

# STEEL DRUM



News for members of Steelworkers Local 1998

September 2004, volume 4, no 4

uswa1998.ca

## Bullying and its impact on us

■ Workplace bullying harms physical and emotional health, destroys self-esteem and undermines performance.

Recently, there was a commercial on television that showed a nondescript man going to work and making his way to his cubicle. It was like running the gauntlet: he is called names, laughed at, shoved and has his lunch taken away from him. The commercial's intention is to address workplace bullying, and does so by using an analogy familiar to anyone who has ever gone to school. Bullying does not end in the schoolyard. It also occurs - with alarming frequency - at work. Workplace bullying can make your place of work a living hell. It is a form of psychological harassment that harms your physical and emotional health, destroys your self-esteem, undermines your work performance, disturbs your sleep and impacts all your relationships. Many of us are witnesses and victims of workplace bullying.

Our collective agreement provides recourse under the grievance procedure for sexual harassment, racial discrimination or harassment for exercising your rights as a union member or activist. There is also an article on "General Harassment" relating to threats of physical abuse or physical harm. Unfortunately, there is little arbitration precedence or case law for bullying that does not fall into any of the above categories. Protection from psychological harassment is not recognized in the Ontario Labour Code, the Ontario Human Rights Code, or the Occupational Health and Safety Act. So how can a victim of bullying protect their mental and physical health in the face of psychological harassment, and ultimately put a stop to it?

The first step is to recognize bullying for what it is. The victim is not the problem; the perpetrator is! The employer has an obligation to stop



the harassment. Look at the literature that is available on psychological harassment in the workplace. If your situation or that of a colleague is portrayed in the material, then you have taken the first step to addressing the situation.

On June 1, 2004, Quebec joined a growing international movement and became the first jurisdiction in North America to introduce legislation against psychological harassment in the workplace ([www.cnt.gouv.qc.ca/en/site\\_hp/index.asp](http://www.cnt.gouv.qc.ca/en/site_hp/index.asp)). Psychological harassment at work is defined in that legislation as vexatious behaviour that manifests itself by incidences of behaviour, comments, actions or gestures that are repetitive, hostile or unwanted. This behaviour affects the victim's dignity, psychological or physical integrity, and results in a harmful work environment. Even one incident of such behaviour may constitute psychological harassment if it affects the employee's dignity or psychological or physical integrity and has a lasting harmful effect.

Psychological harassment can originate from a colleague, a group of colleagues, a customer or

supplier, but in the overwhelming number of reported cases, the perpetrator is a superior, a supervisor or a manager. Fiona McNair, writing for Workplace News (Vol. 8, June 2002) says: "Research led to the discovery that about 80% of the time it is supervisors and managers who are workplace bullies."

Tim Field a leading authority on psychological harassment at work, who has received two honorary doctorates for his work on workplace bullying, founded the National Workplace Bullying Advice Line in the U.K. His investigation concludes that between 12-50% of the workforce experience some form of bullying. The percentages are fairly consistent everywhere in the Anglo-American world, from the UK, to Australia, the U.S. and Canada. Interestingly, 20% of reported cases are from the education sector. The problem is real and, as many U of T employees know, it happens to us!

A 2003 survey of self-described victims of workplace bullying, conducted by the Workplace Bullying & Trauma Institute, reports victims suffer stress effects such as severe anxiety (76%), disrupted sleep (71%), and post traumatic stress disorder (39%). In 70% of the cases, the bullying stopped only when the victim quit or was let go. In a further 17%, the victim was transferred and the bully suffered consequences in only 13% of cases. (Canada Safety Council).

### Features of Bullying

Tim Field's research found that a bully usually has high verbal facility, charm and a considerable capacity to

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## University asks UTSC Staff Member to live below poverty line

What would you do if given the choice to either be unemployed or to keep your job and live below the poverty line? One of our members at Scarborough was recently given this choice.

Her position involves her doing work for two separate departments (3 days a week in one area and 2 days a week in another). There were some organizational challenges in this configuration and rather than talk to the member to see how to make this work, the university gave her the choice of accepting a job at 3 days per week at 60% of her current salary or be laid off. Accepting the 3 day a week job would have put our member below the poverty line. (According to the Canadian Council on Social



Development, the poverty line for a single person living in Toronto is \$19,795 per year.)

What the union finds so infuriating about this is that the work that the university wanted to remove from the member will continue and the university planned on hiring someone else to do that work. In other words, the university was unwilling to take the time to organize the work properly, was unwilling to

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## You Got Your Job Description: Now What?

As part of the joint Union-University job evaluation process, the Department of Human Resources is now contacting directors, managers and supervisors in order to let them know about their responsibility for providing 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. You can arrange to meet with your supervisor and have input into your updated job description before it goes to HR. Note that HR may make changes to the job description once your supervisor has sent it in. HR will then be sending out your job description usually by college, faculty or department. The union will be receiving a copy of it at the same time that you do. By October, 2004, all USWA 1998 members should have received their updated job description from HR. After you receive your 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 representative on the Job Evaluation Committee. The revised job description should then be sent back to HR by your supervisor and a copy will then be forwarded to you and the union by HR. Within a few weeks of receiving your final job description, a member of the Job Evaluation Committee will contact you to set up a time for an interview to validate your job description. We have already completed interviews with incumbents at a number of departments, colleges, faculties and divisions.

