

The Update



Issue 2 2013/2014

November 2013

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MEETING DATES

Term Faculty Social: Infusions, Friday, January 10th, 4:00-6:00pm

Kelowna Social: Infusions, Friday, January 10th, 6:00pm

Penticton Social: Kettle Valley Station, Wednesday, January 15th, 5:00-7:00pm

Vernon Social: Alexander's, Friday, January 17th, 5:00-7:00pm

Salmon Arm Social: Setters Pub, Monday, January 20th, 5:00-7:00pm

Department Chairs Social: Capri Hotel, Wednesday, January 29th, 5:00pm

Winter General Meeting: 5:30-9:00 p.m., Friday, January 24 (Kelowna Campus Cafeteria, hosted bar at 5:30pm, dinner at 6:00pm, and meeting at 7:00pm).

OCFA Executive meetings are generally held once every two weeks. If you would like to bring forward a particular item for consideration please contact one of your OCFA Exec members (see page 2 for the list).

OCFA Council meetings are generally held once per month. If you would like to bring forward a particular item for consideration please contact one of your OCFA Council or Exec members (see page 2 for the list).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The *Update* welcomes letters to the editor. I encourage you to write either in response to what you read in the newsletter or about other Faculty Association matters. Letters to the *Update* do not represent the opinions of the editor nor the OCFA Executive or Council. Please send letters as e-mail to the *Update* editor Erin Radomske at eradomske@okanagan.bc.ca. The preferred format is MS-Word.

DELIVERY OF THE UPDATE

The *Update* is now distributed electronically as a PDF file by e-mail as well as being available on the OCFA webpage at: <http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/administration/ocfa/update.html>

Copies of the *Update* are also posted in local campus mailrooms.

Members of OCFA Council and CARC

2013-2014

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Human Rights and International Solidarity Representative	Levi Gahman	Ext 4425	LGahman@okanagan.bc.ca
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Salmon Arm Campus Steward	Terry Kosowick	Ext 8234	TKosowick@okanagan.bc.ca
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President's Report

Tim Walters

Hi everyone,

There is plenty going on in the next few months – see below for what's what, and don't hesitate to get in touch if there is something you'd like us to be doing or doing differently. I hope you and yours have a lovely holidays, and I look forward to seeing you out at the rally, the socials, or the WGM.

Cheers,

tim

WINTER OCFA SOCIAL CALENDAR:

Friday January 10th: **Term faculty social @ Infusions**, 4-6pm

Friday January 10th: **Kelowna campus social @ Infusions**, 6pm-

Wednesday January 15th: **Penticton campus social @ Kettle Valley Station**, 5pm-

Friday January 17th: **Vernon campus social @ Alexander's**, 5pm-

Monday January 20th: **Salmon Arm campus social @ Setter's**, 5pm-

Friday January 24th: **Winter General meeting @ KLO Cafeteria**

- Hosted bar opens 5:30pm, Dinner served 6:00pm, Meeting begins by 7:00pm

Wednesday January 29th: **Department Chair social @ the Capri hotel**, 5pm-

OCFA BURSARY AND TONY WILLIAMS MEMORIAL BURSARIES

Congratulations to Brittni Dieno, Miya Doige, Thomas Juhasz, Mykyta Khmelevskyy, Amanda Stewart, and Kazuki Tamoda, this year's recipients of OCFA and Tony Williams Memorial Bursaries.

MANAGEMENT EVALUATION PROGRAM

As I mentioned in my FGM report, we have been devising a mechanism through which all faculty can participate in the evaluation of their Deans or Directors, Associate Deans, and Regional Deans. You will all have this opportunity in a few weeks. I'll be contacting you in mid-December with more particulars, but from December 20th – January 10th you'll be able to access evaluation forms online (using the same secure and anonymized website as Chris Clarkson is using for the bargaining survey) to provide feedback which will be collected, aggregated and submitted by the OCFA to each manager's supervisor and to the OC President. This will be the first time in our institution's history that faculty have had the opportunity to evaluate each of their managers, and the first time our

managers have had the opportunity to receive this kind of direct feedback, so we hope you all choose to participate in what we hope will be a rewarding and productive process for all involved.

