

The NEWS and VIEWS Letter about
people and happenings at
Vancouver Community College
August, 1985

**VANCOUVER
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE**

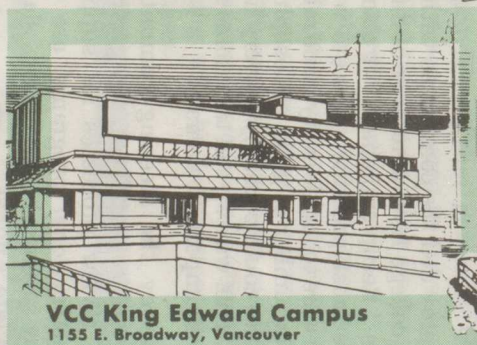
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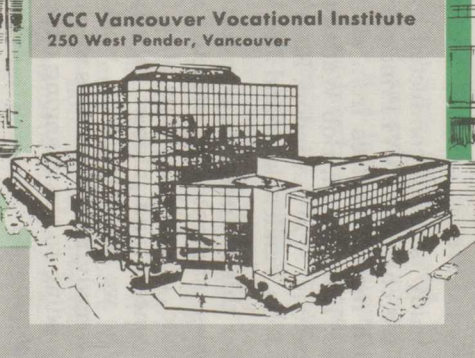


VCC-VANCOUVER VOCATIONAL INSTITUTE
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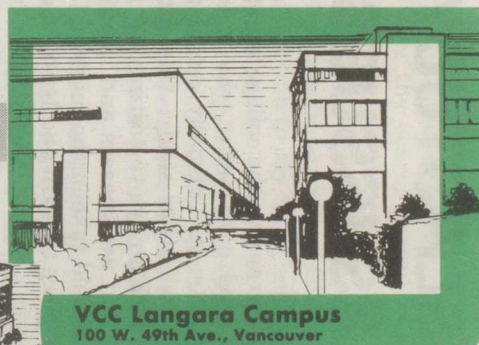
It's our **20**th BIRTHDAY



VCC King Edward Campus
1155 E. Broadway, Vancouver



VCC Vancouver Vocational Institute
250 West Pender, Vancouver



VCC Langara Campus
100 W. 49th Ave., Vancouver

VCC WELCOMES FIRST INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Vancouver Community College's already diverse, multi-cultural flavor will be further enhanced this fall when 40 students from Asia, the South Pacific and Europe become the first overseas students to enter English language training at King Edward Campus and arts and science at Langara campus.

While a great number of VCC students were not born in Canada, and small numbers of international students have attended the college in special programs, such as the successful and long established Canadian School of Takudai, these 40 international students are the first to come into regular programs.

"I think these young people can enrich the experience of their instructors and their classmates," says the college's Director of International Education Norm Henderson. "This is a wonderful step forward for the college. I think we should be proud we can provide these students with the best English language instruction in the country and excellent university preparation.

"Because we are a publicly funded institution, it is important to note these students are accommodated only in programs where the college has already met the demand of people here in Canada. In no instance is an overseas student displacing a Canadian student. Moreover, Canadian taxpayers are not subsidizing any part of their education. Overseas students pay on a full recovery basis."

When the program got approval early this year, college officials thought most student would come from Hong Kong, where English is the language of business and commerce and where access to post-secondary education is extremely limited. However, recruiting has netted a broad range of interest from people from Korea, Japan, Fiji, Sweden, Yugoslavia and Mexico.

"In fact, the majority of our 40 students are already in Canada studying on visas," explains Heather Chan, counsellor for international education. "There are probably two reasons for this. First, because these men and women were already here, they likely knew the college's name and reputation. This, along with the time required to give a student our English language assessment test and the math assessment test, plus the six weeks it takes from the time of acceptance to process the student's visa through a Canadian embassy or consulate, can mean that an overseas applicant simply won't get through the process in time for September.

