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THE



ADVOCATE

Prince Edward Island Union of Public Sector Employees



*Moving
confidently into
the future!*

**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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CEO Salaries Dwarf Average Canadian Earnings

The recession may have hammered the average Canadian but a new survey suggests CEOs weathered the storm in fine form. An examination of the 100 fattest pay packages handed to executives at publicly traded companies in Canada shows they pulled in an average \$6.6 million each in 2009. That's a far cry from the \$42,988 the average Canadian makes and it dwarfs the \$19,877 a minimum-wage worker would earn in a year.

The study by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives says Canada's best-paid CEOs made 155 times more than the average Canadian. "Canadians may still be feeling the pain from a worldwide economic meltdown caused by reckless financial speculation but Canada's business elite has preserved its privileged position," writes author Hugh Mackenzie.

The biggest pay package went to Aaron Regent at Barrick Gold Corp., who made \$24.2 million in 2009, according to Mackenzie's calculations. In second place was Hunter Harrison at Canadian National Railway Co., at \$17.3 million, followed by Gerald Schwartz at Onex Corp., at \$16.7 million. Still, CEO earnings dropped from the previous year. Mackenzie's study of 2008 compensation showed CEOs were earning 174 times the average Canadian, compared to the 155 ratio for 2009. It's

possible that the gap has begun to shrink, Mackenzie says. But generally, CEO pay packages are much higher nowadays than during the 1990s.

In 2008, CEOs were paid an average of \$7.3 million, or almost 11 per cent more than 2009 — not taking inflation into account. Average Canadians, meanwhile, saw a very small climb in their earnings in 2009, keeping pace with inflation. In 1998, for example, the top 100 CEOs made 104 times the average Canadian. Since then, CEO pay has outpaced inflation by 53 per cent, while average earnings rose just four per cent more than inflation over the same 10 years, Mackenzie figures.

"The gap has been growing pretty substantially over the last 20 years"

He says the number-crunching actually underestimates the true earnings of CEOs because of the conservative way corporations report the value of stock options in their executive compensation disclosures.

He estimates that the big banks, for example, are under-reporting the value of 2009 stock options by about \$5.1 million per CEO. The rise in executive pay partly helps to explain why income inequality in Canada is growing so quickly, Mackenzie says.

Heather Scoffield, The Canadian Press

President's Perspective

Greetings Brothers and Sisters:

Greetings Brothers and Sisters of PEI UPSE.

Another year has come and gone. Our annual convention which was held in November paid tribute to our success in the past year and recognized



Shelley Ward, President
PEI Union of Public Sector Employees

the enduring efforts of all our members through their contributions to the union's progress and success into the future.

For the first time in many years our union held a one day convention; however, the agenda was jammed packed. The delegates in attendance discussed many topics setting the path for our union for the following year and into the future. Our annual convention meal recognized thirty-two (32) lucky PEI UPSE members who reached that day we all dream about reaching.

Retiring can be an exciting time for many people knowing that no longer do you have to listen to anyone telling you what and when to do things everyday of your life. We bid well to all our members who retired in the past year. We hope you all enjoy a relaxing life with loved ones each and every day. You all deserve it! Thank you for paving the path for the rest of us and being there for all Islanders in their time of need. Your contributions to every Islander has never gone unnoticed.

Next year's convention will be a two day event. It is a special time for PEI UPSE as 2011 is the 50th Annual Convention. A special committee has been struck for this

event and it will prove to be one convention not to miss. I hope to see you there.

The economic atmosphere has changed very little since the market break down of 2008. The effect that this has had on all of us continues on - including constant threats from our provincial and federal governments for all Canadians to take their lumps. But all the while the money continues to flow to the rich and with the proposed tax breaks for this same group, the little people continue to take the brunt of it all - and we were the ones who bailed them out with our tax dollars.

The Harper government would like us to believe that these same corporations still need another kick at the cat. However, giving tax breaks for the rich while many children and seniors are living below the poverty line is no way to treat Canadians. This is not what the Canadian dream is all about - our jobs leaving Canada so that big corporations can pay less and don't have to deal with Canada's laws and regulations.

Let us not be fooled in the coming months by government rhetoric about how these tax breaks will help us all. They will not. Our corporations are already competitive with the rest of the world. We have the lowest corporate tax rate for large business in the G7. Even the U.S. corporate tax rate is higher than ours. It's time for Canadians to stand up for what is right and tell these fat cats enough is enough. We cannot stand for our public services to be put into further jeopardy as a result of tax cuts for the rich. These taxes pay for our public services like health care, education and child care. We can't afford to lose services we depend on each and every day.

Our members are facing many new difficulties within the work place. Grievances and arbitrations are on the rise in our house. We are seeing an increase in volume among job postings, harassment and bullying in the workplace, and articles which would save money for government (overtime, allowances, vacations, etc).

We encourage all members to notify the union office if you feel that you have been denied rights under your collective agreement. These rights have been negotiated at a common table freely and openly. Your rights under these collective agreements are important to you and to all of the members of the bargaining units.

Once again I would encourage our members to get more involved in your union. We are only as strong as our members are. With the many pressures you are facing in your workplace, PEI UPSE will be there for you when you need us. We encourage you to call your union to let us know what is happening. You are the back bone of this organization. We encourage all our members to take our Welcome to UPSE course to learn about the union and what it does for you. Considering the present atmosphere, we need each other now more than ever.

I hope you enjoy your 2010-2011 convention advocate. You will find many interesting stories and great information about what your union has been doing for its members. Solidarity is what keeps us strong.

In Solidarity,
Shelley Ward, President
PEI UPSE

Membership Services/Activities

2010 PEI UPSE Bursary Recipients

The PEI Union of Public Sector Employees believes in the power of education to improve the lives of individuals and that of society as a whole. Each year the union awards scholarships and bursaries to students in order to help them achieve their educational goals and dreams. The Public Relations and Recreation/Convention Committee considers applicants based on three factors. They are – in order of importance:

- (1) financial need,
- (2) academic ability,
- (3) PEI UPSE involvement

A fourth factor - community involvement - determines the top award winner for the Laurie Jenkins Memorial Scholarship. All applications are reviewed using a “blind test” procedure whereby Committee members are not provided with any identifying information about an applicant. Sean Luttrell was the 2010 winner of the Julie MacKay Bursary valued at \$500, and Amber Hill was awarded the Laurie Jenkins Scholarship valued at \$1000. All other bursaries were valued at \$500. Congratulations to the winners!



From left to right: President Shelley Ward, Kenzie Horne (Father is Bruce Horne, local 1), Jacinta MacLeod (Father is Rick MacLean, local 15), Lauren Gauthier (Mother is Jennifer Gauthier, local 11), Sean Luttrell (Mother is Elaine Luttrell, local 1), Emma Gillis (Father is Edwin Gillis, local 1), Christina Steele (Mother is Muriel Steele, local 16), Chelsey Hustler (Father is Wesley Hustler, local 2).

Winners not in pic are: Alan Corney (Mother is Patsy Somers, local 7), Amber Hill (Father is Robert Hill, local 7), and Katherine Roach (Father is Earl Roach, local 12).

