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THE

# ADVOCATE

Prince Edward Island Union of Public Sector Employees

## 50th Annual Convention!

***Celebrating our Past...  
Growing into the future!***

**PEI UPSE Proud!**

**PEI UPSE Proud!**

***PEI UPSE is proud to represent over 5000 members in both the public and private sectors.***

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THE ADVOCATE is published by the P.E.I. Union of Public Sector Employees for distribution to its members. In pursuing the goals of effective, democratic unionism, members are urged to use this newsletter as a forum to exchange opinions, information and ideas through the submission of letters, articles, cartoons, photographs and other vehicles of expression. In this way, we can **Communicate** with each other, **Educate** ourselves about what is happening and why it is happening and **Advocate** a course of cooperative action that is beneficial to this union, its members and the society we inhabit.

### Submissions should be addressed to:

The ADVOCATE, c/o PEI UPSE, and bear the name, address and telephone number of the contributor. Material printed with a member's signature does not necessarily reflect the views of this union or any of its elected officers or staff.

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## McGuinty - responsible for biggest wave of layoffs in Ontario since the Mike Harris era

*"The lesson of the Mike Harris era is that cuts to public services hurt us all," said Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) President Warren (Smokey) Thomas.*

The Liberal government of Premier Dalton McGuinty issued the first layoff notices on June 14, 2011 in what will become the biggest wave of job losses in the Ontario Public Service (OPS) since the Mike Harris era.



*"The lesson of the Mike Harris era is that cuts to public services hurt us all," said Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU/NUPGE) President Warren (Smokey) Thomas. "In 2003, Dalton McGuinty was elected to turn the page on eight years of destructive cuts that led to the systemic collapse of many public services and contributed directly to the death of seven people in the Walkerton water tragedy."*

*"Those who ignore history are destined to repeat it," Thomas said. "These layoffs and the ones to come will hurt Ontario."*

The 274 layoff notices issued in June 2011 are the start of a process that will cut 1,900 jobs by March 2012. Among the program cuts are several that will jeopardize public finances and public safety, including:

- the province will stop verifying that local governments delivering millions of dollars in social assistance are doing so in accordance with legislation;
- the province will cut staffing that monitors collection agencies by 20 per cent; and
- there will be 57 layoffs in the Ministry of Environment which will cut technical expertise in water safety and air quality.

Programs helping businesses, protecting consumers and supporting adults with developmental disabilities will be hit hardest in this first wave of cuts. "Today is the first of many dark days ahead for the dedicated employees of Ontario's public service," Thomas said. "We will use all resources at our disposal to fight back. We will make these cuts an election issue."

NUPGE

## Don't commit suicide pact

FOXCONN, THE Chinese company that makes iPhones and iPads for Apple, is forcing workers to pledge that they won't commit suicide.

If workers take their lives regardless, their families can't sue the company for more than the legal minimum in damages.

At least 14 workers have killed themselves in the last 16 months at Foxconn factories, where workers get one day off every two weeks and can't sit down or talk to each other during 12-hour shifts.

Foxconn installed nets between its dormitories last year after a string of suicide leaps.

CALM

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# President's Perspective

## Greetings Brothers and Sisters:

Another busy summer is behind us and the fall is quickly approaching. We have been very busy finalizing many of our expiring collective agreements. This year alone your union completed bargaining for twelve (12) of our fifteen (15) bargaining units. Even though your employers indicated that their purses were thin, PEI UPSE with the support of your elected representatives received comparable improvements to all collective agreements, with some exceeding expectations. Our ability to represent our members and ensure our members get what they deserve at the various tables is what we do best. Congratulations to all team members for a job well done.



Shelley Ward, President  
PEI Union of Public Sector Employees

The union has also been very busy organizing. We have added to our family two new bargaining units. Whisperwood Villa in Charlottetown has successfully completed their first collective agreement. We welcome them and are very excited to have them join our family. We also have been successful in having employees from the Dr. John M Gillis Memorial Lodge join the PEI UPSE family. Thanks to Cathy MacKinnon (Resource and Organizing Officer) for assisting these employees in selecting the PEI UPSE as their union of choice. Presently Andrew Jack Labour Relations Officer has spent two days with the team in preparation for their upcoming bargaining. We wish them good luck.

There has been much talk about the economic down turn and the effects it has had on many of us. Everyone has their own opinion

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on what is going on and how bad it really is. The question is who do you listen to? What is for sure is that we have seen many attacks on the public services, locally and nationally. These attacks have occurred as a result of our governments carrying deficits and then blaming these deficits on the public services. We have the Harper government making cuts to vital services. One of these many cuts has resulted in rural PEI losing good paying government jobs. Locally, we are experiencing cuts to the public services as a direct result of a new initiative called "Vacancy Management". The question that needs to be asked is - what is going to be left when governments have finished cutting services? Who will be delivering these vital services, who will be paying for these services, and who will be reaping the benefits? The writing is on the wall. If Canadian's think that times are tough now we better brace ourselves for the future. Presently we have a system whereby public services are delivered by government employees paid by our taxes. What appears to be happening is that these same public services are being downloaded to the private sector to be delivered with a price tag attached to them.

The PEI Union of Public Sector Employees was incorporated in 1961. At that time we were referred to as servants of the people but as time progressed we grew into the union we are today. As an association we began organizing all public employees to stand as one, in an effort to improve the working conditions of our members and protect the communities we live in. One of the fundamental principles of the proclamation that the PEI Union of Public Sector Employees signed is that public services must be accessible to all citizens, no matter where they live, and

regardless of their social and economic status. Presently some rural government services are on the chopping block. In these challenging economic times we are facing very bad decision making on both the federal and provincial fronts. Good paying jobs delivering public services has a direct impact on the economic development of our communities and small business. Why would our governments want to mess with a chance at prosperity during these hard times?

As PEI UPSE members it is our time to stand up for our communities and the services we provide to them. It's time that we speak out about how important you are to your community and what we can do if we all work together to make our communities and our Island a better place for everyone to live. We can no longer afford to live in fear to protect what we are entitled to have as Canadians under the Charter of Rights.

As the largest public sector union on PEI, your union is celebrating 50 years of holding conventions in this province. We are celebrating the achievements we have made for our members and for our communities. Members from all over the Island will join together in this celebration which will take place in mid-November. Getting back to the basics and showing our history will give a clear indication to the delegates just how proud we are of our accomplishments over the past fifty years - and imagine what we can do in the next 50! We encourage any member in good standing to come and join us at your convention.

In Solidarity,  
Shelley Ward, President  
PEI UPSE

# All Together Now

## PEI UPSE forges ahead

### Campaign has first anniversary

The National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) *All Together Now* campaign marked its first anniversary with Champions 4 Change from across the country gathering in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

For two days, June 25 and 26, activists shared their experiences, evaluated the campaign and planned the next phase.

James Clancy, NUPGE national president, kicked-off the conference Saturday morning by welcoming Champions to Halifax and thanking them for their hard work over the last year.

"The All Together Now messages of promoting quality public services, respecting the workers that provide them and fixing our tax fairness problem have resonated within our union membership and with members of our communities across the country and even across borders," said Clancy. "The fact that tax fairness is even being debated in the public forum is due in large part to the hard work of our Champions 4 Change."

