

Eyeglass prescriptions again reimbursed at Accenture



Union Representative Kevin Smyth

Eyeglass prescriptions will again be reimbursed for COPE members at Accenture who use computers, thanks to a July 2005 arbitration win.

Arbitrator Emily Burke ruled that Accenture was wrong to discontinue the BC Hydro practice of reimbursing COPE members when their use of computer screens causes a need for prescription glasses.

Starting from July 14, 2005, employees can request an ergonomic assessment of their computer workstations. If the assessment doesn't eliminate VDT-related vision problems, a special prescription for VDT use may be needed.

Accenture Business Services for Utilities (ABSU) will reimburse em-

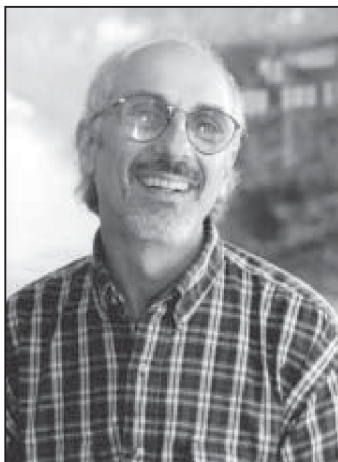
ployees for the eyewear.

The complete award is available at www.cope378.ca

COPE 378 Union Representative Kevin Smyth who handled the arbitration said that members should see their ABSU managers for reimbursement of receipts for VDT prescription eyewear purchased since April 2003.

If claims are rejected, members should contact their COPE stewards.

Workers have a right to safe workplace



COPE Executive Board member Terry Levitt serves on the Joint Health and Safety Committee at Accenture.

A recent early morning fire at a Burnaby school left a smoky smell in Accenture's Edmonds Call Centre. A strong smoke smell had wafted through all the floors and some people had tingling eyes yet most remained at their desks.

"Workers did not know what they should do or whether it was safe to continue working," said COPE Executive Board member Terry Levitt who serves on the Joint Health and Safety Committee at Accenture along with COPE Executive Board member Brian White.

The union is awaiting direction on what procedures members should follow in future emergencies.

The employer must investigate complaints about indoor air quality

and report its findings back to the safety committee.

"It's unfortunate people didn't understand their basic rights to a safe workplace," said Levitt.

Workers' Compensation Board rules say that if people are not in a safe work environment, they have the right to leave. The employer has an obligation to provide a safe workplace.

COPE member passes away

With sadness, we learned from Job Steward Noni Baldwin that COPE 378 member Susan Emerson from BC Hydro passed away. Emerson was 46 years old and had a massive heart attack while hiking the Squamish Chief. Our condolences to her friends and family.

Members support United Way at BC Hydro

This year COPE Executive Councillor Mely Kempf from BC Hydro is the Loaned Labour Representative on the United Way campaign. Each year BC Hydro covers the cost of a COPE member for the United Way campaign.

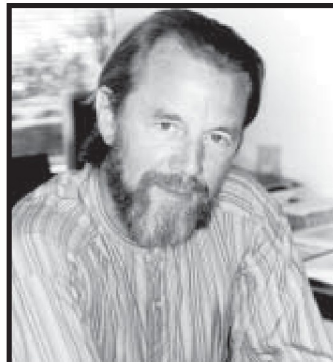
Union members are urged to support this important charity campaign.

Pension meeting at ABSBC Nanaimo Call Centre

COPE executives held a meeting October 17 for union members at the Accenture Business Services (ABSBC) Call Centre in Nanaimo about pension issues and the Call Centre closure. COPE 378 Vice-President Pat Junnila, Union Representative Kevin Smyth and former Chair of the COPE 378 Pension Committee Bruce Farmer answered pension questions.

Union rep retires

COPE 378 Senior Union Representative Scott Watson has retired after working for the union office since the seventies. Originally Watson worked for the Insurance Corporation of BC before joining local 378.



Art gallery

Artist queries social standing in pop culture



The paintings of Chief Poundmaker and Quanah Parker are by Riel Benn whose artwork is currently on tour in Western Canada. Riel, a Dakota, was born in Manitoba and raised on Birdtail Sioux First Nation.

In this series, he uses 12 magazine covers to celebrate heroes to whom he could relate, historical figures, men in traditional dress and places them on the covers of top consumer magazines. This juxtaposition plays not only with our sense of history but our notions of social standing.

The images encourage the viewer to reevaluate his or her own position in the historical context. Each subject looks back at the viewer, querying assumptions about status. More than the stoic Indian, these subjects challenge our control over the narrative and ask who's celebrating whom.

Many viewers will lack knowledge about these heroes and in this way Benn forces them to educate themselves on the history of North America. His artwork asks the question, are they on the covers because they are important, or are they important because of the covers they are on? See more at www.osac.sk.ca