Your Union

Are you on the list?

The CUPE1615 Announcements List, that is! It is not a discussion forum, but rather a place for members of the executive and their designates to share news and information about meetings, training and other things relevant to you, the members of CUPE 1615.

To join, send an email to listserv@cliffy.ucs.mun.ca – leave the subject line blank, remove any signature files, and type in the body of the message subscribe cupe1615-l and your name. You will start to receive messages after you receive confirmation of your subscription.

President’s Report

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

Well, fall is in the air. At least it is supposed to be, with the temperatures we have been getting I am not sure if it is fall or still summer. But what a summer we had, and well deserved too. I hope everyone had a great summer and enjoyed your vacations. It’s back to the grindstone for all of us now. With the thousands of students back on campus things are very hectic and of course I would be remiss if I didn’t mention congested, especially in areas like the food court and parking lots.

We have a lot going on this fall. First of all: negotiations. We are going into interest-based bargaining again this time and it worked so well for us in our last round of bargaining that your negotiating team is expecting and hoping for the same now. One day of interest-based training is currently being set up for sometime in early October. This is standard practice so that everyone on the team knows what to expect when we sit at the table. We hope to begin actual negotiations by mid to late October. How long this round will take is anyone’s guess - it depends solely on how things move once we start to talk. Your bargaining team has a lot of work ahead of them to negotiate the best contract we can for all of us. As things develop we will keep you informed as much as we can. As most of you are aware, until we have something to bring back to the membership, our discussions are strictly confidential.

Our grievances are another very important thing being discussed with HR. To date I have had two lengthy meetings with HR to discuss all of the grievances we have filed. One more meeting should clue up these discussions and then I will be moving forward with the hopes of settling some of them. Before any can be settled, we have to arrange meetings with some departments and the members involved. Hopefully this shouldn't take too much longer. My goal as president is to get these grievances moving as I know that some have been on the books for far too long. As paid president it is one of my duties and obligations to represent you to the best of my ability. Getting these grievances settled is definitely a #1 priority.

One of the grievances we currently have on file for over a year is now going to Arbitration. Hopefully on October 18th this particular situation will be resolved to our satisfaction. There are a couple of others that are also being considered to bring forward for arbitration. Your grievance committee will be meeting soon to discuss this and to
make a recommendation to the executive whether or not to go forward with these. This will also be discussed at our regular monthly meeting in October. To be fully informed why not come to the meeting and weigh in on the discussion?

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the rest of your executive to say thank you to Aubrey Chubbs. Aubrey has been our treasurer since January of 2012 and has done an exemplary job. He had to resign his position on the executive, which is very time-consuming and demanding. Aubrey has proven time and time again his dedication and expertise as treasurer and he will definitely be missed. It was a pleasure working with Aubrey and your fellow executive members just want you to know that when you are ready to be active and involved again you are always welcome. Resulting from Aubrey’s resignation we will of course need to elect a new treasurer. Notice of election will be given at our October general meeting.

I hope all of you enjoy the fall season. Let’s hope our negotiations move forward quickly and successfully. Finally, I just want to remind all of you that my door is always open. If you need to speak with me for any reason whatsoever just call, e-mail or drop by. I’ve said many times that we all have to take responsibility in our workplace. We have to be vigilant in protecting our rights. I certainly can’t be aware of everything going on in the workplace so if any issues arise that you think should be discussed or dealt with you should never hesitate to contact me. Only by working together can we make our workplace the safest, fairest, and most attractive place it should be.

In Solidarity,
Theresa Antle
President

VISIT OUR WEBSITE.

CUPE 1615 has its website up and working. Give it a try. Lots of news and current information. Go to: http://www.mun.ca/cupe1615/ and tell us what you think.
DID YOU KNOW...

CUPE has 618,000 members in 2,392 locals across the country?

About one in every 30 Canadian workers is a CUPE member?

Collectively, CUPE members earned over $23 Billion in wages in 2011, paid $3Billion in Federal and Provincial Income Taxes And almost $700 Million in GST in 2011?

About 57 per cent of CUPE's locals are small, with membership of 100 or less?