On Friday evening the Champions joined locked-out members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) on a picket line to show their support and solidarity against back-to-work legislation brought in by the Harper government.

Our job is clearly not done yet," said Clancy. "We still have a lot of work ahead and we know that with the support of our Champions 4 Change we'll reach our goals."

Participants gained insights and inspiration from various speakers such as tax policy expert Professor Neil Brooks. They also heard from panelists from the U.K, the U.S and Canada who provided an international perspective on the challenges facing public services and tax fairness after the global recession.



Left to right: Larry Brown (National Secretary Treasurer, NUPGE), Paul Nowak (Head, Organization and Services Dept. at the Trades Union Congress), Elaine Bernard (Executive Director of the Labor and Worklife Program at Harvard Law School), James Clancy (NUPGE National President).

Champions also spent time in various workshops building their skills and developing signature products which will be used during the next phase of the campaign.

With a Harper majority government already beginning its assault on public services and workers, and with multiple provincial elections in the next few months, Champions are looking to further engage in the issues, become more active and creative, and to broaden the campaign's reach into communities and workplaces not yet involved.

NUPGE

### President Ward discusses ATN campaign with board

President Ward delivered a presentation to PEI UPSE's board of directors on Wednesday, July 27, 2011 discussing the importance of the second phase of the All Together Now (ATN) campaign.

She talked about the attack on organized labour that elites and government have launched and warned members that we are all in this together. Prime Minister Harper has begun a series of cuts in the public sector that will amount to \$20 billion between now and 2015. 300 workers at Environment Canada have lost their jobs as well as 30 workers in Eastern PEI who were processing EI claims. Meanwhile Harper has hired a private consulting firm at the cost of \$90,000 per day to tell the government where to cut! This is the beginning of the wave. Ward also commented on the McGuinty government in Ontario which will cut 1900 public service jobs over the next year.

In our own province Premier Ghiz has introduced a Vacancy Management initiative to ensure the payroll is significantly reduced which will result in fewer essential public services for Islanders.



President Shelley Ward (PEI UPSE) talks about phase 2 of the All Together Now Campaign!

Ward said "we must stick together in these tough times and promote the value of our jobs and the services we provide to Islanders. Governments have a responsibility to deliver public services and we must all work together to hold these governments accountable."

# Pension Security?

As many PEI UPSE members know, this summer the union office received an anonymous letter which indicated that:

“the current Provincial Government is considering cutting pension benefits to civil servants, nurses and



teachers after the October 3rd provincial election.” Ultimately, PEI UPSE does not know whether the provincial government intends to diminish provincial government employee pensions. Regardless, the union will continue to take this issue seriously, and, as President Ward stated in an August letter to PEI UPSE members concerning this issue: “We prefer to be proactive as opposed to be reactive. . . .”

Lending support in the effort to keep government accountable in regard to the maintenance of the pension plan as it currently exists is essential for PEI UPSE members and its leadership. It is equally important that PEI UPSE members be informed about the pension plan that they are contributing to and will be waiting for them upon retirement. Many assume that they have a good pension plan and they are correct in their assumption.

The provincial government employee pension plan began in 1945 when the Civil Service Superannuation Act was put in force. The pension plan was and is indexed based on increases in the Consumer Price Index therefore ensuring protection of its value over time. As early as 1972, the legislation established a maximum increase of 8% per year.

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Amendments were made to the Act to lower the maximum inflation adjustment to 7% for the year 1993. The following year, the maximum was lowered to 6%, the level at which it is currently. The provision which provides for “indexation” is section 8(4) of the Civil Service Superannuation Act (RSPEI, 1988, C-9). (<http://www.gov.pe.ca/law/statutes/pdf/c-09.pdf>)

(4) The Minister shall annually on or before March 31, increase the pension or allowance being paid under this Act to any person by the percentage increase in the Consumer Price (all items) Index for Canada (1981=100) for the previous year, subject to a maximum increase of six percent.

This provision guarantees that, relatively speaking, the value of a pension remains constant over time, including times of significant inflation (up to 6% per year).

As you can see below, the Government has made annual adjustments to the pension for the cost of living in 1990.

(see <http://www.peicssf.ca/index.php3?number=1023321&lang=E>)

A Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) is applied each April 1 at the rate of increase in the Canada All-Items Consumer Price Index to a maximum of 6%. This adjustment is to protect members against inflation.

Year	COLA (%)
2011	1.80%
2010	0.30%
2009	2.30%
2008	2.20%
2007	2.00%
2006	2.20%
2005	1.90%
2004	2.80%
2003	2.20%
2002	2.60%
2001	2.70%

2000	1.73%
1999	1.00%
1998	1.60%
1997	1.60%
1996	2.10%
1995	0.20%
1994	1.80%
1993	1.50%
1992	5.60%
1991	4.80%
1990	5.00%

The Civil Service Superannuation plan is only one part of a retiree’s or potential retiree’s financial plan. PEI UPSE hosts a retirement information session for its members annually. At the session, potential retirees are encouraged to consider their financial plan and are given information on the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and other sources of retirement income.

All Canadians who have paid into the CPP will receive some retirement benefits from the federal government in their later years. PEI UPSE, in partnership with its national union (NUPGE), have supported necessary improvements to the CPP.

Federal/provincial/territorial discussions on improving the CPP had been progressing well until recently due to Alberta’s support for a private sector voluntary pension plan. Unfortunately, the federal government is considering the less satisfactory alternative proposed by Alberta. The federal and provincial governments need to be pressured to get back on track and implement the improvements. PEI UPSE will continue to do what it can at the provincial level to ensure that the position of the PEI government remains supportive of the effort to improve the CPP.

# 50th Annual Convention

## Agenda

### **PEI Union of Public Sector Employees 50th Annual Convention**

Delta Prince Edward Hotel - Queen Street, Charlottetown

#### Agenda

#### **Thursday, November 17, 2011**

- 5:30 P.M. - Registration for 2011 PEI UPSE Annual Convention
- 6:30 P.M. - Administrative Announcements - Simon Hashie, Secretary Treasurer, Harassment Policy - Karen Jackson, Second Vice President
- 6:45 P.M. - Call to Order, O Canada, Solidarity Forever  
Credential Committee Report  
Introduction of Fraternal Guests  
Introduction of Board of Directors and Staff  
Moment of Silence in Respect of Deceased Members  
Adoption of Agenda  
Adoption of Rules of Order  
Adoption of Elections Procedure  
Minutes of 49th Annual Convention  
Report on 2010 Resolutions
- 7:15 P.M. - Video - Union Presidents
- 7:30 P.M. - President's Report and Address
- 8:00 P.M. - 2010-2011 Committee Reports
- 8:30 P.M. - 2011 Constitutional Resolutions
- 9:00 P.M. - Adjournment