"The requirements the government places on visa students are quite stringent. For instance, the student's family or sponsor must have \$6,500 Canadian in a bank account for at least

six months. Then each person has to be checked through Interpol before a visa can be issued.

Most applicants, Chan says, want to go to Langara Campus for the art and science program, with the idea of then going on to get a degree from a Canadian university. Though she notes that in the last month, she'd had more contact with people who are primarily interested in honing their skills in English, most of whom are from Korea or Japan.

"These people already have a degree or technical training in their own country. They want either to improve their English so they can extend their career potential at home or to do so in the hope of qualifying for admission to advanced studies or training here in Canada."

While the majority of the 40 students coming in September want to go to Langara about half will have to take at least one term of college prep English at KEC to bring their language skills up to standard.

"Even in the case of some students who've passed the provincial exams here, we find our assessment tests put them at a grade 10 or 11 level in English. So we have to tell them they must take additional English before they can gain admission to arts and science.

"In fact, this has lost us some students. Their parents have spent so much money giving them a Canadian high school education that they can't cope with the notion that they will, in effect, have to repeat. But naturally the college cannot consider compromising its standards."

All but about six of the students in September have family or friends to stay with in Vancouver, a fact that should, in Chan's view, make adjustment to college life relatively smooth.

Chan plans a comprehensive orientation for the students running four days in the last week of August. "I want them to have a good grounding in the programs they're going into, the courses they must take to complete the programs. As well we'll look at survival skills — how to handle banking and a bit about consumer law.

"You must remember that in the countries these young people come from life is often quite different than in Canada. Many of them have had virtually no experience with independent living. Decisions are made in the home by the father, until the young person leaves the family to get married."

Because the group come from all parts of the world Chan believes they are at particular advantage. "Because of the diversity I believe they will integrate readily into the larger student body," she explains. "They are less apt to keep to themselves."

VCC SELF-STUDY TACKLES ISSUES

As most of you are aware, the college is in the midst of taking a good, hard look at what it does and how well it does it. Officially called the institutional self-evaluation study, this introspection is done with an eye to sorting out the VCC's strengths and weaknesses and identifying directions it should take in the future. Making VCC a better place to learn and better place to work.

The study is being conducted by a steering committee, chaired by VVI Principal Hans Rerup and with representatives from all VCC constituencies: Ernie Allen, Bob Wadsworth, Robert Cunningham, Sam Lewindon, Ross Carter, Fred Wylie, John Vandenakker and Jim Wong.

Earlier this summer the committee surveyed employees, students and selected members of the public, in a bid to focus on a few areas of prime concern and interest, whether they are strengths we could build on, weaknesses that call for remedy, or new avenues we should pursue in responding to the changing education needs of the community.

"The survey provided the committee with an overview of the college from a number of different perspectives," Rerup explained. "It also let us see what the most pressing interests were. Obviously, if we were to tackle every issue raised we might have a number of good philosophical discussions but we could probably do very little of consequence. This way we can take some real action in the most important arenas."

From this survey the steering committee determined five key issues. These, along with a careful look at review processes for support services and instructional programs, are the focus of study by seven sub-committees, slated to begin work in late August.

In each instance, sub-committee members, most of whom still have to be named, will hear submissions, examine the issues the survey raised, probe the questions at hand and then recommend strategies for the college to follow in enhancing strengths and shoring up weaknesses.

The first of these issues is the college's relations with the community. A number of people

at the college and a number of employers in the area called on VCC to build stronger links to the community it serves. Others suggested more and better co-operation with industry, to meet specific upgrading needs in the workforce. Some argued that more outside advice should be sought, suggesting, for instance, better use of program advisory committees. One senior government official said the college could take on a leadership role, establishing specialized training centres in line with the region's projected economic priorities. A number of employers complained there was limited public knowledge of VCC's services and strengths. The sub-committee looking at community relations is chaired by Paul Taylor, an executive at Johnston Terminals and an advisory committee member for Langara Campus's small business program.

