

SPRING 2021

# Sheet Metal Journal

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British Columbia

## Piedmont Sheet Metal

*Also in this Issue:*

**The End of an Era for Local 280**

**SMWTC Update**

**WorkSafeBC Employer Reimbursement  
Applications For COVID-19 Sick-Leave**

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Official Journal of  
Record for SMACNA-BC



# PROMOTING GROWTH AND STABILITY IN OUR INDUSTRY

Formed in 1969, the British Columbia Sheet Metal Association (SMACNA-BC) was the first international chapter of the Sheet Metal & Air-conditioning Contractors National Association (SMACNA). Founded in 1934, SMACNA traces its history to the National Association of Sheet Metal Contractors established in 1910, and has 2,300 members worldwide.

SMACNA-BC is a member-driven association representing unionized sheet metal contractors in the Mainland of BC, and suppliers to our industry. It promotes the growth and stability of the members and industry.

## OUR MANDATE

- To improve the financial stability and business conditions of the sheet metal industry, and to develop and promote methods to improve managerial proficiency
- To improve quality, efficiency and productivity of this industry, and to implement high standards of work
- To establish and maintain high ethical standards of conduct between members of the Association, and between members and owners, architects, engineers, other contractors, and the public
- To study and help in the development and enforcement of governmental codes and regulations, and such legislation as may be necessary for the best interest of the public and the sheet metal industry
- To promote harmony in labour relations
- To exchange technical, professional, and educational information with other contractor associations in the sheet metal industry and its allied trades in Canada and other countries
- To affiliate as a Chapter with the Sheet Metal & Air-conditioning Contractors National Association, Inc.



[BC Sheet Metal Association \(SMACNA-BC\)](#)

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## NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT

This is an odd time of year to be publishing an “association in review” issue, but that is what this feels like. Of course, in COVID times, many things seem unusual but nothing is surprising, so I think we are in the clear.

Tyler Knowles at Piedmont Sheet Metal spoke with me about how his decision to become a sheet metal worker was prompted by his father’s career in sheet metal, and his grandfather’s before his. Between those three generations, they build a legacy that is both a nod to a good labour-management relationships and a look forward to great teams and cutting edge technology. Piedmont’s story is a good example of acknowledging the past but moving into the future to explore new horizons. See page 8 for more on Piedmont Sheet Metal.

After 24 years of service, Jim Paquette is retiring from his position as Business Manager and Financial Secretary-Treasurer at Local 280. He contributed a letter of update, initially presented at the SMACNA-BC AGM in May, as means of wrapping up his business relationship with SMACNA-BC—but I think we all know this is not the end. Once Jim settles into his new life of care-free, relaxed days with Sonya, we are hopeful we will see them back to visit their SMACNA-BC family as guests and friends.

Taking Paquette’s place will be Richard Mangeldorf. (I remember when Mangeldorf was on the cover of *Sheet Metal Journal* for his participation in a Sheet Metal Workers’



By / Jessica Kirby, Editor, *Sheet Metal Journal*

Training Centre [SMWTC] competition in the later years of his apprenticeship. Time really does march on.) Congratulations to both Paquette for many years of service and for a lovely retirement, and to Mangeldorf for new horizons and opportunities. See page 10 for Paquette’s adieu to SMACNA-BC.

The SMWTC is thriving. Enrolment is up, funding is stable, staff is running at its best capacity, and Jud Martell, training co-ordinator, has his eye on the labour market for the coming year and beyond, ensuring the SMWTC is optimizing its opportunities. Of particular note is the Training Centre’s Union Training and Innovation Program (UTIP) funding, which has helped the centre purchase a mobile elevated work platform VR simulator, advanced welding equipment, VR and augmented reality welding equipment, and fan service equipment to ensure a consistent, well trained, and eagerly engaged workforce for years to come. And, by the time you read this, the SMWTC’s new doors will be open at its expanded facility in Langley, where additional classes will follow in September. Find out what else is happening at the SMWTC on page 14.

When we acknowledge the past, we learn from the toils and victories of others, and when we look to the future, we thrive in anticipation and possibility. Both of these are useful, but we can’t live in either place. The Buddha said, “Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment.” So, as we look back at the past year of COVID resilience and the way the sheet metal industry has persevered with tenacity and optimism, we can also see the light ahead as the province opens up and the cycle begins to shift. If this time has taught us anything, it is that staying in the moment to be grateful and thoughtful of what matters most—family, health, stability, kindness—is the best “present” of all. ■

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### SMACNA NATIONAL CONVENTION

October 24-27, 2021

The 2021 SMACNA Annual Convention is being held in person October 24-27, 2021 in Maui, Hawaii. This year will be different in many respects, yet we will find comfort in the high-quality networking and educational experience members have come to expect. Visit [smacna.org/learn/events/calendar/2021-smacna-annual-convention](https://smacna.org/learn/events/calendar/2021-smacna-annual-convention) to register.

## THE RETURN TO NORMAL

It was recently confirmed that British Columbia has completed Step 1 the four-step BC COVID-19 Restart Plan. If all goes well with more vaccinations, low case counts, and low hospitalizations between now and September, we will be able to “return to normal” life as we knew it prior to 2020. For the SMACNA-BC membership this means:

- NO MORE ZOOM meetings! (I am not a fan)
- Attending an in-person dinner meeting at the Civic Hotel in Surrey
- Signing up for the SMACNA-BC Golf Tournament at Northview Golf Course
- In October, reconnecting and networking at the SMACNA National Convention in Maui, Hawaii
- Wrapping up 2021 with the SMACNA-BC Christmas Party at the Pan Pacific in Vancouver
- Marking your calendars for April 28 to May 1, 2022, to attend the SMACNA-BC Annual Convention at the Delta Hotels by Marriott Grand Okanagan Resort in Kelowna, BC

Sounds good, doesn't it? There may be a few differences from previous events, such as wearing masks, excessively washing your hands, and having to wear pants, but that seems like a small price to pay to finally get back to some semblance of yesterday.

### AMG & Elections

The British Columbia Sheet Metal Association (SMACNA-BC) is pleased to announce its Board of Directors and Officers for fiscal 2021-22, elected via virtual electronic vote on May 7, 2021:

- Dan Taillefer, Viaduct Sheet Metal Ltd.: President
- Phil McDonald, Summit Sheet Metal Ltd.: President-Elect
- Bernie Antchak, Northwest Sheet Metal Ltd.: Immediate Past-President/Treasurer/Secretary
- Mark Kuelle, Austin Metal Fabricators LP: Vice-President
- Mark McLaren, Ridge Sheet Metal Co.: Director – Re-elected
- Al Benning, Ames Metal Fabricators 82 Ltd.: Director
- Angelo Paris, Apollo Sheet Metal Ltd.: Director
- Dan Mauro, Spectrum Sheet Metal Ltd.: Director – Re-elected
- Aaron Smith, Smith Sheet Metal Works Ltd.: Director / SMACNA, Inc. Director
- Brad Popoff, Equity Plumbing & Heating Ltd.: Northern BC Regional Chair
- Bruce Sychuk: Executive Director

### Honorable Mentions

The membership and Board of Directors would like to congratulate Mark McLaren, Ridge Sheet Metal Co., and Dan



By / Bruce Sychuk, Executive Director, SMACNA-BC

Mauro, Spectrum Sheet Metal Ltd on being re-elected to the SMACNA-BC Board of Directors; Phil McDonald, Summit Sheet Metal Ltd., on his re-election to the SMART Local Union No. 280 / SMACNA-BC Joint Conference Board; and Mark Kuelle, Austin Metal Fabricators LP, on his re-election to the Sheet Metal Industry Training Board.

