



**COAST TO COAST UPDATE**  
**AU COURANT D'UN OcéAN À L'AUTRE**  
 INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS  
 FRATERNITÉ INTERNATIONALE DES OUVRIERS EN ÉLECTRICITÉ



**PHIL FLEMMING**

International Vice President / Vice-président international  
 First District, CANADA / Premier District, CANADA



**March/April 2007**

Greetings:

Canada officially recognizes April 28, 2007 as our *National Day of Mourning*. April 28 has been designated as an opportunity to revere those men and women who have died of a workplace accident or illness and remember the injured and ill.

The IBEW was founded by workers who wanted to improve safety in their workplace and today, safety continues to be a main focus of the IBEW. Unfortunately in Canada, an average of 855 employees die from work related incidents each year. From 1993 to 2005 more than 11,123 workers died due to workplace incidents. Another 900,000 per year are injured or have become ill.

The *National Day of Mourning*, held annually on April 28, was officially recognized by the Federal government in 1991, eight years after the day of remembrance was launched by the Canadian Labour Congress. The *Day of Mourning* has since spread to about 80 countries around the world and has been adopted by the AFL-CIO and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

On April 28 please take a moment to consider the gains unions have made by forcing employers and governments to implement safety rules and standards, to better not just our lot, but the lot of all workers in Canada; but obviously our work is not yet done.

While reflecting, please give a moment of silence to our fallen Sisters and Brothers on the job in the past twelve months from the First District.

Local Union 1007, Edmonton, Alberta, **Brother Eric Berggren**; his spouse and two children mourn the loss;

Local Union 2010, Cornwall, Ontario, **Sister Carol Larouche**; her spouse and family mourn the loss.

In remembrance,

Phil Fleming, IVP

**Local Union 1007, Edmonton, AB - IN MEMORIUM**

**Eric Ingvar Berggren 1965 - 2007**

At 1:30pm on March 21, 2007 we lost our Brother, Eric Berggren, in a tragic electrical contact incident. He will be sadly missed by his Brothers and Sisters in Local Union 1007 and we know the entire IBEW family grieves with us.

We offer our most sincere condolences to Brother Berggren's fiancée Ginnette and their children Camila and Mathew; to Brother Berggren's parents Cecilia and Ingvar; to his sister Fran (Ric & family), brother Gill (Karin & family), and to Brother Berggren's many friends and co-workers.

All those who worked with Eric Berggren knew he epitomized everything as a good trade unionist should. He was an honest, kind, conscientious man whose integrity was beyond reproach. He was a wonderful teacher/mentor who gave his time freely. His capacity for work would have put a Clydesdale to shame and he always had time for a laugh. We will miss his goofy smile, his words of encouragement and his steadfast loyalty.

A man amongst men has been taken from us in his prime. Let the warm memories comfort us and may he rest in peace.

**International Representative Retires**

International Representative Vair Clendenning retires on May 1, 2007 after a 46 year career in the electrical industry. Brother Clendenning started his apprenticeship with a union contractor in Edmonton, Alberta because, as he likes to tell the story, all the electrical contractors in Edmonton were union in 1961. After a four year apprenticeship he spent the next 15 years learning his craft as a Journeyman, Foreman and General Foreman working throughout Western Canada, North Africa, the North Sea and Malaysia.

Prior to being appointed as an Assistant Business Manager in 1979, Brother Clendenning served as a member of the Examining Board, Executive Board, and Vice-President of Local Union 424 Edmonton, AB. Together with International Representative Larry Schell, who was also an Assistant Business Manager at Local 424 in 1979, they formed an organizing/teaching partnership that lasted close to 30 years.

