



MINUTES

of the

4th ANNUAL CONVENTION

of the

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

held at the

Laurel Point Inn

Victoria, B.C.

June 3, 2003

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CALL TO ORDER

President Kathy Danchuk called the 4th Annual Convention of the Professional Employees Association to order at 9:02 a.m. on Tuesday, June 3, 2003

The President introduced members of the Association Executive and PEA staff.

CREDENTIALS REPORT

The President called on Dani Alldrick, Chairperson of the Credentials Committee, to give a report.

The Chairperson introduced the members of the Credentials Committee and advised that there were 64 delegates and Executive members registered. He also reported that there were 6 staff in attendance.

M/S/C to accept the Credentials Report.

The Chairperson reported that the following delegates were appointed late:

Holly Kavanaugh	Prince George School District
Joanne Montgomery	Paramedical Professionals
Caroline Baldwin	St. Margaret's School
Debbie Dykes	St. Margaret's School
Wade Gilson	St. Margaret's School

M/S/C that these delegates be seated.

The Chairperson reported that one of the delegates was not able to attend as planned. The following alternate delegate was registered:

Roger John (for Garry Sagert)	University of Victoria
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M/S/C that this delegate be seated.

The Chairperson reported that the following delegates were in attendance without credentials:

Cheryl Conant	Government Licensed Professionals
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Leah Johnstone
Sheldon Martell
Xiaoping Yuan
Jim Russell
Vivian Kerenyi

Government Licensed Professionals
Government Licensed Professionals
Government Licensed Professionals
Legal Services Society
Family Maintenance Enforcement Program

M/S/C that these delegates be seated.

M/S/C that the Credentials Committee stand down, with thanks.

DELEGATES

The following delegates were registered.

Association Executive

Table Officers

President	Kathryn Danchuk
First Vice-President	Jim Russell
Second Vice-President	Dani Alldrick
Secretary-Treasurer	Tom Gore

Chapter Representatives

Government Licensed Professionals	Steve Byford Sharlie Huffman
Community Health Services & Support Staff	Coral Voss
Paramedical Professionals	Sue Ward
St. Margaret's School	Carl Everitt
UVic Administrative & Academic Professional Staff	Morag MacNeil
Small Chapters (Family Maintenance Enforcement Program Lawyers, Legal Services Society Lawyers, Okanagan Regional Librarians and Prince George School District Professionals)	Daphne Laboucan

Chapter Delegates

Government Licensed Professionals

Paul Albu	David Kilshaw
Jim Annunziello	Ron La Torre
Bruce Barnewall	Mike Madill
Anthony Britneff	Sheldon Martell
Brigid Canil	Bruce Pamplin
Brian Chow	John Robinson
Kerry Clark	Kenneth Rogers
Cheryl Conant	Roxanne Still
Bob Costello	Jeff Stone
Trudy Goold	Stefan Tack
Glenn Hill	Paul Tataryn
Harry Jennings	Andrew Wheatley
Leah Johnstone	Xiaoping Yuan

Community Health Services & Support Staff

Dawn Barbeau
Laurel Lafaut
Linda Lucier
Angela Miller

Family Maintenance Enforcement Program Lawyers

Angela Accettura
Vivian Kerenyi

Legal Services Society Lawyers

Kathy Kendall
Alan Nordling

Okanagan Regional Librarians

Georgia McKay
Annie Pope

Paramedical Professionals

Valerie Leverington
Joanne Montgomery
Guido Vanderheyden

Prince George School District Professionals

Holly Kavanaugh

St. Margaret's School

Caroline Baldwin
Debbie Dykes
Wade Gilson

University of Victoria Administrative & Academic Professional Staff

Pat Blonde
Vincent Connor
Maggie Cooper Little
John Foxgord
John Hall

**University of Victoria Administrative &
Academic Professional Staff (cont'd.)**

Kim Lewall
William McGhee
Garry Sagert
Inez St. Dennis
Ian Thornton

STAFF

Executive Director
Staff Officer
Staff Officer
Staff Officer
Administrative Clerk
Administrative Clerk

Jodi Jensen
Jennifer Duprey
Tony Bute
Barinder Rasode
Joanne Petersen
Marianna Crawford

CONVENTION COMMITTEES

Resolutions Committee:

Bruce Barnewall
Steve Byford
William McGhee
Tony Bute, *Secretary*

Jim Russell, *Chair*

Ways and Means Committee:

Vincent Connor
Sharlie Huffman
Annie Pope
Jodi Jensen, *Secretary*

Tom Gore, *Chair*

Credentials Committee:

Laurel Lafaut
Kathy Kendall
Sue Ward
Jennifer Duprey
Joanne Petersen, *Secretary*

Dani Alldrick, *Chair*

Sergeant-at-Arms Committee:

Angela Accettura
Wade Gilson
Guido Vanderheyden
Barinder Rasode

Daphne Laboucan, *Chair*

CONVENTION RULES OF ORDER

The Executive Director read the Rules of Order:

1. A member of the Association may bring any matter before a convention for consideration by means of a resolution. The resolution must be signed by the member and at least one other member before it can be considered.
2. A resolution, except a resolution to amend the constitution, can be considered from the convention floor only if at least two-thirds of the delegates present, and voting, vote to accept the resolution for consideration.
3. Convention reports cannot be amended from the convention floor but a motion to refer the report back to the committee for reconsideration is in order. A motion to refer is not debatable. When a referral motion is properly seconded, it must be put to a vote immediately. A delegate cannot move referral after speaking on the issue.
4. If the recommendation of a committee is defeated, the matter is automatically referred back to the committee.
5. Once presented, a motion is the property of the convention. It may be withdrawn only by a majority vote of the delegates present and voting.
6. A motion to reconsider can only be made by a voter in the majority. Such a motion requires a majority to pass.
7. A delegate wishing to speak on a motion on the floor must be at a microphone and be recognized by the chair of the convention.
8. If a point of order is raised while a delegate is speaking, the delegate shall, at the request of the chair, stand down until the question of order has been decided.
9. If two or more delegates rise to speak at the same time the chair of the convention will determine the order of speakers.
10. Except when a delegate is speaking, a delegate can request that a motion be re-read for information.
11. No delegate can interrupt a delegate who has the floor except to raise a point of order.
12. A delegate may not speak more than once on an issue until all others who wish to speak have had an opportunity to do so.
13. A delegate who refuses to stand down when requested by the chair to do so shall be subject to suspension for the remainder of the session.
14. Speeches are limited to three minutes.
15. Except as set out above the convention will be governed by Roberts Rules of Order.

M/S/C to accept the Rules of Order.

ALLOCATION OF RESOLUTIONS

The President introduced Jim Russell, Chairperson of the Resolutions Committee, who advised that the committee had referred the Secretary-Treasurer's Report, Audited Statements and Budget Statement to the Ways & Means Committee.

INVESTMENT REPORT

The President introduced Paul Siluch, PEA Investment Advisor, who gave an overview of the financial outlook and the state of PEA finances in 2002.

REPORT OF THE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

The President called on Tom Gore, Chairperson of the Ways and Means Committee to give his report.

The Chairperson introduced the members of the committee, and PEA auditor Tony Charles-Roberts of the accounting firm Moore, Roberts & Co.

The Chairperson reported that no resolutions had been referred to the Ways and Means Committee.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND PROPOSED BUDGET

(Secretary-Treasurer's report printed at the end of minutes)

Secretary-Treasurer Tom Gore reported that the loss of PEA members resulting from public service layoffs resulted in a decrease in membership dues of \$31,406 in 2002 from the previous year. Operating expenses for 2002 decreased \$19,107 from the year previous, resulting in an excess of operating revenue over expenses (after amortization) of \$13,436. Gore reported that further declines in operating revenue resulted in the projected budget deficit of \$111,803 for 2003, as delegates to convention in 2002 had voted to retain both membership services and the annual convention. Gore emphasized that new membership organizing remained a priority to offset declining revenue.

M/S/C to accept the Secretary-Treasurer's Report.

M/S/C to accept the Audited Financial Statements.

M/S/C to accept the Proposed Budget.

The President asked the Ways and Means Committee to stand aside.

REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

The President called on Jim Russell, Chairperson of the Resolutions Committee, who introduced the members of the committee.

The Chairperson recommended that Resolution No. 2 be introduced at this time as it would affect the table officer elections if approved.

RESOLUTION #2

BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA By-laws be amended as follows:

Article III — CONVENTIONS

There shall be ~~an Annual~~ a Biennial Convention of the Association.

1. The place and date of the convention shall be fixed by the Association Executive to occur in ~~April, May or June~~ odd-numbered calendar years. The deadline to submit resolutions is to be printed in Association publications at least ~~sixty (60)~~ ninety (90) days prior to convention.