Another sub-committee, under the chairmanship of KEC's Dean of Administrative and Student Services Gerry Sylvester, will look at the various aspects of access to the college. This question was raised in several forms, particularly by college employees. There were questions about the balance VCC is striking between providing accessibility to low achievement students and providing a challenging curricula to those with the potential for high achievement. Into this arena came questions about the equity of our fee structure. Then there were concerns about the college's insensitivity to "market forces" — such as competition and willingness to pay — that some thought ought to determine the fee schedule. Some raised the matter of the college's ability to provide seats in the courses students want given the year to year shifts in demand. Questions were raised, too, about procedures and services, such as registration, that could inhibit easy access to college programs.

The third interest is program and course development. A sub-committee headed by Keith Gilley, chairman of Langara Campus's English department, will examine the strong call from all sectors that the college be more adaptive, responding better and more quickly to the forces at play in the community. Some people called for improved ties to business and industry. Concerns were expressed about the ability of different programs to accommodate change, particularly when this required more space and new equipment. Others thought the college should put more effort into co-ordinating and encouraging efforts to identify new program needs.

for Latin and not modern history. Braving the masses in the bookstore in search of text books.

The counselling department at Langara Campus each year mounts a pre-registration orientation aimed at reducing students' stress and frustration — getting new Langara students off to a positive start.

Ricki Bertrand, a counsellor who was on this year's planning committee, along with counsellors Janet Lalogue-Holme and George Tesla, as well as student services assistant Pat McWilliams, reports that Langara has been undertaking this effort for a number of years so most of the wrinkles are out of the system.

"Really it is just a matter of alerting the different departments in arts and science so we can ensure they will each have a representative at orientation," she explains. "There are two representatives from the career programs, but the focus is on the students coming into arts and science. In career programs there is a more extensive screening process and interviews with the department before hand. This, along with the fact that their electives are relatively few, means that, while career students may need a tour of the campus and other kinds of information we provide at orientation, they aren't doing an extensive selection process for courses."

Tables are set up in the cafeteria and students are invited to drop in anytime between 2:30 and 7:00 p.m. Thursday August 29. "The students in arts and science all have a tentative program worked out," Bertrand says. "They do that in their counselling interview when they are first admitted. But this gives them a chance to ask instructors questions about course content and requirements."

Another important feature of orientation at Langara Campus is tours. These leave every 15

The quality of college offerings is the fourth issue a sub-committee, this time overseen by VIA President Roger Ofield, will look at. The survey reflected much interest in a renewed emphasis on instructional quality. Many people suggested better evaluation procedures for both instructors and courses, as well as greater accountability for the results achieved. Some complained about the admission policies of the college, the resulting quality of the student in the classroom and the impact this has on program quality.

The fifth issue to come forth was that of college decision making, managing and planning. From a number of perspectives employees expressed concern about the management of strategies and plans. Some called for more accountability in programs for staff and professional development. Others questioned management priorities, charging there were insufficient library resources and inadequate space. Some said management priorities and strategies weren't communicated to employees. There were concerns too about the ability of management to effectively channel the enthusiasm and initiative of those with new ideas. A committee under the leadership of Jim Goard, director of computer services, will look at these questions.

In the late fall the sub-committees will submit their reports. These will be sent out for public reaction and then refined in light of the reaction they get. Then a comprehensive external audit will take place early next year.

As steering committee chairman Hans Rerup points out, a glance at the issues might suggest the college is in need of a large scale shoring up, but VCC's reputation and its full classrooms argue against this.

"I think most people here would agree we do a very good job of effectively meeting the educational needs of a very broad spectrum of the community," he explained. "We cannot afford to be smug. The needs of the community are constantly changing and we have not only got to keep up with these changes we have to anticipate them. This is why we must, from time to time, take a close look at what we can do to better meet the needs of those we serve in the community."

