Hello Brothers and Sisters,

Well it looks like summer is really here. I hope all of you enjoy this beautiful weather and the time you take to experience everything it has to offer. With added workloads and the stress that goes with it I hope you give yourselves a break this summer and really enjoy your vacations. YOU deserve it.

I want to caution all of you to be aware of any changes that may be happening in your workplace. It seems many departments are asking our members to complete job evaluations. While this is not a bad thing, (it actually usually benefits most employees) please be very careful and diligent in completing this. The information you supply on this form is the only view HR really has of the duties you are performing. In spite of our objections, HR disbanded the job evaluation committee, so it is now even more important to have these forms completed properly and thoroughly. Human Resources has taken on the role of evaluating all positions up for review. Once your review is completed and you get the results from Human Resources the only avenue we have of challenging these results is in the appeals process. I was on the JE Committee for many years and I now sit on the appeals committee, so please don’t hesitate to contact me with any inquiries or concerns.

I’ve also had many meetings with employees concerning extra duties being added to their now already full workload. We all have to remember that each of us is only one person and can only take on so much. It seems many departments are expecting more work from fewer people all over campus. You have to be careful when taking on extra duties because they may not fall within the correct scope of duties for your position; they may be taking work of others whose positions, (mainly contracts) are not being filled; and of course our campus is growing, so it may be that more personnel are needed to meet the growing demands of your department. If you have any questions on this front don’t hesitate to contact me or one of the executive. We will always do whatever we need to do to address all of your concerns.

Another major issue on campus for many of our members is sick leave. Please review in your contract article 30, particularly 30.03, (a-e). A lot of members assume we get 10 sick days per year without any question from the employer. This is not correct. We don’t actually have a bank of sick days to use. This article clearly states that four consecutive days or in excess of 10 intermittent days requires a doctor’s note to be provided. I have heard in the past year or so from members who are coming close to the 10 intermittent days are being called in to meetings with their department and HR. We have to be aware all the time that HR can make things difficult for us. I don’t want to scare people who are legitimately sick; there is usually no problem or concern there. This is just to make you aware that you can be held accountable for the use of sick leave and quite often these meetings with HR only add more stress to any health issues you may already be experiencing. My concern is with you and making sure your rights are protected.

Con’t on next page.
The last issue I would like to discuss is *Family Responsibility Leave, Article 31.09*. It has been brought to my attention that some departments are telling our members that you can only use three family days per year. This is not correct and any departments telling you this are violating our contract. You have access to six days in a two-year period. This new bank of six days started April 1, 2014. If you do use your whole bank of six days the first year you cannot access any more until the new bank is issued again in 2016. You can also use more than one day at a time if requested and approved. Depending on circumstances sometimes you need to request more than one day. Please read this article carefully, there are many reasons for family leave you can utilize. Again, you can always contact me with any questions or concerns.

Two years ago we planned a session for employees called **“Getting to Know Your Contract”**. We are seriously thinking of scheduling another session this fall. We had a great turn out at the last one and I think those who did attend walked away with a much better understanding of our contract. Knowing your contract gives you the power to defend yourself when needed. This will be discussed further with the executive and then brought to our meeting in September to see if we can get approval for the funds needed to support this. I will certainly keep you posted via our website and listserv when further information is available.

In closing, I urge all of you to take the time this summer to relax and rejuvenate yourselves. We all work very hard here at Memorial and this is the time to recharge your batteries so to speak. Please be careful in all your activities this summer, especially boating, swimming, hiking and driving just to name a few. Accidents can happen to any of us at any time. Enjoy the rest of your summer and hopefully I will see you at our Picnic in September.

In solidarity,
Theresa

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**RETIREMENTS**

GLENNIS KEATS retired from Grenfell’s Bookstore. She is pictured here with Diane Johnson.

*Good luck and best wishes!*

BEV GREENE, of the Ferris Hodgett Library at Grenfell, is seen here with co-workers on her last day before heading off to retirement. Standing, L-R: John Milley, Rosie Myers, Bev, Diane Johnson, Heather Strickland, Rhonda Mitchelmore, Jessica Newhook. Kneeling: Amy Alcock, Krista Ennis.