Article V — ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE

4. The President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, and Secretary-Treasurer shall be elected by secret ballot by majority vote of all the accredited delegates present and voting at the Association's Biennial Convention. ~~The President and First Vice-President shall be elected in odd-numbered years for a two-year term. The Second Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer shall be elected for a two-year term in even-numbered years.~~

~~Notwithstanding the above, for transitional purposes, at the convention in 2001, the Second Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer will be elected for a one-year term and subsequent terms shall be two-year terms.~~

For transitional purposes, at the convention in 2003 all Table Officers will be elected for a two-year term.

M/S Concurrence. Motion failed to achieve the necessary two-thirds majority vote to pass and as such was defeated.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND PROPOSED BUDGET (cont'd)

The Chairperson of the Ways and Means Committee called on Tony Charles-Roberts, who reported on the differences in the way investments are reported in the Audited Statements versus the Investment Reports.

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

M/S/C that the firm Moore, Roberts and Co. be reappointed as Association auditors for the 2003 fiscal year.

M/S/C to dismiss the Ways & Means Committee with thanks.

The Chairperson of the Resolutions Committee called on the President to present her report.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(full report printed at the end of minutes)

President Kathryn Danchuk reported on the unprecedented disruption experienced by PEA members through layoffs, relocations and re-organizations over the last year, and the response of union activists and staff to protect members' jobs and rights through downsizing response committees, grievances and arbitrations, the provision of retirement seminars and financial counselling, and participation in court challenges and public campaigns. Danchuk reported on the success of the Structural Review Committee in making recommendations to rebalance and improve chapter representation at the Association Executive, and noted that chapters and executive members had worked over the past year with a renewed spirit of cooperation to repair internal divisions. In closing, Danchuk extended her thanks to the Association's members and staff for their involvement and support.

M/S/C to accept the President's Report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

(full report printed at the end of minutes)

Executive Director Jodi Jensen reported on the B.C. Government's revolutionary changes to public services and the profound impact for PEA members, their families and communities. Jensen noted that the PEA was facing a difficult year ahead for collective bargaining, with six of nine PEA collective agreements due to expire early in 2004 and wage controls mandating no compensation increases for public sector employees, and challenged delegates to assist in building membership cohesiveness and support for the union's bargaining teams. Finally, Jensen thanked the hundreds of PEA members who volunteer in a myriad of roles for their contributions to the material welfare of their colleagues; and members of the PEA staff for their dedicated and able service.

M/S/C to accept the Executive Director's report.

ELECTION OF TABLE OFFICERS

The President turned the gavel over to Jodi Jensen, Executive Director, who outlined the procedures for the election. The delegates were advised that the positions to be filled were President, 1st Vice-President and 2nd Vice-President.

President

Nominations were declared open for the position of President, for a two-year term. Kathryn Danchuk was nominated and no further nominations were made. After agreeing that she would stand for the position of President, Kathryn Danchuk was declared elected by acclamation.

1st Vice-President

Nominations were declared open for the position of 1st Vice-President, for a two-year term. Jim Russell and Steve Byford were nominated and agreed to stand for the position. Ballots were cast. After counting the ballots, the scrutineers reported the results to the Executive Director, who then declared Jim Russell elected as 1st Vice-President.

2nd Vice-President

Nominations were declared open for the position of 2nd Vice-President, for a one-year term. Steve Byford was nominated and no further nominations were made. After agreeing that he would stand for the position of 2nd Vice-President, Steve Byford was declared elected by acclamation.

M/S/C to destroy the ballots.

REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE (cont'd)

The Chairperson of the Resolutions Committee read the following resolutions to the delegates and made recommendations on behalf of the committee. The delegates either adopted, referred or defeated the resolutions as follows:

RESOLUTION #1

BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA By-laws be amended as follows:

Article IV - CHAPTERS

1. The Association Executive may recognize chapters of the Association made up of members sharing certain employment or professional characteristics.
2. Each chapter ~~with 50 or more members~~ shall be entitled to appoint an Association Executive member from the chapter executive to be notified of, and to attend, all meetings of the Association Executive, subject to (4) below.
3. Chapters ~~with more than one thousand members~~ shall be entitled to appoint an additional Association Executive member for each additional 400 members or major part thereof.
4. Chapters ~~with less than 50 members shall be entitled to jointly appoint at least one Association Executive member from those chapters.~~ The Association Executive may determine which chapters shall combine for this purpose of representation on the Association Executive and the number of Association Executive members to be elected. The combined chapters shall be entitled to jointly appoint at least one Association Executive member from those chapters.
5. Each chapter shall notify the Association headquarters of its representative(s) to the Association Executive, by letter, prior to the representative(s) attending Association Executive meetings.
6. Each chapter constitution and by-laws shall make provision for a minimum of three officers: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary or Secretary-Treasurer.