SOLIDARITY OPPORTUNITY: FORTIS BC RALLY

As I reported in the last issue of *The Update*, more than 200 IBEW Local 213 and COPE workers have been locked out by their employer since June 26th. The BC Federation of Labour have asked us to support these workers at a rally on December 13th. If you're at all able, please come on out to join with other local unions to help lift the spirits of these folks, who have been locked out for almost 5 months now, which is an absolute disgrace. The rally will take place at 1975 Springfield Road in Kelowna starting at 5pm – dress warmly, and bring banners or posters if you can. I'll send out a reminder about this important event as we narrow in on the date.

MOODLE/ONLINE PRIVACY ISSUES.

Note: the following short essay was submitted on behalf of the OCFA to the ILLT newsletter on "Online and Blended Learning," but was rejected by virtue of its being "political."

Faculty and Student Rights in an Online Learning Environment?

Whenever a culture is engaged in a period of sweeping technological change its members need to agree on how its existing rules, norms and accepted practices will need to be modified to fit this new environment. These are invariably turbulent and challenging times, and we are clearly in one such era at present. Changes to the role played by technology in our, and our students', lives require systemic transformation. What will need rethinking in our profession, in our relationship with our students and our employer as information technologies take on greater significance in our work?

The OCFA has increasingly turned its attention to these issues, and a recent case study from OC provides an interesting example of the obstacles and opportunities that lie ahead. At the end of the spring term, we became aware that a faculty member's Moodle space had been accessed by a supervisor for purposes of evaluation without that professor being notified that this was even possible. Since this seemed to us a violation of this instructor's (and his students') right to privacy and potentially also an infringement upon their academic freedom, we asked the college at our monthly meeting if they thought it was appropriate to do this kind of online monitoring absent any engagement with faculty or students about how their existing rights translate to a virtual classroom. We were told that they would look into it and get back to us. We heard nothing back from them for several months, but were recently made aware that over the summer and without any consultation the college changed its policies to allow them to do precisely the thing we had just questioned them about doing, and didn't notify anyone that they had done so.

I recommend you carefully review this new policy, and encourage your students to do likewise: [http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/Assets/Departments+\(Administration\)/Legal+Affairs/Use+of+Information+Technology+Resources.pdf](http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/Assets/Departments+(Administration)/Legal+Affairs/Use+of+Information+Technology+Resources.pdf). In section 13.0, the college declares: "Use of LMS (Learning Management Systems, such as Moodle) may be inspected or monitored from time to time by the employee's supervisor (Associate Dean, Dean or Director) or their designate, without notice or approval for administrative purposes, including without limitation, employee evaluation." We have

discovered that this is already happening today and, given the unilateral and hasty way in which this policy change was brought into being, it will presumably be happening a good deal more in the future. To be clear: right now, anyone in the college's management team (or their designate) can browse anything you *or your students* post on Moodle without your or your student ever having known that this was the case, and they can do so for whatever reason they choose. As section 11.0 makes plain, "[u]sers should not expect privacy when using Okanagan College Information Resources." Were you aware that this is so? Are your students?

Suffice it to say, we believe this is a real problem. When we are evaluated our supervisors visit our classrooms to see us doing our work and hopefully this helps us to do our jobs better, which is policy befitting a learning institution. They do not install hidden cameras in our classrooms to snoop on us without our knowledge, they do not sneak into our offices to read our student's papers, and they do not bug our phones to monitor our communications. Yet they have claimed the right to do precisely this kind of surveillance of the work we do online, which is self-evidently unacceptable. This is 2013, not 1984.

Information technologies have the capacity to fundamentally transform the pedagogical landscape more than any invention since the printing press and in ways we cannot yet imagine. As educators many of us are excited by these potentialities, yet the rush to embrace them must not be predicated upon our concession of the principles upon which our profession is built and without which it is not conceivable. We all have an obligation to work together to think seriously about what academic freedom, what privacy, what our relationships with students and with our supervisors will look like in the wired world. Until the college is willing to do this work and to rethink its present comprehension of these technologies as Foucauldian tools of surveillance and discipline, using OC hosted platforms such as Moodle is regrettably not in the best educational or professional interests of Okanagan College faculty or of its students.