December, 2010

2010-2012 PEI UPSE Committees

The PEI Union of Public Sector Employees is the largest union in Prince Edward Island. PEI UPSE's success depends directly on its members. The membership guides the union in its strategic direction and also organizes and carries out important union work each and every day. The union's standing committees ensure that many of the union's key programs and services are provided to the membership and to the greater community in Prince Edward Island. The committees are appointed for a twenty-four month period on even numbered years following the annual convention (all appointments are at the discretion of PEI UPSE's Board of Directors). Please see PEI UPSE's standing committees and membership for 2010-12 to follow:

Constitution and Structure: Reviews the constitution and recommends changes as directed by the Board of Directors; prepares a review of the Constitution for committee and board members; prepares constitutional amendments for Board of Directors and locals for convention etc.

Members: Steve Mollins, Director, Chair (local 5)
John Searle, 1st Vice President (local 5)
Chrissy Murphy, Director (local 7)
Robert Hill (local 7)
Lindon Mayhew (local 7)
Susan Harris (local 5)
Nancy Keough-Baglolle (local 5)

Finance: Reviews financial policies, purchasing policies, technology, budgetary control, prepares annual budget and makes recommendations to the Board of Directors etc.

Members: Kevin Gotell, Secretary Treasurer, CO-Chair (local 11)
Shelley Ward, President, Co-Chair (local 7)
Carolyn Knox, Director (local 8)
Bryan Burt (local 13)
Mark Arsenault (local 14)
Simon Hashie, Director (local 5)
Todd Handregan (local 14)
Chris Oatway (local 14)

Membership Services/Activities

Education: Provides general union education to all members, continues to develop new courses for PEI UPSE and review existing ones to be sure they are up to date; reports on educationals with recommendations to the Board of Directors; provides recommendations to the Board of Directors to increase attendance at PEI UPSE educationals; coordinates, reports and recommends any educational efforts proposed through other PEI UPSE committees to the Board of Directors etc.

Members:

Debbie Johnston, Director, Chair (local 14)	Deryl Beaton (local 14)
Doug Ferguson, 3rd Vice-President (local 7)	Linda Clark (local 14)
Bev MacWilliams (local 1)	Nancy Smith (local 14)
Paula Matheson (local 2)	Nola Shaw (local 2)
Brodie Knox (local 12)	Tara Ileso (local 14)

Pensions and Insurance: Reviews member pension and insurance plans; recommends to the Board of Directors an action plan to ensure the Pension Standard Legislation is proclaimed on PEI etc.

Members: Donalda Docherty, Director, Chair (local 12)

Shelley Ward, President, Executive Advisor (local 7)
 Clyde Penney (local 2)
 Jim Beaton (local 11)
 Dale Thomson (local 12)
 Brendon Ellsworth (local 14)
 Pat Ellis (local 8)
 Craig MacKenzie (local 2)

Membership Services & Communications:

Reviews member services for improvement; ensures all locals have their full complement of executives; conducts all elections; participates in presentation of resolutions at annual convention etc.

Members: Lynn Bovyer, Director, Chair (local 6)

John Searle, 1st Vice-President (local 5)
 Bruce Horne (local 1)
 Nancy O'Connor (local 3)
 Sam MacKinnon (local 3)
 Leigh MacKey (local 5)
 Scott Gregory (local 7)
 Carol McGrath (local 15)

Staff Relations: Involved in hiring process for Union staff; reviews staffing policies, and the bargaining process with the Public Sector Employees Staff Union.

Members:

Kevin Gotell, Secretary Treasurer, Co-Chair (local 11)
 Shelley Ward, President, Co-chair (local 7)
 Fred MacLeod, Director (local 15)
 Mike Lyriotokis (local 8)
 Billy MacMillan, Director (local 12)
 Shelley Yeo (local 14)
 Colleen MacDonald (local 8)
 Doris MacKinnon, Director (local 16)

Public Relations & Recreation Convention:

Reviews and recommends bursary recipients; investigates ways to improve PEI UPSE's public profile; conducts PEI UPSE has a heart campaign; recommends recreational activities etc.

Members:

Juanita Gallant, Director, Chair (local 1)	
Karen Jackson, 2nd Vice-President (local 16)	
Kathy Costain (local 2)	Marianne Dijkerman (local 6)
David Byrne (local 15)	Kathy Murphy (local 7)
Lisa MacDonald (local 6)	Gordon MacMillan (local 15)
Rick MacLean (local 15)	Margo MacPhee (local 7)
Pam MacKinnon (local 5)	

50th Annual Convention:

Coordinates and arranges events in preparation for the 50th Annual Convention.

Members:

Karen Jackson, 2nd Vice-President (local 16)	
Lynn Bovyer, Director, Co-chair (local 6)	
Doris MacKinnon, Director, Cochair (local 16)	
Bev MacWilliams (local 1)	Danny Callaghan (local 12)
Kathy Costain (local 2)	Brodie Knox (local 12)
Debbie Richard (local 5)	Linda Clark (local 14)
Clair McCardle (local 5)	Shelley Yeo (local 14)
Michele Wright (local 7)	Nancy Smith (local 14)
Scott Gregory (local 7)	Todd Handregan (local 14)
Kim Stewart (local 7)	Carol McGrath (local 15)

Membership Services/Activities

Get Involved in the Union - Win in a Trip!

The PEI Union of Public Sector Employees is the largest union in Prince Edward Island with over 5000 members in both the public and private sectors. Union members work together to create greater workplace democracy, economic security, and to ensure fair treatment at work. In other words, it's the members of the union who are the union! The membership works together everyday to ensure that we have a voice at work and an avenue to equality.



PEI UPSE's active membership is always interested in getting more members involved. In 2011 the union is offering a special incentive that could send you and person of your choice on an all inclusive trip to a sunny destination in 2012. For the first local meeting you attend in 2011 you will earn one chance to win, and each time you bring another member to a local meeting in 2011, you and the member you bring will earn a chance to win. Please contact your shop Steward or Director to find out when your next applicable local meeting is, or call the union for more information at 892-5335. The contest draw will take place at PEI UPSE's 2011 Annual Convention and the winner will be announced - so do yourself or a co-worker a favour and get involved!

Note: Local Directors are obligated to hold at least four local meetings per year as outlined in the Constitution:

- 1. A meeting to elect voting delegates and allow local members to present proposed convention resolutions for the consideration of, and possible adoption by, the local;*
- 2. A meeting to review the material going before an annual or special convention and to allow local members to give direction to their delegates;*
- 3. A meeting to review the results of the annual or special convention and to allow delegates to present a joint report as outlined in Article 13.3.8; and*
- 4. The local's annual general membership meeting.*

Besides the four required local meetings, you can encourage your Director to hold additional local meetings as there is no limit in this regard. By doing this, you will **increase** your chances of **winning** as you will have more opportunities to bring in additional members to their first local meeting. Remember, you earn an extra chance to win every time you bring a member to their first local meeting in 2011, and they earn a chance by attending their first local meeting. *Local Directors will ensure that contest participants are recorded in the minutes of local meetings and copies of the minutes of all local meetings shall be filed with the secretary-treasurer of the union within thirty (30) days of the date on which the meeting is held as outlined in article 11.5.4 of the Constitution. To be eligible to win members must be in good standing, however, you do not have to be present at the 2011 Annual Convention for the draw.*

Win Big!