M/S/C Concurrence

RESOLUTION #3

BE IT RESOLVED that if the PEA convention should become a biennial convention that the Association Executive increase the funding available for chapter Annual General Meetings.
M/S/C Concurrence

RESOLUTION #4

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA executive assess funding availability to hire the best affordable professional negotiator or firm to work with the next designated collective bargaining committee members/staff (behind negotiations and during negotiations) and achieve the best possible deal for its members as a whole.

M/S/C Non-Concurrence

RESOLUTION #5

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA call upon the government of British Columbia to take immediate steps to address the impacts of these cuts, including the establishment of adequate funding for legal aid, income assistance and related social programs that are required to meet United Nations standards.

The committee combined this resolution with Resolution #10 to read:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA call upon the Government of British Columbia to take immediate steps to address the impacts of cuts by restoring funding to legal aid services, social/ income assistance, and Human Rights such that appropriate United Nations standards in these areas are met.

M/S/C Concurrence

RESOLUTION #6

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that, as the PEA membership is entitled to know the rationale, methodology and criteria used in the process for selecting key PEA staff positions, the PEA Executive provide a detailed explanation as to the rationale, methodology and criteria used to select the new PEA Executive Director and that a report be published in the Professional within 2 months of the end of convention.

M/S/C Non-Concurrence

RESOLUTION #7

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that PEA executive provide time in the PEA delegated convention schedule which allows delegates to speak to the convention attendees on issues pertinent to the PEA including posing questions to the PEA executive or staff.

M/S/C Non-Concurrence

RESOLUTION #8

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA demands that the Government of British Columbia repeal or amend these Bills to allow labour contracts to be negotiated by the parties involved.

The committee amended the resolution as follows:

RESOLUTION #8 (Amended)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA demand that the Government of British Columbia repeal or amend Bills 2, 15, 18, 27, 28 and 29 to allow labour contracts to be negotiated by the parties involved.

M/S/C Concurrence

RESOLUTION #9

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA demands that the Government of British Columbia increase funding for the training and retention of doctors and nurses in the Province.

M/S/C to refer back to the committee.

RESOLUTION #10

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA demands that the Government of British Columbia reinstate the provision of comprehensive legal aid for the residents of our Province who cannot otherwise afford it.

Combined with Resolution #5.

RESOLUTION #11

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA urges its members to support all current recall campaigns in British Columbia

M/S/C Non-Concurrence

RESOLUTION #12

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA demands that the Government of British Columbia, in order to further the cause of equity, reinstates programs for disabled persons that have been discontinued as cost-saving measures.

The committee amended the resolution as follows:

RESOLUTION #12 (Amended)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA demand that the Government of British Columbia, in order to further the cause of equity, reinstate all programs for disabled persons that have been discontinued.

M/S/C Concurrence

The President asked the Resolutions Committee to stand aside.

APPROVAL OF 3rd ANNUAL CONVENTION MINUTES

M/S/C that the minutes of the 3rd Annual Convention be adopted.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolutions from the Floor

Three resolutions were received from the floor.

The delegates voted to allow the following two resolutions on the floor for debate.

1. BE IT RESOLVED that the use of concurrence/non-concurrence be eliminated for the purpose of future PEA conventions and that resolutions be voted on either in favour or not in favour as presented by the Resolutions Committee.

M/S/C to refer to the committee.

2. BE IT RESOLVED that the Executive discuss the budget at one of their meetings before the convention and provide delegates with an amendment document to the original budget.

M/S/C to refer to the committee.

REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE (cont'd.)

RESOLUTION #9

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA demands that the Government of British Columbia increase funding for the training and retention of doctors and nurses in the Province.

The Chairperson reported that the committee amended the resolution to read:

RESOLUTION #9 (Amended)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA demand that the Government of BC increase funding for the training and retention of medical, paramedical and allied health care professionals in the Province.

