

THE ADVOCATE

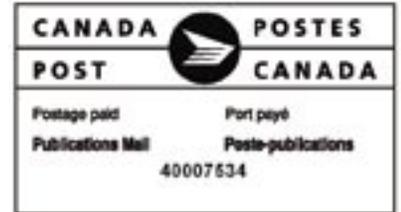
Prince Edward Island Union of Public Sector Employees

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THE ADVOCATE Winter 2016

Report on
Convention



Dear Members,

I want to thank the membership for the continued support as we move ahead into a new year filled with many challenges and opportunities for PEI UPSE.



Karen Jackson
President, UPSE

We are poised to embark upon a multi-year action plan that will enhance our bargaining strength, organizing and campaigning so that we may better serve and protect the membership and the valuable services they provide Islanders. As a union, we want to help build a strong economy for PEI that ensures all Islanders have equal opportunity to lead a full and productive life.

This union is our union and membership engagement is key to our continued success. We can build bargaining strength together by working to create positive change in our workplaces and communities. As members of PEI UPSE we can all make a difference simply by seeing ourselves as active members of a union. We can engage in conversation about our goals and help to shape and fortify our bargaining agenda. We can build public awareness and support by talking with our friends and family. I want to work with the membership

and all of our locals to increase our mobilization efforts. The challenge will be to expand our roles beyond the day-to-day administration of our collective agreements. By becoming more engaged we can work together to achieve our goals. On page 4 of this edition of *The Advocate* please see details of our action plan which was approved at the Annual Convention.

I want to thank Cooke Insurance for donating \$6,000 to the *Silent Witness Project* at Convention. Their generous donation brings hope and moves us closer to eliminating domestic violence in Prince Edward Island. I also want to encourage members to participate in **Wear Purple Day** in Prince Edward Island on February 17 to raise awareness about Family Violence Prevention Week, and to remember the victims of violence and their families.

The new federal government has forged ahead with measures to begin combating economic inequality by increasing taxes on those who earn \$200,000 or more per year in Canada. On page 5 of this edition of *The Advocate* see an update on this as well as information regarding the repeal of anti-labour laws in Canada.

I encourage all members to contact the union office if you have any questions or if you would like to get involved.

Karen Jackson
President, UPSE



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UPSE is affiliated with the Canadian Labour Congress, the PEI Federation of Labour, and the National Union of Public and General Employees.

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UPSE Bursary Winners for 2015

Each year, UPSE proudly awards a scholarship and nine bursaries to students attending college or university. The union understands the importance of working towards a degree or professional designation. The rising costs of obtaining an education often require that students apply for loans. UPSE's bursary and scholarship program helps reduce some of the economic burden that students face.

Kendra Rayner is the winner of the Laurie Jenkins Scholarship for 2015 valued at \$1000. Andrew MacKenzie is the winner of the Julie MacKay Bursary for 2015 valued at \$500. All other bursaries are valued at \$500.



L-R: Karen Jackson and Connor Mayhew (son of Lyndon Mayhew, Local 7).

Left to right: Karen Jackson (President, UPSE), Kendra Rayner (daughter of Roxanne Rayner, Local 3), Jade Burhoe (daughter of Barb Burhoe, Local 6), Erica Gillis (daughter of Edwin Gillis, Local 1), Andrew MacKenzie (married to Jodi MacKenzie, Local 7), Katelyn Anthony (daughter of Charlene Andrews, Local 6), Avery Judson (daughter of Richard Judson, Local 17), Brad MacMillan (son of Bruce MacMillan, Local 12), Chrissy Murphy (Director, Local 7).

Winners not in the picture are: Ashley Hiscock (daughter of Laurie Hiscock, Local 5), and Gillian MacDonald (daughter of Carolyn Knox, Local 8).

Christmas Parties 2015



PEI UPSE hosted Christmas parties for members and their children in December. Karen Jackson, President, says "it was great to see the members celebrating the season and taking time from their busy lives to get involved in union social activities. I want to thank Chrissy Murphy and the PR committee, and Eileen LeClair for organizing the parties."

Our union has always strived to bring members together to have fun and to enjoy working with one another to build fairness and success in our work lives. PEI UPSE has maintained a long tradition of uniting members and building solidarity within our union.