Report on Convention

President builds union's profile in 2010 through key campaigns

President Shelley Ward delivered a one-hour report to convention delegates outlining the union's activities since last convention.

The Board of Directors met ten times during the year and the Executive met a total of



President Ward speaks at PEI UPSE's 49th Annual Convention.

twenty-one times. The union delivered four campaigns and was successful in mobilizing the membership on key issues such as "pension security for all Canadians" at the pension rally in June 2010. Other campaigns included opposing the province's insistence on relocating the Paint and Body Shop to Tignish, the Value of the Public Services campaign, and the coalition print campaign reminding Islanders about the Liberal's 7.5% roll back legislation in 1994-5.

President Ward also spoke about the importance of ongoing campaigns including the need to defend public employees and fight for tax fairness, as well as the union's upcoming organizing campaign that will involve members working together to organize workers across Prince Edward Island. PEI UPSE was recently successful in organizing Whisperwood Villa under the direction of Cathy MacKinnon (*Resource and Organizing Officer*).

President Ward announced a special initiative for 2011 whereby members can earn chances to win a trip for two to a

www.peiupse.ca

tropical destination (*see pg. 6 for full details*)!

President Ward provided an update on major issues affecting the membership including seeking more open communication with the Public Sector Group Insurance Plan (PSGIP), the need to educate more members about the prevalence of bullying and harassment in the workplace, the need to empower members and foster greater involvement in the union, and the continuing battle with the Department of Health and Wellness concerning the lack of transparency surrounding the implementation of the new model of care.

President Ward wrapped up her report with an overview of the union's grievance and bargaining progress (*see bargaining and grievance update in this issue on pgs. 14, 15 and 16*) and a positive message about the year's financial outlook. The union was able to live within its budgetary means while paying down the deficit, providing first rate services to the members, and financing building renovations to ensure PEI UPSE is sustainable into the future.

Doris MacKinnon is PEI UPSE's Member of the Year!

PEI UPSE is the Island's largest union because its members have built a fellowship over the years arising from a common set of responsibilities and interests. PEI UPSE members and activists care about justice and fairness in the workplace and in society. In 2007 the union initiated a *PEI UPSE Member of the Year* award to recognize

members who participate in union functions and committees, volunteer their time, and contribute to the labour movement on PEI.

In 2010 the union was happy to bestow this award on a tireless activist named Doris MacKinnon. President Shelley Ward congratulated Doris for her hard work and dedication and for selflessly promoting solidarity among the membership.

"Doris has been a PEI UPSE activist since she joined the union thirty-two years ago. She's been a wonderful mentor to all those who have had the pleasure of working with her, and has been a valuable asset to her local serving as a Steward, Chief Steward and now a Director. Doris is a true union activist who always addresses the needs of the members in a professional, no-nonsense approach. She has the respect of all her fellow brothers and sisters Island wide who know her."

President Shelley Ward



President Shelley Ward congratulates Doris MacKinnon (local 16) on being the PEI UPSE Member of the Year!

Convention 2010

Executive Election and National Campaign

Secretary Treasurer and Second Vice-President positions go uncontested at election

Brenda Walker, Senior Staff Officer and Labour Relations Officer with PEI UPSE, conducted the election at Convention for Second Vice-President and Secretary Treasurer. Both positions went uncontested as Karen Jackson (local 16) was elected Second Vice-President for a two year term, and Kevin Gotell (local 11) was elected Secretary-Treasurer for a two year term.

Secretary - Treasurer



Kevin Gotell
(two year term)

Second Vice-President



Karen Jackson
(two year term)

All Together Now - Value of Public Service and Tax Fairness Campaign

Lynn Bovyer, Campaign Coordinator for the All Together Now Campaign, and her six Campaign Champions - Mark Arsenault (local 14), Simon Hashie (local 5), Debbie Johnston (local 14), Terry Gauthier (local 14), Eileen Brown-Wilt (local 18, retired) and Nancy Smith (local 14) - delivered an informative presentation at Convention on the importance of promoting the public service and fighting for tax fairness. The campaign defends public employees who have been wrongly blamed for causing the financial crisis, and castigated for having good working conditions, decent pay, and in many cases a good pension. The public sector supports communities and families everyday, while the financial sector and the banks were the cause of the global recession in 2008.

The campaign champions described how government and the elite have perpetuated the myth that cuts and wage freezes are necessary in the public service in order to get deficits under control, and ensure that the economy continues to grow. The fact is that deficits are under control in Canada as we have the lowest deficit among the G7. The real problem is a lack of revenue due to large corporate tax cuts that favour the super rich and big corporations. Jim Flaherty is currently in the process of lowering the federal corporate tax rate to 15% (the lowest among G7 countries). In 2000 the federal corporate tax rate was 28%. Canadians are losing billions of dollars in tax revenue that would normally support our healthcare, education, environment and the public services that we rely on day in and day out. Plain and simply, public services are under attack because the rich are paying less tax than ever before.

Below: PEI UPSE members show their support for public service employees and the fight for tax fairness!



Jack Horne, delegate



Karen Jackson (2nd Vice-President) and
Kevin Gotell (Secretary Treasurer)



Lewis Rockwell (observer)

The following are summations of resolutions that were submitted for consideration by this year's delegates. Of the thirteen resolutions presented eleven were carried and two were defeated.

Emergency Resolution 1 (MOTION CARRIED)

Submitted by the Board of Directors

Flat Rate Dues System

The following emergency resolution required the support of two-thirds of the delegation before it could be brought to the floor for debate. It was subsequently adopted unanimously.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the PEI Union of Public Sector Employees dues structure return to a flat rate dues structure at the rate of \$18.50 per pay period beginning the first full pay period following convention, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Finance Committee continue to investigate a percentage dues structure and report back to the PEI UPSE Board of Directors with their findings.

Resolution 2 (MOTION DEFEATED)

Submitted by the Board of Directors

Presidential Election

The resolution (as follows) to bring back the Presidential Election to the annual convention stirred passionate debate among delegates in 2010:

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

During the debate, fifteen PEI UPSE delegates rose to offer their reasons in support or in opposition to this resolution. On the pro side delegates argued that the open election spawns harassment and bullying among those involved in the election, and even in the workplace itself. Open elections are proving divisive among members and the union is lacking solidarity as a result. Delegates on the pro side also argued that democracy is better served by bringing the vote back to convention where members are more engaged in the issues and, are therefore, able to make informed choices - democracy is earned not given - was the sentiment here.

On the other side of the question, delegates argued that open elections should be maintained to increase member participation in the union. If the union removes this right, it could be perceived that this means less participation among members is desirable. Delegates also posited that the last election had a 40% turn-out and that number could be raised and is far greater than the percentage of the membership involved in a vote conducted solely at convention. Delegates argued that the union is about fighting for member rights not removing them.