#### **Friday, November 18, 2011**

- 8:30 A.M. - Registration
- 9:00 A.M. - Opening
- 9:15 A.M. - Call to Order  
Introduction by Karen Jackson, 2nd Vice-President  
Guest speaker - Armine Yalnizyan, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives "Do we need unions anymore?"
- 10:00 A.M. - Credential Committee Report  
2011 Resolutions
- 10:30 A.M. - Break
- 10:50 A.M. - Presentation - "Why Unions Matter" - 50th Anniversary Committee
- 11:00 A.M. - Auditors Report  
- 2011-2012 PEI UPSE Budget
- 11:30 A.M. - 2011 Resolutions
- 12:00 P.M. - Lunch (all delegates on their own for lunch)
- 1:00 P.M. - Opening
- 1:15 P.M. - Introduction by John Searle, 1st Vice-President  
Guest Speaker - James Clancy, President (NUPGE)
- 2:00 P.M. - Credential Committee Report  
- 2011 Resolutions



## 50th Annual Convention

- 3:00 P.M. - Break - Celebrating our 50th Convention Year. Cake served in the foyer! "Celebrating our past ... growing into the future!"
- 3:30 P.M. - Presentation - All Together Now  
- Women of our Union - Video
- 4:00 P.M. - 2011 Member of the Year Award
- 4:30 P.M. - 2011 Resolutions
- 6:00 P.M. - Adjournment

#### **Evening Activities**

- 9:00 P.M. - Trivia with Todd Handregan

#### **Saturday, November 19, 2011**

- 9:00 A.M. - Registration
- 9:30 A.M. - Opening
- 9:45 A.M. - Pension (Video)  
- Introduction by Doug Ferguson, 3rd Vice President  
- Guest Speaker - Chris Roberts, Senior Researcher, Canadian Labour Congress "CLC Pension Security for Everyone"
- 12:00 P.M. - Lunch (all delegates on their own for lunch)
- 1:00 P.M. - Opening
- 1:15 P.M. - Credential Committee Report  
- 2011 Resolutions
- 2:00 P.M. - 2011 Executive Elections (1st Vice President, 3rd Vice President, Secretary Treasurer)
- 3:00 P.M. - Adjournment

#### **Evening Activities**

- 6:00 - 6:30 P.M. - Reception
- 6:30 - 9:00 P.M. - Banquet  
Retiree Recognition Awards  
Patrick Ledwell, Comedian
- 9:00-12:30 A.M. - Dance

# 50th Annual Convention

## Speakers

**James Clancy** is the National President of the 340,000-member National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE).

Known as a tireless advocate for public services and those who provide them, James



James Clancy, NUPGE President

Clancy is also an outspoken campaigner for a Canadian society which is caring and compassionate.

Defending the interests of working people has always had a much broader meaning to James than just standing up for 'bread and butter' issues at the bargaining table.

Throughout his years as a trade union leader, James has been a strong advocate of social unionism – the idea that trade unions should work within broader coalitions to advance social, economic and environmental justice for all people, regardless of union membership.

At Convention, James will speak about the current and ongoing attack on labour rights and how this is leading to a shrinking union density in Canada. He will also touch on how our tax regime is affecting the attack on public services and public service employees. James will conclude by talking about the ATN campaign and the goals of defending labour rights, fighting for tax fairness and promoting the value of public services.

**Armine Yalnizyan** is senior

economist at the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. She has written about labour markets and public finance for over 20 years since receiving



Armine Yalnizyan, CCPA, Senior Economist

her Masters of Industrial Relations from the University of Toronto. She authored a ground-breaking report in 1998 on income inequality in Canada, entitled *The Growing Gap*. She reprised the topic of income inequality after the national economy had experienced 10 years of strong economic growth, releasing the report *The Rich and the Rest of Us* in 2007.

Associated with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives since 1994 and the first Alternative Federal Budget, she joined the staff in 2008 to advance the work of the Inequality Project. Armine is a founding member of the Progressive Economics Forum and serves on the boards of the Canadian Association for Business Economics, the Canadian Institute for Population and Public Health and the Public Interest Advocacy Centre.

**Can unions save Canada?** Armine's presentation will challenge members to think about the role and relevance of unions today. She will look at the importance of the social unionist movement, the genuine challenge labour faces regarding temporary foreign workers, and the pivotal role public sector unions play in the house of labour.

**Chris Roberts** is a Senior

Researcher in the CLC's Social and Economic Policy Department, where he works on pensions, immigration policy, and other issues. He has taught courses for the CAW-McMaster certificate program, and spent several years



Chris Roberts, Senior Researcher Canadian Labour Congress

as a Professor of Labour Studies at York and McMaster Universities. As well as being a member of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers (CEP) union, he is a pension plan trustee and labour educator on pension issues.

Chris will speak to the current attack on public-sector pensions in the context of growing problems in Canada's retirement income system. He will discuss why the federal government's 'fend-for-yourself' approach is unable to meet the challenge of inadequate retirement savings and an ageing society, and why the CLC's Retirement Security for Everyone campaign is a far better plan for tackling our looming retirement crisis. Specifically, he will focus on the following six areas:

1. *The current attack on workers and their pensions, with a focus on public-sector workers*
2. *The broader context: an ageing society and inadequate saving for retirement*
3. *Canada's retirement income system: what's working reasonably well, and what isn't*
4. *The federal government's reforms and why they will fall short, with a focus on PRPPs*
5. *The CLC's campaign for retirement security for everyone*
6. *What we can do to win a more secure and decent retirement for all*

# 50th Annual Convention

## Executive Nominations

*As required by the Union's Constitution and Bylaws, nominations have been received by the Union Headquarters eighty eight (88) days prior to annual convention. Members nominated for any of the positions for election are entitled to address the delegates for a period of five minutes or less. In the event of a single nomination for any position the nominee will be elected automatically.*

### John Searle re-offers for First Vice President

Hello, my name is John Searle and I am seeking your support in my re-election as First Vice President at the 2011 Convention.

I have worked for 28 years as a Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Officer at Highway Safety and I have been an active member of UPSE. My union experience consists of:

- First Vice President - July 2007
- Executive representative on both the Constitution and Structure Committee and the Membership Services and Communications Committee
- Executive representative on the PSGIP Steering Committee
- Director of Local 5
- Steward of Local 5
- Delegate at the PEI Federation of Labour Convention
- Chairperson on the Insurance Committee



John Searle - First Vice President

My union education consists of:

- You and Your Union
- Directors Course
- Steward Level 1, 2, 3, 4 (all levels completed)
- CLC - Leadership Course & Mobilizing Course

With your support, I will continue to work hard for the members of our union.

In Solidarity,  
John Searle

### Doug Ferguson re-offers for Third Vice President

Greetings UPSE Brothers and Sisters:

My name is Doug Ferguson and I am seeking your support at Convention where I am re-offering for the position of 3rd Vice-President. I work at Hillsborough Hospital as a Resident Care Worker and have been an active UPSE member for 22 years. Currently, I am the Executive Advisor to the Education Committee and a Steward of Local 7 where I have the privilege of representing Addictions, Mental Health, Acute Care and Group Home workers.



Doug Ferguson, 3rd Vice-President

I have also been the Director and Chief Steward of Local 7 and have represented the Resident Care Workers on the Negotiation Committee in the most recent round of bargaining. Over the past 22 years I have taken advantage of UPSE educational opportunities to enhance my ability to represent all members. I have completed all 5 levels of Stewards training provided by UPSE, NUPGE and the CLC. By completing the Train the Trainer course, I now have the honour of passing along this knowledge to new Stewards by teaching Stewards Level 1 and 2.

