



# Heads Up

Vol . 7

Newsletter of the W.F.A.

Date: February 18, 2007

Best of the new year to all our members! Didn't this one get off to a roaring start; one month into the fresh season and we already seem to be involved in a critical Faller shortage, you've got to love that. As this is our first publication after the AGM we'll do a little re-capping of what went on for the 2 days we were in Nanaimo. Due to a lot of outfits getting right back at 'er after January 1<sup>st</sup>, as well as fairly rotten road conditions on the Island that weekend, attendance was down a bit. None the less, we had a very informative Saturday and as always the WFA Board were happy to be networking with the members.

## **From the WFA Boardroom**

The WFA Board of Directors went through quite a restructuring a couple of weeks ago. Here's what went on. Barry Hawes, Bruce Fleenor and Ray Therrien have stepped down after serving an extra year on their 3 year terms. A big thanks is in order to these 3 guys as they jumped on board with the original directors 4 years ago when some of our wonderful employers would threaten to fire you if you were involved with the WFA, since then most everyone in the Forest Sector have gotten fairly use to us being around. Ray will continue be active from the side lines as he is a personal friend to several of the Board as well as the Executive Board. Bruce and Barry have left the Industry for greener pastures, or orchards in Bruce's case. Best of luck guys in your future endeavours!

With 3 leaving, 3 new Board members were nominated and voted in. We'd like to welcome and acknowledge Tony Lalonde from North Van., Glen Erickson from Nelson and Ken Swetlikoff from Enderby, they've began their 3 year term as WFA Directors. As your membership dues are paid up this year you will see their contact information on the Directors matrix that's circulated by us.

The Executive Board has also gone through some restructuring due to Wendy taking a full time job with the BC Forest Safety Council in Nanaimo and Mike has taken a full time administrative /bullbuckers job with Sibola Mountain Falling out of Prince George. Wendy will continue to look after membership registration which is huge in itself and Mike will remain in everyone's face at a political level on behalf of our organization. The BOD have signed on Mike's wife, Patricia as an Executive Assistant which means she'll be picking up the slack for Mike, Wendy and Mack. Those of you that made it into Nanaimo had the opportunity to meet her as she was running the registration table with Mike Roth as you went into the meeting. Pat can be reached at (250) 638-8729 and will be able to forward your concerns in the right direction.

## **Message from Dave Parkin, WFA Communications**

'Heads Up', the WFA in house magazine is looking for news worthy, informative articles to put to print that the falling community will get something out of. We know there are a lot of you that have items, ideas and thoughts they'd like to promote or just plain get off their chests, now's your chance.

We've put out enough of these magazines now; you're all familiar with the content, scratch out something and get it into him. Dave is also looking for advertising sponsorship as that's what makes the magazine happen.

Some of you Contractors might like to promote yourselves on a provincial level for either looking for Independents or looking for work. We put 1000 of these out annually throughout BC, it's a hell of a way to get your name out there for a very reasonable rate.

Dave can be reached at **duketheduck@shaw.ca** or by mailing: **Dave Parkin - 1209 Fair Rd. - Parksville, BC- V9P 2C7**. For this sort of thing we are going to recommend correspondence only. It's your magazine, get involved and be part of it!

### **Bursary for Fallen Members**

Wendy and Mack are in the process of setting up a separate funding entity with the WFA for members who become involved in a fatal accident. This was brought up at the AGM and agreed upon wholeheartedly by the members that we should follow through with this project. Some members have already contacted Wendy asking how to make a contribution to the fund. Soon as we get this up and running, we'll let you know the details.

### **Fallers Getting Ripped Off**

Here's an item that's been going on since the dawn of time in the province of BC and quite frankly could be minimised if those of you that do take on contract jobs follow a few simple guidelines when conducting your business. We're going to describe a scenario the WFA office is currently working on for a member and describe how this mess may very well be avoided along with a few other slippery tricks that take place more often than one would think. As with many of the things to remedy a situation we identify, these are already taking place in the province and are proven effective. The matter our member is currently involved in plays out as follows.

The job was taking place on a BC Timber Sale signed off by the Ucluelet Economic Development Corporation. Interfor was signed on to administrate the job and market the logs. They in turn looked after finding a road builder to do the block development and find someone to do the harvesting, which turned out to be a fairly shaky customer. The Logging Contractor then went on to sign up our member to do the falling for 6.00 a metre. He in turn hired some Independents to knock the timber down along with himself. Take note of all the entities involved to do one 18,000 metre job, hard to keep track of anyone wanting to show a little responsibility for pay or safety, isn't it?