M/S/C Concurrence

RESOLUTION #1 FROM THE FLOOR

BE IT RESOLVED that the use of concurrence/non-concurrence be eliminated for the purpose of future PEA conventions and that resolutions be voted on either in favour or not in favour as presented by the Resolutions Committee.

The committee recommended non-concurrence.

M/S/C Non-Concurrence

RESOLUTION #2 FROM THE FLOOR

BE IT RESOLVED that the Executive discuss the budget at one of their meetings before the convention and provide delegates with an amendment document to the original budget.

The committee recommended concurrence.

M/S/C Concurrence

M/S/C to dismiss the Resolutions Committee with thanks.

ADJOURNMENT

The 4th Annual Convention of the Professional Employees Association adjourned at 4:16 p.m, Tuesday, June 3, 2003.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

There is no denying this has been a tough year for the PEA. As a result of government actions, we have experienced unprecedented layoffs and challenges to the rights of our members. In the face of attack, the union has responded as it was meant to, as it should, and I am proud of our accomplishments in these trying times.

Over the past year, the B.C. Liberal government has proceeded to dismantle public services through program and office closures, layoffs and privatization. PEA members have experienced incredible disruption to their working lives.

There have been unprecedented numbers of Government Licensed Professionals severed as the second of three rounds of downsizing – intended to reduce the size of the public service by one-third – wrapped up in April. Further layoffs are expected to take effect early in 2004. The cuts to Legal Services Society projected at our last convention took effect this year, reducing the number of LSS lawyers from 75 to just 17 and decimating the union's second-oldest bargaining unit.

Those members affected by layoffs – both directly and indirectly – were able to count on the support of their union thanks to the tremendous efforts of our staff, local representatives and volunteers on ministry downsizing response committees. Our representatives worked tirelessly to find solutions to save PEA positions, ensure that all possible placement opportunities were exhausted and that members were able to make informed decisions from among the choices available to them. The GLP chapter contributed significantly in this effort through sponsorship of a series of retirement planning seminars and one-on-one financial counselling which, in many instances, gave members the comfort and certainty necessary to embark on a new stage in their lives.

The decline in membership numbers resulting from downsizing has created financial challenges for the union. While our financial reserves remain significant and healthy, over the short term we are unable to provide the same level of service our members have grown to expect with dues revenue alone. As mandated by previous conventions, we have pursued campaigns and court challenges to fight back against cuts to public services and jobs; and we continue to defend members' rights in the face of continuing, daily attacks by employers on our negotiated terms and conditions. This year, the Association Executive has chosen to approve a modest deficit budget while preserving core services to our members. The majority of PEA members value belonging to a union when trouble comes – they want someone to answer their questions, act on their behalf when they need help and negotiate good collective agreements. Delegates to this convention will be faced with at least one resolution that asks them to make tough choices about how to allocate our financial and people resources, and I trust that membership priorities will remain at the forefront in those decisions.

Our long-term strategy continues to focus on growing the union through certification of new bargaining units. As existing bargaining units are whittled away, the PEA must pursue new members from outside government. Diversifying our membership base will better position the PEA to weather government whims and changes regarding the provision of public services, as evidenced by the stability and growth of our more recently certified chapters at the University of Victoria and St. Margaret's School during the past two years. We must solidify our place as the best home for professionals within B.C.'s labour movement. As part of a trend toward increasing unionization of professionals across North America, professionals in B.C. are seeking certification in growing numbers – meaning there are real potential prospects for new organizing in the near term.

It is only by being members of a union that we have withstood the attacks of the last year. Without the protections of a collective agreement – and the resources necessary to back it up – many of us might very well suffer unfair and unjust employer actions – anything from indiscriminate firing to rollbacks on terms and conditions. Last year, non-unionized workers in B.C. witnessed the introduction of a new Employment Standards Act which severely curtailed protections regarding overtime and statutory holiday pay, minimum daily call-in and the employment of children under the age of 15. While the current government in Victoria does not appear to have any qualms about using their legislative might to do away with long standing, freely negotiated collective agreements, their actions in this regard have sparked public outrage, union-sponsored court challenges and a rebuke from the International Labour Organization. There is no absolute defense in the short term to a government intent on curtailing the democratic rights of workers to free collective bargaining. But that does not render our collective agreements worthless. Over the past year the PEA has pursued numerous grievances and appeals on behalf of members, including grievances alleging the violation of collective agreement provisions regarding layoff and severance, discipline and access to sick leave benefits. There is no more important time than a “difficult” time for workers to enjoy the protections that a union can offer. Collectively, we will get through the times ahead.