In 1981 Brother Clendenning was appointed the Business

Manager of Local Union 424 representing construction workers, alarm, sign and neon workers in the northern half of Alberta. Elected Business Manager in 1983 and reelected in 1986 and 1989 he resigned at the end of 1990 to pursue different career avenues. During his tenure as Business Manager Brother Clendenning served as Secretary-Treasurer of the Northern Alberta Building Trades Council, Executive Board member of the Alberta Building Trades Council, Executive Board member of the Alberta Council of Labour, Board member of the Union Centre Credit Union and Board member of the Northern Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation. He was elected as a delegate to the 1981, 1986 and 1991 International Conventions and attended the 2001 and 2006 International Conventions as an International Representative.

One of the duties assigned to Brother Clendenning by the Alberta Building Trades Council was to act as the media spokesman for the Council. The Alberta unionized construction industry had been decimated in the mid 80's by the collapse of the oil industry and the cancellation of all major construction projects. Because of the exposure Brother Clendenning received as Building Trades spokesman the Alberta New Democratic Party approached him to run against the Minister of Labour in the 1986 provincial election.

Always politically active in his community Brother Clendenning took the plunge and launched his campaign with the support of the Building Trades membership. The New Democrats won almost 30% of the vote and 16 seats, an unheard of feat in Conservative Alberta, but falling 71 votes shy of defeating the Minister of Labour, Brother Clendenning returned to being a full time IBEW Business Manager.

From 1992 until 1997 Brother Clendenning was contracted to the Alberta Building Trades Council as the Organizing Coordinator and Special Projects Coordinator. Under his direction as Organizing Coordinator the Council delivered 185 COMET courses and 50 Salting Schools (now COMET II) in their first year of organizing activity.

As Special Projects Coordinator he was responsible for the development of training courses for the affiliated union's Business Representatives and he was instrumental in the development of Better SuperVision©, a construction industry supervisory training course.

In 1997 he was appointed as an International Representative on a recommendation by International Vice-President Ken Woods and assigned to the First District staff to service the locals in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and North-Western Ontario. In addition to his duties as a service representative, Brother Clendenning served the First District as one of the "Education Reps". Truly believing that membership education is the most impor-

tant duty of an International Representative, Clendenning spent his off hours developing training courses ranging from "Conducting Hearings" to "Team Work" to "Handling Disagreements". In addition he assisted IBEW Education Director Jan Schwingshakl in the development of the Reps Train-the-Trainer and the Business Managers Training Program or "Business Managers Boot Camp" as the participants like to call it.

Despite his busy schedule Brother Clendenning found time to complete his studies in adult education and in 1997 graduated from the University of Alberta with a Certificate in Adult and Continuing Education. Not completely satisfied with the CACE certificate, he continued his education and graduated from the National Labor College in 2005 with a Bachelor of Arts in Labor Education. Never one to sit on his laurels, Brother Clendenning was the first Union leader to be granted the national designation, Certified Human Resources Professional and the initials CHRP.

Brother Clendenning and his wife Donna will be relocating to Kelowna, BC and plan to spend their retirement at the 50 some wineries in the Okanagan Valley. In reality, with 3 children and 7 grand children the winery tours will be few and far between.

We all wish Vair and Donna a happy and healthy retirement!

### **New International Representatives Hired**

#### **Western Canada International Representative:**

The First District is pleased to announce the appointment of Brian Murdoch as a new International Representative. Brother Murdoch will be replacing International Representative Vair Clendenning upon his retirement effective May 1, 2007.

Brother Murdoch began his career with IBEW Local Union 435 in Winnipeg, MB in 1986. He started as a term labourer with the Manitoba Telephone System and successfully completed the apprenticeship program to become a line cable technician.

Brian has served Local Union 435 in various positions through out his career including: workplace safety and health representative, shop steward, Business Representative as well as Business Manager from 2000-2007.

Brian is looking forward to his new role as an International Representative and working through any challenges that this great Brotherhood may face.

#### **District 6 (Eastern Canada) Organizing Coordinator:**

We are pleased to announce that effective April 1, 2007 Bill Martindale has accepted the position of Regional Organizer for Region 6 Eastern Canada.

