



Arbitration brings benchmark process to completion

MEMBERS OF THE JOB EVALUATION committee frequently are confronted with members' questions about the glacial pace of the Joint Committee's progress.

While the Union always has asserted its determination to meet the deadline for completion outlined in the collective agreement, our efforts have met with the University's continued intractability. Dare we say that it is to the University's advantage to delay the completion of the project and any ensuing salary adjustments? Such a strategy allows the University to shift an increasing portion of the cost of job evaluation to your Union.

After months of meetings, the Union and the University failed to agree over the scoring of the seventeen factors for each of the benchmark positions that will be used to guide the new rating system. We assembled detailed documentation of each position's duties and responsibilities culled from site visits, interviews and examinations of organization charts and hiring patterns and presented comprehensive pictures of jobs that often were at odds with their official descriptions. Meanwhile, the University

asserted unquestioned authority to set policy, and explained that job requirements and duties simply "are what we say they are."

With twenty four individual scores outstanding, the Union insisted upon the engagement of an arbitrator to settle the disputed scores and to force the project forward on to the next stage.

The bulk of the disputed scores involved the previous experience required by a job, one of the factors that may influence compensation significantly. It is a category that the university subtly manipulates to reflect a minimal level that regularly is belied by its hiring practices.

In his first decision, concerning a senior research officer in a female-dominated job class, Arbitrator Gerry Lee concurred with the Union's position that the job required more years of experience than the University's job description allowed. Further, he dismissed the University's contention that awarding an increase in the experience category

Happy International Women's Day 2007

We are...
5,500
members of
Steelworkers
Local 1998

We are...
70%
female

We celebrate and honour our sisters who have struggled to achieve economic equality and justice for all women. We recognize that much remains to be done before women close the gender pay gap.

January 1, 2008 will mark a major step in Canadian women's march toward economic equality. Our joint Union-Employer pay equity initiative at the University of Toronto will be completed and will result in pay adjustments.

March 8th 2007

is our day to applaud the progress we have made.

Steelworkers Local 1998
at the University of Toronto, Victoria University
and the University of St. Michael's College www.uswa1998.ca



The International Women's Day Pay Equity ad, printed in the Toronto Star March 8, 2007.

for the position could create a barrier to the employer's recruitment plans stating that "this argument is not relevant in an effective Pay Equity/ Job Evaluation process, given the purpose and intent of *The Pay Equity Act*."

Subsequently, six scores were agreed upon by the parties while Arbitrator Lee ordered a settlement of the remaining seventeen factors, assessing that the Union would receive 70% of the ratings it sought.

...continued on page 8

- 2 On the move
- 3 President's message
- 4 Local news
- 5 On other fronts
- 6 2006 Year in review
- 9 S. African unionists visit
- 10 Workplace injuries; IWD 2007 photos
- 11 Financially speaking; Letters
- 12 Cuts target women

APRIL 12: Mary Cornish to speak on Pay Equity

Well-known labour lawyer Mary Cornish is speaking at our April 12, 2007 Local release time meeting. Mary has been our legal counsel on Pay Equity and our Job Evaluation project for the last two years.

Mary is recognized nationally and internationally as an expert in the field of labour and social protection, justice reform, human rights and pay and employment equity. She is well known for her work as co-founder of Ontario's Equal Pay Coalition which persuaded the Ontario Government to enact pay equity laws.

Mary has been counsel in many precedent-



setting cases. This includes the successful 1997 SEIU Local 204 challenge under the Canadian Charter which restored pay equity rights to over 100,000 women in the Ontario public sector. She also successfully mediated a further Charter Challenge ...continued on page 8

on the move

Local news for members of Steelworkers Local 1998



David Roberts (Dictionary of Canadian Biography) holds a copy of his book, *'In the Shadow of Detroit'*, published in 2006 by Wayne State University Press with the support of Local 1998. The book, which explores the history of the Canadian Ford Company, its relationship with the Windsor community and the Canadian labour movement, took nine years to write – truly a labour of love that consumed almost all of his free time. Roberts retired as a Senior Editor in November 2006 after 26 years of service. Congratulations, David!



Mary Cornish spoke to a classroom of Local 1998 activists March 2nd. Mary will speak to the membership on pay equity at the release time meeting on April 12, 2007.



Pat Hood (Organizational Development and Learning Centre), is the newest member of the Local 1998 Job Evaluation Committee. Welcome to the Committee, Pat!



photo courtesy of: CAMILLE CENDAÑA

Sandra Grant (Banting & Best) is the new Co-Chair of the Women of Steel Committee.

Students literally froze for a tuition fee freeze Feb 7, 2007, camping out in front of University College. Local 1998 Executive members helped by supplying hot coffee, food and an oil drum.



MONICA CHONG & JENNY FAN donate their hair to the cause

CUPE 3261 members picket the U of T Press entrance. Part-timers earn less than \$10 hour and have no benefits.

Members of Local 1998 participate in the 'Cuts for Cancer' campaign. The donated hair is made into wigs for cancer survivors.



NO DELIVERIES TODAY: Strikers picket the U of T Press
photo courtesy of: ROBIN BREON

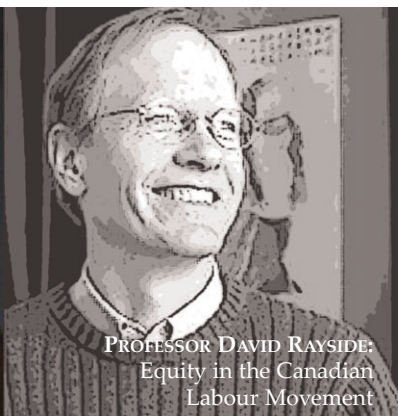
LOCAL 1998 would like to thank all of our guest speakers who volunteered their time to share their knowledge and experience with our membership.



