



GSU News

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GSU operations reviewed at membership meetings

Mid-November to early December is annual meeting time for the members of GSU's 16 Locals. In meeting rooms throughout Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba union members gather to review the running of their union and set the agenda for the following year.



Above: Raymore meeting (l-r) GSU Staff Rep Lawrence Maier, Dennis Seiben, Larry Schroh. Left: George Tillie (centre) registers for the Regina meeting with fellow Local 1 members.

Members attending the 2004 annual meetings receive updates on bargaining, grievance/arbitration work, organizing new groups into the union, GSU finances, union administration and the status of the GSU Defense Fund. In addition, as they have since 1996, members vote on continuation of the additional dues being paid into the GSU Defense Fund.

Local meetings also include discussion of the priority issues in each bargaining unit. Accordingly a considerable amount of time at the 2004 annual meetings has been devoted to pension issues in relation to the SWP/GSU Pension Plan.

On the good-news front, GSU General Secretary Hugh Wagner is reporting that union finances are in good shape, notwithstanding higher than anticipated arbitration, legal, pension research and organizing expenses. Wagner is cautiously

optimistic that a balanced budget can be achieved in the 2005 fiscal year without borrowing any substantial amount from the Defense Fund.



Joint Executive Council meets

GSU's Joint Executive Council (JEC) held its semi-annual meeting in Regina on October 26.

Comprising elected representatives from each of GSU's sixteen Locals, the JEC is responsible for overseeing the administration of the union.

On Oct. 26, JEC members reviewed union finances for the three completed quarters of the 2004 fiscal year and received updates on a variety of subjects including agreement renewal bargaining, pension plan bargaining, grievance/arbitration work, the GSU Defense Fund and the Star Tek organizing drive.

The JEC adopted two constitution amendment resolutions and a resolution to continue the



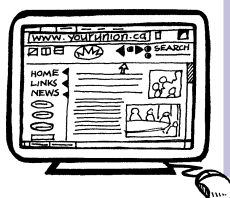
(L-r) GSU Vice-President Brendon Sayers, General Secretary Hugh Wagner, and Vice-President Mandy Windecker.

Defense Fund dues for another year. These resolutions are being voted on by GSU members attending Local membership meetings .

The Council also reviewed and approved the General Secretary's autumn report to the members.

The next scheduled meeting of the JEC will take place in early 2005 following completion of the annual audit and preparation of GSU's 2004 financial statements.

Check our web page.



www.gsu.ca

Upcoming Events

- ✓ **GSU Local membership meetings** - February 2005, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba.
- ✓ **GSU Defense Fund Board of Directors** - February 2005, Saskatoon.
- ✓ **GSU Joint Executive Council meeting** - April 2005, Regina.
- ✓ **2005 Annual SFL/CLC Spring School** - May 8 - 13, 2005, Saskatoon. Interested in attending? Contact the GSU Office.
- ✓ **9th Prairie School for Union Women** - June 12-16, 2005, Regina. Interested in attending? Contact the GSU office.



GSU News

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Please notify us if you change your address!

Union made! **CALM**
OF LABOUR MEDIA

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Labour's world

Call for artifacts

Do you have any health and safety-related objects tucked away? The Workers Arts and Heritage Centre in Hamilton, Ontario is developing a travelling exhibition about the struggle of Canadian workers to have a safe and healthy workplace.

Scheduled to open April 28, 2005 to mark the International Day of Mourning, the exhibition will be a thematic examination of how the history of workers' injuries and disease has been mirrored by improvements in the workplace.

The exhibition will also investigate how contemporary occupational health and safety is shaped by the status of the unions, the precarious nature of many jobs, trends in technology, and free trade in a global economy.

Items of interest are personal protective equipment (e.g. safety goggles) that may have been damaged, safety awards given to any Canadian businesses, placards from strikes over occupational health and safety, buttons with messages about workplace safety, photographs, posters about injury at work.