Brother Martindale started and served his electrical apprenticeship in 1973 with Lockhart & McKay Electric. He was then initiated into Local Union 353 Toronto, ON in March of 1975 and became a Construction and Maintenance Electrician in April 1978 and went on to obtain an Industrial Electrician certificate in September 1987. During the first fifteen years of his career, Brother Martindale worked for various contractors in a number of Locals Unions in Southern Ontario, with the last major jobsite being the Toronto Skydome for Ainsworth Electric in 1988/89.

In January 1990, Brother Martindale was then appointed Local Union Organizer for Local Union 353 and from 1993 to 2003 he represented Local Union 353 as a Regional Organizer for the Construction Council of Ontario and then returned to Toronto as a Local Union Organizer from 2004 to the present.

Brother Martindale is a highly motivated and capable individual whose experience and impressive track record will be an invaluable asset to the IBEW's new organizing initiative.

### **Winter Schools a Huge Success**

The roll out of the Code of Excellence (C.O.E.) in Victoria, BC was at the Coast Harbourside Hotel on February 19 & 20, 2007. International Vice President Flemming welcomed the participants and provided his support for the Code of Excellence program.

Local Union 230 Victoria, BC invited four contractors to participate in the roll out of the program. The contractors and the companies they represented were; E.H. Emery Electric, Derek Emery, General Manager/Owner and Dan Beattie General Foreman from Victoria. Derek is 3rd generation Owner of E.H. Emery Electric an IBEW Contractor for the past 77 years. E.H.; Ross MacLean, General Manager of Houle Electric (Victoria Division) Houle has Offices in Nanaimo, Vancouver, and Prince George; Michael Fleming from the BC Labour Relations Board also participated in our Code Of Excellence presentation. Michael is reviewing new or different tactics that are being used in Labour Relations and will be doing a story that will be published on the BC Board web site on the IBEW Code Of Excellence.

The C.O.E. program was presented by dividing the school into two classes. The Construction program was presented by International Representatives Laird Cronk and Larry Schell and the Professional Industrial program was presented by Representatives Chuck McKenzie, Vair Clendenning and Christine Pynaker. Representative Mike Power was assisting with the review of the program as it was the first roll out in Canada. Mike will gather comments to enable us to make the changes necessary to improve the program prior to the roll out in Montreal.

There were thirty-two (32) participants registered for the

course in Victoria, BC representing the following Local Unions:

213, 230, 254, 258, 424, 435, 559, 993, 1003, 1007, 1574, 2034, 2038, 2067 and 2085.

The Eastern school was held at the Sofitel Hotel in Montreal, QC on March 5 and 6, 2007. Once again the program was opened by International Vice President Phil Flemming. Vice President Flemming thanked those in attendance for their participation in this very important program and their dedication to the IBEW and reiterated his support for, and commitment to the Code of Excellence.

Again the program was presented to two groups. The Construction program was presented by International Representatives Bill Daniels and Tom Reid, with the Industrial program being presented by Representatives Paul Tremblay, Luc Couture and Chuck McKenzie. International Representative Mike Power briefed the instructors prior to Mondays opening on the necessary changes resulting from the experience in Victoria. Representative Power also opened the program with an overview presented to all in attendance, and did double duty monitoring the presentations.

The Eastern school saw thirty-one (31) participants registered representing the following Local Unions:

37, 120, 502, 568, 625, 804, 1432, 1687, 1888, 1928, 2166, 2330, 2351 and the Chairman of the Ontario Power Council, Jack Dowding.

### **Brief Summary of the C.O.E.**

The program is strictly a voluntary program and will only be implemented in Local Unions who fully understand the program, support it and wish to have it implemented. It takes a great deal of commitment by the not only the Local union, but also the contractor to be successful with a Code of Excellence project.