**BIRTHS**

Congratulations to proud parents PAUL & HEATHER MARTIN; Paul is an employee with Delts. Their son, KYLE MARTIN, was born on June 6th at 3:44 pm weighing 7lbs 8oz.
MAKE NO MISTAKE, CUPE IS ON THE FRONT LINE!
A convention report by Keir Hiscock

On May 4th, we gathered at scenic Corner Brook for our 40th Annual Divisional Convention. Our Local sent seven delegates and one alternate. This was undoubtedly one of the most important conventions in recent years. The following is just a sample;

1. The Health Accord expired on March 31, 2014. It was important to strongly urge the Federal Government to reinstate and sign a new Health Accord. A resolution was unanimously carried to this effect.

2. Regressive changes to the employment insurance act through Bill C-38 had to be met with fierce opposition; and oppose our delegates did.

3. The Temporary Foreign Worker program is proving to be an embarrassment to our Canada; again, a resolution was passed to call for an immediate review of this program.

4. Also, an important resolution was unanimously carried to strongly urge the Federal Government to launch a national inquiry into murdered and missing aboriginal women. Our aboriginal women are truly one of the most vulnerable in our society; we must act!

Last but not least, we can be unabashedly proud of CUPE NL! Every delegate voted yes on a constitutional amendment to donate $1000.00 annually to CUPE’s National Global Justice Fund. This fund was established in 2008 to help fight worker enslavement/abuse, child labour, women’s rights, privatization of public utilities such as water, etc. We are forming important partnerships with our fellow international employees. We need to “think globally and act locally”. My colleagues, CUPE is doing this, especially here at home. Each one of our members is partner here.

Many Thanks and In Solidarity Always!

Front row, left to right: John Crowell, Pat Adams, Ingrid Verbree-Barnes, Glenda Rose, Diane Johnson, Keir Hiscock. Back row, left to right: Matthew Pitman, Mike Murphy, Catherine Ducey, Steven Smith
SoCIaL mEDIa SChooL SUCCESS

From May 25 to May 30 I attended the CUPE Atlantic Week Long School in Baddeck, Nova Scotia. I was enrolled in the New Media/Social Media course. The facilitators for the course were John McCraken, CUPE Atlantic Communications Rep. and Rebecca Rose, a freelance journalist from Nova Scotia. The course covered the many facets of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and websites.

The first social media platform we looked at was Facebook. Rebecca guided us through the many different tools it offers and how to structure those tools to fit your local’s needs. I think the most beneficial component of Facebook for our local would be the use of a Group Page. This would allow members to keep up with events and notifications from the local in a timely manner.

The next area we covered was Twitter. John was the content expert for this part of the course. I had never used Twitter before so everything was new to me. Like all the areas we covered, participants had different levels of familiarity with each technology. The course components were facilitated with this in mind so no one was left behind. Those with more experience actually helped those with less experience learn the new technologies. This way no one was left behind and no one was bored. I think the most beneficial component of Twitter is the immediacy of it. You can get information to members in real time.

Next we looked at using YouTube as a way to interact with your local and beyond if you desire to do that. We did a mock news conference with the people taking the collective bargaining course. I shot a media briefing by the group using a little point and shoot digital camera and mounted the video to YouTube. It didn’t look any different than anything you would see on the news. This showed that you don’t need all the expensive equipment used by broadcasters to use the medium of video to share information.

The last area we covered dealt with the layout and composition of websites. We looked at the new CUPE template and discussed the way it was laid out and its ease of navigation. CUPE locals can access the templates for this website if they would like to use the same style of site. This was the first CUPE week long school I have attended so I didn’t really know what to expect. After completing the program I can honestly say this was one of the most enjoyable learning experiences I have ever been involved in. The facilitators were knowledgeable and well prepared. They made allowances for the different knowledge levels and learning styles of the participants. The other learners were friendly and enthusiastic. It could have not been any better.

To support my positive experience with this course I would like to end with some quotes from a couple of the other participants.

“This is the first time I took a course where I wasn’t looking at my watch at 3:00 wishing class was over.”

“This is the most fun I ever had in a course.”

“The instructors had to make us leave at 4:00 because everyone wanted to keep going.”