BETH RAYMER (FORMER MEMBER):
A Season in Palestine



PROFESSOR JENNIFER BERDAHL:
International Women's Day



PROFESSOR DAVID RAYSIDE:
Equity in the Canadian Labour Movement



PROFESSOR ALISSA TROTZ:
International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

members

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who we are





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY THIS TIME NEXT YEAR your bargaining committee will be hard at work developing proposals to take to the bargaining table.

A great deal of work needs to be completed over the next year. Finishing the Job Evaluation project is one of the most crucial and sensitive issues. We also need to continue to build our Communication Action Team (CAT) as well as research other important issues in order to prepare to bargain our fourth collective agreement.

The Job Evaluation and Pay Equity project affects every member of the staff-appointed bargaining unit. We developed an essential tool which can be applied to a variety of positions, and accurately and effectively rate our members' jobs. Because this was an important priority, identified by members, we spent the necessary time developing and negotiating a method that would be capable of handling all the jobs in the staff-appointed unit. A less effective tool would not have been able to rate our members' jobs as well.

Data collection has been critical to this process. Your union recognized that as good as any rating tool is, it may not be as effective, if there isn't a good method of collecting data about the work that members do. The Job Evaluation Committee researched other job evaluation and pay equity systems to determine which methods were the best in collecting data about members' work. They met with experts

and developed an excellent questionnaire that would work well in an interview. The committee found that interviews were the best and most efficient method of gathering the most accurate information about members' work. We wanted to receive the data directly from members.

We agreed in December to work on a joint questionnaire with U of T, using the union's questionnaire as the basis for the new joint questionnaire that could be used in an interview. In January we were shocked when U of T tried to remove the interview as an official part of the process. However, after a mediated settlement in late January, both parties agreed on a pilot project that includes the interview as an important part of the process. I cannot over emphasize the importance of the interview. Our Job Evaluation Committee members are well trained and play a key role in ensuring that your job content is captured accurately so that it can be rated. It is vitally important to you that this is done properly as it will have a long term effect on your job. The union is firmly committed to completing interviews for those members who have not yet been interviewed.

The next step in the project is to develop job classes based on jobs with similar duties and responsibilities, and we need to complete the rest of the interviews so that this can be done. The information gathered on the questionnaire will be used to group jobs, so it is important to ensure that the information is accurate and not under reported.

We have arranged for Mary Cornish who is our legal counsel on job evaluation and pay equity to speak at the April 12 release time meeting. Mary is an expert in this area and the meeting on April 12 will provide an invaluable opportunity for members to hear from her about pay equity, and to ask questions specifically about our pay equity/job evaluation project.

Regular updates on Job Evaluation are posted on the website and the committee will continue to hold lunchtime meetings for members. Please do not hesitate to contact them at jec@usw1998.ca if you have a question.

"Interviews are the best and most efficient method of gathering the most accurate information about members' work... The union is firmly committed to completing interviews for those members who have not yet been interviewed."

Our CAT team is growing and on March 2, CAT members braved the aftermath of a snow storm to join stewards and executive members for an all day meeting with Mary Cornish and Shaheen Hirani from the Steelworkers Legal Department. We discussed pay equity, restructuring and the end of mandatory retirement. Members found all the topics and the discussion engaging and were able to ask questions relating to their departments. CAT representatives play an important role in ensuring that members in your department are included in the communication network. If members in your department are not part of the CAT and you would like to have someone represent you, please contact our "Top CAT", Linda Wilding at: linda.wilding@usw1998.ca.

Meetings are being arranged with U of T and a researcher from the Steelworkers Research Department to discuss the budget and the new budget model. Once our researcher has done the analysis, we will hold lunchtime meetings for members on the budget. "De-mystifying Pensions" lunchtime seminars will also be set up for members. Starting in April, Executive members and stewards will set up tables at various locations across the campuses so that members can address concerns. Robin Breon and I will set up a table in the lobby of Sidney Smith Hall on April 5 and 11. We will post the dates and locations of upcoming tables. Please drop by to say hello or to ask any us questions.

Much needs to be accomplished in the upcoming year and I am confident that with the support of our members and activists we will be in very good shape a year from now as we prepare to enter into bargaining for our fourth collective agreement.

■ Allison Dubarry, President



MEMBERS MARY BERNARD, ANA MARIA CAPOTOSTO, MARTHA YOUNG, RUDY LIMBERGER AND JUNE RILLETT at the March 2nd All-Day Quarterly Meeting.



OMERO LANDI
Staff Representative for Local 1998, speaks to attendees

Local 1998 President Allison Dubarry Wins 'Steelworker of the Year' Award

Allison Dubarry, President of Steelworkers Local 1998, has been named 'Steelworker of the Year' by the Toronto Area Council at the annual Union Officers and Stewards Dinner and Dance held at the Monte Cassino Hotel on February 10, 2007.

In presenting the award, Abdul Samad, a Trustee of the Toronto Area Council, described Allison as "a model of Steelworker activism" and "an example of what a rank and file woman can achieve in our union."

The decision to present the award to Allison was based on her history of union activism as well as on her accomplishments - both within and beyond Local 1998.

"She helped to create an inside organizing committee of over one hundred activists at the University of Toronto, and after a year-long campaign, won the vote, and brought thousands of new members into the Steelworkers," Abdul said. "She is now in her second term as President of Local 1998, and has taken on another historic fight - a massive job evaluation campaign - to make sure that members at her work place are paid fairly for the jobs they do. She began

lunch time meetings on a whole range of union issues such as pensions, air quality, health and safety, and strategic planning for negotiations. She also introduced the Communication Action Team (CAT) with representatives in various departments across the workplace, to have a two way communications system, and be able to mobilize members into action."