On Wednesday, August 4, 2004, USWA Local 1998 held the first of a series of lunch time information meetings on job descriptions and their role in the present job evaluation process. Over 70 members attended the very informative and lively meeting. After a short introduction and presentation by members of the Job Evaluation Committee, the meeting was opened to questions and answers some of which are included here.

**Q** Can my job description be changed by me or my supervisor after it has been sent to HR? What happens if my job duties change after my job description is sent to HR? What do I do if I notice changes or omissions in the revised format HR sends me as compared to the updated job description sent in by my supervisor?

**A** Yes, the job description can be changed after being sent to HR. You should go to your supervisor and tell her or him to contact HR to correct or make additions to your job description if it does not accurately reflect your job duties either because your job duties have changed since it was sent to HR or because there are omissions or changes that are not accurate.

**Q** Do I have to agree with the job description or sign it before it is sent to HR by my supervisor?

**A** According to our Collective Agreement, management has the prerogative to write your job description. However it should be accurate, consistent and reflect what you actually do. You are under no obligation to sign your job description if you are not satisfied with it but in the end management has the final say in what goes in your job description. You should tell your supervisor the reasons you don't agree with the job description. Document your reasons and also send a copy to the Job Evaluation Committee. You will also have an opportunity to express your dissatisfaction to the Job Evaluation Committee when we meet with you to validate your job description. We will note the discrepancies and refer them to management when we meet with them. In the past, we have been able to get a number of duties and responsibilities added to the job description after the incumbent notifies us about their omission.

**Q** Do I have to wait until the job evaluation process is completed to request reclassification?

**A** No, you can request reclassification at any time. Contact your steward or unit chair for more information.

**Q** Where can I get more information about the job evaluation process and job descriptions?

**A** You will be receiving e-mails from the union about upcoming lunch hour meetings in various locations across campus over the next couple of months where we will be providing this information. There is also lots of information about job evaluation and job descriptions at the JEC site: [www.uswa1998.ca/JobEvaluation.htm](http://www.uswa1998.ca/JobEvaluation.htm). If you have any further questions, please contact the JEC at (416) 506-9090 or e-mail us at [JEC@uswa1998.ca](mailto:JEC@uswa1998.ca)

■ Shelley Glazer, Job Evaluation Committee

## P.C. on the G.C.

■ New interim U of T President pays tribute to 'dedicated staff'



**A** lthough my term of office on Governing Council began on July 1, 2004, I thought I had the summer off in terms of Governing Council meetings. However, my brief summer interlude was interrupted by a summon to a meeting on August 16 to deal with the appointment of an interim President in the wake of President Robert Birgeneau's imminent departure for Berkeley.

The initial session of the meeting was held in-camera but it was later opened to the public. Rose Patten, the new Chair of Governing Council, announced that the Hon. Frank Iacobucci, a former justice of the Supreme Court of Canada and former law dean and provost of the University of Toronto, has been appointed interim president of the University of Toronto, effective Sept. 1.

When Iacobucci was introduced to those gathered in Governing Council chambers, he was greeted with a standing ovation. "It is great to be home," he said. "The last time I was at a governing council meeting was in 1985, when I was provost, so it has taken me some 20 years to come home."

His maiden speech touched all the bases. "I am profoundly honoured to serve the University of Toronto at this time, particularly because it was my professional home for 18 years. My respect and affection for the University, its distinguished faculty, talented students, dedicated staff and accomplished alumni have only increased over the years. To work again with its governing bodies, senior officers and leaders from all sectors and divisions of the university is a privilege that I look forward to eagerly. I thank the chair and members of the Governing Council for their confidence in me; I shall do everything I can to justify

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## JEC Updates

So far, the Job Evaluation Committee has conducted job evaluation interviews at the following faculties/colleges/divisions: Innis College, New College, University College, Woodsworth College, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Music, Faculty of Social Work, Faculty of Information Studies, Faculty of Architecture, School of Graduate Studies, International Students Centre, School of Continuing Studies, and the Centre for Industrial Relations.

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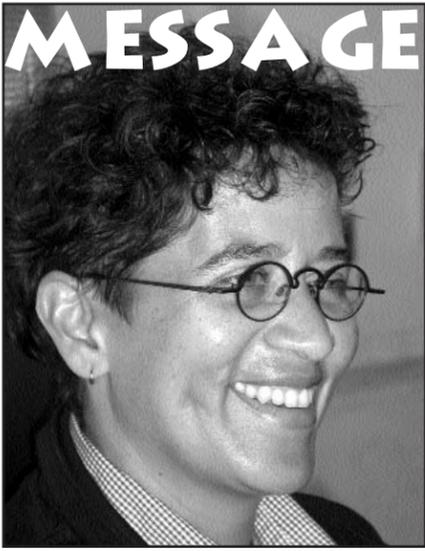
Non-email submissions should be on a 3.5" disk or CD accompanied by a hard copy.