First Vice-President's Report

Rod Watkins
Chief Steward

Hello OCFA members,

I hope your term is going well and you are all enjoying your classes. I have a few grievances to report; I'll try to be brief.

1. GRIEVANCE FAC 10/09—TLU CREDIT FOR TERM MEMBERS ON MATERNITY OR PARENTAL LEAVES

This grievance went to arbitration in April. Term members who go on maternity/parental leave lose out on work to which they have rights of accrual. Other term members pick up this work in their absence. The result is that the members on leave lose their place in line on the path to

converting to continuing; other term members leapfrog over them. We have argued that term members on maternity/parental leave should receive credit for the work they would have done had they not gone on leave. Such credit would allow them to maintain their place in line. We have lost the arbitration. It is being appealed both at the LRB as well as through the courts. The Arbitrator ruled against us, but the decision was based on a legal standard that was struck down by the Supreme Court of Canada moments before the decision was published. It is now before the BC Courts and Human Right Tribunal. Further hearings are scheduled for next month.

2. GRIEVANCE FAC12/05 - DISCIPLINE WITHOUT JUST CAUSE AND DUE PROCESS

A member in the WET program received a 5 day suspension last July as part of a progressive discipline procedure. We are grieving on the grounds that the student complaints that were the basis of the suspension were not properly verified and that the designated supervisor who was responsible for investigating those complaints and who issued the suspension is unfairly biased against the member. The grievance is now at Step 3. Arbitration dates are being sought for this grievance at this moment.

3. GRIEVANCE FAC12/07 – DISCIPLINARY USE OF ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE

This grievance is also on behalf of the same member as FAC12/05. In late November, the member was placed on administrative leave pending investigation of additional student complaints received in the fall 2012 term. The OCFA argued that such use of administrative leave was actually disciplinary and subject to the language in Article 36 of our CA. It is currently at Step 3. It will be placed in abeyance pending resolution of FAC12/05 and FAC13/10 below.

4. FAC13/04 - VIOLATION OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND IMPROPER EVALUATION

In spring of 2013, the OCFA learned that several administrators and support staff have complete access to, and have actually accessed without informing or requesting consent, instructor's Moodle sites as part of their summative evaluations. Such unannounced access, we have argued, is a violation of privacy, both of the instructor but also of students, as well as a violation of academic freedom. The grievance is currently at Step 2 after being removed from abeyance. At the start of the summer, we agreed to place the grievance in abeyance pending discussions of a new policy. Over the summer, the College prepared and published in June a policy regarding IT services including Moodle allowing the College complete and unfettered access to all IT services, including Moodle. As a result, we removed the grievance from abeyance and are currently in talks. (See FAC13/11 below as well.)

5. FAC13/07 - FAILURE TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO MEMBERS OVER AGE 65

Currently, members who continue to work past age 65 lose their LTD as well as Life Insurance coverage at OC. At the encouragement of FPSE and in coordination with other College's and FPSE's Human Right Tribunal case, we have filed a policy grievance against this form of age discrimination. It has been denied by the College. We will move the grievance to Step 3 shortly.

6. FAC13/08 AND FAC13/09 – IMPROPER USE OF ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE

Two further individuals have been placed on administrative leave. At the advice of FPSE and at the request of the College, we have filed separate grievances for both additional members placed on admin leave. Both have been denied at Step 2 by the College. CARC has recommended that we proceed to Step 3; Council will review that recommendation shortly. We will request that these two be heard together should they proceed to arbitration.

7. FAC13/10 – WRONGFUL TERMINATION

Again, this involves the member previously mentioned in FAC12/05 and FAC12/07. The College dismissed this member on October 3, 2013. We have filed a wrongful termination (or termination without just cause) grievance. It will be before an arbitrator in October 2014, unless earlier dates can be found.