"Outside of her local, Allison has put tremendous energy into trying to organize other workers in the university sector such as the staff of Kent State University as well as other universities in Ontario, signing up members and broadening the reach of our union. She strongly believes that unions make a difference in the lives of working people. Whether it is the Day for the Elimination of Racism, Labour Day, International Women's Day, Pride Day, or the peace brunches and anti-war rallies, you can count on her to be there, with a Steelworker flag in her hand. She will speak her mind and stand up for what she believes to be right, no matter the cost."

Congratulations, Allison! You have done us proud!



ALLISON DUBARRY, PRESIDENT OF LOCAL 1998, RECEIVES HER AWARD AT THE STEELWORKERS TORONTO AREA COUNCIL STEWARDS DINNER & DANCE FEBRUARY 10, 2007.



Brian Adamczyk is Local 1998's new Staff Representative and he is happy to be working with U of T staff. Brian has 20 years experience and has serviced locals with memberships ranging from 2 to 4,000. He is also a member of various boards of directors, including Mohawk College and the United Way of Burlington, Hamilton and Wentworth.

Local 1998 SOAR Chapter launched

A GROUP OF RETIRED MEMBERS of Local 1998 were recently invited to a meeting with the Local's President, Allison Dubarry, to discuss the setting up of a chapter of Steelworkers Organization for active Retirees (SOAR). Also in attendance were SOAR International President Lynn Williams, and SOAR executive board member Dan McNeil.

Allison said that she believed that retired members of Local 1998 should be given the opportunity to stay in touch with events at the Union as well as each other. It would also make sure that in dealings between the Union and the University, the concerns of retirees would not be forgotten. Lynn Williams pointed out that SOAR also

provides an avenue for retirees to express their concerns on various issues to both the provincial and federal governments.

The proposal to start a Local 1998 chapter of SOAR received a positive response and an application for a charter for the new chapter was sent to the Steelworkers National Office.

A provisional executive committee has been formed. Executive committee members are: John Malcolm, President; Lou Hawkes, Vice-President; Linda Oliver, Recording Secretary; and Jean Glasgow, Treasurer.

We encourage all current and future retirees to join Local 1998's SOAR chapter.

▪ **John Malcolm**
President, Local 1998 SOAR Chapter

Victoria University • Job Evaluation Report

WORK FOR FAIR, EQUITABLE and sustainable job evaluation for Victoria University members continues to move forward.

Since beginning work as the Local 1998 Job Evaluation Committee representative for the Victoria University Unit in early October, I have focused on learning from the experience of the Local 1998 Staff Appointed Job Evaluation Committee and have attended Pay Equity Training at the Ontario Federation of Labour. At Victoria University, I have had the opportunity to meet with a significant number of members both in group and individual sessions.

The Joint Job Evaluation Committee at Victoria University (Vic JJEC) is composed of representatives from both Steelworkers Local 1998 and from Victoria University. I am on the Committee together with John Ankenman, Unit Chair, and Omero Landi, Local 1998 Staff

Representative. University representatives include Kate Enros, Human Resources Manager, and David Keeling, Bursar.

Initial Vic JJEC work in October and November focused primarily on informational requirements for the project. In the Vic JJEC meeting on December 7, 2006 Victoria University agreed with Local 1998 that no incumbent member's pay would be reduced as a result of job evaluation. Thus a potential barrier to full member participation in the job evaluation process has been eliminated. Other work at the December meeting focused on tasks and timelines. The University completed sending out individual job descriptions to members before the December holiday break. For members, some with many years of seniority, this was their first opportunity to review a job description. Members were contacted individually both by HR and by me to encourage follow up on any job description

questions or concerns. Copies of job descriptions were also received at Local 1998. As a result, I have been able to proceed with some preliminary analysis on job evaluation.

The Vic JJEC met again on January 19, 2007 to continue work on timelines and tasks and to begin reviewing factor language. Meeting dates have been set for February and March to continue this work. Once factor language review and joint questionnaire development have been completed, I will schedule additional information sessions for members. Interviews will follow to gather additional job information that is vital to individual job ratings.

Any member with Job Evaluation questions is encouraged to contact me at the Local 1998 office at 25 Cecil Street (campus mail), by email valerie.ferrier@usw1998.ca, or by telephone at 416-506-9090, ext. 237.

on other fronts

relevant news
for steelworkers

Two days' CEO wage Eclipses Average Annual Canadian Salary

BY THE TIME MOST CANADIANS DRAGGED THEMSELVES INTO WORK after the holidays on Tuesday January 2nd, the country's highest-paid CEOs already earned the average employee's annual salary. By the end of the Tuesday workday, the average CEO pocketed a staggering \$70,000. For minimum-wage workers, the country's top earners made their entire salary average of \$15,931 by New Year's Day.

"When you say that the average CEO made \$9 million in 2005 and the average Canadian made \$38,000, the comparison between those things is so far into the stratosphere that I think people have trouble just coming to terms with what the comparison means," Hugh Mackenzie, an economist with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA), an institute that focuses on issues of social and economic justice, told The Canadian Press.

The statistics are based on 2005 salary figures from Statistics Canada and Report on Business magazine's most recent listing of the 100 best-paid CEOs of Canadian publicly traded companies.

"How can somebody possibly be worth that amount in income and...if those people are taking that much money out of the company or out of the economy, what's left for the rest of us?"

Recent scandals have focused the public

spotlight on the huge salary and severance packages that top CEOs receive.

Former Ontario Hydro One CEO Tom Parkinson resigned last December after criticism surfaced about expense account irregularities and his \$1.6 million annual salary and bonus. Despite his resignation, Parkinson received a \$3 million severance package. Since Parkinson's wages were largely based on the earnings of CEOs in the private sector, Mackenzie says Canadians need to start looking at private-sector practices.

