

Fall **Edition**
NO. 3 **2004**

Introducing: Your BC Branch Executive

BC Branch President

Steve Chong

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Graduating in 1991 with a business degree from Simon Fraser University, Steve was well on his way to becoming an accountant when he realized he didn't want to sharpen any more pencils. He currently supervises the Environmental Health Assessment Program for the Richmond Health Department, and has been in Richmond since graduating from BCIT in 1993. He has been on the BC Branch Executive for the past 3 years.

In his spare time, Steve enjoys sitting on the couch, playing golf, and working on the house (in that order).

Editor's Note:

Claudia Kurzak's successful bid to become CIPHI National President earlier this year has resulted in several new faces at the BC Branch, including Steve replacing her as Branch President. This issue of the BC Page focuses on both your new and existing Branch Executive members, bringing you a brief bio, as well as a photo of each where available. This feature will conclude in the Winter 2004 issue.

Many thanks to Albert Wong for putting this all together!

BC Branch Update: October 2004

As I sit here attempting to write my first update as Vice President of the BC Branch, I am stunned at how quickly this year seems to be passing by. With Thanksgiving just around the corner, and the end of the year nearing, there is much work ahead.

The executive has undergone some changes. With Claudia Kurzac taking on the responsibility of National President, Steve Chong is quickly settling into his new role as Branch President. Salima Kassam has taken over my former responsibilities as Treasurer and Brent Zaharia and Nigel Headley have joined our team as councilors. Thanks to all for their great commitment to the Branch, its members and our profession.

The education committee is busy planning our next Educational Conference for March 15 and 16, 2005. Building on the 2004 conference success, we hope to offer great educational and networking opportunities. With this in mind, if anyone has any suggestions for topics and/or speakers, please let us know. If you have not had the chance to attend the conference in the past few years, I hope you get an opportunity this time around.

The Branch executive also just completed the huge task of mailing out a small token of appreciation to all of you. Enjoy your pens! Thanks to Roopy Khatkar, Salima Kassam and Joanne Lum for their time and hard work!

As Vice President and chair of our membership committee, I expect to review some initiatives to increase our membership numbers. Although our numbers have been relatively stable, I hope to welcome new members for 2005.

No new information has been received concerning the status of our professional designation.

Enjoy this Fall edition of the BC Page. Happy reading!

Respectfully Submitted,

Jasmina Egeler
Vice President, BC Branch

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Bridging Our Environment and Health
70th Annual National CIPHI Educational Conference
June 28 – 30, 2004
Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island

A report written by four delegates from Vancouver Coastal Health (Vancouver office): Tara Hluchy, Salima Kassam, Roopy Khatkar, Joanne Lum

The 70th Annual National CIPHI Educational Conference was an overall positive experience. There was a great deal to learn from the variety of speakers as well as from our fellow colleagues across the country. The educational and social components were balanced well and thoroughly enjoyed.

With regards to the educational component of the conference, the agenda included many interesting speakers/topics and some of the highlights we found are as follows:

The first Keynote Speaker, Dr. Doug Powell from Guelph, Ontario was an articulate speaker on risk analysis related to food safety and public issues of science and society. Another Keynote Speaker, Dr. Lamont Sweet from Prince Edward Island (PEI), gave an informative presentation on the past history of pandemic influenza outbreaks in humans as well as on the Avian Flu. Interesting presentations from the Canadian Armed Forces and their involvement in Afghanistan and Bosnia were a nice addition and very well received. Heather Chowen, a resident of PEI, described the incredibly effective recycling program in this province. It was exciting to hear about this very impressive system which separates waste into 3 categories: waste, compost and recycle. Each waste bin throughout PEI is separated into these 3 compartments which is probably why this province is kept so clean! The rest of the country could learn a lot from PEI! Helen Mersereau, who is from Cape Breton Island, disseminated very pertinent public health information in her presentation: New Waterford Hospital: Indoor Air Quality Case Study. Gary Moulton, a speaker from Nova Scotia, gave a thorough account of how this province survived a hurricane earlier this year with his presentation: Lessons From Hurricane Juan. It proved to be quite a learning experience for the local Environmental Health Officers and for those of us who had the opportunity to hear his talk.