Our guy carried the falling payroll through the bulk of the job incurring a huge, unpaid bill to the tune of approximately 90,000.00. This is where he left himself wide open for problems. Now the wood is gone and the Logging Contractor is telling him there is no money but he will put him on an instalment plan, paying him 5,000.00 a month until the debt is cleared up. This is bullshit! Right now we are working to either get our members money in full or (close to) it after lawyers' fees or bankrupt the guy that's putting him through this misery. Given the timeframe that this has taken place over and the situation of 'who's who', the latter may be the only solution. Any of this sound familiar, it's been going on for years and will continue too unless you as a Contractor/ Independent cover your ass, and even then you may get stung, just not to the point our guy did.

Right out of the gate we will suggest you be really wary of taking on anything by the cubic metre any longer. The glory days of Falling Contractors 'coining 'er' are over. Between patches of gout, unstable markets and shady characters to name a few, there are too many issues working against the falling

community in this day and age. Even if you are working for your most trusted friend you may have some negative factor come crashing down on you that you never anticipated could happen, sending the job into a financial tail spin.

Many of the jobs signed up nowadays are done by the man day. Account for your men's wages, crummies, fuel and oil along with any other costs attached to the job such as administration and go with that. This method should be fool proof.

If you do take on a job by the metre make sure you have a 'man day advance' clause drafted into your contract which states that every 2 weeks you will see enough money from the Prime to cover the payroll, with a 'square up' cheque after the wood's been scaled. At least with this method, if things do run amok you won't be out as much money from your own pocket. If the Prime does not want to do this, it's safe to say you don't want to be doing his falling. Now with this is written into the contract if this advance does not show up in full one week after submitting a bill, **cease and desist all falling activities on the block until the matter is dealt with!** Don't go in the hole any further for this guy and don't expect your Independents to carry the tab either.

One more stunt that takes place we'll warn you about is after the job is done and long gone, the Prime will go back into a setting to ship the pulp which was decked all over the place due to soft market conditions. If you are about to do a setting which has high pulp content, either account for this when bidding, you are going to have to fall it (and buck it) or just take the job by the day, that way you won't have to take the guy to court to get your money once they do decide to ship it. We know of one case going on right now over this very issue, and we know there's more than 1 member going to read this and say 'hey, that happened to me'.

As a member in good standing you are entitled to help from the WFA if you are having problems with an Employer. There are a couple of different avenues we can take. Some Employers still like to think the Falling Contractors still have to put up with their unsavoury conduct; we don't. If you have to shut a job down temporarily to make a point, get in touch with us immediately. Provided your issue is valid, we have the capability to immediately circulate a formal memo electronically out to about 300 members (the caulk boot telegraph will do the rest) identifying the problem along with the parties involved and request they don't go near the job under question until matters are resolved. This works!

We proved this to be fairly effective when a group of North Coast Fallers needed a raise last Summer and were willing to wobble the job. The Employer was known for having the attitude of 'if you won't do it, we'll find someone that will'. We got a hold of him on behalf of our members working there and stated that we had the capability to block his jobsites province wide. We were then told by the Employer there should be no need to take things to that level, a quick round of negotiations got under way and the Fallers got their raise.

Never overlook the obvious either; there is a shortage of us in this province thanks to the Fallers Certification program. This has helped lock down the province with regards to our occupation. There are a pile of real good Employers which realize this and are willing to pay accordingly without any headaches and hassles. As a group, we should all start concentrating on working for these good guys and avoid the fly-by-nighters and rip-offs. If these guys could no longer log because they can't get anyone to fall their wood they would have to move on, opening the doors for the Contractors who are willing to conduct themselves in a fair and fashionable manner.

### **Falling Hazards Brought on by Engineering**

As Fallers, we all know this exists; we touched on it when the WFA published 'A View from the

Field'. Mike from the WFA along with Bill from the BCFSC have began consultation sessions with groups of RPF's, Tech's and Engineers in the province to discuss this issue. The groups that we have done presentations to so far have been very receptive to the point that representatives from BCTS have asked that we come and talk to some of their field workers in the Spring before they send them out for the season.

We do have a fairly substantial presenter's package we are working off of at present, put together with a series of maps which had some of the good 'ol headaches engineered into them as well as what we just plain knew to be fact from being Fallers in the field. If any of you out there would like to supply us with more information and thoughts to help us expand as well as make sure we haven't missed anything, we'd love to hear from you. This request runs parallel to the consultation process we went through with you to compile 'A View from the Field', we're just focusing on one issue this go around. **Anyone wishing to help out with this project can send their comments to Mike either through the WFA website or dmckibbin@monarch.net. Mail works also to Mike McKibbin - 2301 Cramer St. - Terrace, BC - V8G 2K6.**

We always knew there was need for improvement with the Engineering that we as Fallers, and loggers in general, have to contend with, there now appears to be a window of opportunity to do something about it. Once again, we urge you to get involved!

