Well, what a summer we had!!! July was absolutely fabulous, even though it may have been a little difficult at times to work during that period. To those of you who were on vacation during those few hot weeks in July, good for you and I hope you enjoyed every minute of it! The old saying in Newfoundland is that once the Regatta is over, so is summer. Even though we have had mostly rain and fog since the Regatta, I really hope this isn't true. I am counting on a few more weeks of barbequing weather!

As we move toward the fall, try to remember our general membership meeting dates (included in this newsletter). One evening a month is all it takes to be part of the voice of your union. And don't forget, supper is included. Come and join us this fall and winter as we discuss issues in our workplace and help you understand the workings of your union. Remember, there is strength in numbers.

Summer has been relatively quiet for my office as it often is in this period. It's a chance to regroup and ready ourselves to handle any issues that arise in the fall and winter.

One particularly troubling issue of late is the way Human Resources tries to assist us — or more typically, hinders us, with departmental problems.

Several times over the last couple of months it seems that HR is taking a "hands off" approach with departments and letting department heads and supervisors make decisions that are detrimental to our members, affecting morale in the workplace in an appreciable way.

If you have concerns about any contract article you think your department is interpreting incorrectly, contact me. Together we can tackle the problem and help you find a solution.

Appendix A-1, Composition of the Bargaining Unit, has become a concern for me recently. It seems that positions are being "reviewed" by some departments and we have to be diligent in protecting the work of our bargaining unit. We certainly don't want any more positions taken out of the union.

I recently had one department, with HR's approval, trying to remove six (6) positions from CUPE. Following a lot of sometimes very heated discussion, only three positions were removed. In my eyes that is still three positions too many, but at least we preserved the other three.

My advice to all of you is to be careful when taking on duties that could exclude you from your union. Your job descriptions should be quite clear and if any non-bargaining work is being asked of you, always question it and call me to discuss it. Don't forget that the "work now, grieve later" practice is best.

If you have any concerns about your duties, especially new work you are being asked to take on, I am just a phone call or email away.

continued on next page
My Anxiety

By A CUPE Member

Editor's note: The writer's name has been withheld by request.

12 per cent of Canadians have a mood or anxiety disorder.

That means that about 110 people in the union have some form of mental disability, not to mention substance dependence and eating disorders.

There are almost 1,000 CUPE 1615 members and 110 of us struggle each day we come to work. Some of us struggle at home and find relief when we come to work, others have to struggle at work because we haven't found a way to cope with our anxieties while at work: An insensitive supervisor, a difficult co-worker, too much responsibility, the changing work environment ... the list goes on.

For me, I was changing: my new life with a child and the new relationship I had to build with my husband; lack of sleep, high expectations, not enough time for me and ... what would you expect. I took a big crash.

At the time I was finding it a relief to come to work, but my anxiety attacks occurred while I was at work.

My mind would wander, I'd make lists upon lists of things that needed to be accomplished. I felt like a hamster on a wheel that I couldn't stop. I felt nauseous, dizzy, couldn't get enough air. I had what I first recognized as a panic attack at work. At the time I was given support and assistance to get home. Wait! ... I couldn't go home! My baby and the sitter were there! so I was taken to my grandmother's. I thought it was the best option. I was wrong. She was not the least bit consoling. She didn't know what to do with me. It took me hours to stop crying. I did go back to work, and I did visit my doctor. She was very helpful and insisted that I take some time off work. So I did. I really needed some time. It was two weeks — two weeks of my supervisor wondering when I was coming back, two weeks of emails and phone calls from my supervisor and co-workers asking me about work.

When I returned to work I felt like a criminal, like I had done something wrong. I was no longer worthy of my job or to be respected in my work environment. Things felt oppressive. I couldn't deal with what was already going on with me and now this, from the place where I was previously getting some relief.

I reached out to my union where I found understanding and support. It wasn't going to change anything but I no longer felt alone. I had someone to talk to, someone who had my back.

A couple of jobs came up that I could apply for and I did. I had to leave where I was, the relationship there had been tarnished and I had to stop feeling guilty. I was sad to go, I wish it didn't have to come to that, but sometimes change is what we need and it certainly was what I needed.

We aren't broken, we haven't done anything wrong, we aren't being lazy. We need understanding and a chance to heal.

From Your President

Continued from page 1

Our fall schedule of union education courses should be available very soon. Once available, it will be posted on our website and will be put out through your listserv. Registration for these courses is free, so I encourage you to review the list and see if there is anything that interests you. Members who have attended in the past always tell us the courses are very informative. They give you a different perspective on the labor movement, the operation of your local and our contract.

I hope I see lots of you at our annual BBQ and Fun Day on September 6th at the North Bank Lodge in Pippy Park. This is always a great time with lots of activities for your children and, of course, lots of union fellowship.

