

Schoolwork

Newsletter for members of OPSEU Local 330
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Spring 2011

Offering the
Promise of
Success through
Education &
Understanding

Birchview Dunes showing strong support for promotion of 2011 Pink Shirt Day



Caring In Action

Allandale Heights-Perfectly Pink!

*Never doubt that a
small group of
thoughtful citizens
can change the
world.
Indeed, it is the only
thing that ever has.*

Margaret Mead



Bring A Can To Work



Sandra Cadeau helped by her daughter, delivered donations from North District members to the Midland Women's shelter.



Dave McCarl & Donna Caissie delivering donations from West District members to the Collingwood Women's shelter

Daily we work with children who may be in vulnerable life situations. To show that as support workers for the school board, we care about the communities we live and work in, Local 330 initiated a campaign for Dec 6, 2010 that organized the collection and distribution of food hampers to women's shelters. The date was chosen specifically in order to remember and honour the memory of the 14 young women who tragically lost their lives at the l'École Polytechnique in Montreal in 1989 at the hands of an enraged gunman.

The response from members of our Local was heart-warming. The time of year was challenging with so many other food drives happening, but the many donations we received were very gratefully received by the shelters. Shelters in Alliston, Midland, Orillia, Barrie and Collingwood received hampers.

"Your donation helps us provide basic necessities for the families staying here, and helps keep our food buying costs down, we appreciate your support".
Greenhaven Shelter

"The Christmas hamper you donated ensured our families were able to enjoy a much happier holiday season than would have been possible without your support...as we face inadequate government funding continually...without the generosity of people in our community we would not have the additional funds to provide extras that make holiday times special for the women and their children".
My Friend's House



Harriet Todd EAs

To celebrate Literacy Day at Harriet Todd Public School in Orillia, educational assistants organized a visit to the school from a local author, Ian Wilson. Wilson read a passage from his new book "The Secret of The Old Swing Bridge" which is set in Washago. The educational assistants also donated a copy of the book to the school library. This event was featured in the local newspaper.

What a great way for OPSEU Local 330 members to demonstrate their commitment to education and be recognized in the community for doing so!

Congratulations Harriet Todd EAs.



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48 Alliance Boulevard
Barrie
705-737-5622

OPSEU NEWS

Friday March 18 & Saturday 19th elected members of Local 330 were at the Regional meeting in Toronto.

OPSEU is divided up into seven regions across the province, we are in Region 3. Every region has three executive board members representing the members at this higher level. This year was an OPSEU election year –regionally and provincially. The main focus at this meeting was to elect our regional representatives. Patty Rout and Clare Rowett have represented us for a number of years but did not run this time around. Patty, on the executive board for a number of years, was second in command at OPSEU as the provincial vice-president for the past 2 terms. Local 330 would like to extend thanks for their support over the years and wish them both well in future endeavours. It takes a tremendous amount of time and commitment to both OPSEU and the labour movement to commit to those positions. Their lives are literally lived through OPSEU, CLC, NUPGE, and OPSEU political campaigns, making sure our issues are on the table with politicians and the public, so that they can learn the importance of our role in a civil, caring society.

The three executive board members elected for the next two years are:

Peter Wright– V.P. Region 3

Sara Labelle

Gordon Longhi

Other provincial and regional positions were elected. Provincial committees are: Women's; Young Workers; & Human Rights, and at the regional level a Hardship Committee. Our own **Dave McCarl** ran for the Provincial Human Rights Committee (PHRP) and was elected for Region 3, congratulations Dave! As part of

his duties he was an automatic delegate to the Canadian Labour of Congress (CLC) Convention in May, this year in Vancouver. Silvana joined him as an elected delegate. With our two sector members from Region 6 there, it was great that CLC had four education sector representatives from OPSEU!

Silvana and Lesley are regionally elected delegates to the Ontario Federation of Labour Convention (OFL) in Toronto, in November. Dave will be there as an elected PHRC committee member. These events enable labour activists to meet with, and build relationships across, the labour movement, helping to build co-operation and understanding of issues that we are dealing with in our work lives, and challenges our communities are facing.

The OPSEU Provincial Convention was in April. The delegates to convention, once again, voted for Smokey Thomas as the OPSEU president for the next two years.

Delegates debated constitutional changes and resolutions put forward by locals and local labour councils. It was an intense 4 days and by the time end of convention arrives everyone is experiencing mental exhaustion, but also a sense of positive direction and pride in belonging to a member driven union.

Local 330 delegates were: Silvana Petersen, Lesley Chisholm, Dave McCarl, Sandy Barker, Kelly Martin, Sandra Cadeau



*Pink shirts were a big hit, with sales pending we could be going province wide!
R -Sandra, Kelly
T-Sandy, Silvana, Lesley
and
Toronto rallies*





Convention 2011

Sandra Cadeau North District Steward

I was elected as a delegate to the 2011 OPSEU Convention. It was my first time and particularly exciting as it was OPSEU's 100 year anniversary,

and an election year! Convention started with an amazing video tribute to OPSEU's 100 year history. The video tracked OPSEU's history from its CSAO roots through to the challenges and victories of OPSEU today.

