



**MINUTES**

of the

**3<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION**

of the

**PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION**

held at the

**Coast Harbourside Hotel**

**Victoria, B.C.**

*June 4, 2002*

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*June 4, 2002*

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**CALL TO ORDER**

President Kathy Danchuk called the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention of the Professional Employees Association to order at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, June 4, 2002.

**CREDENTIALS REPORT**

The President asked Tom Gore, Chairperson of the Credentials Committee, to give a report.

The Chairperson thanked the members of the Credentials Committee and advised that there were 66 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 of the Credentials Committee reported that the following delegate was in attendance without credentials;

Government Licensed Professionals	Richard Scott
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*M/S/C that this delegate be seated.*

The Chairperson reported that some delegates were not able to attend as planned. The following alternate delegates were registered.

Government Licensed Professionals	Bruce Barnewall (for Brian Chow)
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Government Licensed Professionals	Glenn Hill (for Bernie Peschke)
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Government Licensed Professionals	Mike Black (for Ron Gray)
Community Health Services & Support Staff	Dawn Barbeau (for Margot Denny)

*M/S/C that these delegates be seated.*

*M/S/C that the Credentials Committee stand down.*

## **DELEGATES**

The following delegates were registered.

### **Association Executive**

#### **Table Officers**

President	Kathryn Danchuk
First Vice-President	Jim Russell
Second Vice-President	Tom Gore
Secretary-Treasurer	Ron Dumont

#### **Chapter Representatives**

Government Licensed Professionals	Steve Byford Sharlie Huffman
Legal Services Society Lawyers	Guy Riecken
UVic Administrative & Academic Professional Staff	Garry Sagert
Community Health Services & Support Staff	Coral Voss
Paramedical Professionals	Sue Ward
Small Chapters (Okanagan Regional Librarians, Prince George School District Professionals and Family Maintenance Enforcement Program Lawyers)	Debra Padron
St. Margaret's School	Pat Giommi

## Chapter Delegates

### **Government Licensed Professionals**

Paul Albu	Ken Hodges
Dani Alldrick	James Hofweber
Bruce Barnewall	Harry Jennings
Garry Beaudry	Mike Jobke
Jacques Bousquet	Eric Johansen
Anthony Britneff	Leah Johnstone
Kerry Clark	David Kilshaw
Cheryl Conant	Ron La Torre
Peter Davis	Sheldon Martell
Gord Dow	Sean O'Sullivan
Neil Edwards	John Robinson
Doug Flynn	Richard Scott
Trudy Goold	Roxanne Still
Mike Black	Jeff Stone
Jeremy Higham	Les Thiessen
Glenn Hill	
Bill Andrew	
Kathy Kendall	

### **Legal Services Society Lawyers**

### **University of Victoria Administrative**

Vincent Connor  
John Hall  
Sheryl Karras  
Bert Klatt  
Kim Lewall  
Morag MacNeil  
William McGhee  
Mariann Olchowy  
Inez St. Dennis

### **Community Health Services & Support Staff**

Dawn Barbeau  
Laurel Lafaut

### **Paramedical Professionals**

Monika Coates  
Valerie Leverington  
Guido Vanderheyden

### **Prince George School District**

Caroline Northey  
Dave Pugh

### **Family Maintenance Enforcement Program Lawyers**

Veronica Beier

### **St. Margaret's School**

Debbie Dykes  
Sunny Quay

Executive Director  
Senior Staff Officer  
Staff Officer  
Staff Officer  
Financial Clerk  
Administrative Clerk  
Administrative Clerk  
Database Clerk

Doug Hensby  
Jodi Jensen  
Tony Bute  
Barinder Rasode  
Caroline Ward  
Joanne Petersen  
Marianna Crawford  
Dagmar Morris

Jim Russell, *Chairperson*

Anthony Britneff  
Pat Giommi  
Jeff Stone  
Doug Hensby, *Secretary*

Ron Dumont, *Chairperson*

Leah Johnstone  
Bert Klatt  
Coral Voss  
Jodi Jensen, *Secretary*

Tom Gore, *Chairperson*

Marie Kardash (absent)  
Dave Pugh  
Sue Ward  
Joanne Petersen, *Secretary*

Sheldon Martell

Debra Padron  
Garry Sagert  
Richard Sulkers  
Tony Bute  
Barinder Rasode

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.

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.

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.

If the recommendation of a committee is defeated, the matter is automatically referred back to the committee.

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.

A motion to reconsider can only be made by a voter in the majority. Such a motion requires a majority to pass.

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.

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.

If two or more delegates rise to speak at the same time the chair of the convention will determine the order of speakers.

Except when a delegate is speaking, a delegate can request that a motion be re-read for information.

No delegate can interrupt a delegate who has the floor except to raise a point of order.

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.

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.

Speeches are limited to three minutes.

Except as set out above the convention will be governed by Roberts Rules of Order.

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

The President introduced the association support staff.

## **ALLOCATION OF RESOLUTIONS**

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

members of the committee.

