* reported that Attorney General Wally Oppal had ordered an investigation into an incident in which a Richmond judge adjourned an impaired driving trial because of a shortage of sheriffs in the courtroom. Oppal is quoted as saying, “The sheriffs have to take some responsibility for what happened.”

In the article Component One chair Dean Purdy described what actually happened: “The sheriffs said the Crown counsel in the case was very upset and asked that an RCMP officer waiting in the hallway step in and provide security, said Purdy.

He also told the paper, “the judge declined to allow the Mountie to fill in.” Oppal’s criticism of sheriffs continued in the article where he was quoted as saying, “Surely they’re not suggesting for a minute that an RCMP officer who is fully qualified to deal with the use of force and all of those things is not qualified to address an incident that may take place in the courtroom.”

On July 22nd, in a Richmond News article, the sparring continued: “The sheriffs knew about (the shortage) the day before but did not communicate the problem to the Crown,” Oppal told the News.

Dean Purdy countered, saying, “allowing an RCMP officer to step into a sheriff’s shoes, as suggested by Oppal, would be contrary to the union’s collective agreement.”

Oppal eventually granted there are recruitment problems. “B.C. has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country,” he said. “There’s a shortage of people in the work-place. I recognize there’s a shortage of sheriffs as well.”

Purdy goes on to predict, “I believe it will happen again.” And he adds, “As well as trials being adjourned, the safety of court staff, the public and judges is being compromised here.”

On August 1st, a release from the BCGEU said that the government’s response to the adjourned Richmond trial was “financially unsound and an admission of failure on the part of the provincial government to provide adequate staffing to provincial courts.

“It’s robbing Peter to pay Paul, and simply doesn’t address the real issue, which is the recruitment and retention of B.C. sheriffs to ensure the secure operation of our court system.” said BCGEU president Darryl Walker.



**SPEAKING OUT** (Vancouver, April 22, 2008) Deputy sheriffs gather on the steps of the Vancouver Art Gallery to draw attention to the need for an increase in wages. Sheriffs are currently the lowest paid law enforcement employees in the province. Sheriffs held rallies today at Court Houses around the province.

For complete media coverage, go to the Component 1 page on the BCGEU web site: [http://www.bcgeu.ca/C1\\_Corrections](http://www.bcgeu.ca/C1_Corrections) then click on “News Coverage.”

Also, submit your email address to [majordomo@bcgeu.bc.ca](mailto:majordomo@bcgeu.bc.ca) for the latest media updates and alerts.

## HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

- Option 1:** Stay informed at BCGEU.ca; give your home e-mail address to your Local Executive member; support your union representatives at the worksite.
- Option 2:** Be proactive and look for things to do; attend a union meeting; and ask questions.
- Option 3:** Become a Steward or an OSH Committee Member.
- Option 4:** Write a letter to your MLA — solicit support for wage parity (Feds), improved safety and working conditions — ask your MLA to help influence Ministry and Government officials in an effort to have them recognize to difficulties faced by provincial correctional officers.

## GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS

### ...on labour market adjustments

**F**irst, the bad news - The market adjustment to our no-longer competitive pay has been rejected by the provincial government once again.

There is a provision in the collective agreement that allows for the, “expeditious means of addressing salary issues which may be associated with such recruitment and retention challenges.”

Twice the BCGEU has released studies that show correctional officers and deputy sheriffs are not being paid fair rates compared to their counterparts in the rest of the province and the country. The BCGEU has proven the need for a market adjustment. The government’s refusal to provide one is only exacerbating the problem of recruitment and retention.

“Our component executive has made this point to the provincial government,” said Dean Purdy, chair of the union’s Corrections and Sheriffs Component. “When we met with Solicitor General John van Dongen, he promised to review the issue with his staff.”

“In response to questions from the Opposition MLAs on May 23, van Dongen said the government would consider a market adjustment,” said Purdy. “Our members are leaving at an alarming rate for other higher paying law enforcement jobs and it’s time for the government to come through.”

**Now, the good news** – The Public Service Agency is committed to reviewing the issue in the fall.

“While we have a commitment from the PSA that the issue will be addressed in the fall, we are very disappointed the government has not moved more quickly on this important issue,” said BCGEU president Darryl Walker in a recent BCGEU press release.

“We will put our arguments forward again at our meeting with the PSA this fall,” said Walker. “However, the government has to realize that we are not going to let this issue go away until there is an outcome that provides an adjustment for correctional officers and deputy sheriffs.”