Because this resolution (if carried) required changing the Constitution, it needed the support of two-thirds of the voting delegates. The final tally was 84 in support of the resolution, and 49 against. This fell short of the 89 votes required for a two-thirds majority and the motion was defeated.

Resolution 3 (MOTION DEFEATED)

Submitted by the Board of Directors

Presidential Elections Committee

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this committee be elected at convention the year prior to the presidential election.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if no elected executive officer wishes to fulfill this position then a member of the Board of Directors shall be considered for election.

Resolution 4 (MOTION CARRIED)

Submitted by the Board of Directors

Vacancy of Executive Officers (President's Position)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this union ensure that our members are properly represented for a short term basis by a member in good standing who would have firsthand knowledge of the issues, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the group of members whom the board of directors will first consider for such appointment, by election, shall be of the present sitting elected Executive Officers, that being 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, 3rd Vice President, Secretary Treasurer, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if no elected executive officer wishes to fulfill this position then a member of the Board of Directors shall be considered for election.

Convention 2010

Resolutions

Resolution 5

(MOTION CARRIED)

Submitted by the Board of Directors

Fiscal Year

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that PEI UPSE change our fiscal year to be August 1 to July 31, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this change shall commence for the fiscal year of 2012-2013.

Resolution 6

(MOTION CARRIED)

Submitted by the Board of Directors

Fiscal Year

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Article 18.4 of the PEI UPSE Constitution be amended to read "The fiscal year of the union shall be from August 1 to July 31 annually, beginning 2012-2013.

Resolution 7

(MOTION CARRIED)

Submitted by the Board of Directors

Early Years Centres

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the PEI UPSE continues to lobby this government to ensure that this program is fully supported by government for many years to come, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that PEI UPSE monitor that this publically funded and publically monitored program stay public in doing so ensuring that our government does not allow any private for profit box daycare centres to open business on Prince Edward Island.

Resolution 8

(MOTION CARRIED)

Submitted by the Board of Directors

Early Childhood Educators

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that PEI UPSE reaffirm its commitment to this sector ensuring that we negotiate wages which are reflective of the labour market, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that that PEI UPSE reaffirms its commitment to this sector that we will continue to organize the unorganized in an effort that the ECE's will be compensated with better wages and benefits into the future.

Resolution 9

(MOTION CARRIED)

Submitted by the Board of Directors

Public Service Campaign

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that PEI UPSE lobby the public with a campaign to bring to light the importance of the public service, the importance of public employees and the importance of a fair tax program.

Resolution 10

(MOTION CARRIED)

Submitted by Local 14

Pension and Retirement Security

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that PEI UPSE continue to press the federal government to increase the CPP payments to allow our Sisters and Brothers a dignified and secure retirement.

Resolution 11

(MOTION CARRIED)

Submitted by the Board of Directors

Retirement, Pensions and Benefits

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that PEI UPSE ensure that there is proper education provided not only for our members who sit on appointed committees but also for our staff to ensure that at least one staff person is up to date on these issues, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that PEI UPSE assign to the Staff Relations committee to review and report to the board of directors with recommendations on a resolution to address the issue ensuring that when our members call the office regarding benefits there is someone available to them.

Resolution 12

(MOTION CARRIED)

Submitted by Local 19

Volunteer Work

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UPSE lobby government for a \$500 tax credit for seniors who are involved in volunteer work.

Resolution 13

(MOTION CARRIED)

Submitted by Local 19

CPP Death Benefits

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UPSE lobby the federal government through NUPGE for a 10-15% increase in CPP death benefits per annum.

You've worked hard for this day, and have helped Islanders along the way!

At the 2010 Annual Convention PEI UPSE paid tribute to its retirees. These members deserve special thanks for their contribution, day in and day out, for making PEI a better place to live and work. Retirement is an important and exciting milestone in a person's life. It's a time to celebrate years of service to a career and anticipate years of relaxation to come. For some it also provides the time and means to embark on new work opportunities and or dreams that may have went unfulfilled. Either way, retirement is a significant achievement and marks the beginning of a new phase of life. The Prince Edward Island Union of Public Sector Employees congratulates its 2010 retirees for their dedication and hard work.



You have done Islanders and your union proud!

Retirees at the 2010 Annual Convention:

Valerie Bowlan, [Regional Economic Development](#)

Joyce Bryenton, [Prince County Hospital](#)

Dianne Callbeck, [Fisheries](#)

Vernon Cheverie, [Provincial Correctional Centre](#)

Kay Coffin, [Souris Hospital](#)

Alfred Croken, [Government Garage](#)

John Daley, [Queen Elizabeth Hospital](#)

Kathryn DesRoches, [Access PEI](#)

Elizabeth Doiron, [Confederation Centre Library](#)

Jack Horne, [Community and Correctional Services](#)

Ann Landry, [Prince County Hospital](#)

Eileen LeClair, [Government Manor](#)

Joyce MacDonald, [Hillsborough Hospital](#)

Marjorie MacDonald, [Charlottetown Courthouse](#)

Mae MacKinnon, [Kings County Addictions](#)

Farley Mahar, [Highway Operations](#)

Leah Mayne-Cainey, [Mental Health](#)

Joseph McCue, [Highway Operations](#)

Michael McNeill, [West Royalty Liquor Stores](#)

Shirley McQuaid, [Child and Family Services](#)

Marian Murphy, [Confederation Centre Library](#)

Sheila Peters, [Child Protection](#)

Therese Peters, [Access PEI](#)

Geraldine Power, [Child Protection](#)

Nancy Reddin, [Community Services](#)

Nancy Richard MacKinnon, [Income Support](#)

Rachel Roy, [Mental Health](#)

Linda Sharbell, [Prince Edward Home](#)

Parnell Trainor, [Administration](#)

Dolores Watts, [Administrative Services](#)

Sharon Wedge, [Western Hospital](#)

Federal / Provincial Issues

Canada's Health Care System Under Attack

In 2014, the Canada Health Transfer (CHT) program is set to expire. The CHT is a significant source of stable health care funding provided by the federal government to provincial and territorial governments. There are two components to the CHT; tax transfers and cash transfers. In 2010-11, tax transfers will amount to \$13.1 billion in funding and cash transfers to \$25.4 billion. By 2013-14, cash transfers, which increase by 6% annually, will amount to over \$30 billion in health care funding for the provinces and territories. In PEI, 20-25% of health care spending comes from the CHT. In 2010-11, the PEI government ear-marked \$508 million for health care; \$110 million of this expenditure will be funded via the CHT.



Canada Health Transfer

The CHT program was implemented in 2004 as a means to strengthen Canada's health care system. Goals of the plan included ensuring all Canadians have access to reliable and quality health care, reducing wait times and ensuring an adequate supply of health care professionals. Clearly these are goals that the health care system is still striving to meet.