The Chairperson recommended that the Secretary-Treasurer's Report, Audited Statements and Budget Statement be referred to the Ways & Means Committee.

*M/S/C to refer the Secretary-Treasurer's Report, Audited Statements and Budget Statement to the Ways & Means Committee.*

The Chairperson then called on the President to present her report.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

(full report printed at the end of Minutes)

President Kathryn Danchuk reported on highlights of the year's events, most notably the B.C. government's decisions to lay off one-third of public service workers, rip up signed collective agreements, and gut the province's labour code and minimum employment standards. Danchuk reported on PEA actions in defense of members' jobs and rights and encouraged delegates to actively engage in "fight-back" campaigns. In addition to these more high-profile activities, the past year was an extremely busy one for collective bargaining, and Danchuk reported on the settlements reached on behalf of seven out of nine bargaining units. In closing, Danchuk extended her thanks to the Association's members and staff, and encouraged delegates to affirm and support positive growth and change within the union.

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

## **REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE**

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 III — CONVENTIONS**

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

The place and date of the convention shall be fixed by the Association Executive to occur in ~~April, May or June~~ September, October or November of even-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 for a two-year term by majority vote of all the accredited delegates present and voting at the Association's 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.~~

The committee amended the resolution as follows:

### **RESOLUTION #1 (Amended)**

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

#### **Article III — CONVENTIONS**

1. There shall be ~~an Annual~~ a Biennial Convention of the Association.
2. The place and date of the convention shall be fixed by the Association Executive to occur in ~~April, May or June~~ even-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 ~~for a two year term~~ 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.~~

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

### **RESOLUTION #2**

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

#### **Article III — CONVENTIONS**

5. Each chapter shall complete credentials for each of the chapter delegates and alternates on a form provided by the Association Executive and cause the credentials to be delivered and received at the Association's head-quarters at least ~~thirty (30)~~ sixty (60) days before the date of the convention.
6. Delegates' credentials shall be distributed by the Association to the chapter executives and shall state the number of members of the chapter who are in good standing at a date to be determined by the Association Executive.
7. A member of the Association may submit resolutions to convention provided that the member and at least one other member of the Association sign each resolution.

8. A chapter executive may submit its own resolutions to convention.
9. The Association Executive may submit its own resolutions to convention.
10. All resolutions for submission to convention must be delivered to and received at the Association's head-quarters at least forty-five (45) days before convention.
11. The Association Executive shall arrange that copies of resolutions ~~which are to be submitted to convention~~ received by the deadline be forwarded to all chapters at least thirty (30) days before convention.
12. The Association Executive shall arrange that each delegate to convention ~~shall be sent a copy of all resolutions to be presented to the convention~~ that have been received by the deadline, together with a copy of reports (President, Secretary-Treasurer and Executive Director, along with the audited financial statements) to be submitted to the convention, at least fifteen (15) days before convention.
13. A resolution or question except a resolution to amend the Constitution and By-laws may be presented from the floor of the convention if two-thirds majority of the members present and voting vote to admit it.
14. Except as herein provided the meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

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

The President introduced Paul Siluch, PEA Investment Advisor, who gave an overview and update on the PEA's investments.

Paul Siluch introduced Jim Clark, Divisional Manager, Edinburgh Fund Managers, who reported on the Global Equity Portfolio Review.

## **ELECTION OF TABLE OFFICERS**

The President turned the gavel over to Doug Hensby, Executive Director, who outlined the procedures for the election. The delegates were advised that the positions to be filled were 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President**

Nominations were declared open for the position of 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President, for a two-year term. Dani Aldrick was nominated and no further nominations were made. After agreeing that he would stand for the position of 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President, Dani Aldrick was declared elected by acclamation.

### **Secretary-Treasurer**

Nominations were declared open for the position of Secretary-Treasurer, for a two-year term. Tom Gore was nominated and no further nominations were made. After agreeing that he would stand for the position of Secretary-Treasurer, Tom Gore was declared elected by acclamation.

## **REPORT OF THE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE**

Ron Dumont, Chairperson of the Ways and Means Committee, introduced PEA auditor, Tony Charles-Roberts of the accounting firm Moore, Roberts & Co.

The Chairperson reported as follows.

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 Ron Dumont reported on the Association's audited financial statements and on the Association's budget for the fiscal year 2002. Dumont reported that during the 2001 fiscal year the Association's revenues totalled approximately \$150,000 including investment income, pushing the union's net assets over the six million dollar mark. Dumont warned delegates that the union's assets would be sufficient to weather the financial challenges ahead, but that the union needed to grow in order to maintain its current fiscal health into the future.

*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.*

## **APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS**

*M/S/C that the firm Moore, Roberts and Co. be reappointed as Association auditors for the 2002 fiscal year.*

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

President Danchuk thanked Ron Dumont, the outgoing Secretary Treasurer, for his work on the Executive.