I was honoured to vote for our president, Smokey Thomas. The support of my brothers and sisters allowed me to gain an incredible amount of information and knowledge that made me feel empowered and confident in casting my vote for Smokey.

Convention would not be Convention without a solidarity rally. I participated in three rallies. The first rally was on Thursday, April 7th for part-time college workers, they have been waiting for the government to open the ballot boxes and count their votes allowing

them the right to join a union-our union OPSEU. The second rally was on Friday in support of the Hospital Professionals' division. Lastly, on Saturday, an Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) organized rally: Toronto for Everyone. We joined 10 000 people in a demand for respect for our communities, public services and good jobs.

There was a lot to take in, resolutions passed for OPSEU to establish a commission to study tax fairness and public services, and voting on constitutional amendments. It was a terrific opportunity and I learned a great deal about how OPSEU is organized.



Friends with Benefits....

The Benefit of Benefits.

Health care is not free! With a conservative majority now in power it is likely to become more expensive and/or less available to the average worker. We are in the fortunate position of being employed with a collective agreement that offers a benefit package to employees, albeit at a cost to ourselves.

Costs are based on a variety of factors, the employer contribution rate, the group experience rating, and a factor we have no control over - health care inflation. Experience rating is based on the group usage. If the group is a high user of benefits costs will rise. If the group is judicious in their use of benefits then costs can remain relatively stable.

Local 330 is currently exploring other benefit options available to us and we will develop a benefits survey for all members to complete in the near future. This will help give us a clearer picture of the kind of benefit package members want and some cost containment options that members would be willing to accept.

On June 8th a presentation on the wind up of the trust will be delivered at our General Meeting, Barrie Central at 6pm

OMERS:

As SCDSB employees many of us are fortunate to belong to the OMERS pension plan. The employer

matches our contributions, and as such, they are actually deferred wages. It is very important to note that if you have an unpaid leave **of any sort**-you are eligible to purchase that period. There are specific time limits to adhere to, and although the employer should be sending out an "election" form to you regarding your choices, it is important to be proactive and be aware of your entitlement to purchase this time. Not purchasing can impact your retirement date options. If you believe that you have not received a form (#165) offering you the buyback option for a leave period, please contact Judy Grant, payroll department, by email. Information was sent out in a contact message very recently. If you have not received this information please email the OPSEU office : opseu330@bellnet.ca and it will be sent out to you.

The Spring OMERS session was arranged for the evening of May 19th, it shares important information applicable to all members-young and not so young..., the more you hear it the more you understand this important benefit that we, as union members, have bargained into our collective agreement. Remember that the board matches your contribution-it is a deferred wage. OMERS has one of the strongest records for fiscal responsibility amongst pension companies. There are afternoon times available on Sat. May 28 for 1/2hr sessions with an OMERS rep. Contact the office for details.

Dealing With Difficult People : A professional development opportunity report:

A seminar opportunity happening during March Break in Barrie was brought to our attention. Local 330 offered to cover the cost, as part of the pd fund initiative, to school based office/clerical members. The following report came from a member who took advantage of the opportunity.

I took advantage of the union offer to participate in the "Dealing with Difficult People" seminar that was offered at the Monte Carlo Inn during March Break. This seminar was run by the Fred Pryor organization. I was intrigued by the topic and also felt the day was worth an investment in myself, both as an employee and in my personal life. I came away with information that will help me in my job. What made this course worthwhile was that it did two things:

- I got to know myself better – how do I tick. What kind of worker/employee am I? What my strengths and weaknesses are and how others are able to get along with me.
- It taught us to recognize personalities and how they work – what makes them tick and what makes them happy and we were given effective behaviour strategies to get along with each different personality type.

I learned that if I am working with an individual who likes to be appreciated – I NEED TO/MUST (to work together well), let that

individual have the floor-let them talk and talk, they need that, it will bring out the enthusiasm that is so characteristic of them. Even if it sounds like bragging and it gets under your skin – let them talk! This same personality type expects others to be flexible and to use rules only as a guideline. This explains why I find it difficult working with my "Difficult Person", I follow the rules when I'm at work. This was a light bulb moment for me!

Other key points for me were:

- Model behaviour – pacing – it's our duty to change ourselves.
- We can't change our "Difficult Person", **but we can change ourselves.**
- Work on self esteem – we ALL have self esteem issues
- **Confront assertively with respect!**
- Event + Response = Outcome
- Speak slowly – this keeps you under control and thinking
- Be prepared with State of Mind, Tone and Stance

I would certainly go again – the speaker and material were excellent.

Thank you OPSEU 330!

Professional Development: June 30, 2011

It's worth the drive to Barrie!!