"From another perspective too, we are accountable to the public for our performance. They pay the bills. We need to demonstrate that we are doing the best for the community with the dollars provided to us."

minutes to half hour throughout orientation and they can go along way toward unravelling the mysteries of the campus — finding one's way around the offices and classrooms laid out around a quadrangle, learning where the gym, library and student union building are located.

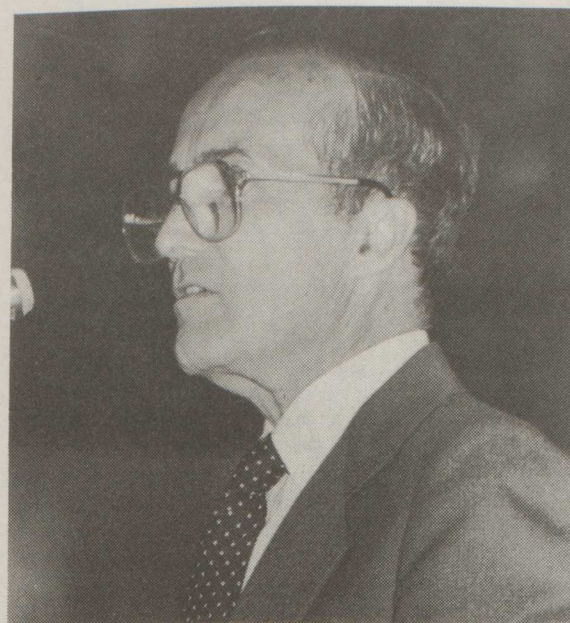
"Student aides are hired and trained to act as tour guides," Bertrand explains, "and this seems to work quite well."

Another hurdle orientation helps students over is registration. "Registration used to be a bit of a zoo," Bertrand says. "But we went to a computerized system in May and that worked very well. It seemed to cut down on both time and frustration."

"Again, for the students in career programs registration isn't a big problem. Their places are reserved in the required courses as they're admitted. Arts and science students work out a tentative program with counsellors when they are admitted. But there is usually a great number of changes in this schedule and there can be timetable conflicts."

"Now registration is computerized these students can quickly get up to date and accurate advice. Let's say a person finds he can't get into the chemistry section he wants, counsellors at the scheduling desk can provide the options left open."

At orientation counsellors give introductory talks to students about college policies on grading and course withdrawal as well as the wide array of services available at the college. "Recognizing that there is only so much information they can take in at one time we keep these fairly brief," Bertrand says. "But we alert them to the help available through health services, to our study skills workshops and to the assistance available through financial aid."



VCC President Paul Gallagher.

GALLAGHER APPOINTED BOARD OF TRADE DIRECTOR

Vancouver Community College President Paul Gallagher was recently appointed to the board of directors of the Vancouver Board of Trade. The college has an ongoing commitment to working with business an industry in meeting the education and training needs of the workforce.

VCC MOVES INTO EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

Unemployment is a frightening prospect. There are the practical concerns to handle — budgeting, paying the bills, finding new work. And then, there are the inside concerns — motivation, confidence.

Recently the head of VVI's counselling department, Dalton Kremer, put on a workshop for unemployed and about to be unemployed forestry workers from B.C. Forest Products and from the Timberland Mill.

Officials from VVI worked with company representatives, representatives from the International Woodworkers Association, the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission and B.C. Ministry of Labour, in the planning and implementation of this week long employee assistance pilot project.

"What we wanted to do," Kremer explained, "is to help these men, some of whom had worked in the forest industry for more than 20 years, to look at their needs in five key areas."

"The first was personal concerns — money management, budgeting, developing skills that would let them cope with unemployment. Next was vocational counselling. Getting them to consider what their job alternatives could be. Then, the next step was to take a look at what training opportunities were open to them. We were in a good position to do that here. Another area most needed assistance with was job search skills. They needed to learn how to make application, prepare a resume, handle an interview. The last task was to make them aware of the community resources that can assist them. Sure, being unemployed is a rough situation, but there are a great number of agencies out there to help."