To achieve these goals, the federal government needs to remain a strong partner with provinces and territories in funding health care. Health care spending is increasing at a dramatic rate across the country. In PEI, health care spending has increased from \$325 million in 2005 to \$508 million in 2010; an increase of 56%. With an aging population and expensive drug costs, indications are that health spending will continue to increase year after year.

The Federal Government's October 2010 Update of Economic and Fiscal Projections indicates that government is expecting to return to surplus budgets in 2016. It is important to note that this calculation was arrived at assuming that the CHT grows at its current legislated rate, 6% annually, through to 2016. Clearly the federal government can afford to maintain the current CHT growth rate and balance the budget by 2016.

Minister Flaherty has indicated he would like transfer payments to be tied to inflation and economic growth, both of which are expected to be in the 0-2% range. This is a significant growth decrease from the current 6% level and will not sustain a health care system where spending increases outpace inflation and economic growth. Such a move would likely require provinces to cut health services, institute user fees or raise taxes.

Discussions surrounding the future of the CHT program need to be public and transparent. Canadians must be engaged in an open consultation process to ensure the sustainability and accessibility of our health care system into the future. Health care is a top priority issue for Canadians and our universal system is a strong part of our national identity. We cannot jeopardize our universal health care system by standing idly by and allowing the government to conduct backroom talks that may prove pivotal to the very existence of our health care system as we currently know it.

PEI UPSE

Flaherty backs away from CPP commitment

It has been eight months since the PEI Union of Public Sector Employees (PEI UPSE) hosted a pension rally at Crowbush Resort calling for an expansion of the Canada Pension Plan (CPP). At the time, Minister Flaherty publically declared that some increase to the CPP was a necessary step for Canadians. However, when finance ministers from across the country met in Alberta in December they found that Minister Flaherty had completely changed his tune. Flaherty's new story was that the economy was not ready for CPP enhancements. The issue has not been completely shelved but it is being ignored. Union members and all Canadians should consider putting the pressure on the federal government to do what's right and enhance the CPP so that Canadians can retire in dignity and security.

Any change to the CPP requires the support of two-thirds of provinces representing two-thirds of the population. Currently, Quebec is sitting on the fence and Alberta is opposed to any expansion in CPP, preferring instead a private sector option to strengthening Canada's retirement income system. An increasing number of groups and individuals are voicing their support for an expansion of the CPP. These include many provincial finance ministers, labour groups, student groups, seniors' groups and economists and academics, including former CPP chief actuary Bernard Dussault, Jack Mintz, head of the School of Policy Studies at the University of Calgary and former Finance

Canada tax policy analyst Keith Horner, are speaking out in favour of an expanded CPP. What is unclear is the extent to which the CPP should be enhanced.

Indications from federal and provincial finance ministers are that any increase would be modest, but there is no firm agreement on what modest means. Recent proposals have advocated for wage replacement rates of between 25% and 70% to be funded by premium rate increases of between 3.6% and 15.4%.

Canada Research Chair in Public Finance, Professor Jonathan Kesselman, recently completed an evaluation of retirement savings options based on a comprehensive set of criteria including; coverage adequacy, investment returns, investment costs, risk and durability. His evaluation indicated that a mandatory defined benefit public pension plan (CPP) outperforms workplace pension plans and private savings options as a retirement savings vehicle.

Modifying the CPP is the most effective tool for modifying the retirement income system for a number of reasons. CPP is pervasive; it is a guaranteed payment that covers 93% of working Canadians. CPP is portable from job to job and from province to province. CPP is also low cost, low risk, indexed to inflation and secure. The expectation when CPP was created was that workplace pension plans and private savings would supplement benefit payments to achieve an adequate retirement income for Canadians. Evidence clearly indicates that this is not the case, nor likely to be the case in the future, particularly for middle-income earners.

There exists a strong case for expanding the CPP to meet the needs of retiring Canadians.

Study supports public long term care facilities

A new report by the Institute for Research and Public Policy finds there is a growing gap in the quality care offered by private and public long term care institutions. Private facilities tend

to have less staff and end up sending more residents to

hospital with "pressure sores, pneumonia, and dehydration" according to the report.

The Provinces are looking for ways to reduce health care costs and moving toward more privately owned long term care facilities is part of their plan. Demographics show that one in five Canadians require long term care. This represents a very high rate of institutionalization as compared to other countries like Denmark which have supports and services to keep seniors in the home.

The bottom line is that our seniors require quality care like anyone else. They should not be subjected to private facilities where their care is being neglected in the name of profit maximization.

Information on the Institute's report was sourced in the Toronto Star.



Grievance Review

Harassment

Individual Grievance (Civil Service)

Six Civil Service employees found themselves in a situation where they were being harassed by a manager. PEI UPSE filed a grievance in August of 2010 under article 5 of the collective agreement in response to the issue, and an investigation was conducted. The investigation concluded that harassment was indeed taking place. As a resolve, the employer was then ordered to change their internal policy and to provide harassment training for the manager.

Disciplinary Letter

Individual Grievance (Civil Service)

A Civil Service employee had a disciplinary letter put on his/her file in December 2010. The union grieved at level 1 and argued that the employer did not have just cause to issue the letter and therefore, it should be removed. The grievance was settled in January 2011 and it was determined that the employer did not have just cause to issue the disciplinary letter and so the letter was removed from the employee's file.

TIL Policy

Policy Grievance (Civil Service)

The issue in this case was about the management of TIL policy. PEI UPSE filed a grievance in June of 2010 arguing that the employer created TIL policy that violated article 13 of the collective agreement. The union filed for arbitration on this matter in July 2010; however, the employer and the union have not agreed on an arbitrator. Kim Turner will represent the union at arbitration once an arbitrator is agreed upon and dates are set.

Temp Positions

Policy Grievance (Health)

The employer created temporary positions in 2007-8 to accommodate work load; however, after two years the union filed a grievance citing article #30 contending that full time permanent positions should be created. As the employer continued to do nothing about this issue arbitration dates were scheduled for September 2010 (*continued...*)

A settlement was subsequently reached prior to arbitration in August 2010 in which four, seventy percent positions were created (equalling 2.8 full time positions).

Working Alone

Policy Grievance (Civil Service)

PEI UPSE members working at campgrounds often work alone and at night. Worker health and safety in these types of conditions depends on the worker being able to be in touch with other staff. The workers in question did not have a reliable means to communicate with other staff as their cell phones in some cases were not within range of cell towers. This resulted in unsafe work conditions for the members. The union filed a grievance in early 2010 citing articles 29.01, 30.01, and 29.02 (b), however, a settlement was not reached. The employer and the union subsequently agreed to have arbitrator Gus Richardson decide on this case. The hearing was concluded on January 26, 2011 with a put in place settlement. It has a three pronged approach consisting of prevention, response and aftercare.

Failure to post

Policy Grievance (Health)

A member of the public was hired in a casual position; however, the position was never posted in the workplace. The union filed a policy grievance citing articles 2, 4, 8.02, 11.03, 30, 31, 35 and 42 contending that the employer must stop offering casual employment to the public, before it first allows permanent part time members a chance to apply. Further, the union argued that all future hiring must be done in accordance with the collective agreement. This issue was to go to arbitration for a ruling; however, the employer settled in November 2010 before this occurred. The job was re-posted and a PEI UPSE member secured the position. The grievance was subsequently withdrawn.