The Board of Directors would also like to acknowledge Kevin Taylor, Ridge Sheet Metal Co. (formerly City Sheet Metal Ltd.) for his service and dedication while performing his duties as Director, Vice-president, President-elect, and President of the association. The Board wishes Kevin all the best in his future endeavors.

SMACNA-BC, in recognition of dedicated service to the BC Sheet Metal Association and the Sheet Metal Industry, has elected one new SMACNA-BC Life Member: Neil



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**British Columbia Sheet Metal Association (SMACNA-BC)**

Providing products and information related to the Sheet Metal Industry, including technical manuals and guidelines.

The unmatched technical and managerial expertise of SMACNA-BC Contractors is enhanced by the talent and skills of the workforce they employ. SMACNA-BC Contractors employ only Red Seal Certified Sheet Metal Journeymen and Registered Apprentices.

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| Ames Metal Fabricators 82 Ltd.   | Northwest Sheet Metal Ltd.              |
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| City Sheet Metal Ltd.            | Spectrum Sheet Metal Ltd.               |
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- |                               |                                  |
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| AIRPLUS Industrial Corp       | Maxam Metal Products             |
| Airtek Canada Inc.            | Modern Tool (BC) Ltd.            |
| All Therm Services Inc.       | Nu-West Construction Products    |
| Canadian Western Bank         | Pacaire HVAC Supplies Ltd.       |
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Deppiesse, formerly of Horizon Metal Systems Inc. Neil has served on the SMART Local Union No. 280 / SMACNA-BC Joint Conference Board since 1995.

Please join SMACNA-BC in congratulating Mark Halvorsen of Viaduct Sheet Metal Ltd. on being inducted into the distinguished College of Fellows.

Mark will be inducted during the President’s Luncheon on Wednesday, October 27, 2021, at SMACNA’s 78th Annual Convention on Maui this October. Membership in SMACNA’s College of Fellows is reserved for top industry professionals who have made significant contributions to advance the sheet metal industry, culminating in years of commitment, distinguished service, and dedication.

**SMACNA-BC New Contractor Member – Apex Pneumatics Ltd.**  
[apexpneumatics.com](http://apexpneumatics.com)

Milan Matic - Sales & Project Management

Apex was established in 2018 and provides custom fabrication, system design, service and installation, and emergency support to the industries it serves, including sawmills, planer mills, remanufacturing lumber plants, grain terminals, feed production plants, engineered wood production plants, plastic & rubber processing, and bulk commodity handling facilities.

**SMART Local Union No. 280 Business Manager & Financial Secretary-Treasurer, Jim Paquette Retires**

SMACNA-BC would like to extend sincere best wishes to SMART Local Union No. 280 Business Manager Jim Paquette on his retirement. It would be an understatement to say that Jim will be recognized firstly as a gentleman and an overall outstanding person, but also as someone who substantially changed the face of the sheet metal industry in British Columbia and, for that matter, North America.

Jim has served the sheet metal industry in so many ways and has derived his methodologies to suit all situations, drawing from his vast experiences, total honesty, and dedication. I speak on behalf of all his fellow committee, trustee, and board members when I say Jim may be retiring from his job, but he is leaving the industry a legacy it can continue to build on, and we thank you so much for that. Jim, here is to a long, prosperous, retirement to you and your lovely wife Sonya. Hopefully in the very near future, Sonya and you will be able to get together once again with the SMACNA-BC members, this time not in an official capacity but as friends.

Jim is leaving Local 280 in the very capable hands of Richard Mangelsdorf who has been acclaimed as the next Business Manager & Financial Secretary Treasurer. Congratulations, Richard, on your new position, and we at SMACNA-BC look forward to working with you for a very long time. ■

## THE ECCO GROUP™ ANNOUNCES THE APPOINTMENT OF GLEN BOLGER AS VICE-PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS AND RAY NEWSTEAD AS VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE CANADIAN DIVISION OF ECCO SALES AND DISTRIBUTION



Glen Bolger



Ray Newstead

The ECCO Group, a leader in HVAC and Building products, announces the creation of the ECCO Operations Department and the appointment of Glen Bolger as Vice-president of Operations.

The creation of the Operations Department will further ECCO's goals toward operational excellence. This department will support the core businesses in becoming more efficient and effective, so that the organization can better help our customers succeed with reliable support and quality products.

"I look forward to continuing to work closely with Glen as he extends his vision for achieving operational excellence by focusing on improvements in efficiency and effectiveness company-wide," says Bill Davis, vice-president and general manager of The ECCO Group.

Glen's extensive knowledge, expertise, and drive have resulted in this promotion to Vice-president of Operations. In this new role, Glen will also continue as Head of Operations for ECCO's distribution centers and manufacturing plants. He is eager to continue building this department while collaborating with other departments, business units, and vendor partners to ensure success in all of ECCO's efforts.

"After working at ECCO for several years as the Director of Manufacturing Operations, I am excited to take on this new challenge and contribute to the overall success of the organization as we continue to grow," Bolger says. "I look forward to leading this new department, supporting our core businesses in helping our customers succeed as we manufacture and sell the highest quality products backed by reliable, expert support across the organization."

In April, The ECCO Group announced the creation of the ECCO Sales and Distribution business unit and the appointment of Ray Newstead to head the Canadian Division as Division Vice-president.

This move furthers ECCO's goal to help customers succeed by providing a structure to focus on reliable expert service backing the sales of products it manufactures, as well as those from its manufacturing partners.

"I am confident that with the addition of Ray to our team of exceptional leaders we will continue building and ultimately executing ECCO's goal to be the top choice for HVAC supplies and building products for our customers and vendor partners," Davis says. "We are a fast growing company and are better positioned for the future with the changes we are making."

Ray joins ECCO as an accomplished senior executive with many years of Building Products & HVAC industry experience, most recently in the role of CEO and prior to that in the roles of VP of Operations and CFO. He is a visionary leader, team collaborator, and change agent with expertise in strategic planning, market growth, and business development. He will be responsible for the oversight of Canadian operations that include ECCO Supply and the national accounts sales team.

"I'm very excited to join ECCO at this transformative time," Newstead says. "It's my pleasure to lead this new division that includes ECCO Supply, already an established leader in the Western Canadian HVAC wholesale market. We look forward to building on our strengths to better help our customers succeed with the best products and service and winning together in the weeks and months ahead."

Learn more about ECCO Group at [www.theeccogroup.com](http://www.theeccogroup.com) ■

## BC REINSTATES TRADES CERTIFICATION FOR TEN OCCUPATIONS

Reinstatement will begin with 10 trade classifications, including mechanical trades, with implementation expected by 2025.

BC is bringing back requirements for skilled tradespeople to be certified, starting with ten classifications in the electrical and mechanical trades.