In Solidarity, Theresa

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Retirements

Saying goodbye, good luck and thanks for your many years of support to Brother Richard (Rick) Predham and Sister Marg Pippy

CUPE 1615 president, Theresa Antle, congratulates Rick Predham on his retirement from the position of supervisor in the mail room.

Rick has 35+ years of service with Memorial.

Good luck and best wishes, Rick!

Marg Pippy retired in July after 37 years of service with Printing Services.

Good luck and best wishes, Marg!
I'm going to be honest.

In April of 2013 when the Botanical Garden reverted to being part of a department of MUN, and we were told our positions were going to be in the union, I had some reservations.

The biggest one was that I was going to experience a pay cut, as part of my salary would now be deducted for union dues.

Speaking with some people they projected their views of "I pay all this money in, and get nothing out of it," so I was a little worried.

I'm not one to sit back and complain though, and I felt that if I was paying to be a member then I was going to do my best to get my money's worth. So, when I heard that they served meals at the general membership meetings I was there - because I never turn down free food! (although it's really our dues that pay for it).

I went to the first union meeting by myself, but I was able to convince another co-worker to join me once her seasonal position started. It is always nice going somewhere new with someone you already know.

I didn't know what to expect, having never been in a union before. On average there has been 20-50 people at the regular meeting. This is good because as a new person you can blend into the group quite easily, but you also have a chance to speak if you want to do that too.

We start the meeting with the meal (which has always been delicious), then move on to union business.

The first few meetings I did feel a little lost, as people were discussing past and future courses and conventions they had been to or wanted to go to.

I had to vote a couple of times on issues that I really didn't feel I had the right to vote on as I wasn't really educated on the matter. But always in these cases the executive and senior members would help explain the issue, making me feel a little more confident in my vote.

The more I started going to the meetings the more I learned. I learned about the education courses that were offered (I'm used to having to pay for school, but these courses are all paid for and a per diem buys your lunch).

I learned about other unions and their struggles and how CUPE 1615 was helping them out in their time of need.

I heard about the nice thank-you letters we had received from members who had received a bouquet of flowers or a fruit basket when they had an illness etc. (since learning about this, I've requested three for co-workers on leave and I knew they would be happy to receive them); I learned about the member's children who were receiving scholarship money from the union.

I learned about the upcoming social events, attending all that I could (remember my free food philosophy), and had a blast, and even won some prizes! But most of all I met some awesome new people from around campus.

All of the above are great everyday things any member can participate in, but the union is really there to help us through issues in the workplace. Being a keener I actually read (skimmed) the collective agreement, and noticed some things that weren't being followed in my workplace, specifically the Shift Differential in Section 25.01....

With the help of Theresa (Antle), and many emails, phone calls, and persistence, HR realized their mistake and agreed to give us our shift differential, including the back payment from the time we joined the union.

For my co-worker who works every weekend, this means around $1000 more in salary every year.
ends, as the Botanical Garden is open seven days a week from May-November). This was not a fault of my department, as it was more of an issue they just weren't aware of.

When I asked for it to be corrected the comment from HR was that this didn't apply to us. Not sure why it wouldn't apply, I brought up the issue at the end of the next membership meeting. Some of the executive expressed that this should apply and that they would look into it. With the help of Theresa (Antle), and many emails, phone calls, and persistence, HR realized their mistake and agreed to give us our shift differential, including the back payment from the time we joined the union. For my co-worker who works every weekend, this means around $1000 more in salary every year - it actually makes those of us who have to work on weekends feel like there is just compensation.

The biggest change for me though, was at the February 2014 biennial election when Theresa put my name forward for the recording secretary position. I had been a member of the union for less than a year and felt like there were many more knowledgeable people who would be suitable as part of the executive. Theresa had seen that I had the motivation to be involved, but I lacked the knowledge myself to confidently put myself out there. Luck has it that for some reason the secretary position is not as highly contested and I ran unopposed ... not that I want the competition, as I'll happily run for the position again.

But guess what - it's really not that hard, and I've really been enjoying the job! Yes, I do have to sit facing the crowd with Theresa at the front of the room, but I really do feel aware of what is going on.

The executive also has monthly meetings (even in the summer), but I feel more in the know than ever, and can now confidently vote on various issues that affect us all.

Although people say they don't have the time to be involved, I really only spend two nights a month, plus socials, and education courses when I have the desire.

Since February, I've signed up for various committees including helping to update our website and starting some social media projects. There are many more committees looking for members if you feel you have something to offer!

I'm looking forward to attending my first conference in October on behalf of the union, and am also looking forward to taking the Stewardship training, once my schedule allows.