The Way Forward, Convention 2015

At Convention, the membership carried a resolution put forward by the UPSE Board of Directors entitled "Action Plan." The resolution states that UPSE will advocate for quality public services, tax fairness, a modern industrial strategy and labour rights.

The Action Plan outlines UPSE's commitment to working with community allies to make PEI a fairer society based on equality and inclusion. This means focussing on the challenge that income inequality presents to Islanders and indeed all Canadians. Income inequality has been growing steadily and is now at levels not seen since before the Great Depression.

In the last decade, the richest 1% of Canadians took home almost one-third of all income growth.

What the 1% want

- the attack on public services and programs, which has left more and more of our vulnerable citizens to fend for themselves;
- the lack of tax fairness, which has resulted in increased government spending on tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy and less government spending on public services;

- the lack of a modern industrial strategy in favour of a hands-off strategy of deregulation, privatization, and government spending on tax cuts to corporations without any corresponding commitment to job creation; and
- the three decades' attack on labour rights which has led to shrinking labour density and the inability of unions to achieve greater income equality for all working people.

What we want

- to put forward our alternative approach aimed at creating greater income equality in Canada;
- quality public services that meet the needs of all citizens and enhance the values of equality and inclusion;
- tax fairness based on a progressive approach to wealth distribution;
- a modern industrial strategy that supports a mixed economy and emphasizes sustainability and social justice; and
- recognition that labour rights are human rights and are a critical instrument to achieve higher levels of economic equality and social rights for all citizens.



UPSE's new Action Plan outlines a path for the union over the next several years that is based on a Common Wealth - Common Good Framework.

- **Quality Public Services**
- **Tax Fairness**
- **Modern Industrial Strategy**
- **Labour Rights**

The union recognizes the value of public services as an expression of our common wealth for the common good. Public services must be funded adequately through a progressive tax system based on fairness.

As front-line providers of public services, we recognize the positive impact public services have on reducing social and economic inequality and enhancing the ability of all citizens to participate fully in all aspects of society. The value of public services and the workers who provide them have a positive impact on our economy as a whole. They provide businesses and communities with public infrastructure, a skilled and healthy workforce, a safe and clean environment, and needed stimulus for local economies.

Bargaining Update

Lady Slipper Villa signed its first collective agreement on January 20, 2016. Members obtained a 1.5% wage increase and four years retro pay. Negotiations for additional wage increases will resume during the current one year agreement.



Top: Troy Warren (UPSE LRO), Rose McNally (team member), Alana Rummerfield (team member)
Bottom L-R: Kevin Gotell (UPSE Secretary Treasurer), Karen Jackson (UPSE President), Karen Cook (Lady Slipper Villa, Manager), Chris Montigny (Employer counsel).

Community Connections team members have worked hard to draft their first ever collective agreement. Ratification kits will be distributed in February and an update will follow.

A new collective agreement for Community Inclusions will cover the period from 2015-2018. After rejecting a tentative deal in November, members voted again in December as some adjustments were made to wage figures. The result was that the members voted 78% in favour. The deal is a 4 year term with an 8% increase over the term. The final agreement also contains improved vacation and bereavement benefits.

New Government: Promises for Labour

In the last edition of *The Advocate* UPSE outlined key promises for labour made by the new federal government. Some of these include repealing bills C-377 and C-525; raising taxes on the most wealthy Canadians, reversing EI changes made by the Harper regime, and returning the age of eligibility for Old Age Security from 67 to 65.

It's early in the new government's mandate, however, during a week long sitting in December they were able to raise taxes on Canada's wealthiest while cutting the tax rate for middle income earners. The increase applies to those who earn above \$200,000. They will be taxed at 33% which is a 4% increase. Those who earn between \$45,282 and \$90,563 will be taxed at 20.5% which is a 1.5% decrease. The changes to the tax brackets are not revenue neutral and will cost government approximately \$1.2 billion per year in lost tax revenue.



The first full sitting of Parliament began on January 25, 2016. In regard to new legislation the government is expected to repeal Bill C-377 which forces unions to publicly disclose their finances despite the fact that unions make their finances available to their memberships; and Bill C-525 which makes it unreasonably difficult for unions to organize and allows a minority of workers to decertify a union.