Premier John Horgan calls it a "transformative change" that will provide better-paying career opportunities, particularly for women and Indigenous workers, just as BC is about to embark on its biggest ever infrastructure program.

"The changes that the BC Liberals made back in 2003 discouraged people from completing their Red Seal," Horgan said. Workers could get jobs and build up skills, "then you wouldn't have that

continued on page 23





# Contractor Profile: Piedmont Sheet Metal

By / Jessica Kirby

*Piedmont Sheet Metal's goal to be a leader in the sheet metal industry is fuelled by the latest technology, a good relationship with their local, and generations of hard work.*

SMACNA-BC member Piedmont Sheet Metal is a family owned and operated contracting business out of Burnaby, specializing in HVAC design, fabrication, and installation.

The company was founded in 1997 by Toby Knowles, who was also a sheet metal worker as was his father before him.

Toby's son, current general manager Tyler Knowles, says his grandfather founded Piedmont Sheet Metal Works in the 1970s, but passed away in the 80s. At the time, Toby was too young to take over, and despite other people's efforts to manage it, Piedmont Sheet Metal Works eventually closed its doors.

But Toby stayed the course. He started working in a shop on clean up while he was in high school, completed an apprenticeship, and became a journey in his early 20s. At 28, he jumped on the chance to buy the sheet metal sector of an air-conditioning company, and started Piedmont Sheet Metal as it is known today.

"He is semi-retired, but still works here, attends our Wednesday meetings, and likes updates," Tyler says. "He weighs in on higher level matters and overseeing the company's operations, but stays out of the day-to-day."

Tyler also did shop clean-up while in high school, then entered his apprenticeship after graduation. He was only a couple of years into his apprenticeship when the company needed a second estimator, so he was brought in to train in this field.

"A year later, that first estimator left and I was the only other person who knew how to estimate," Knowles says. "But I was only 19 or 20 so it was a rough road. My dad stepped into the sales side and help out, and we would put his name on jobs



I quoted because no one would take a young guy like me seriously."

By the time he was 26, Knowles had fully taken over the sales division, and he eventually took over as general manager a few years later. Today, the company employs 80 people in its shop, field, and office.

Piedmont has an impressive list of past and current projects in the Greater Vancouver area. The company is just finishing up 400 W Georgia, landmark building in downtown Vancouver with immense aesthetic appeal and complex architecture.

"It is always nice to be a part of something that will be a



recognized as a memorable feature in the downtown core for years to come,” Knowles says. “Our work has to accommodate architectural deviations and changes, but of course it isn’t a part of the project that people see. Our trade is largely functional to ensure the comfort of occupants at the end of day.”

Piedmont is nearing completion of Handsworth Secondary, a large secondary school project in North Vancouver, and is looking ahead to starting Burnaby North Secondary later in the year—both new builds. The company is also working on seismic upgrades and retrofits on other schools in the area. “We enjoy school projects,” Knowles says. “It is nice to see the investment into infrastructure projects and anything with benefits the community and kids.”

Piedmont is able to take on a breadth of large projects thanks to its fully-equipped 24,000 square foot shop and the skilled workforce at Local 280, with whom they’ve enjoyed a solid partnership since the beginning.

“This comes down to who is sitting on both sides of the table,” Knowles says. “We have been very fortunate because Local 280 members are reasonable and great to work with.”

From tablets in the field to new machinery in the shop, Piedmont relies on the latest technology to ensure the productivity and safety of its workforce, a tenet the Local has always supported.

“Over last few years, the Local has continued to be innovative and adapt with times,” Knowles says. “The Sheet Metal Workers’ Training Centre has invested in virtual reality and augmented reality training equipment, and its second facility opened June 15. They also did a great job of adapting schedules and curriculum layout to accommodate the COVID crisis.”

Technology has helped the workforce maximize efficiency, but it certainly has never replaced jobs or the need for humanpower at Piedmont.

“In fact, the opposite is true: it has allowed us to move faster and do more work, and the union understands that,” Tyler says. “There will always be a need for people to do sheet metal work, especially on the fabrication and installation sides. There are so many special fittings, and ducting is a large object with many components. It would not be an easy thing to automate.”

Besides providing training for its skilled workforce, Local 280 remains open to feedback around training requirements and adapting to meet market demand.

“We have good communication and our relationship has been great. When we noticed a need for blueprint reading courses, we called up the union and partnered with them to run blueprint and layout classes. One of our senior foremen went in and assisted with the field process for that.”

With a strong customer base in BC’s Lower Mainland, Piedmont is known for being service-oriented and going the extra mile with its long-standing customers.

“These valued clients have been working with us for a long time and have built lasting relationships with the company,” Knowles says. “Each year, we host exclusive events to show our appreciation.”

Past favourites include a yacht cruise, a hangar party with helicopter rides, and a lake event where guests were invited to try water sports and Jet Skis.

“Plenty of companies do lunches with their clients, but it is nice to do something they will remember forever,” Knowles says. “It’s nice for us to provide an unforgettable experience that ends up being the talk of the industry for weeks.”

Customers love these events, of course, but they are not the sum of the company’s success.

“That comes down to both sides,” Knowles says. “There is keeping the relationship on an almost personal level, but then it comes down to the work. You can be the nicest guy in the world and do any event you can imagine, but if the crew and team aren’t pulling together and performing the work we won’t be successful.”

And it is that great team that keeps the company moving forward. “We are lucky enough to have some of the best sheet metal workers in the province, with multiple apprentices winning apprenticeship competitions after being trained by our knowledgeable and seasoned foremen,” Knowles says.

Company success also means giving back, and Piedmont expresses this with active involvement in various charities, such as BC Children’s Hospital Foundation Burnaby School District.

“If you have the means to give back, you should,” Knowles says. “It is just the right thing to do.”

One of the most interesting ways Piedmont has given back was through donated time and materials for Project Emily, a collaboration with Ashton Mechanical and many other generous trades to build a wheelchair accessible home for Emily, a young girl who lost mobility in her legs after a failed procedure to correct a curve in her spine.

Whether they are busy giving back, hosting clients, or looking for new technology, Knowles says, “None of this would be possible without our Local 280 techs, our strong client relationships, and the hard work of our entire team.”

Learn more about Piedmont Sheet Metal at [piedmontsheetmetal.ca](http://piedmontsheetmetal.ca). ■



# The End of an *Era*

Business Manager & Financial Secretary Treasurer at Local 280, Jim Paquette shares an update, reflections, and gratitude after 25 years of service.

By / Jim Paquette • Photos courtesy of SMACNA-BC

*Jim Paquette, Business Manager & Financial Secretary Treasurer at Local 280, submitted the following report to SMACNA-BC in May.*

Since mid-March 2020 when our world was thrown into turmoil with the global pandemic known as COVID-19, SMART Local 280 has tried to be as informative as possible. Local 280 notified its membership prior to Spring Break 2020 to let members know anyone who travelled outside of the country would be required to quarantine for 14 days on their return to Canada. Thanks must be directed to those SMACNA-BC contractors who took the same position.

In those early COVID-19 days, there were changes almost every hour, so trying to keep up was an immense task. Local 280 worked to keep the lines of communication with SMACNA-BC open and as up-to-date as possible. There were Local 280 members who early on thought that taking two weeks off from work would be enough, that the virus would pass, and things would return to normal. That was not the opinion or the direction that Local 280 put forward, knowing this would be a long ride. From the very early days onward, Local 280 knew that this pandemic had the potential to change much that we had known and taken for granted.