"I think people are now starting, certainly in the (United) States...to ask questions about how the market actually works ... like who gets onto these compensation committees and how the consultants that are brought in to do the studies, how they actually do the work they do."

"These large corporations are not one-man bands. These are very large, sophisticated operations, and it just kind of boggles the mind that anybody thinks it's reasonable to be paying out, as an annual income for the year for a chief executive officer, numbers averaging \$10 million for the top 100."



A Million Reasons to Raise the Minimum Wage

OVER ONE MILLION PEOPLE IN ONTARIO EARN LESS THAN \$10.00 an hour, working in jobs where they are underpaid and undervalued. Contrary to popular belief, most low-wage jobs are not found in small businesses - instead they are found in retail giants, fast food chains, or temp agencies. Why should large, wealthy companies be allowed to pay poverty wages?

The fact is that if minimum wage had kept up with inflation, it would be \$10.00 today!

The initial reaction of the Liberal government is to kow-tow to their business masters by saying that a minimum wage of \$10.00 would result in the loss of 60,000 jobs in Ontario. Their panic-stricken message is reminiscent of the claim that the abolition of slavery in the United States would bring about the collapse of the economy in the south. Only after the loss of York South-Weston in a by-election did the Liberals promise to raise the minimum wage to \$10.00 - by the year 2010. It is too little, too late.

The Toronto and York Region Labour Council has joined with community groups and the student movement to launch a major campaign in support of Bill 150, a bill to raise Ontario's minimum wage to \$10.00. Bill 150 was introduced at Queen's Park by Cheri DiNovo, MPP for Parkdale-High Park.



U of T Press members ratify settlement after four week strike



MEMBERS OF CUPE 3261, THE STRIKING PART-TIME warehouse workers at U of T Press, have ratified a memorandum of settlement, thus ending a four-week strike.

"We are not happy it took four weeks on the picket line to bring the employer to a reasonable offer," said CUPE 3261 president Ron Hoinkes. "However, we are pleased the strike is over and we can return to work with an offer better than the one we had been given prior to the strike."

"It is a deal that will see our members reach the \$10 per hour mark long before the recent Liberal budget that set that date at March 31, 2010!"

Members of Steelworkers Local 1998's executive committee joined picketers on the opening day of the strike at the Downsview plant and again on March 16th for a noon time rally at the Press's main offices on St. Mary Street in Toronto.

"It is never easy for workers to walk the picket line and four weeks puts a lot of stress on picketers and their families. There is a sense of relief now and a commitment from members to get back on the job and do the good work they are known for," Hoinkes concluded.

THIS SIDE
TOWARD SCREEN



PRIDE PARADE 2006
STEELPICS, 2006™

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RETIREMENT RECEPTION 06
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UTSC HOLIDAY PARTY
Leah Takata & Anne-Marie Vassiliadis
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BENEDICTO MARTINEZ
Spoke on trade union repression in Mexico
STEELPICS, 2006™

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ROCKLEE JOHNS speaks to the
Membership on PAY EQUITY
STEELPICS, 2006™



year.in review

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PRESIDENT ALLISON DUBARRY speaks
to the members at a Lunchtime meeting
STEELPICS, 2006™

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URSULA FRANKLIN speaks to the
MEMBERSHIP at the HOLIDAY PARTY
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CHATNIE DANCERS (TRINIDAD)
DAY for the ELIMINATION of RACISM
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NGOMA ENSEMBLE (GHANA)
DAY for the ELIMINATION of RACISM
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Local 1998 SOAR CHAPTER
STEELPICS, 2006™

COUSA tackles Quality of Life in the Workplace

DELEGATES TO THE CONFEDERATION of Ontario University Staff Associations and Unions conference met in February.

Andy King, Steelworkers National Director for Occupational Health and Safety gave an address entitled "*Wellness in the Workplace*" while lawyer Tracy Henry of the firm Cavalluzzo, Hayes, Shilton, McIntyre and Cornish focused her workshop on the topic, "*Accommodation for Stress, Anxiety and Depression*".

King elaborated on the idea of "*wellness*" as a term that has evolved over the years and tries to define a more holistic approach to personal well being and growth. He noted, too, that managers of large institutions too often substitute glowing rhetoric for practical improvements in the workplace such as providing daycare facilities and attending to health and safety concerns such as air quality.

Tracey Henry noted in her remarks that stress and related "work anxiety" has become a huge problem in the workplace as workloads have increased with daily competing deadlines not at all an uncommon experience. She noted that increasingly employees need time away from work (sick leave) because of stress related physical and mental ailments. She cautioned employees to beware of supervisors and managers who are prone to ask for far more detail than necessary (detailed letters from physicians, etc) when an employee takes sick leave for stress related reasons.

Delegates attending the conference in February represented University of Waterloo, Wilfred Laurier, Laurentian, Queen's, Lakehead, U. of Western Ontario, and the University of Toronto (including St. Mike's, U Vic and UTS).



COUSA PRESIDENT DAWN MUNDAY (r) presents a token of appreciation to Tracey Henry

April 12: Mary Cornish

...continued from page 1

in CUPE et al which obtained \$414 million in government funding for these restored rights. Mary was also counsel for Jane Doe, a woman attacked by a serial rapist. She won for Jane Doe the right to sue the Metropolitan Toronto police force and the recognition that the Charter applies to ensure police forces act in a non-discriminatory fashion.

Certified as a labour law specialist by the Law Society, Mary represents trade unions and employees in many sectors. In 1993, the Law Society awarded her the Law Society Medal for her outstanding contribution to the legal profession.