If you have or know of any such items contact Felicity Pope at fpope@sympatico.ca at the Works Arts & Heritage

Centre wahc@web.net
WORKlines/WAHC/
CALM

Discriminating against part-time employees

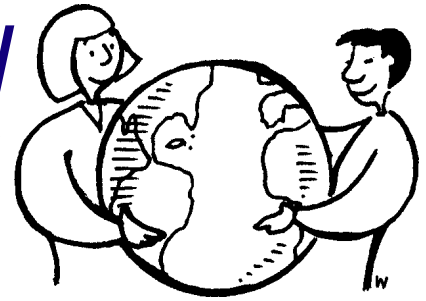
The Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) has told its part-time employees they cannot hold more than one part-time job with the region.

A crossing guard, for instance, working 20 hours a week, is prohibited

from picking up a second job as a cleaner for 20 hours a week. CUPE represents both groups of part-time workers.

CUPE rep Jacquie Bramwell says, "This flies in the face of what's happening out in the work world nowadays. It is well known that most new jobs in Cape Breton are part-time or casual jobs. So not only can these workers not find full time jobs, they're also being told by CBRM that they can't have more than one part-time job to make ends meet.

"We just had one of our cleaners apply for a crosswalk guard job



and was told she'd have to pick one or the other. This is the height of ridiculousness," says Bramwell.

CUPE/CALM



Rats!

U.S. building trades unions have

been proudly flying inflatable rats over construction sites where "rat contractors" are at work.

The first inflatable rat was used by a Chicago local and was named Scabby. Since then, rats have popped up at construction sites in Philadelphia, Las Vegas and other cities where contractors are refusing to pay union wages or to maintain health and safety standards.

Rats have been attacked, pierced and deflated — but a little duct tape, and the rat's back as good as ever.

December 6

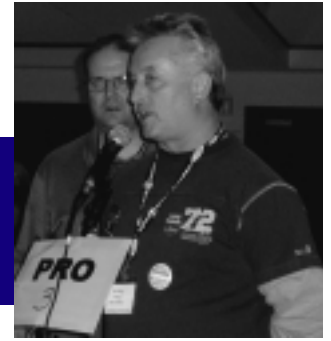
National Day of Remembrance & Action on Violence Against Women

December 6 marks 15 years since 14 young women were murdered at Montreal's Ecole Polytechnique because they were women.

Help end violence against women.

Send a postcard to the Prime Minister and remind him that his government needs to do more than just make promises to help end violence against women. It's time to act.

From October 27 to 30, 19 GSU delegates attended the 49th annual convention of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour at the Saskatchewan Centre of the Arts in Regina.



GSU resolutions debated at Saskatchewan's largest labour convention

GSU delegates were in attendance as more than 650 delegates from the trade union movement attended the SFL's annual convention.

Canadian Labour Congress Executive Vice President Marie Clarke Walker attended the convention and brought greetings. Ted Mansell from SEIU delivered a moving presentation on the serious danger of needlestick injuries to a variety of workers in the healthcare sector.

Minister of Labour Deb Higgins also addressed delegates. During her speech, she advised there would be legislation put in place to require newly-engineered safety needles in the healthcare sector, and she fielded questions from delegates, including gay marriage and implementation of the most available hours legislation.

GSU resolutions were among many resolutions debated on the convention floor. GSU Local 1.1's resolution requesting the convention be changed from an annual convention to a biennial convention was defeated after much debate. Convention delegates determined that meeting once a year as a group of trade unionists to keep in close contact was essential. Many expressed the view that convention was a great place to interact with each other, boost morale, and recharge their batteries. In the opinion of delegates, an annual convention was a necessary step to offset the constant contact employers have with employees.

On the final morning, elections were held for the offices of

Top: GSU's General Secretary Hugh Wagner speaks to a resolution at the SFL Convention.



Bottom: Convention delegates rally against poverty in front of the Saskatchewan's legislature building.

SFL President, Treasurer, Secretary and Executive Council. Larry Hubich was elected President by acclamation. Marvin Meickel of CUPE and Wanda Bartlett of RWDSU were also elected by acclamation to the

offices of Treasurer and Recording Secretary.

GSU's convention delegates elected Lily Olson and Mandy Windecker to the union's Vice-President and Alternate on the SFL Executive Council.