So much for expeditiousness, let-alone living up to existing collective agreements. But the language is on our side and our position is irrefutable. Look forward to the fall.

Refer to page 337 of the Fourteenth Master Agreement and read Memorandum of Understanding #22.

## “ In Their Own Words:

*From B.C. Corrections Branch official Lisa Lapointe:*

“In the fiscal year 2003-2004, there were 846 people in B.C. jails in pre-trial or remand custody,” Lapointe said. “For the 2007-2008 fiscal year, that had jumped to 1,301. That accounts for almost all of the rise in the inmate population. It is not the sentenced population that is rising, it is the remand population. So we have more people in custody until their trials.”

“The overall number of prisoners in B.C. jails on any given day right now is 2,668 while the number of cells is 1,557... We are basically operating at 171 per cent capacity.”

“The centres have 1,557 cells and accommodate an average of 2,545 inmates each day. The overflow is addressed by placing two inmates in cells that were initially built for one.”

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*From a May 2005 report prepared for then Solicitor General John Les and obtained by the Vancouver Sun through a freedom of information request:*

“Starting in 2002, the B.C. Liberals made deep cuts in corrections staff and closed 10 facilities. Staff/inmate ratios went from one guard for every 20 inmates to as high as 1:50 or 1:60.

“According to the *Sun*, “Solicitor General Les admits too many inmates and not enough staff or corrections facilities is ‘something that [he is] aware of and something that [he is] concerned about.

“Meanwhile, Victoria admits overcrowding problems will only get worse, with 80 per cent of inmates forecast to be double-bunked this year.

“Also in the *Sun*, “Solicitor General Les says that part of the problem results from delays in court proceedings for inmates.”



**VICTORIA LOBBY** — Component 1 Chair Dean Purdy (r) meets Solicitor General John van Dongen. Purdy led a Component delegation to Victoria to lobby MLAs on issues related to overcrowding of jails, safety in the courts and the recruitment and retention of workers.

In this photo, members are meeting with Solicitor General John van Dongen and his officials. Members of the Component delegation: Dean Purdy (Component chair), Derek Goodwin (Component secretary-treasurer), Tony Tessari (Local 105), Ron McCabe (104), Larry Cadieux (111), Steve Lisik (103), Mike Scott (102).

## THE HIGHS...

By Ken Mead

I was lucky to be in the room, I should say ‘the war room’ at BCGEU headquarters in Victoria, when our component executive was watching Question Period, on May 23rd. It was the-day-after their MLA lobby efforts. I observed while they watched and what I saw was inspiring as well as gratifying.

Earlier in the day Dean Purdy, our component chair, received a call from the NDP, who were looking to clarify a couple points. After the call, Dean had the impression the NDP would indeed be asking a question or two during that day’s Question Period. No one would have dreamed our issues would dominate like they did.

It was only a small victory in the war, but securing allies to raise our banner and voice our message in the legislature was a great acknowledgment of our cause. Question after question was posed to government ministers by opposition MLAs — the men in the war room couldn’t believe their accomplishment. Surprisingly, there were even a couple of answers with encouraging undertones.

Sure, with a majority government, the opposition’s voice can be ignored just as easily as the BCGEU’s. But it was a definite high to secure champions. “I don’t think van Dongen is going to pose for a picture with you again,” quipped BCGEU staff Wiho Papenbrock to Dean.

When it was all said and done, 17 minutes of the 30 min-

utes allowed had been used to challenge the government on the issues of corrections and sheriffs. I hope you enjoy the highlights like your executive did and as much as I did watching their reaction to the harvesting of the fruits of their labour. Here’s looking forward to a bumper crop in the fall.



**M. Farnworth:** ...On average, provincial jails in this province are at 170 percent over capacity. The North Fraser Pretrial Centre was built for some 300 inmates. Recent numbers have put that to 667 people.

*And later in QP...*

**M. Farnworth:** Well, the ratio under this government has increased to one corrections officer to every 60 inmates. That is unacceptable.



**Hon. J. van Dongen:** ... We are following that contract in all respects. The contract makes provision for the application for a temporary market adjustment. The staff has done that on two occasions. ...

On one occasion, management agreed to the temporary market adjustment. In my meeting with corrections staff a couple of days ago, they have indicated that they will make another application, and we will consider that, again on the basis of the terms of the agreement.