For a week the ten men came into VVI to work with Kremer. As he explains, the sessions were divided up in a number of different ways. "Most of these men hadn't been in a classroom for years, so the prospect of sitting down at a desk

ECONOMIC RENEWAL INITIATIVES GET STARTED

In June Vancouver Community College was given about \$300,000 in the first round of awards from the Ministry of Education's special \$5.8 million economic renewal and development fund. The government made this money available to colleges and institutes across the province so they could initiate projects to help get the wheels of British Columbia's economy turning once again. More money will be awarded in the fall when the second set of proposals is put forward to the government.

A proposed Pacific Rim international business centre, awarded \$80,000 under the scheme, is getting off the ground, reports Langara Campus Dean of Instruction Lawrence Fast. He says language programs in Mandarin and Japanese will be available at Langara this September. Work is beginning on a series of international marketing courses, that will be available to both students in the Pacific Rim program and those in the business administrative program.

"As well, we're looking at starting a newsletter to keep a steady flow of information going to our contacts in international education," Fast explained. "That would include the institutions,

all day was intimidating. We broke the day up with small group discussions, workshops, tours of campus and individual sessions."

One of the first things they tackled was a personal inventory — an individual assessment of their strengths and weaknesses, plus what they wanted to get out of the program. In the latter instance, their interests ranged from acquiring knowledge of the job market in B.C. to techniques for selling oneself to a new company.

"Really getting them to focus in on themselves and take a good look took us into the second day," Kremer said. "From there, we went on to look at work options and retraining possibilities. We looked at VVI and KEC, talked about CEIC's role in retraining, looked at the Canadian classification dictionary on occupations. Then we looked at other sources of information — libraries, government reports — on jobs and job conditions."

Then they went on to the topic of resumes and how to market yourself through your resume. "I think this was an important step for many of the men," Kremer says. "They generally thought you had one resume you sent to all potential employers and it detailed your past work experience. They didn't really think in terms of tailoring the resume to the employer's needs."

This idea is echoed by one of the participants, Keith Schultz. "I found the information on resumes very helpful. I'd never thought of it before but it makes sense. You have to create a resume that focuses on what the employer is looking for."

The group tried role playing in an interview situation and they practiced techniques that would, as Kremer says, take them through the bureaucratic maze and get them access to the people they want to see or the information they needed to get. "Here we made use of AV equipment so they could see their own performance and they critiqued one another," Kremer explained.

"In this program what I tried to do was teach these people a 'process' they could follow and build upon for the balance for their years in the workforce, whether they wanted to improve their chances for employment in the forest industry or whether they want to go into an entirely new field."

In assessing this first experience with an assistance program, Kremer said he thought the

such as Takushoku University, that we've worked with over the years, as well as the six visiting experts who came from Pacific Rim countries last year to act as resource people at the college. We would hope to expand from there."

He went on to say there had been some talk of placing a college representative overseas, most likely in Hong Kong, to act as liaison in matters of international education and forge the college's ties with educational institutions in the Pacific Rim. But this issue is still at the discussion stage.

A small business development and resources centre, funded for \$125,000 under the government scheme, and designed to give some business skills to students at VVI and KEC is moving forward. Barbara Bowers, division chairman for KEC's English language training, says that with the help of John Cousineau, co-ordinator of institutional research, and Glen Witter, from the business department at Langara Campus, a survey has been developed to assess the need for business training among ELT students.

"We anticipate that some of these students in our language program may come from families who have businesses here, or some of the students themselves may have experience running businesses in their homelands. They may want programs that explain the tax system and licensing provisions, that generally teach them the ropes when it comes to doing business in Canada. But the survey, when its done, will give us a more precise idea."

Another objective is to provide business skills for the technical and vocational students at the two campuses, those in programs that range from hairdressing to auto mechanics, many of whom could successfully combine their trades training with business know-how to start new ventures.

unemployed sawmill workers benefited in a number of ways. First, from the support they got from one another and secondly from the sense of confidence the program built.