-- from CUPE National Year in Review

Labour Day Picnic

Once again a good time was had by all. The CUPE 1615 Picnic was a great success this year. When I looked out the window on the morning of Sept 8th I was a bit worried because of the drizzle and fog that the picnic might have to be cancelled. I prayed the weather forecast was going to be correct. It turned out to be a beautiful afternoon. I hope everyone who attended had a good time and will join us again next year. I want to thank everyone who helped out with the planning of the picnic and getting everything up and running the day of the picnic. We hope to see you all again next year and please spread the word our picnic is a great day of fun, food and friends.

On behalf of the Social Committee, Susan Kearsey

Left: Keir Hiscock Right: Patrick Tyler

Left: Theresa Antle Center: Susan Kearsey Right: Carol Kennedy

**Boss Not Listening?**

Call your union steward
Band on the MUN

Campus Food Bank Fundraiser Concert

Band on the Mun III
December 1, 2012 | 7 – 9PM

D.F. Cook Recital Hall
School of Music

$10+ non-perishable food item
All proceeds will be going to the Campus Food Bank. Tickets will be available at the door on the night of the event.

There will also be tickets available on music CDs provided by some of the performers. Performances will be provided by employees from a number of departments and faculties on campus performing music and songs from a variety of genres including blues, jazz, contemporary, folk, and traditional.
CUPE NL says “get more aggressive”

(St. John’s) – CUPE Newfoundland and Labrador President Wayne Lucas is calling on Premier Kathy Dunderdale to send a loud and clear message to the Harper Conservatives over yesterday’s announcement regarding cuts to Employment Insurance (EI) benefits.

Lucas says, “The provincial government appears to be sitting on the fence on this very important matter. These drastic cuts are primarily aimed at seasonally employed women and men. These workers are a vital part of the provincial economy and any cut to their income will definitely trickle down.

“These sweeping changes by the federal government show that they are out of touch with workers reality”, says Lucas. “They are once again catering to the Harper ideology and have entirely lost track of workers’ needs.

“There are other parts of these changes that are not getting much attention but are very significant”, Lucas says, “for example, the EI Board of Referees.” Now instead of an open and transparent process the workers and business appointees will be abolished leaving only political appointments.

Lucas says, “To add insult to injury none of these changes will go before a parliamentary committee for debate and consideration prior to introduction. And what’s even worse, the federal minister can make changes at any time at her discretion. One has to wonder why these changes weren’t debated on the doorsteps of Canadians throughout our country in the last federal election.”

“The livelihoods of thousands of families, especially those in rural parts of our province, are under attack”, says Lucas. “It is time for the Premier to cut the Harper Conservatives loose and to step up to the plate and go to bat for the workers and families of Newfoundland and Labrador.”

A by-election for the position of Treasurer will take place at our Nov. 13th membership meeting.

Theresa Antle, President
CUPE/CALM

CUPE launched a fun and informative game on literacy and clear language to celebrate International Literacy Day on September 8.

Take a few minutes to test your knowledge on these issues with the Super Alpha Quiz, the new online game from CUPE’s national literacy working group.

The game is a fun and educational tool to help shed light on the literacy issues facing Canadians, and help promote increased learning in our workplaces.

The United Nations’ International Literacy Day annually falls on September 8 to raise people’s awareness of and concern for literacy.

It’s in your contract!
ARTICLE 5 – RECOGNITION

If there are changes being made to any positions and you are not sure if this should be taking place you should refer to Article 5 in your contract. Sometimes duties change, classifications change, hours, etc... this article states that HR should keep the union apprised of any changes or modifications being made to positions. This doesn’t always happen, so it is your duty to let one of the executive know and we can follow up with HR to get some answers.

Section 5.02 (b) states very clearly:

When a bargaining unit position is vacated and the Employer intends to continue to have any or all of the duties performed or intends to refill the position the Employer shall notify the Union in writing. The notification shall indicate whether the Employer intends to modify the duties, title, classification, hours of work or status (i.e. whether permanent, sessional or contractual) of the position and the rationale for the change. Where there is no change, provision of a copy of the job posting shall be sufficient.

Section 5.03 is also very important:

(b) The university will also ensure that students, faculty and excluded personnel will not be utilized to fill vacated union positions.

(c) Both parties recognize the University’s role in the community and its responsibility to the students it serves. The parties further recognize that the provision of employment for students is in the interest of the entire University community. The parties recognize that employment of students is for the purposes of augmenting the studies of students with work experience. Such employment is not for the purpose of replacing existing
bargaining unit members.