Failure to post

Policy Grievance (Health)

Three positions were created as part of a pilot project and were subsequently not posted so that members would have a chance to compete. The union contended that article 31.04 (c) of the collective agreement was breached and argued that the three positions

should be posted as permanent positions. In 2009 the positions remained temporary; however, in December of 2010 the union was successful in its grievance and the positions were posted.

Uniform Allowance

Policy Grievance (Health)

The employer instituted a uniform policy that included a new footwear policy; however, neglected to provide a footwear allowance for the employees. The union contends that articles 1, 702, 16 and 18 have been violated. The union argues that if the employer wants specific uniforms worn, including specific types and colours of footwear, then the employer should provide a uniform allowance to cover employee costs for both. This issue is moving to arbitration – the union and the employer have agreed to Brian Bruce as arbitrator and are awaiting dates in 2011 for arbitration.

Duty to accommodate

Individual Grievance (Health)

A Supervisor at Talbot House (half-way house for men providing addiction services) went on stress leave. A Doctor subsequently advised that the employee could return to work in some capacity. The Employer agreed to look for an alternate spot for the employee but then failed to accommodate. The union filed a grievance in October 2009 citing article violations in sections 51.01, 51.02, 51.03, and 51.04 (a) and (b). The grievance went to mediation - arbitration in November 2010 and PEI UPSE was successful in getting the employee an accommodation which was suitable to both parties.

Failure to post

Policy Grievance (Civil Service)

PEI UPSE members informed the union that two casuals were hired without any job posting. The union filed a grievance in February 2010 contending that articles 38 and 39 of the collective agreement were violated. The union argued that the employer should have posted the two positions and normal procedures for hiring should have taken place. An arbitration date was set for November 2010; however, a settlement was reached prior to this in October 2010. The employer acknowledged its error and the casuals were removed from the positions.

Grievances / Bargaining

Failure to post

Policy Grievance

(Holland College Administration and Support)

A new residence was built (Glendenning Hall) and the employer sub contracted out the maintenance work. The union raised the issue verbally in 2009 and 2010 and filed a grievance in October 2010 citing articles 3,32,45 and 54. The union then met with Holland College management and have agreed to a process whereby PEI UPSE positions will be created at Glendenning Hall. Further talks will ensue in January 2011.

Bargaining Review

Garden Home

Bargaining update

The collective agreement between Garden Home Incorporated and PEI UPSE expired on June 29, 2010. Negotiating teams met in May 2010. After delays from the employer due to funding, the negotiating team for the union reconfirmed its position and negotiating will commence on February 15 and 17, 2011.

Whisperwood Villa

Bargaining update

The negotiating team met in October 2010 to complete demand forms in preparation for bargaining. Then in January 2011 the team met to develop a draft collective agreement to present to the employer. Negotiations are scheduled to begin in February 2011. Whisperwood Villa is PEI UPSE's newest bargaining unit comprised of approximately seventy employees from nursing, dietary and housekeeping.

Civil Service, IRAC, WCB

Bargaining update

Negotiations for a new collective agreement opened in March 2010 and after several rounds of negotiations, and moving through conciliation, the union and the employer were unable to find common ground on key issues.

PEI UPSE and the Civil Service, IRAC and WCB moved to binding arbitration on December 13 and 14, 2010.

www.peiupse.ca

The arbitration board consisted of Bert Blundon (Union Nominee), Colleen Malone (Employer Nominee), and Bruce Outhouse (Arbitrator). The respective positions of the union and the employer were heard by the board and all information will be taken into account. Bruce Outhouse will deliver a ruling and award in the near future; however, at the time of this publication the union is still awaiting the decision.

Note: On December 7, 2010 (the week before arbitration) the employer contended that the arbitration board did not have jurisdiction to rule on casual issues as outlined in the Civil Service Act Regulations in sections 82.6 and 66(f). This means that Arbitrator Bruce Outhouse's upcoming decision will not include a ruling on casual issues specifically. However, this will not affect delivering a ruling for casuals on issues listed in 2.02 of the collective agreement such as wages, overtime, travel allowances etc.

In the meanwhile, separate arbitration dates for the casual issues have been scheduled for May 2 and 3, 2011. Bruce Outhouse will serve as arbitrator and Pink Larken will represent the union.

President Shelley Ward met with Premier Robert Ghiz about the need to amend the Civil Service Act Regulations - sections 82.6 and 66 (f) - so that an arbitration board does have the power to make rulings on casual issues. Ward asserts that the rights of casual workers must be upheld - labour rights are human rights.

Department of Health

Bargaining update

The Prince Edward Island Union of Public Sector Employees' one thousand plus members working for the provincial government's Department of Health and Wellness have a renewed collective agreement extending retroactively from April 2009 until March 31, 2012. PEI UPSE and the Department of Health and Wellness moved to binding interest arbitration on September 21, 22, and October 1, 2010.

Arbitrator, Thomas Kuttner, brought forward the arbitration award on October 19, 2010 awarding PEI UPSE Department of Health and Wellness members with a 6% raise: April 1, 2009 (2%), Oct 1, 2009 (2%), Oct 1, 2010 (1%) and Oct 1, 2011 (1%).

On top of the general economic increase of 6% for all PEI UPSE Department of Health and Wellness members, a shift premium was awarded of \$0.25, as well as wage adjustments for Licensed Practical Nurses (8%), Psychologists (\$6.00), Speech Language Pathologists, Audiologists, Social Workers and Dietician/Nutritionists (2%) to bring them into balance with their Atlantic counterparts.

Holland College

(Admin & Support)

Bargaining update

The union's negotiating team for Holland College Administrative and Support ratified a tentative collective agreement on November 29, 2010 with 80% of the return vote in favour of acceptance. The collective agreement had expired on March 31, 2010 and bargaining teams met seven times between June and November in 2010 to reach an agreement.

Holland College

(Faculty)

Bargaining update

The collective agreement for Holland College Faculty will expire on March 31, 2011. The union has begun preparation work including sending proposal forms to employees with a return date of January 31, 2011. A letter has also been sent to the employer notifying them sixty days prior to the expiration of the agreement that preparations for negotiations have begun and meetings have been scheduled to elect the union's negotiating team.

Early Childhood Education

Bargaining update

The collective agreement for the **Montessori Children's Centre** expired August 31, 2010. A tentative agreement was subsequently reached on December 9, 2011 and ratification kits were mailed out in late December. In March 2012 the provincial government will look at a new funding arrangement and so wages could be reopened at this time.

The collective agreement for the **YMCA of Summerside Creative Learning Centre** expired August 31, 2010. Bargaining teams met on December 20, 2010 and January 20, 2011. Examples of issues on the table include vacation carryover and leave administration.