June 30th is the day planned for the joint OPSEU/SCDSB pd day. This year it is an opportunity for office/clerical, both school based and education centre, along with technical support staff to be offered the pd day event.

There are several considerations in the planning of this day. The first major factor is the date; in order to offer the opportunity to all group members a joint day needs to be available. This year the only available joint day in the school year calendar 2010-2011 was June 30th 2011.

There have been some concerns raised about the choice of date. Remember this is a day the employer has agreed to. Each and everyone of you

is offered the opportunity to share in a day organized especially with OPSEU members in mind. The committee that does the organizing is made up of your colleagues. They spend many hours researching and developing plans for the day. It is your opportunity to get together with colleagues and enjoy a well planned event. The issue might become : we use it or lose it.

We urge all office/clerical /technical staff to sign up for this great opportunity, there are a few spaces left. Support the effort that your committee has put into developing this day and benefit from the great information, and networking.

I guarantee it will be worth the drive to Barrie!

330 SHORTS



Tax filing time! Remember to use the premium portion that **you** pay towards benefit costs as part of your medical deductions. This is only extended health and dental premiums, NOT life insurance or LTD. The person with the lowest income can claim it as a medical expense, regardless of who paid the premiums, along with any other out of pocket medical/dental (non cosmetic) expenses that you/your family incur throughout the year, this includes expenses that may have been only partially refunded through the benefit plan –the excess can be added to your medical expense credit.

Look at your last paycheque in 2010, it will give you an idea of your total premium cost. You can also locate information about uncovered expenses you have claimed by checking the SSQ website and looking at the breakdowns. Always keep my paper receipts as back up.

Read the tax guide for more detailed information.

Many members who filed for E.I. last year are receiving notices regarding overpayment. You must indicate to them that you receive your pay in instalments over the working year, what you pick up may not be what you have actually earned during that particular pay period. You need to declare vacation earnings. Return the required form within the stated time lines and you can also reference contacting :
Joanne Gemus, Manager of Payroll Services
Ed Centre 705 734 6363 x 11362

Mark June 8 on your calendar. It is our Spring General Meeting date. Send questions along to the office, there will be a Q&A time, if we have questions ahead of time it may help with the length of the meeting. The primary focus will be on the former trust fund asset distribution. Local 330 feels positive about the imminent distribution, and the fact that we have pushed hard for an equitable distribution to former participants in the plan. In addition there is also the

demutualization disbursement. If you know of any retirees that may have a claim on these funds please encourage them to contact the Local with contact information to ensure that they receive any funds allocated to them.

Check both the SCDSB and OPSEU.org website for deals related to cellphones/plans. On the OPSEU website you will also see opportunities for insurance savings based on your affiliation with OPSEU, and vacation outlets.

Accommodations are work arrangements based on specific medical documentation from a physician. It may involve a work location and/or a classification change, or could be as simple as providing ergonomic equipment to prevent repetitive strain injury recurrence. The employer is legally bound to work with a disabled member to look for a solution, your union will support you through the process.

EAs are questioning the differences between DECEs and themselves, particularly in respect to wages. Wages were bargained for at the Ministry of Education level and funded by the ministry through a Provincial Framework Agreement, as was ours, not by individual school boards or individual bargaining units. The roles are very different. DECEs are partnering with teachers in a specific role; EAs assist in a generalist role, a different level of responsibility that will be recognized. As the DECEs bargain their collective agreements the difference in responsibility level may very well be reflected in a collective agreement with a higher wage grid.

Current and upcoming PD opportunities

Wednesdays, April 27-May 25:Autism Intervener Training
Tuesdays, May 17-31:Therapeutic Crisis Intervention
May 19:OMERS Info evening
June3 PD Day-Elementary: Deaf Access
June 30th:Clerical/Technical PD Day

CONGRATULATIONS & CONTINUED SUCCESS

Stephanie Truelove

Levi Macleod

Justus Rutherford

Jennifer Cant

Kaylee MacMillan

Kyle Purdy

Jenna Rutherford

Casey Shaw

Michael Kazienko

Bailey Loverock

Bursary Winners 2010

Every Fall Local 330 posts information and application forms on opseu330.com about bursary opportunities for children of Local 330 members (those who have signed union cards).

Congratulations to the students whose names were drawn in December 2010 for a **\$150** bursary from OPSEU Local 330.

There were 21 applicants that applied, and those that weren't successful this time can apply again in 2011.

25 YEAR CONGRATULATIONS :

Stephanie Moreau :
Midland Secondary School

Tracey Monks : Bear Creek



EDITORIAL POLICY

Please address comments and concerns to Ichisholm@opseu330.com. The content of this newsletter may come from other OPSEU publications or articles of interest (with permission). We encourage members to submit constructive articles. Please sign articles and ensure that they are a positive contribution to our local and members.

Lesley Chisholm Editor
1st V.P. OPSEU Local 30



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