8. FAC13/11 - VIOLATION OF COPYRIGHT OWNERSHIP

As part of the new IT policy mentioned in 4 above (FAC13/04), the College was claiming ownership of every single item posted or transmitted via the College's IT services. This includes anything posted by a faculty member or student via the school's Moodle, email or any other IT service. This is a clear violation of our Copyright language that guarantees that copyright ownership ordinarily resides with the instructor. In talks, the College appears to have recognized this and has given indications that the policy will be amended. Once that becomes official, CARC will re-evaluate the need to proceed with this grievance.

In Solidarity,
Rod Watkins
Chief Steward/1st Vice President
Okanagan College Faculty Association (FPSE local 9)

Second Vice-President's Report

Chris Clarkson Negotiations Committee Chair

The next round of public sector bargaining in British Columbia has begun. On November 13, 2013, the Health Sciences Association of British Columbia (HSABC) announced that it reached a tentative agreement on a five-year contract extension. If ratified, the new agreement will expire in March 2019.

Among the salient points of the tentative agreement is a 5.5% wage increase over 5 years, with the possibility of an additional "Economic Stability Dividend" dependent upon the province's economic performance. The wage settlement also includes a "me too" clause: if other "comparable" public sector unions are able to win larger wage increases, the HSABC's wage increases will be adjusted accordingly. It is my opinion that this agreement sets the "floor" for wage increases in the public sector, and nothing more.

The other important aspects of the tentative agreement involve benefits. The HSABC agreed to create a benefits trust by 2016, which will give the association co-management rights over their benefits package. In the last round, the HSABC agreed to the Fair Pharmacare Tie-In. The new tentative agreement adds coverage for drugs not covered under the Pharmacare formulary. The reimbursement rate for unlisted drugs is set at 50%. Clearly, this is additional evidence that the coverage provided under the Pharmacare Tie-In is inadequate, and that the unions that have agreed to the tie-in are attempting to mitigate its effects.

Locally, the OCFA continues to prepare for bargaining. In the September issue of the *Update*, I outlined the process and timeline that the bargaining committee is following in its preparations for bargaining. If you need further information, please consult that issue, or email me at cclarkson.ocfa@gmail.com.

The period for submitting bargaining proposals has now ended, and the bargaining committee has been busy drafting and revising questions for the bargaining survey. The survey will be conducted online. The survey software is administered by OCFA members, the data will be anonymized, and all of the information is stored on a Canadian-based server. The committee takes your privacy seriously, and we made our decisions about the survey software accordingly. Special thanks go to Rod Watkins for setting up the server.

We will send email invitations to all members to participate in the survey on Monday, November 18. If you don't receive an email, check your spam folder. If you still can't find the email, contact me. The survey will remain open until Monday December 9, and the software will send out an automated reminder each week to those who have not completed the survey. Please take the time to participate. Your feedback will be instrumental in determining our bargaining priorities.

Once the survey is complete, and the results are in, the committee will analyze the data, set bargaining priorities, and write up the proposals. The proposals will be presented to the membership for ratification at the association's Winter General Meeting in January 2014.

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Michelle Nicholson, MBA, CGA, CPA

EARNINGS, DEDUCTIONS, AND NET PAY

Every two weeks either by email or by interoffice mail we each receive a payroll deposit slip notification detailing how much salary we have each earned, deductions from the salary and how much was deposited in our bank accounts. We should all take a look at this information periodically to make sure it is correct and to review the many paid benefits we receive.

EARNINGS

The first item is Regular Pay. For full-time employees you can check this amount by opening the College website, select Employees from Campus and Community, then select OCFA, and then select OCFA Collective Agreement. On page number 78 (or document page 93/107) is Appendix A Salary

Scale. Effective September 1, 2013 step 1 salary is \$87,468. We get the base salary plus the stipend. To determine the bi-weekly salary as a full time top of scale member the \$87,468 is divided by 26 pay periods per year which equals \$3,364.15. Next divide the \$3,364.15 by 10 working days per pay period then by 6 hours per day to get the hourly rate of \$56.07.

If you are full-time you can check your hourly rate using the following formula:

$$\text{Annual Salary} / (26 \text{ paydays} * 10 \text{ days} * 6 \text{ hour}) = \text{Annual Salary} / 1,560 \text{ annual hours} = \text{hourly rate}$$

Note the hourly rate may be different by a few pennies on your payslip due to rounding during the calculation.