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who  
we  
are



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Next April all of the units in our local will be able to begin bargaining with the university, as the contracts expire on June 30, 2005. We have already begun preparing for the next set of negotiations. Over the next few months, our local will be focusing on four major areas to gear up for negotiations: electing and training a negotiating committee, eliciting key priorities from the membership, doing education about the process and the issues, and building a strong membership communications network regarding our contract negotiations.

A call for nominations for negotiating committees for the Staff-appointed and casuals units is in this edition of *Steeldrum* (page 8). The nomination meeting will be at the September Local meeting on the 14th, with elections occurring in the first week of October. Participating on a negotiating committee can be a very rewarding experience. The committee first surveys mem-

bers about which issues are priority issues and then works to achieve gains in the contract so that improvements in the working lives of their fellow workers can be achieved. Committee members receive training on how to bargain, and this time, the Executive is working on providing committee members with advanced training as well.

Members will meet the new negotiating committees at a release time Local meeting on October 13. Ken Neumann, the new National Director of the Steelworkers, will be speaking at the meeting and members will have an opportunity to meet Ken. Unfortunately, only members of the Staff-appointed unit are able to leave work at 3pm to attend release time meetings.

Elections for the negotiating committees for Victoria and St. Michael's will occur in the upcoming months. John Ankenman and David Johnson, the Unit Chairs for Vic and SMC respectively, will be in touch with members in those units about elections.

Our lunchtime series "Where's the money? De-mystifying the U of T Budget" which Sheila Block began will start up again in the fall. Jorge Garcia-Orgales from the Research Department of the Steelworkers National office will be continuing the presentations across campus. If you liked the "De-Mystifying Pensions" series and are interested in learning about where the money is spent, and what assumptions the

budget is based on, then you'll quite enjoy this seminar. The Executive and the negotiating committees will continue to plan lunchtime seminars on various issues surrounding bargaining.

We had a tremendously successful meeting of the CAT team (Contract/Communications Action Team) in mid-August. June Rillet, a new CAT member, has a report about that meeting and the CAT network in this edition of *Steeldrum*.

Negotiating committees are important in the collective bargaining process, but they aren't the only important feature of bargaining. Membership participation and communication are vital to any successful bargaining and the CAT members are the first step

**Membership participation and communication are vital to any successful bargaining, and CAT members are the first step toward such a network.**

in building the type of network that we'll need to have in place as a prerequisite for successful bargaining. It is important to have at least one person from each department on the CAT team to ensure that your voices and concerns are heard. If you would like to get more involved with the CAT team, you can speak to a CAT member or your steward or unit chair. Emails can also be sent to [cat@uswa1998.ca](mailto:cat@uswa1998.ca).

A strong and extensive CAT network and your participation are what will strengthen the bargaining process and enhance the committee's ability to make substantial gains during the next set of negotiations.

■ Allison Dubarry, President

## Bullying and its impact

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deceive. A psychological bully is also usually a control freak and compulsive liar who exhibits a Jekyll and Hyde nature. They do not stop at one victim; they are frequently serial bullies.

Interestingly, features of their bullying are seldom unique:

- unjustified criticism;
- micromanaging;
- trivial fault-finding;
- setting up the victim for failure with unrealistic goals or deadlines or by denying necessary information and resources;
- overloading the victim with work or having work taken away (replacing proper work with demeaning jobs);
- increasing responsibility while removing authority;
- diminishing and devaluing work performed by the victim;
- humiliating (ignored, overruled, left in the dark about plans);
- deliberately timed critical / dismissive remarks;
- isolating the victim from co-workers.

### What To Do

In a December 11, 2002, *Globe and Mail* article entitled "When Victims are On Their Own", Toronto lawyer and former Ontario Human Rights Commissioner, Raj Anand, wrote that the first thing a victim should do is look into how prevalent or persistent the problem is within their workplace. Are there other victims or wit-

nesses in your situation? Talk to your work colleagues. Keep a paper trail. Gather evidence that proves the company knew about the abuser. The paper trail is not absolutely necessary, but without it, a case will become "she said" and "he said". Talk to the abuser's boss and to Human Resources. The victim's case will be stronger if it can be shown the employer was aware of the situation but did not stop it.

In the absence of protection under the Labour Code, the Human Rights Code or the Occupational Health and Safety Act, victims can sue for what is called "constructive dismissal". According to Marisa Pollock, a lawyer with Sack, Goldblatt, Mitchell, "You are in effect dismissed, when someone makes your life hell. It is a last resort but a civil law suit can be successful."

In one Ontario case, decided in 2000, the court ruled, (and upheld by the appeals court), that a manager at Xerox had acted impulsively and without justification toward a harassment victim and that the treatment made the victim's continued employment intolerable. (Shah vs. Xerox) The judge awarded the victim damages equivalent to 12 months' notice.

Everyone has a right to a work environment that is free from all forms of harassment, including psychological harassment. Workers in Ontario may not yet have legislation to protect them against psychological harassment, but we can look out for each other. Do not suffer in silence. Talk to someone - contact a union representative about what is happening and how we can help you put a stop to it.

■ Steve Rutchinski, Deborah Ohab & Edith Fraser

## Steeldrum wins CALM award

Steel Drum has won the Award of Excellence for Best Layout and Design (locals over 1,000) at the Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM) Conference held in Edmonton from May 14-16, 2004.