A number of questions arose as to the value of the program if the contractor or employer is not willing to deal with issues that are clearly in the role of management, issues such as material and or tool shortages, unskilled, or improperly trained supervisors. For the program to be successful the employers have to be committed to make this work and deal with all of the issues.

The Local union similarly has to deal with members who are not pulling their weight, or adhering to the terms of the collective agreement, with regard to start, finish or break times, etc. The responsibility of discipline does not shift to the union, as we still follow the process of management disciplining and the union investigating the discipline.

The Code of Excellence, simply put, requires both parties, the Local Union and employers to live up to the terms of

the existing collective agreement, and is in no way designed at amending or undermining that agreement. The program is designed to make us more competitive, open new markets and get us back into old ones. The true measure of our success will be the additional projects and contracts that we get as a result of our efforts.

### **Code of Excellence Update**

The Code of Excellence was first on the agenda at the last All Canada Progress meeting in Saint John, NB. Following that meeting there have been a number of meetings held involving Local Unions 37 Fredericton, NB and 502 Saint John, NB. Their aim is to implement the C.O.E. at the Point Lepreau refurbishment project.

Local Union 804 Kitchener, ON was presented the program by International Representative Tom Reid at their December General membership meeting December 20, 2006. At that meeting the membership overwhelmingly supported the Code of Excellence when it was put to a vote. Local Union 804 is planning to implement the program at the Bruce Power nuclear generating station, and a meeting has been scheduled for April 23, 2007 at which time Representatives Daniels and Reid will present the program to contractor representatives in hopes of getting their buy in.

Local Union 894 Oshawa, ON's Executive Board received the program presented by Representatives Daniel and Reid on February 20, 2007. Following that meeting the Board provided information and their endorsement at their general meeting on March 22, 2007. A special called meeting was held March 15, 2007, again with Representatives Daniels and Reid making the presentation. A vote was held March 15, 2007, at which time the membership of Local Union 894 gave the C.O.E. their approval. Local Union 894 is currently looking at the two nuclear stations in their jurisdiction as well as expanding their commercial and institutional market.

Local Union 230 Victoria, BC had a presentation by International Representative Laird Cronk to the Executive Board on March 15, 2007. The Local Union is currently reviewing target jobs to perform using the Code of Excellence.

Local Union 424 Edmonton, AB had a presentation by International Representative Larry Schell to the Executive Board on March 16, 2007. Local Union 424 is moving ahead to start the C.O.E. in March 2007 on a job near east Edmonton.

The Executive Board of Local Union 2085 Winnipeg, MB was given a presentation by International Representative Clendenning and have asked for C.O.E. to be implemented on a high profile project.

A number of other Local Unions across the District have requested information packages and are now considering next steps.

### **Local Union 1003, Nelson BC**

#### **Business Manager Retires**

In 1969, Brother Lou Bouliane entered into an electrical apprenticeship with Local Union 1003 and has remained active in all aspects of the Local Union activities ever since.

Brother Bouliane was an active Officer on the Executive Board and was President of Local Union 1003 and then in the fall of 2000, the Executive Board appointed him as Business Manager, when Bob McKnight retired. In 2001, Brother Bouliane was voted in as Local Union 1003 Business Manager and was re-elected in 2003.

Brother Ray Keen replaces Brother Bouliane as appointed Business Manager.

### **Local Union 1007, Edmonton, AB - Good of the Union**

St. Patrick's Day — March 17, 2007 to the uninitiated — was a day to celebrate in Edmonton, Alberta even for those who don't share the Celtic heritage.

EPCOR's Transportation Department held a Job Fair with 65 Utility Worker positions up for grabs. EPCOR's Transportation section has been an integral part of the company since the city owned Utility's inception. In the beginning there were street lights and trolley buses, and then came traffic lights and a light rapid transit (LRT) system.

Sixty-five (65) new, permanent jobs are always cause for celebration but there was something extra for **IBEW Local Union 1007** to smile about. Rod Moore, the Director of the Transportation department invited Business Manager Martin Duckworth and Assistant Business Manager Jimmy Cooper along to take part in the Job Fair.