Other moves expected to help federal unions include repealing sections of Bill C-59 which gave the government power to override collective agreements and strip sick leave provisions from employees. Repealing this bill will improve labour relations and will set the stage for a fair and open bargaining process in upcoming negotiations.



Federal unions are also looking for the repeal of Bill C-4 which effectively changed the collective bargaining process in the public service. The Harper regime amended the *Public Service Relations Act* of 1967 in order to control which unions could strike and or go to arbitration. Bill C-4 also forces arbitrators to consider government's economic state of affairs as a primary factor in determining settlements.

UPSE's Member of the Year

Lynn Bovyer nominated Wilma Ramsay, the recipient of the 2015 Member of the Year award. Wilma works at the Workers Compensation Board. She has been an outstanding union activist throughout her years as a member and has served in many positions. She currently serves as UPSE's Second Vice President and was Director and Chief Steward of Local 18. Wilma is also the Chairperson of the Staff Relations Committee and is a past member of the Equality Committee. She participated with the National Workers Compensation Union Coalition and has acted as a reserve representative for the Workers Compensation Board on the past three negotiating teams. Wilma is a team player and is always willing to go the extra mile for her union.



(L-R) Lynn Bovyer (Director, Local 9) and Wilma Ramsay (Second Vice President and Member of the Year).

Executive Elections

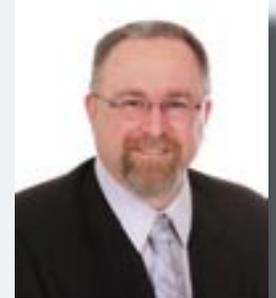
Mike Butler conducted the union's elections for its First and Third Vice President at the 54th Annual Convention. Doug Ferguson, UPSE's First Vice President was elected by acclamation, and Jim Ryan was elected UPSE's Third Vice President.



Jim Ryan was elected at Convention as UPSE's Third Vice President.

Juanita Gallant (Local 1), Leo Dowling (Local 12), and Jim Ryan (Local 6) offered for the Third Vice President position. Executive Elections are held each year at Convention. Executive terms are for two years. At the 55th Annual Convention, elections will be held for the positions of Second Vice President and Secretary Treasurer.

UPSE sincerely thanks all members who took part in the 2015 Executive Elections. It's your interest and participation in our union that builds solidarity and keeps UPSE moving forward as a strong, vibrant organization.



Doug Ferguson was re-elected at Convention as UPSE's First Vice President.

Fraternal

Guests/Fraternal at Convention from other labour organizations included: James Clancy (NUPGE), Alex Furlong (CLC), Joan Jesome (NSGEU), Lori MacKay (CUPE), Al Mullin (NBUPPE), Susie Prouix Daigle (NBUPPE), Carl Pursey (Fed of Labour), and Rosenn Strelezki (SGEU).

You've worked hard and made a difference for Islanders. UPSE Salutes the 2015 Retirees!

At the 54th Annual Convention UPSE paid tribute to its retirees. They deserve special thanks for their contribution to our society and for making PEI a better place to live and work. Retirement is a milestone in one's life. Retirees are saying goodbye to years of hard work and commitment, however, they are also embarking on new challenges and adventures. Some retirees will find work in new areas or take advantage of opportunities and /or dreams that may have went unfulfilled; others will use their extra time to recreate, relax and spend more time with family. Retirement is a significant achievement and celebration; it marks the beginning of a new phase of life. The Union of Public Sector Employees thanks and congratulates its 2015 retirees for their dedication and hard work.



President Karen Jackson congratulates Russell Boylan, Maintenance/Highways, for his 14 years of service and contribution to Islanders.