CALM is a network of union publications and editors. It was founded in 1976 by the major affiliates of the Canadian Labour Congress. It has about 500 member publications and radio or TV programs with an estimated combined circulation of one million.

USWA Local 1998 was represented at the conference by P. C. Choo, Glenda Gillis and Kim Walker.

## Poverty line continued from page 1

discuss the situation to make it work and our member had to pay the price. No member of management would be asked to take a pay cut or live below the poverty line.

The union made it clear that this situation was completely unacceptable and filed a number of grievances on this matter. While organizational change is a fact of life in large organizations like U of T, our members need to be treated fairly and with respect.

**Note:** At the time of publication, the union was in settlement negotiations which would put our member back to work at 100% with no loss of earnings.

■ Ron Wener, Co-Chair, Grievance Committee

# Steel Pride 2004

## ■ An Affirmation of Diversity

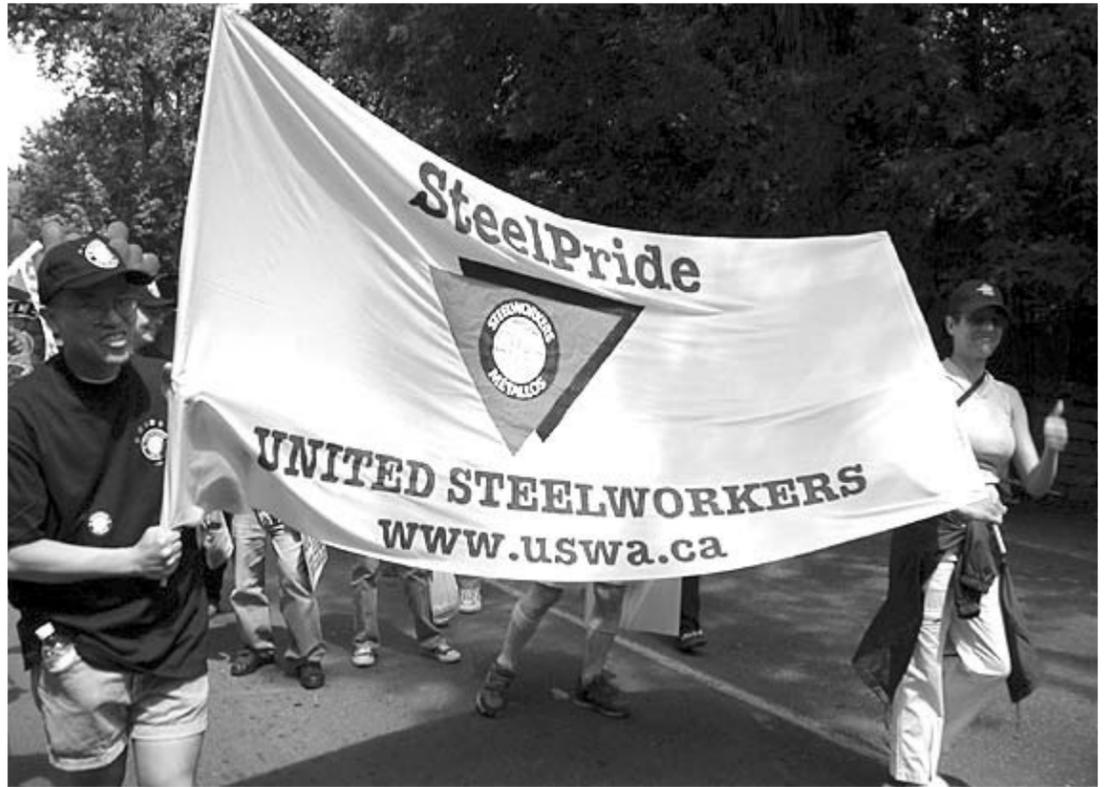
Given any opportunity, we are always keen to talk about what it is exactly that makes our union unique. We have every reason to be proud of our Steelworkers union and its commitment to advancing workplace rights and human rights for everyone. What better place to demonstrate pride in our union and its commitment to human rights and equality than at Pride 2004!

We have been to Pride before, both as spectators and as participants. As spectators we knew Pride was big, but we never realized how big until we participated. The crowd was tremendous! We were in awe of the people packing the sidewalks, balconies and even rooftops. When you go to Pride, you see all races, ethnicities, orientations and ages - just a wonderful example of the diversity that is humankind. All together for one fabulous day and everyone is family - at least for an afternoon.

So, on the afternoon of Sunday, June 27, we joined hundreds of Toronto Area Steelworkers gathered on the Rosedale Valley road to assemble for the Pride Parade. A good number of these members were from Local 1998 with their families. We were there to celebrate Pride and to support our gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered brothers and sisters in the workplace in a true affirmation of diversity. Unlike the usual fiercely hot Pride weather, this time the weather was good, if not a little too windy at times. If there aren't slits in the banner, you run the risk of going airborne or having your arms pulled out of their sockets if you are holding it!