Other courses I have completed are: Facing Management, Popular Economics, Health and Safety, Leadership and Dealing with Management. I believe in the importance of education for all UPSE members, so together we can combat the attacks labour is continuously facing. I, for one, will continue to stand up and protect our hard earned rights in this time of fiscal restraint and continuous attacks on organized labour. I firmly believe that knowledge is power and that by educating you, our members, we will continue to strengthen our union.

I have made the decision to re-offer for the position of 3rd Vice-President because I believe in our union and I look forward to working with you, the UPSE members, to grow and strengthen our union. With over 22 years of experience I feel I have the experience to serve you. I bring with me new ideas, confidence, enthusiasm, and a dedication to UPSE. I look forward to the challenges and opportunities ahead and will continue to work hard for you if I am re-elected.

In Solidarity,  
Doug Ferguson

# 50th Annual Convention

## Executive Nominations

### Terry Gauthier offers for Third Vice President

Greetings UPSE Brothers and Sisters:

My name is Terry Gauthier and I am seeking your support at Convention where I am offering for the position of 3rd Vice-President. Since becoming a member of the Union of Public Sector Employees (formerly Public Service Association) in 1980, I have been actively involved in various capacities, including regular attendance at annual conventions and local 14 meetings. What follows is a list of other Union activities in which I have been involved.



Terry Gauthier - Local 14

#### 1980-1989

- Member of two committees, one chaired by Fred Quinn and the other by Brenda Walker.
- Represented the Public Service Association at the Alberta Public Union convention (1986)

#### 1990-1999

- Member of Pay Equity Study for PEI public servants (1990)
- Member of Public Employees Classification Study team (1991-1992)
- Active participant in the protest of the 7.5% wage roll back (1994)

#### 2000-Present:

- Technical category representative at the negotiations table (circa 2000)
- Federation of Labour meeting (2002)
- National working group on forest fire fighter protection (Ottawa, October 2009)
- Classifications Appeals Board (2010- ongoing)
- "Retirement Security for Everyone" meeting (Charlottetown, May 2010)
- National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) triennial convention (June 2010)
- "All Together Now" campaign as a champion for change (Ottawa, October 2010)
- Presentations to various union groups for the "All Together Now" campaign (2010-ongoing)
- Two days of action for UPSE Mental Health Awareness Campaign (2011)
- Labour School (Antigonish for June, 2011)
- UPSE representative at the national "All Together Now" campaign meeting in Halifax, (June 24-26, 2011)
- CLC Convention in June 2011 in Vancouver- delegate

In Solidarity,  
Terry Gauthier

### Brother Hashie wins nomination for Secretary Treasurer at BOD meeting after Gotell steps down

Simon Hashie is PEI UPSE's new Secretary Treasurer. Brother Hashie, Director of local 5, won the nomination at the July 27, 2011 PEI UPSE board meeting. He accepted the position after being nominated by Steve Mollins (Director, Local 5) and Mike Lyriotokis (Co-chair, Stewards Council). Brother Hashie works for the Department of Transport and Infrastructure Renewal as a Parts Person. He has been a member of the PEI UPSE Board of Directors for the past four years. The PEI Union of Public Sector Employees wishes its former Secretary Treasurer, Kevin Gotell, all the best.



Kevin Gotell - Local 11



Simon Hashie - Secretary Treasurer

# 50th Annual Convention

## 50th Annual Convention

The PEI Union of Public Sector Employees is excited about your upcoming 50th Annual Convention. PEI UPSE has always believed in the democratic process. This shared value has sustained the union since its inception in 1945. The union was then known as PEI Public Servants Association or the Association for short. The Association in the early days functioned largely as a social club or as an association of government employees. Like our union activists today, these early members of the Association had a keen interest in justice and fairness in the workplace. In 1961 a new constitution and bylaws were accepted as well as a new name - the Public Servants Association, Inc. It has been 50 years since this great union was incorporated and we want to celebrate the achievements of the union and the members who have made a better workplace for all Islanders today.

At Convention you will learn about key moments in our history over the past 50 years through various displays and video presentations - events that created greater workplace democracy to provide working people a voice and an avenue to fair treatment and economic security.

It is paramount that we celebrate our progress, review our challenges and move confidently into the future. The 50th Annual Convention will remind us all of the hard fought for rights we have gained and the fact that these rights can be removed with the stroke of a pen.

This applies to what has been achieved through collective bargaining and to what has been achieved through social unionism in our great province. As union members and activists we can never afford to sit back and take our wages, benefits and working conditions for granted. In fact, today we are faced with some of the biggest challenges in our union's history. The trend for smaller government, minimal corporate tax, stagnating real wages and the attack on pensions is creating an environment where only the top 10% of income earners in Canada can get ahead. The middle class is shrinking and so is the public sector! As of June 2011 significant job gains were seen in the private sector, as employers added 94,500 positions. However, the public sector shrank by 71,500 jobs. This trend must be stopped - public services must not be withheld by any kind of discrimination, political bias, income test or bureaucratic red tape.

Unfortunately we have seen a reduction in public services right here in our own province with the Ghiz Liberals looking for ways to lower the deficit. Instead of adopting sound fiscal management practices the government has opted to blame the public service for its financial

woes. At the 50th Annual Convention keynote speakers will talk about a campaign to turn this all around, as well as how public sector unions are a key component in the fight to protect the dwindling middle class in these tough economic times.

## Contest / Trip Winner to be announced at Convention!

As mentioned in a previous Advocate, the union offered a special incentive that could send you and a person of your choice on an all-inclusive trip to a sunny destination in 2012. At the first local meeting you attended in 2011, you earned one chance to win. And each time you brought a new member to any following local meetings in 2011, you and the member you brought earned a chance to win. The contest draw will take place at PEI UPSE's 50th Annual Convention and the big winner will be announced.



**Local Directors have ensured that contest participants were recorded in the minutes of local meetings and copies of the minutes were filed with the secretary-treasurer. To be eligible to win, members must be in good standing, however, you do not have to be present at the 50th Annual Convention for the draw to win.**

# 50th Annual Convention

## Resolutions

*The following are summations of resolutions that have been submitted for consideration by this year's delegates. The intent of each resolution is articulated in the "Therefore Be It Resolved" line of each resolution.*

### Resolution Submitted by Local 14 *Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we lobby the Federal Government not to sign this agreement in its present form.

### Resolution Submitted by Local 14 *All Together Now Campaign*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that that PEI UPSE continue to work on and promote and gather valuable information toward the value of the public services and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that PEI UPSE continue to partake in Campaigns at both the provincial and national level.

### Resolution Submitted by Local 14 *Vacancy Management*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that PEI UPSE lobby the Provincial Government for complete clarification on this statement on vacancy management, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the review includes work load standards.

### Resolution Submitted by Local 5 *OHS Act*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that PEI UPSE lobby the government to amend the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* to include minimum and maximum temperatures for working indoors.

### Resolution Submitted by Local 19 *Pension (Retirees)*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Provincial Employee retirees' pension payments be based on the All-Items Consumer Price Index for PEI rather than the All-Items Consumer Price Index for Canada.