## **REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE (continued)**

### **RESOLUTION #2**

The committee brought back an amended resolution:

### **RESOLUTION #2 (Amended)**

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

#### **Article III — CONVENTIONS**

5. Each chapter shall complete credentials for each of the chapter delegates and alternates on a form provided by the Association Executive and cause the credentials to be delivered and received at the Association's head-quarters at least ~~thirty (30)~~ sixty (60) days before

the date of the convention.

6. Delegates' credentials shall be distributed by the Association to the chapter executives and shall state the number of members of the chapter who are in good standing at a date to be determined by the Association Executive.
7. A member of the Association may submit resolutions to convention provided that the member and at least one other member of the Association sign each resolution.
8. A chapter executive may submit its own resolutions to convention.
9. The Association Executive may submit its own resolutions to convention.
10. All resolutions for submission to convention must be delivered to and received at the Association's head-quarters at least forty-five (45) days before convention.
11. The Association Executive shall arrange that copies of resolutions ~~which are to be submitted to convention~~ received by the deadline be forwarded to all chapters at least thirty (30) days before convention.
12. The Association Executive shall arrange that each delegate to convention ~~shall be sent a copy of all resolutions to be presented to the convention~~ that have been received by the deadline, together with a copy of reports (President, Secretary-Treasurer and Executive Director, along with the audited financial statements) to be submitted to the convention, at least fifteen ~~(15)~~ thirty (30) days before convention.
13. A resolution or question except a resolution to amend the Constitution and By-laws may be presented from the floor of the convention if two-thirds majority of the members present and voting vote to admit it.
14. Except as herein provided the meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

*M/S/C Concurrence*

### **RESOLUTION #3**

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

#### **Article XIV — AMENDMENTS**

1. The Constitution and By-laws may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the delegates voting in Convention.
2. The Constitution and By-laws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote by referendum in accordance with Article VI if five per cent of Association members, in good standing, sign a petition that such an amendment be put to a membership referendum.
3. Notwithstanding the above, the Constitution and By-laws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote by referendum in accordance with Article VI if the Association Executive decides that such an amendment be put to a membership referendum.

*M/S/C Concurrence*

### **RESOLUTION #4**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the PEA condemns this governments decision and urges the government to repel this draconian legislation; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the PEA continue to work with the Bargaining Associations to fight attacks on our members in the health sector.

The committee amended the resolution as follows:

**RESOLUTION #4 (Amended)**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the PEA condemns the government's actions pursuant to Bill 29 and urges the government to repeal this legislation; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the PEA continue to work with the Health Sector Bargaining Associations to defend our members' rights.

*M/S/C Concurrence*

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

(full report printed at the end of Minutes)

In his report to delegates, Executive Director Doug Hensby condemned the Liberal government for creating an artificial deficit crisis through tax cuts that led to the loss of public services and jobs. Hensby predicted that the coming years would be among the toughest ever faced by the PEA and its members, as all nine PEA chapters feel the impact of government budget cuts through layoffs and shrinking resources. Hensby also reported on PEA activities in response to government cuts, including membership meetings, the establishment of informational websites and media campaigns, and participation in court challenges. As a trustee of the Public Service Pension Plan, Hensby reported on the positive changes to pension benefits under the plan resulting from joint trusteeship, and on the challenges resulting from the government's off-loading of health care costs. In closing, Hensby thanked and acknowledged the contributions of the well over a hundred PEA volunteers who contribute to the welfare of their fellow members, and the PEA staff, for their hard work and dedication.

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

## **REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE (continued)**

### **RESOLUTION #5**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the PEA insists the government facilitate the participation of the less-well-off members of society by ensuring an increase in programs providing grants, bursaries and work opportunities for the many students who will not otherwise be able to afford post-secondary education.

The committee amended the resolution as follows:

### **RESOLUTION #5 (Amended)**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the PEA insists the government ensure accessibility for less-well-off members of society by increasing programs to provide grants, bursaries and work oppor-tunities for the many students who will not otherwise be able to afford post-secondary education.

*M/S/C Concurrence*

### **RESOLUTION #6**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Professional Employees Association condemns and opposes the BC Liberal Government's plan to reduce the provincial public service and the number of Government Licensed Professionals by up to one third; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Professional Employees Association continue to fight for the preservation of licensed professionals in the public service through awareness campaigns, protest movements and relations with government.

The committee amended the resolution as follows:

### **RESOLUTION #6 (Amended)**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Professional Employees Association condemns and opposes the BC Liberal Government's plan to reduce the provincial public service and the number of Government Licensed Professionals by up to one third; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Professional Employees Association, as a top priority, continue to fight for the preservation of licensed professionals in the public service through awareness campaigns, protest movements and relations with government.

*M/S/C Concurrence*

### **RESOLUTION #7**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the PEA fight to protect the right of an individual to access justice in this Province; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the PEA urge the government to restore adequate funding to Legal Services Society to ensure that services are maintained to protect the most vulnerable in society.