On a more social note, there were many fun and interactive events planned throughout the duration of the conference. The traditional social events which includes the golf tournament and evening wine and cheese were a wonderful way to meet, greet and network with the delegates and exhibitors. These events were also a great way to set the social tone for the conference. The lobster dinner event on the first official day of the conference started with a bus tour of the National Park along the North Shore of PEI and ended with a delicious home-cooked lobster meal. We enjoyed the beautiful scenery of the island with it's rolling green hills, farmland, rich red earth, lovely coastline and of course, Cavendish, home to Anne of Green Gables. The lobster dinner was an event in itself as we donned our bibs and attempted to gracefully eat (is it possible?) this traditional island fare. We listened to live Celtic entertainment and even ran through the neighboring meadows! It was an evening of fun and laughter! The President's Banquet on the second day was an enjoyable and classy event. It was an honor to meet and dine with the National Executive members and each of the Branch Presidents across Canada. We took part in dancing to the live music and mingling with everyone in the lovely outdoors. It was on this evening that our very own Claudia Kurzac, BC Branch President, was formerly introduced as the new National CIPHI President. Congratulations Claudia! On the last day, the CIPHI Awards Luncheon was an event where various CIPHI awards were presented to honor specific delegates. The awards given were Honorary Membership, Lifetime Membership, Alexander Officer, Alex Cross Award and the Environmental Health Review Reward.

On our time apart from the conference we enjoyed touring around the small, beautiful province of PEI (Summerside, North Cape, and Charlottetown) and learning about the rich history (i.e. visited Province House where the Fathers of Confederation met and formed the country of Canada). We also had the opportunity to attend a pre-Canada Day concert in the park (unfortunately a very rainy day, but we Vancouverites seemed to know how to handle it!). A few of us were able to enjoy a Ceilidh (a traditional Celtic party) and some of us were fortunate enough to be around on Canada Day to take in the spectacular fireworks. It felt special to be celebrating this auspicious day in the birthplace of Confederation!

We would like to thank CIPHI BC Branch and Vancouver Coastal Health for allowing us the opportunity to attend the Educational Conference in Charlottetown, PEI. It was an enriching experience on so many levels and we are grateful for the financial support offered to us to be able to attend this event. Thank you!

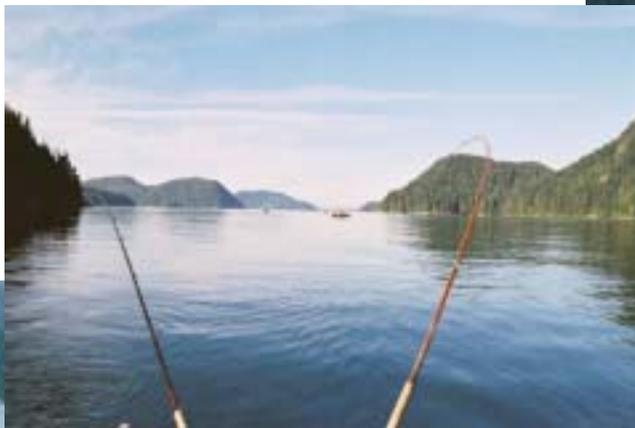
Tara Hluchy, Joanne Lum, Salima Kassam, Roopy Khatkar

From a Retired Member...

Dear Friends. Attached are a few recent pictures from our fishing trip to Tlupana Inlet between Gold River and Tahsis. The fishing was fannnnntastic as a former BC Premier would say. The weather cooperated and the scenery was beautiful. We caught and kept 7 nice Spring Salmon like the ones in the pictures and let several more go to keep the Fishing Gods happy. To all of you who helped send us on this wonderful trip as one of my retirement presents, my heartfelt thanks.

Best regards, Tim Roark.

PS, I'm sitting in my office chair and enjoying every minute I use it.



2004 C.I.P.H.I. Annual Conference

Charlottetown, P.E.I.

Being a Public Health Inspector (PHI) for the past nine years, this was the first Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (CIPHI) annual conference I attended, and would like to say, that I was impressed by the organization, the speakers and topics. A special thanks goes to the Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island Branches for doing an excellent job of organizing the conference.

Moving recently from Ontario to British Columbia (November, 2003), most of the Ontario Branch PHIs do not attend the annual conferences due to numerous conferences sponsored by the Ontario Branch and other organizations (e.g., semi-annual conferences sponsored by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care). However, a few of my Ontario colleagues were at the conference, and it was a pleasure to see them and catch-up on what's happening with the PHIs in Ontario.

Working as a Food Safety Specialist at the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), the main objective for me attending the conference was for the promotion of the FOODSAFE program (a BC food handler training program) and thanks to a bursary from the BC Branch to offset registration costs, I had a chance to attend a few of the conference sessions.

All of the presentations I attended were very well done. From Dr. Doug Powell's, keynote talk on Monday morning on food safety, to Sgt. Torsten Schultz', a PHI/Preventative Medicine Technician, presentation on his involvement of an outbreak of Roto 12 virus at Canadian Forces Bases in Bosnia, to Domenic Losito's presentation on his experiences at an environmental health conference in Durban, South Africa, where he contrasted their program to ours. All of them illustrated the fact that Canadian PHIs are well respected and play important and crucial roles in Public/Environmental Health around the world.

