

STEELDRUM



news for members of Steelworkers Local 1998

november 2003, volume 3, no 4

www.uswa1998.ca

De-mystifying pensions

An interview with Sheila Block

Pensions can be very complicated. As new administrative employees of the University of Toronto, we attend an orientation to acquaint us with the benefits available, one of which is the University of Toronto's pension plan. At this time we are expected to make decisions that will define our future, even beyond our working years. So the question must be asked "Do we really know as much as we feel we should about this plan designed to provide for us and our loved ones into retirement?" The answer is "NO" judging by the recent turnout for Sheila Block's lunchtime presentations on "De-mystifying Pensions". Not only were the sessions well-attended but, with good questions, some very interesting discussion was generated.

Sheila is an economist and a researcher in the Research Department of the Canadian National Office of Steelworkers. She provides bargaining

support to locals of the USWA across the country and deals with other research issues. She has worked for the Steelworkers Union for the past eight and a half years and, coincidentally, is also

an alumna of the University of Toronto, having obtained her Master of Arts here.

Recently we got together with her to discuss some specific items regarding *continued on page 4*



Sheila's advice:
start early, bargain for a better pension with your employer, and work politically to maintain the public system.

Focus on the municipal elections: David Miller

Extraordinary vision, extraordinary leadership

Mayoral candidate David Miller took time off from his busy schedule to speak to USWA Local 1998's general meeting on October 14th, 2003.

Miller was introduced by Allison Dubarry, President of Local 1998. Speaking to a crowd of about 200 Local 1998 members, Miller touched on the three main issues of his platform: clean government, a clean waterfront, and clean air and streets.

As one of the councillors who led the fight for the MFP scandal inquiry, Miller reiterated that

clean government is one of his priorities. Saying that lobbyists and backroom dealers have had too much power and influence at City Hall, Miller pledged to bring integrity back to City Council. To this end, he will ensure decisions are made openly in City Council, appoint an independent ethics commissioner, and ban lobbying of civil servants on procurement issues.

Of all the major mayoral candidates, Miller is the only one to oppose the fixed link to the Toronto Island Airport as well as the expansion of the Island Airport. Arguing that it makes no fiscal sense to expand an already costly and wasteful airport, Miller said that "the waterfront should be for people, not planes".

Saying that the air in Toronto is increasingly

poisoned by smog and air pollution, Miller pledged to improve public transit in Toronto. He compared the current price of a Metropass at \$98.75 a month in Toronto to the \$54.00 a month cost in Montréal. Miller pledged to reduce the cost of a Metropass by 2005 by lobbying for increased funding from the senior levels of government.

As we go to press, David Miller is now leading in the most recent polls. It is clear his platform for a clean and prosperous city is winning over the people of Toronto. David Miller is truly a candidate with extraordinary vision and extraordinary leadership.

After his speech, David Miller sat down with members of the *Steeldrum* Newsletter Committee for an interview. Below is an excerpt of that interview.

SD: Why do you want to run for mayor?

DM: I am running for mayor because I believe that together, we can build a city that is the best it can be. I have been a city councillor for

continued on page 5

His platform for a clean and prosperous city is winning over the people of Toronto..



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index

- 2 Local 1998 @a glance
- 3 President's message;
Layoffs: Do's & Don'ts
- 4 De-mystifying pensions;
Union women
- 5 Focus on the election:
Miller's vision
- 6 Crisis in steel industry;
Your job description
- 7 Reporting accidents;
District 6 Conference
- 8 UTS reorganization
undemocratic, unfair

who we are



index STEELDRUM directory

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The Steeldrum is published by USWA Local 1998 (UofT). The Newsletter is printed by Hamilton Web Printing. All inquiries and submissions are encouraged. Submissions by email are preferred. Non-email submissions should be on a 3.5" disk or CD accompanied by a hard copy.

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Job Evaluation Committee Report

The Job Evaluation Committee (JEC) has been expanded to include four new full time positions.

As part of the overall Needs Assessment, the JEC submitted a request to the Executive to add four full-time equivalents (FTEs) to support the work of the Committee in July 2003. The Needs Assessment was approved at the membership meeting held on September 15, 2003.

Subsequently, a call was sent out to the membership on September 17 to invite applications for these positions.

We are pleased to announce that the following will be joining the Job Evaluation Committee effective January 2004: Mary Bird, *Health Services*; Marisa Freire, *OISE/UT*; Shelley Glazer, *Counselling & Learning Skills*; Kristina Smith, *Department of Speech Pathology*.

Ana Sapp, Robin Breon & P. C. Choo
Principals, Job Evaluation Committee

Victoria University Report

The Union has received the University's response to the third step grievance meeting we attended on behalf of one of our members who was terminated this summer while on long term disability. Unfortunately, the University denied the grievance. The Local's Executive has since approved going to arbitration with this grievance and notification to this effect has been filed with the University.

Negative responses were also received from the University for the third step meetings for grievances VC 2003-9 and VC 2003-10, both of which were filed on behalf of members who were unjustly denied sick leave benefits. We filed for arbitration for each case after approval from the Local's Grievance Committee and Executive. Subsequently, we included these two grievances in our mediation proposal to the University. Altogether we proposed mediation for five grievances (VC 2003-4, VC 2003-5, VC 2003-6, VC 2003-9 and VC 2003-10). Management has recently agreed to our proposal and arrangements are currently being made to secure a mediator. If mediation fails for any of the five grievances, they will be furthered to arbitration.