### **Electronic Surveys from the WFA**

Hey, while we're talking about getting involved, we'd like to explain why those surveys show up to your e-mail address periodically from us. Our satellite office in Terrace is hooked up with several different entities across the continent that do electronic surveys mainly but not limited to labour groups, including WorksafeBC. Many of these get dealt with either in Terrace by Mike, by your Board of Directors or just dumped if we feel they are too far removed from the falling community.

If we have taken the time to forward any of these out to you it's because we felt that you as an individual should have the opportunity to voice your feedback; in short, it's important. We're going to acknowledge that some of these surveys (the section 26 review) are extremely drawn out but the issues identified will inevitable affect you as a Faller in BC. This is why we have forwarded certain items to you, so you know what's coming down the pipe and have a chance to voice your concerns, even if sometimes it seems like no one is listening!

Because the WFA represents Independent, Contract and Company Fallers it can be a real physical and legal impossibility to accurately come up with 'one size fits all' submission for some things, therefore we as your representatives will not do this under the WFA. You as an individual can and should.

WSBC is use to getting a multi-faceted response from Mike which in turn goes into a lengthy phone consultation process to sort out the conflict in his statements, in other words he has covered all the bases. That still doesn't mean you shouldn't get involved. Incidentally, the Fallers were commended by WSBC on their involvement with 'One man company' survey that went on early last year.

### **New Faller and Super/Bullbucker Training**

New Faller Training is planning on having a fairly active year. Some of our members have been enquiring about the scheduling on behalf of their sons, friends and relatives. For those interested parties here's the most current list of times and places we could obtain. As always, the contact person for either program is Gary Banys, he can be reached at (250) 741-1060 or banys@bcforestsafesafe.org

New Faller Training dates are:

April 10-May15 Chase and Parksville  
June 4-July 9 Queen Charlotte Islands/ Parksville  
June 25-August 3 Parksville  
September 17-October 22 Chase  
November 5-December 3 Parksville

The towns we have listed coincide with a supporting college willing to administrate the New Faller Training program for the 5 days of classroom part. Timber for the practical part of the course will quite possibly be out of an entirely different town site. As start up date for the course becomes nearer, Gary would be able to let you know the location if a son or nephew was trying to make living out arrangements for that part of the course. The breakdown on the Fallers Supervisor course is as follows.

February 19-February 23 Nanaimo  
February 26-March 2 Nanaimo  
March 5-March 9 Port McNeill  
March 12-March 16 Campbell River  
March 19-March23 Campbell River  
March 26-March 30 Fraser Valley  
April 9-April 13 Prince George

Application forms are available through the BCFSC at (250) 741-1060 or get a hold of Mike or Pat and the WFA can ship you a copy electronically.

The WFA had some of its members as well as its Board attend the pilot sessions of the Super/Bullbucker course late last winter. As we explained several newsletters ago, it is structured around existing WSBC regulation, there is nothing new, and if you are a Faller Supervisor you should be doing the things spelled out in the course.

Now, what has happened after some people went through the pilot session is they got back out around their falling crews and became what we have come to call a *Stump Nazi*. We are well aware that these guys took this course, focused in on one component, which was the stump evaluation and proceeded to go back to the bush and become real stress factors for a lot of Fallers. We have brought this point forward to the BCFSC, the folks that built and administrate the course. They have told us our concerns will be factored into the up and coming sessions. Trust our Forest Industry and some of its Supervisors to screw up a perfectly simple thing as this course.

If you happen to have one of these knuckle heads as your Bullbucker, could you let us know, we'd like to straighten him out before he kills someone! Anyway, the bottom line is it's a good course, if you're in charge of Fallers we recommend you take it. And please remember Bullbuckers, there's a whole lot more to looking after your guys than hammering on them about a ragged stump or 2 you may find in their quarters.

### **Safe Companies**

As of January 23<sup>rd</sup> we have 17 SAFE Companies in the province of BC with 278 registered to go through the process. Out of the falling community, Sibola Mountain Falling Ltd. has successfully achieved its SAFE Companies status in BC. Congratulations to Jordan Nicolussi, the president of this company.

The BCFSC has assigned its first two safety advocates in the province to help companies prepare to take their audits. They are John Gooding of Williams Lake and Neil Campbell out of Penticton. Many

of you will recognize Neil's name as he is a certified Faller and a QST. These guys will be available to come to your business and help you identify the flaws or weaknesses in your worker safety programs... (or for the outfits that safety is virtually non-existent), they will get you up to speed.

