



Merry Christmas

and a

Happy New Year

to all TWU members and your families

from the

Officers and Staff of the Union

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Scholarship thanks

Dear TWU:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the bursary you have given me. Without your help I would not have been able to further my education. Thank you. I truly appreciate your kindness and generosity.

Sincerely,
Najjla Kuzyk

Dear TWU:

I would like to thank the TWU for selecting and awarding our daughter Sonia Sukhveer a \$1,000 scholarship towards her studies at SFU. Thank you.

Surinder Clair,
Local 5

Sports thanks

Dear TWU:

On behalf of the North Van Stars 88 Girls Fastpitch team, we would like to thank the TWU for its sponsorship in the 2002 season. This donation helped us purchase some much needed equipment for our team and was greatly appreciated.

Thank you very much,
Derek Lasocha
North Vancouver, Local 30

Dear TWU:

I would like to thank the TWU for the \$250 cheque to the **Alberta Marlin Aquatic Club**

As a swimmer with the Alberta Marlin Aquatic Club, and son of a TELUS employee, I am enclosing a photograph of our team. On behalf of all the competitive swimmers with AMAC, we thank you very much for the cheque.

Yours truly,
Jason Anhorn,
Medicine Hat, Alberta
(Editor's note: See Picture, p. 4)

Retirement thanks

Dear TWU:

On behalf of myself and my family, I want to thank the Union for the Honourary Life Membership and the \$1,000 cheque. I spent 14 years of my 30 years seniority with TELUS as an elected officer for the TWU, and what a privilege it was to represent our members.

I want to thank our members who showed me respect and patience during a time when many issues we fought for together were at the bargaining table for the first time. I used to say to managers: "You can't fight common sense and dedication of our members, so get out of the way."

I want to thank President Rod Hiebert for taking time out of his busy schedule, and for his kind words, at my recent retirement function.

Thanks also to Vice-president Neil Morrison and Business agents Karen Whitfield, Betty Carrasco and Bill Silvester for attending and joining me in celebrating those 14 years, and thanks to former President Bill Clark and former executive council members who attended. Thanks to the Transmitter editor for helping me research past articles in the Transmitter.

In closing, let me say 30 years is a long time to work, but more important is the legacy left by all senior member who retired, and the struggle to preserve that legacy. I wish the current executive and bargaining team the dedication and strength of character that will be needed to pursue the issues ahead. Look to the membership to find strength and dedication. That is where our legacy will be preserved.

In solidarity,
Linda Hebert

Dear TWU:

Many thanks to the TWU for the classy way it does business. In these tough time you are handling the many issues with the care and thought that good management requires and we are used to receiving from you. Keep up the great work.

At this time I would also like to thank you for the Honourary Life Membership, pin and cheque for \$1,000 that you so generously supplied me with. It is all very much appreciated.

Yours in solidarity,
Cynthia Burges
Local 50

Dear TWU:

Thank you very much for the monetary gift and the Honourary Life Membership. The past 3 decades have been exciting and enjoyable working for O.K. Tel, B.C. Tel and TELUS, but only because the TWU, its members and their leaders have made it that way.

Please don't give up on our fight with the new regime. It will take time but the TWU, its membership and leaders will prevail.

Thank you again and all the best.

In solidarity,
Nick Alexis
Local 6

Dear TWU:

Thank you so much for the \$1000 cheque, it really did brighten up my day as it came on my official retirement day, forced on me by the Company.

I wish you all good luck in the hard days ahead in your quest for a good contract for our members.

Good luck to you all.

Sister Barb Rippin
Penticton

Dear TWU:

I wish to thank the Union and its members for the generous retirement gift of \$1000. My family and I will enjoy the gift.

B.H. Rose

Dear TWU:

Many thanks for the \$1000 cheque and Honourary Life Membership for my retirement July 1, 2002.

I'm extending my appreciation to the Union for 25 years of support and for the extremely hard work in the past months.

This is a battle for our Union's life.

In solidarity,
Sister Diane Dyer
Local 16

Dear TWU:

I would like to give a big thank you to all my TELUS friends who came to celebrate my retirement (May 1, 2002). A wonderful dinner was held on June 20th and again thank you to

everyone who contributed to this memorable evening.

I wish to also thank the TWU for the Honourary Life membership, pin and cheque for \$1000 and letter on the occasion of my retirement after 30 years with BC Tel and TELUS.

Sincerely,
Anne Scott
North Vancouver

Dear TWU:

I'd like to give special thanks to Lila Wing and the TWU in the presentation of my Honourary Life Membership and \$1000 gift.

I've enjoyed 25 years of employment with BC Tel/TELUS and my retirement is possible because of the hard work of the Officers and members of the TWU and the Pension office.

Thank you again,
Barbara Koverchuk
Burnaby

Dear TWU:

Thank you for the Honourary Life Membership, letter, pin and the \$1000 cheque.

As a member I have enjoyed excellent working conditions and benefits for 45 years. As a PBX/PABX installer I saw all of the technological changes. I would gladly do it all over again for another 45 wonderful years. I wish you continued success, especially through the current round of negotiations and downsizing.

Best regards,
Don Hubbick

Dear TWU:

I would like to thank the TWU for the opportunities given me in this organization. It has been an honor to serve the members as VP Local 50 as delegate, and on the finance committee. This union has given numerous training opportunities, to enable me to better fight for our members' rights. This is the best union I have been involved with in my working life and a truly democratic one.

I thank the members for allowing me to represent them, it has given me untold satisfaction. I can't begin to thank everyone, but will mention some who without their support, my job would indeed have been more difficult. Sisters Lila Hackett, Betty Carrasco, Hope Cumming, June Lewis, and Lori Ruggles, Brothers Mike Thompson, Jim Christensen, Rod Giddens and Rod Hiebert. My apologies for those I have missed. A very special thanks to sister Julie Labine. Also thanks for the unfaltering support of my wife, sister Carmen Cairns Local 32 and my family.

It is with sadness I am leaving, I will always be TWU.

In solidarity,
Randy Cairns
Local 50

Dear TWU:

It is with great pleasure and pride I accept my Honourary Lifetime Membership with the TWU.

When I called your office I received a warm friendly greeting and my request was handled in an efficient and expedient manner.

Thank you for the cheque for \$1000 and the pin that I wear proudly.

I am now retiring after 34 years with BC Tel and TELUS. I have enjoyed the company of many fine co-workers and the support of a very strong union.

I wish all of you the best of luck and thanks for all the great memories.

Yours sincerely in solidarity,
Linda Wedholm
Nanaimo

Dear TWU:

Thank you for the cheque for \$1000 I received on my retirement

also for the Honourary Life Membership and the pin, which was presented to me by Brother Bill Silvester.

I had a wonderful retirement celebration. It was great seeing all my old friends. A Special thanks to Linda Wallace, Ray Wheeler, Bonnie and Ken Barriscale, my out of town friends and family. Thank you all for coming. I have enjoyed working for BC Tel and TELUS also supporting the TWU.

The Union has given us good benefits and working conditions. Please, everyone give your loyal support.

Many thanks,
Louise Hutton
Local 21

Dear OPEIU Staff at TWU:

Thank you for the beautiful tree, it's doing well. I really appreciate all you did to make my retirement special.

Miss you all,
Kathy Pearn

With the many retirements taking place due to the TELUS buyout packages, The TWU has received a great number of letters from members thanking the Union for the \$1,000 cheque and honourary life membership. We have reprinted a few of the letters above, but the number has become so great it is not possible to re-print all of the thoughtful and kind comments in your letters. However, we want to acknowledge the names of those who have sent us letters, with thanks for taking the time to write.

Gordon Lillos, Local 7
Mary Mackin, Vancouver Loc. 52
Fred Jones, Vernon
Tony Barnbrook, Abbotsford
Pollyann Richards, Prince George
Lynda Summers, Port Coquitlam
Pat McGuire, Local 50
Wendy Barber, Local 16, Kelowna
Linda Haggarty, Surrey
Ida Nicoletti, Prince George
Judy Radonjic, New Westminster
Don Brown, Kelowna
Henry Wilson, Prince George
Reg Belzac, Cranbrook
Diane Cervo, Local 14, Nanaimo
Satya Gopal, Local 5
Frank Ford, Local 3, Nanaimo
"Langley Larry" Blake, Local 7
JoAnn Thurston
Ted Farrell
Steve Demoskoff, Local 15
Wilma Kim, Vancouver
Steve Malerby, Vernon

Bravo for billboard

Dear TWU:

I would just like to say Bravo and well done to the TWU for setting up this informative billboard downtown near the Mutual office.

The reaction to the billboard has been very favourable from members I have spoken with.

Dave duPlessis
Local 38

Dragon Boat thanks

Dear TWU:

Thank you for your donation this year.

It was used to develop our training program for the Junior Dragon Boating Team.

Your financial help in this great venture is truly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Ivan Carothers
Kelowna Dragon Boat Club

EDMONTON OFFICE
#103 - 10525-170 Street
Edmonton, Alta, T5P 4W2
Ph. 780-444-6945
Fax: 780-488-6911

CALGARY OFFICE
#255 - 525-28 St. S.E.
Calgary, Alta, T2A 6W9
Ph. 403-237-6990
Fax: 403-802-2381

TWU phone ... (604) 437-8601

TWU fax (604) 435-7760

Pension Plan
office (604) 430-1317

TWU hotline .. (604) 435-2224

TWU Website addresses:

TWU Home Page: <http://www.twu-canada.ca>
TW Pension Plan: <http://www.twu-canada.ca/twpp/pptoc.htm>
TW Benefit Plan: <http://www.twu-canada.ca/twbp/bphome.htm>
TWU Email Address (Union Office): twu@twu-canada.ca
TW Pension and Benefit Plans: general@twplans.com

The Transmitter

Member of

The Transmitter is the official publication of the Telecommunications Workers Union.