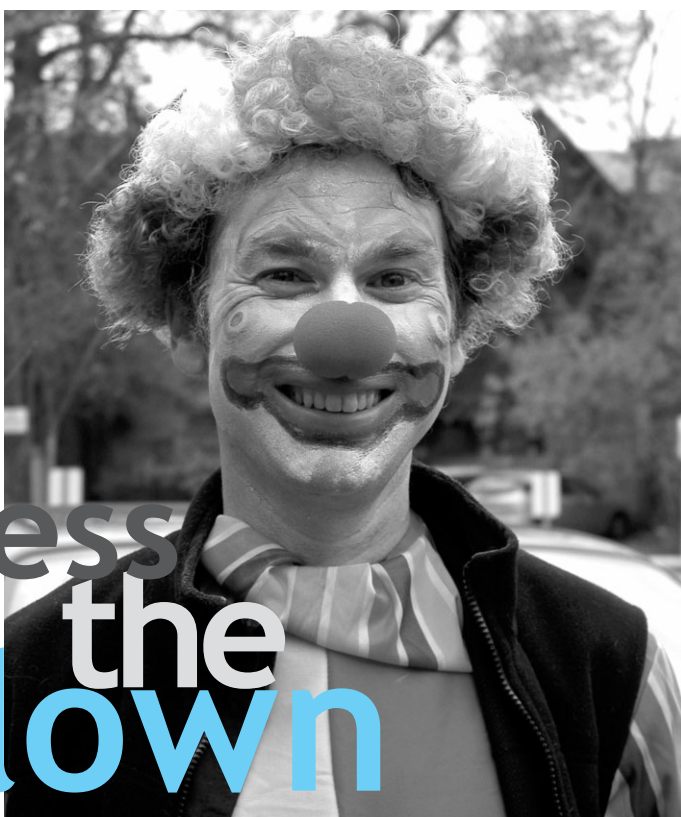
In September, the Union and the President of the UofT Student Administration Council (SAC) met with the University in an attempt to make discounted TTC Metropasses available to our members at Victoria. We proposed an agreement whereby the University would pay an administration fee to SAC for selling the discounted Metropasses. The arrangement proposed was the same as was accepted by the UofT administration: based on the assumption that twenty percent of the membership would buy a monthly Metropass, the University would pay two dollars per person for twenty percent of the membership. With a total of one hundred and twenty Victoria Steelworkers, the cost to the management would be forty-eight dollars per month for a trial period of four months. At the end of the trial period the program would be evaluated and a decision made to continue it unchanged, adjust it or cancel it. After considering the proposal at length, the University declined to participate. Their decision will be discussed at the Local's November Executive meeting.

John Ankenman, Unit Chairperson Victoria University

Hart House Theatre Night: *Angelique*

Due to the positive response for tickets to the play *Angelique*, by Montreal playwright Lorena Gale, we have booked an extra 20 seats for members who want to purchase tickets at the discounted rate of \$12 for the Friday, November 14th performance. Curtain is at 8pm and tickets should be purchased directly from the Hart House box office prior to the performance. Members should present their UofT Staff photo ID when purchasing tickets and identify themselves as members of Local 1998 Hart House Theatre night. The box office number is 416.978.8668.

guess
the
clown



... and win a Steelworker T-shirt!

Send your guess to kim.walker@uswa1998.ca

The winner will be contacted via email.

general
membership
meetings

November 12th @5:15pm & December 11th @3:30pm

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The past while has been quite lively for Local 1998. We've held a number of lunchtime meetings that were extremely successful and the first ad in our media campaign against job cuts was placed in Toronto newspapers. As well, a campaign was recently launched to raise public awareness about the proposed separation of the University of Toronto Schools (UTS) from UofT which puts a number of our members in a more vulnerable situation. In October stewards and unit chairs also received supplementary training in representing members.

Meetings for Members

Three sessions on "De-mystifying Pensions" were held for the staff-appointed unit in October and were well attended. Sheila Block and Jorge Garcia-Orgales from the Steelworkers National Office explained how our pension plan works and spoke of the importance of ensuring that the federal pension plans (Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security) remain viable programs as both of these represent an important source of income for retirees. They also emphasized how important it is for members who are under 35 to enroll in the pension plan now. This issue of the newsletter contains an interview with Sheila on understanding pensions. We have put the PowerPoint presentation of the pension seminar up on the website. In early November a session for members of Victoria University will be held and we will be setting one up for members at St. Michael's College.



Local 1998 members attend a lunch hour "De-mystifying Pensions" seminar by Sheila Block

Four lunchtime unit meetings were held in the last month as well, and more unit chairs are scheduling meetings for their areas. A regular schedule will soon be established as many members can only attend union meetings at lunchtime.

University of Toronto Schools (UTS)

UTS is one of the top high schools in Canada and has the distinction of having more Nobel Laureates among its alumni than any other high school in Toronto. In fact, UTS has more Nobel Laureates than even UofT. UTS's connection to UofT is one of the aspects of the school that makes it unique amongst high schools in Toronto. However, the future of UTS in the UofT community is now at risk.

Last fall the school began a process of examining its future and looked at whether to continue as a part of UofT or separate into a new entity as an ancillary corporation. In September the board made a recommendation that UTS separate from UofT.

At a Town Hall meeting in September held to discuss the proposal, it was clear from the comments that many alumni, students and parents did not support the ancillary corporation model. Unfortunately, the board has decided not to allow members of the UTS community to vote on the future of the school. The interim Board has decided it will be the only one in the UTS community to decide on the future of the school. Consultation is not a substitute for a democratic process to determine future directions.

The proposal is scheduled to go to Governing Council in November and it will appoint future board members and there will be no mechanism for members of UTS to elect representatives to the board and make them accountable.