2015 UPSE Retirees:

Janet Kemp, [Homecare](#)

Cindy-Lou Andrews, [Highway Safety](#)

Russel Boylan, [Highways](#)

Reginald Conohan, [Forestry](#)

Donalda Docherty, [LCC](#)

Grace Doucette, [Taxation & Property Records](#)

Damien Dunsford, [Strait Crossing Bridge Ltd.](#)

Joyce Ford, [Provincial Correctional Centre](#)

Joyce Gallant, [Addictions](#)

Allan Gallant, [LCC](#)

Joanne Gardiner, [LCC](#)

Leonard Gotell, [Highway Safety](#)

Iva Higginbotham, [Access PEI](#)

Marlene Hughes, [Consumer Corporate & Insurance Services](#)

Paul Jenkins, [Agriculture](#)

Rosemary Jenkins, [Income Support](#)

Janet Kemp, [Home Care](#)

Cindy MacDonald, [Agriculture](#)

Nancy MacDonald, [Home Care](#)

Dawna MacDonald, [Social Programs](#)

Lois MacDonald, [Dental Health](#)

Diana MacGillivray, [Administration/ Finance](#)

Doris MacIsaac, [Holland College](#)

Archie MacKinnon, [Building Maintenance](#)

Curtis MacNevin, [Highways](#)

Kent MacRae, [Highways](#)

Mary MacSwain, [Environmental Health](#)

Stephen Madden, [Queens Printer](#)

Catherine Martin, [Income Support](#)

Murray McColeman, [Summerside Youth Centre](#)

Lorna McInnis, [Library](#)

Marlene McKenna, [Home Care](#)

Theresa Mitchell, [Prince Edward Home](#)

Elizabeth Noonan, [Dental Health](#)

Nancy O'Connor, [Home Care](#)

Ruth Phillips, [Queen Elizabeth Hospital](#)

Jean Reeves, [Prince County Hospital](#)

Leona Strongman, [Parks](#)

Eileen Trainor, [Workers Compensation Board](#)

Edna Vloet, [Highway Safety](#)

54th Annual Convention: Resolutions

The following are summations of resolutions for convention that were submitted for consideration by this year's delegates. Nine resolutions were carried.

Submitted by Local 19

*PSGIP Board of Trustees
(Carried)*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UPSE adopts a mandate to work with the other PSGIP Trustees to change the current trust agreement to include at least one representative of the Government of PEI retirees.

Submitted by Local 3

Student Workers

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that all students be used for extra staff and not as a regular staff member.

This resolution was not voted on. Convention delegates decided to refer the issue to the bargaining committee.

Submitted by Local 7

Health Care (Carried)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UPSE lobby the Minister of Health, Health PEI, and the Medical Society to change the current practice to increase the success rates of cancer treatment, and decrease the devastating effect cancer deaths have on families.

Delegates spoke passionately about this issue and reinforced the importance

of increasing screening and early detection.

Submitted by Local 7

*Women's Committee
(Carried)*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UPSE Women's Committee be re-established.

Delegates spoke in favour of this resolution. A women's committee will build solidarity and help to empower women. The committee will address key issues and will promote participation at all levels of the union.

Submitted by Local 7

Workplace Violence (Carried)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UPSE lobby Health PEI, the Government of PEI, and any other employer contained within UPSE to produce a clear policy which will protect staff from violence in the workplace.

Local 7 penned this resolution in response to Health PEI's Mistreatment of Employees Policy. Delegates argued the policy is outdated and does not adequately address the obligation that employers have to protect workers from violence in the workplace.

Submitted by Local 7

Bully-Free Workplaces (Carried)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UPSE lobby the government and Health PEI to recommit to the Bully-Free Workplaces Program.

Submitted by Local 6

Rotating Convention (Carried)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Convention be rotated between two different weekends when possible to enable members who work weekends, and co-parent, the opportunity to attend Convention and not miss out on family time.

Submitted by the BOD

*Action Plan/Late Resolution
(Carried)*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that delegates to the 2015 Convention of the PEI Union of Public Sector Employees adopt this UPSE Action Plan on advocating for Quality Public Services, Tax Fairness, a Modern Industrial Strategy and Labour Rights.

Submitted by the BOD

*The Way Forward/Late Resolution
(Carried)*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the PEI Union of Public Sector Employees adopt this UPSE Action Plan for Building Bargaining Strength, Organizing and Growth, Public Policy Analysis and Community Campaigning.

Submitted by Local 3

*Child Advocate/Late Resolution
(Carried)*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that PEI Union of Public Sector Employees lobby the Government of PEI to appoint a child advocate for PEI.