Another reason I was looking forward to attending the annual conference was to meet some Eastern Canada colleagues that I had not seen since we departed Ryerson University in 1995. It was a pleasure to meet some of them and relive old times. I was also impressed with the amount of members from BC. There must have been 15 to 20 BC PHIs and I was glad to meet some of my BC colleagues for the first time.

In addition to the presentations, there were many social events during the conference. From the wine and cheese ice breaker reception/poster presentation on Sunday night, to the traditional PEI lobster supper (my first experience eating lobster) and bus tour of the National Park, to the President's Banquet, where it was announced that BC's very own Claudia Kurzac will be the next president of CIPHI National and the CIPHI Awards Luncheon, the events were enjoyable and went by too fast.

Even though I did not have a chance to travel the Island of PEI, and stayed mostly in Charlottetown, I never realized how beautiful the province is and how large Canada is, until you spend a full day traveling from one coast to another.

In conclusion, I would like to thank FOODSAFE and the Secretariat – JoAnne Pasquale - for also attending the conference and covering the booth while I went to some of the presentations; my employer, BCCDC, for granting approval for me to attend the conference and covering some of the costs involved; and to the BC Branch - for providing the bursary to cover the registration fee.



Thanks again. I look forward to attending the 2005 Annual Conference called Evolving Borders of Public Health in Toronto, Ontario and I encourage all PHIs to participate in this worthwhile national experience. Yours truly,

Atul Jain, B.Sc., B.A.A.(EH), C.P.H.I.(C)
Food Safety Specialist, Food Protection Services
BC Centre for Disease Control

International Congress on Environmental Health

Dear Colleagues and friends,

Thank you for supporting my attendance for one day of the 8th International Congress on Environmental Health in Durban South Africa. It was truly a stimulating experience. I highly recommend attending the upcoming conferences in Ireland or Australia. Maybe I'll see you there.

To start, we were successful in our bid for the 11th International Congress on Environmental Health hosted in Vancouver 2010! Cheers to both Nick and Rob for their winning presentation.

The conference opened with an outstanding ceremony. Zulu dancing, singing – an exquisite performance. Difficult to top but a good challenge for us in 2010!
The delegates were mostly South Africans, Africans from the rest of the continent and a few of us from around the world.

It became apparent quite quickly from the opening speeches of the Ministers of Health and Environment and the President of South African Environmental Health that due to the political situation (3rd free vote since apartheid) and 40% unemployment that funding for Environmental Health is not a priority at this time. One astonishing example of the lack of funding is that 80% of inspectors do not have vehicles. They lack monitoring database software for tracking and reporting. The problems they face are dramatic – townships adjacent to each town or city with no potable running water, sanitary sewer, electricity. In evenings, the thick haze of burning kerosene from the cooking and heating of these shanties can be seen. During our travels we observed one fire, possibly due to the hazardous burners used which leak and cause explosive fires if knocked over. Between December and February they have been dealing with a cholera outbreak near the Mozambique border.

There were a number of interesting presentations. Of particular interest were:

Growing health hazards from toxic metals in the African environment;
Health Care Waste Management in KwaZulu Natal;
Poor Man's fuel. The continued use of paraffin (kerosene) for domestic energy requirements in low income households;
Operating in a changing Environment – A case History – Emission reductions at Engen Refinery in South Durban;
Environment and Health Collaboration; and many more. If you are interested, I have all papers on disk. Let me know and I'll email them to you. Contact me at: liz.vallaster@vch.ca.

The biggest message folks is LIFE IS GREAT IN VANCOUVER CANADA!

Lis Vallaster.

CIPHI National President

Claudia Kurzac

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Claudia graduated from BCIT with an Environmental Health Technology Diploma in 1980. She has been a BC Branch Executive member for 9 years, and has served as the Branch President for the last 5 years before becoming the National President.

Claudia is currently employed as a Senior Environmental Health Officer for the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (Vancouver). She has worked for the past 12 years in Vancouver and has been in the Environmental Health field for 19 years in total.

Claudia is married with no kids and one dog. In her spare time she enjoys long walks with her dog, gardening, and cooking.

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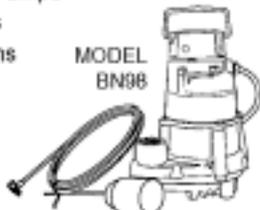
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B.C. Branch C.I.P.H.I.