Our local is concerned about what's occurring at UTS as a number of our members work there. If UTS becomes a separate entity from UofT, the members will cease to be members of the Staff-appointed bargaining unit and will no longer be employees of the University of Toronto. While UTS has said that it will recognize the bargaining rights for these members, it's quite different negotiating for a small number of members than negotiating for 3,100 members. Schemes such as this weaken and fragment our bargaining unit

and affect our ability to bargain improvements for all our members. It could be the thin edge of the wedge for other separations of this nature.

The union proposed that UTS enter into a services agreement with UofT for the work performed by our members. A services agreement would mean that our members would remain UofT employees. In fact, UTS's Director of Administration and Finance encouraged the adoption of a services agreement as the option that would work best for UTS. Unfortunately, the Board rejected this proposal.

Our campaign around this issue will be continuing and we will continue to fight to preserve our members' rights at UTS.

Media Campaign

In September our local, along with a number of CUPE locals on campus placed ads in *NOW Magazine*, *Eye* and *The Varsity* that addressed the issue of government under-funding for post-secondary education. Under-funding of universities has resulted in tuition increases and cuts to service which has had a direct impact on our members. We will be meeting with the other unions on campus in the next few weeks to discuss the next phase of the media campaign on budget cuts.

Training

A number of new stewards recently took the Basic Stewards course and in mid-October Stewards, unit chairs and Executive members took a Facing Management course that was set up for our local through the Steelworkers Education Department. This course was extremely useful in equipping members with the best tools to represent fellow members. We are working on developing a proposal for more "You and Your Union" courses for members. This course explains how the union works and how it works for you.

Allison Dubarry, President

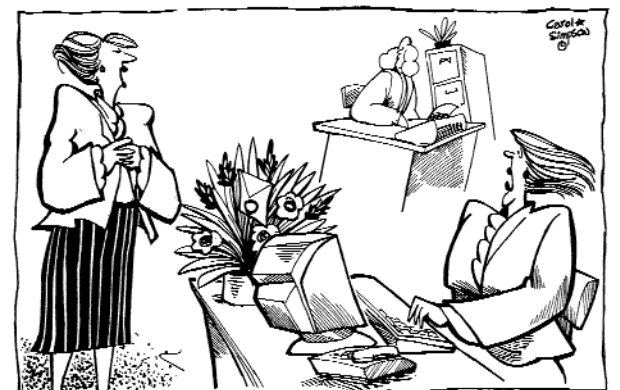
Layoff survivors' Do's and Don'ts

This article is aimed at those of us who have survived the recent round of layoffs at UofT.

After such a nasty round there is a tendency among those remaining to feel grateful that their jobs were not lost. Beware of these feelings - the University may use these feelings against you! Often during reorganization a number of positions are compressed into the remaining position(s), resulting in more duties to be completed in the same amount of time. Do not let your feelings of relief and gratitude tempt you into working late or during your lunch hour. You will be doing yourself the greatest disservice.

First, you will be denying yourself the extra pay that you fully deserve. University of Toronto full-time staff are paid to work 36.25 hours per week (33.75 hours during July and August). According to our Collective

Agreement, "employees who perform work in excess of 36.25 hours in a work week will be paid at the rate of time and one-half the employee's regular rate of pay for authorized hours worked beyond 36.25". Your department may well have anticipated your generosity and banked on the fact that you would probably be willing to work unpaid overtime. Do not give away your



"As Employee of the Month, I expect you to set an example for the rest of your work team... now go lay yourself off."

Do not give away your

continued on page 5

De-mystifying your pension

continued from page 1

the University of Toronto's pension plan for Local 1998 members.

One such item is that we share the same pension plan with faculty. There had been talk in the past that the UofT Faculty Association was planning to separate or "hive off" from the existing pension plan and we asked what might be the negative consequences to our members. Sheila responded that this had not happened in the last round of bargaining and she did not think it was about to happen now.

As for concerns regarding whether the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Old Age Security (OAS) are sustainable, the end result of reviews and the proposed legislative changes in the mid 1990s was that very few substantial changes were made to the CPP and the integrity of the OAS was maintained. What brought about questioning in the first place was the ideology of some and the profit concerns of the financial industry; in essence a political rather than an actuarial concern. Public pension benefits are an essential part of retirement incomes and without them our pension from the univer-

sity would have to double. Sheila's advice to members is twofold: bargain for a better pension with your employer and work politically to maintain the public system.

Sheila believes our plan has many positive features. She pointed out that benefits received upon retirement are based on the salary you earned during your 36 highest paid months; every time your salary increases, your pension increases; your pension is indexed to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) so that during retirement your pension will continue to increase; and the plan has excellent early retirement provisions as well as survivor, termination and death benefits. Although all pension plans suffered as a result of the stock market performance of the last few years, she believes our plan is in a sound financial position.

However, there are some improvements she would like to see in our pension plan, even though progress was made in the last set of bargaining. The objectives last time round in terms of our pension plan were twofold. Firstly, there was the introduction

of a bridge benefit. This allows us to afford to retire early as a bridge benefit replaces our OAS and CPP payments until we reach age 65. Secondly, the union wanted to increase the benefit rate to 2 per cent on all earnings (not just 1.5 per cent on our Highest Average Salary/Wages (HAS/W) to the CPP maximum and then 2 per cent of HAS/W over our average CPP maximum salary). This change would benefit all members but particularly lower paid members by providing a more generous pension upon retirement. Progress was made on both these objectives. The goal in the next set of bargaining is to make these features a permanent part of our basic pension plan.