In addition to her human rights and labour counsel work, Mary provides strategic policy and consulting advice on these issues to organizations, agencies and governments. She has advised the Swedish government and the European Economic Community on pay equity laws and the New Zealand government on pay and employment equity standards and implementation.

Mary is an Adjunct Professor at Osgoode Hall Law School and has written and spoken extensively in many areas including national and international labour and human rights law, pay and employment equity, access to justice and human rights enforcement. Mary is the Chair of the Canadian Bar Association's National International Law Section.

Arbitration brings benchmark process to completion

...continued from page 1

Proposed timelines rejected by University

With the benchmark process completed, the Union brought forward a list of essential tasks: the establishment of a timeline to ensure completion of the project, agreement upon an ongoing means of dispute resolution, the alignment of the University and the Union's questionnaires and information gathering tools and the determination of job classes.

When the Union proposed an achievable schedule for completion of the site visits, interviews and rating of jobs, one predicated upon the demonstrated pace and expertise of the Local's committee members, the University responded by insisting that the grouping of positions into job classes (jobs with similar duties, qualifications, recruiting procedures and compensation schedules) should be the first order of business.

In turn, the Union argued that this was premature; two years of site visits and interviews had determined that many job descriptions are outdated and/or corrupt, and that the delineation of job classes must be based upon valid job descriptions that detail the work our members actually do. President Allison Dubarry was adamant that the Local will not permit the casting of positions into job classes without an in depth and up to date assessment of each member's job content. To compromise would be a profound betrayal of our members' interests.

Dispute resolution established

The parties have agreed to regular monthly mediation sessions to assist the meeting of milestones and agreement on a variety of issues.

Joint questionnaire tested

Approximately half of our members have been interviewed by the Union's Job Evaluation Committee and detailed information about their duties and responsibilities collected through site visits and questionnaires. This time consuming effort is crucial to understanding the work that our members do.

It also has resulted in a critical mass of information. Hence, the Union agreed to the University's proposal to use an electronic version of the questionnaire that will encourage broader and quicker gathering of outstanding data.

During March, approximately fifty five members and their managers participated in the test run of a new electronic version of the questionnaire.

University attempts to restrict union access to members

Union and University members worked productively to adapt the Union's Job Evaluation questionnaire to an electronic format that Union representatives believed did not violate the integrity of the original instrument.

Cooperation evaporated as the University abruptly announced that the interview should play a minimal role in the information gathering process. The University averred that a member might "request" a site visit.

This effectively would signal to management which employees seek Union support, and was opposed by the Union as threatening to the membership. An environment of intimidation exists still in many University of Toronto departments and offices; our bargaining unit is a young one which is in the process of securing its role, step by step.

The Union's position is that the interview and site visit are critical to documenting not only the duties our members undertake, but also the conditions under which they perform them. It has been our experience that incumbents often

fail to record aspects of their jobs that they believe to be readily apparent or routine, when, in fact, that information is crucial to the evaluation of the position.

Therefore, we insist that that all members should be encouraged to meet with Union representation as a matter of course, rather than as an exception, and that these site visits be accommodated by all managers with appropriate release from daily duties.

When the electronic questionnaire is circulated to the full membership, it will be in your interest to accept the invitation of your local's Job Evaluation Committee member to participate in an interview and site visit. He or she not only will answer any questions you may have about the questionnaire, but also will help you to see your duties and responsibilities freshly and objectively.

Pay equity remains unresolved

The University has continued its refusal to provide evidence that the Pay Equity Plan for the University of Toronto that was posted in 1991 was maintained until the date of the Union's certification in 1998. The generation of a new plan that recognizes the Local as the bargaining agent has not yet been proposed by the University.

The Pay Equity Commission has assigned a new review officer to our case and we recently met with her.

Meanwhile, committee members attended the OFL's seminar, "*Pay Equity Maintenance: Union Obligations and Responsibilities*" and two full days of training offered by the Commission's Education Department.

Finally, to stimulate response from the Commission and to serve notice that the Union expects the University to meet its obligation to establish and maintain a gender neutral system of job classification and compensation, the Union filed thirty individual cases with the Pay Equity Commission in January 2007.

■ *Job Evaluation Committee*

South African Unionists visit Local 1998, share struggle, experience

SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE UNIONISTS, LEONARD Gentle and Mthetho Xali, visited with Steelworkers Local 1998 in January 2007.

Gentle is the acting director of the International Labour Research and Information Group (ILRIG) while Mthetho Xali is a researcher and education officer for the organization. ILRIG is engaged in a wide range of international development education work including projects such as one studying emerging health problems particular to women mine workers in South Africa (a research project that is, in part, sponsored by the Steelworker's Humanity Fund). ILRIG also organizes international conferences on various topics related to globalization and its impact on working people worldwide.

As part of his work as an education officer, Mthetho Xali has been following new ways and means of organizing including community as well as union organizing. To that end, he has been interacting with employees at the University of Cape Town. Founded in 1829 as the South African College (a high school for boys), UCT is South Africa's oldest university.

We interviewed Mthetho while he was visiting U of T with a view toward trying to understand the similarities and differences in the problems and challenges that face employees working in the post-secondary education sector in our two countries.



MTHETHO XALI, ILRIG

Steeldrum: Are workers at the University of Cape Town members of a union?

Xali: Yes. In fact, there are several unions at the University of Cape Town. One of the larger unions was the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union until outsourcing by the university led to a loss of jobs and a diminishing of the union's strength. This led workers to organize what is today called the University of Cape Town Workers' Forum (UCTWF) which emerged as a response to the outsourcing and was an attempt to unite all of the employees - both union and non-union - at the University of Cape Town.



LEONARD GENTLE, ILRIG

Steeldrum: Was this effort successful?