*M/S/C Concurrence*

### **RESOLUTION #8**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the PEA executive continue to work to raise the profile of the PEA members in the media and with the public by media campaigns and speaking out on issues of concern to PEA members.

*M/S/C Concurrence*

**RESOLUTION #9**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the PEA support the BCTF in whatever manner is deemed appropriate by the Executive in terms of monetary or moral support in its fight to maintain appropriate class sizes and other positive education initiatives, as well as maintaining its status as the union representing ALL public school teachers in B.C.; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the PEA write a letter to the Minister of Education and the Premier, voicing the PEA's concerns on the issues of the erosion of public education in B.C. and the attempt by the government to weaken and reduce the influence of the BCTF in representing the interests of public school teachers.

The committee amended the resolution as follows:

**RESOLUTION #9 (Amended)**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the PEA support the BCTF in whatever manner is deemed appropriate by the Executive in its fight to maintain appropriate class sizes and other positive education initiatives, as well as maintaining its status as the union representing ALL public school teachers in B.C.; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the PEA write a letter to the Minister of Education and the Premier, voicing the PEA's concerns on the issues of the erosion of public education in B.C. and the attempt by the government to weaken and reduce the influence of the BCTF in representing the interests of public school teachers.

*M/S/C Concurrence*

**RESOLUTION ON ORGANIZING**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Professional Employees Association make organizing new bargaining units a top priority and devote all appropriate and necessary resources to ensure the success of any organizing strategy; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** all organizing initiatives be consistent with the PEA By-laws, be subject to Association Executive approval and result in bargaining units which are defensible both financially and organizationally.

*M/S/C Concurrence*

**APPROVAL OF 2<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION MINUTES**

*M/S/C that the minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Convention be adopted.*

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Resolutions from the Floor**

Eight resolutions were received from the floor.

The delegates voted to not allow seven of the resolutions on the floor for debate.

The delegates voted to allow the following amended resolution on the floor for debate.

**WHEREAS** the needs of members for staff support is expected to be higher than usual in the upcoming year;  
and

**WHEREAS** the convention delegates have voted for an annual convention;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Executive take necessary steps to maintain adequate resources to plan the 2003 convention.

*M/S/C Concurrence*

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

## **SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE**

Tom Gore, Chair of the Scholarships Committee, identified the ten successful applicants who were each awarded a \$1,000 scholarship, as follows:

### ***High School:***

Morgan Anderson (son of Dale Anderson, GLP) Irene Meara Brown (daughter of Boyd Brown, GLP member) Jenni Currie (daughter of Barbara Currie, UVIC member and Sandy Currie, GLP member) Michael Waters (son of Alan Waters, GLP member) Meghan Youwe (daughter of Don Youwe, GLP member)

### ***Post Secondary:***

Jaishrey Kartha (daughter of Bijou Kartha, GLP member) Kirsten Pinkerton (daughter of Gerry Pinkerton, GLP member) Allison & Jennifer Ross (daughters of Bruce Ross, GLP member) Mike Symonds (son of Brian Symonds, GLP member)

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention of the Professional Employees Association adjourned at 3:20 p.m., Tuesday, June 4, 2002.





## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Although elected to the position of First Vice-President by delegates to convention last year, I assumed the duties of President last fall. At the outset, I would like to acknowledge our former President, Tom Volkers, who tendered his resignation in late October. Unfortunately, due to a very serious family illness, Tom needed to focus his energies at home. On behalf of the Association Executive and staff, I would like to thank Tom for all his dedicated work on behalf of PEA members over the years and to wish he and his family all the best in the future.

To say that this year has been one of the most difficult years we in the PEA have experienced is to seriously understate the obvious. In more ways than one, it seems that we have been under attack, hit on all sides by a government intent on reducing the size of the public service and the necessary services provided by public sector professionals. Although this dismantling of public services is foremost in our minds, I am mindful that over the past year the union has continued to provide the everyday services that we all expect. Therefore, this report will focus not only on the difficulties that we faced as a union this year, but also on the work that continues to be done on our behalf, and on the vision we will need to build into the future.

Since our last convention, the Gordon Campbell Liberals were swept into power with an overwhelming majority. Within weeks, citizens and organized labour began to get a glimpse of what the government had in store for British Columbia. Our Government Licensed Professionals were among the first to feel the wrath last September when Gordon Campbell announced that all ministries, except health and education, would be required to prepare budget scenarios with reductions up to 50 per cent. It soon became clear that the public sector would be downsized like never before. On January 17 – Black Thursday – the government announced their intention to eliminate 11,700 public service jobs over three years. While the number of PEA members who will lose their jobs as a result is still not clear, it is expected to be in the hundreds.

The direct fallout of ministry budget cuts has trickled down to members in other chapters. Significant budget reductions in the Ministry of Attorney General and Treaty Negotiations were passed on to the Legal Services Society. The resulting cuts to legal services were so deep that even the society's Board of Directors refused to implement them. The government swiftly fired the board, appointed a trustee and began phasing out legal aid services. As a result, the number of LSS lawyers will be reduced from 75 to only 16.

For health sector employers expected to provide health services with frozen budgets and escalating costs, the government provided increased "flexibility" and lower employee costs by introducing Bill 29, the *Health and Social Services Delivery Improvement Act*. That act provides employers with the tools to close hospitals, privatize services and stripped health care workers of long-standing collective agreement rights. Over 250 PEA members, in both of our health sector bargaining units (Paramedical Professional and Community Health Services and Support) were affected by this legislation.

It was in the midst of these events that the PEA successfully negotiated collective agreements for all but two of the union's nine bargaining units. One of the essential roles of the PEA is to act as the bargaining agent in negotiating improvements to members' working conditions, and this year has been no exception. Improving job security provisions, enhancing professional development and achieving acceptable salary increases emerged as clearly essential bargaining goals this year. However negotiations have been anything but easy. Negotiating seven collective agreements in recent months has translated into a huge workload for PEA staff and significant commitment by members of the bargaining teams. The staff and members involved in this work are to be commended

for their diligence and dedication in working to achieve the best deal possible for members under discouraging and often frustrating circumstances.

Although a tremendous amount of effort has gone into achieving collective agreements, I know that not all members have been satisfied by the outcome for themselves or their bargaining unit. However, as the current government continues to impose settlements, ignore arbitrated awards and rip up contracts, it seems clear that our negotiated agreements have at least made the best out of what little was available. It is possible that future negotiating rounds will only get more difficult.

The work of upholding or enforcing negotiated collective agreement rights is an integral but often invisible part of the work that a union must do. As the work environment gets increasingly turbulent, as has been the case in the last year, more grievances, arbitrations and disputes result. It is in times such as these that staff are frequently called upon to assist members in need. Unfortunately, unless you have been a member who has sought help, the knowledge and skills that PEA staff possess often go unnoticed. If ever we needed our staff's experience and skill, it is in this current climate.

I can't begin to address the terrible human price that recent measures taken by the Liberal government will exact on us, as individuals, as communities, as a union. However, the PEA is fighting back on all fronts.

The union has established two websites and launched advertising campaigns to educate the public about the important and necessary work that our members do, and to mobilize and support lobbying of MLA's.

Early this year, the PEA held membership meetings in 18 communities around the province to talk to members about government cuts, their rights and to discuss opportunities and ideas for fighting back. Community-based pressure may be the most effective strategy right now to capture the government's attention. Consequently, the PEA has established a Mobilization Committee whose task it is to improve PEA presence in local community activities and to identify and work with potential supporters.

The Association Executive has allocated funds for all these initiatives and recently approved the funding necessary to pursue court challenges to government actions and legislation, both independently and in cooperation with other unions.

Although the PEA will continue to support and partake in the "fight-back" campaign, I urge each and every one of you to join the battle. There is only so much that the staff and Association Executive members can do. It is too easy for government or media to dismiss unions as faceless, self-interested entities, but it may not be so easy to dismiss growing numbers of individuals who oppose these cuts.

What do I see for the future? Although I don't have a crystal ball, I know that this next year will likely see a significant reduction in our GLP and LSS membership. We may also see the complete loss of our health sector members due to government legislation. As much as we will continue to fight against the loss of our members and their jobs, this government is hell bent to tear apart most of what we see as necessary public service. Consequently, for our very survival, we must continue to build. This union must put the highest priority on seeking new members by certifying new bargaining units.

In the present labour climate, certification not only makes sense for the under-represented employee; it also makes sense for the PEA. With the introduction of Bill 50 in 1998, which limits the PEA's jurisdiction over government licensed professionals, we must seek new members from outside government. As existing bargaining units are whittled away, the PEA must pursue new bargaining units in order to solidify its place among the labour movement in B.C.

With new bargaining units comes change, and these changes may not always come easily. Change can be perceived as threatening and unnecessary. However, change must be the future! We must remember that changes to our union occur in response to our varied membership. Not all PEA members are alike. Different bargaining units will have different issues. We must all strive to respect our differences while still supporting the PEA as a whole. As has become apparent this past year, some members are concerned about loss of control and identity. However, we must collectively ensure that each and every PEA member has a voice that is equally valued, and challenge ourselves to ensure that we really are a union, united in common goals, for the betterment of all. I believe that if we can achieve this we will indeed be healthier for it.

Even though growth will mean more change, we must support growth. For in growth we have people, and in people, we have strength. We need to begin the task of building, and I urge all of you to support this very necessary initiative.

In addition to building the union with new bargaining units, we also need to build and revitalize the union from within. I know that this past year has been an extremely rough one. Although I don't want to make light of the concerns that caused some of the friction; I do not want to dwell on the past either. As the Structures Committee gets underway, I am confident that it will explore and come to understand the global needs of the union and will propose solutions that all chapters can accept. I hope that we are on the road to working together and to building a unified base which new bargaining units will embrace. I have confidence that as members of a professional union, we can all support and respect our differences.

In closing, on behalf of the Association Executive, I would like to thank our staff – Doug Hensby, Jodi Jensen, Tony Bute, Jennifer Duprey and Barinder Rasode – who continue to work tirelessly on our behalf. I know that this past year has been particularly difficult for them. Although they have not been the architects of the plans to eliminate jobs, they are often blamed for the outcome. It is in times like these that we must support our staff, as they support us. At present, we need them more than ever to ensure that our collective rights are upheld. I truly do appreciate that a small union such as ours has been able to attract the caliber of staff that we have. I also hope that the staff members know that there is a vast silent majority who truly do appreciate the personalized service that you all provide.

As always, a special thank you must also go to those who ultimately support the whole organization. Caroline Ward, Dagmar Morris and Marianna Crawford in the Victoria office and Joanne Petersen in the Vancouver office are always helpful and most pleasant to work with.

I appreciate your time and attention, and hope that I have provided some encouragement for the future as well as some insight into the workings of your union.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn Danchuk,  
President



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The past year has delivered its trials – a full bargaining agenda, and public sector cost-cutting and downsizing that will result in the most massive attack on the PEA in its history.

### A MADE IN B.C. DISASTER

The Province of B.C. has a budget problem — a budget problem created by this government. This is a government which created an artificial deficit crisis through tax cuts that primarily benefit the wealthy. This is a government which has ignored the pain and disappointment felt by both the citizens of British Columbia and by professionals and others who work for the public service of this province.

B.C.'s Auditor General confirmed that the government's books were balanced in both 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 and in each year a small surplus was created. There is no doubt that the province would have had a tough time balancing the books this year with the world wide downturn, the softwood lumber treaty and the events of September 11, but the Liberals' unwise and large cuts to personal and corporate taxes have created a huge deficit. The totality of the ministry budget cuts imposed by the Liberal government seems to match the value of the taxes cut. This is a made-in-B.C. disaster. The legacy of two balanced budgets, with surpluses, will be transformed into the largest deficit in provincial history.

As a result, all PEA members' working lives are currently haunted by the spectre of government budget cuts and massive layoffs. We will be witnesses to a massive overhaul of public services in B.C. that will be accompanied by the most radical downsizing experienced by public servants in nearly two decades. Many PEA members will be affected by government layoffs, both directly and indirectly, in lost jobs and services.

Each of this Association's nine chapters will feel the impact of government budget cuts over the next three years, primarily through layoffs and shrinking resources. The coming years will be among the toughest the PEA and its members have ever faced.

Our two oldest bargaining units are particularly hard hit by government cuts – the Government Licensed Professionals and Legal Services Society. The GLP membership could drop by more than 350 professionals and LSS is reducing from 76 staff lawyers to a mere 16.

The odious piece of legislation passed by the government to slap health care workers gives health employers the right to contract out work, lay employees off with little severance or notice and to ask the government to decertify unions. The PEA may lose all its health care workers outside direct government – the loss of up to 250 more members. If health sector collective agreements can be gutted by government legislation, no public sector employee should consider their collective agreement to be safe. Today paramedical professionals and community health support workers have lost negotiated collective agreement rights. Yet every single PEA member could potentially see this government strip away legally negotiated and in many cases hard-fought collective agreement rights and benefits — potentially affecting provisions ranging from wage increases to layoff by seniority.

The Liberal government justifies its actions by arguing that union collective agreements are part of their budget problem. As a result, Gordon Campbell's government is considering legislating away contracts to make it easier to privatize public services, introducing further changes to the province's labour laws and reneging on negotiated collective agreements. But we know that union collective agreements didn't cause the government's budget problem. The Campbell government contributed to the problem by introducing the largest tax cuts in Canadian history, cuts that are estimated to take

\$1.2 billion out of the \$24 billion 2001/2002 budget. It's hard to argue with taking home extra dollars on your paycheque, but will those dollars be enough to cover the extra costs of public services that are about to be unloaded onto the public? Cuts to Pharmacare and the Medical Services Plan may only be the beginning. The government's fiscal agenda and failure to adapt to a changing world economy will mean more unemployed workers in B.C. and a deepening recession.

This is crisis time for public sector unions and for the PEA. The union will need to either expand its membership base by organizing more professionals into the union or contract or reduce the services it currently provides for existing members. This convention will have an opportunity to debate this issue and give direction on organizing for the future.

## PENSION PLAN GOVERNANCE

The Public Service Pension Plan has two new improvements as a result of the trust agreement worked out last year leading to joint trusteeship of the plans. Joint trusteeship has been in effect since January, 2001 and I have had the pleasure and responsibility of serving as the PEA trustee to the Plan since that time.

The first improvement to the Plan will be to change the normal form of pension to what is referred to as a single life annuity, guaranteed ten years from the current single life annuity with no guarantee. The pension always continues for the life of the retired member. The proposed amendment would continue the pension for a minimum of ten years from the commencement date of the pension even if the retired member were to die during that ten-year period. The change in the normal form of pension will result in an improvement in pension of between 1.2 per cent and 4.0 per cent depending on age at retirement.

The second benefit improvement is more complex. Currently, the Plan provides what is referred to as a 2 per cent formula that is integrated with Canada Pension Plan (CPP) at age 65. In effect, the formula drops at age 65 to provide a 1.3 per cent formula for earnings up to the Year's Maximum Pensionable Earnings. The benefit improvement will increase the formula in the post-65 period to 1.35 per cent. This improvement will boost the average plan member's pension by 2.6 per cent. The increase applies to the pension payable after age 65. The value will vary depending on each individual's pensionable earnings.

These changes are a positive result of joint trusteeship.

That was the good news, now for the bad news. The off-loading of health costs by the Liberal government has created a problem for all of the pension plans. Government's decision to drop several services from basic medical has caused an increase of nearly 50 per cent to the extended health costs for coverage for pensioners. This was followed by the regressive tax to increase the basic medical premiums by 50 per cent. This is a direct cost to the pension plans. The basic medical is currently paid by the Municipal and Public Service Plans for pensioners.

In the Public Service Plan, retiree health benefits are financed from a set portion of the employers' contributions to the pension plan. Any of this portion in excess of what is required to pay the health benefit costs is then transferred to the Inflation Adjustment Account (IAA) to help offset cost-of-living increases. It is forecasted that by the end of this year 81 per cent of this set portion will be required to pay the health benefits and the costs are continuing to increase. As there is no other source of income to fund health benefits, the trustees are discussing what changes will be necessary to reduce the costs of providing these benefits and contain them within the fund's ability to pay. The Teacher's Pension Plan has reluctantly decided to pass these costs to their retired members. Retired

teachers are now required to pay for their basic medical insurance and have experienced several changes to their extended health plan.

## COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Last year was one of the PEA's busiest times for the 'bread and butter' activity of collective bargaining. Over the last year deals have been achieved and ratified at the Legal Services Society (LSS), Family Maintenance Enforcement Program (FMEP), University of Victoria (UVic) and St. Margaret's School (their first collective agreement).

An agreement has also been reached at the Prince George School District (PGSD) that the members are ratifying as this report is being prepared.

The union's largest bargaining unit, the Government Licensed Professionals (GLP), and the Community Health Services and Support (CHSS) bargaining unit both reached tentative agreements prior to the last convention but were not finalized until after convention.

The GLP agreement was completed on March 31 and ballots returned on April 20. The government of the day called the election on April 18. The tentative agreement was reached and ratified in the nick of time. It doesn't take much imagination to see what may have happened to the PEA if we were forced into a strike situation against the Liberals.

Unfortunately, PEA members in the province-wide council of unions that represent the Paramedical Professionals had a more difficult time reaching an agreement. The Liberal administration attacked health professionals by abandoning the collective bargaining process and imposing a contract through legislation. Before many months had passed the government once again used its legislative might and stripped away many of the rights and benefits enjoyed by health care workers for many years by legislative fiat in Bill 29, *The Health and Social Services Delivery Improvement Act*.

## RESPONSE TO GOVERNMENT CUTS

At their October 29 meeting, the Association Executive took a strong stand to defend PEA members' jobs and collective agreement rights by adopting a motion detailing support for members and defense of PEA jobs. The Executive put in place the funding necessary to accomplish their adopted goals and objectives by earmarking up to \$150,000 from the PEA's sizable reserves to fund defense activities. At their meeting in May the Executive increased the funds available for this task to \$200,000.

The motion adopted by the Association Executive is as follows:

*"That the Professional Employees Association campaign to protect jobs and services; educate members as to their rights; encourage our members to lobby MLAs and local governments, write letters to local papers, and participate on call-in radio shows;*

*And further, that the Professional Employees Association work with other unions, the BC Federation of Labour and other groups when common interests are apparent;*

*And further, that the Professional Employees Association use all means including lobbying and advertising to defend our members' interests and employment."*

Since that time the PEA has been extremely active in its efforts to fulfill the mandate created by the Executive resolution. PEA staff attended a series of meetings open to all PEA members at various locations around the province. The purpose of the meetings was to provide members with information

on their collective agreement layoff and seniority rights and on Association activities. We have been active in coordinating our activities with other unions through our activity at the B.C. Federation of Labour Expanded Public Sector Committee.

The PEA has set up two web sites to educate citizens about the loss of important professional services: [www.professionalsforbc.com](http://www.professionalsforbc.com) and [www.accesstojustice.ca](http://www.accesstojustice.ca). Both sites provide an easy email tool to lobby MLAs on behalf of professionals and against cuts to legal aid.

The union has run a series of advertisements to support the websites and the services delivered by our members to the public. As this report goes to print, we have sent a letter to every member advising them that they will be called by the union to seek their opinion on what additional actions the PEA should take. There will be a report on that activity during the convention.

The PEA has also been involved with court challenges to the government's destruction of public services.