Sheila would like our pension participation to begin from our date of hire and not allow participation to be voluntary until age 35. During the lunchtime presentations, many members of Local 1998 talked about how they wished they had become members of the plan when they had been hired. It would have allowed them to retire earlier with a larger pension.

Furthermore, if you were to leave the university prior to retire-



Sheila Block

ment, you would be entitled to receive all your contributions with interest. In certain circumstances you might receive the whole value of your pension, both your own and the university's contributions as well as interest accrued.

Sooner or later we all retire. As with everything in life, it pays to be prepared. Sheila's slides from her presentations have been posted on the Local 1998's website www.uswa1998.ca. We would urge you to take the time to visit the site, especially if you have not been to a presentation. After all, what is at stake here is your future.

Glenda Gillis & Jenny Fan
Admissions & Awards

LABOUR TORONTO & YORK REGION COUNCIL List of Endorsed Candidates

Etobicoke North
Ward 1 - Ikram Freed (Councillor)
Wards 1 & 2 - Stan Nemiroff (Trustee)

Etobicoke Centre
Wards 3 & 4 - Kemp Rickett (Trustee)

Etobicoke Lakeshore
Ward 6 - Jerry Smith (Councillor)
Wards 5 & 6 - Bruce Davis (Trustee)

York West
Ward 8 - Anthony Perruzza (Councillor)
Wards 7 & 8 - Stephnie Payne (Trustee)

York Centre
Ward 9 - Maria Augimeri (Councillor)

York South Weston
Ward 11 & 12 - Elizabeth Hill (Trustee)*

Parkdale/High Park
Ward 13 - Stan Kumorek (Councillor)
Ward 14 - David Smaller (Councillor)
Wards 13 & 14 - Irene Atkinson (Trustee)*

Eglinton Lawrence
Ward 15 - Howard Moscoe (Councillor)
Ward 16 - Anne Johnston (Councillor)
Wards 15 & 16 - Howard Goodman (Trustee)

Davenport
Ward 17 - Alejandra Bravo (Councillor)
Ward 18 - Adam Giambone (Councillor)
Wards 17 & 18 - Maria Rodrigues (Trustee)

Trinity Spadina
Ward 19 - Joe Pantalone (Councillor)
Ward 20 - Olivia Chow (Councillor)
Wards 19 & 20 - Chris Bolton (Trustee)

St. Paul's
Ward 21 - Joe Mihevc (Councillor)
Ward 22 - Michael Walker (Councillor)
Wards 21 & 22 - Josh Matlow (Trustee)*

Willowdale
Wards 23 & 24 - Eddie Zuniga (Trustee)

Don Valley West
Wards 25 & 26 - Peter Dotsikas (Trustee)

Toronto Centre Rosedale
Ward 27 - Kyle Rae (Councillor)
Ward 28 - Pam McConnell (Councillor)
Wards 27 & 28 - Sheila Ward (Trustee)*

Toronto Danforth
Ward 29 - John Papadakis (Councillor)
Ward 30 - Paula Fletcher (Councillor)
Wards 29 & 30 - Rick Telfer (Trustee)

Beaches East York

Mother Teresa with brass knuckles:

Forging Feminism in USWA

Union Women: Forging Feminism in the United Steelworkers of America
By Mary Margaret Fonow
University of Minnesota Press,
Minneapolis, Mn. 2003, 250 pp.

Toward the end of her book, *Union Women*, Mary Margaret Fonow uses the phrase 'Mother Teresa with Brass Knuckles' to describe the dual aspects of social concern and militancy among women unionists. What an ear-catching phrase!

That's my experience of union women. The first time a woman comes to a meeting she might stay quiet and invisible. But before long she's asking questions, making her voice heard; soon the humour surfaces and she's in the thick of the action.

Not so long ago, women's voices were muted in the union. Fonow's study describes the exciting process of women taking their

place. I was pleased to see our own local's entry into the labour field documented. We are "the largest unit in the

past 40 years in Canada" to have signed up and we are mostly women. But we are not the first. I was surprised to read that the Steelworkers mounted another important organizing drive 60 years ago. Eileen Tallman recruited the Bren Gun Girls who worked at the John Inglis plant in W.W. II. The book doesn't state how many of the 14,000 Inglis workers were women but if even one third were, they would have outnumbered even our large local. And yet few of us have heard about these union girls, possibly our mothers and grandmothers, who put down the guns and put on aprons, not always willingly, at the end of the war.

The book compares and contrasts American and Canadian experiences of unionizing and creating spaces for women unionists. Fonow, an American historian, draws on the work of Canadian researcher, Meg Luxton. Canadian institutions such as the National Action Committee on the Status of

Women (NAC) and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms are seen as progressive.

Fonow also analyses how language changed when women became involved. For example, one group turned the imagery of the bargaining table into that of the kitchen table. She focuses on the victories women have achieved as well as the setbacks. One chapter details how the institutions for sustaining Women of Steel groups was put in place, the mounting of courses, holding conferences, promoting women to positions of leadership at all levels.

I confess I was impatient with the academic language of (parts of) the book. I decided not to get bogged down in definitions and debates about "what is feminism?" I suggest members fast forward to the stories of women and groups of women who have built the movement we inherit. May these stories inspire us to make further advances.