They were able to explain the Unions' role in making the company stronger and more competitive by a commitment to technical and safety training. It gave them a chance to tell the many young people there about the strong work ethic passed down to us by our founders and of the pride taken in a job well done. Last, but certainly not least, they welcomed 65 new Sisters and Brothers into the oldest and largest electrical Union in the world.

IBEW members form the backbone of the company. The large majority of the foremen and senior tradesmen got their start as Utility Workers while the men and women who decided not to pursue an electrical apprenticeship now form one the most dedicated and talented skilled labour groups in the entire country.

The entire process shows us yet again that the IBEW can provide a highly skilled, motivated workforce and with an intelligent, conscientious management team in place. Collaboration rather than confrontation. Lets all of us hold our heads high at the end of the day. Let's hope it's the first of many such ventures.

### **Local Union 2351, Churchill Falls NFLD—Ratifies New Agreement**

IBEW Local Union 2351 has recently completed negotiations and ratified a new Collective Agreement for the next four years, January 2006—December 2009.

The new Operation Agreement includes a retroactive 1.5% increase for the first year (2006), 3% in the second year, 3% for the third year, and again 3% in the fourth year. In addition to the negotiated wages increases, anyone above Group 9 in the Operations Group, which is most of the trades-people, will receive \$0.50 cents in the second year, \$0.65 in the third year, and \$0.50 in the fourth year. The Operations Agreement was approved by 58% of the membership.

Members employed under the Office and Support Agreement will receive 1.5% retroactive for the first year, and 3% in years 2, 3, and 4. The Office and Support group voted 86% in favour of ratification.

Business Manager Gord Burry would like to thank International Representative Mike Power for his continued support of the Local Union and assistance during negotiations.

### **Adoption of Bill C-269: a Matter of Justice and Modernization**

OTTAWA – *The Canadian Labour Congress calls on the government of Canada to join with the other parties in the House of Commons and move towards adoption of Bill C-269 to bring justice and a measure of economic security to Canada's unemployed workers.*

*"This legislation will go a long way towards modernizing the Employment Insurance program," says Barbara Byers, Executive Vice-President of the Canadian Labour Congress. "It is not perfect but it will bring remedies to the main failings of the current system that disqualify too many workers. This legislation will help make EI more accessible and will also provide for better benefits for improved durations."*

*"The labour movement also calls on responsible employers to join with workers and call on the government to support the progressive changes proposed in Bill C-269. The bill offers a vision of an Employment Insurance program that works for workers and for the long-term economic interests of the country."*

*"Our EI system needs to keep pace with the realities of today's workers, a majority of whom do not have traditional employment that is daytime, weekdays, full-time and permanent."*

*Bill C-269 essentially brings forward the recommendations supported by all parties in the 2005 Report of the parliamentary committee on Human Resources. These proposals, which, in their broad outlines, match the Canadian Labour Congress' own call for modernization of EI, have unfortunately been ignored to date by the current and previous governments.*

*The Canadian Labour Congress, the national voice of the labour movement, represents 3.2 million Canadian workers. The CLC brings together Canada's national and international unions along with the provincial and territorial federations of labour and 135 district labour councils.*

*Web site: [www.canadianlabour.ca](http://www.canadianlabour.ca) or contact: Jean Wolff, 613-526-7431 and 613-878-6040*

### **Unions Push for Better Fair Wage Policy**

**March 13, 2007 - News Durham Region**

*OSHAWA -- Two unions are calling on the City to beef up its fair wage policy for construction work, saying it will ensure public buildings are built more efficiently and are safe for citizens to use.*

*Terry Dorgan, a spokesman for Local 894 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), says competition in the construction industry can be cutthroat and is concerned that leads to cheaper, unqualified workers getting an edge.*