We all have a role in being responsible for what we see happening around us in our workplace. As I said earlier, if you are aware of something changing in any positions bring your concern to me or one of the other executive. Unless we know what is going on we cannot investigate any of the changes being made. We have negotiated long and hard to get the positions we have and in order to protect these positions we have to be vigilant at all times.

You are out there on the front lines, you know what is going on in your workplace and quite often, you are the only one aware of any changes being made. If you do have a concern or a question, please bring it to me immediately. Any delays may make it more difficult to do anything. If you are unsure if these changes are legitimate or have already been discussed with HR, then a phone call or e-mail is all it takes. Don’t be afraid of being labeled a trouble maker because all enquiries are completely confidential.

Theresa Antle
President

FTQ/CALM

The Quebec Federation of Labour (Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec) congratulates the leader of the Parti Québécois becoming the first woman to become prime minister of Quebec.

The labour federation salutes the courage and determination of Pauline Marois for first, establishing herself as a parliamentarian, then as the head of several ministries, and finally, the as leader of the Parti Québécois. Her party’s election is a historic moment for Quebec and is welcomed.

In addition, the FTQ is committed to working in good faith with the newly elected government in accordance with the Quebec model and expects the opposition parties to respect the decision of the Quebec people and support the functioning of the new government.

"It is now more imperative than ever to work together to rebuild a Quebec representative of what Quebecers have defended since the early sixties, a society that is more just, equitable and egalitarian. This is called the Quebec model," said the president of the FTQ, Michel Arsenault.
Mental Health

450 million people world-wide - more than 1 in 16 - have a mental health problem. Inequality, social exclusion, and extreme stress are major causes. Although most affected people live in poor countries, one in five adult Canadians (21.3 percent) will suffer a mental disorder in their lives, as figure which translates into 4.5 million people.

According to the World Health Organization, 5 to 10% of the world’s population suffer from clinical depression at any given time. Depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide, and will be the single biggest medical burden on health care by 2020.

Spending on mental health per person per year is $1.63 globally: $44.84 in high income countries, and $0.20 in low income countries. Professional help is rare in poor countries, averaging 1 psychiatrist for every 2 million people and 1 psychiatric nurse for every 233,000. In rich countries, there are 170 psychiatrists for every 2 million people and 70 psychiatric nurses for every 233,000. Even in a wealthy country like Canada, however, only one in three people needing mental health services actually receive them.

Rates of mental disorders double after emergencies like war and natural disasters. Since the 2008 financial crisis, suicide attempts have risen sharply in several countries, especially in Greece, where the suicide rate increased by 40% in the first five months of 2011. 90% of those who die by suicide in Western countries have a mental disorder, and one in 5 people with bipolar disorder die by suicide. In Canada, the rate of suicide among Inuit youth is 11 times higher than the national average.
Depression affects 1 in 5 older people, 2 in 4 of those living in care homes. Loneliness in old age is a higher health risk than life-time smoking. Refugees are also significantly prone to depression. In Britain, the rate of mental disorders among refugees stands at 40%. First and second generation migrants are up to 8 times more likely to be diagnosed with schizophrenia than a white British person.

Do you need treatment for a mental illness? Numerous treatments for mental illnesses are available. The particular treatment or treatments you'll need depends on the type of mental illness you have, the severity of your symptoms, and what you and your doctor think will work best for you. In many cases, a combination of treatments works best.

Although psychiatric medications don't cure mental illness, they can often significantly improve symptoms, whether you have depression, schizophrenia, an anxiety disorder or another condition. Psychiatric medications can also help make other treatments, such as psychotherapy, more effective.

If you think you need help, talk to your doctor or contact EAP at 1-800-387-4765 or online at: http://www.shepellfgi.com/EN-CA/

Sources: Mental Health Foundation, WHO, International Association for Suicide Prevention, Health Canada, New Internationalist, Mayo Clinic.
“Canada is like an old cow. The West feeds it. Ontario and Quebec milk it. And you can well imagine what it’s doing in the Maritimes.”

Tommy Douglas

Learning Labour Law
By Rhonda White

I had the privilege to attend the weeklong school in Baddeck Nova Scotia from May 28-June 1. Thanks to CUPE 1615 for allowing me the opportunity to learn more about the union and how it works enabling me to better serve my local.