Reviewed by Mary Bird
Member of Local 1998

Ward 31 - Janet Davis (Councillor)
Ward 32 - Sandra Bussin (Councillor)
Wards 31 & 32 - Sheila Cary-Meagher (Trustee)

Don Valley East
Ward 33 - Shelly Carroll (Councillor)
Wards 33 & 34 - Zia Ahmed (Trustee)

Scarborough Centre
Ward 37 - Michael Thompson (Councillor)

Ward 38 - Glenn De Baeremaeker (Councillor)
Wards 37 & 38 - Daniel Hill (Trustee)

Scarborough Agincourt
Ward 39 - Sherene Shaw (Councillor)

Scarborough Rouge River
Wards 41 & 42 - Alimamy Bangura (Trustee)

Toronto Catholic District School Board
Wards 29, 30, 31, 32, 34 - Marlene Ciarrocchi

Wards 19, 20, 22, 26, 27, 28
- Catherine Leblanc-Miller
Wards 35, 36, 38, 43 - Paul Crawford*

York Region School Board
Markham - Stan Korolnek
Richmond Hill - Linda Bernofsky & Bel Sierra
Town of Georgina
Dave Szollosy * Acclaimed positions

Extraordinary vision, extraordinary leadership

continued from page 1

nine years and I see the need for leadership at City Hall. I believe that I have both the vision and leadership qualities to lead Toronto in the 21st century.

SD: Apart from your opposition to the expansion of the Island Airport, how is your platform different from the other candidates?

DM: First of all, let me say that my platform is very different from that of the other mayoral candidates. Integrity is key to my campaign. And integrity is not about finding loopholes in the law that you can exploit; it is about doing what is right.

Another key difference between me and my fellow candidates is that I am opposed to cutting the municipal workforce as a way to balance the books. I have always fought against contracting out and my good relationship with city workers is a strength, not a weakness. I have earned their trust and respect and they will work hard in my government.

Yet another difference is that I am absolutely opposed to freezing the number of shelter beds as advocated by some of my fellow candidates. If I am elected mayor, three quarters of the city budget will be set aside for municipal emergencies.

SD: How do you propose to revive Toronto's economy after the SARS outbreak?

DM: We have to build on our strengths and build on our diversity. City Hall needs to lead. We are leaders in mining finance and we have a thriving cultural community. We must reach out and encourage people to visit Toronto.

SD: How are you going to increase the current level of funding for the TTC?

DM: I will maintain the city's share of funding at the current 20%. In addition, I will build an alliance of mayors both across Ontario and across Canada to advocate for adequate funding for public transit from the senior levels of government.

SD: How do you propose to run Toronto without a deficit?

DM: Let me be clear about one thing: it is against the law to run a deficit. Increasing our debt is not an option as it incurs carrying costs. If I am mayor, I will seek "home rule" powers from the provincial government.

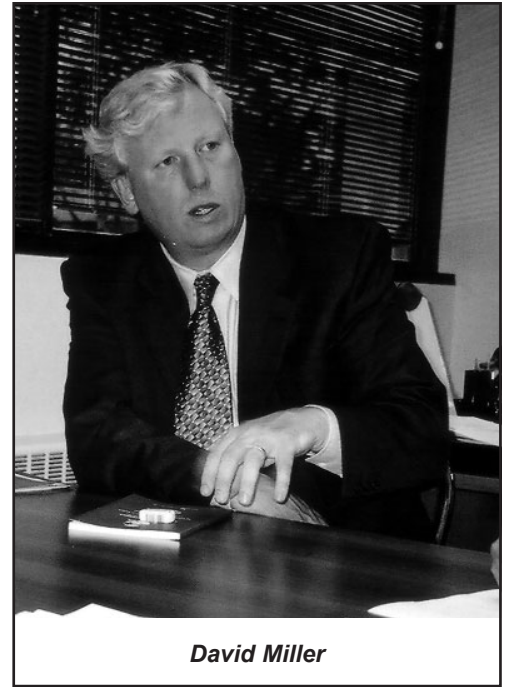
SD: We are now going to focus on David Miller, the person. What qualities make you the best qualified for the job?

DM: I believe my experience as a city councillor is a tremendous asset. I am principled and I listen. Above all, I believe in public service.

SD: What events have most influenced you and formed your character?

DM: My father passed away when I was very young. I was brought up by my single parent mom. We were very close. Her death two years ago has deeply affected me.

As to your second question, I was a rugby player and I played in the U.S. national championship. I learned a lot about teamwork.



David Miller

SD: What attracted you to municipal politics? And why municipal rather than provincial or federal politics?

DM: I believe the municipal level of government is closest to the people as opposed to the provincial or federal levels. It is the level of government where I can make the biggest difference in the lives of people because there are tremendous opportunities to make changes. Also, party politics and party partisanship is greatly reduced at the municipal level.

SD: What would you like your legacy as mayor to be?

DM: I would like to be remembered as someone who made Toronto a model city for North America and the world. I would like to be remembered as someone who preserved the magnificent waterfront and our world-class public transit system.

SD: Thank you for your time.

Ana Sapp, Glenda Fillis, Jenny Fan & P.C. Choo

Do's and Don'ts continued from page 3
time and work for free.

Assuming you are fairly paid for working beyond the regular 36.25 hours, one of the major problems in the workplace is stress. Courses are available through UofT's Human Resources Department on how to manage and reduce stress. Constant overtime could ultimately lead to burn-out, making you a prime candidate for one of these courses! Constantly working overtime will take time away from your family which could well lead to other related problems; constantly working overtime will not leave you much time or energy to spend your fairly earned wages.

Lastly, overtime takes away the work of another person. The University has chosen the

least creative means to correct their fiscal shortfall - to cut staff. With the influx of the double cohort, more staff should be hired. Instead, the University has chosen to lay people off. Most of the duties left behind by persons laid-off have not disappeared; rather, these duties have been added to the remaining staff, sometimes resulting in an unhealthy workplace.

Be reminded, the University wants to function like a corporation. Although you may have survived this round of reorganizations, the University does not always appreciate loyalty and conscientiousness. The next round of layoffs may well include you!