*"If construction work is done by unqualified personnel, it can be dangerous for the public when they go into those buildings," he said. "A better fair wage policy would stop that from happening. If a certain minimum wage has to be paid anyway, people are more likely to get someone qualified instead of getting cheap labour that maybe isn't."*

*Commissioner of Corporate Services Rick Stockman said Oshawa has a fair wage policy in place and was one of the first municipalities to adopt one. However, he agrees with the union reps that it might be time to expand it.*

*Mr. Dorgan and Garth Cochrane, a spokesman for Local 463 of the United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters, pitched their vision for a better policy at Monday's meeting of council's audit budget and corporate services committee.*

*The new and improved policy proposed by the unions would lay out minimum wage to be paid for each trade, support apprenticeships and skills development, promote*

workplace health and safety and provide tools for enforcement.

*It would apply to industrial, commercial and institutional construction work carried out by and for the City.*

*The union reps stressed these are not "union preference policies," saying in every trade there are non-union contractors paying wages that equal or exceed those set out in the policy. The policy is only meant to limit competition from those who base their competitive advantage on cheap labour and lower safety standards.*

*"I am shocked that the City of Oshawa, home of General Motors, does not have a policy like this, like it should have," said Councillor Mary Anne Sholdra after councillors noted Toronto and Clarington both have detailed policies in place. Members of committee voted to send the issue to staff for a report.*

### **Local Union 348, Edmonton, AB - Collective Agreement at Yellow Pages Group**

On March 16, 2007 Local Union 348 ratified a collective agreement for over 200 members at Yellow Pages Group (YPG). YPG is an income trust that publishes over 90% of the Yellow Page directories in Canada including an online directory. Local Union 348 represents the sales forces and clerical operations in Alberta.

YPG is the fifth owner in 7 years of the Yellow Pages publishing in Alberta since it was spun off by TELUS. This agreement is the 5<sup>th</sup> first agreement with a new employer, and after 9 months and one rejected offer (72% NO), 83% of the members accepted the latest offer.

This bargaining took on a life of its own. Unfortunately, one of the Bargaining Committee members, (and also Unit Chair) broke ranks with the Committee and the Local Union, and began a campaign against the IBEW, Negotiating Committee and the bargaining process. Coincidentally, there was a raiding attempt by the Canadian Telecommunications Employees Association out of Ontario. They represent the YPG clerical office employees in Ontario and Quebec.

Through out it all, Local Union 348's long term members and a dedicated group of shop stewards and members assisted by International Representative Christine Pynaker, worked to restore faith in the bargaining process and their Negotiating Committee, and sent the CTEA raiders back to Ontario licking their wounds.

This collective agreement introduced a 'Net by Ac-

count Commission' plan in which, sales people who meet their growth targets will make in excess of \$100,000.00 and have total control over their work scheduling.

Clerical operations employees now have the highest wage rates at YPG in Canada with the highest classification top rates reaching \$30.00/hr in 2008. A compressed work week was introduced with 1 day off every 2 weeks. The agreement maintains the current 7 weeks vacation after 25 years, with an agreement term of 44 months with a wage re-opener half at the term midpoint.

After years of layoffs and re-hiring, and yearly turnover in excess of 28%, Local 348 is hopeful stability will return.

### **Fired Worker May Have a New Job**

**March 12, 2007 - Today Staff and Sun Media**

*The case of a Quebecer dismissed from work in the oil sands may be headed for the Alberta Human Rights Commission.*

*Negotiations to reinstate Carol Rioux and Marco Pelletier (who quit in protest) at Suncor Energy weren't successful over the weekend and the two have been dispatched to another work site, said Jessica Bowering, lawyer for the Ironworkers Union Local 720, this morning.*

*The human rights case will be filed, said Bowering. "Probably not today, but probably by Wednesday," she said.*

*Rioux was dismissed from Suncor after he failed to pass a second orientation test because of language problems. His friend Pelletier resigned following the dismissal.*