One of the most important PEA activities is negotiating improvements to working conditions, benefits and compensation on behalf of our members. In recent months, the PEA successfully negotiated a new collective agreement for our Okanagan Regional Librarians and as of the time of writing this report, was about to head to the table on behalf of Family Maintenance Enforcement Program Lawyers. In the next year we will be negotiating renewed collective agreements on behalf of Government Licensed Professionals, University of Victoria Administrative & Academic Professionals, Prince George School District Professionals and members of our newest chapter at St. Margaret’s School. The PEA is also a member of two health sector bargaining associations and will be involved in negotiations for our Paramedical Professionals and Community Health Services and Support bargaining unit members. Given the province’s ballooning deficit and the recent agreement on behalf of hospital workers to exchange wage rollbacks for better severance and bumping provisions, we are not expecting bargaining to be an easy ride. Even in the best of times, collective bargaining is a difficult and exhausting task. Negotiations in the year ahead will call on each and every member to collectively support and guide the staff and members on their bargaining teams.

In the midst of the whirlwind of the past two years, our Structure Review Committee has successfully found consensus on a myriad of difficult matters regarding PEA governance. Their recommendations are a testament to the dedication of committee members to listen, respect and work together to resolve specific concerns and achieve the best solution possible for union members. I am pleased that the committee’s recommendations were adopted in full at the Association Executive. One of the resolutions in front of the delegates is a constitutional change necessary to fully enact the recommendations of this committee and I am hopeful that delegates will support these important changes to re-balance and improve chapter representation at the executive level.

The success of the Structure Review Committee is emblematic of a renewed spirit of cooperation within the PEA as chapters have worked together and with the Association Executive over the past year to repair internal divisions. Last year, I spoke of the need to build and revitalize the union from within and I have worked hard with my colleagues at the PEA to build bridges and accommodate concerns. I am confident that this work will continue as we collectively build the strength of our union.

In closing, I cannot conclude my report without thanking those who work on our behalf. This year we said good bye to Doug Hensby. The union just won’t be the same without him, for Doug put his heart and soul into his work and he *always* put *our* best interests first. I know that he will be missed. However, I also know that our new Executive Director, Jodi Jensen, has the same passion for this union. She has spent the last five years learning our unique idiosyncrasies and I am confident and

grateful that she can step into Doug's shoes without missing a beat. We are indeed fortunate to have her.

Our Staff Officers Tony Bute, Jennifer Duprey and Barinder Rasode are all most capable and continue to provide the best service possible – even though it isn't easy during these difficult times. Thank you for being there when we need you.

A special thank you must also go to those who work tirelessly behind the scenes. Caroline Ward and Marianna Crawford in the Victoria office and Joanne Petersen in the Burnaby office are the people who support the organization with their positive and willing assistance.

Finally, I would like to thank you – the members – who take the time to get involved. From the delegates to this convention, to members who cast a vote in an election or referendum, it is your involvement that counts. I know that everyone seems to have too few hours in the day and I truly appreciate your commitment to the union. I hope that when we turn the corner to better times even more members will find the time to get involved.

Thank you for your attention. I hope that I have added to your knowledge of our union.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn Danchuk
President

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

TALKING ABOUT A REVOLUTION

Looking back on the preceding year, I am struck by how much our province has changed for ordinary citizens. Nothing short of a revolution describes the shift in our government's conception of public services for the public good.

In just two years, the Liberal government in B.C. has overhauled almost every aspect of public services, paving the way for privatization, layoffs and reduced services. There have been fundamental changes to the work that PEA members do, the environment their work is performed in and the terms and conditions under which work is performed.

Those changes have not gone unnoticed, either internationally or on the streets where we live. In recent months, the International Labour Organization has condemned government legislation imposing settlements and stripping collective agreement rights from workers in education and health. Public professionals have seen their role as stewards of public resources curtailed by a government content to allow for-profit corporations to act as their own watchdog. Seniors and students have joined public sector workers in protesting cuts to Pharmacare and basic medicare, and increases to tuition fees. The Chief Justice of Canada, the Canadian Bar Association and the Law Society of B.C. have publicly condemned cuts to legal aid that have left thousands of British Columbians without equal access to justice. Hundreds of PEA members have lost their jobs or faced the upheaval of relocating themselves and their families.