Xali: It has been successful in that for the first time UCTWF has created a meeting place for workers in outsourced services to share their problems and discuss strategies for challenging the employer. The Forum acts as a platform for all workers to share the problems that they face with the different companies that employ them and to begin discussing solutions. It's only through some kind of united strategy that these workers will be able find solutions which include organizing and unionizing those workers that do not currently have any representation.

Steeldrum: How often does the UCTWF meet?

Xali: Meetings are generally held once a week during the lunch hour and often are the basis for organizing wider events such as workshops, public meetings to address particular topics and, in some cases, to organize strike support committees for workers in other workplaces.

Steeldrum: What are the issues of most importance to our sisters and brothers who work for the University of Cape Town.

Xali: I would say a very basic living wage is a first step. We are supporting the demand for R3,500 (C\$573.00) per month plus a guaranteed bonus of not less than R3,500pm with much stronger job security. The university currently has too many of the jobs placed in permanent casual status with no possibility of becoming secure jobs (continuing appointments as we refer to them at the U of T - Ed.). We are also asking for decent, safe and healthy working conditions. This includes all the necessary protective clothing, training and safety facilities necessary to carry on work in laboratories and other training facilities. And finally, we are demanding that everyone who works at UCT be directly employed by UCT, not outside companies and sub-contractors who are exploiting the workers with a disgusting wage level and no benefits.

Steeldrum: Has the UCTWF been able to make any progress on these issues?

Xali: The UCTWF finally forced the UCT management in 2005 to consider a code of conduct for outsourced service providers aimed at improving the working conditions of outsourced workers. Companies will be required to follow the terms of the code if they obtain or retain contracts with UCT. The code of conduct according to Vice-Chancellor Njabulo Ndebele addresses the following issues: freedom of association in order to form trade unions; the improvement of basic working conditions including health and safety issues, staff and development training; a minimum wage that is at least equal to the Supplemented Living Level (SLL) for the Western Cape. This is an independently determined minimum wage and this will be implemented between 2006 and 2008. Other gains include regulating working hours, night shifts, and leave conditions including maternity leave.

Steeldrum: Our thanks to Mthetho Xali for this interview.

Xali: And thanks to you as well. I hope someday that representatives of Steelworkers Local 1998 might be able to meet with their counterparts at University of Cape Town. Your experiences here in a unionized work environment are a source of great inspiration to my colleagues at UCT.

■ Robin Breon, Vice-President

Gerry LeBlanc Speaks Out about Injuries in the Workplace: PART I



GERRY LEBLANC, PROGRAM COORDINATOR, Program Coordinator for the Steelworkers Injured Workers Program (IWP) for the Toronto Area Council, spoke at a meeting of the Employment Section of the ADR Institute of Ontario on February 7.

ADR Ontario is an organization whose members work as mediators and arbitrators throughout the province of Ontario. Gerry, along with Merv King, handles all of the WSIB claims for USW members injured in the workplace. In addition to handling and managing all of our workers compensation claims, an important component of his job is worker education and community outreach.

Gerry began his presentation to the Institute with a historical review of the role of trade unions in workplace health and safety, particularly in regards to injured workers. The United Steelworkers began organizing in North American steel mills. The mills were dangerous, and worker injuries and deaths were common. Resistance to early attempts to organize them was frequently violent, with strikes for improvements in wages and working conditions ending in armed conflict. In an 1892 strike 300 Pinkerton watchmen marched against striking steelworkers resulting in the death of seven workers and three Pinkerton men. By 1936, 125,000 steelworkers were organized into a cohesive union with headquarters in Pittsburgh, PA. Through subsequent organizing drives, mergers and amalgamations, the United Steelworkers began to represent workers in other sectors of the economy. By the later part of the 20th century, the union had expanded its membership into the service sector with thousands of members represented in diverse workplaces from the original steel mills to university administrative staff, such as our membership here at Local 1998.

With the changes in membership, the USW saw a corresponding change in the nature of workplace injuries. Today, Gerry not only deals with workers injured by heavy equipment in

some of our sister locals at factories and construction sites, he also looks after workers injured by years of repetitive strain caused by keyboarding or laboratory equipment.

Improvements to worker safety have been gained through collective bargaining, and through legislation. Managers are finally beginning to realize that safe workplaces are also productive workplaces with lower costs. Gerry linked the recognition of the mutual worker/management interest in safety to the development of mandatory Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSC). The role of committee members on the JHSCs is mandated by the Ontario Health and Safety Act (OHSA). These committees are required to permit managers and workers to cooperate in maintaining safe workplaces. Local 1998 members serve on the committees and they fill an important role in making sure that the University maintains a safe workplace.

Gerry reminded the audience that despite the recognition of mutual interests, and the legal obligations placed on employers, the reality does not always correspond to the ideal. Laws only provide baseline, or minimum standards. In unionized workplaces further improvements to safety are negotiated through collective bargaining, but workplace safety expectations are not always matched by safe workplaces. For a workplace to be truly safe there needs to be a commitment from all parties to what he termed, "a culture of safety and awareness". The Joint Health and Safety Committees form

the keystone of health and safety practices in the workplace. In order to function effectively there must be a real commitment from employers to the letter and spirit of equitable representation between workers and managers serving on the committees. Too often, the power imbalance that exists in other aspect of the employer/employee relationship is carried into the JHSC. When this happens, safety (and long-term profitability) is compromised by cost cutting and cost avoidance. The reality that cost cutting and avoidance actually leads only to cost deferment is often not recognized until the costs can no longer be deferred, i.e. workers have already been injured. Our worker members of the JHSCs help insure that this does not become a problem at the University of Toronto.