As we marched with our Steel Pride Banner (a beautiful job by Christine Beckermann), there was applause and cheers from the crowds. Shouts of "My Mother is a Steelworker!" "Steelworkers - Human Rights!" and "Go Steel!" filled the air. It became very obvious to me that the reputation our union has in the field of human rights, equality and equity had preceded us. The overall appreciation for Labour ("Unions Rock!" was one memorable shout-out received) was especially heightened by the upcoming federal election and concerns regarding continued protection of gay rights and same-sex benefits/marriage. Knowing that unions support equal rights for all under the law, many people wanted to get the point across that they are thankful for the work we do and that without it, gender and sexual equality in the workplace (and society in general) would not be where it is today.

Whether gay or straight, the solidarity was there in all of us walking together, advocating



equal rights for all. While Pride is certainly a celebration of the LGBTQ community, groups like PFLAG (Parents Family/Friends of Lesbians and Gays) and other straight participants feel the obligation very keenly to stand shoulder to shoulder with the community and express support for cousins, sons, daughters, aunts, uncles, even parents - and show that their struggle is a human one. Together, we can all work for a more tolerant workplace and Pride is a great place to start.

The parade itself got off to a slow start. Passing floats and participants, meandering for what felt like miles down Park Road all the way to our location in the parade. But eventually, there was the car and Mohammed Bahksh from the District Office. Nancy Lessin and Charley Richardson from the International Union in Pittsburgh - solidarity from the United States! - having never been to Pride Toronto, were looking forward to participating in North America's second largest Pride parade.

As we prepared to march, we were surrounded by colourful floats and other participants in elaborate and imaginative costumes. We were in front of the brightly decorated float from Metropolitan United Church. We marched directly behind the Ikea float - a yellow Volkswagen Beetle with the roof piled high with mattresses and Ikea boxes and surrounded by people in pyjamas. That wasn't a bad thing because they had great music, and their colours are also gold and blue, they fit right in as 'honorary' Steelworkers for the parade. Our own float consisted of a car brightly festooned with balloons. We were wearing navy blue Steel Pride T-shirts and caps delicately accented in rainbow colours by Bob Chernecky. In addition, he had prepared multi-coloured ribbon streamers which

he attached to our sleeves and caps. As we walked, Jim Kennedy and Bob Chernecky handed out Steel Pride hats and shirts to spectators and joked with the crowd. Carolyn Egan (President of the Toronto Area Council) followed in the float with the megaphone telling everyone watching the parade how proud the Steelworkers were to take part in Pride.

Unfortunately though, a big detractor these past few years was the powers that be who decided to erect barricades along the route of the parade. What in previous years had been a truly free and open-participation event was more rigidly controlled and removed of any and all spontaneity. This, along with the enormous amount of corporate sponsorship did much to suck some of the festivity right out of the event, so thanks to the drag queens and the sequined cowboys on stilts for keeping Pride cheeky, as it should be.

At the conclusion of the parade, there was a social held on the rooftop patio at the Hugh Garner Co-op on Ontario Street. The most amazing view of the lake is to be had here and you are surrounded by blue water, blue sky and breezes - rather like being on the deck of a cruise ship, actually. It was wonderful to talk with the members of the Local and other unions and there were a lot of laughs and lot of great conversation. It was the perfect way to end the day.

Pride is about feeling good about who you are. It is a celebration of acceptance. You can't help but smile at others and they smile back, every time. The thing about Pride is that good feeling sticks, and you won't ever want to miss another one. We look forward to next year's parade and hope that you can join in!

■ *Deborah Ohab, Innis College & Alex Thomson, Victoria University*

## Tentative Agreement at Trent U

Trent University has reached a tentative agreement with OPSEU Local 365. Armed with a 77% strike mandate from its members, the union managed to negotiate a 11% increase in salary over three years - 4% in the first year, 3.5 % in the second and third year. The union also negotiated improved pension and health benefits. Vision care benefits have been increased to \$250.00 effective July 1, 2005 and chiropractic care will be increased to \$500 (effective the first of the month following ratification).

## Carleton U Staff Poised to Strike

### ■ Class disruptions expected

Carleton University administrative, technical and support staff are poised to go on strike after contract talks broke down Friday, August 20, 2004. Both sides have been in negotiations since April of this year.

According to Karen Martin, President of CUPE Local 2424 which represents the staff at Carleton, "the university refused to move an inch from its previous offer. They picked our pockets by reducing pension plan benefits and then offered us a wage increase below industry standards. The very day we were negotiating, University Vice-President

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Local 1998 steward and activist member Steve Rutchinski, has just released his first CD entitled *Queen Street and the Blues* (available at the U of T Bookstore, the Innis Café, and Sam The Record Man). *Steeldrum* spoke to Steve about his music and what it was like to release his first CD.

#### About the music

*Queen Street and the Blues* is all my own original blues music that features me doing the vocals, acoustic guitar, piano and harmonica tracks with Juno Award winning blues artist, David Raven performing some of his best guitar work yet. By the way, David Raven is my brother.



I wanted the feel of the late 50s early 60s Chicago blues and it has that throughout, especially on the title track, *Queen Street and the Blues* and also on *Going to Chicago*. Both have this great back and forth play between the piano and guitars, kept tight, no long running solos, but there is always something happening that catches your ear, draws you in, only to be followed by an equally interesting slide guitar, harmonica or piano line. New Orleans music has that same feel to it.