Vice President

Jasmina Egeler

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Jasmina was born in Stuttgart, Germany and moved to Kelowna, BC with her family in 1984. She attended Okanagan University College in Kelowna prior to commencing her Environmental Health studies at BCIT in 1995.

Her first practicum was completed in Salmon Arm and her second in Coquitlam. After completing her last practicum she was lucky to cover a Maternity leave position in Burnaby, where she remained until 2000. In April 2000, a permanent full time position became vacant in North Vancouver, where she has been working ever since. Around the same time, Jasmina started volunteering for the BC Branch as recording secretary, with a short stint as treasurer, and now in her “madness” has accepted responsibilities as Vice President.

Her passions aside from public health include a regular yoga practice, loads of running and of course spending time with her long time boyfriend, family and friends.



Treasurer

Salima Kassam

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Salima was born in Tanzania, East Africa, and raised in Calgary, Alberta. She graduated from BCIT in 1998 with a Bachelor of Technology Degree and a Diploma in Environmental Health.

Salima has worked with a private company in Calgary in the field of Industrial Hygiene, prior to her move back to Vancouver. Since her move, she has worked in the New Westminster Health Unit as an Environmental Health Officer on a contract position. Since then, she has been employed with Vancouver Coastal Health for the past 5 years. She started as a District Environmental Health Officer, and is currently an Environmental Health Officer for Community Care Facility Licensing.

This is Salima’s first year on the Branch Executive, but has been part of the Education Committee for the past 3 years. Salima enjoys kayaking, ball hockey, and traveling whenever she can.



Recording Secretary

Joanne Lum

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Joanne (AKA Jo) was born and raised in Victoria, BC. She graduated from the University of British Columbia with a Bachelor of Science degree in Nutritional Sciences in 1997, and continued at BCIT to complete her Bachelor of Technology degree in Environmental Health in 2000.



After the Environmental Health Program, she worked with Toronto Public Health for a summer contract position. She moved back West to complete her certification, and since then, she has been employed with Vancouver Coastal Health for the past 4 years; 1 year in the Tobacco Enforcement Program and the last 3 years as a district inspector.

Joanne has been Secretary for the BC Branch for the past 2 years, and is also part of the Education Committee. She enjoys traveling, rowing, photography, volleyball, BBQs, and “beach time”.

Past President

Richard Taki

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Richard was born and raised in beautiful Merritt BC. He studied Pharmacy at the University of British Columbia and was granted a Diploma in Environmental Health from BCIT in 1983. More recently, Richard received his Master of Art in Leadership and Training from Royal Roads University in May of 2003.



Richard began his career in sunny Alberta with Sturgeon Health (St. Albert) and later became the Manger of the Environmental Health Program with North Eastern Alberta Health (St. Paul). In 1987 he started working with the Vancouver Health Department and currently serves as the Manager of Health Protection, Vancouver Coastal Health (Vancouver).

Richard first volunteered to be a Branch Councilor in 1991, served as President from 1992 to 1995, and is currently helping out as Past President. He has always been involved with the Branch in some capacity and is most known for his involvement with coordinating the BOC examination panels.

Any spare time that Richard has is dedicated to his wife, two boys and ice hockey and lacrosse.

Corresponding Secretary

Roger Parsonage

Okanagan Health Service Delivery Area
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Roger was raised in the Kootenays and was granted a Diploma in Environmental Health from BCIT in 1994. He is currently studying business administration by correspondence.

Roger began his career in Coquitlam after completing practicums in Vernon and Salmon Arm. He moved south of the river to Boundary in 1995 and then to Vernon in 1998. He became Program Leader for Administration with Interior Health in 2002 and then Manager of Health Protection for the Okanagan service area this past January.

Roger joined the BC Branch in 1996 as the recording secretary and currently serves as corresponding secretary, along with BC Page Editor which he began in 2002. He is currently representing the Branch as a member of the Professional Advisory Group developing core programs for public health in BC.

When not renovating their home, Roger's leisure time is spent with his wife and 2 girls; their 3rd child is expected in late October.

Councilor

Lynne Brewer

Health Canada
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Lynne graduated from BCIT's Environmental Health Program in 1975. She has been on the BC Branch Executive for over 10 years, and currently holds the position of Councilor. Before the BC Page was circulated electronically, Lynne was in charge of picking up the BC page from the printers and mailing it out to members.

Lynne is currently employed by Health Canada, Workplace Health and Public Safety Program, as an EHO. She has been employed as an EHO for 29 years. During her time with Health Canada, there have been lots of changes and variety in her work. Even the name of the section in Health Canada that she works for has changed many times!

In her spare time, Lynne enjoys swimming, downhill skiing and camping.