### Resolution (Constitutional) Submitted by Local 14 *Biennial Convention*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that PEI UPSE change the current convention format to a biennial, 2 day convention format, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this change shall commence in 2012 and the first PEI UPSE biennial convention be set for 2014.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Constitution Committee examine and bring to next convention, Nov 2012, all constitutional changes required to implement a 2 day convention, every two years.

### Resolution (Constitutional) Submitted by the Stewards' Council *Chief Steward Stipend Eligibility*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that article 12.4 of the PEI UPSE Constitution and BYLAWS be amended to read:

*12.4 (b) Failure to attend a minimum three (3) of the required four (4) meetings shall be considered as the Chief Steward resignation. The resigned positions shall be filled as outlined in Article 11.3.*

### Resolution (Constitutional) Submitted by Local 5 *Presidential Election*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Presidential Election return to be conducted at our annual convention, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 2012 Presidential Election shall be held at the 2012 annual PEI UPSE convention, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the constitution be amended to return the Presidential Election to convention, the procedures for the every three year election be amended and outlined in the constitution, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that there be a deadline of 120 days for receipt of nominations for the position of president in order to run for the position at convention.

# 50th Annual Convention

## Resolutions

### Resolution (Constitutional)

#### Submitted by the Stewards' Council

##### *Election of Local Stewards*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that article 11.6.6 of the PEI UPSE Constitution and Bylaws be amended to read:

*11.6.6 (iv) To be eligible for nominations for the position of steward, a member must be:*

- a. a member in good standing (as defined in preface 7)*
- b. be nominated by a member in good standing of their applicable local, and*
- c. received training as approved by the Stewards Council*

### Resolution (Constitutional)

#### Submitted by the Board of Directors

##### *Interpretation of loss of rights through discipline*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED Article 6 be amended to read:

*6.3 To participate in the union's business at the Local level, participate in the election of delegates to conventions, and participate in the election of President (Article 16.6).*

*6.7 To vote on the ratification of collective agreements affecting the member.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the following interpretation be included in the Preface:*

*8. A member who is no longer in good standing as a result of discipline shall be excluded from the membership rights described in Article 6, Sections 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, and 6.5.*

### Resolution

#### Submitted by Local 2

##### *Pension Plans and Retirement*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that PEI UPSE continue to pressure both the provincial and federal governments to ensure that everyone is able to have a secure retirement and to be able to live a dignified life.

### Resolution

#### Submitted by Local 2

##### *Health Care*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that PEI UPSE continue to support and pressure both the federal and provincial governments to put more money into the health care system to improve the quality of health of every PEI Islander.

### Resolution

#### Submitted by Local 3

##### *Home Support*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Home Support workers request that PEI UPSE raise awareness and lobby government to require Health PEI to provide roadside assistance for all Home Support workers, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this assistance costing shall be borne upon Health PEI.

### Resolution (Constitutional)

#### Submitted by the Board of Directors and Local 14

##### *Members of the Board of Directors Seeking Federal or Provincial Political Office*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that elected members of the Board of Directors wishing to seek nomination for political office indicate their intentions in writing, and thereafter be considered on a leave of absence from their elected PEI UPSE position until the nomination meeting, and the temporary vacancy be filled for the time period prior to the nomination meeting.

Should the member be successful in gaining the nomination, they will be considered to have resigned their PEI UPSE position and the vacancy will be filled according to the constitution.

### Resolution (Constitutional)

#### Submitted by the Board of Directors

##### *Board to have ability to postpone convention in the event of dangerous situation*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors be given the authority to postpone and/or reschedule convention should the safety of our delegates be at risk.

# 50th Annual Convention

## Resolutions

### Resolution (Constitutional)

#### Submitted by the Board of Directors

*Restriction on number of elected positions held*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that members, wherever possible, only hold one elected position, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED a new section 11.6.11 be added as follows:

*Wherever possible, a member in good standing shall only hold one of the following positions - Chief Steward, Director or Executive Officer.*

### Resolution (Constitutional)

#### Submitted by the Board of Directors

*Observers to pre-register for convention*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that members in good standing who wish to attend convention as observers indicate their wish in writing eighty-eight (88) days before convention.

### Resolution (Constitutional)

#### Submitted by the Board of Directors

*Definition of "in Writing"*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED a new definition be added to include electronic transmissions which reads:

9. "in writing" includes all written forms of writing, as well as electronic methods that can be printed.

### Resolution (Constitutional)

#### Submitted by the Board of Directors

*Member in Good Standing*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the wording in the definition be amended to read:

*Continuing membership in good standing in the union, with all the rights and privileges that this entails, may be granted to a member who is on approved leave of absence without pay, or who is laid off and has a right to return to work pursuant to existing legislation. Such a member shall retain a membership in good standing in the union provided that the member makes appropriate prior arrangements for the payment of dues as outlined in Article 7.1.3.*

### Resolution (Constitutional)

#### Submitted by the Board of Directors

*Prospective delegates to attend local meeting for election of delegates*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED a new section 13.3.6 be added as follows:

*For greater clarity, to be nominated for the position of voting delegate or alternate, members in good standing shall attend the meeting. If unable to attend the local meeting where nominations are to take place, members in good standing shall indicate their intention in writing to the Local Director(s). The signed letter of intention shall be presented at the local meeting to be accepted as a nomination for election.*

### Resolution (Constitutional)

#### Submitted by the Board of Directors

*Members absent from local executive elected office*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Article 11 be amended with the addition of a new subsection reading:

*11.6.10 Any member who is absent from the place of work due to injury, disability, approved leave of absence without pay, or who is laid off and has the right to return to work pursuant to existing legislation for more than a three month period and who has not made prior arrangements as outlined in article 7.1.3, shall be deemed to have resigned from their respective elected position. Notwithstanding Article 11.5.1, a local Director's absence shall also apply to these provisions.*



*Resolutions -  
50th Annual  
Convention!*

# 50th Annual Convention

## Budget

### 2010-2011 Budget

### Forecast to Aug.31, 2011

### Proposed Budget 2011-2012

Revenues	
Dues	2,170,500
* Social Fund	11,500
Building fund	29,500
Health Development and Training	0
Interest - Severance Pay	0
Other Income (Fun Day/Golf/etc.)	<u>0</u>
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>2,211,500</b>

2,170,500
11,500
29,500
0
0
<u>0</u>
<b>2,211,500</b>

2,129,500
11,500
29,500 1
30,000 2
0
<u>0</u>
<b>2,200,500</b>

Expenses	
Advertising	0
Audit	16,000
Bank charges and interest	1,500
Building and grounds maintenance	15,000
Building Mortgage	55,000
Cleaning	15,000
Dues and fees	90,000
Electricity	6,300
Fuel	6,000
Insurance	12,000
Office supplies and expenses	30,000
Equipment rental	35,000
Postage	15,000
Taxes	15,000
*Social fund	11,500
Telephone and fax	22,000
Travel - Staff	<u>11,000</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>356,300</b>

0
16,170
1,250
14,200
55,000
12,500
105,000
7,200
8,600
11,400
36,000
36,000
12,000
12,800
11,500
21,000
<u>7,500</u>
<b>368,120</b>