One of the easiest ways to explain the structure of SAFE Companies and the ability to pass would be to compare it to the Fallers Certification program we all went through; both were built off of existing WorksafeBC regulation. When it came time to get certified, many of you stepped up to the plate and did it, no problems. These were the Fallers that knew and understood how to go about their business within the boundaries laid out by WSBC, the same rings true for SAFE Companies. Provided you are familiar with your roles and responsibilities as an Employer in the eyes of WSBC, you're going to pass this thing.

The WFA was involved in structuring the audit system as it was being developed. Once 'Sibola' had gone through the audit we contacted Jordan with a few very straight forward questions, the first being "What did you think of that?" His response was, "We passed because we were already doing everything anyway. Between the work I had done in the office, the documentation that came in from the Bullbuckers out in the field and the cooperation of our Fallers, we got it". Question two went along the lines of, "Was this easy?" Jordan's response for the most part was, "Not entirely, we did have to work for it. Like so many things in our Industry, doing the right thing is not always the easiest".

If you would like to register in the SAFE Companies program, forms are available on line at the BCFSC's website, go to the SAFE Companies 'tab'.

### **Attachments**

This newsletter is coming to you with 3 separate attachments for you to look at and get what you can out of them. The next headings will give you an idea of where they originated from as well as our views on them.

#### **The Cost of a Faller**

This item was circulated at the AGM by Darrel Wong, 'Steels' Local 2171 President. It represents a fairly detailed breakdown of what they feel an Independent Faller should be making for a wage. There were 3 items on the end that were inked in by a couple of our Board members which brought the total up. As many of you are aware, it's contract year for the Steelworkers. Their plans are to include their members who are Independent Operators in their negotiations this year using this figure. For many of you that felt you got the 'shaft' financially when you were made to run your own company to be a Faller, you were right!

Right now many of our members, both Independent and Contractor would like to see the bar set at no less than 500.00 a day. Many are already paying better than this, but at least it's somewhat of an Industry standard to set. Anyway, as mentioned get what you can out of this memo, we've supplied it to you as 'food for thought'. Our thanks to Darrel for passing it along.

#### **The Health and Safety Accord**

Many of you are aware of second attachment's existence, for those that aren't, here's a copy. An accord is an agreement. This particular one was drafted up a few years back by Tanner Elton, CEO of the BC Forest Safety Council, after which all member organizations that joined the Council signed on to it. As a refresher, the BCFSC is made up of pretty well everybody involved in the Forest Harvesting Sector of BC, including WSBC and the MOFR. Many of you that are looking at this for the first time are

probably going to have the same questionable feeling as we did the first time we looked it over. Regardless, we have taken the time to circulate it to our members for a couple of specific reasons...

First, this should be incorporated into your companies SWP's for your employees to view. There is an item in the SAFE Companies audit asking you if this has been done. If you as a Contractor haven't, photo copy this one and get it in there.

Second, most of our members know bloody well in order to run your outfit safely it will cost a little bit more for items such as proper supervision, extra documentation, etc. We've been hearing this from you for some time now. Many of you have asked us where this is supposed to be coming from. This is identified in bullet number 9. It should be taken into account through the bidding process. Currently, we're well aware this is not taking place in a lot of cases...It's the same old process; the low baller gets the work, while the good guy and his crew stay at home. Keep in mind, the entire sector has signed on to this piece of paper, even though you'd still never know it in many parts of this province!?!

If you know that you submitted a bid based on doing things safely and properly and were knocked out of the process by some haywire flake, DO NOT be afraid to say something! Use this piece to hold the Licensee or tenure holder accountable. We must acknowledge that some licensees are bucking up to the good operators; we still have a ways to go yet. If we don't start doing a little 'policing' on our own, change will take forever...

### **WFA Membership Form**

The last attachment is our own membership form. Many of you are up for renewal around the first of April, we just made things much easier for you. If you've already come good with the office, pass the form on, we're always looking for new members. Your BOD gives you a strong voice in this province, more members makes us that much stronger. If you so chose not to remain a valid member(?!?) you lose the benefits of this organization, be it these newsletters, the WFA job link or getting us to unleash an unholy wrath on a bad actor Employer. Make sure you print clearly, with all your current contact info. If you aren't online, give us an e-mail address of someone who will notify you when Wendy sends something through; a son, daughter or book keeper etcetera. Keep your head up in the bush and follow a good 'ol rule when falling and bucking, 'if you know you can do...do it, if you think you can do it... don't! Here's a quotable quote passed on to us at the AGM by a member, it went:

***Know Safety...No Pain,  
No Safety...Know Pain.***

Ya gotta like that one. We'll talk to everyone in the Spring. Look after each other!!!