With the provincial deficit ballooning to an all-time high as a result of the largest personal and corporate tax cuts in Canadian history, the government has initiated a program of spending cuts and selected tax increases that have disproportionately hurt B.C.'s small towns and rural areas. Not only are smaller communities hurting from ministry office closures and lost services such as courthouses and hospitals, but a recent study by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives titled "Bleeding the Hinterland" showed that B.C.'s income tax cuts concentrated dollars in Greater Vancouver, which is already the wealthiest part of the province. West Vancouver had an average tax cut of \$2,085 per taxpayer, the highest in B.C. and three times larger than the average tax cut for the province as a whole.

The PEA has continued to speak out about the impact of public service cuts in B.C.'s smaller communities, partnering with the B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union on a public education campaign which featured PEA members in newspaper ads placed in communities affected by office closures, posters, pamphlets and buttons. The campaign put the focus on job losses in smaller communities and on the environmental degradation that may result from changing legislation and the loss of public watchdogs.

Tax cuts which predominately benefit the wealthy – those least in need of a break or government aid – is part of a trend that has swept government decision making in North America and contributed to the growing gap between rich and poor. Governments have cut health care, education and other social services in order to further enrich the already well-off at the expense of the rest of us, and at the expense of a social safety net which provides public services to those who need them.

The job of many PEA members is – or used to be – to provide just those services. PEA members on the front lines everywhere report increasing workloads, restricted mandates and declining levels of service. These are coupled with low morale, decreased job satisfaction and increased stress levels.

These are the challenges that face us. We have no choice but to meet those challenges head-on. As a union our duty is to act, to defend and to organize – not only to increase our size, our strength, our opportunities and our pocketbooks – but as part of the most broadly defined movement of labour and democracy we can imagine. And when we go into collective bargaining seeking the best for ourselves – better compensation, benefits, working conditions and opportunities – we can never pretend to be who we are not.

We are a union made up predominately of professionals. It is what defines the PEA, the special and important niche that it has occupied in the labour movement for nearly thirty years. I like to think that the PEA is good at what it does, providing excellent service and solid, professional representation to public sector professionals.

As professionals, we are uniquely situated to speak out. Our education, training and employment give us a leg up on the scale of legitimacy. And speak out we must, especially in times of social revolution.

I know that we do not always agree with each other on the best tactics or strategies for advancing the rights, benefits and opportunities of PEA members. Nor do we always agree on what democracy looks like within our own organization.

It is through these conversations that an organization grows and changes, and delegates to this year's convention will have an opportunity to decide on changes to the PEA's governance structure. One of these changes arises from the recommendations of the PEA's Structure Review Committee, and has been adopted and put forward in the form of a resolution by the Association Executive. This is a committee which took its mandate from the discussions of delegates and members, worked hard to achieve consensus and successfully came to conclusion with a series of recommendations designed to improve this union for its members.

Throughout these kinds of conversations – and in all of our actions – we must keep our eye on the bigger picture. Because I know that all of us can agree on the goal that we are collectively working towards – a better, more just world not only for PEA members, but also for members of our families and communities.

PENSION PLAN GOVERNANCE

The boards of trustees of the four public sector pension plans – Public Service, Municipal, Teachers and College – have faced a number of challenges over the last year arising from the increasing cost of providing group benefits for retirees. Since taking office, the B.C. government has off-loaded health costs from the province's budget to individuals through changes to the Medical Services Plan and Pharmacare. This off-loading, together with rising costs and demand for prescription drugs, caused health care costs for retired members to skyrocket.

The majority of PEA members are enrolled in either the Public Service or Municipal Pension Plan. In both of these plans, group health benefits for retirees can only be funded from the employer contributions to the Inflation Adjustment Account (IAA). Overspending of the employer contribution to the IAA on group benefit costs meant that the trustees for both plans had no choice but to make changes to group benefits for retired members. PEA members enrolled in these two pension plans will need to alter their financial planning for retirement to accommodate these changes.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

The last year was a relatively quiet one for the core PEA activity of collective bargaining. A deal delivering general wage increases of seven per cent over three years was negotiated and ratified with the Okanagan

Regional Library. As this report went to press, we were about to begin negotiations with the Family Maintenance Enforcement Program for a renewed collective agreement.