11,000 3
16,000
1,320
14,000
52,800 4
11,130
75,000 5
8,500
9,000
12,000
30,000
31,000
13,000
13,000
11,500
18,200
<u>10,000</u>
<b>337,450</b>

Employment	
Wages - staff	658,200
Wages - president	77,750
Benefits - President	13,000
Employee Benefits	139,000
Severance Pay Allocation	5,000
Early Retirement Fund Allocation	5,000
Training	<u>10,000</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>907,950</b>

610,000
76,820
11,150
115,000
5,000
5,000
<u>9,500</u>
<b>832,470</b>

639,900
71,060
11,000
123,000
5,000
5,000
<u>13,000</u>
<b>867,960</b>

Other	
Benevolent	1,500
Campaigns	65,000
Legal and Professional Fees	150,000
Newsletter (Advocate)	20,000
Photography	0
Reference Materials	15,000
Defense fund	<u>10,000</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>261,500</b>

1,500
65,000
278,800
16,900
500
14,300
<u>10,000</u>
<b>385,500</b>

1,700
60,000 6
150,000
17,000
500
15,000
<u>10,000</u>
<b>252,500</b>

# 50th Annual Convention Budget

	2010-2011 Budget	Forecast to Aug.31, 2011	Proposed Budget 2011-2012
<b>Committees</b>			
Ad Hoc	0	2,650	0
Annual Convention	70,000	67,795	156,900 <sup>6</sup>
Bargaining	104,000	52,275	80,000
Board & Chairpersons	80,000	60,300	80,000
Conferences	87,000	63,000	76,000
Constitution & Structure	3,000	3,700	4,000
Education	88,000	60,000	80,000
Executive Officers	70,000	68,500	70,000
Finance	8,000	4,700	6,000
Membership Services & Communication	3,000	8,400	7,700
NUPGE travel pool	50,000	34,000	48,000
Pensions & Insurance	16,000	15,500	20,000
Recreation/Public Relations/Convention	61,000	61,000	67,000
Staff Relations	7,500	8,070	4,200
Stewards Council	<u>33,000</u>	<u>28,800</u>	<u>30,000</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>680,500</b>	<b>535,240</b>	<b>729,800</b>
<b>Total cash inflow</b>			
	2,211,500	2,211,500	2,200,500
<b>Total cash outflow</b>			
	2,206,250	2,121,330	2,187,710
<b>Budgeted cash inflow (outflow)</b>			
	5,250	90,170	12,790

## Proposed Budget Footnotes: 2011-2012

- Revenue:** Health Development & Training Fund  
Administration and salary costs associated with the administration of the fund.
- Revenue:** Dues Building Fund \$29,500. As per the 2009 Annual Convention, twenty-five (.25) cents per member per pay directed towards the mortgage.
- Expenses:** Advertising  
Costs removed from individual committee budgets to one expense.
- Expenses:** Building Mortgage  
Actual cost \$52,800 - \$29,500 will be covered by Building Fund Revenue.  
An additional \$15,815 remaining in the budget was applied to the mortgage.
- Expenses:** Dues and Fees  
Elimination of dues to the P.E.I. Federation of Labour. The amount retained from January to August - \$22,529.52 was applied to the mortgage as per motion of the Board of Directors, which reduces the life of the mortgage by 1.5 years.
- Expenses:** Campaigns  
All Together Now will continue, P3 Campaign and other campaigns that may arise.
- Committees:** Convention  
50th Anniversary of Convention, \$156,900.00 as approved by your Board of Directors to hold a two and one half day (2 ½) convention for 2011.

# Bargaining Update and Grievances

The **following 3** grievances are linked under the model of care in Health and will be heard at arbitration all together on January 10 and 11, 2012.

Kim Turner will be the legal representative for PEI UPSE at Arbitration and Bruce Outhouse will be the Arbitrator.

## Corpus Sanchez

### *Policy Grievance (Health)*

The union contends that the employer failed to consult with PEI UPSE about the design process for the new model of care, the roll out plan, the additional job responsibilities for members, and the adoption of other recommendations that came out of the Corpus Sanchez report. PEI UPSE filed a grievance on November 6, 2009 citing violations of articles 1,4,7,26,30 and 42.01 of the collective agreement.

## Model of Care

### *Policy Grievance (Health)*

PEI UPSE filed a grievance on August 6, 2010 arguing that the employer violated articles 7,14.18, 30.02, 34.03,34.04, 36, 40 and 43 of the collective agreement. The redress the union seeks is that the employer cover all costs associated with LPN education resulting from the implementation of the new model of care. This includes expenses for courses, and text books which LPNs incurred as well as any time LPNs used from their time banks. This grievance also seeks a reimbursement of the PEI UPSE Training and Development fund where the fund was used for LPN education relating to the new model of care.

## Procedural Issues / LPNs

### *Policy Grievance (Health)*

This policy grievance filed April 7, 2011 contends that the employer's procedural guidelines for PEI UPSE health staffing reduction, transfer and reassignments during the implementation of the model of care violates articles 2,4,7,8,11,28,30,32 and 33 of the collective agreement.

The union seeks a remedy that recognizes that the collective agreement has been violated and ensures the employer will follow the collective agreement regarding implementation of any workplace changes, and that members who were negatively impacted as a result of these violations be provided their rights including compensation for any financial losses.

## Uniform

### *Policy Grievance (Health)*

All staff was subjected to a restrictive uniform policy including tight controls on what was considered appropriate footwear. The union filed a grievance in October 2009 and the issue is going before Arbitrator Bruce Outhouse on November 17, 2011.

## Vacation Carryover Payout

### *Policy Grievance (Health)*

Employees who did not use all their vacation were not permitted to carry said vacation over and as a result were having vacation time removed from them. The union filed a grievance under article 19.02 on April 14, 2010. This issue, along with a separate individual grievance of the same nature will be heard at arbitration on May 16 and 17, 2012 by Arbitrator Brian Bruce.

## Failure to Post

### *Policy Grievance (Civil Service)*

The employer failed to post 4 positions and as a result the union filed a grievance in July 2010 citing articles 38 and 39 of the collective agreement. The employer continued to delay posting the positions, however, after much discussion with the union a resolve was found and the positions were posted in June and July 2011.

## Failure to Post

### *Policy Grievance (Civil Service)*

The employer failed to post 4 positions and as a result the union filed a grievance in July 2010 citing articles 38 and 39 of the collective agreement. The employer continued to delay posting the positions,

however, after much discussion with the union a resolve was found and the positions were posted in June and July 2011.

## Harassment

### *Group Grievance (Holland College)*

Several Holland College employees were experiencing harassment from their supervisors. The union filed a group grievance under the harassment policy in the collective agreement in November 2009. Without any resolve being found through the grievance process the issue went to mediation arbitration on June 29, 2011. The outcome was positive for all parties concerned. The Union and the Employer will establish a joint committee to have ongoing discussions regarding matters which impact the working relationship between employees and management. Copies of the Holland College harassment policy and harassment –related provisions of the collective agreement will be posted in the workplace, and management will receive sensitivity training to ensure employees of the College act in a respectful and collegial matter in all interactions.