**C. Puchmayr:** ...Wages for correctional officers in British Columbia last year were ranked ninth in Canada. They make \$30,000 a year less than their federal counterparts. In 2007 alone, the year that the

minister boasts about, 144 corrections officers left the system. When will the minister take responsibility for the exodus of staff, and when will he deal with the issues of retention and recruitment that are so necessary in the system today?

*And later in QP...*

**C. Puchmayr:** ...There certainly are provisions in the collective agreement that allow opening the collective agreement and that deal with those very market issues that are affecting the system today. But the minister can take action to ensure that a competitive rate is put in place so that all of Canada and the corrections officers in B.C. are paid at a rate that is competitive.



**L. Krog:**... Across B.C. there are courtrooms that have had to be shut down because there were insufficient sheriffs available, including family court in Nanaimo, and the Attorney General well knows it.

...will the Attorney General just admit he is putting safety in

the courthouses at risk? It's undermining the integrity of the system, and is he going to do something about it today?



**A. Dix:** ...Seventy-one sheriffs, sheriffs gone in 14 months. That's one in six sheriffs in British Columbia — a loss of experience, a loss of sheriffs. It has an enormous effect on the courtroom. So what is the

Attorney General's plan? He's in charge. ...He says it's about the economy. That's what he says. Does he not acknowledge that there's a serious recruitment and retention problem when other law enforcement officials are paid enormously more than sheriffs?



**Hon. W. Oppal, Attorney General:** ...You can't correct the problem overnight. What we have is we've recruited people. ...We've been involved with the BCGEU. We've had a number of meetings with

them. We want to work with them. We work with the judges to ensure that the security demands and the security needs of all the courthouses are met. So we're doing our best. As I said a moment ago, the economy is strong. We're competing with other parts of the economy for people.

*Images courtesy of The British Columbia Legislature*

## THE LOWS...

### Wage comparisons

Unfortunately the "lows" are more specifically our uncompetitive wages and the growing inmate to staff ratios. Here are the facts that are being ignored.

Comparative Wage Rates for Sheriffs 2008	Hourly	Hourly % Difference	Annual Salary	Difference
B.C. Sheriffs (BCGEU)	\$26.31	N/A	\$48,055.00	N/A
Greater Van. Transit Authority Police (COPE 378)	\$36.58	39%	\$76,104.00	\$28,049.00
Vancouver Police	\$35.87	36%	\$74,619.00	\$26,564.00
Saanich Police	\$34.91	33%	\$72,624.00	\$24,569.00
RCMP	\$34.67	32%	\$72,125.00	\$24,070.00
Federal Corrections Officer (UCCO)	\$33.67	28%	\$70,045.00	\$21,990.00
Delta Police*	\$33.53	27%	\$69,757.00	\$21,702.00
Alberta Sheriffs (AUPE Aug. 2008 rate)	\$31.52	20%	\$61,467.00	\$13,412.00
Ontario Bailiff (OPSEU)	\$29.75	13%	\$58,012.00	\$9,957.00
Canadian Border Services (Feb 2007 under renegotiation)	\$28.58	9%	\$55,724.00	\$7,669.00
Abbotsford Traffic Enforcement Officer (Public Safety Inspection Division)	\$28.60	9%	\$55,964.00	\$7,909.00
B.C. Legislature Special Provincial Constable (Un-Armed security)	\$26.90	2%	\$52,052.00	\$3,997.00

## Wage comparisons, cont...

Provincial Corrections Officers Wage Comparisons 2008	C.O.	Annual Salary
Rank- Based on Hourly Wage		
1- Union of Northern Workers (N.W.T.)	\$36.28	\$70,746.00
2- Federal Corrections UCCO (CSC)	\$33.67	\$70,045.00
3- Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE)	\$32.67	\$61,584.00
4- Yukon Employees Union (YEU)	\$31.55	\$65,636.00
5- Nunavut Employees Union (2006)	\$30.02	\$58,539.00
6- Manitoba Government & General Employees Union	\$29.61	\$61,795.00
7- Saskatchewan Government & General Employees Union	\$29.36	\$57,002.00
8- Ontario Public Service Employees Union	\$28.87	\$60,049.00
9- B.C. Government & Services Employees Union	\$27.08	\$49,464.00
10- New Brunswick Canadian Union of Public Employees	\$25.64	\$49,928.00
11- Quebec Labour Central *	\$24.89	\$48,553.00
12- Newfoundland & Labrador Ass. Public Employees	\$23.11	\$48,077.00
13- Nova Scotia Government & General Employees Union **	\$22.89	\$47,618.00
14- PEI Union of Public Employees	\$21.30	\$41,535.00
* Quebec's most recent contact information is from 2003 (Suspected higher ranking in 2008).		
** Nova Scotia Government & General Employees Union without contract since 2005.		