■ **Allan Revich**
Co-Chair, Grievance Committee

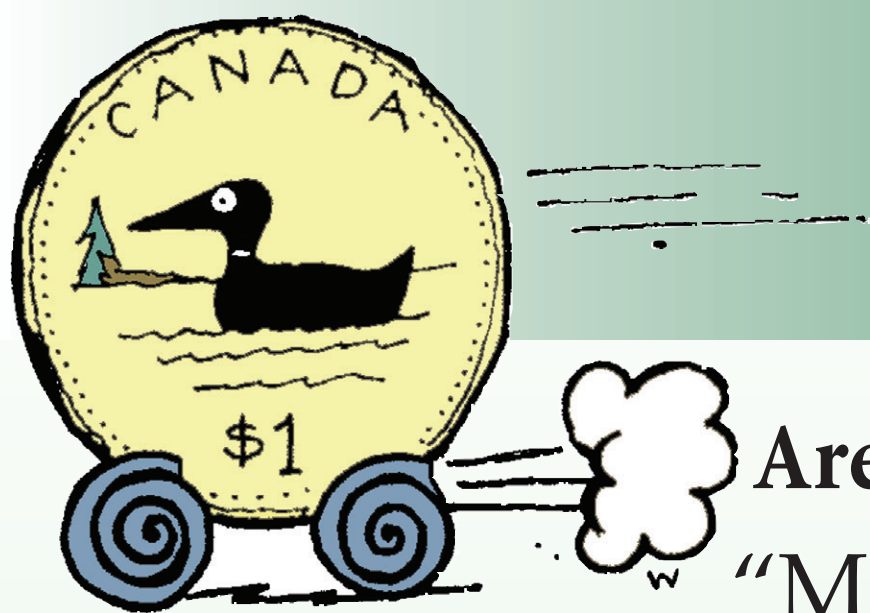
PART II will appear in the next issue of *Steeldrum*



LOCAL 1998 MEMBERS joined thousands to celebrate IWD on March 10, 2007. The day began with the Mary Spratt breakfast at Steelworkers Hall on Cecil Street (cooked and served by the men!) followed by a rally at OISE/UT. Participants then took part in a march

through the downtown core and ended with the IWD Fair at Ryerson.

Among those taking part in the rally and march were Parkdale-High Park MP, Peggy Nash (r) and Parkdale-High Park MPP, Cheri DiNovo (l) who spoke on the need to raise the minimum wage to \$10.00 - NOW!



financially speaking

Are RRSPs still a good choice?

"MAY I TOP THAT UP FOR YOU?" I looked at the waiter ready to pour more coffee into my cup, thinking "that is what we were just discussing!"

However, my financial advisor and I were discussing "topping up" RRSPs (Registered Retirement Savings Plans), and the pros and cons of RRSPs in general. Some of the drawbacks that critics find with RRSPs include the following:

To experience the full benefits of an RRSP, a long-term commitment is required, yet we do not know how, or whether, RRSP regulations will change over time. Uncertainty breeds fear. It is important to regularly assess investment portfolios to ensure that investments continue to make sense. Also, developing exit strategies is as important as formulating entry plans.

Current regulations require that RRSPs mature by December 31st of the year in which the annuitant turns 71. They can be cashed in, or rolled over into RRIFs (Registered Retirement Income Funds), Annuities, or LIFs (Life Income Funds). The option(s) chosen will affect future retirement income and taxes payable.

Withdrawals are taxed fully as income. Depending on the retiree's income level, this can be a benefit or a disadvantage.

Unfortunately, we can never know for certain what lies ahead. All we can do is make the best decisions given our goals and the information at hand. Currently, RRSPs have a number of advantages as well:

Contributing to RRSPs reduces taxes payable, possibly even prompting a tax refund. This is probably the single best advantage RRSPs have for our financial health if we use the refund to invest further, or to pay down bad debt such as credit cards.

RRSP funds can be used to supplement income not only during retirement, but

whenever a person finds him/herself in a lower income tax bracket. For instance, one may withdraw funds in a year when they are in a lower marginal tax bracket, maybe due to job loss or an unpaid leave of absence. Also, in certain situations and within certain parameters, individuals may be allowed to withdraw funds from their RRSPs without paying taxes (e.g. Home Buyers' Plan, or Life-long Learning Plan).

For most individuals, retirement income is lower, often substantially lower than during their working years. RRSPs help individuals maintain their standard of living in retirement.

RRSPs are a tax-deferred investment vehicle which increases the opportunity for the investment to grow. Although we cannot escape taxes in the long-run, we can defer them for a time by investing in RRSPs. Given that they are one of the few remaining tax-friendly investments available to the average salaried person, it is definitely worth considering.

We have already touched on how taxes (or deferring taxes) can be one incentive to investing, possibly in a tax-deferred investment such as RRSPs. Inflation is another incentive for individuals to invest, because it eats away at our finances. If you kept \$75,000 tucked away in a shoe box under your bed for twenty-five years, a mere 2% annual rate of inflation over that period would deplete the value of that money by nearly \$30,000, which is almost a 40% reduction overall! While there are no guarantees in life, hiding our money under the bed will not help us. If we can make our money work for us, it can greatly improve our financial situation.

Compounding interest helps our investments grow more. How much of a difference does

compounding make? Let us look at an example where an investment of \$250 per month over the course of 25 years grows at an 8% annual rate of return. The chart provided shows that after 25 years:

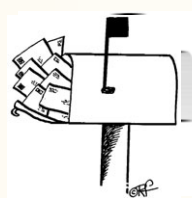
a) The total amount invested would be \$75,000;

b) If the investment earns simple interest only, meaning that interest is only earned on the amount invested, but not on the accumulated interest, the total amount of the investment after 25 years would be approximately \$150,250. Not a bad sum!

c) However, if the investment is allowed to compound, meaning that interest is earned on accumulated interest as well as on the principal invested, the effects are incredibly more pronounced. The total investment would grow to approximately \$237,000! This is more than three times the original amount invested, all thanks to the benefit of compounding interest.