In February the Liberal government appointed a trustee of Legal Services Society after the organization's Board of Directors twice refused to implement deep cuts to their budget. Board members fought what is a clear dismantling of LSS because of their commitment to the independent nature and mandate of the society. The government swiftly responded by firing the Board and moving to implement changes that will deny access to justice for thousands of British Columbians.

The PEA sought a judicial review of the government's decision to dismiss the Legal Services Society's Board of Directors. Unfortunately the court action and subsequent appeal were unsuccessful in overturning the dismissal.

The PEA is also a partner to and will contribute financially, on a per capita basis, to the court challenges launched by the health sector bargaining associations against Bill 29, which stripped away the collective agreement rights of PEA members in the Paramedical Professional and Community Health Services and Support bargaining units.

## MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

One of the most important PEA activities is defending members' negotiated rights after a collective agreement is reached.

Direct membership service is one of the PEA's strengths. On hundreds of occasions this year we have interpreted contract language, answered members' questions, given advice, supported those who have been unfairly disciplined. This year we have the added burden of hundreds of members fearing layoff with many questions as to their rights. We have fought grievances and defended members before third parties. None of this activity is visible to most members but all of it is vitally important to those who are improperly treated and need their union's support.

## FINANCES

In spite of a challenging year for investments the PEA portfolio continued to produce modest gains.

This year the executive, as a result of a resolution adopted by delegates at the last convention, developed criteria to evaluate the performance of the PEA's investment advisor. The policy defines objective criteria for evaluating the investment advisor's performance over time.

At one per cent of salary, the PEA's membership dues remain substantially the lowest of any major union in the B.C. public sector. However, this year and the ones following will produce financial pressure on the union and its reserves. With a declining membership our revenue will also decline. The solution to maintain a healthy balance is to either cut services or increase the membership base. A major part of the reason the PEA can work effectively for current and prospective PEA members is our ability to show that in times of crisis, the PEA has the financial clout to provide adequate support and assistance to members.

## STAFF

I cannot say enough about the dedication and work ethic of our staff. This year we have added Barinder Rasode to replace Jennifer Duprey who is on an extended leave. Five PEA staff people – Jodi Jensen, Jennifer Duprey, Barinder Rasode, Tony Bute and myself – are responsible for looking after members' direct servicing requirements. If an employer violates contract rights or otherwise unfairly abuses a PEA member, we are the ones responsible for helping the member to pick up the pieces. I like to think that Jodi, Jennifer, Tony, Barinder and I do a pretty fair job at that, but we couldn't do without the aid and comfort supplied by Caroline Ward, Dagmar Morris and Marianna Crawford in the Victoria office and Joanne Petersen in the Burnaby office. I extend my thanks to all staff members for their contributions to the team effort.

## VOLUNTEERS

The PEA is very much a cooperative and participatory organization. Apart from the members of the PEA Executive and the eight-person PEA staff, a substantial number of PEA members make significant, voluntary, unheralded contributions to the work we do. The number of PEA members who freely contribute time and effort to improving the working life of the membership is well into three figures. The roster of PEA local representatives alone is well over a hundred members. Others contribute as members of chapter executive committees, join union-management committees, bargaining teams and in other important roles. None of them is paid a dime for doing this work. There is simply no way the PEA could function effectively without the efforts of members. To all of you who contribute materially to the welfare of your fellow PEA members, I say well done, and thank you.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

The past year has been one of the busiest in PEA history – bargaining in virtually every PEA bargaining unit and a massive attack by our employers on job security.

More challenges lie in wait for PEA members. The Liberal government in Victoria has public sector employees on edge. Over the next few years our mettle is going to be tested, individually and collectively.

I look forward to working with the Association Executive, my fellow staff members, and with you in pursuing our goal of ensuring that we make the Professional Employees Association the best union possible for the professional people we represent.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Hensby  
Executive Director



## SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

2001 was another successful year financially for the Association. Our membership dues exceeded our operating expenses. When income from investments is added in, we ended the year about \$150,000 "in the black." We passed the six million dollar mark in net assets.

In 2002, we face some challenges. We have already committed \$150,000 to our Downsizing Response and expect a small decrease in our dues revenue. Despite these new developments we could well end up "in the black" again due to the income from our investment portfolio.

Beyond 2002, the challenges become even greater as the effects of government cutbacks begin to severely impact our membership numbers. Due to the financial cushion provided by our investment portfolio, we can weather just about any storm. No one likes to be in stormy weather all the time, however, and our Association needs to grow in order to survive over the long term. Money invested now in recruiting new members will pay off in increased membership dues and decreased reliance on income from investments.

This is my final year on the Association Executive after close to five years of service. Those five years have seen some significant changes, particularly from a poorly attended AGM structure to a vibrant Convention. Change is almost always attended by turmoil, and we have had our share. We face more changes in the future and we need new leaders to step up and serve the Association.

To all those who have served the Association in the past year, and particularly our staff, I extend my thanks and gratitude.

Yours in solidarity,

Ron Dumont  
Secretary Treasurer