Adult Custody Counts & FTE's					
Centre/Rating	Capacity	Staff:I/M Ratios	Highest Count & Date	Year Built	Original Capacity
<b>Maximum</b>					
NFPC	490	1 to 60	678/ April 26, 2008	1999	300
FRCC	422	1 to 40	515/ May 13, 2008	1990	267
SPSC	199	1 to 40	296/ Feb 2008	1991	152
VIRCC	294	1 to 40	398/ Feb 19, 2008	1985	206
KRCC	274	1 to 36	330/ April 4, 2008	1989	168
PGRCC	232	1 to 38	317/ Oct 2007	1998	164
<b>Medium</b>					
NCC		1 to 96	245/ Feb 2008		169
ACCW			N/A		
FMCC			N/A		

# Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in Corrections

by Ken Mead

We charge through the centre, toward the code-yellow. Inside the living-unit we discover a muscular, tattooed and dangerous looking inmate near the kitchen. He is standing arms outstretched and roaring at his peers who watch him, their faces stacked and framed in the little windows of their cell doors. They goad him on. He's wild-eyed. I get between him and the cells to try to break his eye-contact with the rest of the range. His head is shaven so the loonie sized hole in his scalp is easily visible. Blood streams the length of his six-foot body to a growing pool on the floor. His movements, easily tracked by the blood trail. It was my first-time responding to a code-yellow. It's obviously still very clear in my memory. But – is the event over for me? Could it trigger or contribute to post-traumatic stress disorder or PTSD?

A little dramatic, I know. I even considered cutting the previous paragraph until a colleague read it and immediately began to recall many traumatic incidents of his own career. So as you recall your own experiences take heed of two studies that show more than 25% of corrections workers suffer from PTSD.

In the spring of 2003 all 1,008 of Saskatchewan's corrections employees were sent a diagnostic questionnaire. 271 of them replied. The results were published a year later in a thesis by Bobbi Stadnyk. Stadnyk has extensive experience in aggression research and has conducted numerous research projects on workplace violence and its impact on employees.

Not surprisingly, 79.3% of the respondents to the questionnaire reported experiencing a traumatic event in the workplace. On average, over a six month period each respondent personally experienced 2.9 traumatic events, witnessed 4.99 and heard about 9.77 events.

Surprisingly, 25.8 % reported symptom levels of PTSD suggesting a probable clinical diagnosis of the disorder. In contrast, the prevalence rate of PTSD in the general public is estimated to be less than 4%. This 25.8% result is comparable to what has been identified in other high risk groups including combat veterans, prisoners of war, disaster survivors, and emergency service personnel.

In the summer of 2005 Stadnyk conducted a subsequent longitudinal study of approximately 70 new-hires in Saskatchewan corrections. After only nine months, 26% of the group would have qualified for a diagnosis of PTSD. This group's level of PTSD at the beginning of their employment was 6%.

Now a doctor, Bobbi Stadnyk says her methodology has resulted in, "a very accurate probable diagnosis," of PTSD in her survey groups. She would have you examine the following six criteria to estimate your own symptom level of PTSD.

- 1) You have been exposed to a traumatic event that involved the perception of serious harm or death and your response included feelings of helplessness and fear or horror.
- 2) You re-experience the event through dreams, hallucinations or feelings that the event is reoccurring.
- 3) You avoid behaviours, thoughts, activities and conversations that may trigger memories. You may have forgotten some of the traumatic incident, loose interest in previously favourite activities, feel detached from others and suffer from a sense of impending doom that prevents you from establishing long-term goals and initiating future plans.
- 4) You're unable to concentrate or conceptualize and are experiencing a related inability to complete tasks. You can't sleep or are easily awoken and may have an exaggerated startle response, as well as feelings of irritability and anger.
- 5) You have been experiencing these symptoms for more than one month.
- 6) These symptoms have caused significant interference in a critical area of your life.

As you would likely conclude from the above list, the quality of life for the PTSD group was significantly lower than for the non-PTSD group. The PTSD group was more depressed, had more sleep-related complaints, used more alcohol, missed more than twice as much work and used more health-care resources. They perceive the workplace, coworkers and supervisors negatively.