## Casual Workers

### *Policy Grievance (Civil Service)*

The union filed a policy grievance with the Department of Transportation, Infrastructure and Renewal based on articles 1,2,5,7,9 and 30. The union contends that casual employees in West Prince received recall letters that clearly stated they would be hired for 14 weeks at 40 hours per week. However, the employees were made aware that they would be laid off when they had attained 525 hours regardless of the number of weeks worked. The recourse the union was seeking was that the casual employees should be allowed to complete their 14 week terms at 525 hours. Due to successful negotiation with the employer the union was able to achieve a positive outcome for all affected members.

# Bargaining Update and Grievances

## Group Home Workers

### *Policy Grievance (Civil Service)*

The employer intended to significantly alter the agreed upon work schedules of group home workers. PEI UPSE filed a grievance in June 2011 citing article 44 of the collective agreement. With no resolve established through negotiations the union filed for arbitration on June 21, 2011 and was able to keep the current work schedule in place. The union is awaiting arbitration dates.

## Notice of Layoff

### *Individual Grievance (Civil Service)*

The employer was attempting to terminate an employee because the said employee was not able to perform his/her duties. The union argued that the employee should be accommodated at work and will provide the necessary medical evidence to support the accommodation. The union filed a grievance at level 1 on May 3, 2011 and at level 2 on July 27, 2011.

## Pesticide Regulatory Inspector

### *Policy Grievance (Civil Service)*

The employer hired a Pesticide Regulatory Inspector from the public for a term greater than 3 months. The union filed a grievance on May 3, 2011 under article 38 arguing that any position that goes beyond 3 months must be offered internally before it can be offered to the public. On May 20, 2011 the union requested arbitration dates and awaits this information.



## PEI UPSE Bargaining and Grievances.

## Bargaining Review

### Civil Service

The new collective agreement between PEI UPSE and the Civil Service / IRAC / WCB was signed on July 18, 2011. The union and the employer had moved to arbitration in December 2010, and Arbitrator Bruce Outhouse brought forward an award on February 22, 2011. The union subsequently sent the details of the award to all permanent PEI UPSE members working for the Civil Service, WCB, and IRAC.



Top (left - right): Mike Lyriotakis, Troy Warren, Maurice Rodgerson  
Bottom (left-right): Mary Beth Parsons, President Shelley Ward, Carol Anne Duffy

Some of the highlights of the new collective agreement include a general wage increase of 6% (April 1, 2010 1%, October 1, 2010 1%, April 1, 2011 1%, October 1, 2011 1% and April 1, 2012 2%), an increased training and development fund (\$250,000 to \$300,000), choice regarding travel allowances (straight km or monthly), and increased maximum leave per year (8- 10 days), and bereavement leave (4-5 days). Shop Stewards are meeting on September 28 to go over the changes to the new collective agreement and will subsequently distribute individual copies to the membership.

In regard to the ongoing casual issue, the union attended a very disappointing conciliation session on Monday, June 21, 2011 with representatives of the government. The meeting was part of ongoing efforts to finalize the portions of the PEI UPSE Civil Service collective agreement related to casual employees. The most important issue on the table was that casual employees should be allowed preference over the general public in open job competitions as long as minimum qualifications for the job are first met.

However, the government is against this idea because it would make patronage appointments and political control over the casual workforce more difficult. Their proposal was entirely unsatisfactory, and they were unwilling to negotiate with the union.

Further, the premier has refused to make the necessary amendments to the *Civil Service Act* regulations that would give an arbitration board the power to rule on casual issues. The government has decided to continue with its systematic discrimination against Civil Service casual employees by denying them their full collective bargaining rights. PEI UPSE is currently seeking legal advice on how to best proceed.

## Community Inclusions

### *Bargaining update*

The collective agreement between Community Inclusions and PEI UPSE expired on March 31, 2011. The union prepared and sent out demand forms in the spring and on July 25 met with the employer to bargain. A deal was reached including most significantly an 11% wage increase over 4 years that will bring employees more in-line with their industry counterparts. The new collective agreement has been ratified and signing will take place in October 2011.

# Bargaining *(cont.)*

As governments continue to chip away and sometimes completely dismantle rights and benefits that have been fairly negotiated it is important that members stand together in solidarity against these abuses. We have seen and won't forget what Harper is doing here in Canada to the public service and unions as witnessed in the recent postal strike and the latest cuts to Environment Canada and Federal EI program employees in PEI. We have also seen Premier Ghiz deny casual employees in PEI their full bargaining rights in order to retain political control of these employees.

As governments and big business continue to work together to diminish the labour movement and its fight for equality, it is more important than ever that we organize workers and prepare for the future. In the last year PEI UPSE has welcomed two new bargaining units under its wing in the form of Dr. John Gillis Memorial Lodge and Whisperwood Villa. PEI UPSE is on the move organizing and improving labour rights as all workers have the right to organize and bargain collectively.

## Dr. John M Gillis Memorial Lodge

### *Bargaining update*

On April 4, 2011 Gillis Lodge joined PEI UPSE. The union is proud to now represent Gillis Lodge's approximately 80 members. PEI UPSE conducted education sessions on bargaining with members from Gillis Lodge and distributed demand forms to members in July 2011. Bargaining representatives were also nominated in July. The bargaining team expects to meet with the employer in early October of 2011 to exchange packages and begin negotiations.

## Whisperwood Villa

### *Bargaining update*

On March 22, 2010 Whisperwood Villa's approximately 80 members joined PEI UPSE - the largest union in Prince Edward Island. On May 6, 2011 members ratified their first collective agreement with 93% in favour. The bargaining team consisted of Trudy Stewart and Louise May (Whisperwood Villa), and Troy Warren (PEI UPSE). Wages were among the most significant issues.



(left - right) Kevin Gotell, Louise Maye, President Shelley Ward, Trudy Stewart, Troy Warren

## Garden Home

### *Bargaining update*

The collective agreement between Garden Home Incorporated and PEI UPSE expired on June 29, 2010. Negotiations for a new contract between PEI UPSE and Garden Home took place on February 15 and 17, March 1 and 15, and May 5, 2011. The collective agreement was ratified in June 2011 with 63% in favour. Highlights of the agreement include general wage increases from 8-11% depending on job classification and the introduction of a weekend premium.



(left - right) Kevin Gotell, Arrika Dalton, Troy Warren, President Shelley Ward, Lynn Ingalls, Joanna Butterfield, Angela McMurrer

## Health

### *Bargaining update*

The collective agreement between PEI UPSE and the Department of Health will expire on March 31, 2012. PEI UPSE will distribute demand forms in the late fall of 2011.

## Grain Elevators

### *Bargaining update*

The collective agreement between PEI UPSE and Grain Elevators Corporation expired in March 2011. Negotiating teams have been to the bargaining table twice and wages remain the only stumbling block. A third round of negotiations took place in August 2011 and ratification packages were distributed on September 21, 2011 and the agreement was ratified with support of 77% of the membership.

## Early Childhood Education

### *Bargaining update*

PEI UPSE commends the Ghiz Government for establishing a wage grid in 2010 that has increased wages for PEI UPSE early childhood educators in PEI who have been traditionally underpaid for their important contribution to society. We await the government's announcement in March 2012 for improvements to this grid. The union will be recommending that government continue to enhance early childhood educator wages. Once the new wage grid is established PEI UPSE (through a wage reopening clause) will work with members to update collective agreements accordingly.