Although I doubt I'll ever break my free food philosophy, I also feel this has been quite important: The more you do for the union, the more the union does for you.

So where do you start?

Grab another CUPE 1615 buddy/co-worker and come join us at the next general membership meeting on September 9th!

The fall schedule of meetings is posted on the webpage, and on the last page of this newsletter. Keep in mind that the union will pay for childcare if needed!

If you are feeling unsure about where to start getting involved, chat with any of the executive at one of the next meetings.

Hope to see you there!

Christine Byers
Recording Secretary
cbyers@cupe1615.ca

Anxiety
cont’d. from page 2

I'm very happy where I am now; my life is feeling much better. I've done a lot of work over the last year-and-a-half and it's paid off.

Something I think a great deal about though, is that if my life takes a turn again — for the worse — will the people in my new work setting understand?

I would like to see some understanding from our employer as well as education for us and those who we work with. We aren't broken, we haven't done anything wrong, we aren't being lazy. We need understanding and a chance to heal.

If you can relate to my story, I want you to know that you aren't alone. There are others that come to work every day here at MUN who have similar struggles. Thank you for reading my story.

http://www.understandnow.ca

Other useful resources:

http://www.notmyselftoday.ca/
http://depressionhurts.ca/

And, of course, our EFAP provider:
http://www.shepellfgi.com/EN-CA/
Dear Professional Development Fund Committee:

I am writing to thank all of you for approving the CUPE Professional Development Fund for my attendance of the American Scientific Glassblowing Society (ASGS) Symposium 2014 in Eugene, Oregon, this past June.

I recently relocated to St. John's from Toronto for the scientific glassblower position in Technical Services at Memorial University, because it is a supportive and innovative environment to work in.

I am grateful that the resource of the CUPE Fund is available for my professional development, furthering value to my employment at MUN.

This was my second symposium as a junior member and it continues to be a positive experience. With the guidance of the teachers we had in the hands-on workshops, I learned and absorbed many scientific glassblowing techniques that I am still practising and applying to my work today. I also did a technical poster presentation titled: Good til the Last Drop — Oil Extraction of the Ocean Floor Substrate and was selected as the recipient of the "Wale Award" for the outstanding Technical Poster Presentation which will be presented at the 2015 awards banquet in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I have also been selected as the chair for the ASGS technical papers for the 2015 symposium and Schott Glass has invited me to go on site to Germany, which is all positive for Memorial University's public image.

This (2014) symposium was a great opportunity where I gained even more knowledge, resources and more professional connection in scientific glass. I also feel honoured to be recognized for the hard work I put into my craft.

Your approval and support will permit me to further contribute to the university’s Technical Services team and the internal and external clients which the Glassblowing Shop supports.

The CUPE Fund that is offered through our union assists many employees and my teammates, who are members of CUPE 1615, to pursue their professional education.

Thank you for making this fund available. I will not forget the support that has been extended to me.

Sincerely,

Sabrina Bélanger
Glassblowing Shop - Technical Services
CUPE Equality Statement

The CUPE Equality Statement is read before every union meeting — large and small — and expresses the guiding principles by which we conduct our business.

Union solidarity is based on the principle that union members are equal and deserve mutual respect at all levels.

Any behaviour that creates conflict, prevents us from working together to strengthen our union. As unionists, mutual respect, cooperation and understanding are our goals. We should neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Discriminatory speech or conduct which is racist, sexist, transphobic or homophobic hurts and thereby divides us. So too, does discrimination on the basis of ability, age, class, religion and ethnic origin.

We should neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Sometimes discrimination takes the form of harassment. Harassment means using real or perceived power to abuse, devalue or humiliate. Harassment should not be treated as a joke. The uneasiness and resentment that it creates are not feelings that help us grow as a union.

Discrimination and harassment focus on characteristics that make us different; and they reduce our capacity to work together on shared concerns such as decent wages, safe working conditions, and justice in the workplace, society and in our union.

CUPE’s policies and practices must reflect our commitment to equality. Members, staff and elected officers must be mindful that all sisters and brothers deserve dignity, equality and respect.
Fall Semester 2014
Membership Meeting Schedule

Food served at 5 p.m., meetings start at 5:30.

St. John’s
September 9 - ED 3034A
October 14 - ED 2018A
November 4 - ED 3034A
December 9 - ED 2018A

Corner Brook
Members meet in AS275

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
• Committee reports
• Unfinished business
• New business
• For the good of the union

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

Come and eat with us before the start of the proceedings. WE lay on the spread, so let’s enjoy a meal together.

Child care costs/commitments keeping you from attending meetings?

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

If you no longer want a paper copy of CUPE on Campus, please email wtyler@mun.ca before the next issue is published to have your name removed from the distribution list.

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