If you are part-time your salary is calculated using the formula in article 37.2. The salary on your contract is calculated using the salary scale in effect at the time the contract is written. So if your contract was dated August 2013 the salary scale for April 1st, 2013 was used. Converting this to a bi-weekly salary is a little complicated. Consider a part-term employee with a contract for 1 TLU Fall 2013 who is at step 1 and received a contract from August 20, 2013 to December 17, 2013. The part-time salary for this contract was $(\$86,602 * 1 \text{ TLU} * 17 \text{ weeks} * .89 \text{ adjustment factor}) / (4 \text{ TLU's max} * 52 \text{ weeks}) = \$6,299.46$. (Discussion of the adjustment factor is outside the scope of this article). The payroll department using the dates of the contract determines the number of pay periods that will occur during the contract. For this contract this worked out to 8.6 pay periods. So we take the \$6,299.46 part-time salary divided by 8.6 pay periods to get \$732.50 salary per pay period.

On September 1st all of these calculations had to be amended to take into account the new salary for step 1, the amount of salary already paid and the remaining pay periods in the contract. The new bi-weekly salary is not as simple as a 1% increase of the old bi-weekly salary but it is close. The key thing is that the total paid over the life of the contract will be correct. The number of hours per week is determined by your bi-weekly salary divided by a full-time bi-weekly salary for the same salary scale. In this case it works out to 13.19 hours for a 1 TLU contract. The hourly pay is your bi-weekly pay divided by the hours per week. The payroll software needs hours per week and hourly pay so that is why they are calculated and shown on your payroll deposit slip notification.

For part-time employees the next items in Earnings are pay in lieu of benefits which is 4% of salary then vacation pay which is 16% of salary as per article 39.3.2.

Another item in Earnings for full-time employees is "EI Rebate". We get this once a year because we earn paid sick days and the College gets a rebate on the Employment Insurance (EI) premiums they pay the government. They are required to share that rebate with us and they do this once a year. In the Year-To-Date section you can see the total you received.

This year full-time employees received retroactive pay increases so the retroactive pay we received related to this year and last year are listed in the earnings section. The Year-To-Date column shows the total retroactive pay you received.

There may be other items in your Earnings section if you receive additional pay for Distance Education or Extended Semester pay.

DEDUCTIONS

This section is a little misleading because some items are deductions that you pay for, some items are benefits the employer pays for you, and other items are both.

Federal Income Tax, Provincial Income Tax, and Faculty Association Dues are deductions subtracted from your total earnings. The taxes are paid to the government on your behalf and the dues are paid to the OCFA.

Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance, and College Pension Plan are both deductions and benefits. The College contributes matching funds to your Canada Pension Plan on a dollar for dollar basis. For every dollar they deduct from your earnings they contribute an additional dollar. So the total contributed to your Canada Pension Plan is double what is deducted from your earnings. For Employment Insurance and the College Pension Plan the College contributes matching funds in excess of what is deducted from your earnings. Have a look at the Year-To-Date column to see how much you contributed and how much the College contributed to these funds.

There is a long list of item with amounts in the Employer column but nothing in the Employee column. These are all benefits that the College pays the entire cost of on your behalf. For example Dental, Medical, LTD, AD&D, Life Insurance, MSP, and Workers Compensation plus Faculty PD and ESL fund contribution. The total College paid benefits add up to a lot of money each month. Check out the total for Employer in the Current Amounts column and the Year-To-Date columns.

NET PAY

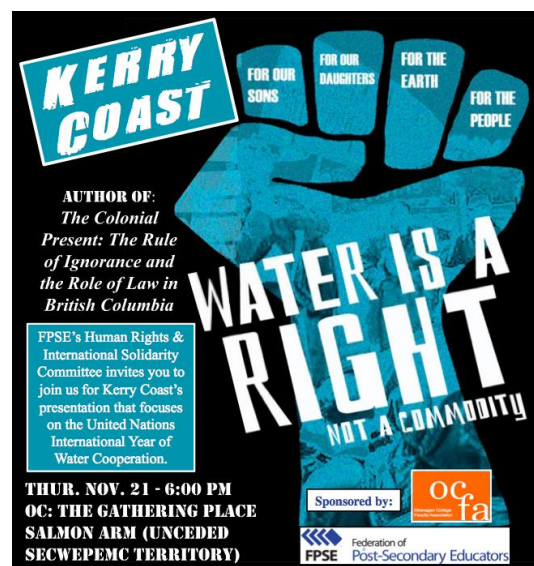
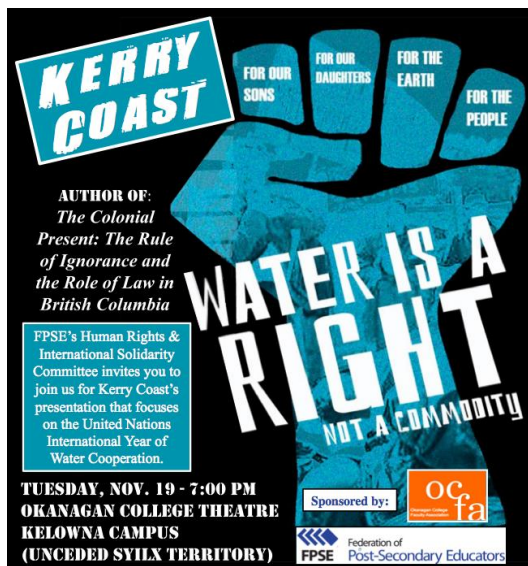
Total Earnings minus Total Employee Deductions equals Net Pay. Typically net pay does not change much from pay day to pay day with one exception. Depending on your annual salary you may “max out” on EI and CPP sometime in the Fall each year causing your net pay to increase by a couple of hundred dollars. In January you start paying EI and CPP again dropping your net pay back down. This is caused by annual maximums on EI and CPP deduction.

Human Rights and International Solidarity Representative's Report

Levi Gahman

Upcoming Events

For those of you who are interested in water rights, sustainability, neoliberalism, colonialism, and social justice; please come join us in Kelowna or Salmon Arm for the FPSE Human Rights and International Solidarity Committee Speaker's Tour featuring Kerry Coast.



KERRY IS ALSO GUEST LECTURING ON 3 CAMPUSES FROM NOV 19-21:

Nov 19

Penticton: 10:00am-11:20 am (Criminal Justice)

Nov 20

Vernon: 10:00am - 11:20am (Anthropology: Environment)

Salmon Arm: 3:00pm-4:20pm (Women's Studies)

Nov 21

Vernon: 9:00am-10:00am (Anthropology: Environment)

Vernon: 11:30am-1:00pm (Women's Studies)

For more information regarding Kerry's itinerary, please contact Levi Gahman at LGahman@okanagan.bc.ca. For more information on Kerry, and her book: <http://www.claritypress.com/Coast.html>

OC⁴ Cycloportif

Markus Heinrichs

WHEN GREAT THINGS COINCIDE: THE OCFA AND THE OC⁴ CYCLOSPORTIF

This past June saw a number of riders of all calibers participate in the inaugural OC⁴ Cycloportif, the college's road cycling equivalent to the Half Marathon and 10k. The public not only got to see how OC meets the valley's needs through its multi-campus format, they enjoyed some of the greatest scenery while pursuing a recreational sport activity. This soon-to-be annual event is the only official college event that physically connects all four campuses - and it happened only because of OCFA support. Last year, Salmon Arm's OCFA executive member Rod Watkins suggested several ideas to the OC⁴ organizing committee that ultimately resulted in the OCFA providing support for volunteers, making this event possible. The continued generosity of the OCFA and participation of its members in this healthy, positive, and amazingly FUN event in 2014 is graciously anticipated.

With that in mind... all members of the OCFA (and their cycling friends) are invited to ride in at least one stage of this year's event! Departing Friday (the 13th of June- ooh scary, don't cross the path of any black cats) afternoon from the Salmon Arm campus, the approximately 70km route will take you through some of the most scenic agricultural land in the province, and it's net downhill! An aid station with food/water is present on each stage, managed by nursing student volunteers with some degree of first aid training. Upon arrival at the Kalamalka campus you will be treated to a delicious meal, to be shared with your fellow riders. Saturday's more challenging 75km adventure starts from the campus and makes its way to Kelowna along Kalamalka and Wood Lakes, then down K.L.O. road from the bench of east Kelowna. A sumptuous lunch awaits you in the atrium of the Center for Learning. Sunday's route does involve a significant portion of highway, though we've included scenic detours through Peachland and Summerland (and even a quick visit of the west bench in Penticton) before finishing the day at the Centre for Excellence- with lots of great food, naturally!

Registration for the OC⁴ is easy, simply follow the links on www.okanagan.bc.ca/oc4; and as a reminder, early-bird registration ends Dec 31! For more information, maps of the tentative route, or a copy of last year's route guide (with original research articles from OC geography professors!), please consult the website. Proceeds of this event are used to support bursaries within the nursing program. If riding isn't quite 'your thing', we have several areas in which you would be welcome to volunteer- email Markus at mheinrichs@okanagan.bc.ca.

Okanagan Rail Trail – An Opportunity

By the Okanagan Rail Trails Initiative (provided by Bradley Clements)

We have a tremendous opportunity that has presented itself here in the Okanagan. On October 2, 2013, CN began the process to abandon the railway between Vernon and Kelowna. While the abandonment of the railway will have negative consequences on our manufacturing sector, we must consider the opportunity that arises from this unfortunate situation. We can do our best to transform this wonderful linear property into a community asset that will provide benefits to the residents and visitors to the Okanagan now and long into our future, or we can allow this transportation corridor and last natural lakefront access to be sold for private use.

The decision is ours. If we wish to consider this decision, then we must act fast. The railway may become available on Dec 3, 2013 and the opportunity lost by March of 2014. We must act quickly.

WHY AN OKANAGAN RAIL TRAIL?

There are several benefits to saving this transportation corridor and turning it into a community pathway.

Health A community pathway will provide healthy recreation and transportation opportunities to people of all ages with a beautiful, safe, and accessible place to cycle, walk, hike, or jog. This will enable the residents of our communities to incorporate exercise into daily routines by connecting key locations that are currently not easily accessible by riding, walking or jogging. By encouraging physical activity we will see a significant effect on public health and wellness.



Transportation/Livability In addition to providing a safe place to enjoy recreational activities, this community pathway will act as an efficient transportation corridor and help create a seamless regional multi-modal transportation system. By connecting Coldstream, Kelowna, Lake Country, Vernon, the airport, UBCO, the 50 km pathway will link communities and places of work and recreation and provide the ability to avoid congested streets and highways. Currently there is no other transportation corridor that would provide an opportunity like this to connect Okanagan valley communities with a safe alternative for non-motorized transportation modalities. This will become a significant factor in the Okanagan's livability. The Okanagan Rail Trail will also "feed" people into and out of transit stations in a safe and efficient manner improving the adoption of other alternative transportation methods.

Conservation/Environment By transforming the railway into a community pathway we will gain the conservation benefits of preserving green space as well as the additional benefit of providing

needed links between fragmented habitats. This will provide further opportunities for protecting plant and animal species. The community pathway will also be a useful tool for the preservation of Kalamalka, Wood and Ellison Lakes, which currently have largely undeveloped shorelines along the route. In addition, the pathway can allow us to experience these beautiful lakes and the unique ecology that surrounds them with little environmental impact.

Economy/Revitalization The economic effects of an Okanagan Rail Trail are also a very important to consider. For several years the economy in the Okanagan has been evolving. Manufacturing has been declining and small business increasing. Tourism continues to be the most important contributor to the local economy. The Okanagan Rail Trail will have direct impact on tourism. The pathway will have very little incline or decline, making it attractive to a broad range of users and many types of activities. The Kettle Valley railway is a prime example of the heavy use these types of trails receive. In 2004 when \$13.5 Million was committed to rebuilding the trestles lost to fire the Provincial and Federal governments indicated that the Myra Canyon portion of the trail provided \$5 million in economic benefit each year. (1) The Okanagan Rail Trail will also improve the livability of the Okanagan increasing the attractiveness to entrepreneurs and employees seeking an improved quality of life.



Community Identity The Okanagan Rail Trail can become a source of community identity and pride. These effects can be magnified if our communities use the pathway to highlight and provide access to historic, cultural, recreational, and environmental resources. The increase in tourism due to the trail will provide the community with positive exposure and help generate greater community identity. Kalamalka Lake and its mainly undeveloped shorelines is currently a large part of the Okanagan's identity. Development along these shores would be putting this aspect of our identity at risk. Converting the railway into a pathway will help protect the lake and preserve its international identity.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS OF ABANDONING THE RAILWAY?

The process of abandonment is defined by the Canada Transportation Act. The process is below:

Aug 23, 2013	Railway line transferred from Kelowna Pacific Railway Ltd. to CN
Oct 2, 2013	CN issues Notice of Discontinuance of Railway Line - Parties interested in acquiring the railway for the purpose of continuing railway operations must make their intentions in writing to CN by Dec. 2, 2013. If a party signals intentions, go to scenario 2. If no parties show intentions, go to scenario 1.

Scenario 1

Dec 3, 2013	Offer to Government
Jan 2, 2014	Deadline for Government of Canada Acceptance
Feb 3, 2014	Deadline for British Columbia Government Acceptance
Mar 5, 2014	Deadline for Transit Authority Acceptance
Apr 4, 2014	Deadline for Municipal Government Acceptance

Scenario 2

Dec 3, 2013	The parties interested in operating the railway have 6 months from the expiry of the 60 day notice to reach agreement on the sale. If no agreement is reached the process continues as follows.
Jun 3, 2014	Offer to Government
July 3, 2014	Deadline for Government of Canada Acceptance
Aug 5, 2014	Deadline for British Columbia Government Acceptance
Sep 4, 2014	Deadline for Transit Authority Acceptance
Oct 4, 2014	Deadline for Municipal Government Acceptance

HOW DO WE ENSURE THAT A COMMUNITY PATH IS AN OPTION?

Time is of the essence. It will be just a few weeks before the railway will probably be offered to the community through various levels of government. After that time period, the railway right of way will be offered for sale to the general public. Once the railway line is offered for sale to the public, sections will be quickly purchased ending the option for a community pathway linking our communities and creating public asset to benefit current and future generations of residence and visitors of the Okanagan.

We suggest the following:

1. We need community support for the Okanagan Rail Trail to show the various levels of government that we indeed wish to have the option of a rail trail considered. Please go to www.okanaganrailtrail.ca to join our list and show support. You can also like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/okanaganrailtrail.
2. Raise funds for a cost benefit analysis of purchasing the railway line. We believe that proper analysis is required before we say yes, let's purchase the corridor. We are confident that the analysis will show purchasing the corridor will be a wise investment.
3. Work with the various levels of government and CN on developing and agreement that benefits residents, government and CN.

Losing the railway will have a tremendous negative impact on the Okanagan's economy. If that does happen, then we must make the best of an unfortunate situation. We will have the opportunity to take this situation and turn it into a positive outcome for the residence of the Okanagan, tourists coming to visit and our economy today and into our future. The decision is ours. We can make this happen if we all work together.

Please Note. This document was written by the Okanagan Rail Trail Initiative. We support the businesses that utilized the railway and will support an organization who wishes to take over

operations of the railway. Our intent is to ensure that the rail line is considered as a community pathway/transportation corridor only if the railway is abandoned.

For more information, or to show your support of this idea, please visit our website

www.okanaganrailtrail.ca or email us at okrailtrail@gmail.com

You may also call 250-306-4192.

Notes and Information Sources

- (1) <http://www.kettlevalleyrailway.ca/jd2004.htm>
- (2) CN's Notice of Discontinuance of a Railway Line, Oct. 2, 2013.
- (3) CN Network Strategies Department, Montreal Quebec.
- (4) National Trails Coalition – Canadian Trails Study, Terrance J. Norman, December 2010,
- (5) <http://www.railstotrails.org/ourWork/trailBasics/benefits.html>
- (6) BEAT: The Path to Health, Fall 2008



Promoting faculty expertise at the Vernon Vipers Game (November 8, 2013).