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin O’Leary
CUPE WEEK LONG SCHOOL 2014

Recently, I had the pleasure of attending my first CUPE Atlantic Region Weeklong School from May 25th- May 30th, 2014. The event was held in beautiful Baddeck, Nova Scotia. Approximately eighty Brothers and Sisters from CUPE locals throughout Nova Scotia and Newfoundland gathered together to attend the various courses being offered.

I attended The Introduction to Stewarding course, which also contained six modules from the recently revised Steward Learning Series. The course facilitators did an excellent job. The material was arranged very well and presented superbly. It was both informative and interesting.

We stayed at the Inverary Resort which is right on the banks of the Bras d’Or Lake. It is a beautiful place to stay if you’re ever in Baddeck! The resort offers a variety of rooms and cottages to stay in, and also has an exquisite dining room that serves probably the best food in all of Nova Scotia.

The days were spent in the classroom learning, discussing case studies, working in groups and even a few role playing situations (to make it feel like the real thing!). Evenings were spent socializing with others, or by the campfire sing along. Some of us even managed to catch a few of the playoff games!

The week long school is a great experience where you’ll not only learn a lot of information to help make the workplace better, but it is a great opportunity to meet and talk with people from other locals, and even make some new friends along the way.

Shawn Organ

Photo taken by Kevin O’Leary
HEALTH & SAFETY LESSONS LEARNED

From May 25 to 30, 2014 I was pleased and delighted to be accepted to join other CUPE 1615 members as we travelled to Baddeck, NS to take part in the 2014 Atlantic Region Weeklong CUPE School. There were CUPE members from all kinds of workplaces around Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. It was quite eye opening to see how many different types of workplaces and occupations make up CUPE. There were four courses offered and Keir Hiscock and I took the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) course. There were twenty participants and the two facilitators were John Brookfield and Kathy Dauphney. They put us to work starting on the very first day!

The course was very different from any OHS training which I have received in the past. This was in no way similar to rules and regulations about when to wear PPE or what chemicals need to be used in well ventilated spaces. The focus of this course was on becoming a Health and Safety activist. Using powerpoints and in class discussion, we learned about different types of research and steps which we could take to address a Health and Safety issue with the employer. We also discussed the need to inform our members about health and safety and how to engage them in the process by being open to taking in their own personal workplace concerns. Another important point is to consider networking inside of our local. We, as a local, have a wide variety of skill sets and people should be encouraged to use their knowledge to help out. It would be ideal to have an OH&S rep per worksite. In our case that could be per building or department. Another interesting and important topic presented was on Mental Injury viewed as a result of workplace hazards. How working environments can have detrimental effects on workers and how we can strive to improve this for our members was addressed. Keir and I have been discussing this at length and we hope to try and present a plan to help address this to the union membership and executive in the future.

The major and most enjoyable part of the course was practical. John and Kathy split us into two groups to represent two different workplaces. Keir and I along with three others, played members of “CUPE 9000” working for a fictitious company, Newfoundland Municipalities. We were charged with the task of setting up our half of a JOSH (joint occupational safety and health) committee with five other participants who took the role of the Employer's team. We then engaged in role play; negotiating terms of reference for our committee, calling meetings both JOSH and labour management, making recommendations to the employer and consulting our union rep (played by John Brookfield) or the Government OHS officer (played by Kathy Dauphney) when we needed advice or clarification. Scenarios which posed new issues to be addressed were given to us on a regular basis. The information was not always evenly shared between the two sides which added a strong sense of reality to the proceedings. It can be easy to assume that everyone wants to be on the side of what is safe and best practice in the workplace. The sad reality is that the dollars and cents for appropriate safety gear, substitution of less hazardous practices and increased time or staffing required for work to be performed in a safe manner can cut into productivity and the ever important budget. It was entertaining and challenging and our side won some and lost some.

The other side of Union school was of course the social and networking side. I learned a lot in class, and I think I learned even more by listening to people tell stories about initiatives, concerns and victories in their own locals. I made a lot of connections both outside CUPE 1615 and within. I would like to thank the local for the opportunity to attend this fabulous event and I certainly hope to go again! I encourage each and every member to think about attending such an event.

Respectfully submitted,
Nathalie Vanasse
EMPLOYEE AND FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Your confidential Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP), is provided by Shepell.fgi. This comprehensive, confidential service is available to Memorial employees, retirees, and their immediate family members at no cost, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

For immediate, confidential support, please call 1-800-387-4765 (TTY Service: 1-877-388-0275). Online services are available at www.shepellfgi.com. Confidentiality and privacy are assured to each employee, retiree, or family member who uses the counselling service. As with all EFAP services provided, contact should be made directly with Shepell.fgi. No information concerning any individual situation will be reported back to representatives of Memorial.

An Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) supports and assists employees and their immediate family members in assessing and resolving work, health and life issues.

Complimentary to employees and their family members, EFAPS provide accessible, confidential and immediate support for a range of health and wellness issues.

You are likely aware that EFAP provides counselling services for emotional health; there’s also much more:

Family Support Services
- Planning a Family
- Childcare
- Homecare Support
- Eldercare
- Bereavement
- And more

Financial Support Services
- Debt and credit
- Tax issues
- Budgeting
- Retirement/Life transitions
- Financial impact of divorce
- And more

Career Counselling
- Coaching to help bolster resiliency
- Strategies to avoid burnout and find focus
- Practical and lifestyle needs, goals, and solutions related to retirement

Nutrition Support Services
Diet can strongly affect mood, health and energy levels. Maintaining a healthy, well-balanced diet can be a challenge with busy schedules and family demands. Connect with one of our Registered Dietitians for advice about:
- Weight loss/gain
- Lowering cholesterol levels
- Reducing high blood pressure
- Boosting energy
- Regulating diabetes
- Healthy eating on-the-go
- Preventing heart disease
- Accommodating shift work
- Preventing osteoporosis
- Eating a well-balanced vegetarian diet

Health Coaching
Understanding health issues and concerns help to make the changes needed to be well and stay well. Our Health Coaches are Registered Nurses and Occupational Health Nurses who offer practical, personalized support for physical health issues, such as:
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Migraines
- Asthma, allergies
- PMS, Menopause, Andropause
- Gastrointestinal concerns (Crohn's Disease, ulcers)

They assist with risk reduction action plans and provide motivation to stick with it. Factors they will address include:
- Weight management
- Healthy eating
- Smoking cessation
- Responsible alcohol use
- Stress management
- Exercise as a component of a healthy lifestyle

MORE ABOUT EFAP IN THE NEXT ISSUE!
CALM CONFERENCE PROVIDES VALUABLE COMMUNICATION LESSONS
by Patrick Tyler

I recently had the privilege of representing 1615 at the Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM) conference, May 1 - 3, 2013, in Montreal.

CALM is a collective of union communicators and editors who work to strengthen the labour movement by building media literacy about labour issues. A focus of their work is countering the efforts of governments and special interest groups to distort – or outright discredit – the aims and objectives of the labour movement.

I was joined at the conference by my colleague and union sister, Sandra Mills, of Computing and Communications. It was decided early on that we would split as many sessions as possible, to maximize the amount of information available. Sandra, being a computer specialist, opted for those sessions that spoke to the role of technology in getting our (labour’s) message out; for example, Managing Your Union’s Social Media Profile. My sessions largely focused on the art and the act of communicating; more so what’s being said and who’s saying it, than how it’s being transmitted.

The conference had a lot to offer on how we manage communications in our local. Based on what I heard at the conference, we could be doing a better job of communicating with our members and there is much we can do to enhance and support the recent initiatives of the larger Canadian labour movement to underscore the value of unions in Canada.

In my first session, MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS DURING BARGAINING AND BEYOND, some of the key points discussed were:

Adopting and staying with a consistent message, one that emphasizes the hopeful and the promising not just the negative and the combative. For example, instead of “the public can go to hell”, there’s “we regret that our strike is inconveniencing students. But I think students understand the principles we’re fighting for today, will benefit them in their workplaces tomorrow”; a positive spin based in empathy.

The idea of a single message is particularly important in the context of the picket line. The media is famous for zeroing in on the angriest or least articulate picketer, and exploiting their willingness to make unfortunate statements or to act in a manner that either creates or reaffirms a negative attitude towards unions. For that reason, the workshop leader(s) encouraged union execs to develop daily speaking points which picketers are encouraged to stick with in the event they are drawn out by a reporter.

One important item the spokesperson reflected on was about cultivating a rapport with the media before such things as a strike occurs. This will ensure that you are dealing with reporters who have some knowledge and experience of the labour beat, and it will buy you credibility in times of uncertainty.

My next session was SPOKESPERSON SKILLS.

As the title implies it was about developing techniques for handling the media in different interview settings; for example a news conference vs. a scrum. A news conference is typically a much more static affair and affords the spokesperson a much greater level of control than would be the case for a scrum. In a scrum, the reporters are frequently crowding you, pushing microphones in or near your face, and questions can come from any quarter and be totally unanticipated. According to the presenter, no amount of rehearsing is going to entirely prepare you for a scrum. But there are techniques that can be employed to limit the damage you can do to yourself. The presenter talked about:

- body language,
- eye contact,
- taking a question with your head down, in a thoughtful pose, gathering time for your response
- what patterns in clothing to avoid; e.g., busy lines, and again,
- being alert to opportunities to exploit the situation to give a positive, progressive slant to your answers.

Generally speaking, the president of your union, or a specially trained spokesperson is the designated spokesperson, although it doesn’t have to be that way. Regardless of who is assigned or takes on the task, some professional media training is pretty much essential.
Friday's final session was a keynote panel presentation: LESSONS FROM QUEBEC FOR CANADIAN LABOUR COMMUNICATION

From the Orange Wave—referring to the success of the NDP during the last federal election—to the 2012 Maple Spring—the student-led protest against increased university tuition fees—Quebec has seen a number of exciting and interesting developments the labour movement in the rest of Canada can learn from. For example, a.) new efforts in organizing temporary foreign workers, and b.) experiments in labour media by locked-out workers.

The panelists included Alexandre Balearic, an NDP member of parliament (elected in the Orange Wave); Marie-Eve Rancor, a lawyer active in community organizing; Mustafa Heneway, a community organizer and activist in the newly formed Quebec Temporary Foreign Workers Association, and Lisa Djèvahirdjian, a union representative in the communications department for CUPE.

An underlying theme of the presentation was the importance of community-based support in driving the social awareness and activism that underpins the labour movement in Quebec.

Saturday's first session was DEVELOPING GREAT CONTENT FOR YOUR WEBSITE

As with most seminars concerning website development, the dominant refrain was “Content is King”! Among other techniques the seminar leader discussed was the use of compelling photography. One of the things that is clear about union websites is they could benefit significantly from member-supported photography. She encouraged the attendees to go back to their locals and put programs in place to encourage the submission of member-sponsored photographs. And not just photos of members at work, but of workers engaged in community activities and social engagement; pictures of the union—in the form of the members—at play in the life of the community.

Another strategy recommended was integrating information across media. For example, an article started on your website, could be continued and wrapped up in your local’s newsletter. Video shot for a website piece could be shared with Facebook followers and YouTube watchers . . . and vice-versa.

As with almost any discussion of websites, there was talk about content layout and how site information is framed. Although the group couldn’t arrive at consensus with respect to one model being the best, some common endorsements included a feature article on the front page, with a picture or pictures, serving as a focus for adjacent stories; a menu structure of limited depth and a coherent grouping of associated content.

MEMBER-LED CONVERSATIONS ABOUT IMPORTANT TOPICS FOR LABOUR COMMUNICATIONS

This was a very engaging seminar driven by topics put forth by the conference attendees. Once those topics had been identified and written down, attendees were told to select the two topics of greatest interest to them, and join that cohort in a discussion of the topics.

1. FOR MY FIRST TOPIC I JOINED A GROUP LOOKING AT THE PROBLEM OF MEMBERSHIP APATHY.

All the participants expressed concern with the lack of participation amongst members at their various locals. I was shocked to learn about the difficulties many of them were having achieving quorum at their membership meetings.

In some cases, locals couldn’t get any more than two members to show up, and some of these were big locals with a significant number of members. I was proud to note that CUPE 1615 regularly has quorum, and more, and cited innovative strategies like serving food and child care support in encouraging member participation.

The talk turned to the particular problem of attracting young members to the meetings. Many noted that with an aging demographic, many executive members would be retiring and there wouldn’t be any informed, trained younger members in the wings to fill those positions.

It was agreed that the best way to tackle that problem is to draw young members in gradually, asking them for very basic help and once successful in getting them engaged, gradually raise the significance and importance of the work they are being asked to take on. Mentoring was also seen as an important part of that process. The older more experienced members need to introduce themselves to younger members and provide them with opportunities to see the value of the union in terms of the hard-won benefits of the past, and the unique protections and articles they are going to have to develop to respond to the changing face of their work-place.
One of the strategies to be endorsed was the implementation of a greeters operation or committee, wherein older local members are assigned to meet with new members shortly after they are appointed, to outline the benefits of the new employee’s membership in the union, and to encourage the new-hires to get involved … remembering to start small, supplemented with lots of hand-holding.

CUPE 1615 is fortunate to have it in their collective agreement that the employer must, within a reasonable period, identify new members to the local. Many of the representatives at the presentation noted that their locals struggle to get and maintain that information.

2. HOW TO DEAL WITH DISTRACTING VOICES IN A LOCAL

One of the participants was struggling with a situation in his local where two members had joined forces in undermining the local’s messages and communication strategies by maintaining a rogue website which they used to put out false information and undermine the local’s legitimate news. The person who had spearheaded the topic was at his wits end to find a solution. Proposals ranged from having several large union members pay them a visit, to co-opting them.

The consensus was to approach the rump group and ask them why they were doing what they were doing and to see if some accommodation couldn’t be arranged. If such a meeting failed to produce a solution, the legitimate communications people should start telling the stories of members who had been harmed or inconvenienced by relying on information from the rump website. This would have the effect of undercutting the credibility of the rogue site. All participants agreed it would be best if the legitimate local communicators not drive the rump group farther away. In doing that, it would simply make it that much more difficult to moderate the rump group’s messaging. The wiser option would be to invite them in; challenge them to identify a situation where the legitimate communicators had failed in providing appropriate information and where the rump’s website had gotten it correct.

END OF CONFERENCE DINNER AND PRESENTATION

Conference goers heard from Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois, spokesperson for the Quebec Student Federation that played a leading role in the student strike of 2012, which, in turn, was a catalyst for the Maple Spring movement, one of the largest political mobilizations in Canada in decades. Nadeau-Dubois’ presentation pointed to lessons learned from the movement and how they could be used by the labour movement in communicating and organizing for a different Canada.

END OF CONFERENCE THOUGHTS

Although not a focus of any particular workshop–at least, not the ones I attended–one aspect of the movement that was brought forth time and time again was “campaigns”. It’s clear from the conference discussions that a large number of locals are involved in campaigns on an ongoing basis. These campaigns bring attention to targeted concerns such as two-tier benefit systems, union solidarity, pension reforms and specific bargaining issues (limited to a local’s location). I was greatly impressed with the idea and think 1615 could be much more active in this area. The campaigns don’t have to be elaborate or long:

- a day of members wearing a particular coloured t-shirt to signify solidarity.
- a day of wearing non-permanent tatoos to protest outsourcing or some other pressing concern
- a day of answering calls only on their fourth or fifth ring . . .

. . . acts to bring to the attention of the employer, the public and even the members themselves the legitimacy, relevance and power of the union to represent and to give life to the labour movement.
save the date!

CUPE 1615
BBQ & Fun Day

For all CUPE 1615 members (with or without children)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6
NOON to 3 PM
NORTH BANK LODGE
PIPPY PARK, ST. JOHN’S
KUDOS TO CUPE NL AND LOCAL 1615

At a recent International Solidarity conference in Ottawa, attended by both national and international representatives, Charles Fleury, our national secretary treasurer, remarked during a speech that he could not think of a better example of solidarity than when CUPE NL at its 2014 Annual Convention, with just 6000 members, raised more than $11,000.00 for a striking CUPE Local in Northern Ont. “This is the power of solidarity and this is what it looks like in action!” he stated.

P.S. Out of that +11,000.00, our Local gave $1000.00! Solidarity and partnership is an important part of what we do and what we’re about. We are recognized for it.

Thank You Members!

Keir