



Lorne West *for*
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I have not prepared a speech or any fancy sayings, or catchy tunes, but I do have a few notes to try and touch on. First I would like to thank you all for inviting me here into Gerry's world, or as Gerry puts it, his riding! I have not had the opportunity to get to know a lot of you well, but some of you I have had the privilege of knowing for quite some time. For those that don't know me, my name is Lorne West, and I am currently the president of Local 1271, Surrey. I think I need to say first and foremost that I have the greatest amount of respect for Gerry. With four good candidates there is likely a good chance of a second ballot. I sincerely hope that Gerry and I are both on that second ballot. But I am here because I want to win that ballot, not because I want you to choose between Gerry and me. I understand that your support is with Gerry and that is where it should be.

With that in mind then I am not here to seek your vote, but to get to know you, to build our relationship for the day when I am successful as IAFF 6th District Vice-President. I will want your support then. Life is about relationships and I want to start building a relationship with all of you now and that is why I am here today. We are fortunate that we have four experienced candidates that no matter what happens or who wins we know we are going to have a strong and successful IAFF 6th District. We all have similar resumes so I not going to bore you with those details, but I want to tell you a little about me. I have been in and around the fire service for about 30 years. At the age of 17 I had an opportunity to get involved with forest fire fighting and frankly at that age I was not prepared to work that hard, but I came home and joined the local paid-call brigade and was selected to the career force by the time I was 21 in 1977. I have recently written my Battalion Chief exams, which is a bargaining unit position, and at the age of 48 I don't anticipate retiring any time soon from the Fire Department.

I have spent my entire adult life advocating for fire fighter, dispatcher, prevention issues and support staff of the fire service. When I was first elected in Surrey we were a Fire Department dominated by the volunteer paid-call members and had one of the lesser collective agreements in BC, and we had little or no community profile. Today I am proud to say we have the best collective agreement, in almost every way, and we are devolving the paid-call component in the city. With the city approving the staffing of the last stronghold of paid-call members we have emerged as the second largest fire department in BC. I have participated in the growth of what was once a 4 station department operating with 2 & 3 man trucks to where we are today, 14 stations with 4-6 fire fighters in each. We achieved a unanimous council resolution to staff and maintain all first response fire apparatus with four fighters, and were the first city council to pass

resolution for fire fighters to achieve cancer presumption. Our Surrey Fire Fighter's Foundation raises over \$450,000 each and every year, and is the single highest profile community organization in the city. This year we were nominated as the Community Service Organization Leader and will receive that award in a ceremony June 2.

My decision to run for 6th District was a family decision in every way. We are prepared for the hard work to come. I look forward to the work and the challenges our District will face in the next four years. I don't merely want the job; I want to do the work, to "do" the job. There are many issues and challenges we face but fundamentally it all comes back to one thing – bargaining. After all is said and done, we must be able to achieve our successes at the bargaining table and everything we do interfaces to that point. To that end I have successfully bargained over 30 collective agreements in no less than a dozen jurisdictions and cities, and not a single one has ended in interest arbitration. For the first time in BC in over 20 years we have reversed the trend of police comparability and narrowed the gap, with my Local's settlement this year. And what makes that even more profound is that, it was after a number of Locals had already settled for status quo. It is also the first time in BC a Local has gained ground on the Ontario Locals.

Wage parity with police is a significant matter for our members. In BC alone, it would mean over 21 million dollars annually in our member's pockets, and double that if we consider the question district wide. But bargaining is also about relationships, and I have spent a long time building a network of relationships of influential decision makers, and they have all help us achieve our settlements. When Gordon Campbell was elected Premier in BC I was not only the first fire fighter but also the first Union leader to have an opportunity to meet with him. Just last Saturday, I participated in gathering community leaders, the Fire Chiefs and IAFF Union Leaders of Surrey and Delta for a crime and safety forum in Surrey with the Deputy Prime Minister, Anne McLellan, where we were able to discuss fire fighters issues and the communities concerns from a fire fighters perspective. When Martin announced his candidacy I was able to secure significant time with his senior campaign team, organizing the police and fire union leaders from the major cities of Greater Vancouver to have as much time as we needed to address our key issues such as the PSOC, pension reform, and the criminal code amendments. I am currently working out the details for the Prime Minister himself to come to Surrey, although not for certain yet, I expect to be meeting with Paul Martin before the end of next week.

I have no illusions about the challenges of being the IAFF 6th District VP. I cannot do the 6th Districts job as well as Terry can. I don't have his experience or the time he has to put into it. I am an active fire fighter with a young family and I want to have a balance in my life, with family and IAFF. I believe that is possible. Perhaps in time, I may gain the experience that Terry has, but I also think we can gain greater successes by building a team. I think we have many very talented people among us, Gerry being one of them, and I can look around the room today and see many more. My Local has become stronger and I have been able to represent them better from the valuable experience I have gained assisting neighboring Locals and representing the IAFF. We need to provide more of our Local leaders with that experience, and give them the necessary training and support they need to coordinate that effort District wide. With your input I believe we can by consensus build a team to represent us in the 6th District. A team that will

support the small Locals, provide leadership to all the Locals and support the larger Locals to become the leaders they can be.

We have many issues that we are faced with and it will take a team to tackle them all. We saw last month the Alberta government propose they move the ambulance model away from the local government and place the authority with the Regional Health Authority, in BC it has been rumored for some time that they will move towards the Regional Health Authority and in Saskatchewan you have a mix of private and public Ambulance providers functioning within the Regional Health Authority models. The provinces all talk to each other, perhaps with the RHA concept starting here that is why it has spread. This issue overlaps our provincial borders and we need to build a collaborative approach to respond to it. We now have the National Building Code amendments to the Fire Code redefining our once prescriptive codes to subjective based codes. BC and Ontario have already adopted this model and it is only a matter of time before that hits Alberta and Saskatchewan, given their references to the National Code. When I asked the IAFF to respond to this they presented a position paper on the matter within days.

When Roy Romanow's Royal Commission on Health Care Reform was holding hearings again I asked if the IAFF could take advantage of this opportunity to present a national IAFF position on pre-hospital emergency care. And again literally within days Jim Lee presented a well-written paper that has now become our position in BC. I have been to Washington and worked with the staff there and seen what they can do. We have some of the most skilled, knowledgeable staff anywhere working for us in the IAFF. We need to rely on them more, ask more of them, I am confident they can deliver. As a Local President they have delivered on everything I have ever asked of them and more. We need to bring those resources to you, more effectively and efficiently, and you need to know they are there. They can help us achieve greater success if we coordinate our efforts for cancer and heart presumption provisions, dispatch issues and NFPA 1710. We should be growing our district in communities with IAFF members and adding new Locals by growing Fire Departments without IAFF members yet. The recent success on the criminal code amendments is a good example of our successful collaboration.

I wrote that initiative. It started with a BC resolution submitted by my Local, and is a good example of how everything interfaces back to the bargaining table. I had one objective with that initiative and that was to make the legislative link between Police and Fire parity in the hazards of the work we face. If we can achieve parity in the criminal code it is just one more step towards doing so at the bargaining table. I believe we need to empower our Provincial Associations through the Local Presidents, not directly. If we provide the Locals with strong leadership we will be stronger provincially. By empowering each Local with leadership each member is better represented. I want to work with you to achieve that, I want your help to run the 6th District, but I am not going to ask you to choose me over Gerry. Your support is where it should be, and I would like to thank all of you again for letting me be here in Gerry's world. I look forward to getting to know you, discussing your issues and helping you with your Locals in any way I can.