Our decision to top-up our RRSPs, or even to invest in them, will depend on our current needs and our forecast for our future prospects. We should not shy away from RRSPs simply because we are afraid of what future governments may do. The most important point is to have a financial plan, and investing is an important part of financial planning.

■ **Lidia Mestnik, Admissions & Awards**



your letters

Part-time college workers have no rights

OPSEU is working hard to right a long-standing wrong in Ontario. We need your help.

Our college system functions with large numbers of part-time faculty and support staff. These workers are denied the right to unionize, receive benefits, draw pensions, or collectively bargain their working conditions in Ontario colleges. That's 17,000 workers who are denied their basic rights, and are subject to exploitation and discrimination, low wages, and few benefits compared to their full-time colleagues.

This is unacceptable for the workers of Ontario, for the students, and for the taxpayers.

The International Labour Organization agrees. On November 8, the Geneva-Based ILO ruled there was no reason why the basic principles on the rights of association and collective bargaining should not apply to these workers. They also said the Ontario government should 'rapidly' make the legislative changes to allow these workers to organize.

Students are being shortchanged. Part-time teachers are often unavailable: they have no office space, they have another job. This puts more stress on the full-time academic and support staff.

Everyone knows that to compete, to be productive, we need a well-trained, well-educated workforce. Educating and training people on the cheap won't help us compete in the global economy. But Ontario's college system ranks 10th out of 10 in provincial funding on a per student basis. We are dead last.

But part-timers are working to end this abuse. At a founding meeting Nov. 17 -19, workers from

all 24 colleges formed the Organization of Part-time and Sessional Employees of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (OPSECAAT). With OPSEU's help, OPSECAAT will be pressing Premier McGuinty to do the right thing and implement the ILO ruling.

Please contact Premier McGuinty and Ministers Bentley and Peters via the **collegeworkers.org** website. Tell them you believe in fairness for college part-timers. Tell them the government must change the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act now to allow part-time college workers to join a union and bargain a contract. Working together, we can end this injustice and win a voice in the workplace for these workers. We can end the legalized discrimination against these workers. It's only fair.

In solidarity,

Leah Casselman, President, OPSEU

Cuts Target Women

AT A RECENT LOCAL 1998 WOMEN OF STEEL event, Judy Rebick, former president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), said that for the first time Canadians are dealing with a government which is actually opposed to equality for women.



Dozens of programs have been cut or eliminated, but two key ones - the Status of Women and the Court Challenges Program - indicate that Stephen Harper is clearly targeting women's equality.

The Status of Women Program has played an important role since its creation in 1976, by funding women's organizations and conducting gender-based analyses of federal policies and programs. Its mission was to promote gender equality and originally the program was a partner in the Canadian women's movement.

In late September 2006, the government announced a \$5 million cut over two years to Status of Women's budget. This represents a 38.5% cut to the department's small budget. In late November, Heritage Minister Bev Oda announced the closure of Status of Women's regional offices along with staff layoffs. This will add additional hurdles to women's groups seeking funding, particularly small organizations which rely on information and support from regional staff. Such connections are critical to gaining funding.

More worrying, though, than the funding cut, is the change in the funding guidelines for Status of Women. The Women's Program is a small grant program which has funded women's groups for over 30 years. The Women's Program will no longer fund organizations involved in any research, advocacy or lobbying activities. The "promotion of gender equality" has been dropped from the mandate of the Women's Program and it will only fund groups that promote women's "participation" in the social, economic and cultural life of their community.

In the same round of cuts, the Harper government eliminated the Court Challenges Program. This program has played a key role in assisting members of language minorities, disabled Canadians, women and other disadvantaged groups to challenge laws they considered to be discriminatory under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Several important decisions based on challenges funded by this program have been handed down over the years, including supporting bans on the publication of the names of victims of sexual assault in the media and determining that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is prohibited by the Charter.

Former Treasury Board President John Baird said that, "I just don't think it makes sense for the government to subsidize lawyers to challenge government's laws in court."

This is misleading. People must have an opportunity to challenge laws which they consider to be discriminatory, and this is an expensive undertaking. Without the Court Challenges Program, only those who can pay their way will be able to seek the protection of the Charter. Equality rights will have no meaning if people cannot afford to access them.

This seems like a "gender neutral" cut, but it will have a disproportionate effect on women and their ability to challenge discriminatory laws. It also relates directly to Stephen Harper's social conservative agenda. In the past, former Justice Minister, Vic Toews has accused "radical judges" of making social

policy using the Charter. Dismantling the Court Challenges Program appears to be a direct attack against so-called "judicial activism."

Canadian women, trade unions and other progressive forces have shown again and again that they will stand up and fight when confronted with right-wing governments intent on rolling back the clock and taking away hard-earned rights. Perhaps a positive outcome of the Harper government and its social conservative agenda will be a re-energized Canadian women's movement.

Already, organizations around the country are starting to mobilize. A new website, www.statusreport.ca, is full of up-to-date information on the cuts and changes to Status of Women and has information on how to take action. The Coalition to Save Court Challenges, a broad coalition of concerned organizations and individuals, is also campaigning and their efforts have been gaining momentum. A local group consisting of law students, legal aid clinics and social justice organizations demonstrated when Finance Minister Jim Flaherty spoke recently at the National Club. An ad hoc coalition of national and regional women's organizations is also organizing a month-long campaign challenging the federal government to improve its record on women's equality and human rights.

For more information please see:

www.fafia-afai.org/en;
www.criaw-icref.ca/indexFrame_e.htm
www.savecourtchallenges.ca

■ **Colleen Burke**
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