"I think most made substantial steps forward in their ability to look at their personal skills and interests in a different light," he noted. "This gave them a foundation to identify strengths they could take into new occupations."

He went on to say, that the opportunity to spend time in different trade areas at the college seemed particularly worthwhile, with two participants applying for admission to college programs.

"This was a pilot project," he noted. "Naturally, there are some changes we would make if we tried this type of session again. For instance, I think the program would have benefited from more individual counselling for the participants. And, because our preparation time was relatively short, we didn't have a stable of guest speakers to draw on, people with expertise in small business."

"I would like to have a pre-program interview with each participant too. Some of the time we used up in class for matters that could have been handled in an interview. If we offer workshops like this in the future, and I think we should, I would like to see more people from the college participate. We have a broad range of know how here and I think we could extend the range of advice we provide."

"We did very well in this first instance. The people involved seemed to really get something out of the experience. I think they got new perspective, a lot of practical knowledge and I think the support they gave one another was a confidence builder."

Harry Guzyk, 57, said the program gave him a detailed plan to follow in finding a new job.

"I had no idea the career possibilities open to someone my age," he said. "The program let me look at possibilities I would never have come up with on my own."

"I am thinking about retraining in auto body. I've always been interested in cars and tinkering with them. From my house I can see where a new bridge is being built across the Fraser River. Now that bridge is going to mean more traffic. More traffic means more accidents and, I figure, more need for body work."

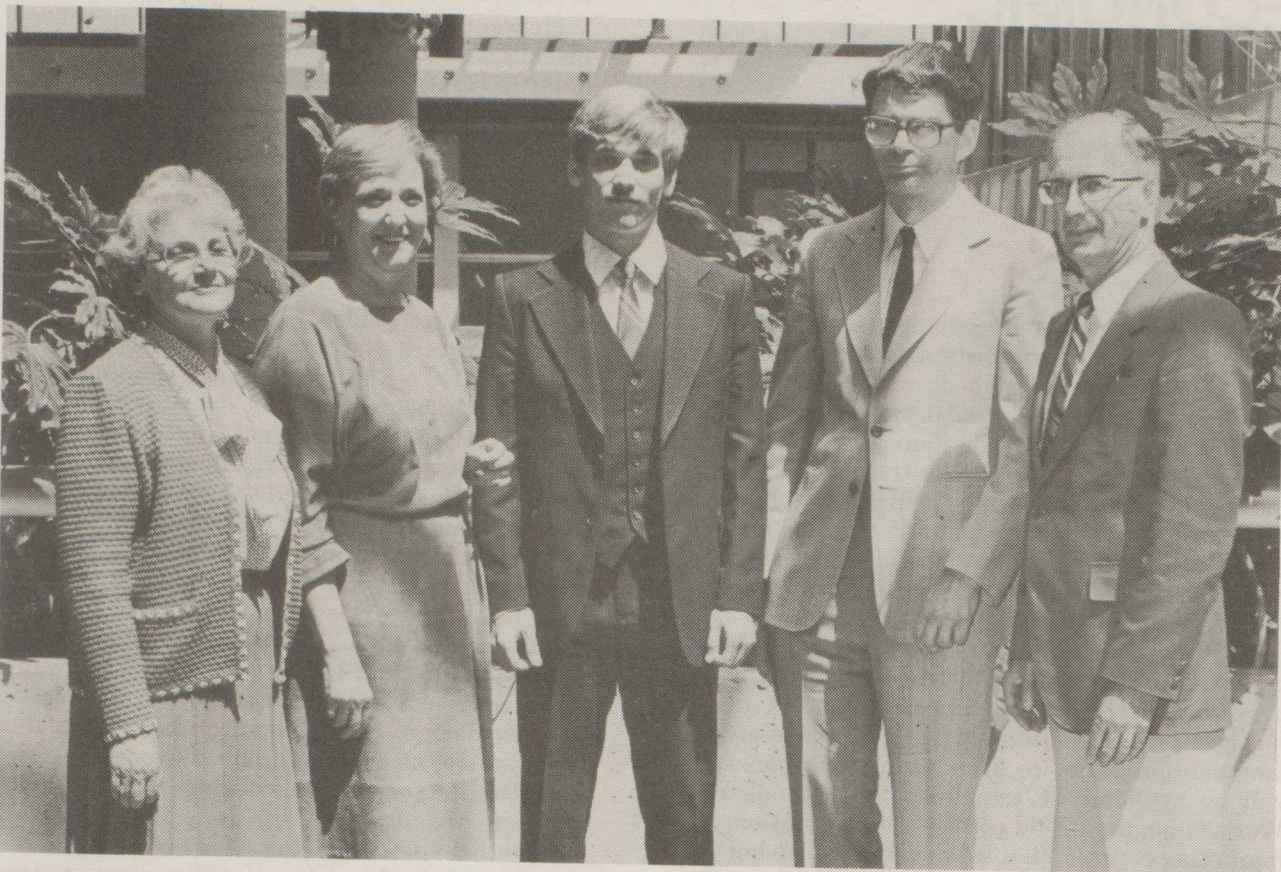
"The program really got me to take a wider look at myself and what's around me. I hope more people will be able to take it."