All SMACNA contractors initiated safe work procedures in their shops and kept them up to date. The real challenge recognized early on has been job sites and misinformation around the way COVID-19 was transmitted.

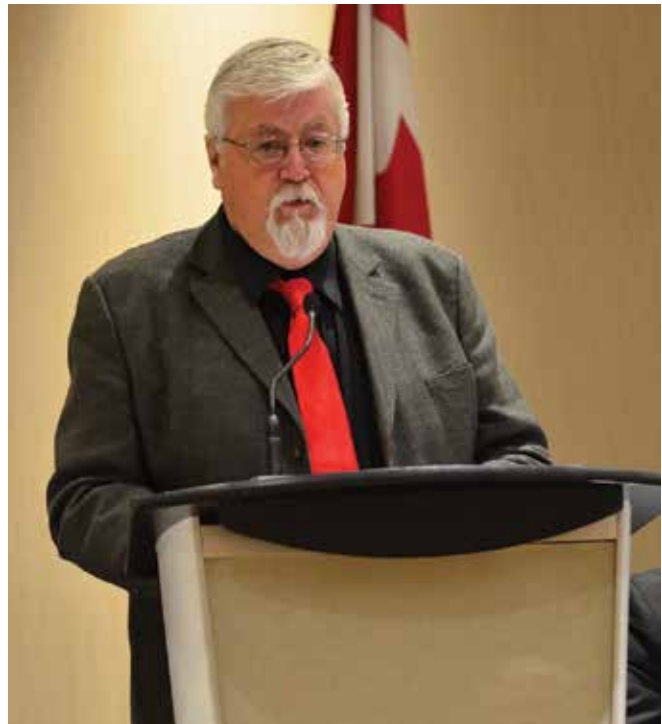
In the early days, the British Columbia Building Trades asked the BC government to relax contract language legislation so some worksites could be closed without penalty. However, the government made construction an essential service and required WorkSafeBC to step up the inspections of sanitary conditions on all job sites. Those inspections have gone a long way to improve work site sanitations. I would like to remind employers that they also have a part to play in this, as part of the construction contract requires clean toilet facility provision. Upholding their part in providing a clean and sanitary worksite will have a positive effect on the construction industry overall. The BC Building Trades continues to push for onsite sanitary improvement.

I would also like to thank those contractors who assisted Local 280 by supplying small aluminum strips for those around the province who started a grassroots campaign to sew face masks, when PPE was in very short supply and so many just wanted to help in any way they could. This initiative went a long way to getting people engaged in the pandemic. Contractors supplied and Local 280 distributed 30,000 aluminum nose strips around the province and millions across North America.

Before the pandemic, Local 280 started the process of hiring a full-time organizer. This was not done overnight, and there was a high degree of interest from the membership. After interviews, I hired Steve Davis as Local 280's full-time organizer, and his first day on the job was March 25, 2020. If I had known earlier what was coming, I may have had second thoughts; however, Steve has proven himself the right choice for the job. In hindsight, if someone can make connections and reach out during a pandemic, they can be successful any time.

SMART—with the assistance of the Sheet Metal Occupational Health Institute Trust (SMOHIT), which is not something SMACNA-BC contractors contribute to—provided reusable face masks with filters and a small bottle of personal hand sanitizer to all SMART members in the United States and Canada. SMOHIT recognized the importance of personal health and hygiene, and the SMACNA-BC/Local 280 Partnership Fund also designed and distributed another type style of face covering known as a Buff.

At the end of 2020, Business Representative Ken Elworthy decided to retire early after 19 years working for the Local membership. He and his wife decided to move to the Sunshine Coast for a more relaxed lifestyle. Very shortly after they arrived, they both came down with COVID-19, and Ken was very sick and taken to hospital by air ambulance. On June 13, he passed



away peacefully at his home with his wife and daughters at his side. We are thinking of his family at this difficult time.

Some larger projects in the province, such as LNG Canada in Kitimat and Site C in Fort St. John, are still underway. They have had some slow downs due to COVID-19, but work has continued to progress at a slower than expected pace. The work-camps have adjusted and now provide for quarantine, and those workers are being paid for their shifts. Rapid testing and onsite vaccinations are also available. Work is beginning slowly, and a site-specific letter of understanding has been signed with a contractor doing architectural sheet metal.

For the most part the hours worked in sheet metal fell just short due to a reset in mid-March/April 2020 compared to those hours worked in 2019, which was a banner year for the sheet metal industry. All things considered, the hours worked in 2021 look as though they will end up comparable to previous years.

We hope, as we move into the next stages of this global pandemic and the availability of vaccines, that many members and their families will participate in the vaccination program. With all the fatigue of this past year weighing heavy, now is not the time to drop our guard or become complacent.

As some of you may already know, SMART Local 280 is holding its elections for union officers, which takes place every three years. After 24 years serving in elected office, I have decided to not seek re-election and to retire. During my career as a sheet metal worker, I worked for 21 years on the tools and during that time I worked hard for those SMACNA-BC employers who employed me, and I hope they all were satisfied with my work.



*"After strapping the files on to my motorcycle and travelling all the way back to Burnaby, seeing the look on his face as I pulled into the parking lot with his files on my motorcycle was priceless."*

*—Jim Paquette, Business Manager & Financial Secretary-Treasurer, Local 280 (retired)*

So many things have changed in the industry, such as work site safety—the things that were done so many years ago would not even be imaginable today. Changes in technology during those years, small things like the number of industry hours lost simply by changing from using extension cords to cordless power tools. But some things are very special to me, such as when Tony Paris 1982 came to my jobsite at the VGH Parkade in 1982 on my last day of work to wish me well before going to BCIT for my fourth-year schooling. That simple gesture meant a lot to me. I also remember getting a phone call from Jim Irvin at Irvco Contracting while on an out-of-town jobsite late on a Friday afternoon. He needed to have files from the jobsite dropped in Burnaby, and he would be waiting for me to bring them to the office. After strapping the files on to my motorcycle and travelling all the way back to Burnaby, seeing

the look on his face as I pulled into the parking lot with his files on my motorcycle was priceless.

And during those years, I worked with so many tradesmen, a lot of whom are gone now. They were my mentors who taught me my trade and to try to make a profit on a project. I will always remember them and be grateful for their advice.

As for the last 24 years working in the union office, I have worked hard for the membership of Local 280. My philosophy from my first day has been to be honest and tell people what they needed to hear, not what they wanted to hear. This has been a different type of job for me, and I never thought I would be doing it for as long as I have. Every day is different. There was never a blueprint for this project, the job never really ends, and the only direction I have ever had to follow has been to move forward. During my career, I have had the privilege of serving in many different capacities, and I have learned that things of value do not change over night but over-time, and those things that we have changed together in our shared industry partnership have changed over time for the better.