Bargaining & Member Profile

Early Childhood Education

Bargaining update

The collective agreement for the **Child Development Centre** does not expire until August 31, 2012. Currently, PEI UPSE is working with the employer on a wage reopener to allow for the new government grid brought in with the province's Early Years Centres initiative.

The union is working to secure a name change and collective agreement for the **Morell and Area Early Learning Centre**. Formerly the St. Peter's Early Learning Centre Inc., the Morell and Area Early Learning Centre now requires agreement from the board and the employer for certification.

Tremploy

Bargaining update

Tremploy's collective agreement expired on June 30, 2010. Teams worked hard to reach an agreement; however, there were thirteen cost items that required third party resolution. PEI UPSE and Tremploy headed to conciliation with an aim to resolve all outstanding issues on November 19, 2010 and got a four year agreement. Wage increases are 1% in July of 2010, 1.5% in 2011, 1.5% in 2012, and 2% in 2013.

The agreement also includes an additional one-half day off on Christmas Eve for the next four years (which now gives employees the full day off), plus a letter of agreement for the employer to check into the costs associated with allowing retirees to stay in the Health /Dental plan after retirement. Members also now have a newly revised Deferred Salary plan and improvements to the Severance/ Retirement Allowance for Retirees.

Public Service employee in right place at right time!

Bruce Horne (local 6) is a Road Patroller with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. As a Road Patroller Bruce is constantly monitoring the state of our roads and highways for ice and snow conditions and anything that could cause a dangerous driving situation. As we all know, this is a very busy job on Prince Edward Island and one that the public depends on everyday. Bruce calls in sanders and salt trucks where needed and works at all hours of the day and night to help ensure our safety.

In early January of this year Bruce took his role as a Road Patroller to a whole new level. It was somewhere between 4:30 and 5:00 a.m. in the morning and Bruce was checking a road where a sand truck had broken down. As he continued his patrol he ended up on the Navoo Road and to his surprise noticed flames pouring out of a home's attached garage. It was the home of Coady and Amanda Cooke. Bruce quickly parked his vehicle and approached the house. He began banging on the home's living room window and a light came on inside so he knew he had woken the Cooke's. They quickly moved from the bedroom at the back of the house to the front door beside the garage and exited. It was a close call but everyone was ok. Bruce was happy he was in the right place at the right time to help the Cooke's escape a life threatening situation. There aren't many people on the roads at 4:30 or 5:00 in the morning; however; public service employees in various occupations work at all hours of the day and night. They work to make Prince Edward Island a better place for everyone.



Bruce Horne (local 1) stands by his patrol truck. One early morning in January 2011 Bruce discovered a house on fire during a routine patrol ...

Violence Against Women and Girls

President Ward lights candle in memory Kim Byrne who was murdered in December 2000

December 6 is the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women established in 1991 to mark the anniversary of the murders in 1989 at l'École Polytechnique de Montréal. They died because they were women. December 6 provides an opportunity for Islanders and Canadians to think about the problem of violence in our society and specifically violence against women. It is important on this day to remember those who have died as a result of gender based violence. It is a day for everyone to consider concrete actions that will eliminate violence against women and girls.



President Shelley Ward lights a candle in memory of 30-year-old Kim Byrne.

President Shelley Ward attended the Memorial Service and Candle-Lighting ceremony on December 6, 2010 at the Confederation Centre of the Arts in Charlottetown. President Ward lit a candle in memory of Kim Byrne who was beaten to death during the early morning hours of December 10, 2000 by her common-law spouse Frederick Francis Sheppard. In Prince Edward Island eight women have been murdered by men since 1989. The murders took place in all three P.E.I. counties and in both urban and rural areas. The murder victims ranged in age from 23 to 77. Two women were murdered by men they were living with, three by ex-partners, and three by neighbours and acquaintances. As a Licensed Practical Nurse, Kim was a member of the PEI Union of Public Sector Employees (PEI UPSE). In December of 2004 family, friends and co-workers constructed a life-sized wooden "silhouette" of Kim, through the "Silent Witness" project. This Minnesota project commemorates women who have been killed by their partners or ex-partners. PEI UPSE sponsored Kim's silhouette, the first on PEI.

Source: PEI Status of Women

PEI's Family Violence Prevention Week February 13-19, 2011

Every year since 1991, the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women has coordinated a Purple Ribbon Campaign Against Violence. Volunteers spend hours pinning purple ribbons to thousands of bilingual information cards and help distribute these ribbons across the Island to raise awareness of violence issues and to encourage people to work together towards an end to violence. Thousands of Islanders wear purple ribbons during the week of December 6 to mark the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. The ribbons are also worn during Family Violence Prevention Week. Please pick up your purple ribbon and information card at the PEI UPSE office as a sign that we stand up against violence!



Important Update on the Health and Development Training Fund

President Ward has been successful in her quest to access an advance of the 2011-2012 Education Fund. President Ward notified the employer that the education fund was out of money and therefore, the union was not able to approve any further education requests from any health members for this fiscal year, April 2010-March 2011. The union recognized the importance of the funding for the LPNs for if they do not receive this training, their employment with the province could be jeopardized. The union was notified that the employer has agreed to advance the union monies from the next fiscal year's allotment (April 2011-March 2012) in an effort to allow the Licensed Practical Nurses the ability to continue on with their mandatory training. LPNs who are enrolled in a course which has begun or is to begin before March 31, 2011 should contact Cathy MacKinnon, Resource and Organizing Officer (902)892-5335 for further information. LPNs are reminded that they need to complete and submit an application form for all funding requests.

Building Update



Front of PEI UPSE office at 4 Enman Crescent, Charlottetown.



Back view of PEI UPSE office.

PEI UPSE invites all members to come down to the newly renovated union office for a look. This is your union headquarters! The renovated office includes a sitting area for members as well as greater overall meeting, storage and office space. The former building had become dilapidated as it was approaching forty-years of age. It had small amounts of asbestos in the flooring and plaster, very little storage space and insufficient meeting area. The new building can accommodate board meetings, committee meetings, and educationals which will save the membership close to \$30,000 per year.



Side view (from driveway) of PEI UPSE office.

The PEI Union of Public Sector Employees is now poised to move confidently into the future.



Comfortable waiting / sitting area for members.

"Accommodating our Members was essential!"



Welcome to PEI UPSE's front reception.



Boardroom (space for board meetings, educationals, committee meetings and local meetings).

"The union is more than just office space - it's a place to get involved!"



Fully equipped kitchen with sitting area to the side.

Membership Reports

Police and Peace Officers Memorial Service in Ottawa

This is the thirteenth year that PEI UPSE and the Community and Correctional Services Division (Office of the Attorney General) will co-sponsor attendance to the Police and Peace Officers Memorial Service in Ottawa. The memorial service honours police and peace officers who sacrificed their lives to keep our communities safe. The service also provides an opportunity for participants to engage in networking and professional development activities. PEI UPSE representatives at the memorial service attended a preceding conference hosted by the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE).



Police and Peace Officers march on Parliament Hill in recognition and memory of fallen comrades.

Member Report: I had the privilege to attend the National Union's working sessions on September 23 and 24 and the Canadian Peace and Police Officers' Memorial Service on September 25, 2010. The meetings were a great place to network with other people across Canada. It was nice to hear that the problems that we have here on PEI are the same all across the country. These issues include mental health in the jail system, low moral in the workplace, overcrowding, assaults on staff, and lack of training for Correctional Officers. Currently, there is no formal training or support for Correctional Officers who have to deal with inmates who have mental health problems. We need more money for resources and training regarding this issue. There was a case that made national headlines that supports my point. Ashley Smith was a girl from New Brunswick who committed suicide while in custody. She was mentally ill and needed professional help. However, in the end she didn't get that help and she took her own life. PEI UPSE and the national union have worked hard to raise awareness about the mental health issue in the correctional system. Ottawa recognizes there is a problem, but still hasn't done anything to improve the system at the provincial level. In fact, all they are doing is building more jails - but this will only compound the problem. Left as is, we have major concerns with safety for the inmates, staff, and eventually the community when these people are released from custody without any treatment.



PEI UPSE members attending the Police and Peace Officers Memorial in Ottawa were: (top) Linda Clarke, Todd Handregan, Michelle Mullins, and Trent Parsons. (bottom - left to right) Chris Oatway, Scott Gregory, Debbie MacPhee, Shelley Yeo and Deryl Beaton.

We had a guest speaker from the Office of The Parliamentary Budget Officer named Ashutosh Rajekar. Mr. Rajekar spoke about the new sentencing laws that Parliament passed and how it will affect the correctional system. In his report he stated that the new law will result in offenders spending 159 more days in custody, and the national inmate headcount will raise by 3,754 offenders. This will place more stress on the provincial system. The new law states that an offender will not be given any credit for his remand time. His time will only start when he is sentenced. Usually the judge will grant the offender time plus one half for his time spent in jail for remand. So if an offender gets sentenced to 30 days and spends 10 days on remand, then when he is sentenced he would only have 5 days remaining on his sentence. As you can see, the new law will cause great pressure on the provincial system. This will lead to overcrowding in PEI facilities and will only exaserbate the mental health issue. The government needs to understand that we will soon have a major safety concern on our hands.

On Sunday, September 25, 2010, fifteen Police Officer's were remembered at the annual Memorial on Parliament Hill. The march started a few blocks away from Parliament and we marched to the Hill. This was a very uplifting experience for myself. I was honoured to be a part of this. I would like to thank PEI UPSE for selecting me for this trip. It was a great time to network with my fellow brothers and sisters from all across the country. I look forward to getting more involved with PEI UPSE in the near future. I hope I will be able to attend these meetings again in the years to come. Thanks again.

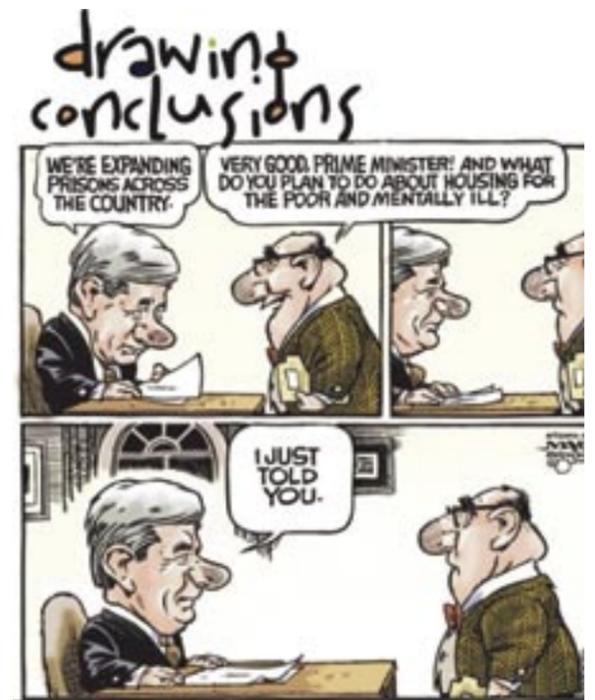
Chris Oatway, Correctional Officer

Membership Reports

No Health without Mental Health

The National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) hosted an important conference called “No health without mental health” from October 28-29, 2010 in Ottawa. Several PEI UPSE members attended the conference and shared their findings in written reports upon their return to Prince Edward Island. The following article contains excerpts from the member reports.

The conference’s keynote speaker from the Globe and Mail, Andre Picard, explained that the mental health issue costs Canadians \$51 billion per year through both direct and indirect costs, yet the issue itself is neatly hidden in plain sight. The problem of mental health affects all levels of society. Based on this idea, the conference took a broad approach to the issue with participants in mental health as well as people who worked in social services and corrections who feel the impact of dealing with clients with mental illness, often by default (Steve Mollins). It is no surprise that different professions are having to accommodate and serve those suffering from mental illness despite the fact that these professions in many cases do not include the necessary background or training to do so. Doris MacKinnon builds on this point with a quote from Andre Picard - “Indeed, Canada does not have a mental health system, rather it has a patchwork of programs that leave people with mental illness orphans of medicare.” In other words, because Canada lacks a mental health system as such, many of those suffering fall through the cracks. Many end up in institutions that are not equipped to deal with them such as correctional facilities. Len Bush (NUPGE) touched on this problem and made suggestions regarding mental health and what the justice system needs to do to deal with it. First, resources need to be created that help keep people with mental illness out of jail; second, mental health courts are needed; third, more training for staff in the penal system is required; and fourth, we need improved programs for inmates (Doris MacKinnon).



The conference also educated members about the stereotyping and stigmatization surrounding mental illness, and the fact that many Canadians avoid getting help because of this. We need to realize that mental illness is an illness like any other and can be treated. Mental illness is also very common. The World Health Organization “stated that in 2020 depression will be the leading cause of disability on the planet” (Doris MacKinnon). It is clear that Canada needs a mental health strategy. “Canadians experiencing the effects of mental illness have been left to suffer in silence, with limited resources and fear of stigmatization. The creation of a mental health strategy will allow Canada ... to develop a holistic plan for addressing the needs of Canadians” (Lindsay Porter). The only thing standing in our way is the political will to make this happen. However, as PEI UPSE member Bernie LeFort points out, the current government is more concerned with saving large corporations billions of dollars in Canada through unnecessary tax cuts - leaving Canadians less and less money for things like a comprehensive mental health system let alone a strategy.

One in five Canadians have a mental health problem.

Mental health issues are not a lost cause - they are a just cause!

... for the most part people cope on their own.

Thanks to Doris MacKinnon (Mental Health Outreach), Steve Mollins (Probation Officer), Pierre Gaudet (Youth Worker), Lindsay Porter (Mental Health Therapist), Bernie LeFort (Mental Health Outreach), Dina DesRoches (Probation Officer), Danielle Hennessy (Correctional Officer), Brody Noonan (Correctional Officer), Glen Poirier (Correctional Officer) and Chris Oatway (Correctional Officer) for attending the “No Health Without Mental Health” conference in Ottawa. Report information (in one form or another) from our members was used in the above article.