ORIENTATION GIVES A HEAD START



Most of us remember the agonizing first days of college or university. Not knowing where the washrooms were. Spending half an hour in a line-up only to discover it was course approval

VVI ACCOUNTING GRAD TAKES CGA SCHOLARSHIP



Anthony Townson, a summer graduate of VVI's accounting program, who attained a 4.0 grade point average, was awarded a scholarship by the Certified General Accountants Association to complete his CGA studies. Pictured at the ceremony are: (left to right) Jenny Williams, VVI financial aid officer; Fern Reed, of the business department; Anthony Townson, David Fairhall, chairman of the CGA Association's education committee; and Gordon Thom.

Anthony Townson, a recent graduate of the accounting program at VVI, has won a scholarship from the Certified General Accountants Association to cover his tuition in the first year of the program. As with all students in the CGA program, Anthony will study evenings while working at an accounting office during the day.

Anthony was previously self-employed in a janitorial business. But when he wanted a career change he took aptitude testing and this indicated his talents were in the accounting field. He completed his last term at VVI with a perfect 4.0 grade point average.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION GETS OFF THE GROUND

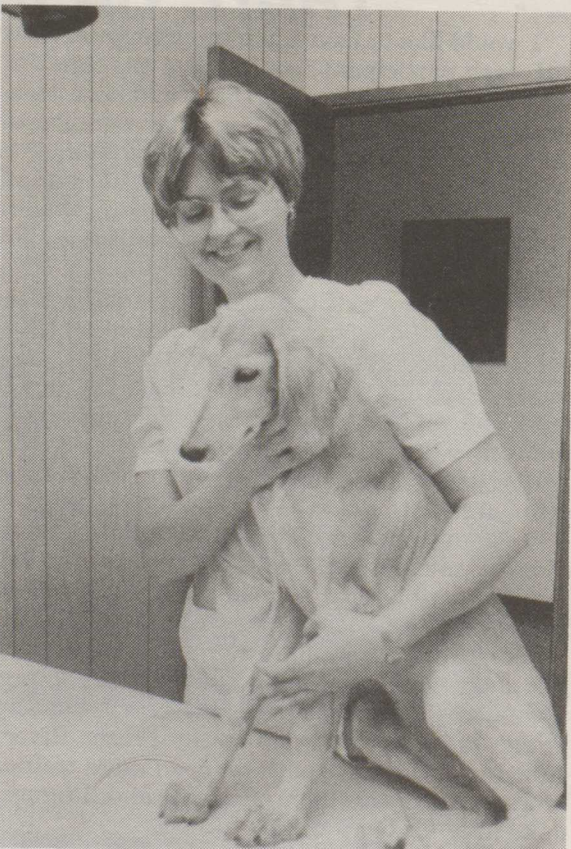
Howard Naphtali, executive director of the VCC Educational Foundation has recruited graduates to sit on an alumni development committee. On the committee are: Irene Leonard, a Langara Campus arts and science graduate who is an assistant vice-president with First City Investments; Valerie Nielsen, another Langara Campus graduate who is that campus's registrar; Tom Toulson, another Langara Campus graduate who is the college's director of contract services; and William Zarchikoff, a Langara graduate who is an executive director and general manager with W.J. Stelmaschuk and Associates Ltd., a firm of promoters.