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Large turnout of members at Burnaby strike vote meeting consider Union position prior to voting. At right, ballots are counted, giving strong Union backing.

TELUS members give Union 84% strike mandate

By a vote of 84 per cent, TWU members working at TELUS have given the Union a strike mandate.

Well over 7,000 members cast ballots at meetings held in centres throughout BC and Alberta between October 26 and November 12. Despite the reduction in membership and the turmoil created by the company's massive downsizing currently underway, members of the bargaining committee report very good turnouts at meetings in both provinces.

Following the vote count on November 15, TWU President Rod Hiebert told a news conference that the membership had given the Union a strong vote of support in favour of taking job action, including a strike if necessary, to bargain a revised, respectful collective agreement. Hiebert stated:

"TELUS workers are sick of major cuts to the quality of service and the thousands of jobs lost in communities caused by the mismanagement and bad investments of TELUS executives. Workers are now sending a message to TELUS management that it's time to work together to repair the damage to the quality of service and TELUS's reputation by reaching a revised collective agreement with our members."

Hiebert said TELUS ran into serious problems after it purchased cell phone company Clearnet Communications for an overpriced \$6.6 billion, when it was probably worth about \$2 billion. "That extra \$4 billion would pay wages and benefits of the entire Unionized membership for more than four years," Hiebert said.

TWU members have been working at TELUS without a contract for almost two years since expiry of the agreements at the end of December, 2000.

Because of the company's intransigence, progress at the

bargaining table over the past two years has ranged from "painfully slow" to "virtual standstill".

The company's response to the Union announcement in October that it would be seeking a strike mandate was to apply for the appointment of a federal conciliation officer. On November 14, the federal government announced the appointment of Tom Hodges and William Lewis as co-conciliators. Hodges is from the Calgary office and Lewis is from the Vancouver office of the federal Mediation and Conciliation Services division.

While the Union thought the application for appointment of a conciliator was premature, we did not oppose it, and Hiebert said the Union will co-operate with the conciliators in an attempt to reach a revised collective agreement with TELUS.

The parties met with the conciliation officers November 18, and as we go to press, further meetings have been scheduled for early December.

A major stumbling block to progress at the bargaining table, says bargaining committee chair Bruce Bell, has been the company's insistence on a completely new collective agreement.

To throw out an existing collective agreement and begin from Square One is unprecedented, and is totally unacceptable to the Union, Bell said. The Union is insisting that the parties bargain a revised collective agreement.

We are hopeful that the strong strike mandate we have received from the membership will indicate clearly to the company that a brand new agreement is a non-starter, and that they will have to get down to serious negotiations, Bell said. "We are hoping as well that the conciliation officer will assist in focusing the company's attention on the

need move away from "brand new" and accept the necessity of bargaining a revised agreement."

Bell said that the Union is very happy with the strong strike mandate the members have given, but that it does not signal that a strike is imminent. The conciliators' mandate is for 60 days, to January 13, 2003, and can be extended by mutual agreement of both parties. Legal strike action is not possible while conciliation is underway.

"It has always been our desire, and is still our desire, to negotiate an agreement," Bell said. "A strike would only be a last resort, but it is an option that is now open to the Union down the road if the company continues to refuse to come to its senses."

A couple of other significant factors have complicated the bargaining process and contributed to the slow pace of talks this round, Bell said.

One, the company is seeking massive concessions on a range of issues, including crucial questions relating to contracting out work, which is tied in part to the demand for a brand new agreement. "The Union, and the membership, are simply not prepared to accept the concessions sought by the company, and instead urge the company to bargain changes respectfully with the Union."

A second factor complicating bargaining is that a number of unresolved issues which impact on bargaining are currently in front of the Canada Industrial Relations Board (CIRB). One of these involves the status of Clearnet and its employees. The Union's position is that Clearnet is a TELUS acquisition and that the employees are part of the TWU bargaining unit. TELUS argues that the Union would have to organize them, as we would with employees of an unorganized and unaffiliated

company. The CIRB has not yet ruled on this dispute. Similar questions surround TELUS employees working east of Alberta. There are also crucial questions before the Board relating to the status of TELUS Mobility, and in addition, the Union has Unfair Labour Practice complaints pending before the CIRB.

Rulings from the Board on some of these outstanding questions may also help to break the bargaining logjam.

In the meantime, as bargaining continues, the Union executive and bargaining team express sincere thanks to the membership for their very strong show of support in the strike vote, and in the workplace, for our efforts to bargain a decent revised collective agreement.

The solidarity of the membership, Bell says, is as always the key to the Union's success at the bargaining table.

The winners of the 'Why TELUS is not a Top Ten Company' contest

10. Our shares went "rock bottom".
SWISS ARMY KNIFE.

9. The suspension of an employee for exercising his freedom of speech and expressing views that differ from the CEO. I mean honestly why ask for feedback or comments via email if you can't respect that someone might disagree with you.

SLOW COOKER.

8. Peter Massy has never been recognized as a true spirited team member in any of Darren's e.letters. At least not yet - I got my fingers crossed for you bud.

SODA FOUNTAIN DRINK MIXER.

7. You can't be a top 10 Company without a top 10 CEO.

EXPRESSO MAKER.

6. We embrace change, not employees.

CORDLESS DRILL.

5. Why would a so-called top 10 company in Canada want to get rid of 6,000 reasons why it became a top 10 Company?

BLENDER.

4. Because "Quality Customer Service" can't be measured with a stopwatch.

BREAD MAKER.

3. Blue Chip to BULL CHIP!!!

TELESCOPE.

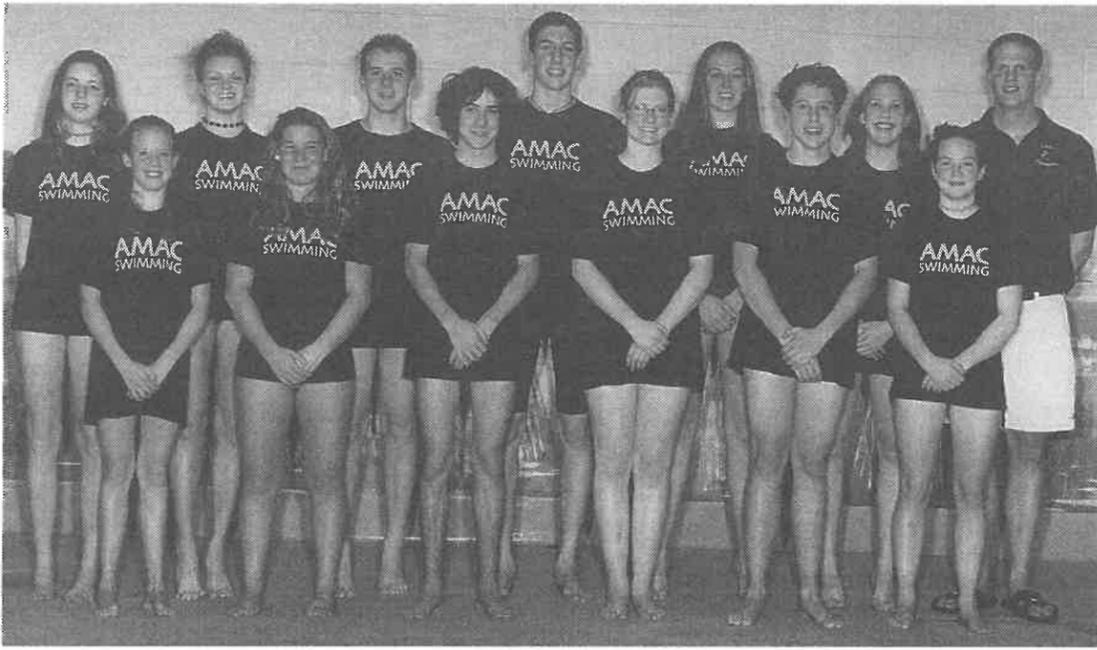
2. Here at TELUS "we embrace confusion and initiate uncertainty."

MOUNTAIN BIKE.

And the **NUMBER ONE** reason is:

In a top 10 company, the stock is actually worth something!

SONY 27" TRINITRON TV



Alberta Marlin Aquatic Club

Look for your name in the Transmitter

The Union's Solidarity Committee is starting a campaign to encourage members to keep informed on union issues through various Union publications – membership mailings, website postings, and the Transmitter.

A first step in this campaign is a new contest sponsored by the Solidarity Committee.

Dispersed among articles in the Transmitter will be the names and Locals of a number of members chosen at random. A prize will be awarded to anyone who spots his or her name in the Transmitter. If

you see your name, call the Union office collect at 604-437-8601 and ask for Colleen McFadden. Tell her where you found your name, and she will arrange to have your prize sent to you.

To help increase readership of membership mailings, the Committee will enclose at random special prize "claim tickets". When you open your mailing to read it, check to see if you are one of the winners. Frank Palmieri 5. Full membership mailings may also take the form of a special insert in a local meeting notice, so you should check meeting notices as well as membership bulletins. If you find a claim ticket, mail it along with your home address to Colleen McFadden at the Union Office, 5261 Lane Street, Burnaby, BC, V5H 4A6, and your prize will be mailed to you.

Our goal is to increase membership awareness and knowledge of the important issues affecting all of us.

TWU Solidarity Committee

Quality telecommunications for all Canadians

Quality of Service - What is the union doing about it and why?

The TWU has a long history of acting as a consumer advocate, promoting affordable, accessible communications services to all customers in urban and rural areas alike. We support the expansion of communications services beyond strictly metropolitan areas, we have put forward recommendations to government to promote equal access to the new information highway, and we have been key players in the promotion of customer service at the CRTC.

Given the recent downsizing at Telus and the resulting inability of employees to address customer complaints, the TWU has decided to initiate campaigns across BC and Alberta in order to bring quality of service issues to the forefront. We are seeking community support in this effort, and we are asking customers to contact both the CRTC and federal government politicians to ensure that access to affordable service remains a reality. In addition, we are drafting a submission to the CRTC outlining our concerns about Telus's actions and how they are negatively affecting customer service. We encourage all members to keep up to date on these developments and our quality of service campaigns by visiting the TWU website at www.twu-canada.ca

If we are to save jobs and ensure the health of the company in the long term then we must take action that promotes high quality service and protects customers' interests by insisting that their communications needs are met. This campaign is not about bad-mouthing the company. It is about addressing customers' needs in spite of the company's attempts to downgrade service. It is about mobilizing customers and communities to ensure that the needs of Canadian citizens are met. It is about sustaining and improving the regulatory framework to ensure that customers continue to have access to affordable, high quality communications service. It is about maintaining the guarantee of high quality communications for all Canadians.

The CRTC – the Guarantee of Quality Commun. Services

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) is a government authority whose mandate is to regulate and supervise the country's broadcasting and telecommunications. Created to serve the public interest, the Commission is governed by the Broadcasting Act of 1991 and the Telecommunications Act of 1993. These laws are designed to ensure that Canadians have access to reasonably priced, high-quality, varied and innovative communications services that are competitive nationally as well as internationally.

Under its mandate, the CRTC monitors telephone companies' service quality by requiring each federally regulated telephone company to submit a quarterly report based on 16 service indicators. Each company is required to maintain a certain level of performance on each indicator. If a telephone company does not meet a particular standard, it is required to explain to the Commission why the standard was not met and to explain what it is doing to remedy the failure. This process is referred to as exception reporting.

Since 1998, Telus has consistently failed to meet many of the basic service standards that are monitored by the CRTC. The most commonly missed targets include: access to the business office, access to the repair office and out-of-service troubles completed. Under its exception reporting, Telus regularly cites "insufficient staffing resources" as the reason for substandard performance. In light of the company's plan to downsize by 6,500 positions, it is difficult to anticipate anything but a further degradation of service. It is our intention to use the quality of service campaign to focus the

attention of the public and the Commission on the negative consequences of downsizing, centralization of the operations, and the company's increased use of 'self-service' systems that are frustrating, time-consuming and inefficient.

In addition, the CRTC is inviting public comment on the merits of initiating a "Consumer Bill of Rights" that would go further than the current regulatory framework does in protecting customers' interests. The TWU supports this initiative. Diane Bowers 21, Terry Froese 30. We encourage customers to contact the CRTC and to respond to the Commission's invitation to send it their questions, comments and suggestions.

What can you do?

As mentioned, since 1998, Telus has consistently failed to meet a significant number of the CRTC's Quality of Service Indicators. Given the company's recent downsizing efforts, it is obvious that service standards will deteriorate at an accelerated pace as employees leave the company and customer complaints flow in at an exponential rate. Those employees who remain on staff after the downsizing will be under pressure to take on an exorbitant amount of work, beyond what is humanly possible, in an increasingly hostile work environment.

Employees can only do their best in an untenable situation. The TWU is committed to supporting our members under these difficult circumstances. In addition, we offer the following advice when taking complaints from customers:

- Assist customers in any way you can.
- Inform customers of what is happening to service quality and why.
- Provide customers with the information they need to complain to the CRTC. (Business cards with CRTC and TWU contact information are available from the union office.)
- Refer friends and family to the TWU website to learn more about the issues impacting Rene Perrin 208 their community and their communications services.
- Document any substandard service you witness to and inform the TWU by writing, faxing or emailing the TWU at the addresses listed below
- If your workload is excessive or if your manager is making unreasonable demands of your work group, get help from your shop steward or councillor and have them notify your business agent.
- Support your fellow union members and assist them wherever possible.

In addition, complaints about substandard telephone service can be reported directly to the CRTC by visiting the Commission website, by writing, or calling them directly:

**Canadian Radio-television and
Telecommunications Commission (CRTC)**

Ottawa, Ontario

K1A 0N2

Telephone Toll Free: 1-877-249-2782

TDD (toll free): 1-877-909-2782

To visit the CRTC on the web go to: www.crtc.gc.ca

To correspond with the CRTC email them at: info@crtc.gc.ca

Or contact the:

TWU Consumer and Regulatory Affairs Committee

5261 Lane Street

Burnaby, B.C V5H 4A6

604-437-8601 Ext: 254 (voice) 604-435-7760 (fax)

Or email us at quality@twu-canada.ca

Union calendars coming

In early November, TELUS announced in various work places that it could no longer afford to supply workers with desk calendars. Always eager to help out the cash-strapped company, the TWU has decided to lend a helping hand. The Union's Solidarity Committee has decided to print our own calendar for distribution Edward Stephens 1 to our members at TELUS.

The calendar will feature Union history, and members at work. It will also provide information on how to reach Union offices, hotline, website, and so on. Distribution will be by a variety of methods – handed out in the workplace, through the local executive, or by mail, in consultation with the Local.

We expect to have the calendars ready for distribution by late December or early January.

BOYCOTTS

All readers are asked to support the following trade union sponsored consumer boycotts. Please do not patronize or purchase any of these goods, services and/or retail outlets:

All Non-Union Postal Outlets

Dispute with CUPW

Philips Electronic Products, Quebec

CLC/USWA 7812



TWU President Rod Hiebert and BC Federation of Labour President Jim Sinclair unveil TWU billboard with message about TELUS service outside window of company CEO Darren Entwistle



Three Operators from downtown Vancouver who "happily accepted early retirement", from left, Jean Martin, Wilma Kim and Mary Mackin

Massive disruption of TELUS workforce

The TELUS downsizing initiative – the most massive disruption of the workforce in the company's history, affecting directly more than 5,000 TWU members and indirectly many more – is relentlessly moving forward to full implementation.

The downsizing, announced earlier this year some two years after the merger of Alberta TELUS and BC TEL, consists of two inter-related parts – a reduction in the number of employees through financial incentive packages, and the closure and consolidation of offices and reduction of services in both provinces.

TELUS's goal in terms of workforce size was an overall reduction of 5,000 unionized workers, with an additional 1,000 or more managers let go.

As of late November, the figures provided by TELUS indicated the company had more than met its target regarding bargaining unit members. The original plan foresaw 2,200 Alberta and 2,800 BC unionized workers leaving. The company indicates that the BC target was met and the Alberta target exceeded by about 200, for a total reduction of the bargaining unit workforce of 5,200.

However, even if those figures are accurate, the entire 5,200 have not yet left the workforce. The dates for leaving are staggered, depending in part on the company's needs and in part on the desire of the worker. There will be people leaving under the incentive schemes offered throughout 2003, as the final qualifying date for one of the options is December 31, 2003.

Two incentive options were offered – the Early Retirement

Incentive (ERIP), essentially for members who could qualify for an immediate pension; and the Voluntary Departure Incentive (VDIP), essentially for those too young to take the pension at this time.

Terms of the ERIP offer did not change since its initial offering. For members with the required years of service, and age, they are able to take a package amounting to one year's salary, plus \$500 per year of service to a maximum of \$10,000 for 20 years service.

The original VDIP offered members a buyout amounting to 18 months' salary plus \$1,000 a year to a maximum of 15 years, or \$15,000. However, TELUS modified the VDIP offer for those in BC wanting to have the right to apply for an unreduced pension at age 55. That VDIP was based on an ERIP-equivalent, with the money TELUS thus saved directed into the TW Pension Plan. Members in BC willing to wait until age 65 to apply for their pension were eligible for the original full VDIP amount, as were the members in Alberta. (In Alberta, the pension plan is not part of the Collective Agreement, but is run by TELUS, and did not figure in to the VDIP or ERIP calculations.)

According to our estimates, approximately 1,300 BC members and 600 Alberta members took the ERIP, while approximately 1,500 BC members and 1,400 Alberta members took the VDIP. However, we should make clear these are approximate, as the Transmitter does not have exact or final figures.

One cruel (or should we say crueler?) twist to the TELUS buyout story came in late

October, when TELUS suddenly announced that the VDIP in Alberta clerical was oversubscribed, and that 300 members who had been accepted for the VDIP (some had already left, and most others had made plans for the future) were having the offer withdrawn, and could not leave with the VDIP.

This turnabout created a huge amount of anxiety and disruption, resulting in hastily-arranged meetings between TELUS officials and the Alberta members affected by the decision. Many of the members were so distraught they told the company managers they no longer wanted to work for TELUS under any circumstances.

In the end, the VDIP was reinstated for the 300 or so workers who had seen it offered and then withdrawn, with the company's "explanation" that it was all a "clerical error".

To paraphrase England's great wartime leader, "some clerical error, some explanation".

A Letter of Agreement signed by the TWU and TELUS will result in redeployment based on the provisions of the Collective Agreements in Alberta, and in BC through a process involving three rounds of canvass.

Surplus/Vacancy

As reported in the previous Transmitter, the downsizing was accompanied by consolidation and closure of call centers – dropping from 66 in 20 communities to 28 in nine communities, and the closure of 33 of 40 phone stores, with consolidations of the remaining 7 in Calgary, Edmonton, Burnaby, Vancouver and Victoria.

The closures and consolidations, along with the staff reductions, has resulted in a huge disruption of the workforce, and a surplus/vacancy picture which at this time can only be described as a "moving target". Company numbers have been changing weekly, and in some instances, daily. However, we are beginning to get a clearer picture of the changes and where the movement of employees is occurring. In general, in BC we see vacancies on Vancouver Island, and surpluses in the North and Okanagan, with selective opportunities for some people to move into the Lower Mainland.

In Alberta, in Plant, there is a general movement out of Calgary and Edmonton into smaller centers, and in clerical, there are more vacancies than surpluses.

While scrambling to keep abreast of the company's moving target, the Union has over the past number of weeks been meeting with the company to try to mitigate the harm to members and to improve their options. In the forefront of this effort is a committee of officers led by Vice-President Neil Morrison and including Business Agents Karen Whitfield, Bill Silvester, Mick Shiels, Allison Kuzyk and June Lewis.

We are pleased to report they have had some notable successes in mitigating the damage TELUS has inflicted through its downsizing and redeployment.

To give one notable example, the committee got the company to agree to let more than 70 tech-qualified drafters follow their work, something which had not initially been contemplated

by TELUS. This will allow the drafters affected to continue to do their jobs and, we expect for many, to stay in their communities – far less disruptive to their lives than would otherwise have been the case. It has the added benefit of reducing the plant surplus list in BC's North and Okanagan, and has resulted in 52 additional vacancies in the Lower Mainland.

Recently, the Union has signed off a number of Letters of Agreement, dealing with a range of redeployment issues, which have the net effect of reducing considerably the disruption resulting from the entire redeployment initiative, and helping get the displaced workers into the jobs fit for them.

The Union's position throughout this entire sorry episode of downsizing and redeployment is that the disruption was largely unnecessary, and the result of mismanagement by top TELUS managers – that growing the business would be far preferable to downsizing, and that any downsizing that was necessary could have been achieved through gradual attrition and early retirements, without closures and cuts to service, and without pressuring members to leave before normal retirement age.

But given the company's determination to bull ahead, the Union believes that the buyout and early retirement offers were far preferable to a massive layoff option that would likely have been the alternative, and that members were best served by working negotiating the best terms possible for their redeployment incentive options.

TELUS – a ticking time bomb?

By **ROD HIEBERT,**
TWU President

It is hard to imagine that only two years ago B.C. Tel and Telus, the incumbent telephone companies operating primarily in British Columbia and Alberta, were stellar, solid, blue chip companies whose stable, experienced management and highly-trained, devoted workers delivered an impressive record of uninterrupted profits. The companies provided high quality service to all of its customers and enjoyed good relationships with the communities in which they operated.

Then everything began to change. Management announced a merger between these companies, and Darren Entwistle, a virtual unknown, was chosen to be the new CEO of the merged organization.

Entwistle had a plan. He quickly replaced nearly all of the existing, experienced management with aggressive newcomers from outside the company. Under his leadership, Telus would compete nationally. To this end, it embarked upon an unprecedented series of mergers and acquisitions. The goal was to whip Bell Canada and Shaw.

At the same time, Entwistle was determined to create a managerial utopia in which Telus employees had few rights and managers unilaterally controlled every significant aspect of their working lives. To this end, he declared war on the Telecommunications Workers Union, which represents the company's unionized employees, by attempting to drive wedges between the union and its members. His goal was to win the loyalty of individual employees away from the union through a series of incentive-based pay schemes and share purchase options.

The new strategy simultaneously attempted to discard the existing collective agreement by substituting a compendium of managerial buzzwords. Management was going to change the Telus culture to generate a "passion for growth"; employees were going to be taught to "embrace change" and "seize opportunities"; they were going to be rewarded for having the "courage to innovate", and were "coached" in the wonders of teamwork.

Management somehow had difficulty understanding employees' reluctance to embrace this game plan, whose purpose was to dump one-third of the company's staff. In order to achieve this, they brought in a new industrial relations scheme promoting Personal Development Plans and Objectives under which employees were told to FIFO (Entwistle's acronym telling employees that they had to fit in or face expulsion from the company.) The new CEO stated with pride that he took his cues from General Patton, arguing that "A good plan violently executed is better than a perfect plan executed next week."

Some analysts and insiders questioned the wisdom of the decision to deploy this ideologically-driven, winner-take-all strategy in a company which was already highly successful. Such an aggressive plan entailed significant but unnecessary risks. Some suggested that management should avoid provoking the company's employees and ignoring the needs of its customer base.

Experienced managers with more of a background in labour relations might have questioned the rationale for digging up the confrontational management strategy that had had such disastrous effects in the 1980s, let alone to use it as the key to securing the company's future. But Entwistle and his team was in a hurry. They weren't interested in contacting companies that had tried this approach to find out that following it might entail severely negative effects.

Then, 40 days after he was appointed CEO, Darren paid a whopping \$6.6 billion to acquire Clearnet, a national mobile phone company with red ink bleeding from its balance sheet – at a time when the market was at the top of the business cycle! While Telus's public relations hype put Darren on the front page of business sections across the country, some industry observers began expressing concern about the company's new direction.

Clearly there was trouble on the horizon stemming from Telus's purchase of Clearnet, which increased the company's debt load to a staggering \$8 billion. This threw its financials out of whack and forced its cash flow into negative territory. But Entwistle chose to focus on the company's positive financial results measured by EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization). Ironically, he and his executive team were granted huge increases in compensation based in part on these EBITDA results. But EBITDA is not part of generally accepted accounting principles and has been criticized by a number of accounting and investment experts.

Instead of depending on market hype and using questionable financial methodology to evaluate the feasibility of the merger, an experienced executive team would have conducted a thorough due diligence and carried out the same kind of evaluation that someone does when they are purchasing a new home. In such situations, the purchaser wants to know what the underlying value of the asset is, whether or not the market is overpriced, whether he can afford it, if there are related liabilities, whether there are liens registered against it, how much debt will be incurred as a result, how much money he has in the bank, whether his income is stable and secure, what prevailing interest rates are, where interest rates are heading, what the terms of amortization are and whether

he can afford the extra debt if interest rates climb. A prudent person would proceed with a major purchase like this only after having completed an examination of these fundamentals.

If things were not risky enough thanks to the purchase of Clearnet, Entwistle compounded the danger by dumping Telus's Chief Financial Officer in favour of Bob McFarlane, the Chief Financial Officer of the money-losing Clearnet. Compounding the problems created by Clearnet purchase was the fact that management was still having major problems making the merged Alberta and B.C. operations function effectively.

When Entwistle made the decision to purchase Clearnet, there was a great deal of information available indicating that the market was seriously overpriced. Furthermore, management gurus who had previously advocated downsizing and corporate restructuring were changing their minds regarding the merits of the slash-and-burn approach after witnessing the severe adverse effects of aggressive staff cuts. In short, there was ample evidence indicating that the aggressive merger and growth plans that Entwistle had embraced do not work. But the new executive team chose to ignore it.

Furthermore, had they evaluated the assumptions underlying their strategy, based on the history of those situations in which they had been applied, Entwistle and his team would have realized that what they were doing was likely to generate only the *appearance* of success.

If they had looked into the matter, Entwistle would have realized that his slash-and-burn strategy has a history of causing devastating fallout. When slash-and-burn became the fad in the American telecom industry 1980s, managers sought to lower their costs per line, regardless of the effects on their companies. This was dramatically illustrated at U.S. West (now Qwest), the dominant phone company in the U.S. Pacific Northwest, when management decided that it was going to make cost reduction its #1 priority. To this end, they cut their staff dramatically, contracted out huge amounts of work, slashed construction and maintenance budgets, and attacked their unionized workforce.

To the uninitiated, this might sound like a great plan to improve productivity, reduce operating expenses and improve the bottom line regardless of the pain it caused. But it took only a few years for the problems generated by this approach to surface at U.S. West. As a result of the savage cuts to its workforce, the company found itself unable to provide decent service to its customers. Its infrastructure was so badly neglected that expensive upgrades and major construction programs were required to rebuild the system. In some areas, telephone plant became a serious safety

hazard. In others, customers were altogether unable to access even basic telephone service.

All of these problems were caused by the fact that the company had downsized its trained staff to the point where only a skeleton crew remained. The employees with the knowledge of the system that was needed to operate, maintain, and rebuild the company had been driven away. So when floods hit the region, the company was unprepared to provide even emergency services. As a result, it was forced to pay a premium to bring in trained staff borrowed from other telephone companies to get the system working again.

The TWU experienced this first hand. More than 200 of our members were borrowed from B.C. Tel for months at a time to work in Oregon and Washington, cleaning up the mess caused by management's neglect of the U.S. West system. In the end, after following a strategy that caused all this unnecessary disruption and pain in order to generate short term improvements in their bottom line, U.S. West was forced to hire a significant number of new employees.

U.S. West was not the only company that embraced this short-sighted strategy. In New York and New England, the NYNEX company also opted for a slash-and-burn approach in hopes of boosting its bottom line in the short. In the end, however, the actions of NYNEX management caused an unprecedented degradation of service quality. Matters deteriorated so badly that the New York State Public Utilities Commission fined the company tens of millions of dollars and initiated a comprehensive oversight mechanism to ensure that its service quality was brought up to par.

Similar cracks have begun to appear in Entwistle's strategy. City councils, mayors and communities are complaining about poor service quality, job losses and the economic fallout they are experiencing because of the Telus strategy. Safety complaints are stacking up as the company's infrastructure crumbles. TWU members are experiencing unprecedented stress as they are being forced to answer questions from angry customers who have been left on hold for as much as three quarters of an hour. Other customers complain that no Telus service person arrived after they have waited at home all day to get their phone installed or repaired.

In some instances, employees are refusing to leave by the front door of Telus offices because they want to avoid enraged customers who are laying in wait for them. Meanwhile, cancelled maintenance programs and lack of staffing are starting to cause lengthy major service outages. Many problems are going unreported. Others are not addressed in accordance with the standards set by the CRTC. In all



Cartoon by Michael Thompson, Local 50

likelihood we have only seen the tip of this disastrous iceberg.

The moral is that Telus would have been better advised to concentrate on gaining customers and growing through providing good service instead of taking on huge debt to finance poorly-planned acquisitions or driving down costs by attacking its workforce.

Unfortunately, Entwistle chose to ignore the adage that those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it. The Telus share price has nosedived since his programs were initiated. One bond rating agency downgraded the company's debt to junk status. Telus is experiencing cash flow problems, while debt load has increased dramatically. Employee morale is dangerously low and jobsite stress, anger, and frustration are negatively affecting productivity. Telus employees believe that Entwistle is seriously off track. Work processes are becoming impossible to carry out thanks to management's infatuation with continuous, unnecessary process change as management tries to make workers do more with less. An ever-decreasing number of employees whose job it is to provide service are being diverted from productive work in order to answer complaints stemming from the new grand strategy. Given the company's strategic priorities, they can do little more than apply band aids to a crumbling infrastructure and make excuses for systematic understaffing to an increasingly hostile public.

There appears to be no relief in sight to this destructive downward spiral. Service levels will continue to sink from current low levels. Customers will continue to lose any sense of loyalty to this arrogant corporation, which wants to raise their rates but which refused to

provide them with good service. We have heard from public interest organizations and city councils which are preparing to file formal complaints about the degraded level of service.

Despite all of these warning signals, senior management is in denial, insisting that they are on the right track and that they are determined to stay the course. When confronted with the company's serious problems, they blame everyone but themselves: the union for insisting that management negotiate seriously; the CRTC for rejecting the company's pleas; the Canada Industrial Relations Board for not allowing Telus to decide the nature of its employees' bargaining unit; bond rating agencies for lowering Telus's debt rating; and customers who have switched to the company's competitors. The list is growing.

Ultimately, Entwistle is provoking a major confrontation with his unionized employees. Neither the collective agreement that is in place nor the unionized employees who built Telus into a blue chip company have changed since his arrival two years ago. But he is adamant that they are the problem. With Bell Canada moving into Telus's back yard, it is inconceivable that Telus would pick this as the time to provoke its employees into a dispute which can only further degrade a level of service quality that is already seriously impaired, force more hardship on communities, and destroy employee relations and morale for years to come.

The bottom line is that Entwistle wants customers and employees to pay for his flawed merger/growth strategy. It's simple: Telus can save money by cutting construction and maintenance programs, then lock out its unionized

staff, saving those nasty payroll costs. Management seems to believe that customers will stay with Telus through a strike or lockout, continuing to pay their bills regardless of the service disruption that results. The plan is to blame the unionized workforce for any service disruptions, when the problems should be laid at the feet of the company's crumbling infrastructure.

While there are major problems at Telus, there are no quick fixes. The further things are allowed to deteriorate, the larger the problems will become. Entwistle has picked a series of costly, unnecessary fights. At the same time, he has incurred some very high risk liabilities. It is our view that it is only a matter of time before this ticking time bomb explodes.

There are things which could be done to defuse this explosive situation. They would include:

Telus management must take responsibility for the fallout from its flawed strategic plan. The CRTC, the market, short sellers, the union, the employees who built the company, the CIRB, bond rating agencies, Labour Canada, and the competition should not be scapegoated as the cause of their problems.

The entire executive team and the board of directors should be reviewed. The goal should be to create a stable board and executive with managers and directors who know how to run a telecommunications company.

Withdraw the expensive, stressful, productivity negative PDO's and PDP's that have been initiated during Entwistle's tenure.

Cut back on the company's expensive TV and billboard advertisements. A solid company is built through

providing good service, not by having the cute animals in its ads.

Minimize investment and expenses east of Alberta. Instead use these funds to fight competition and provide good service in the company's core business areas of Alberta and B.C. The company's current plans are effectively undermining the core business by pursuing a pot of gold in eastern Canada.

Embrace the provision of high quality service an asset that builds customer loyalty. By ensuring proper maintenance of facilities, retaining highly trained employees, and implementing necessary construction projects, Telus will secure its future based on a valuable infrastructure.

Employees and customers should be valued, not manipulated. Happy, loyal employees will work hard for the company. Loyal customers will purchase its services.

The company's slash-and burn, winner-take-all approach must be abandoned. Instead, management should strive to resolve outstanding issues rather than picking unnecessary, unproductive fights.

Telus should adopt a system of corporate governance which ensures that the executive uses appropriate, understandable reporting and accounting terms and principles, and sets executive compensation based on tangible, relevant variables. To bolster shareholder confidence, external auditors should be brought in to appraise the health of the company and to make recommendations for constructive changes.

It remains to be seen whether Telus management will follow this advice before it's too late, or whether the company will have to experience major upheaval before coming to its senses.



Workers at Strategic Communications, members of TWU Local 63, meet in downtown Vancouver in September to ratify Collective Agreement, which was signed off earlier that month after 12 months of bargaining and a strong strike mandate from the membership. Negotiators for the Union were B.A. Bill Silvester, and members Raymond Hodgson, Benny Chou and Julie Todd. Strategic Communications, a 10-year-old company that specializes in fundraising and polling, was auto-certified on August 14, 2001.

TELUS appeals bomb threat order

By TIM WILLIAMS, B.A.
TWU Safety Officer

Determined that bomb threats at TELUS will continue to be handled in secret, TELUS has appealed a DIRECTION that was issued October 14, 2002 by a government Safety Officer. The Direction requires timely notification to the employees in bomb threat situations.

The Labour Code and other Government regulations – and long established Government policies – require that employees be informed of such threats to their safety, immediately after contacting the police and initiating a search of the escape routes. TELUS however, is resisting this requirement vigorously, even though failure to inform the employees deprives those employees of their right to refuse dangerous work.

If Telus wins the appeal, they can continue to conceal the bomb threats from those in danger until they deem it to be in their interests to do so. The result will be that, while the police and others search the building for bombs and other suspicious items, the employees will continue to work, unaware of the danger they may be in.

Failure to notify employees of a bomb threat is also a violation of the company's written policy, which stipulates that employees must be notified "as soon as possible" after contacting the police and initiating a search of escape routes. This provision was, of course, only included in the company's policy after a complaint from the TWU Safety and Health Committee (TWUSH) resulted in an Assurance of Voluntary Compliance (AVC) being issued to the Director of Corporate Safety, leaving management no choice but to SAY they would notify employees as soon as possible.

During the appeal delay, TWUSH continues to monitor the situation, and intends to keep the pressure on. If this enforcement action by HRDC fails to move the company into a more responsible position, on-

the-job action may be necessary, focused especially on the development of alternate alert procedures and reliable methods of spotting company responses to the concealed emergencies. If the company can not be relied on to provide timely, accurate information in such situations, the employees will need to consider leaving the scene when police or floor wardens are seen snooping through the buildings.

Those employees who have volunteered to be part of "search teams" should be discouraged by all classified workers and all union activists, since they are neither trained nor equipped to ensure their own safety. Professionals should perform this kind of search anyway. Even if those who have volunteered to do the searches have no regard for their own safety, the result of their searches is unreliable. Before declaring a workplace safe, the other employees are entitled to have this search done by a qualified person – not some untrained volunteer who knows nothing about explosives or what to look for.

Management wants employees to isolate themselves upon receiving a bomb threat, on the pretext that this keeps the report to the police from being influenced. TWUSH agrees that the story should be told first to the police but obviously, this measure prevents any other employees from learning of the bomb threat. Therefore, any employee who is

unfortunate enough to receive a bomb threat should, immediately after informing their supervisor and calling the police but prior to isolating themselves, alert their co-workers to the situation and ensure that someone will get the message to the Safety Committee.

Other employees who then learn of a bomb threat should spread the word by any means available. Until this secretive approach is abandoned by Telus, no employees should put faith in the company's intention to protect their safety during a bomb threat. Telus is showing no respect for the safety or the rights of the employees.

At press time, management, in some buildings – in consultation with the workplace health and safety committees were willingly endorsing local procedures that provide for very swift communication of bomb threats to the employees.

It is to be hoped that this kind of emerging sanity will have the desired effect. With this in mind the local workplace committees and local union executives should spare no effort in cooperating with those managers who are willing to act responsibly. When the bomb detonates, we want everybody to be safely out of its reach! If that objective is met, we also want to do everything possible to co-operate with the company in its difficult responsibility and we want to minimize the damage to our workplace and to our company.

Massage therapy beneficial

Institute for Work & Health/
CALM

Massage therapy is becoming a more common treatment for patients with low-back pain. But does it work?

According to a literature review conducted by IWH-based members of the Cochrane Collaboration Back Review Group, massage therapy can relieve symptoms and improve function for patients with low-back pain.

Patients who have subacute (pain lasting between four and 12 weeks) and chronic low-back pain (pain lasting more than 12 weeks)

can benefit from massage therapy, especially if it's combined with exercise and education and if it's delivered by a licensed massage therapist.

The benefits of massage can also last for at least one year after the end of treatment for patients with chronic low-back pain.

The results of this study are published Quin Hua Chen 63 in the September issue of Spine.

About 10% of those who suffer from low-back pain have chronic pain. Eighty to 90% of the health care costs associated with back pain are for patients with chronic low-back pain and disability.

Shaw members sent Drug Plan cards

In October on-line Drug Plan Purchase Cards (Assure) were sent to TW Benefit Plan PART D Shaw Employees. This card is for purchasing prescription drugs only, no paperwork is required unless you purchased a prescription between October 1 and the time you first used your Drug card. A form was included in the envelope with the Drug Plan Purchase Card, however we have since been notified that the name of the form and address has changed to Assure Card Claim Form at Great West Life, Health and Dental Benefits, P.O. Box 3050, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 4E5.

If you purchased prescriptions prior to October 1st, you must submit your receipts along with a Healthcare/Visioncare Expense Statement as you did previously to Great West Life. Please note the change of address where you submit your Great West Life claims both Extended Health and Dental Claims has been changed to Box 3050, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 4E5.

All Claim forms are available on the TWU website at http://www.twucanada.ca/member/plans/benefit/shaw/shaw_benefit_plan.html <http://www.twu-canada.ca/member/plans/benefit/shaw/shaw_benefit_plan.html>

You should have received a card along with a card for your spouse and for each dependant adult child, if a student enrolled in full-time education between ages 19 and 24.

Some members had not received their Drug Plan Purchase card(s) due to the TW Benefit Plan not being notified of change of addresses, change of marital status, change in dependant information, please notify the TW Benefit Plan office of any changes or if you have not received your Drug Plan Purchase card(s). The TW Benefit Plan can be contacted at (604) 430-3300.

Plan to downsize the 12 Days of Christmas

Internet/CALM

Memo to all staff:

In the light of today's highly competitive global economy, the North Pole's board of directors feels it must be more responsive to its stockholders. Therefore, the following steps are being taken to downsize the 12 days of Christmas.

The partridge will remain, but since the pear tree never produced a valuable cash crop, it will be replaced by a plastic plant.

The Turtledoves must go. They are not cost-effective; therefore, these two positions are eliminated. The three French hens will be reduce to two, thereby saving another position and moderating a redundancy.

The four calling birds will be replaced by an automated call waiting system. This should also reduce our phone charges.

The five golden rings have been put on hold while the board checks the soundness of having a portfolio based solely on precious metals. A more diversified portfolio with mutual funds, T-bills and blue chip stocks is suggested.

The six geese a'laying is a luxury we can no longer afford. From now on, to better serve our customers, we will be substituting eggs from chickens.

The seven swans a'swimming are another holdover from better times and will be replaced by mechanical swans. From a distance, Gary Ball 208 no one is likely to notice.

The eight maids a'milking will also be cut. Those maids no longer needed will be given out placement assistance. By next year, it's expected this operation

will either be outsourced to a Third World country or converted to milking machines.

The nine ladies dancing will be cut to four since nine is an odd number, Robyn Pankhurst-Walker 202 and we can no longer afford such inefficiencies.

The 10 lords a'leaping has always struck us as overkill. Cuts will be made here as well. Hiring this many lords and paying workers' compensation cost to cover any injuries they may receive from all that leaping is excessive.

Also, the 11 pipers piping and the 12 drummers drumming have been deemed an unneeded extravagance. Instead, at board functions, a string quartet will be hired. Rank-and-file employees will have to make do Jack Carroll 208 with Muzak.

We realized these changes may be upsetting to some, but they are necessary. In the coming days, we will be counting on each of you to do your part for the Days of Christmas team.

Lung cancer claim allowed

In a landmark decision the Ontario Workplace Safety and Insurance Board has allowed a claim to a woman who was recently diagnosed with terminal lung cancer.

This decision, made in a remarkably short period of time, confirms that members of the service industry are particularly vulnerable to the effects of second-hand smoke.



TWU delegates to BC Federation of Labour convention held in Vancouver in late November

NACU focuses on proposed foreign ownership changes

A National Alliance of Communications Unions (NACU) conference, hosted by the AC&TWU, was held in Halifax November 23-24. *Vice-President Neil Morrison has once again kindly made available his notes from the conference. This report is based largely on those notes. Our thanks again to Neil.*

Representing the TWU were President Rod Hiebert and Vice-Presidents Neil Morrison and Bruce Bell.

Representing the AC&TWU were Gary Grant, President, and Dean McDonald, BA.

From CEP: Ervan Cronk, Atlantic; Michelle Ouimette, Québec; Joell Carr, Ontario; Ron Carlson, Saskatchewan; and Peter Murdoch and Jim Kincaid, National Office.

From CAW: Brian Lee, representing workers at AT&T (replacing Dave Halicowski, who recently retired).

The issue of **Foreign Ownership** in the Canadian telecommunications sector was a major topic under discussion at the conference.

This was sparked by the recent announcement by federal Industry Minister Allan Rock that he has ordered a review of foreign ownership restrictions in the telecom and cable TV sectors. (Telecom comes under Rock,

while CATV comes under Heritage Minister Sheila Copps). Rock wants the committee doing the review to report by the end of February, 2003.

Under current rules, foreign ownership is restricted to 33.3 per cent direct holding, and up to 46 per cent indirect through holding companies and the like. There is a big push from industry and some branches of government to lower or eliminate foreign ownership restrictions to allow access to cheaper foreign capital.

All NACU affiliates are opposed to increased foreign ownership. Labour is concerned that lowering or eliminating restrictions would lead to loss of sovereignty, consolidation of work in the U.S. (for example, serv reps, operators and engineers, *inter alia*) as well as transfer of head offices to the U.S. Labour fears Research and Development Linda Smith 203 and manufacturing of equipment will be affected because foreign owners will use their own equipment and R&D.

A Decima research poll shows 59 per cent of Canadians oppose increased foreign ownership.

An action plan was discussed, to include:

- Informing organizations likely to support labour's position on the issue, such as the Council of Canadians, Friends of Canadian

Broadcasting, the Public Interest Advocacy Centre, and consumer groups.

- Lobbying provincial governments.

- Applying pressure for public hearings.

- Putting an emergency resolution to the BC Federation of Labour convention.

- Undertaking regional media campaigns.

- Encouraging Locals write to federal cabinet ministers, and the CRTC.

Another issue of concern to the NACU delegates was **Essential Services**.

A new Essential Services provision was added to the Canada Labour Code January 1, 1999.

Aliant has applied to have approximately 570 workers out of 2,500 declared essential. There have already been six days of hearings before the CIRB, with no end in sight.

The AC&TWU and CEP have convinced the CIRB the threshold question should be whether there is an imminent danger to the health and safety of the public. There have been affidavits and testimony from DND, RCMP, Nav Canada, and 911 services. In fact, systems already have backups because of fibre rings, cellular systems, and the like.

Labour also notes there have been long strikes in telecom in both Canada and the U.S., and the public has not been endangered, nor has there been a legislated end to a telecom strike.

TELUS has applied for essential services hearings before the CIRB, and the Unions do not think that hearing will be put on hold pending an outcome of the Aliant hearings. It is the Unions' view that what the telcos really want is for the bargaining unit to look after essential services so managers and/or strikebreakers will be free to look after the rest.

Another issue discussed was **Quality of Service**. James Kincaid will prepare information for a survey of members to assist affiliates gather information.

Quality of Service and the proposed survey will be discussed further at the next meeting of NACU, which is scheduled to coincide with the foreign ownership hearings in Ottawa.

Ottawa reviewing telecom ownership rules

The federal minister of Industry is calling for a review of foreign ownership restrictions in Canada's telecommunications sector.

Allan Rock has asked a Commons Committee to finish the review by the end of February. The Committee has been asked to determine whether Canada can secure access to a larger capital pool for investment in infrastructure without compromising its national interests.

Foreign-ownership regulations stipulate that at least 80 per cent of the members of the board of directors of a telecommunications company must be Canadians, and a similar per cent of the company's voting shares must also be held, either directly or indirectly, by Canadians. These rules have been in place since 1993.

The Labour movement opposes easing of foreign-ownership restrictions in telecommunications. The TWU took the issue to the BC Federation of Labour convention through the following resolution:

Whereas the Minister of Industry Allan Rock has called for a review of foreign ownership rules for Telecommunications and Cable TV companies;

And whereas a majority of Canadians oppose a removal of foreign ownership restrictions;

And whereas removing these restrictions would ultimately lead to a loss of sovereignty, loss of jobs, further degradation of service, breaches of national security, reduction of research and development in Canada, cost increases for consumers, and compromise the privacy of Canadians;

Therefore be it resolved that the BC Federation of Labour through the Canadian Labour Congress strongly oppose any moves by the Federal Government to remove or reduce the current foreign ownership restrictions in the Telecommunications and Cable TV sectors.



Members work to restore access to Mobility site destroyed by fire near Fort McMurray this summer as House River forest fire rages nearby. Seen here, Lorne Boychuk (Cable Repair), and Larry Oram (Network); also present, but not in picture, Rob Pagacz (Network) and Perry de Vos (Cable Repair).

Days of pay purchase info for TWPP members

The Telecommunication Workers Pension Plan office has provided information of interest to Plan members who have purchased service in the previous two calendar years.

To be eligible for a full year of credited service you must have a minimum of 250 Days of Pay in a year. The 250 days includes days worked and days on Leave of Absence due to sick leave, WCB or ill health.

If you have a shortfall of Days of Pay in 2002 you may be entitled to purchase Days of Pay. To be eligible, you must have 36 months of seniority, worked a minimum of one day in the year 2002, and been employed for the full calendar year to purchase any shortfall on the 250 days. You cannot purchase more service than was earned in 1999 or 2000.

If you are eligible and wish to purchase, this is a reminder that you must purchase within the calendar year, no payments will be accepted in 2003 for the 2002 calendar year.

For more details or if you would like a form to purchase days please contact the TW Pension Plan at (604) 430-1317.

Extended Health coverage

The Union office has received a number of calls asking for information on Extended Health Coverage after leaving TELUS.

The following is information for TWU members who have or will leave TELUS as a result of taking the VDIP (Voluntary Departure Incentive).

The Company has said that they will carry on coverage of extended health and dental for TWU members who elect to take the VDIP for three months past their departure date.

Once this three-month period has elapsed, past employees who have not obtained group coverage through another employer would then have to either buy their own extended health and dental coverage or pay for such expenses themselves.

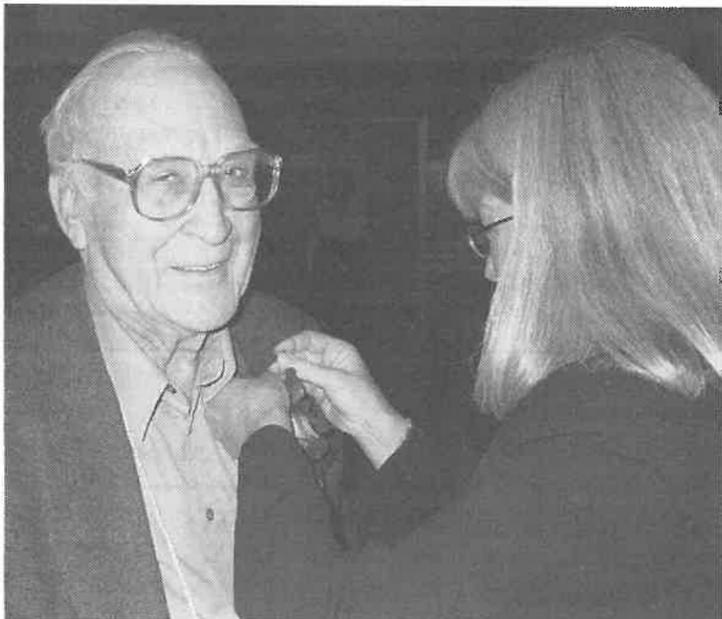
The Union met with representatives of Clarica recently to see what they had to offer to members who, due to taking the VDIP, would soon be without extended health and dental coverage through TELUS.

The following information is not an endorsement of Clarica but for your information only and is intended to help you start the process of finding an extended health provider.

Employees of TELUS are currently covered by a group extended health and dental plan provided by Clarica. Once an employee terminates with TELUS, Clarica has an individual plan that former employees of the group plan can convert to without taking a qualifying medical examination. It is called their "Personal Health Insurance Guaranteed Benefit Replacement". Other insurers offer individual extended health and dental plans, but may require a medical examination or other information in order to determine the premium rates.

Former members of the TELUS group plan have 31 days from the time they leave the group plan to sign up for the Clarica conversion plan. The list of benefits and costs are available through Clarica. Anybody interested in getting more information should contact Shawn Perryman at Clarica, business number 604-588-5232 extension 214, facsimile 604-581-7330 or shawn.perryman@clarica.com. You may want to contact the Clarica office nearest you but we are putting Shawn's name forward because he is becoming familiar with our situation.

Pensioners' Dinner, 2002



TW Pension Trustee Nancy Curley greets oldest female, Violet Lanthier, and oldest male, Frank Helden, at annual Pensioners' Dinner in Burnaby



JACKETS

| | |
|-----------|-------|
| X-small | 32-34 |
| Small | 36-38 |
| Medium | 40-42 |
| Large | 44-46 |
| X-large | 48-50 |
| XX-large | 52-54 |
| XXX-large | 56-58 |

| | |
|-----------|------|
| Small | Tall |
| Medium | Tall |
| Large | Tall |
| X-large | Tall |
| XX-large | Tall |
| XXX-large | Tall |

VESTS

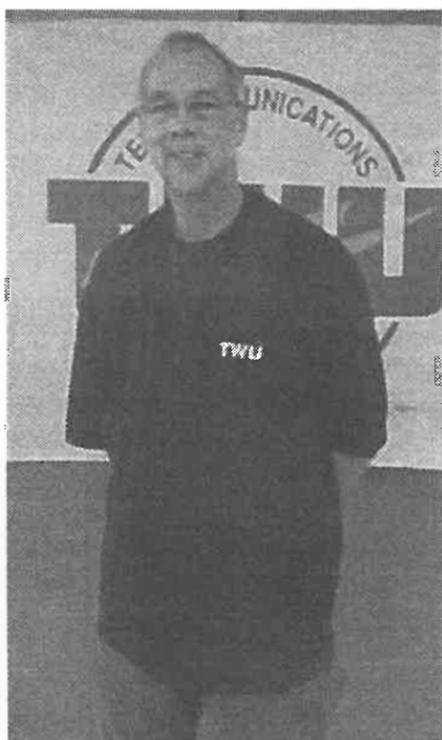
| | |
|-----------|------|
| Small | 36 |
| Small | Tall |
| Medium | 40 |
| Medium | Tall |
| Large | 44 |
| Large | Tall |
| X-large | 46 |
| X-large | Tall |
| XX-large | 48 |
| XX-large | Tall |
| XXX-large | 52 |
| XXX-large | Tall |

T-SHIRTS

Colours: navy, grey, black

HATS

Colours: black and navy



Bargaining Committee member Ron Driscoll models TWU T-shirt. You too could look this good in Union apparel now on sale from the Union office!



Promotional Items Order Form

Telecommunications Workers Union
5261 Lane Street
Burnaby, BC V5H 4A6
Tel: 604-437-8601
Fax: 604-435-7760

Telecommunications Workers Union
#255 - 525 - 28th St. S.E.
Calgary, AB T2A 6W9
Tel: 403-237-6990
Fax: 403-802-2361

Telecommunications Workers Union
#103 - 10525 - 170th Street
Edmonton, AB T5P 4W2
Tel: 780-444-6945
Fax: 780-488-6911

Email: twu@twu-canada.ca

Website: www.twu-canada.ca

| Qty. | Colour | Size | Description | TWU LOGOS 1, 2 OR 3 | Unit Price | GST (7%) | PST (BC) (7.5%) | Total |
|------|--------|------|---|---------------------|------------|----------|-----------------|-------|
| | | | Caps (low fitting) | | \$14.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | |
| | | | Denim Shirt (long sleeve) (S, M, L, XL) | | 43.00 | 3.01 | 3.23 | |
| | | | Denim Shirt (long sleeve) (XXL) | | 45.00 | 3.15 | 3.38 | |
| | | | Golf Shirt Women sleeveless (S, M, L, XL) | | 42.00 | 2.94 | 3.15 | |
| | | | Golf Shirt Women sleeveless (XXL) | | 44.00 | 3.08 | 3.30 | |
| | | | Golf Shirt Women's (S, M, L, XL) | | 42.00 | 2.94 | 3.15 | |
| | | | Golf Shirt Women's (XXL) | | 44.00 | 3.08 | 3.30 | |
| | | | Golf Shirt Men's (P-1589) (S, M, L, XL) | | 43.00 | 3.01 | 3.23 | |
| | | | Golf Shirt Men's (P-1589) (XXL) | | 45.00 | 3.15 | 3.38 | |
| | | | Golf Shirt Men's (TP-1479) (S, M, L, XL) | | 43.00 | 3.01 | 3.23 | |
| | | | Golf Shirt Men's (TP-1479) (XXL) | | 45.00 | 3.15 | 3.38 | |
| | | | Jacket (Viper Gortex) (S, M, L, XL) | | 175.00 | 12.25 | 13.13 | |
| | | | Jacket (Viper Gortex) (XXL) | | 180.00 | 12.60 | 13.50 | |
| | | | Jacket (Summer - 2-tone Bomber) (S, M, L, XL) | | 82.00 | 5.74 | 6.15 | |
| | | | Jacket (Summer - 2-tone Bomber) (XXL) | | 87.00 | 6.09 | 6.53 | |
| | | | Jacket (Winter - 2-tone Bomber) (S, M, L, XL) | | 90.00 | 6.30 | 6.75 | |
| | | | Jacket (Winter - 2-tone Bomber) (XXL) | | 95.00 | 6.65 | 7.13 | |
| | | | Jacket (Melton Leather Bomber) (S, M, L, XL) | | 185.00 | 12.95 | 13.88 | |
| | | | Jacket (Melton Leather Bomber) (XXL) | | 190.00 | 13.30 | 14.25 | |
| | | | Official TWU Pin | | 2.75 | 0.00 | 0.00 | |
| | | | Sweat Shirt Hooded (S, M, L, XL) | | 54.00 | 3.78 | 4.05 | |
| | | | Sweat Shirt Hooded (XXL) | | 56.00 | 3.92 | 4.20 | |
| | | | Sweat Shirt Long Sleeve (S, M, L, XL) | | 36.00 | 2.52 | 2.70 | |
| | | | Sweat Shirt Long Sleeve (XXL) | | 38.00 | 2.66 | 2.85 | |
| | | | Sweat Shirt Long Sleeve Polo (S, M, L, XL) | | 48.00 | 3.36 | 3.60 | |
| | | | Sweat Shirt Long Sleeve Polo (XXL) | | 50.00 | 3.50 | 3.75 | |
| | | | Sweat Pants | | 44.00 | 3.08 | 3.30 | |
| | | | T-Shirt (double-dyed) | | 18.50 | 1.30 | 1.39 | |
| | | | T-Shirt (short-sleeve) | | 16.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | |
| | | | Umbrella (Manual Golf) | | 12.50 | 0.88 | 0.94 | |
| | | | Vest, Polar Fleece (S, M, L, XL) | | 52.00 | 3.64 | 3.90 | |
| | | | Vest, Polar Fleece (XXL) | | 57.00 | 3.99 | 4.28 | |
| | | | Mugs, Travel | | 8.00 | 0.56 | 0.60 | |

GST & PST to be added to unit price in BC. GST to be added to unit price in Alberta. Approximate delivery date - 4 weeks. All merchandise is Canadian-made. If you require any special or specific sizes, please contact June Lewis, Business Agent or Colleen McFadden, Manager, Administrative Services at the TWU office.

Full payment must accompany each order. Please place all orders with your Local Secretary-Treasurer and make cheques payable to the Telecommunications Workers Union.

| | | |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name: | | Local: |
| Address: | | |
| | | Postal Code: |
| Amount Enclosed: | Work Phone #: | Home Phone #: |

UNION OFFICE USE ONLY

| | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Date Order Received: | Picked up by/Shipped via: |
|----------------------|---------------------------|



LOGO # 1



LOGO #2



LOGO #3

Please note: All fabric, materials and labour are 100% Union and are Canadian-made. Mirage fabric is high quality, insulated, water resistant and fully machine washable.

Groundbreaking member retiring from TELUS



Cheryl Shiels, first female technician in Alberta, seen here with daughter Alex, retiring from TELUS after 33 years

When Cheryl Shiels started working for AGT in 1969, she was a 17-year-old telephone operator.

When she leaves the TELUS workforce this December 13, with 33 years seniority, she will be leaving as one of the few female technicians in Calgary.

Cheryl has the distinction of being the first journeyperson in I&R Craft in AGT, anywhere in Alberta.

It was way back in 1977 that Cheryl went into craft as a technician, and it wasn't achieved without a struggle.

Born in Regina, Cheryl moved with her family to Drumheller as a young girl. She started with AGT in Edmonton right out of school, but after six months she moved to Calgary, and has worked for AGT/TELUS in Calgary ever since. After six years as an operator and two years in Clerical as a Repair Service Clerk, Cheryl got the idea it might be fun to work in craft.

"I thought it would be fun, I don't mind outside work, and the money was better," Cheryl says, "so I decided to give it a try."

However, getting in didn't prove to be easy. She says AGT managers initially tried to discourage her. When she pressed the issue, they told her she wasn't qualified because she lacked Grade 12 math. So she enrolled in the electronics

program through night school at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, and completed the course, which included the required high school math, in about a year.

Even then, the company stalled at placing her. So Cheryl went to the Alberta Human Rights Commission, and before the issue went to a hearing, AGT agreed to give her a chance. After canvassing the crews, the company placed her in a craft position.

She says she was very well received by the men in the crew. "They were willing to train me, and I'm pretty adaptable, and we got along fine. I stayed there for four years." Since then, she has worked in a number of positions, including dedicated technician for the City of Calgary, and most recently, as a technician dedicated to looking after TELUS buildings in Calgary.

Although she was a ground breaker for women wanting to go into craft in Alberta, Cheryl says 3 years passed from the time she was accepted until the second woman came into craft in Calgary, and even today there are only a handful of female craftspersons in TELUS Alberta.

Asked if she ever had any regrets about her move to craft, Cheryl says emphatically, "None at all. It's been a great job. I like the customer contact, and customers are often surprised and pleased to find out there are women in the job."

Cheryl and her husband Mick were married 18 years ago. Mick is now a Business Agent for the TWU, a position he was elected to shortly after the merger of Alberta TELUS and BC TEL. While Mick is the union activist in the family, Cheryl says she has always been a Union member and supporter since starting with AGT 33 years ago.

Cheryl says she has been working for a long time, and decided it was time for a break from work. She is taking the VDIP offered by TELUS, and will be eligible for the company pension in four years, but she doesn't rule out a return to part-time work some time in the future. But for the time being, though, she plans to enjoy her newfound leisure, and spend more time with Mick and their 15-year-old daughter.

Great Financial Plans



By BILL BILES, CFP
Financial Planner

Van Tel/Safeway Credit Union

I must make one *important correction* to something I have mistakenly told hundreds of TWU members at my summer/fall seminars regarding the TELUS packages. I said there is no way to defer any part of the package payout to 2005, understanding that the last day for departure via the packages is December 31, 2003. The "next year" deferral offered by TELUS would extend only to January 2004, or so I thought. However, if you work until the end of a December your final paycheque isn't issued until January. You are able to defer any part of your payment until the January *following* the year of your last paycheque. So if you depart at the end of December 2002 and you receive your last paycheque in January 2003, you can realize your package payouts in either January of 2003 or deferred to January of 2004. It follows that if you depart in December 2003, and your final paycheque is in January of 2004, you should have the right to receive your payment in either January of 2004 or deferred to 2005. These deferrals may imply some different tax consequences for those of you leaving in December of either year. Anyone looking for clarification, please give me a call.

I would still argue that there is little advantage to deferring your RRSP transfer to the following year (the dollars aren't taxable anyway), and you may wish to rethink deferring the part of the payout you cannot shelter. Since you won't have much TELUS income in the year of your last paycheque (if received in January), deferring payment for 12 months may not reduce your tax owing enough to make it worthwhile. You can probably use the money sooner anyway!

Speaking of money... "*Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat. Please put a penny in the old man's hat. If you haven't got a penny, a ha' penny will do. If you haven't got a ha' penny, then God bless you!*"

This old Christmas ditty seems very poignant this year. You and I may be doing okay but there are some who could use a hand this Holiday Season. Whether we can help out financially or not depends on how tight things are in our own budgets, but there are other ways to brighten someone's holidays.

Helping rake up the neighbour's yard, or clearing some snow, or offering the clothes or toys you no longer use, or even making up a meal or food basket can lighten someone's load and brighten their holiday season. To mix some clichéd sentiments, it is a very small world and what goes around, comes around. Even if you don't receive a tax receipt for it, and even if you don't think you are helping out much, any charitable activity can be good for the heart and soul!

And speaking of our hearts, we have experienced tumultuous financial times over the past couple of years. Stock markets around the world have "corrected" sharply (what were they doing wrong in the first place, you might ask), share prices of many individual stocks (including some very near and dear to our hearts and wallets) have given us fits and starts, and many of us have made life-impacting decisions regarding the package offerings from TELUS. For some of us, tomorrow looks very different from today and yesterday. Good or bad, these changes are our new lives and the attitude and grit that got us where we are today will help see us through the challenges ahead. But while we must plan for the future, we cannot overlook today.

We are currently experiencing remarkably low interest rates, representing a "bust" for savers but a "boon" for those looking to borrow or reorganize their debt. Prevailing interest rates are bound to rise so looking for lower cost debt with longer terms, or the option to lock in for the longer term, makes very good sense. If you are looking to buy term deposits, keeping your funds relatively short term and liquid makes good sense – if rates increase you would like to be able to regularly take advantage of new and increasing deposit returns. Visit your favorite financial institution (VTSCU branches are in Victoria, Vancouver, Surrey and Burnaby at Royal Oak and the TELUS "Boot") to see how you can best take advantage of today's low rates.

Finally, year-end is an important time to do your last minute tax planning. Know what deductible expenses must be incurred by December 31 and time your investments to defer distributions and taxable income. Contact me for a more comprehensive list of year-end tax tips.

And see if you can find at least a "ha' penny" to spare for your fellow man, in kind if not in cash. Everyone's Holiday Season will be the better for it. Please enjoy yours!

You can call Bill Biles at (604) 656-6289, email at bbiles@vantelsafeway.com, or contact a Van Tel/Safeway Member Service Representative at (604) 656-6200 or toll free at 1-800-663-1557. Please visit Van Tel/Safeway's website at www.vantelsafeway.com.

Associate membership open to early retirees

Reprinted, by request, from September, 2002 Transmitter

Five years ago, when a number of members were leaving the BC TEL workforce prior to age 55 after accepting a Voluntary Separation package (VSP), the TWU instituted an "Associate Membership" designation to cover those members between the time they took the VSP and the time they began collecting their pension (at which time they become retired members).

Associate membership means that the member retains eligibility to apply for the Union's retirement gift (maximum \$1,000) on starting the pension, and also continues to receive the Transmitter.

With a new Voluntary Departure Initiative in the offing, Secretary-Treasurer Jim Christensen has sent a letter to members outlining the process to become an Associate Member of the TWU. Christensen explains:

"You are required to pay \$1 per month (\$12 per year) to the TWU. Payments start the month following your last day of employment and cease when you start receiving your pension. Payment can be made by cheque for one year at a time, or for the entire amount. Yearly reminders will not be sent. If, at the time you go on pension, your payment is in arrears, the outstanding amount will be deducted from the retirement cheque."