I must thank Bruce Sychuk, as well as many others on the board of directors and other committees, who over the years have kept things respectful and professional over some very difficult times. Knowing Bruce prior to when he became Executive Director of SMACNA-BC was an asset and part of our shared industry



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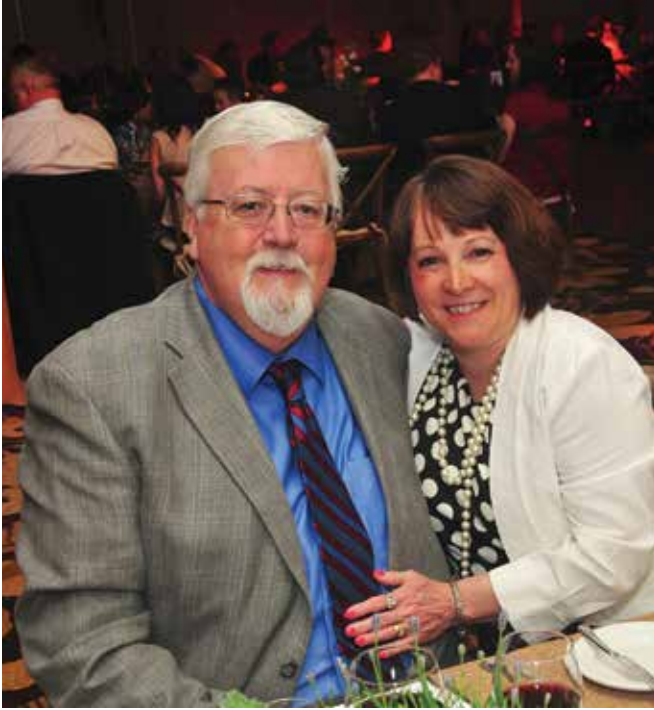
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success. Without always seeing eye to eye we have challenged ourselves and pushed each other to do better. The SMACNA-BC/Local 280 partnership has been held up across the United States and Canada as a model of what a labour-management partnership could look like. The sheet metal industry in British Columbia is in far better shape today than it was many years ago, and that credit must go to all those on both sides of the table who have given tirelessly of themselves to make a difference.

In leaving my position as Business Manager & Financial Secretary Treasurer, I go into retirement knowing that SMART Local 280 is in much better shape today. It is in the capable hands of people much smarter than me, and it is my pleasure to report that Brother Richard Mangelsdorf has been acclaimed as the next Business Manager & Financial Secretary Treasurer of SMART Local 280. Supporting him will be President Jud Martell, Vice-president Steven Davis, and Recording Secretary Jason Leigh, which ensures continuity in the leadership. I know and trust that going forward, the partnership will continue and grow.

In closing, I want to thank my wife Sonya for so much she has done to support me, and I thank the SMACNA-BC membership for opening their arms to welcome Sonya and make her feel comfortable and safe at all of its events. Most in the sheet metal industry know about the sacrifices we have to make to further the combined success of this industry, very little of which would be possible without a supportive spouse or partner to have your back at home. Sonya has always had my back. She has allowed me the time and space to do what I felt had to be done, at the time it needed to be done, not only here in British Columbia, but across North America. She is and has been my partner and part of our shared success. ■

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# Sheet Metal Workers Training Centre Update 2020 – a year shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic

By / Jud Martell • Photos courtesy of SMWTC

A 2020 report would be remiss if it didn't headline COVID-19, which defined all operational priorities in businesses across the globe. The Sheet Metal Industry Training Board (SMITB) was faced with significant challenges to support its apprentices and contractors, while prioritizing the safe delivery of technical training.

At the one-year mark in March 2021, we thanked our contractors for their diligence to keep our workforce safe on the job and for releasing apprentices for technical training when scheduled. Our industry continues to produce strong apprenticeship numbers, and our training centre continues with triple classes to meet the demand for technical training, while adhering to safety protocols.

## Industry Forecast

According to the the BC Labour Market Outlook (2019 – 2029), average employment growth for sheet metal workers at 0.4 % up to 2024 with 91.3% of openings expected to replace retiring workers and 8.7% due to economic growth.

In its annual outlook survey, the *Sheet Metal Journal* found that contractors were “finding new and creative ways to engage the workforce (45%), investing in labour (24%), and implementing new technology, including tracking, estimating, AutoCAD, and other software (22%)”.

*Sheet Metal Journal* also reported that BC economists predict

a slight rebound and moderate growth this year with BC on track for real GDP growth averaging 4.7 percent in 2021 and 4.9 percent in 2022. Construction will continue to drive the recovery, driven by residential and commercial projects, and government spending on infrastructure.

## Apprentice Training & Specialty Training

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted training offered at the Training Centre from March 2020 onwards when apprentice and specialty training was temporarily suspended. There were 41 students attending SMWTC at the time, and they were quickly transitioned to complete their training remotely. Staff transitioned to remote work while simultaneously reconfiguring our high touch, hands-on trades training facility to meet COVID-19 safety guidelines.

The pandemic expedited a situation already in the making—the digitization of part of the training centre's training curriculum. A blended learning model was developed combining online theoretical and onsite technical training, made possible by an investment in IT infrastructure by the Board and Industry Training Institute (iTi).

The entire third intake of 50 students had their classes cancelled in early 2020. When classes were scheduled to reconvene, the Training Centre prioritized students with the highest apprenticeship hours to seat assignments. In June 2020, we



welcomed back our first class of 24 Level 4 apprentices and all excelled and passed the IP exam—a stellar result.

In fall of 2020, it was a daunting feat to deliver triple classes via blended learning model to meet the demand, while adhering to COVID-19 safety protocols. We extended the technical training by one week to provide additional instruction time for apprentices, and received additional funding from the Industry Training Authority (ITA) to support our efforts. All students were issued iPads and laptops for use while in training, and AutoCAD as a specialty training class enhanced the curriculum.

### Apprentice Contests

The following apprentice contests scheduled in 2020 were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic's physical distancing requirements:

- BC Skills 2020 Provincial Competition (April 2020)
- Skills Canada 2020 – Vancouver (May 2020)
- The Canadian Contest (June 2020)
- SMWTC Annual Apprentice Contest (November 2020)

Subject to public health orders, we are hopeful the SMWTC Annual Apprentice Contest will be able to run this year with a tentative date of November 20, 2021.

### Funding

The ITA adjusted the 2020–2021 fiscal year budget (\$650,000) to address the COVID-19 pandemic and the additional weeks of instruction added to all technical training. Tuition was also increased \$100 as a result of the additional week of training.

Our Technology and an Inclusive Workforce: Forging our Future Sheet Metal Industry Project is funded through the Union Training and Innovation Program (UTIP), a federal cost-sharing initiative developed to increase investment in training equipment and materials for higher quality training, leading to a more skilled and productive trade's workforce. UTIP is also intended to improve the participation and success of key groups in trades training and careers, including women, Indigenous People, and newcomers to Canada.

SMITB's UTIP project has been awarded \$424, 213 over five years (2019–2024). In the fall of 2019 and spring 2020, SMITB purchased a mobile elevated work platform virtual reality (VR) simulator, advanced welding equipment, VR and augmented reality (AR) welding equipment, and fan service equipment offset by the federal government subsidies. Currently, we are negotiating with the funder for further equipment purchases subject to approval. Vancity also provided \$500 in Community Grant funding in support of our UTIP Project participants; and, we received funding from the iTi in the amount of \$22,000 USD, to purchase of computers and AutoCAD software to assist apprentices in gaining greater digital literacy in online tools.