The committee will determine strategies to reach alumni of the college and to interest them in its future. As well they will develop a fund raising program aimed specifically at former graduates.

The fall flyer will contain information on the association and encourage alumni to get in contact.

CE REPEATS COMPUTER SKILLS SUCCESS

Computer skills in the workplace is a practical program aimed at computer novices. In a series of short-term courses on basic computer skills and software applications, the program tries to break down the high tech mystique surrounding computers.



Lori Fierheller, one of the first graduates in CE's computer skills for the workplace program will use her know-how when she opens a boarding kennel this fall.

"In our program," explains co-ordinator Marie Burlinson, "we first try to reduce the sense of intimidation so many people have when they sit down in front of a terminal. Everyone in a course works with an IBM pc. The idea is to learn by doing. We're not heavily into theory, the emphasis is on practical application."

Last year, the program's first, it proved so popular that demand consistently exceeded the 20 spaces available in each course.

"We're really geared to the office worker who arrives at work one day to find a microcomputer on her desk," Burlinson says, "or to the small business man who sees the competition moving to a computerized system but is nervous about making the move himself."

"We seem to have met a real need. Response last year was terrific. I wasn't anticipating running a spring session but I did because the demand was so great."

Lori Fierheller was one of three students in the program who last year completed the requirements for a certificate. This meant she completed three basic computer skills courses, plus four of the software application packages, which range from wordprocessing to spreadsheets and database management.

"For me the program was perfect," says Fierheller, who works at the Fraserview Animal Clinic. "This fall I'm opening my own boarding kennel and the computer skills I acquired through the program will enable me to manage the business much more effectively. I plan to use database management to handle billing, to keep my customer lists, records, that sort of thing. You can set up programs to meet whatever needs your business has."

"I went from having no knowledge of computers to a point where I now feel I could competently handle my business operations on computer."

Each course runs one evening or one Saturday morning a week for five weeks. People without any computer experience must take the three basic computer skills courses before they can take software applications.

Each course cost \$135. For more information call Continuing Education at Langara Campus: 324-5322.

FOUNDATION FOCUSES ON STUDENT AID

This year the VCC Educational Foundation is asking the business and corporate community to contribute funds for one thousand \$250 bursaries.

A campaign team, under the direction of lawyer Robert Bonner, will soon be out canvassing the boardroom of downtown in a bid to provide urgently needed student aid funds.

This year's corporate campaign is built around the slogan: "There are more than 3,000 compelling reasons for contributing to the VCC bursary campaign—". This is the number of VCC students financial aid officers expect to request assistance this year.

Last year more than 1,200 Vancouver Community College students borrowed \$3.5 million in student loans to support their education. But still many students need help. Loans are harder to get. Tuition fees are up. The downturn in the economy means fewer students can get summer or part-time jobs while they study.

Untold numbers of students can't begin or won't complete their college education because of financial difficulties. The business community, those who will in future years turn to this pool of talented young people as their skilled workforce, is being asked to make an investment in the future with support for bursary money today.

INTERCOM

InterCom is produced by the Public Relations and Advertising Services Department of Vancouver Community College. Your comments are welcome. Please call 875-1131, local 355.