In the year ahead, our collective agreements with the Province of B.C. and the University of Victoria, covering our two largest bargaining units, are due to expire and we will doubtless face significant hurdles in negotiating acceptable deals with these employers. The provincial budget released February 18 formalized wage guidelines mandating no general wage increases for public sector employees and there are already indications that the government will come to the table seeking to roll back collective agreement benefits. At B.C.'s three major universities, the zero, zero, zero mandate has already caused labour disruption as various locals of the Canadian Union of Public Employees struggle to achieve collective agreements acceptable to their members.

Not only is the PEA facing a very difficult bargaining environment, we are heading into a very heavy year for collective bargaining. In addition to GLP and UVic bargaining, the PEA will be negotiating new contracts for our members employed by the Prince George School District and St. Margaret's School, and as a member of the respective bargaining associations, will be involved in negotiating new contracts for members in the Paramedical Professional and Community Health Services and Support chapters.

VOLUNTEERS

More than two hundred PEA members freely contribute their time and energy to improving the working lives of themselves and their colleagues, and to making this organization work for all members. Volunteering to be local representatives, members of joint union-management and bargaining committees, members of executive committees and to fill a whole host of other roles, these members make often unheralded and essential contributions.

These hundreds of PEA volunteers have made the leap into action and without them – and others willing to do the same – this organization simply could not function effectively. I extend my thanks to each of you. You set the example for all of us.

STAFF

I am very proud to work alongside a team of excellent staff and am honoured by their support as I assume the role of Executive Director. I am a firm believer that none of us “arrives” unaided. Each of us develops, learns and achieves in a web of relationship and I am most fortunate to have experienced the mentorship of two of the PEA's former Executive Directors – Doug Hensby and Alan MacLeod. That I am only the fourth to fill the role of Executive Director in the PEA's nearly 30 year history speaks to the commitment and dedication of my predecessors. I intend to meet the precedent they have set in this regard while moving forward to meet the new challenges before us.

Joining me in this venture are our dedicated and able staff. Tony Bute, Jennifer Duprey, Barinder Rasode and myself are responsible for looking after members' direct servicing requirements – answering questions and providing advice, interpreting and negotiating collective agreements, and pursuing grievances and appeals on behalf of PEA members. This “bread and butter” work of the union couldn't be achieved without the skilled support of Caroline Ward and Marianna Crawford in the Victoria office and Joanne Petersen in the Burnaby office – theirs are the friendly and helpful voices that first greet PEA members in need of assistance. I extend my thanks to all staff members for their contributions.

Respectfully submitted,

Jodi Jensen
Executive Director

SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

2002 was a difficult year for the PEA. We faced the loss of 318 Government Licensed Professional and Legal Services Society members laid off by Mr. Campbell and his friends. This terrible loss was partially offset by gains of 83 members amongst the other bargaining units, especially at the University of Victoria and St. Margaret's School, for a net membership decrease of 235. As a result, PEA membership dues in 2002 totaled \$1,204,372, down \$31,406 from 2001. Last year we reduced our operating expenditures to \$1,172,716, down \$19,107 from 2001, resulting in an excess of operating revenue over expenses (after amortization) of \$13,436. We will continue to prudently underestimate revenues and overestimate expenses. As a result we have budgeted a reduction in operating expenditure for 2003 of \$7,300, while anticipating further reductions in our operating revenue as a result of additional losses of GLP membership and the GLP payroll holdback, leaving a budget that anticipates a deficit of \$111,803.

At the same time convention delegates last year voted strongly against moving to a biennial convention and against any decrease in services for members. While these were very positive affirmations of the value members place in the Association and its staff it removed two major options for reducing expenditures. It remains a priority for the Association to acquire new bargaining units to offset these declines in membership and resulting revenues.

On top of reduced revenues from members, last year the investment climate was, to say the least, terrible. The PEA did considerably better than most because of our large holdings of bonds and our relatively small equity portfolio but we did sustain a net loss of \$79,642. We remained committed to opposing cuts to our members' positions and we spent a total of \$168,815, drawn from our invested reserves, on our downsizing response campaign which both aided displaced members and opposed government policies. To help improve our future investment returns, on the advice of our financial advisor Paul Siluch, we amended the investment policy to include up to five percent of our invested reserves in corporate bonds.

The bottom line for 2002 leaves us in a cautious but strong and optimistic position, with a retained reserve at year-end of \$5,851,890. I want to especially thank Caroline Ward in the PEA office and our auditor Tony Charles-Roberts for always keeping me up to date on the financial affairs of the Association and leading me through the maze of our statements.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Gore
Secretary Treasurer