*Bowering couldn't confirm whether the two men will start work today. "It'll take a few days before they get to work so it's still possible to iron out the problem with Suncor," she said, "I don't know what might have happened over the weekend but to my knowledge nothing has happened."*

*Meanwhile, a politician entered the fray on Friday when local MLA Guy Boutilier offered to help smooth things over between the oil giant and the union.*

*"I hope for some kind of accommodation," Boutilier said while on a trade mission in Mexico.*

*Suncor spokesman Patti Lewis said the company does offer English as a Second Language courses, but as a new employee, Rioux did not qualify to take them. He had only been on the job for two days when he was asked to retake English safety tests and failed. Suncor says Rioux's language problems posed a safety risk.*

*At the Alberta legislature in Edmonton on Thursday, NDP Leader Brian Mason said the case highlights a larger*

*problem: big oil companies undercutting unionized labour by importing foreign workers.*

*Oil companies have imported non-union labour from places like China and the Philippines. Suncor says its foreign workers must all speak English, but other companies are less demanding. Documents obtained by Sun Media show Chinese employees at CNRL's Horizon site are only required to speak English if they work in supervisory roles like a foreman or higher.*

*"We will stand up against government policies that see qualified people -- regardless of whether they speak French or English -- fired in lieu of cheaper, foreign labour," Mason said.*

*Lewis dismissed Mason's anti-union theory, saying Suncor invites temporary foreign workers to its site as "a last resort."*

### **B.C.-Alberta Labour Deal – A Storm in the Making?**

The following article is from the March 14, 2007 Globe and Mail, *Special to Globe and Mail Update*, that outlines the threat to Apprenticeship programs posed by the newly signed trade agreement between Alberta and British Columbia. Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty is considering signing on to the trade deal known as TILMA (Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement). This article was written by Wayne Peppard, Executive Director of the BC and Yukon Building and Construction Trades Council, who is a qualified plumber and gas fitter with 35 years experience in the industry.

*The name, TILMA, sounds like a destructive hurricane — and that's the kind of effect it could have if it moves across the country from British Columbia and Alberta.*

*The Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement between B.C. and Alberta has been promoted by both governments as a solution to the skilled-labour shortages faced by these two provinces but by deregulating and lowering qualification standards, the agreement is likely to make the problem worse. If TILMA is picked up by the other provinces, the end result could be lowered standards that eliminate years of progress.*

*Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty has already discussed bringing TILMA to his province with B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell, while groups such as the Canada West Foundation are pressing Saskatchewan and Manitoba to join the agreement.*

*In B.C. and Alberta, the public and even major construction contractors are still asking, "What is TILMA?" — a question their counterparts in other*

*provinces should start asking before it arrives on their doorsteps too.*

*TILMA was signed by B.C. and Alberta last April, with no prior public consultation or discussion. It allows almost any government regulation or standard to be challenged on the grounds that it is more restrictive to trade than necessary. Challenges will be adjudicated by panels appointed by the two provinces with the authority to impose fines of up to \$5-million for each violation.*

*The implications for construction workers is very significant. TILMA says governments are not permitted to maintain "obstacles" to labour mobility, such as apprenticeship requirements and training standards, unless they can prove they have no other option.*

*Close examination of the apprenticeship systems and credentialing requirements reveals that the intent is to quickly move to a deregulated market.*

*Alberta currently turns out the most apprentices trained to the "red seal" national endorsement and many of its trade classifications are deemed compulsory. Currently, trade workers must be qualified to the Alberta standards to work there.*

*However, the "red seal" endorsement is not needed in B.C., nor is trade qualification or certification required to work in the province, except for safety purposes under specifically regulated circumstances.*

*Under TILMA, all trades and occupations are to be reconciled between the governments. The intention is not to create one standard, but to simply recognize each other's requirements to ensure that they do not create a barrier to labour mobility. Rest assured, there is absolutely no intention to move B.C.'s unregulated qualification environment up to the higher Alberta standards.*