On January 10, 2011 the collective agreement between the Montessori Children's Centre and PEI UPSE was ratified with 100% support from the membership. The agreement included better sick leave benefits where a limited number of personal days can be used as well as the addition of a statutory holiday.

The collective agreement between the YMCA of Summerside Creative Learning Centre and PEI UPSE was ratified on March 4, 2011 with 100% support from the membership. The bargaining team was successful in attaining improved vacation, TIL, and leave time.

# Income Inequality

## Canadian Income Inequality!

Work hard and you'll get ahead. That's been the mantra of folks who prefer their governments small and their success big. But as two recent Conference Board of Canada reports show, that mantra is being cast into doubt. According to the voice of Canada's business establishment: "High inequality can diminish economic growth if it means that the country is not fully using the skills and capabilities of all its citizens or if it undermines social cohesion, leading to increased social tensions. High inequality [also] raises a moral question about fairness and social justice."

The top 10% of Canadian households have seen steady gains in income, but it wasn't until 2007 that most incomes finally nudged ahead of where they stood in 1976, in constant dollar terms. Then the recession hit. Yes, many goods are cheaper than they were a generation ago. But the list does not include higher education and home ownership, both of which lead to greater economic security. Those costs have zoomed past most people's income growth. Increasingly, Canadians have been pursuing these two dreams with ever-growing piles of debt. You don't need to work at the Bank of Canada to know that current levels of household debt offer a precarious foundation for sustained growth.

For most Canadians, the issue isn't that the rich are getting richer. The dilemma they face on a daily basis is getting and staying in the middle class. Canadians rightly believe that hard work should lead to upward mobility. They believe most people won't need help if the market is fair and they play by the rules - get educated, work hard. It's the promise of their own upward mobility that has many Canadians willing to brush aside the handsome gains enjoyed by the rich in the

past 20 years. But rising inequality, in good times and bad, makes it increasingly feel like the game is rigged, destabilizing foundational values and expectations. Some will call for change that doesn't much disturb the status quo: Improvements in productivity, or tax cuts for Canadians with the lowest taxable incomes. But truly reducing inequality requires either increased incomes or lower costs for the majority.

That means bosses and owners sharing more of the productivity gains and profits with workers; or paying more tax to expand affordable access to post-secondary education, public transit and child care, thus taking the pinch out of small paycheques. For those who feel these measures are too costly, they should consider the alternative. History has shown us, time and again: When too much is controlled by too few, something has to give. Continuously rising inequality is unsustainable. Everyone has a stake in fixing this. And the fix has no political colour. It is about the future of Canada and where we're heading as an economy, a society, a democracy. That's why even conservatives are worrying about Canada's rising income gap.

Say the word "inequality," and many people automatically assume you're talking about the poor. But a mounting body of research shows that, left unchecked, a growing income gap affects the rich, the poor and everyone in between. Economic growth used to be touted as the surest ticket to broad-based prosperity. But during the strongest period of economic growth in the past 30 years, between 1997 and 2007, a third of all income gains went to the richest 1% of Canadian tax filers.

Think that's normal? In the 1960s, the most recent comparable period of sustained growth, the richest 1% took only 8% of the gains from growth. Not since 1920, when Ottawa began to collect income data, have Canada's elites pocketed a larger share of the income gains from economic growth.

Top marginal tax rates for millionaires also are at rates last seen in 1920. Canada's top 100 CEOs have seen a 13% year-over-year jump in average pay, rising to an average of \$6-million. In contrast, the average earnings of employed Canadians has fallen to \$38,500. Things are better for full-time, year round workers, but not by much. Median earnings inched from \$44,100 to \$45,600 in inflation-adjusted terms - not over the last year, but since 1976.



Pause on that for a moment: Just \$1,500 more after 33 years. And consider that today's workers have invested much more time and money in their education than their counterparts from a generation ago. This storyline isn't in keeping with our traditions and international reputation as a land of opportunity for those with a little pluck and effort. The Conference Board's international review of the data shows that since the mid-1990s, Canada went from better-than-average to worse-than-average levels of inequality, slumping from 14th to 22nd place out of 32 OECD countries. Our decline was more rapid than even the United States, despite a decade of robust economic growth and record levels of job creation.

At the very same time, 15 OECD nations - including many of our peers, like Norway, Italy and the U.K. - were reducing income inequality. No matter your political leanings, most people understand that endless concentration of income, wealth and power is bad for the economy. After all, businesses rely on rising purchasing power of the many, not the few, to deliver growth and profits.

Armine Yalnizyan, Senior Economist, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

# Membership Opportunity

## PEI UPSE seeks members to represent the union at upcoming meeting:

The National Union is holding a two-day Young Workers Forum in Toronto on January 26 and 27, 2012. PEI UPSE is looking for a youth delegate (under 30) to attend this meeting in preparation of becoming more involved in the union's campaigns - especially the All Together Now campaign. The over arching theme "Public Services are an intergenerational contract," will engage young activists in addressing the economic crisis, fighting program cuts, campaigning for tax fairness and against deregulation. The All Together Now campaign, and the Robin Hood Tax component in particular, will provide a strong foundation for this work.

*The forum will also allow young workers to share their perspectives on a variety of issues including social media, involvement in political and social life, the balance between union and family responsibilities and the role of unions in creating social and economic change.*

**If you are interested in attending the Young Workers Forum please submit a one page paper outlining your experience within the union, e.g., your union education, activism, campaign involvement, and commitment to the union and its membership. Also, outline how knowledge gained at the forum can inform your continued involvement in the union upon your return. The successful member will receive notification from the PEI UPSE executive. Please submit your paper to the PEI UPSE office by Wednesday, November 9 at 4:00 p.m. (peiupse@peiupse.ca) or 902-892-5335 or toll free 1-800-897-8773.**

**Union  
involvement?**



## Public Libraries promote early literacy development

As September approaches, Members who are parents begin to prepare their children for school. Parents know the learning process starts at birth and there are many ways they can help their infants, toddlers and preschoolers with the six skills that lead to reading readiness.

Children who have these skills have less problems with reading when they start school. The process for families is easy and fun. Here's a no-stress cheat sheet to give your child a best start:

1. Read to your child (who loves to hear the sound of your voice); and she/he will enjoy books.
2. Look at the shape of words and help her/him to learn that print has meaning.
3. Practice lots of words in conversations with your child; the more words she/he knows the easier it is to recognize words and understand what is read.
4. Ask your child to tell you stories.
5. Teach simple rhymes and she/he will learn that smaller sounds build words.
6. Sing the ABC song and your child will soon know the names and sounds of letters.

**Let's go to  
the Library!**



All PEI Public Libraries offer Preschool Storytimes designed to promote early literacy development for children ages 3- 5 and modeling the six early literacy skills. All young children and their Moms and Dads are invited to enjoy storytime, and meet new friends at their local Public Library. Check the Public Library Service Program Guide (available free at your local library), or view the Program Guide at [www.library.pe.ca](http://www.library.pe.ca) for dates and times of a storytime near you.