Lillian Lanca
Co-Chair, Grievance Committee

After the company laid off all of the employees, there was no one left to do the work.



Crisis in the steel industry

Interview with Rolf Gerstenberger, President Local 1005

SD: Congratulations on recently being elected President of Local 1005 at Stelco's Hilton Works in Hamilton. How many members are in your Local and how much of Canada's steel production is produced at your plant?

RG: Local 1005 USWA presently has 3,800 members. Our membership is quite senior with about 400-500 members retiring every year. We will probably be down to 2,500 workers by the end of the present contract, which expires in 2006. We produce about 2 million tons of steel at this plant. We still produce about 40% of our steel for the auto industry. Stelco has plans to get out of some of the market for steel products. Canada produces about 15 millions tons annually, while the Canadian market consumes over 16 million tons.

SD: Is the steel industry in Canada really in trouble, and if so, why?

RG: There is definitely a crisis in the Canadian steel industry, and in the North American industry. In the U.S. over 40 companies have filed for Chapter 11 (bankruptcy) protection. About 17 of these companies are no longer in existence. The others are being resurrected as new companies are being bought out by other steel companies or by vulture capitalists. In the U.S. over 200,000 workers who have retired have had their pensions reduced and have had their

health care benefits slashed. In Canada, Algoma Steel has been going into and out of bankruptcy for over 10 years. Ivaco and Slater Steel are in CCAA bankruptcy protection and there is a real chance that Stelco will be forced into CCAA. Stelco itself has lost over \$100 million in the first half of the year, and they are expecting to announce more losses this quarter.

In my opinion, the crisis in the steel industry is directly related to the inherent flaws with the system we live under. The steel industry spends billions of dollars to modernize, so that they can produce more steel with fewer workers. 15 years ago it took 10 man-hours to produce a ton of steel. Now, some plants can produce steel at 1 man-hour per ton. If a company does not consistently push to lower their man-hour per ton, they will be wiped out. But when they borrow money from the financiers to modernize, they have to pay this money back - interest and principal. But now they have fewer and fewer workers who are producing, and from who the new social product (in this case steel) can be seized. These financiers have the first claim on this social product, and their demand is that the workers have to take less and less. This, in my opinion, is the root of the problem.

SD: What concessions are Stelco demanding of your members? Would concessions save the company?

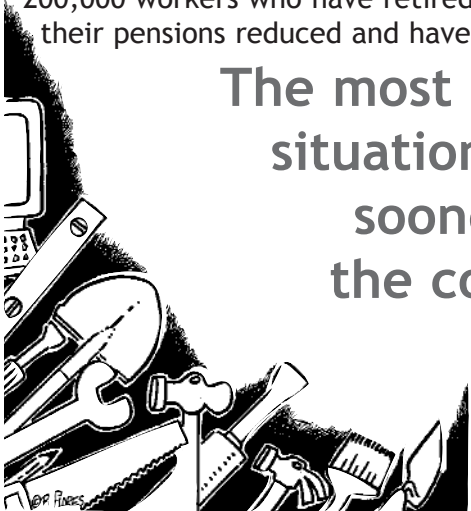
RG: Back in July 2003, Stelco made a serious attempt to get the workers and their union to accept a 20% cut in wages and benefits, and a 20-30% increase in productivity. They were not successful at that time. Since that time they have been trying to get workers to agree to give up various work rules. Give up their contracting out language. They even want to hold the grievance procedure in abeyance because of the severe financial times the company is in. They also announced that they want to lay off 150-200 workers at the end of the year in an attempt to force the Union to give in to their demands. We are still opposing all their demands for concessions.

SD: Having seen companies like Air Canada laying off and cutting service, Canada Post and others demanding concessions, and even when concessions are made, companies like Canadian Air going under, what approach should steelworkers take to the dilemma they face in the steel industry?

RG: The disturbing thing about the present situation is that all deals are off. What I mean by this is that in days past, the union bargained in good faith, they reached an agreement with the company, and deal struck. Now, no sooner do the workers agree to a deal, the company comes back and wants to open the contract and wants the workers to give up everything. We just signed a four-year contract last year. No one was happy with the contract, even though it was accepted by 71%. Less than one year later, the company was demanding that the union give the company all the things they were not successful in getting in that contract. Plus they wanted a 20% wage and benefit cut. That is still their goal. This is the experience of the Air Canada workers, of Algoma, and others. Once workers start on the road of giving concessions, it is a never-ending race to the bottom. We are not interested in participating in this race to the bottom.

Steve Rutchinski
School of Graduate Studies

The most disturbing thing about the present situation is that all deals are off.. Now, no sooner do the workers agree to a deal, the company comes back and wants the workers to give up everything... It's a never-ending race to the bottom...



You & your job description

Union urges staff to request updated job descriptions

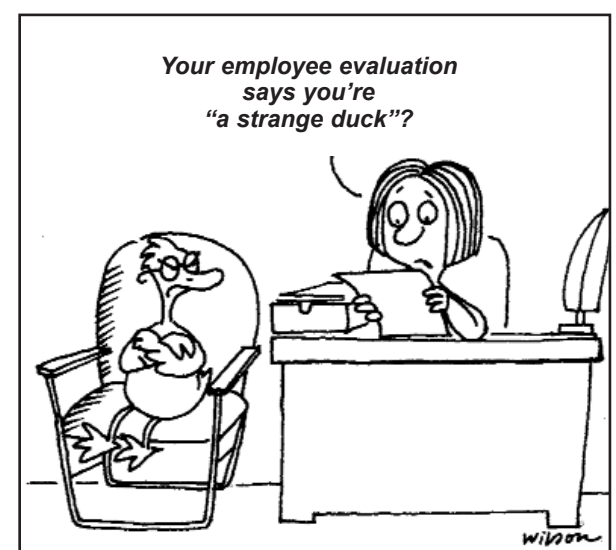
As the SES/U job evaluation project continues to roll out over the coming year, it is important for unionised staff to know that the first phase of their involvement with job evaluation is the need to have a clear, concise and updated job description. The department of Human Resources is now contacting directors, managers and supervisors in order to let them know about their responsibility to provide you with an updated job description written in the new SES/U format. If your job description is out of date, now is the time to request a new one from your supervisor or from your HR Personnel Generalist.

After you receive an updated job description in the new SES/U format, you should then take the opportunity to meet with your supervisor and advise her or him of any corrections, additions or deletions that should be made to the job description PRIOR to meeting with your

Union representatives on the job evaluation committee.

This is important because the job description is the basic instrument used to define and measure the level of work being performed by any given employee and is really the defining cornerstone of the employee's relationship with the institution as far as work related matters are concerned. Your job description should clearly summarize the major duties and responsibilities performed on the job as they relate to the four major factors of the SES/U system - skills, responsibilities, effort and working conditions.

The job description should indicate the level of complexity involved in the work with regard to judgement exercised, daily contacts made, decision-making responsibilities as well as the consequence of error. A job description should also clearly specify the nature and purpose of



supervision received on the job as well the supervision to be exercised by the employee. General working conditions, hours of work, required equipment skills, and other qualifications such as formal education and previous work experience are all fundamental components of the job description.

When outlining duties and responsibilities, the use of action verbs is *continued on next page*

Reporting accidents in the workplace

When an accident should be reported

About one year ago, Susan's office was in the midst of a major move. During the move, Susan was lifting some boxes and felt a tweak in her shoulder. She went home and took a couple of days off. When she returned to work, she let her supervisor know that she had a shoulder injury but was fine now. Unfortunately, she was not.

About a month later, Susan's shoulder began bothering her again. As a result, she went on sick leave for the 15 weeks and then applied for Long Term Disability (LTD). She was denied LTD and, during the process of her appeal with the insurance company, Susan has been forced to live off her savings and must pay for much of her medical treatments such as massage therapy.

This difficult financial situation would not have arisen if Susan were informed that her original injury should have been reported as a workplace injury. If you let your supervisor know that you are injured on the job, they are required, by law, to complete a Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) Form 7 within three days of the incident.

Often, employees decide not to report injuries that appear minor. At UofT, we benefit from a generous sick leave benefit where we do not lose any wages when we are sick. This can remove the incentive to report injuries immediately. Unfortunately, we have seen a number of cases like Susan's who have been denied WSIB benefits because their accident/injury was not reported.

When should an accident be reported?

An employer must report the incident to the WSIB within 3 days if the worker (staff member): loses time from work; earns less than a regular day's pay; or, gets health care treatment (some examples of covered health care costs are doctors' visits, prescriptions, care in hospitals and other health facilities, physiotherapy, chiropractors' visits, eyeglasses and prostheses.)

An employer does not need to report the incident if the worker only needs first aid. Some examples of first aid are: cleaning minor cuts, scrapes or scratches; treat-

ing a minor burn; applying bandages, a cold compress or ice bag; putting on a splint at the workplace; or, changing a bandage during a follow-up check up that doesn't result in further treatment.

Are you eligible for WSIB benefits?

To be eligible for WSIB insurance benefits, you must: have a worker-employer relationship with an employer covered by the WSIB (UofT is covered); have an injury or illness directly related to your work; promptly file a claim with the WSIB; provide all relevant information requested by the WSIB to help them determine your benefits; and consent to the release of functional abilities information to your employer by the health care professional treating you.

What Benefits Can You Receive?

Your workplace insurance entitles you to a range of benefits. The benefit most people are familiar with is the replacement of earnings you lose while disabled by workplace illness or injury (benefit for loss of earnings), but a number of other WSIB benefits are available to you: Benefit for Loss of Earnings (LOE); Benefit for Non-Economic Loss (NEL); Loss of Retirement Income (LRI) Benefit; Benefit for Future Economic Loss (FEL); Health Care Benefits; The Occupational Disease and Survivor Benefits Program; Benefits for Seriously Injured Workers.

More information is available on the WSIB website at www.wsib.on.ca or you can call the Local 1998 Office at 416.506.9090

Ron Wener
Co-Chair, Grievance Committee

N.B. The above is based on a true story; however, Susan's name has been changed.



Job Description

continued from page 6

especially important in describing the job. In your job description you should see action verbs describing your work such as: administers, acts, accumulates, analyses, approves, arranges, assigns, assists, authorizes, compiles, controls, coordinates, decides, determines, develops, directs, distributes, establishes, executes, formulates, gathers, implements, initiates, instructs, interprets, interviews, maintains, manages, monitors, operates, organizes, participates, performs, plans, prepares, processes, receives, recommends, reports, researches, resolves, reviews, schedules, submits, supervises, trains, etc.

Over the years, with the introduction of new information technologies, expanded responsibilities and more complex administrative functions, many job descriptions have not been updated. If your job description no longer reflects the duties and responsibilities that you carry out, then your job may not be rated and classified properly.

Now is the time to set the record straight.

Take a look at your job description today!