There are eight songs, which I chose as a kind of closure to a phase in my life. These are my favorite songs written over several years. I chose them as a musical expression of the happiness and the sorrows of that period.

#### First CD - what was recording it like?

Recording *Queen Street and the Blues* with my brother was pure magic. He is so good and such a fine engineer and producer as well. We've always played kitchen and living room gigs together, and I've always thought it's hard to tell where one guitar left off and the other begins. We call it "the brother-thing". He is an awesome guitar player - and together we have something that is very hard to find.

It took about a year to record and engineer the CD. We recorded together on the weekends and worked independently through the week - in the late hours after completing work, union, political activity, parenting duties and all that stuff in life.

We didn't start out with the aim of making a recording for public release, but as the project progressed, we kept getting really positive encouragement from a broad spectrum of people: teenagers, colleagues and musicians alike - some of whom are quite accomplished. The result is now available in stores. One song *Mean Man Blues* was picked up by Sam the Record Man for their compilation of indi-blues and jazz artists in Toronto. It has received air play on the 'Let the Good Times Roll' blues programme at CIUT and is in the hands of other blues radio programmers.

#### What else do you do?

My day job is as a Policy and Program Assistant at the School of Graduate Studies. I have a fantastic daughter who just turned sweet sixteen and a grown son who lives on the west coast. I am an activist worker: a union steward at the School of Graduate Studies and Co-Chair of the Newsletter Committee, and a worker politician, standing as a candidate in the last federal election. Musically, while *Queen Street and the Blues* is blues, I write and play folk/roots/acoustic music, traditional music and music of the people's struggles. If you want to come out and hear some of the music I play live, drop me an email to [s.Rutchinski@rogers.com](mailto:s.Rutchinski@rogers.com) and I'll keep you posted.

■ Lillian Lanca & Ana Sapp

## An artist in our midst Steve Rutchinski sings the blues

"*Mean Man Blues*" was picked by Sam the Record Man for their compilation of Indi-Blues and Jazz artists in Toronto.

## Common Disciplinary Mistakes in the Unionized Workplace

On June 16 and 17, 2004, Grievance Co-Chairs Ron Wener and Lillian

Lança and Victoria University Unit Chair John Ankenman, attended a seminar on avoiding common discipline mistakes in the unionized workplace. Each segment of this seminar was presented by a panel of lawyers, one representing management and the other representing union. We were able to take away much information to help us in our constant struggle with management.

Generally, discipline should be corrective with consequences clearly indicated for non-compliance.

Management considers anything else as 'coaching' or 'counselling' though the Union is having some issues with these 'coaching' or 'counselling' letters. In any event, if you are being requested to attend any sort of performance meeting, it would probably be advisable to request that a union representative attend with you.

Discipline should also be progressive. You should not be terminated at the first alleged offence, unless the offence is extremely serious, as for example embezzlement. There should be a course of verbal and written

warnings clearly outlining the undesirable behaviour and clearly outlining the preferable behaviour. There should also be consistency. One member should not receive severe discipline while another member gets milder or no discipline for the same behaviour.

It is also very advisable to hang on to any and all information concerning your performance - in other words, document. Keep a file, electronic and paper, with all performance communication between you and your manager - both positive as well as negative. If you would ever be in a position to file a grievance, it is always better to have too much information than not enough.

Lastly, it is always a good idea to periodically check your personnel file to ensure that everything contained is relevant and appropriate. You can contact your Human Resources generalist to review your file. According to Article 32 of our Collective Agreement, "An employee may review his or her personnel file, provided that two (2) working days prior notice is given to the appropriate local Human Resources Office."

■ Lillian Lanca, Grievance Co-Chair

#### Carleton U continued from page 4

Duncan Watt boasted about the University's 'very prosperous' financial position, announcing \$60 million in construction projects in a televised interview."

"We're also dealing with quality of life issues such as excessive workloads, resulting in excessive amounts of overtime and increasing difficulties in the ability of members to take leave entitlements," says Martin. "Management is pushing for a strike and showing a total lack of respect for our members."

CUPE has requested a "No Board" report from the Ministry of Labour which starts the countdown to a legal strike or lockout. The official strike vote will take place September 1 - 2. Martin is confident of the outcome because her members have given the negotiating committee a strong strike mandate of 87% just prior to conciliation.

■ P. C. Choo

## CAT: Your Union Needs You!

■ On August 12, members of the newly formed Contract Action Team (CAT) gathered at Steelworkers Hall for their first meeting to begin the process of building a network of communications between the union and its membership.



The purpose of this network is to ensure that we negotiate a strong new contract when our current contract expires on June 30, 2005.

I was asked by a member of the Executive to be an Area Coordinator for our Rehabilitation Sciences Building at 500 University. Seeing this as an opportunity to contribute to my union and our members in a significant way, I accepted and attended the meeting to learn what I could do to support the CAT team.

At the meeting, we were asked to form into groups and we spent most of the meeting reviewing lists of our membership across the

university for accuracy and identifying colleagues who might also be approached by our union to join and extend CAT's base of support.