Theresa Antle and I had the opportunity to do the labour law course. At first I was a little intimidated by the volume of information being presented, but I soon realized that the instructor Leanne MacMillan made the mountains of information interesting and enjoyable. It was a great eye-opener to see historically where labour law came from and the evolution of these laws to date. It has taken many years to get to where we are today and still there is a long way to go.

Through striking, work delays and in more recent years, fighting for amendments to the Acts, trade union activists are responsible for this evolution. Having a labour code helps governments both provincially and federally to regulate the labour standards in Canada. The labour legislation sets out the standards to which all employers and employees are to follow. If there are any disputes then the labour laws will govern the outcome of all disputes in a non-discriminatory manner. These laws give employees many rights that ensure a safe work environment.

Unions must be vigilant to preserve the well-earned privileges of collective bargaining: Duty of fair representation; Duty to bargain; Certification; Grievances; Arbitration; Right to Strike, and labour standards have become important considerations for unionized employees and those who represent them. In recent years there has also been focus on Occupational Health and Safety, Right to Know, Right to Refuse, Risk Management and issues

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Theresa Antle, President
such as Respectful Workplace and Sexual Harassment.

As unionists we enjoy the benefits of the labour legislation in times of collective bargaining without discrimination and good faith practices. We enjoy a safe working environment, but not without labour legislation to legally force employers to comply with all collective agreements. CUPE members should try to become familiar with these items and courses like this recent one provide us with an opportunity to do so.

CUPE National Literacy Working Group

The Literacy Working Group (LWG) helps to guide CUPE’s literacy and clear language work. The LWG provides feedback and insight on the tasks needed to meet the Literacy Program’s goals and objectives.

The LWG works with the Literacy Coordinator to achieve these goals and objectives. Working Group members act as CUPE literacy contacts in their region. In addition, members may be asked to represent the program at CUPE events and literacy related activities.

For more information, go to: http://cupe.ca/literacy/a4fce3e2897e08
Diesel engine exhaust has long been considered a significant threat to worker and public health. However, it’s now officially considered a human carcinogen.

Similar to asbestos and silica, diesel engine exhaust is now recognized as a human carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). IARC is part of the United Nation’s World Health Organization (WHO).

The decision to reclassify diesel engine exhaust from a probable human carcinogen (Group 2A) to a definite human carcinogen (Group 1) is the result of compelling scientific evidence, according to a panel of scientific experts convened by IARC. They explained in a June 12, 2012 press release, “Diesel exhaust is a cause of lung cancer and also noted a positive association with an increased risk of bladder cancer.”

Kurt Straif, Head of the IARC Monographs Program, says, “The main studies that led to this conclusion were in highly exposed workers. However, we have learned from other carcinogens, such as radon, that initial studies showing a risk in heavily exposed occupational groups were followed by positive findings for the general population. Therefore actions to reduce exposures should encompass workers and the general population.”

Millions of Canadians are exposed to diesel engine exhaust when they breathe. According to CAREX Canada, more than 800,000 Canadians are occupationally exposed to diesel engine exhaust. Here in Ontario, more than 275,000 workers are exposed including truckers, bus drivers, heavy equipment and farm tractor operators, miners, landscaping labourers and maintenance workers.

Employers are required by law to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker.

The Workers Health & Safety Centre has recently updated a diesel exhaust fact sheet highlighting examples of precautions designed to help protect workers and the public. The fact sheet also outlines the numerous additional risks to health posed by diesel exhaust.
B.C. Government workers across the province went on a province-wide, one-day strike on Wednesday, September 5, 2012.

Approximately 27,000 BCGEU, PEA and COPE 378 members who work for the B.C. government went on strike in 153 communities and 1,785 government worksites across B.C.

“We are looking for a fair and reasonable agreement, but the government is not listening. We have no choice but to send a clear message on September 5: there can be no more falling behind for all government workers,” said BCGEU President Darryl Walker. “We've not taken the decision to strike lightly. Our last strike in direct government was over 20 years ago.”

Since 2010, B.C. government workers have suffered a real wage cut of five percent. The government’s last offer, which has been withdrawn, would see pay cheques fall further behind inflation.

“Our professional members have in almost all cases chosen public service because of their commitment to serving the public”, said Scott McCannell, PEA Executive Director. “Without some protections to stop a clear trend of downsizing licensed professionals in the public service, the public interest will not be served. Our members will be taking job action for the first time in their 38-year history to send a message to the government that this issue needs to be addressed and that we need a fair settlement.”

“We've exhausted our other options with ICBC and the provincial government,” said COPE 378 President David Black. “Our members have spent over two years without a collective agreement doing more work for less pay.”

Essential service levels are guaranteed so the health, safety and welfare of British Columbians will not be affected by the job action.
October 7: World Day for Decent Work
ITUC/CALM

From dawn in Fiji to sunset in Hawaii, workers from more than 100 countries will take part in a global day of action to demand stronger government action for economic recovery, job creation for young people, decent working conditions and full respect for workers' rights.

World Day for Decent Work 2012, co-ordinated by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), will highlight the growing trend of precarious employment where workers face temporary, insecure and transient conditions—especially for young workers.

Youth unemployment is as high as 60 per cent in some countries, and a whole generation of young people faces exclusion from the labour market. This is a social and economic time-bomb.

“The crisis, and the inability or unwillingness of governments to restore jobs and growth, is having a particularly brutal impact on young people. Official figures show that 75 million young people are without jobs across the world, many millions more are trapped in informal or precarious work, and tens of millions of new job seekers have no prospect of finding work, or education and training to equip them for work in the future,” said Sharan Burrow, General Secretary of the ITUC.

People taking part in World Day for Decent Work include young workers in Spain affected by austerity measures and Brazilian workers constructing the 2014 FIFA World Cup and 2016 Olympic stadia.

Event listings by country will be available on the website. Photos and videos will be also be available as actions take place on or around October 7.

www.wddw.org / Follow on Twitter: #wddw
BARGAINING FOR A BETTER MUN

Right before the start of a new round of negotiations is probably the best time to participate in training for bargaining. I will not bore you with the history of collective bargaining. Put simply: out of necessity to remain alive through work day, and have working provisions that are beneficial to the employee, his/her family and the community, there ensued a long and sacrificial struggle for workers’ rights. We’ve gained much over the generations, but sadly, out of necessity, the struggle remains.

During the week of May 28 to June 1, I sat with brothers and sisters from our own local and locals from Atlantic Canada to study and strategize. The setting was beautiful Baddeck, N. S. The mission was clear; prepare thyself for collective bargaining.

I learned much during that week. The usefulness of role playing, in my opinion, can never be overestimated. Even when like-mindedness exists, the duel of employer/employee bargaining can still elicit strong emotion (it stems from the need to survive).

We discussed the typical strategies and tactics commonly used by employers in their efforts to weaken and/or eliminate the existing collective agreement. One such strategy is that of disempowerment; rendering the employee as a separate and detached entity from the organization. This is one strategy that will not succeed here. MUN is ours – it belongs to those who came before, and those who will come after us. Indeed, it’s a sobering responsibility.

Bargaining to improve the collective agreement for the members of CUPE Local 1615 is bargaining for a better Memorial University.

In Solidarity,
Keir

Cash for your Words

Do you have a flair for writing? Would you like a chance to win a cash prize? Well, sharpen your pencil and get to work. CUPE on Campus wants writers – all kinds of writers – to fill its pages. You can write fiction, poetry, an opinion piece, or anything you choose. Keep it to two pages and make sure you follow the CUPE Equality Statement. That means that your writing should not contain anything that is discriminatory on the basis of ability, age, class, religion, language or ethnic origin, nor should it be racist, sexist, transphobic or homophobic. All writers will be entered in a draw for a cash prize.
Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, Nov 13, 2012 5:00 PM
Room ED1014 (St. John’s)
Room AS275 (Corner Brook)

Tuesday, Dec 11, 2012 5:00 PM
Room ED1014 (St. John’s)
Room AS275 (Corner Brook)

Agenda
Roll call of officers
Reading of the Equality Statement
Reading of minutes from last meeting
Business arising
Treasurer’s report
Communications
Executive board report
Reports of committees
Unfinished business
New business

Union meeting tonight and you don’t have time to get home and have supper?

Come and enjoy delicious food with us. Before we start the proceedings, we lay out the spread. Let’s enjoy a meal together.

Need a sitter so you can get to the meeting?

Your union will pay for your childcare so you can attend the monthly meetings. Just contact Theresa Antle at 864-2393, or email tantle@mun.ca