*Gary Mar, Alberta's former Intergovernmental Affairs Minister, emphasized to one audience that "we will not be 'dumbing down' professional standards. Our two provinces will reconcile them to the highest level."*

*Colin Hansen, B.C.'s Minister for Economic Development, expressed a very different view: "I would argue the highest standard is not necessarily the best standard. And so what TILMA forces us to do through this process is to look at not what's the highest standard or the lowest standard, it's what makes sense."*

*Alberta businesses and qualified workers are likely to lose out when their province is forced by TILMA to recognize the qualifications of B.C. workers with lower credentials.*

*Whatever the politicians' intent, by signing TILMA they have surrendered the ultimate decision about "what makes*

sense" to dispute panels, whose rulings will be made not on the basis of what is best for the public interest, but on the much more narrow criteria of what is the least trade restrictive option.

If other provinces accept TILMA what that means for the rest of Canada is very clear — the province with the lowest qualifications for skilled trades will set the standards for the entire country.

TILMA's implementation in B.C. and Alberta will have a chilling effect on efforts to raise training and occupational standards in both provinces, regardless of the need to respond to new technologies and changing methods of work. By creating confusion about which province's standards apply to workers from one province doing work in the other, it will likely create enforcement problems in areas such as occupational health, workplace safety and consumer protection. Multiply those problems by extending TILMA to other provinces and we will have a national race to the bottom in training requirements.

That's no way to achieve the highly skilled work force Canada so urgently needs to be internationally competitive. Canada should avoid the TILMA hurricane while there's still time.

#### Today's Trivia

Over 97% of agreements ratified in 2006 (covering approximately 95% of employees) were settled without a work stoppage. Of all agreements settled, 58.3% were concluded with the assistance of a conciliator or mediator, 36.6% were reached through direct bargaining, and 2.7% were settled at arbitration.

#### 2007 Harley Davidson Tickets

There are still a few raffle tickets available, so remember to contact your International Representative and purchase before the first draw.

**The first "Early Bird" draw will be held May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2007** at the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual IBEW/MS Golf Tournament with the prize being a 2007 Dyna "Super Glide" FXD. **The second "Early Bird" draw will be held July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2007** at the 1<sup>st</sup> District Office for a 2007 "Heritage Softail Classic" FLSTC. **The final "Grand Prize" draw will be held on August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2007** at the All Canada Progress Meeting in Victoria, BC for a 2007 "Road King Classic" FLHRC.

All Early Bird prize winning tickets will go back in the draw and are remain eligible for subsequent prizes and the grand prize. **That's right for \$100.00 you could win all three Harleys!**

#### Projected Meeting Dates 2007

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| 4/29 - 5/02/07 | BCTD Legislative Conference<br>Crowne Plaza<br>Ottawa, ON   |
| 4/30 - 5/02/07 | Railroad Conference<br>Miami Beach, FL  |
| 5/7 - 11/07    | Broadcasting, Manufacturing<br>& Telecom. Conference<br>Wyndham Miami Beach<br>Miami Beach, FL            |
| 5/24/07        | IBEW M.S. Charity Golf<br>Tournament  |
| 6/11 - 15/07   | Utility Conference<br>Buena Vista Palace<br>Orlando, FL   |
| 8/24 - 25/07   | Membership Development<br>Conference<br>Fairmont Empress Hotel<br>Victoria, BC                            |
| 8/27 - 30/07   | First District Progress Meeting<br>Fairmont Empress Hotel<br>& Victoria Conference Centre<br>Victoria, BC |
| 10/15-17/07    | Membership Development<br>Conference<br>Hyatt Regency Hotel<br>Atlanta, Georgia                           |
| 11/26 -30/07   | IBEW Nuclear Conference<br>Bally's<br>Las Vegas, Nevada   |