Briefly, this is how the CAT concept works. An Area Coordinator for each building will be the primary contact for the union executive and negotiation team. S/he is responsible for contact with a group of about 10 other co-workers within his/her building. When the area coordinators receive communications from union officers on the CAT organizing committee, they will disseminate the information to union members within their department, and to other CAT reps in their building, each of whom will then distrib-

- Failure to provide benefit coverage;
- Personal safety issues;
- Failure to provide breaks;
- Overtime/flex-time;
- Improper job classification;
- Assistance with return to work issues for members on leaves of absence (sick leave/maternity leave);
- Discipline/coaching meetings.

We, of course, never meet with the university without our members' prior consent. If we are unable to resolve an issue to our members' satisfaction, filing a grievance can be a very useful tool in achieving results.

### Recent Grievances

Our stewards and unit chairs have been involved in quite a number of grievances recently. These include:

- Failure to follow grievance process. In this instance, a manager negotiated a settlement with a member after the grievance was filed;
  - Improper pay (casual). The university was replacing staff-appointed work with a casual on a short-term basis. The university wanted to pay the casual member \$12/hour instead of the staff-appointed rate;
  - Removing duties from the Bargaining Unit;
  - Failure to provide one month's notice - a member received a notice of reorganization (12 weeks notice) but did not receive the one month's notice of the elimination of her position;
  - Improper reorganization (two occasions) - these are situations where the university is undergoing a reorganization in a particular area but is not following proper procedure;
  - Improper notice of layoff (two occasions);
  - Unjust discipline (a number of grievances);
  - Failure to pay overtime;
- Improper deductions on pay stubs (e.g. the university deducted too much money or failed to deduct for certain benefits);
  - Concerns over vacation allotment;
  - Helping casual bargaining unit members migrate to the staff-appointed unit;
  - Dealing with difficult managers (e.g. bullying behaviour);
  - Harassment (sexual);

ute this new information to his or her own department's union members.

By creating such a network, the union guarantees that its members are kept current, and we have the unique experience of really participating and becoming a part of the negotiation process.

**THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO GET INVOLVED.** If a member of the CAT organizing committee approaches you, please say YES, and JOIN our CAT Team. Remember your union needs you so that WE can win the best contract for ourselves. And it is also fun to work together with our union executive in such a dynamic collaborative way.

Other business was touched on with respect to the new contract. There will be a general meeting on October 13, which will require release time. It is expected that the negotiation team will be elected by then. Lunchtime meetings will also be arranged for discussions of the university budget, which will be a big part of the new contract negotiations this year.

The meeting ended with an enjoyable photo shoot of the new Contract Action Team with its members to date along with members of our union executive. Catch it in this issue! We hope our happy faces will entice you into coming out to support your union, too. We look forward to seeing you at the next CAT meeting.

■ June Rilett, Department of Occupational Therapy

- Failure to follow grievance process - settlement negotiated outside of grievance process.

If you have any workplace concerns, please contact a steward or unit chair in your area. The list of stewards and unit chairs is available on our website [www.uswa1998.ca](http://www.uswa1998.ca)

■ Ron Wener  
Co-Chair, Grievance Committee

### P.C. on G.C. continued from page 2

fy that confidence in meeting the exciting challenges and opportunities that currently face us."

That Iacobucci acknowledged the dedication of staff in his maiden speech is significant. This is in marked contrast to Birgeneau who conveniently forgot about U of T staff in a speech at a function in February celebrating the greatness of past and present women at U of T. (See 'Great Women, Great Omission', *Steeldrum*, Vol. 4, No. 2, April 2004.)

The new interim President wasted no time in getting down to business. The next day, he paid a courtesy call to our Local President, Allison Dubarry. Call me an optimist if you will but I think this augurs well for future relationships between the university and the union. This simple gesture spoke volumes about Iacobucci as a person. I believe that, given his background, he will be a fair-minded person who will listen to both sides before arriving at any conclusion. Don't get me wrong. There will be disagreements at times, confrontations even, between the university and the union. But I am hopeful.

■ P. C. Choo  
Governing Council

# Health and Safety FAQs

**Q** What if my concern isn't about an immediate danger, but something that should be addressed, nonetheless?

**A** Your first recourse is always to raise the issue with your supervisor. The university has a legal obligation to take all reasonable precautions to protect our health and safety, but each of us is responsible for identifying hazards and to work safely, using protective equipment and devices that have been provided.

**Q** What if my supervisor can't or won't address the issue?

**A** Workplace hazards can be addressed through your building Joint Health & Safety Committee (JHSC). This committee has been designated by law to address health and safety hazards in each workplace. It is composed of equal numbers of workers and management representatives, and is responsible for conducting regular workplace inspections. Each committee will have at least one certified member of our union who has received special training in the laws that govern occupational health and safety. The certified JHSC worker, and he or she has special duties under health and safety laws. You can raise any health and safety issue not being addressed by your supervisor with your certified worker, or any member of your JHSC.

**Q** How do I find my worker members of the JHSC?

**A** You should be able to locate your worker JHSC members either through the listing of their names and locations on your building Health and Safety bulletin board, or through the web site of the U of T Environmental Health and Safety office. If your workplace does not have a bulletin board and/or you cannot find your building JHSC on the map, please contact the union office.