Our branch's own Organizational Health Assessment Report from 2007 seems to fit a scenario where more than a quarter of corrections employees are suffering from PTSD. In the report, scores showed "significant challenges" in half of the survey categories and only "fair" in the others. In a HayGroup survey, Saskatchewan Corrections also scored poorly. "Corrections people aren't happy," says Stadnyk.

When asked about the occurrence PTSD in the inmate population Dr. Stadnyk said, "PTSD would likely be quite high in the inmate population." But no studies had been done that she was aware of. It could be the Catch-22 of corrections; 26% of staff suffering from PTSD overseeing an inmate population also suffering from high rates of PTSD. Under these conditions, "you will likely run into trouble," says Dr. Stadnyk.

In all likelihood each of us has run into trouble and will run into trouble in the future. Be aware and take care.

## YOUR COMPONENT EXECUTIVE



(Victoria: February 27-29, 2008) Members of the Component 1 executive meet in Victoria. In the photo (*front row, l-r*): Mike Scott (Acting Local 102 Chair), Derrick Goodwin (1st Vice Chair, Local 103), Dean Purdy (Local 101 Chair and Component Chair), Steve Lisik (Local 103 Chair). *Back row (l-r)*: Ron McCabe (Local 104 Chair), Wiho Papenbrock (BCGEU staff), Larry Cadieux (Local 111 Chair) and Tony Tessari (Local 105 Chair).

### **DEAN PURDY: Component One chairperson, and Local 101 chairperson**

Dean became a union activist immediately after joining Corrections in 1988. He knew that getting involved was the way to make changes in the work sites and quickly found this type of work appealed to him. As the Component Chairperson Dean sits on the Provincial Executive and is also currently assigned to 17 different committees.

Utilizing his training and experience he has negotiated the 14th Correctional and Sheriff services agreement, a new hours of work agreement for both SCO3's and Correctional Officers at VIRCC, and handled over one-hundred grievances as a shop steward. Dean vows, "My priority is still to bring wages up to a comparable National level and to address safety issues for Corrections and Sheriffs."

### **DERRICK GOODWIN: Component One treasurer, and first vice chair of Local 103**

Derrick became involved in the Union in 2003, following the closures of the Maple Ridge Courthouse and many other B.C. courts, as well as corrections facilities. Previously he had contributed five years to committee work on occupational health and safety issues. He was drawn to union activism because of his desire for fair treatment of workers and concerns regarding safety in the workplace.

Derrick has experience with issues such as overtime sharing, denial of STIIP, and letters of discipline. He says, "Many

issues are easily resolved by accessing the resources of the Union and knowing the Collective Agreement." Adding, "Communication is the key to making the union work for all."

### **STEVE LISIK: Component One first vice chairperson, Local 103 chairperson**

Steve is a deputy sheriff and 19-year member of the British Columbia Government and Services Employees' Union. "I started my activism as an OSH rep, became a Shop Steward, then I accepted a challenge from a colleague to run for my local executive," he says.

His guiding principle is seeing that his fellow union members make it home safe to their families after a day's work, saying, "Isn't it everyone's right to feel safe?" He is also an OSH facilitator and sits on the PE OSH committee as well as many other union committees. "We need to pull together now more than ever, to ensure these basic rights are enforced and protected from a government that only cares about meeting their budgets."

### **RON MCCABE: Component One second vice chair and Local 104 chairperson**

Ron began his career at Oakalla in 1988. In 1990 he became a steward. Recently he has increased his union activity by becoming local 104's chairperson. "I Strive to have members treated fairly under administrative law and would like to eventually see staff treated as well as inmates," he quips. Adding, "My advice to other members is to get involved to make your workplace a better place to work. I think if more people got involved in union activity rather than knocking the union there is no end to what we could accomplish!" He brings his experience in union activities at the local and component level as well as a thorough understanding of health and safety issues.

### **MIKE SCOTT: Local 102 chairperson**

Mike had great reservations becoming a union activist after having done it for several years in Ontario before moving to BC. He felt he had a huge target on his back after having dealt with approximately 200 grievances. "I joined Local 102 approximately 6 years ago as 1st vice chair in order to make NCC a better place to work," he says. Adding, "It hasn't been easy with the Liberals in power."

During this time he realized that in order to become a more effective shop steward, sometimes it's necessary to think like a manager and plan your arguments & their responses to them ahead of meeting with them. Currently Mike is organizing the CO's & Instructors in their classification appeals. "I am really encouraged by the work I see our Component One Committee taking part in right now. Every step forward is a huge gain to achieving our goals and earning Sheriff's & Correctional Officer's the respect we deserve for our contributions to a safer society for every B.C. resident."