“ The Training Centre continues to be an industry leader by building on the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity for innovation, adaptation, and increased digital literacy skills. ”



In addition, the following in-kind contributions were received in 2020:

- Milwaukee – educational tools program
- Microsoft – MS office suite software for students
- AutoDesk – student versions of AutoCAD software

**Staff And Facility**

The Training Centre continues to be an industry leader by building on the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity for innovation, adaptation, and increased digital literacy skills, not only for our apprentices but also for our staff. In 2021, we brought on part-time instructors Scott Wilcox from Spectrum Sheet Metal Ltd. and Matt Cleary from Austin Metal Fabricators LP to assist in the delivery of technical training. We appreciate their contractors for exercising flexibility in allowing them to take time off to work for the Training Centre.



**SEASON OF CHANGE – WE ARE GROWING!**

*A second Training Facility is coming this fall/winter! Stay tuned for updates.*

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The SMWTC welcomed Astrid de la Tour de Saint Ygest as its new office administrator in April, and Heather Brown has taken on an additional day per week to support intake coordination of new applicants to meet the growing demand.

The training centre is also pleased to announce it is expanding with the purchase of a new training facility in Langley, as of June 15, 2021. Watch for the expansion of class offerings in the fall/winter 2021/22 to meet the increasing demand for apprenticeship technical training. The team hopes to relaunch its specialty training once the new training facility is operational.

It is important to note that there was no increase in the provincial budget for technical training in BC. The SMWTC’s existing COVID-19 funding model was negotiated up to August 31, 2021; however, at this time additional funding allocations are not anticipated for the remainder of the fiscal year (March 31, 2022).

**Moving Forward**

As we continue to navigate these uncharted waters impacted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we will see where the end of 2021 takes us. 2020 will certainly go down in the records as one of the most memorable years, in terms of tremendous change and incredible opportunity, and 2021 is presenting a similar path. We have all faced our own experiences with COVID-19, both professionally and personally, and we hope you continue to be safe and healthy in these interesting times. ■



## WORKSAFEBC EMPLOYER REIMBURSEMENT APPLICATIONS FOR COVID-19 SICK-LEAVE AVAILABLE ONLINE JUNE 15

*The provincial government has announced more support for workers affected by COVID-19. Workers are now entitled to three days of paid sick leave if they have symptoms of the COVID-19 virus, are in isolation, or have been tested and are waiting for the results.*

Employers are responsible for full- and part-time wages during this period, but the government will reimburse employers up to \$200 per day, provided those employers do not have a sick leave program in place at their business. Beginning June 15, employers can visit WorkSafeBC's website at [worksafebc.com/en/covid-19/covid-19-paid-sick-leave-reimbursement-program](https://www.worksafebc.com/en/covid-19/covid-19-paid-sick-leave-reimbursement-program) for the full details and to access the application to receive reimbursement through the online services portal.

Sick leave that is eligible for reimbursement must have been taken between May 20 and the program's end date, December 31. This program falls outside of workers' compensation and will not impact an employer's premiums or accident fund.

To access reimbursement, employers must be registered and current with WorkSafeBC insurance coverage, and they must be signed up for WorkSafeBC's employer online services.

The COVID-19 sick leave program is intended to provide financial security to workers in the time period between feeling

unwell and when they are eligible to access the federal Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit, which provides four weeks wage support to individuals who miss work because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Unfortunately, the federal program has been difficult to access for workers," Premier John Horgan told *The Vancouver Sun* in May. "No one should have to make that difficult choice between staying home when they're sick or going into work because they have an economic imperative to do so."

The federal program only supports workers who are working fewer than 50 percent of their scheduled working hours per week. Once it kicks in, it provides \$500 for a one-week period, up to a maximum four weeks. Individuals accessing the program must renew their application weekly.

Amendments to British Columbia's *Employment Standards Act* enabled the employee sick leave legislation, and as of January 1, 2022, the province's legislation will also include a permanent paid sick leave for workers who cannot work due to any illness or injury.

So far, the construction industry seems supportive of the program, though association leaders like Chris Atchison, president of the BC Construction Association, and Dave Baspaly, president of the Council of Construction Associations, told *The Journal*





© Can Stock Photo SeventyFour

“Other programs are coming in across the country and BC needs to be in step with the other provinces,” said Darin Hughes, president, Scott Construction Group.



COVID-19 safety protocols and any worker who gets sick goes into quarantine for 14 days, not three days.”

Baspaly echoes Atchison’s sentiment, saying, “\$200 barely scratches the surface and employers must top up that amount. We need to find out the details of the reimbursement program. For example, we don’t know yet if the application process for reimbursement will be smooth or highly bureaucratic or how much time it will take.”

In the same article, Mike McKenna, executive director of the BC Construction Safety Alliance, said both workers and employers will benefit from the COVID-19 sick leave program.

“If a worker gets sick, he or she should go home and recover,” McKenna told *The Journal of Commerce*. “And it’s good that construction employers will be partially reimbursed for workers’ wages while they’re off the job. At the same time, every effort should be made to getting employers and employees vaccinated.”

Darin Hughes is president of Scott Construction Group. He says the program is a positive step in the right direction, but should have been in place sooner. “Other programs are coming in across the country, and BC needs to be in step with the other provinces,” he told *The Journal of Commerce*. “On the other hand, it would have been better had the program come in earlier. Now it’s less needed than it used to be. Positive COVID-19 tests are less frequent than they were even as recently as a few months ago.”

One of the most important trends in how COVID-19 is spread and contained is workers’ ability to stay home when feeling unwell. Obviously, lack of pay is preventative for some, and so support for the temporary and long-term programs would have impactful repercussions for construction and all industries.

“Paid sick leave is good for businesses, it’s good for workers, and it’s good for communities,” Horgan told *The Vancouver Sun*. “Together, it will help us come out of the COVID-19 pandemic stronger than we went in.”

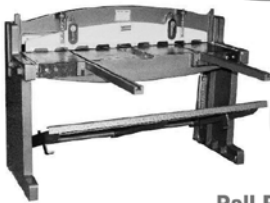

For a complete list of WorkSafeBC’s COVID resources, please visit [worksafebc.com/en/covid-19](https://worksafebc.com/en/covid-19) ■

of Commerce, that while government help is appreciated, \$200 per day may not do the trick.

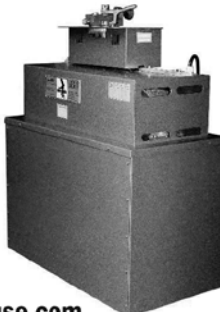
“Anything that protects our workers is good,” Atchison told *The Journal of Commerce* in an article that ran in June. “However, reimbursement of \$200 a day won’t go all the way to covering the cost to employers in the construction industry, which has high wages. Furthermore, construction has very robust

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## CARE VS COMPLIANCE: MAKING THEM CARE ABOUT SAFETY

Everybody cares about something. And they do care about it... in their own way. The challenge in getting your people to care about safety lies largely with how they understand and interpret the word 'safety'.

The companies that I have helped come through my Rally Your Team program have all identified the word safety as a barrier to safety. Say the word safety to some of your people and their eyes roll back in their heads as they brace themselves for the safety lecture that, in their minds, is on its way.