Ana Sapp, Robin Breon & P. C. Choo
Principals,
Job Evaluation Committee

Report on District 6 Conference

Over four hundred Steelworkers representing Locals in Ontario and Atlantic Canada met in Niagara Falls, Ont., on October 27, 28 and 29th to participate in the District Six Conference. The Conference, which is organized yearly, is an opportunity for delegates to interact with the District, National and International officers of the USWA and to participate in educational panels, workshops and meetings that address a wide range of issues including collective bargaining trends throughout the labour movement, health and safety issues, recent legislation that impacts the workplace and numerous other items that packed a busy three day schedule.

The membership of Local 1998 was represented by 11 delegates at the Conference: Allison Dubarry, Robin Breon, John Ankenman, Marjorie Bhola-Swami, Charles Kernerman, Ana Sapp, Lillian Lanca, Robert Chernecky, Mary Ann DeFrancis, Jean Glasgow and Jim Kennedy. The majority of our delegation was first time attendees representing the executive as well as representatives of important committees (Pensions, Women of Steel). The number of delegates attending was a result of discussion held at the last monthly meeting where it was noted that the District Conference is an important opportunity to interact with a wide range of activists from within the broader Union and that the close proximity of the venue (Niagara Falls) to Toronto made it economically feasible to attend.

Featured speakers at the conference included Wayne Fraser, District Six Director and Conference convenor; Lawrence McBrearty, National Director for the Steelworkers in Canada, Leo Gerrard, International President of the USWA; Judith Marshall, Director of the Humanities Fund; Carolyn Egan, Vice President of Toronto Area Council; Professor Gregor Murray, a labor specialist from the University of Montreal; and Jack Layton, leader of the Federal New Democratic Party.

International President Leo Gerrard noted in his remarks that "globalization continues to be a race to the bottom that will lower the standard of living for

working people throughout the world as corporations continue to chase higher profits by means of lowering wages, ignoring environmental standards and resisting unionization wherever they can."

In the post-secondary education sector Gerrard made special mention of the employees at the University of Toronto who for the first time in their institution's history bargained wages and benefits and reached an agreement that then became the standard upon which the faculty and other administrative groups bargained. Gerrard welcomed observers from McMaster University who are currently considering unionization and noted that administrative staff at Kent State University in Ohio had recently invited the Steelworkers to conduct an organizing drive on their behalf.

In a dramatic announcement, Lawrence McBrearty informed the delegates that even as he was speaking the House of Commons had just completed their third and final reading of the health and safety legislation that came out of the 1992 Westray mine disaster that saw 26 miners perish while working under conditions that the company new were unsafe. This legislation will, for the first time, allow for criminal prosecution against corporations found guilty of negligence.

Also, in a particularly poignant and moving keynote address that concluded the conference, Stephen Lewis, the United Nations Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa outlined the spiraling crisis that will witness over 100 million deaths before the end of this decade. He pointed out that it was the founding of the Steelworkers' Humanity Fund in 1986 that led the way in Canada for unions to become involved with social justice issues that affect the human family beyond our borders. Lewis noted with some pride that today, literally every major union in Canada has its own international fund that is based on the Steelworker model.

Robin Breon, Vice President

“Ancillary Corporation” status for UTS:

Undemocratic, unfair and unaccountable

The proposed re-organization at University of Toronto Schools (UTS) will adversely affect ten unionized administrative staff members there and will be detrimental to the broader UTS community. For many years, UTS has been a part of the University of Toronto acting as a “laboratory school” associated with the Faculty of Education and O.I.S.E. Over the past few years there has been much debate in Governing Council and within UTS over how best to continue this association. The current plan to disaffiliate the school and make it into an independent “ancillary corporation” has raised serious concerns over the future of the school as well as the job security and well being of the ten members of Local 1998 who work at UTS.

Over the summer, members of the Union executive met with UTS staff and attended an open community consultation meeting held in the school (which is located on the south side of Bloor Street, between Huron and Spadina). Out of these consultations emerged a picture of general dissatisfaction from many members of the UTS community including parents, students and alumni.

Of particular concern to the members of Local 1998 who work at UTS is the removal of their status as members of the larger pool of employees that are covered under the current Collective Agreement. When news of the proposed re-organization reached Local 1998, the Union proposed to the University that the ten admin staff at UTS be guaranteed that their present status be kept intact when and if an ancillary corporation was to come into place. The University to date has not responded to our



“Steely” ‘clowns around’ during a break from leafletting

request.

Subsequently, the Union has decided to take action by mounting a broader public campaign that will challenge the planned re-organization at UTS. On Saturday morning, October 18, members of our Local distributed informational flyers at the annual UTS open house. Also on hand was “Steely” the clown with balloons for all of the younger students who eagerly grabbed them as they headed into the school.

Many parents and current students at the school took the time to meet with us on the sidewalk and discuss the issues raised in the

Union’s informational flyer. Increasing numbers of parents and alumni are concerned that one immediate result in re-organizing UTS into an ancillary corporation will be a rise in tuition rates with the school losing its broad based multiracial, multicultural constituency while it takes on the character of an elite private school such as Upper Canada College.

Also called into serious question is the formation of the “interim board of directors” itself. The model being formulated is one of a “closed board” that will not report to any identifiable membership constituency within the UTS community or hold an open and democratically accountable Annual General Meeting in which the UTS community can participate with voting privileges.

Additional action on the UTS campaign included the distribution of a special letter addressed to the UTS alumni which was distributed to alumni as they arrived at their annual Alumni Dinner which was held on October 23rd. The reception to Local 1998 members was very positive with one alumna declaring: “This is great! I’m so glad you’re doing this - I think I’ll raise the issue during dinner!”

The UofT Governing Council does not operate within such an undemocratic framework, nor does Local 1998. Why should UTS?

LOCAL 1998

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