Councilor

Nigel Headley

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Nigel graduated from BCIT with a Bachelor of Technology degree in Environmental Health in 1999. After his final practicum he continued working with Vancouver Coastal Health in the Tobacco Program educating and persuading retailers to reduce the sales of tobacco to minors.

He later moved to Richmond Health Services where he has been working for the past four years. As an Environmental Health Officer, Nigel has demonstrated eagerness to promote and maintain a high standard of public health and environmental safety.

In 2001, he became the student preceptor coordinating Environmental Health students during their field training. Now he has taken on a new challenge by becoming involved with the CIPHI BC Branch Executive. He currently holds a councilor position and is the most recent member of both the Education and Membership Committees.

In his spare time he enjoys playing music and spending time in the recording studio. Occasionally, on the weekends, you may find him hiking, fishing or playing cricket in Stanley Park.

Councilor

Alan Kerr

South Vancouver Island Health Service Delivery Area
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Alan graduated from Simon Fraser University in 1977 and from BCIT's Environmental Health Program in 1983. He has been on the BC Branch Executive for 4 years as a Councilor.

Alan began his career in Environmental Health in Alberta and then managed to get himself hired in Vancouver. In 1992, Alan moved to Victoria.

Currently, Alan is the Regional Environmental Health Consultant for the Capital Health Region, Vancouver Island Health Authority. Alan enjoys biking to work, skiing with his family, and trying to keep his collection of junk cars running.

Councilor

Roopy Khatkar

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Roopy graduated from the University of British Columbia with a Bachelor of Science degree in Dietetics in 1993 and a few years later attended BCIT where she entered the Environmental Health Program.

After completing her practicum in Vancouver (Vancouver Coastal Health) she graduated from Environmental Health and soon after started working as an EHO in Vancouver...and has been there ever since! She has been involved in CIPHI, BC Branch as a Councilor for 3 years and enjoys being a part of the Education Committee.

In her time away from work she keeps busy with a variety of activities including hiking, golf, tennis, kickboxing, traveling, cooking and spending time with family and friends. Her most recent venture has been to hone her long lost musical skills by taking up the guitar...great fun, but not as easy as it looks!

In Memorium

Some members may have heard the sad news....

We lost a friend and colleague, Jan Horton, who passed away on June 11, 2004, after a courageous battle with cancer and complications related to chemotherapy. Jan graduated from Environmental Health at BCIT in June 1991, and just prior to that she completed an Extended diploma in Environmental Toxicology from Simon Fraser University. She worked in Northern Alberta and then started with the Northern Health Authority in 1995. She worked out of the Fort St. John office for 9 years. She was always willing to try new things. She produced some exceptional playground inspection reports using the new digital camera when it was first made available to the program. She was a great cook, baker, and accomplished craftsperson with her interests ranging from weaving, soap making, copper work, basketry, but most of all quilting. She will always be remembered for her baked goodies at the staff meetings.

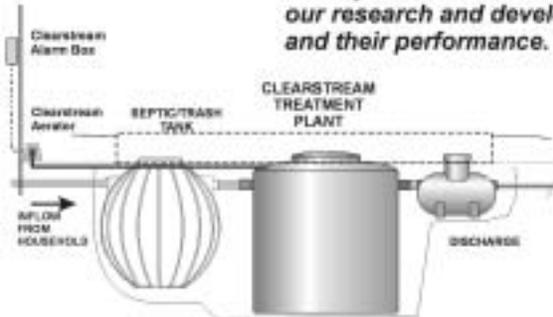


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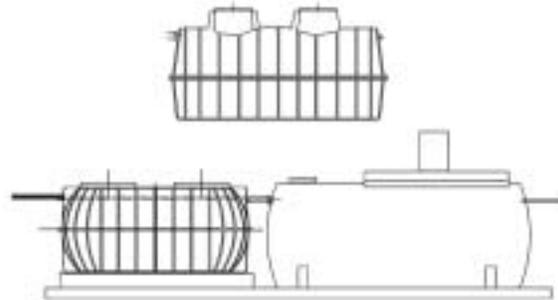


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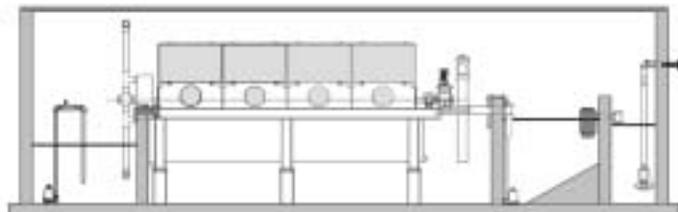


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