## CLASSIFICATION APPEALS



### **TONY TESSARI: Local 105 chairperson.**

Tony became a union activist in 1992, starting as a Union member at large, and then becoming a steward. He has held the position of 2nd Vice, 1st Vice and now Local 105 Chair. Tony's main reason for becoming involved as an activist was that he couldn't live with the Labour and Safety injustices at work, and knew the only way to deal with them was by becoming involved.

Tony is currently dealing with both safety and labour relations issues for Local 105. He is actively recruiting to rebuild Local 105 Activists in both Deputy Sheriffs and Corrections at all levels. "Members need to understand the contract didn't magically appear, it was fought for and negotiated and needs its members involved in order to police it," he says.

### **LARRY CADIEUX: Local 111 chairperson**

Larry began his career in 1989 at the Prince George Regional Correctional Center and became a shop steward right away. "I was rather shocked at the old school attitude by many of the managers and the open disdain they had towards the officers around me," Larry recalls. He feels his ability to function in a dysfunctional worksite is thanks to his union parents and valuable mentors. T

This is Larry's first term as the local chair, but he has been on the local executive on every level. Local 111 is the largest geographically so its scope and distances create time-consuming realities on-top of his chair responsibilities and extensive committee work. Larry says, "I make it happen because the staff I work with are the best and I want to give them my best as the chair." Adding, "I can't thank my local executive enough for the long hours they put in."

### **WIHO PAPENBROCK: BCGEU Regional Coordinator (BCGEU staff), assigned to assist the Correctional & Sheriff Services Component executive.**

Wiho is responsible for field services in the Thompson – Okanagan – Kootenay Region of British Columbia, as well as specific assignments with province-wide implications for employees of the Correctional and Sheriff Services Component of the Union. After nearly 20 years in the private industrial sector he joined the BCGEU in 1989.

Wiho has extensive experience in labour relations, providing membership representation at contract negotiations, grievance arbitrations, compensation and pension appeals, education and training, organizing and general membership services. "I have always believed that if you work long enough and hard enough for working people you will eventually gain the respect of all," says Wiho.

In December of 2005 an et al classification appeal was filed out of VIRCC for SCO1s. This was followed by another SCO1 et al appeal in May of 2006 out of the SPSC.

After the Senior Corrections Officer 3s (SCO3s) were made redundant in 2006, the CS position was created and went into effect at that time. The job duties changed significantly for the new position and the CS's took on all of the duties and more except for the warden's courts. A third appeal was filed out of SPSC in January 2007 to cover the added duties of the new CS position.

The union has made the case that the appeal should be granted based on the job description for the CS position, along with the Public Service Job Evaluation Plan and other supporting information.

Also in the works is a similar appeal registered for the Sheriff Supervisors Grid 18. In the summer of 2007, it was decided that the Sheriff Supervisors wanted to file this appeal to a higher grid level.

Most recently, classification appeals were filed for Deputy Sheriffs and Correctional Officers in both Youth and Adult over the last couple of months.

Remember that the classification appeals launched by the union are separate and in addition to our efforts through the recruitment and retention process to press for a temporary market adjustment (TMA). The TMA provisions are contained in a separate part of our contract.

Refer to page 131 of the Fourteenth Master Agreement and read Article 28.

# INTERESTED IN BECOMING A STEWARD?

## The role of the Steward

The Steward is the face of the union at your worksite. The Steward's role is to enforce the collective agreement and protect your rights. Your Steward is elected by the members at your worksite. A steward does not just deal with grievances and complaints at the worksite.

## The steward :

- Is often the liaison between the worksite and the local and the area offices;
- Signs up new members to the union at the worksite;
- Encourages you to attend local meetings;
- Assists you in understanding your rights under the collective agreement;
- Talks to members about what is happening within the local and the union as a whole, such as bargaining and educational activities;
- Ensures the union bulletin board is kept up to date;
- Refers members to committees on specific issues such as the Labour Management Committee or occupational health and safety;
- Listens to your concerns and issues;
- Can advise or refer on issues related to WCB appeals, STIIP/LTD issues, Unemployment and Classification Appeals.

Please contact your area office:

[www.bcgeu.bc.ca/contact\\_us](http://www.bcgeu.bc.ca/contact_us)