Make no mistake, people care about safety, but their version of it. And it would be foolish to assume that employees will universally care about safety in the way that you would like them to.

### Clarity of purpose drives safety engagement

Safety needs a specific definition, a picture, a vision. Ask ten crew members to describe what safety looks like to them and you will get ten different responses. It's the same idea as asking those same ten to describe their favorite breed of dog. You're going to also get ten different responses. People don't see the same things.

If you want your people to get on board with caring about safety, then what you want them to care about needs to be very specific and clear.

FranklinCovey's research into company goals revealed that 85 percent of employees cannot identify one of their company's top goals. And of the 15 percent that could name one of the top goals, only half were prepared to help the company achieve it. A whopping 89 percent of those same employees had no idea what to do to help the company achieve its goals.

Perhaps that's why the focus for so many years has been on safety compliance instead of buy-in. Compliance is seemingly easier to achieve. Simple brute-force enforcement of safety rules and protocols will get compliance. But it won't help employees to care about where they work or to take an active role in helping the company achieve its goals.

### Valued people value safety

David Broadhurst from Codesafe Solutions in Australia said, "Valued people value safety." People who feel valued by their employers, who feel that their contribution makes a difference, are more prepared to get behind the company goals.

When safety becomes a clear vision shared between employees and leaders, there is a greater level of camaraderie and cooperation to achieve the goals. There is a greater teamwork mindset and a greater willingness to look out for the people they care for.



By Kevin Burns

When employees care about the other members of their team and care about their own contribution to it, they are more likely to voluntarily make choices that reduce the risk to themselves and their fellow team members.

A company focused on achieving bare minimum compliance in safety is likely not terribly concerned about the level of care or mindfulness of their employees. Employees who are engaged in their work are more likely to care about the outcomes of their work. Quality, pride, and safety all work together. An employee who is proud of their high quality of work is less likely to employ low-quality safety standards or shortcut safety protocols.

### You won't get commitment to safety without clarity.

Until your team is clear on the mission, the goals, and the purpose for the work, they are less likely to help their employers achieve seemingly arbitrary goals. Without a connection to the why of a target or goal, there is no reason to care about it.

In order for employees to become clear about company goals, they need simple, concise communication. That also includes supervisors who lend the greatest amount of influence on any worksite. Employees will do what is important to their immediate supervisors.

If safety is important to the supervisor, it becomes important to the team. It is vitally important that supervisors buy-in to the safety program and the company goals. Then, armed with excellent team building and coaching skills, they will inspire their teams to raise their performance level. When the team is achieving together, there exist fertile grounds for care to take root.

Create a team that cares about each other, cares about their work, and cares about building a solid reputation, and you create a team that cares about safely doing that work. Care becomes far more powerful than in-the-moment compliance. ■

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## WHY ELECTRONICALLY COMMUTATED (EC) MOTORS?

Industry today consumes roughly 40 percent of the world's electricity. Two-thirds of that electricity is used to power electric motors. AC motors are the workhorses of industry, yet they are power hogs. Let's put this into perspective: there are roughly 25 million small-frame AC motors employed on fan drive units. Assuming average power consumption of approximately 150 watts and a duty cycle of 75 percentage, these units consume 25 billion kWh of power each year.

This means that, given Site C Dam will generate 900mW annually, the average annual output from three Site C Dam is needed to supply the power just for these small frame AC motors.

Rising energy costs and new government regulations have spawned revolutionary innovations in motor technology. Electronically commutated (EC) motors used in various fan applications, such as refrigeration, air conditioning, and building systems, consume roughly 30–40 percent less power than AC motors. So, if all 25 million small-frame AC motors in our earlier example were switched to EC, this could save nearly 10 billion kWh

This is great news for everyone—engineers, designers, and owners who actually pay the power bills. EC technology is



By Norm Grusnick, P.Eng.  
ECCO Supply

the future of sustainable energy consumption in industrial and residential appliances, pumps, and HVAC applications.

You may hear EC motor technology referred to as electronically commutated motor (ECM), permanent magnet, brush free, brushless DC, or brushless alternating current. Some of these may vary slightly in design but carry the same basic concept. Whatever you call it, EC technology is here to stay.

The new government energy rules have prompted engineers to replace or retrofit many of today's 1 HP or smaller AC motors to EC. These include furnaces, fan compressors, and pumps. Larger 1 HP to 10 HP systems switching to EC technology have the ability to lower power bills significantly for large facilities.

### How EC Motors Work

Basic DC motors rely on carbon brushes and a commutation ring to switch the current direction, and therefore the magnetic field polarity, in a rotating armature. The interaction between this internal rotor and fixed permanent magnets induces its rotation. In an EC motor, however, the mechanical commutation has been replaced by electronic circuitry. Through its brushless design, the magnetic field is already established by permanent magnets on the rotor. This allows you to supply the right amount of current to the fixed armature in the right direction at precisely the right time for accurate motor control.

The brushless EC motor has external electronics, a rotor with permanent magnets, and a stator, which has a set of fixed windings. A circuit board continually switches the phases in the fixed windings to keep the motor turning. Speed is controlled by commutation electronics, so motors are not limited to synchronous speeds and can rotate much faster than traditional AC motors. The EC motors' designs are becoming ever more cost competitive as volume increases. They use less material and low cost ferrite magnets to achieve superior performance and higher efficiencies. Due to their flexibility, EC motors are now being used in many HVAC applications.

### Speed Control Pays Off: Think of EC Like Driving a Car

Imagine if you turned on the engine and went to 100% of the speed, then tried to control the speed of the car by using your brakes every time. That's how most commercial and industrial

continued on page 23

## SMART Local 280 /SMACNA-BC Partnership



Left: Jud Martell, Local Union No. 280 President.  
Right: Bernie Antchak, Northwest Sheet Metal Ltd., SMACNA-BC President.



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- B. Flaherty, Cornell University, Syracuse, N.Y.

# MENTORING: OUR INDUSTRY SUCCESSION STRATEGY

*(Gen X And Millennials, You're Up!)*

If I objectively analyze the foundation of my construction career, I find that my leadership success can probably be credited to several guys in jeans and dirty boots. It was not a professor, but a contractor-entrepreneur who most encouraged and inspired me by serving as my first mentor and guide. Spare with praise but long on wisdom, he found ways of putting me in the front row for life lessons time after time. Job sites, negotiations, and even a beer at the bar, all became mentor's tools to connect this young, ambitious, and raw rookie with my potential. Simply put, he saw in me what I could not, and helped me bring it out.

I believe the majority of you readers are like me: you did not get to where you are in this industry without someone like this mentoring you. I think of mentoring as someone taking a personal interest—someone with whom a real connection of trust, communication, and mutual benefit can be made. Mentoring is a very powerful motivational and developmental tool that regularly plays a key role in most of our personal and professional lives. It has also powerfully shaped our industry.

This tradition of mentoring in our industry is a now at risk. I was unaware of the decline until recently, but there is a disconnect between everyone who says it is a great idea and how many leaders are actively engaged. Each year I have the privilege of being retained to speak to tens of thousands of construction leaders. These include CEOs down to project managers, superintendents, and foremen. I ask these leaders the same question: "How many of you received mentoring on your career path?" Ninety-five percent raise their hands. I then ask this follow-up question, and the problem becomes clear: "How many of you are mentoring someone now?" Less than 50 percent respond affirmatively. That response is startling, and it is truly in our interests to find out why it exists.

I have asked those who don't mentor anyone why, and the aggregated responses follow these themes: "The kids today are not willing to be mentored."

"It's not worth the time to invest in them."

"I don't have the time to do it."

On the other hand, when I ask young industry leaders why they think they cannot obtain mentoring, they respond with, "They think mentoring is giving me a hard time instead of showing us how to succeed" or "No one has offered, and I don't know how to find someone to mentor me."

These responses speak to both a generational disconnect and a de-valuing of the mentoring time investment. Addressing these obstacles is vital. Beyond the current economic challenges, our industry faces unprecedented demographic succession



By Mark Breslin  
CEO, brezlin.biz

challenges. The current retirement of the Baby Boomer Generation will profoundly challenge the construction and engineering industries. Gen X and Millennials now must be today's mentors, despite their relatively young ages. And I predict they will be very good ones. There has never been a time in our industry when mentoring has had more upside. My point is not one presented as a moral imperative or benevolent obligation; it is a bottom-line business and talent strategy upon which this industry may thrive or fail.

I would like to suggest three strategies that all industry leaders should adopt to ensure mentoring does occur:

1. All organizations should perform a demographic analysis of their workforce and integrate mentoring into their succession planning.

continued on page 23



**Business Manager & F.S.T.**

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**Assistant Business Manager**

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## FIRE! FIRE! FORCE MAJEURE CLAUSES

Particularly since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, contractors and other companies are increasingly more interested in implementing force majeure clauses in their contracts. A force majeure clause operates when uncontrollable circumstances or events (e.g. war, natural disasters, or extreme weather) prevent a party from fulfilling their obligations under a contract.

In the event of such a circumstance, a party to a contract may attempt to rely on that clause to avoid their continued obligations under the contract. However, in the recent case of *Interfor Corporation v. Mackenzie Sawmill Ltd.* 2020 BCSC 1572, we see an example of where contractual obligations were not discharged.

### The Facts

In 2006, a contract was executed whereby Mackenzie Sawmill Ltd. (“Mackenzie”) agreed to supply wood chips to Interfor Corporation (“Interfor”) for an indefinite duration (the “Contract”). The Contract contained the following force majeure clause, which read, in part, as follows:

“If at any time while this Agreement is in force [Mackenzie] shuts down or curtails the operation of the mill due to fire, strike, or other labour disruptions... then Mackenzie without liability may discontinue or curtail the production and delivery of chips to Interfor.”

Between 2010 and 2014, a series of fires at the Mackenzie mill broke out, ruining the mill and ultimately stopping the production of chips for Interfor.

Mackenzie took steps to demolish the mill and, through associated companies of Mackenzie’s owners, built a new sawmill at the same location. When the new sawmill began operations, its owners began selling wood chips contrary to the Contract.

Interfor commenced an action seeking declaratory relief. One key issue was whether the force majeure clause in the Contract permanently discharged Mackenzie from its obligations under



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the Contract, or whether the Contract continued to bind and oblige Mackenzie to provide wood chips to Interfor despite the force majeure clause.

### The Decision

After a summary trial, the Court concluded that Mackenzie’s obligations under the Contract were not permanently discharged under the force majeure clause. Instead, the Court found that the fire triggered the force majeure clause, which suspended Mackenzie’s obligation to provide wood chips to Interfor.

Notably, the Contract did not impose an obligation on Mackenzie to rebuild the mill or even to start production of chips. Mackenzie was not obligated to operate the mill and generate chips, but if it did, according to the Court, then it was required to sell the chips to Interfor.

### Lessons Learned

1. In the construction context, force majeure clauses often specify factors affecting the jobsite or a contractor’s ability to carry out their work in accordance with their contractual obligations. It is important to be aware of the circumstances identified by a force majeure clause.
2. Particularly during the time of COVID-19, it is worthwhile reviewing your contracts and ensuring a force majeure clause adequately protects your interests against uncontrollable circumstances, including but not limited to shutdowns or delays related to unavailability of materials, or restricted access to a jobsite due to public health orders.
3. Circumstances surrounding force majeure events can be complicated and often require a detailed analysis of the facts. If you are involved in a dispute relating to a force majeure clause, it is best to speak to a lawyer as early as possible. ■

*This article was written by Matthew T. Potomak, lawyer, and Liam Robertson, articulated student, who practise in construction law with the law firm of Kuhn LLP. This article is only intended as a guide and cannot cover every situation. It is important to get legal advice for specific situations. If you have any questions or comments about this case or other construction law matters, please contact us at 604.864.8877 (Abbotsford) or 604.684.8668 (Vancouver).*

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2. Managers, leaders, and supervisors need to be made to understand the operational and economic necessity of mentoring. Perhaps even include incentives, awards, and recognition for top mentors in the organization.
3. And finally, all young people need to know how to find a mentor. Both collegiate and apprentice programs need to assist them in developing this skill set. They need to know how to find someone who is willing to invest in them (and how to show appreciation for it being offered).

As was done for me, for over 20 years I have mentored many young people. I meet with or call them monthly. I hear about their lives, work, relationships, dreams, problems, and more. Mostly, I listen. When I do speak, I know it really matters. My payoff is the realization that I have often done the right thing for the right reason for the right person.

Mentoring is the last and final gift a leader gives to his or her employees, organization, and industry. I sincerely hope each of you will take the time to help someone else obtain the rewards and accomplishments that this industry has provided to you. Let us not let our great tradition of mentoring die. ■

Mark Breslin is an author, speaker, CEO and influencer inspiring change for workplace success across all levels of business. Mark has improved leadership, accountability, innovation, and engagement for organizations and individuals. He has spoken to more than 400,000 people and sold hundreds of thousands of copies of his books on leadership and workplace culture. See his work at [breslin.biz](http://breslin.biz)

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certification to travel within Canada, you wouldn't have that certification to move from job site to job site."

Critics argue the province would be better off increasing the number of spaces in colleges and training programs, where new entrants face waiting lists up to three years to get in, rather than putting in place mandatory certification.

A two-year consultation process went into devising the change, Horgan said, which he promised will have multiple pathways for existing workers in the initial 10 trades to earn credentials, either by registering as apprentices or challenging the certification standards.

Reinstatement will begin for construction and industrial electricians, power-line technicians, refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics, gas, steam and pipefitters, sheet-metal workers, and heavy-duty equipment and automotive service technicians.

These 10 trades are among the most skilled trades that already have the highest levels of certification, Horgan said. The province estimates there are about 8,000 uncertified workers in the trades among 100,000 tradespeople without certification in B.C.

Journeyed tradespeople or registered apprentices will "continue to work in their trade like they always have but certification will facilitate training and is expected to open the doors for thousands of workers to be successful and have lifelong careers in the trades.

Government expects to introduce legislation next spring, which will give workers and employers a year to either register in apprenticeship programs or challenge trade requirements to earn certification through existing experience.

For the electrical trades, the province expects the certification requirement to be in place by 2023, for the other trades implementation is expected by 2025. ■

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