GSU Defense Fund Board meets

The Board of Directors of the GSU Defense Fund met in Regina on November 24, 2004.



Clockwise from far left: Michael Raine, Michelle Holden, Blaire Temple, Brent Pelechaty, Bryan Hammer, Wayne Hanna, and Hugh Wagner met at GSU's Regina office on Nov. 24.

The Board is comprised of five elected members of the union who are not representatives on GSU's Joint Executive Council.

The Defense Fund Board consists of Bryan Hammer (SWP-Unit1A), Blair Temple (Unit 1A), Brent Pelechaty (Unit 1A), Wayne Hanna (Unit 1B) and Michelle Houlden (WP-Unit1.2). The Directors are elected for two year terms at biennial GSU Policy Conventions.

At the Nov. 24 meeting the Board reviewed GSU finances, the Defense Funds assets (currently

slightly more than \$3 million) and the investment strategy of the Fund. The Board plans to structure the Fund's investments with the objective of eliminating the current additional dues being paid by GSU members by the end of 2005.

The Nov. 24 meeting included a presentation from Leith McKay on behalf of Investors Group, which administers about one third of the Defense Fund investments.

UFCW wins Wal-Mart appeal



A November 23 Saskatchewan Court of Appeal decision has paved the path for resuming hearings on the United Food and Commercial Workers' efforts to unionize Wal-Mart's Weyburn store.

Earlier this year, UFCW's certification application hearings hit a snag. Wal-Mart objected to a Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board (SLRB) subpoena seeking its internal company documents, such as one referred to as *Wal-Mart - A manager's Toolbox to remaining union free*.

The Saskatchewan Court of Appeal's Nov. 23 decision overturns an earlier ruling by Court of Queen's Bench Justice George Baynton, and forces Wal-Mart to provide internal documents to the SLRB. In turn, the SLRB will review the information and determine if it is relevant to be formally admitted as evidence.

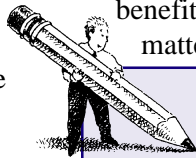
"We were very pleased to get the decision and are very happy with how thorough it is," said Paul Meinema, UFCW Local 1400 President. "Now we want to move it ahead and get these people certified."

Wal-Mart has 60 days to launch an appeal of the Nov. 23 decision to the Supreme Court of Canada. Meinema expects the retailing giant will appeal, but says Wal-Mart's delaying tactics won't keep the union away long term.

"People at Wal-Mart clearly want to belong to a union," Meinema said. "They understand the benefits. It's just going to be a matter of time until they break

through that barrier and become unionized."

UFCW has also applied to represent Wal-Mart workers in the retail giant's North Battleford location. Meinema said UFCW has been contacted by employees at three other Saskatchewan Wal-Marts, but declined to reveal the store locations.



GSU can provide commuted value estimates for SWP/GSU Pension Plan members - free of charge.

GSU members wanting to use this new union service are asked to contact either Lawrence Maier or Dale Markling at the union office. Information is also available on GSU's web page - www.gsu.ca



IN MEMORIAM

Labour community mourns loss of Len Wallace

Long-time labour leader Len Wallace passed away peacefully on November 8th.

Len was active in the fight to establish free medicare in Saskatchewan, a founding member of the Regina Community Health Clinic, and a Regina *Leader-Post* legend for his charitable donation creativity to the newspaper's Christmas Cheer Fund.

Helping working people make a decent living by building a strong union was very important to Len. He worked for the Retail Wholesale and Department Store Union most of his life and he loved the work. Throughout his life, his counsel was sought by the province's political

and labour leaders, as well as his friends and his children.

Len retired from RWDSU in 1989, but he continued to write articles and to represent the union on arbitration boards. His concern for others was apparent until the very end.

Len will be remembered for many things - his leadership, integrity, generosity, dry sense of humour, loving nature, and his abiding belief that each of us has the ability - and the responsibility - to work to make the world a better place.

Our thoughts and our sympathy are extended to Len's family and friends.



Season's Greetings & Best Wishes for the New Year

from the Officers and Staff of Grain Services Union.