**Q** How do I report an accident?

**A** Reporting of accidents, injuries, and incidents that have the potential to result in personal injury is crucial!

When immediate medical attention is needed, or to report a fire, phone 911

To notify the University of Toronto St. George Campus Police, phone 416-978-2222

To notify the Scarborough Campus Police, phone 416-287-7333

To notify the Mississauga Campus Police, phone 905-569-4333

To report chemical spills, phone 416-978-7000.

To report radioactive spills, phone 416-978-2374.

To report facilities emergencies and urgent repairs (from floods to missing ceiling tiles in designated asbestos buildings), phone 416-978-3000

■ This is the second installment in a two-part series on Health and Safety in the Workplace.



**Q** Does anything have to be done after an emergency/first aid call is made, or when a call is not made?

**A** Reporting of accidents and occupational illnesses involving death, critical injury, lost time, or health care by a medical practitioner is required under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act. At U of T, reporting of accidents to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) is done centrally through the Office of Environmental Health & Safety (OEHS). Your department has an obligation to make a report to the OEHS.

When there is no lost time from an accident, injury or incident, a report to OEHS (and subsequently to WSIB) may not be made to the OEHS. It is important for each of us to assure that any accident, injury or incident is reported. Proper reporting means creating a paper trail that may be useful or necessary in the future, should you require medical attention or accommodation later on. It also means that incidents that result from hazards in the workplace can be addressed before they cause injury. This information will be recorded at OEHS, and relayed to your local area JHSC and to our Central Health and Safety Committee. Of course, all information is treated confidentially. Report any accident, injury or incident to your supervisor and to OEHS. Make sure your doctor knows about the kind of work you do and tell her/him about any illness or injury that you think may be work-related.

**Q** What is meant by my "Right to Know"?

**A** If there are unsafe materials used in your workplace, you have the right to know about them. You also have the right to know about any dangerous machinery or anything else in your job that can hurt you or make you sick.

**Q** What is meant by my "Right to Participate"?

**A** The Occupational Health and Safety Act has set out our rights to participate in health and safety inspections, recommendations and decisions in the workplace. We participate through our building-based Joint Health & Safety Committees (JHSCs) or Health & Safety Representatives.

**Q** How do I get involved?

**A** We are always looking for folks who want to get involved in health and safety. If you have questions about getting involved, speak to a member of your building JHSC. You can mention your interest to union members on your local area JHSC, or just call the union office!. Vacancies occur on JHSCs when members take positions that require a move to another building, when members decide to step down, or when members leave the University. When vacancies occur among our union members, the Local puts out a call, through SteelDrum, our website, and by posting on our union bulletin board. If you have questions about the duties or time commitment of our JHSC worker members, talk with members on your building committee...or contact your Health and Safety person in the union office.

**Q** What if I can't sit on my building JHSC, but I still want to be involved?

**A** Health and Safety is important to us all...but not everyone can sit on a JHSC. If you want to be involved in health and safety, get involved with our Local 1998 Health and Safety Committee. We meet monthly to share information on health and safety and environment issues, those that affect us locally, and those that need to be addressed through participation in city-wide, provincial, national and international campaigns. If you are interested, contact your Health and Safety person in the union office!

■ Mary Ann DeFrancis & Sean Kearns  
Co-Chairs, Health & Safety Committee



# Call for Nominations for U of T Staff-Appointed & Casual Negotiating Committees

Steelworkers Local 1998 is preparing for contract negotiations with the university and wants you to be involved. We need your support and ideas in order to get the best collective agreement possible.

Local 1998 is accepting nominations for positions on the Negotiating Committees for the Staff-Appointed and Casual units. The elections will be held on **October 6, 2004**. Nominations and elections for the St. Michael's, Victoria and the University of Toronto Schools Negotiating Committees will be held separately at later dates.

### Eligibility

In order to stand for election, you must be a member in good standing. You must be nominated by another member in good standing either at the Local 1998 membership meeting on

Tuesday September 14, or in writing by submitting the attached nomination form by 5:00 p.m. on Friday September 10. Written nominations can be faxed to Christine Beckermann (Local 1998 Recording Secretary) at (416) 506-0640 or emailed to [c.beckermann@uswa1998.ca](mailto:c.beckermann@uswa1998.ca). Nominees must be present at the Local 1998 membership meeting on Tuesday September 14 to accept the nomination. Alternatively, they can send a written acceptance to Christine Beckermann by 5:00 p.m. Friday September 10.

There are three positions available on the Casual Negotiating Committee and twelve positions available on the Staff-Appointed Negotiating Committee. At least one of the Staff-Appointed positions must be from the Mississauga campus and one from the Scarborough campus.

### Nomination Form

Nominee: .....

Department: ..... Staff-Appointed ..... Casual .....

Phone Number: ..... Email Address: .....

Nominator: .....

Department: .....

Phone Number: ..... Email Address: .....

Signature of nominator: .....

\* NOTE: Please return this form to Christine Beckermann by 5:00 p.m., Friday, September 10, 2004.

contact info

## LOCAL 1998

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The Steeldrum is a member of:

