

On The Inside:

- Page 2 - Guest Opinion
- Page 3 - President's Perspective
- Page 4 - Bargaining Updates
- Page 5 - National News
- Pages 6, 7, 8 & 9 - Convention Report
- Page 10 - 2007-2008 Retiree Photos
- Page 11 - Committee Reports
- Page 12 - Convention Photos - Upcoming Events



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THE ADVOCATE

Prince Edward Island Union Of Public Sector Employees



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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 PEIUPSE, 4 Enman Crescent, Charlottetown, PE, C1E 1E6 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. The UPSE office is located at 4 Enman Crescent in Charlottetown and can be reached by telephone at 892-5335 or, toll free, 1-800-897-8773, by fax at 569-8186 or by e-mail at peiupse@peiupse.ca. The union's website is: www.peiupse.ca Printed at: Transcontinental Prince Edward Island, Borden-Carleton, P.E.I. All material appearing in The **ADVOCATE** may be reprinted or photocopied (please credit).
Managing Editor: Cathy MacKinnon



Exploiting the economic crisis to attack unions

Rescue plans include bailouts for banks but wage controls for public sector workers.

- an excerpt from a paper by Larry Brown, for the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE)



Cutting the jobs and incomes of workers will prolong the slump, not resolve it.

In Canada, the CEOs of our banks are on the list of the absurdly highly paid, but the bank bailouts here made no mention of executive salaries. Yet here as well, the autoworkers, who earn less per year than our CEOs make per week, must pay a heavy price if that industry is to get a bailout.

Stephen Harper's government has been less precise about how much workers have to give up but he has been no less clear that the price of aid is lower autoworkers' salaries. One supposes that it was the unionized workers who decided to build gas-guzzlers and the highly profitable SUVs, instead of more saleable cars, and who let the quality of the products lag behind those of imports. Why blame the mere executives, the CEOs and CFOs, when it's so clear that unionized wages are the problem? Why indeed.

Of course it's not just unionized autoworkers who are identified as public enemies whose wages have to be controlled — at least according to the right-wing opinion punditry.

Public sector workers too, we are told almost daily, with their allegedly unreasonable demands and their ostensibly total job security, must be brought under control if we are to avoid Armageddon.

Amazing. Not one public sector worker made \$10 million last year. Few made 1 percent of that. All through the 1990s, public sector workers were subject to layoffs and wage freezes and wage rollbacks and legislative imposition of contracts. But the amount of antiunion vitriol being directed to public sector workers because they dare to have unions, would lead an observer to think that the biggest economic problem we have is union wages in the public sector.

The ill-fated Economic Update brought forward by the Tories included public sector wage controls and even wage rollbacks as a matter of course, and these moves were considered so obvious they didn't even attract much debate. Now even the RCMP is having to face a unilateral reversal of an agreed upon wage increase because, to the right wing, wages of those at the working level are always the problem. It's bailouts for banks but wage controls for public sector workers.

Meanwhile, Finance Minister Flaherty brags about massive Tory tax cuts, and the federal government's independent budget officer says that looming federal deficits are the direct result of deliberate policy changes like tax cuts, not the economic slowdown. Again, it's tax cuts for corporations and wage controls for unionized workers.

In fact, every economist who can add knows that the worst thing we could do right now is to cut workers' wages anywhere. The economy needs to be strengthened from the bottom up. Pumping money into the banks will not re-inflate the economy, will not ensure that money is spent in our communities. Cutting the jobs and incomes of workers will prolong the slump, not resolve it.

But facts are never allowed to get in the way of an attack on unions. As usual, whatever the facts or circumstances, for the right wing, "they have seen the enemy, and it is always us."

Larry Brown is the Secretary-Treasurer of the 337,000 - member National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE). The PEI Union of Public Sector Employees (UPSE) is a component member of the National Union (NUPGE).

President's Perspective

Brothers and Sisters of the Union of Public Sector Employees,

2008 has come and gone and 2009 has come upon us. Canadians are being warned to ready themselves for a downward spiral in our economy with hard times seen for everyone. Well, let's say those of us that are not in the higher echelon of the Corporate world that is. The economic outlook for Canada is heading for what appears to be a deep depression unless something is done to stimulate the economy. Many will be protecting their pocket books even closer to get through these difficult times.



Our 2008 annual UPSE convention was an overwhelming success. The delegates debate the entire slate of resolutions brought forth and the direction has been set for 2009. UPSE will see two new faces on your Executive with those being Kevin Gotell and Doug Ferguson. Brother Ferguson has recently been elected at the Board of Directors level to replace Mike DesRoches. Brother DesRoches has made a difficult decision to step back from his position as 3rd Vice President because of personal reasons. Our thoughts and prayers are with the DesRoches family during these difficult times. I look forward to working with both Kevin and Doug ensuring that our union proceeds forward at great strides through these difficult days ahead.

Delegates who attended the 2008 UPSE convention emailed and passed on messages expressing their extreme satisfaction of our most recent convention. This year's convention focus was on you the members. This year I thought it important we start to address this issue. The convention's theme was UPSE members "Who We Are and What We Do" We focused our convention on celebrating and recognizing the work you provide to Islanders. The focus was to educate our members on the numerous services which we as UPSE members provide every day to Islanders. We are all professionals and need to be celebrated and recognized for the service which we deliver. I would personally like to thank all those members who agreed to allow UPSE to take pictures of yourselves in your jobs to educate those who do not realize just how big our union is and how diverse we are. I would also like to thank you all for the professional services you provide ensuring that all Islanders are kept safe and secure living in a democratic society. It is comforting to know Islanders are in good hands. You never can receive enough thanks. The framework and foundation of P.E.I. UPSE are you the members. You make the contributions to the fight of improving the lives of all labourers. UPSE members span from one end of the Island to the other and from side to side. Five thousand members strong. It is you that make us who we are. It is you that give us our strength, which plays a huge part of our achievements and that have made us who we are today. UPSE needs you to be there because without you we cannot exist. I would ask that the next time someone says to you "who is the union," remind them that you are the union.

Our annual convention also provided for a most informative two-day convention. The list of presentations included information on the Civil Service Superannuation Pension Plan, Public Sector Group Insurance Plan, Public Private Partnership initiatives, and the most memorable being the presentation by Shawn Arbing. Shawn delivered a presentation of his work in Afghanistan and the differences him and his troops are making in the lives of those who are less fortunate. These people do not know what it is like to live in a democratic society. The impact of Shawn's presentation on those members in attendance has been extremely positive one. Many members have a different view of what our troops are doing abroad. These types of presentations make you proud to be Canadian and to be thankful for the democratic society which we live in. Thank you Shawn for the sacrifices you have made and thank you to all the families who have loved ones abroad for making a difference in the lives of those who are less fortunate.

As was mentioned in my Presidential address UPSE has many accomplishments to take notice of from the past year. They include reaching three collective agreement settlements with measurable improvements in each, settling of many workplace grievances and maintenance of our representation on our Pension Plan to mention a few. The biggest achievement we have to be proud of is the accomplishment made with our Public Sector Group Insurance Plan (PSGIP). The bench marking has been completed for the active members and the retirees. It was as a result of your union's persistence over the past two years that we have made these accomplishments. You had given me the direction to ensure we move forward on this extremely important issue and we have been successful. UPSE will in the last week of February hold town hall meetings to present this information. Please keep watch for further information on these sessions. Members will have the opportunity to hear for themselves the information they will require to make an informed decision. The direction we are given, following these meetings and after a membership vote, will be acted upon to further our quest on addressing the high costs of benefit coverage upon retirement.

As we proceed into the coming months, many items will be addressed. These items include addressing improving direct membership rights in the areas of pension legislation enactment, early retirement for our peace officers without a penalty as some federal counter parts enjoy, continued work on the PSGIP, and casual rights improvements to mention a few. UPSE will be reviewing our education calendar to better serve our members, reviewing our union office to plan for possible future renovations, reviewing our due's structure to assess if UPSE requires any changes, and reviewing our staffing structure. As you can see there is much more work to be completed in the coming months, and we are definitely up for this challenge.

The annual convention was a time to celebrate not only our present members but to bid farewell and good luck to our retirees. At the annual convention supper, which was attended by the largest number of delegates in years, I had the privilege to recognize approximately twenty UPSE members who have recently retired over the past two years. What a special group of people they were. These people have left such an overwhelming legacy and their expertise will be missed at the workplaces. Every one of them was well rested, relaxed and full of good cheer. Retirement is one thing we all have in common and one goal we all hope to obtain sooner than later. No more alarm clocks, no more deadlines. It can get any better than that. UPSE paid a special tribute to a long standing dedicated Labour Relations Officer who is about to retire in 2009. Paul Atkinson has worked tirelessly on your behalf for thirty-five years has decided to pack it in and enjoy the links. Many UPSE members have encountered the professional service which Paul has devoted throughout his thirty-five years. We all agree that we will be losing a gem of a staff member. We don't know what we are going to do without him. He will be a very hard act to follow. Paul will be leaving us June 2009 and we wish him health, happiness, and good fortune. Good luck Paul you will be missed.

In closing I would like to thank all UPSE members for your continued support. We are about to enter a time in our lives where solidarity is of the utmost. The economic atmosphere for not only the organized but also the unorganized will be very difficult. It is during these times that we need to stand together ensuring we maintain the labour rights we have and not give in to temptation. We are only as strong united as one as you will allow us to be. Keep the faith and we can and will overcome anything. Representing you and having your labour rights addressed is the most important and rewarding part of the President's job. Ensuring that your issues are put to the employer and that your voices are heard always comes first. UPSE will continue to work on your behalf addressing your issues. Once again thank you.

In Solidarity,
Shelley Ward
UPSE President

On the Bargaining Front



P.E.I. Department of Health

Members of the Department of Health Bargaining Unit have elected the team to represent them at the bargaining table. The team have held meetings to review demand forms and are working with the staff representatives to develop a proposal package for the Employer. The current agreement expires on March 31, 2009.

2008 Health Negotiating Team

CLIENT SERVICES AND PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION (CSPA) CATEGORY REPS

	Name	Workplace	Phone (w)	Email
Main Rep:	Carolyn Knox	Public Health - Summerside	888-8156	cknox@ihis.org
Main Rep:	Alan Davidson	Child and Family Services - Charlottetown	368-5353	ajdavidson@ihis.org

CLIENT AND PROGRAM SUPPORT (CPS) CATEGORY REPS

	Name	Workplace	Phone (w)	Email
Main Rep:	Doris MacKinnon	Addictions - Souris/Montague	687-7112/838-0958	damackinnon@ihis.org
Alternate Rep:	Eileen LeClair	Summerset Manor - Summerside	888-8326	eileenleclair@hotmail.com
Reserve Rep:	Kim Stewart	Hillsborough Hospital - Charlottetown	368-5419	kg.stewart@pei.sympatico.ca

RESIDENT CARE WORKER (RCW) CATEGORY REPS

	Name	Workplace	Phone (w)	Email
Main Rep:	Doug Ferguson	Hillsborough Hospital - Charlottetown	368-5456	dougrum@hotmail.com
Main Rep:	Paula Wells	Maplewood Manor - Alberton	853-8610	p_wells529@hotmail.com
Alternate Rep:	Bernadette MacDonald	Riverview Manor - Montague	838-0718	garry_bernadette@hotmail.com
Reserve Rep:	Ray Johnstone	Beach Grove Home - Charlottetown	368-6750	n/a

LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE (LPN) CATEGORY REPS

	Name	Workplace	Phone (w)	Email
Main Rep:	Karen Jackson	Kings County Memorial Hospital - Montague	838-0733	k_jack29@hotmail.com
Main Rep:	Craig MacKenzie	Community Hospital - O'Leary	859-8750	chmackenzie@ihis.org
Alternate Rep:	Linda MacKinnon	Stewart Memorial Hospital - Tyne Valley	831-7900	braydenis1@hotmail.com
Reserve Rep:	Brenda Bingley	Beach Grove Home - Charlottetown	368-6759	n/a

UPSE STAFF REPRESENTATIVES

	Name	Workplace	Phone (w)	Email
Lead:	Brenda Walker	UPSE Office	892-5335	bwalker@peiupse.ca
Assistant:	Nancy Smith	UPSE Office	892-5335	nreeves@peiupse.ca

STRAIT CROSSING BRIDGE LTD.

Negotiations are ongoing with this bargaining unit. The negotiating team is diligently working to ensure all of the member's concerns are being addressed. Lead Negotiator, Paul Atkinson is optimistic that an agreement will be reached for membership ratification. The current agreement expired on December 31, 2008.



St. Peter's Early Learning Centre

UPSE applied for conciliation on November 10, 2008. Hon. Carolyn Bertram Minister of Communities Cultural Affairs and Labour appointed Roy Doucette as Conciliator effective November 12, 2008. Mr. Doucette will meet with the parties to assist in finding solutions to the negotiating items still unresolved.

Negotiations and conciliation efforts have been hampered by the recent announcements regarding kindergarten relocations and the small school closures. Until centres are fully aware of the impact these changes will have on their revenues, it is difficult for them to move forward with negotiations. In order to ensure the staff are getting the best deal possible, a clearer picture of the Centre's future financial situation and operating location will need to be identified. This situation strengthens the argument for a National Childcare Program.

The employees are not the only ones who may be affected by kindergarten relocations and small school closures. The changes may result in the closure of many community based child care centres that will leave parents struggling to find spaces for their children. UPSE continues to be hopeful that governments will come together and address this most serious social issue.

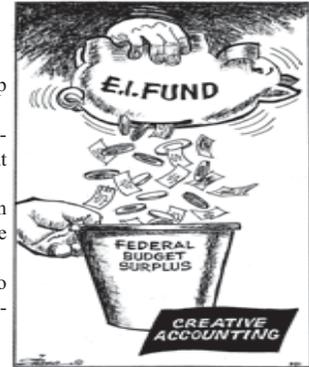
Billions for banks, but not for pensions

UFCW/CALM

Back in June, Stephen Harper's Conservative government grabbed \$50-billion from the surplus built up over the years in the Employment Insurance (EI) fund. The grab was possible because of the C-50 omnibus budget bill. "That is money that was there only through workers' over-contributions to EI," says UFCW president Wayne Hanley. "Five months later, we see Harper shovelling billions to Canadian banks. What about Canada's workers who built up those billions?"

The plunge in the stock market has shrunk the investment portfolios of thousands of company pension plans. "The stock markets and the plans will eventually recover," Hanley says. "But just like the banks, these workers' pension plans should receive direct financial assistance until the monetary storm has passed.

EI is intended to provide income protection, and pensions are income. "It was workers, not banks, who built Canada's wealth," Hanley adds. "When it comes to assistance in troubled times, workers and their pensions should be first in line."



Private for-profit clinics erode public health care

Ontario Health Coalition/CALM

Researchers investigating 130 for-profit surgical, MRI/CT and "boutique" physician clinics across Canada found evidence to suspect 89 possible violations in five provinces of the Canada Health Act. The clinics were violating Canada Health Act's requirement for equal access to hospital and physician care and the prohibition on extra-billing patients. The report reveals the first forays of U.S. private health companies into Canada.

The report's author, Natalie Mehra, director of the Ontario Health Coalition is calling on the federal government to live up to its responsibility to protect Canadians from extra-billing and two-tier health care. "We found evidence that for-profit clinics are eroding the fairness and equality of Canada's health system. A significant proportion of for-profit surgical and diagnostic clinics are billing provincial health plans and also charging extra fees to patients to maximize their revenues and profits," says Mehra. The charges are unaffordable for all but the wealthiest Canadians. Clinics told researchers they charged \$13,000–\$20,000 or more for knee surgery, \$1,200–\$2,000 or more for cataract surgery, and hundreds to thousands of dollars for MRIs.

For-profit clinics are also taking specialists, health professionals and operating room nurses out of local public hospitals to serve less urgent patients, often for extra fees. Despite claims about reducing wait times, there was direct evidence that poaching staff worsened shortages in local hospitals. There was evidence of staff poaching out of local hospitals by for-profit clinics in Nova Scotia, Quebec, B.C., Ontario and Manitoba. Although some provinces are considering introducing for-profit clinics for the first time, the researchers found that three provinces - Alberta, Ontario and Manitoba have all rolled back their experiments with for-profit MRI/CT clinics or surgical clinics, opting instead to build capacity in the public non-profit health system.

In Ontario and Manitoba, the for-profit cancer and cataract surgery clinics had higher costs per treatment than non-profit clinics. This should serve as a warning to provinces where more for-profit privatization of health care is being considered. "We found that the for-profit clinics overwhelmingly locate in large urban centres where there are more wealthy people to buy their health care procedures, raising concerns about worsening access in rural areas," says Mehra. In cities like Montreal where Statistics Canada reports patients have the worst shortage of family doctors in the country, there is a high incidence of boutique physician clinics selling executive health care for hundreds or thousands of dollars per year per patient.

Canada ranks last with Ireland in UNICEF child care report

Survey of child-care standards in 25 developed countries

How does Canada fare?

Child Care: A UNICEF Report Card 2008

Benchmarks	Status
Number of benchmarks achieved	1
Parental leave of 1 year at 50% of salary	x
A national plan with priority for the disadvantaged	x
Subsidized and regulated child care services for 25% of children under 3	x
Subsidized and accredited early education services for 80% of 4 year-olds	x
80% of all child care staff trained	x
50% of staff in accredited early education services tertiary educated with relevant qualification	✓
Minimum staff-to-children ratio of 1:15 in pre-school education	x
1.0% of GDP spent on early childhood services	x
Child poverty rate less than 10%	x
Near-universal outreach of essential child health services	x

Source: UNICEF Canada

NUPGE/Ottawa (15 Dec. 2008) - Canada ranks last in a tie with Ireland among 25 developed nations in a comparison of child care services conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The report says Canada failed nine of 10 measures to ensure that children get a good start in life. It met only one standard - a benchmark stipulating that 50% of staff in accredited early education services have post-secondary qualifications.

Sweden topped the list, meeting all 10 benchmarks. The other countries, in order of ranking, were: Iceland, Denmark, Finland, France, Norway, Belgium (Flanders), Hungary, New Zealand, Slovenia, Austria, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Japan, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Spain, Switzerland, United States, Australia, Ireland and Canada.

"Investing in early child care and education is a key strategy to respond to current economic challenges and to promote economic stimulus and recovery," UNICEF Canada said in a statement.

The Canadian organization urged the Harper government in Ottawa to act by introducing "measurable standards, guidelines and appropriate funding for child care and solutions by July 2009." The report, entitled The Child Care Transition, was sparked by new scientific understanding about the importance of early childhood education at a time when an increasing majority of children in the world's richest countries are spending a large part of their day in child care.

2008 Convention Report

The 2008 UPSE Annual Convention followed an agenda that was as diverse and interesting as the members it represents. The convention's theme was "UPSE Members...Who We Are...What We Do" In keeping with this theme the convention hall was decorated with pictures of members from all of the union's 11 bargaining units, and slide shows were presented depicting members and the jobs they perform. President Ward would like to acknowledge the hard work of Recreation and Public Relations Committee Chair, Karen Jackson in putting them all together.



Labour Relations Officer, Paul Atkinson
with President Shelley Ward

The convention opened with President Ward's address to the delegates. The President highlighted the successes UPSE had achieved during the past year and addressed some of the issues UPSE will be facing in the year to come. She spoke about the continued efforts of UPSE to improve rights for our casual workers and ensure members are being well served by their Insurance and Pension Plans. President Ward spoke about department relocations and how the Ministers involved have failed to address our concerns. She highlighted some victories achieved on the grievance front including improvements for members who are required to work alone, and a policy to deal with the short trip allowances. President Ward acknowledged the hard work of the Union's Committees and Stewards, and she thanked all the members who work so diligently on behalf of their UPSE brothers and sisters.

President Ward also acknowledged the UPSE staff, and thanked them for their dedicated support of UPSE members during the past year. She paid a special tribute to Labour Relations Officer, Paul Atkinson. Paul has announced that he will be retiring in June of 2009 after serving the members for over 35 years.

Educational Presentations

Members attended two educational sessions on Friday prior to the convention's official call to order and a third session which was included in Saturday's agenda. The sessions were designed to provide delegates with up-to-date, accurate information.

Public Private Partnerships (P3s)

The first session was on Public Private Partnerships and how they threaten quality public services. Provincial Treasurer Wes Sheridan had stated in the House that he was not ruling out P3 financing as a possibility for manor replacements or any other government initiative. This news motivated President Ward to call on, CUPE and IUOE to join forces and address this issue. A coalition was formed resulting in the 'Say No To P3s Campaign'. UPSE sisters, Debbie Johnston, Karen Jackson, Eileen LeClair and Joyce MacLean, gave delegates an overview of the campaign and presented some interesting and eye opening statistics on problems associated with P3s.

Following the presentation President Ward introduced Buellah Sherren and her grandson Makenzie McGuigan and thanked them for serving as the 'faces' of our campaign.



l-r: Debbie Johnston, Eileen LeClair,
Joyce MacLean and Karen Jackson

NOTE TO MEMBERS: In a follow up to the above story, President Ward is happy to report that Minister Sheridan announced his government was not going to utilize any Public Private Partnership initiatives to rebuild the province's manors. The

announcement was made in conjunction with the presentation of the Capital Budget. The coalition will continue to remain proactive on this issue and vocally oppose any P3 initiative which is related in any way to Public Services.



Terry Hogan

Civil Service Superannuation Fund (CSSF)

The second educational session was on the Civil Service Superannuation Fund (CSSF). Even though all of the delegates were not members of this fund, much the information presented was beneficial to anyone participating in a workplace pension plan. Terry Hogan, Manager of Pension Benefits with the Provincial Treasury, provided general information on sources of retirement income, including, Workplace Pensions, Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplements, and Registered Retirement Savings Plans. Terry explained the penalties imposed for starting your pension plans early, and explained bridging benefits that are available with many workplace plans. He also reminded the delegates it is never too early to start planning for, and building your retirement income.

Public Sector Group Insurance Plan (PSGIP)

During the last round of Civil Service Negotiations, President Ward and the negotiating team took the problems we were experiencing with the PSGIP and negotiated articles to address these issues as part of the collective agreement. These efforts resulted in a scheduled summit on the PSGIP where our questions and concerns will be formally addressed. The efforts at the table have resulted in a much improved relationship between the parties. The Employer has provided UPSE with long awaited benchmarks. These benchmarks allow us to compare the services and coverage in our plan in relation to other plans operating in the region. UPSE's two Trustees, Craig MacKenzie and Kirk Morrison were joined by Denise Lewis from Pension Benefits who presented an overview of the benchmarks for active employees and a proposal for plan enhancements and the costs associated with them. The benchmarks indicate, in most areas, the PSGIP is offering active members a package equal to, and in some areas superior to others offered in the region. Information sessions on the benchmarks for the active group will be held for the membership during the month of February. Following is a list of meeting locations, times and dates.



l-r : Craig MacKenzie, Denise Lewis
and Kirk Morrison

February 23 - Kings County
3:00 p.m.- Access PEI - Souris
6:00 p.m.- Curling Club - Montague

February 25 - East Prince
3:00 p.m Loyalist Inn - Summerside
6:00 p.m. Loyalist Inn - Summerside

February 24 - Charlottetown
3:00 p.m. Dutch Inn - North River (Whiltshire Room)
6:00 p.m. Dutch Inn - North River (Whiltshire Room)

February 26 - West Prince
3:00 p.m. St. Anthony's Hall - Bloomfield
6:00 p.m. St. Anthony's Hall - Bloomfield

2008 Convention Report

Keynote Speaker - Shawn Arbing

This year's keynote speaker was UPSE member, Shawn Arbing. Shawn works as an Assistant Probation Officer with the Department of the Attorney General. Shawn is also a member of the Canadian Armed Forces Reserve. In both positions he works with people to try and help them improve their personal situation. He recently took a leave from his job so he could take part in a six month deployment to Afghanistan, to serve as Leader of a Tactical Psychological Operations Team. He spoke to the delegates about that experience.

During his presentation, Shawn was able to provide the delegates with a perspective on the war that was personal, honest and heart-felt. He allowed us to see a totally different picture than what is relayed during the evening news coverage. He shared stories about the villages he spent time in, and the people who lived in them.

Shawn spoke of how communication systems were almost nonexistent in many areas where they travelled and how a part of his mission was to work with the Elders in the villages and update them on what was going on in the rest of the country. They also worked with the residents to rebuild schools for children, giving them back a sense of normalcy. Throughout his presentation it was clear, the goal was not to impose our values and beliefs on the people they encountered - it was to respect theirs, while assisting them to rebuild their communities.

The expressions on the faces of many delegates were indicative of the impact Shawn's presentation made. Members who commented afterwards thanked Shawn and the rest of Canada's military for their selfless efforts on behalf of the Afghan peoples. As Local 8 member, Viola Evans Murley reminded us, "Whatsoever you do for the least of my brothers."



Shawn at podium during his presentation

Fraternalists well represented at convention

This year's convention was well attended by Fraternal delegates. These delegates are sent by other Unions/Federations to show their support and pass along best wishes from their memberships. Fraternal delegates attend all convention functions and activities.



From l-r: Lois Wales - 1st V. P. Manitoba Government and General Employees Union (MGEU), Henny Haneraaf - British Columbia Government and Service Employees Union (BCGEU), Carl Pursey - President P.E.I. Federation of Labour, Brenda Clapp Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), and Jason MacLean - Nova Scotia Government Employees Union (NSGEU)

2008 UPSE Member of the Year

Linda Toole, an Addictions Worker from Local 3, was chosen by the delegates as the 2008 Member of the Year. Linda was nominated for the honour by President Ward. In her speech President Ward told members of the courage and determination Linda displayed when she agreed to stand up to her employer and grieve what was a blatant, discriminatory hiring practice. For many members the act of filing a grievance is in itself an intimidating process, but agreeing to challenge them face to face in a legal setting requires a very special person.



Linda Toole (left) pictured with President Shelley Ward

Congratulations Linda, you truly are the member of the year.

Convention's social activities promote union solidarity

Convention delegates took advantage of the social activities planned for them by the Recreation and Convention Committee. The committee decided to change the traditional karaoke on Friday night and replace it with a good old fashioned 'Kitchen Party'. Comic performer 'Cicily' of Cicily and Bridget fame got the party started with her one person show. Delegates answered the call to share their talents and the entertainment was remarkable. The event proved to be a huge success. Plans are already underway for another one next year!



'Cicily'



Local 16 members at Convention Banquet from l-r: Judy MacIntyre, Doris MacKinnon, Joyce O'Brien and Mae MacKinnon



Secretary Treasurer, Kevin Gotell plays a festive piece on the piano

2008 Convention Report

Delegates consider 22 resolutions

17 adopted - 3 defeated and 2 referred

Defeated

***Presidential Election:** Arguments both pro and con were debated on the issue of returning the election of President to the hands of the convention delegates. The pro side argued the expense involved was not justified due to the low voter participation. They also argued the activists who are elected to represent the members of their locals as convention delegates are most familiar with the candidates and their stand on the issues and should be the one's who decide. The con side argued UPSE is a democratic organization in which all members pay dues to belong. They argued we are continually trying to encourage members to participate and become more active within the union, and reverting back to a delegates only election for president would be a giant step backward. In the end the majority of delegates supported the con argument and the resolution was defeated. The coinciding proposed housekeeping resolution was also defeated.



Delegates voted to continue with a province wide membership vote for UPSE President

***Pension Contributions:** This resolution called on UPSE to direct the government to allow workers a say in the management of their pension contributions. The motion was tabled to allow both pro and con supporters a chance to follow up on some of the information that was being presented. It was later brought back to the floor where a clearer picture of the possible implications was presented. It was agreed as plan contributors we want to be able to provide direction to our plan managers, but it may not be in our best interests to assume the total financial responsibility for the plan's assets. Our current structure requires the Employer make up any losses incurred in the funds investment revenue.

Adopted

*** Mileage allowances:** Delegates voted to adopt 2 resolutions dealing with mileage allowances. The first one will result in an increase to the rates paid to members for union related travel. The new rates, effective following convention are as follows:

- single (driver only) - from .33 to .40 per km.
- driver plus 1 passenger - from .35 to .42 per km.
- driver plus 2 passengers - from .37 to .44 per km.
- driver plus 3 or more passengers - from .39 to .46 per km.
- short trip allowance - from \$6:00 - \$7.25



The second resolution changes the Constitution to allow the Board of Directors to make future changes to the mileage allowance rates when necessary.



*** Energy/ Conservation:** Delegates voted to adopt both resolutions dealing with environmental issues. One calls on UPSE to direct government to develop a scientific method that will rapidly determine the source of water contamination and to prosecute any person, organization or government found guilty of contaminating any Island waterway or stream to the fullest extent of the law. The second resolution calls on UPSE to encourage the government to follow the State of California's Energy Rebate Rates in Renewable Energy to encourage local energy production.

*** UPSE Committees:** A resolution to set a maximum limit on committee size was adopted by the delegates. Committees may now range in size from the chair(s) plus two members to the chair(s) plus nine members. The majority of UPSE Committees fall in the middle of this range. If a chair feels that his/her committee requires additional members they may appeal to the President.



*** Casual Employees:** Local 12 members submitted this resolution which was amended by the delegates to cover all casual workers instead of only those working in a specific area. It calls on UPSE to lobby government for equal rights for all casual employees. As a follow up to this resolution, President Ward is in the process of conducting meetings so the civil service casuals may elect a representative from each county to present the issues surrounding casual employment to the next Civil Service Negotiating Team.

*** Hiring Practices Within Government:** Delegates adopted this resolution which calls on UPSE to lobby the government for fair and just hiring practices that ensure the most qualified applicant is awarded the position.

*** Exclusion of President During Investigation of Constitutional Interpretation Challenge:** The UPSE President is a member of most UPSE Committees, including the committee responsible for the Constitution. Delegates adopted this resolution which was submitted to ensure transparency of any investigation held to resolve a member's challenge of the President's interpretation of a Constitutional Article.

*** Executive Meetings:** The Constitution required the UPSE Executive to meet a minimum of twenty-four (24) times per year. It was felt by the Executive and supported by the Board this number of meetings was not required to carry out the duties of the Executive. The minimum number has been reduced to eighteen (18) meetings. There is no cap on the maximum number of meetings allowed.

*** Director Entitlement:** A resolution adopted in 2007 contained reference to a specific local number. This tied the hands of any committee who sought to make changes to the local structure. This resolution removes the reference to any specific local number.

2008 Convention Report

***Community Social Service Worker Appreciation Day:** Initiated at the National Board this resolution was submitted by the UPSE Board of Directors. This resolution called upon UPSE members to acknowledge the services provided within Island communities by Social Service Workers and proclaim November 6th as Community Social Service Workers Appreciation Day. Beginning in November 2009 UPSE will formally recognize this day. This resolution has also been adopted by many of the NUPGE components.

November 6
Community Social Service
Worker Appreciation Day

Adopted - Housekeeping

The following adopted resolutions were all dealing with housekeeping changes required to update or clarify articles within the Constitution. Some of these problems are created when a Constitutional Amendment is adopted and the resulting changes end up effecting another Article, or when an existing Article is found to be ambiguous and needs to be clarified to properly reflect its intended meaning.

Resolutions: 7, 8 and 14 - **Member in Good Standing**, Resolution 6 - **Absolute Majority-Presidential Election**, Resolution 9 - **Membership Dues for Retired Members**, Resolution 15 - **Executive Officers**.

Referred

***Market adjustment - All Trades:** A resolution calling on UPSE to lobby government for a market adjustment on behalf of all trades workers including equipment operators was referred to the Bargaining Committee. The Committee will ensure this item is considered when the Civil Service Bargaining Unit are preparing for their next round of contract negotiations.

*** Union Dues:** This resolution called for a change in the formula UPSE uses to set dues. Dues are currently set at a fixed rate which is determined by convention delegates and charged to all members who earn in excess of \$500.00 bi-weekly. Members earning under this amount are charged on a pro-rated basis. The resolution called for the bi-weekly rate to be a fixed amount equal to one (1) hours pay. The resolution was referred to the Ad Hoc Committee on Alternative Dues Structure.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Alternative Dues was to present a recommendation on dues structure at this year's convention and they worked diligently to meet this task. They realized in order to properly prepare such a recommendation they needed to evaluate the needs and expectations of UPSE members and come up with a benchmark so they could calculate the necessary dues required to meet this need. They utilized the expertise of our sister union, NBU and our National Secretary Treasurer, Larry Brown to provide them with some direction. They asked for an extension until the 2009 Annual Convention to prepare a complete recommendation. Convention delegates approved this request.

Audited financial statement reveals surplus for 2007-2008

2008-2009 Operating budget also projects small surplus

Audited financial statements for the 2007-2008 operating year revealed the union had a surplus in its operating fund. The finance committee also projected a small surplus for the 2008-2009 operating year and as a result the finance committee did not recommend a dues increase for 2008-2009. President Ward thanked all of the committee chairs for their continued efforts to ensure they operate within their budget allocations. Secretary Treasurer, Kevin Gotell, thanked the Finance Committee members, Board member Simon Hashie and UPSE Office Supervisor Lisa Rossiter for their assistance in preparing this year's operating budget.

Executive Officers

Convention Elections



Eileen
LeClair



Doug
Ferguson

Convention delegates had to choose between two well deserving candidates for the position of 2nd Vice President. Doug Ferguson, a RCW from Local 7, offered for the position and incumbent Eileen LeClair, an Occupational Therapy Worker/RCW from Local 2, re-offered for another term. Eileen LeClair was the successful candidate. Kevin Gotell, a Judicial Clerk from Local 11, was unopposed in his bid for Secretary Treasurer.



Kevin Gotell

Mike DesRoches resigns as 3rd Vice President

Board of Directors elects Doug Ferguson to serve remainder of term



Mike DesRoches

In November, 3rd Vice President Mike DesRoches, informed the Board that he would be resigning for personal reasons. Mike, a Social Service Worker from Local 2, had held the position for the past five years. In a meeting held on December 18, 2008 the Union's Board of Directors elected Doug Ferguson, a Resident Care Worker from Local 7, to serve the remaining term of office for the position. The current term of office will expire in November of 2009. We wish Mike and his family all the best in the future and welcome Doug to the Executive.

Retiree Recognition

The following members who retired in 2007-2008 were honoured during the convention banquet. Retirees are pictured with UPSE President Shelley Ward.



Clayton Coles
Technical Officer
Highways



Julia Donahoe
Dietitian
Public Health



Michael Francis
Program Officer
Emergency Measures Organization



Deborah MacLean
Resident Care Worker
Prince Edward Home



William (Bill) Glen
Professional Officer
Forestry



Beverly Mayne
Licensed Practical Nurse
Prince County Hospital



Bill Trainor
Social Service Worker
Child and Family Services - Charlottetown



Dan Malone
Social Service Worker
Addictions - Mt. Herbert



June Yeo
Administrative Support Worker
Transportation and Public Works



Jake Shaw
Learning Manager
Holland College Aerospace Centre



Elaine Trainor
Licensed Practical Nurse
Mental Health



Jude Driscoll
Professional Officer
Workers Compensation Board



Doug Gaudet
Technical Officer
Capital Projects



Priscilla MacKinnon
Accounting Technician
Holland College - Montgomery Hall

Recreation and Public Relations Committee

\$5500.00 in Bursary funding awarded

Bethany Knox is awarded \$1000.00 Laurie Jenkins Memorial

The Public Relations Committee reviewed 43 bursary applications this year. Six applications were disqualified for failing to meet the necessary requirements. Applications are reviewed using a 'blind test' format so the identity of the applicant is not known by the judges. Judging is based on the following three areas, listed in order of importance: (1) financial need, (2) academic ability, (3) UPSE involvement (as it relates to the applicant or the member to whom the applicant is dependant). The Laurie Jenkins Memorial Bursary is awarded based on a fourth factor - community involvement. It is awarded in memory of Laurie Jenkins a strong union activist who was also an active community volunteer.



The 2008 winners are:

Laurie Jenkins Memorial - \$1000.00 - Bethany Knox - Bethany is the daughter of Local 10 Member Paul Knox and the step-daughter of Local 11 member Nouhad Knox. Bethany is in her final year of a four year Arts Program at St. Thomas University in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Bethany has a long history of community service and was awarded the Red Cross - McInnes Cooper 2008 Young Humanitarian Award.

Julie MacKay Bursary - \$500.00 - Christopher King - Christopher is the partner of Local 7 member Margo MacPhee. He is enrolled in the Correctional Officer Program at the Atlantic Police Academy in Summerside P.E.I.

\$500.00 Bursary - John Moase - John is a Resident Care Worker from Local 6. He is in his second year of a four-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program at UPEI.

\$500.00 Bursary - Laurie Elizabeth Marchbank - Laurie is the daughter of Local 5 member Hubert Marchbank. She is in her third year of a four-year Arts Program at Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick.

\$500.00 Bursary - Shelby McCarron - Shelby is the step-daughter of Local 3 member Randy Mahar. She is in her first year of a four-year Bachelor of Science Program at UPEI.

\$500.00 Bursary - Ashton Elizabeth Gallant - Ashton is the daughter of Local 1 member Juanita Gallant. She is in her first year of a five-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program at UPEI.

\$500.00 - Douglas Marchbank - Douglas is the son of Local 5 member Hubert Marchbank. He is in his first year of a two-year Masters Program in Science at UPEI.

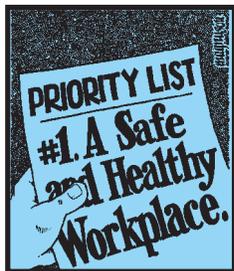
\$500.00 - Jillian Campbell - Jillian is the daughter of Local 17 member Carla Campbell. She is in her first year of a four-year Arts Program at UPEI.

\$500.00 - Jessica Lynn Taylor - Jessica is the daughter of Local 12 member Bob Taylor. She is in her third year of a four-year Arts Program at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario.

\$500.00 - Samantha Jolene Ellis - Samantha is the daughter of Local 3 member Jeffery Ellis. She is in her second year of a two-year Sport and Leisure Management Program at Holland College in Charlottetown P.E.I.

Education and Occupational Health and Safety Committee

The Occupational Health & Safety Act - Is your workplace complying?



Section 25 of the OH&S Act states:

- (1) At a workplace where 20 or more persons are regularly employed the employer
 - (a) shall establish and maintain a joint occupational health and safety committee; and
 - (b) may establish additional committees.

Additionally, the size of these committees is to be agreed upon by the parties, or as ordered by the Director of OH&S. One half of the committee's members are to be appointed by the union, and one half is to be appointed by the employer.

The committee members shall work cooperatively to identify hazards to occupational health and safety in the workplace. The committee shall be notified of all workplace issues respecting OH&S. They will work together to investigate and promptly deal with these issues. Committee members shall participate in regular workplace inspections, and make recommendations for improvements when necessary. They shall advise the employer on individual protective equipment best suited to the needs of the workers, within the provisions of this Act and the regulations. The Committee shall review the policies and provisions of the Act and ensure the employer is operating in full compliance, and they shall maintain records and minutes of all committee meetings.

Workplace OH&S Committees are to meet at least once per month, unless directed otherwise by the OH&S Director. All members of the committee shall be entitled to take the required time off for all committee meetings or any associated training that may be required. This time shall be deemed work time for which the worker is entitled to all their usual salary and benefits.

If your workplace is not complying with these regulations, or you would like additional information, please contact the UPSE office at 892-5335 or toll-free at 1-800-897-8773 and ask for a member of the Educational and Occupational Health and Safety Committee to contact you to discuss your concerns. The entire OH&S Act may be viewed online at: http://www.gov.pe.ca/law/statutes/pdf/o-01_01.pdf

Convention Photos

Delegates at work for you



Upcoming Events

UPSE Annual Hockey Tournament



The Union's Recreation and Public Relations Committee have scheduled this year's hockey tournament for Friday February 20th and Saturday February 21st. The tournament will be held in Georgetown, at the Three Rivers Sportsplex.

Registration will be limited to the first eight teams to submit their names to Rick at 962-2827 or Pam at 888-8077. The cost of registration is \$250.00 per team.

PSGIP Benchmarking Information Sessions

February 23 - Kings County
3:00 p.m.- Access PEI - Souris
6:00 p.m.- Curling Club -Montague

February 25 - East Prince
3:00 p.m. Loyalist Inn - Summerside
6:00 p.m. Loyalist Inn - Summerside

February 24 - Charlottetown
3:00 p.m. Dutch Inn - North River (Whiltshire Room)
6:00 p.m. Dutch Inn - North River (Whiltshire Room)

February 26 - West Prince
3:00 p.m. St. Anthony's Hall - Bloomfield
6:00 p.m. St. Anthony's Hall - Bloomfield

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR ALL MEMBERS

As per the UPSE Constitution there will be an election this year for the position of UPSE President. All ballots for this election MUST be mailed to your home address. In order to ensure your name is on the voters list, the Union office must have accurate, up-to-date information. If you have had a change of name or address since the last Presidential Election you need to call the office at 892-5335 or toll-free at 1-800-897-8773 and update your file.

Thank you,
Tammy Laybolt
UPSE Membership Records Coordinator