

# Chronicles of CUPE



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## Corporation Unwilling to Bargain

This summer issue is coming out to inform the membership about the progress (or lack there of) of negotiations. As you can tell from the title, the Corporation has forced us to call for conciliation. There are 2 articles in this issue discussing this topic.

Another important topic covered here is the

new Computer Use Policy that the Corporation is implementing. Read page 8 for details of this potentially controversial policy change.

Here's hoping everyone ends up with at least one warm sunny day of vacation time this summer!

**A lobbyist on his way home from Parliament is stuck in traffic. Noticing a police officer, he winds down his window and asks: 'What's the hold-up?'**

**The policeman replies: 'The Prime Minister is so depressed he's stopped his motorcade and is threatening to douse himself with gasoline and set himself on fire. He says no one believes he can get us through the credit crunch. So we're taking up a collection for him.'**

**The lobbyist asks: 'How much have you got so far?'**

**The officer replies: 'About 40 gallons, but a lot of people are still siphoning.'**

**GO GREEN: bring your own cup to meetings instead of relying on Styrofoam cups or bottled water.**

### Inside this issue:

News bits	2
Schedule 'A' & 'B' Negotiations Update	3
Mayonnaise Jar and 2 Beers	4
From The Negotiating Committees	5
Survey Says Work Place Stress Makes Us Sick	5
Lexophiles	6
From The Negotiating Committees cont...	7
Computer Use Policy	8

### Dates to remember:

July 17th—Dragonboat Festival
Aug 2nd—International Friendship Day
Aug 3th—Civic Holiday!
Aug 13th—Left Handers' Day

## News Bits

- The Entertainment Committee held another successful CUPE picnic at Chippewa park. Lots of prizes were handed out with all the kids having a blast!
- The Schedule 'A' Job Evaluation Committee has reconvened and is working around holiday schedules to continue working on job guide evaluations.
- The DSSAB group has elected a Negotiating Committee. Ardeen Rezka (Chair), Terry Davis, Natalie Fortier, Jackie Livingston, and Marlene Rintala Wideman will work towards signing their first Collective Agreement.
- The Animal Services division is in talks with the local PetSmart store to begin a partnership in order to adopt out more animals.
- The Federation of Canadian Municipalities convention was recently held. CUPE National was on hand to counter the Federal Governments push towards "Free trade deals for everyone". Recently CUPE was active in raising concerns about the Canada Colombia free trade agreement that ultimately put that legislation on hold. Another major topic on the minds of CUPE representative is to make politicians aware of the harms of Public-Private Partnerships.
- Recently CUPE members joined CEP members rallying on parliament hill to protest the Federal governments dismissal of the forestry crisis.
- We are pushing the Corporation to adhere to the Banked Overtime policies that are in place.
- Three scholarships were handed out to High School graduates. Congratulations to Julia Vanderwey, Nicole Stark and Jamie Lynn Gustafson.
- The Control Clerk's Report is showing that the Corporation is continuing the practice of not filling all vacancies. If you know of any that have not been filled for more than 90 days let our office know.
- A big welcome to recently elected committee members Mark Wilson (Sched. 'B' Grievance Chairperson) and Rod Cooper (WSIB Committee member).

## Cracking the Human Resource Code

### COMPETITIVE SALARY

Most of our competitors don't pay much either.

### "JOIN OUR FAST-PACED COMPANY"

We have no time to train you.

### "MUST BE DEADLINE-ORIENTED"

Your first four projects are already way overdue.

### "DUTIES WILL VARY"

Anyone in the office can boss you around.

"MUST HAVE AN EYE FOR DETAIL"

We have no quality control.

### "CAREER-MINDED"

Female applicants must be childless.

### "REQUIRES TEAM LEADERSHIP SKILLS"

You'll have all the responsibilities of upper management, without the pay, title or respect.

## Cat's Got Corporation's Tongue, Unwilling to Talk

On May 14th the Negotiating Committee and the Corporation last met. At this time it became clear that the Corporation was not willing to budge on ANY of their proposals even after we showed a willingness to bargain and removed some of our items from the table. This has forced the Committee to call for a conciliator.

We have been notified that our request for conciliation will get underway July 21, 22. We are optimistic that real bargaining can begin at that time.

Before you start to panic, remember that this is just the next step in the process. History shows that when it comes to the bargaining table the Corporation must have it's feet to the fire before they get serious about bargaining.

So we soldier on in solidarity.

What is conciliation? The Ministry of Labour's website says: "Conciliation is a process by which a trade union or an employer can ask the Ministry of Labour for help in resolving their differences so that they can reach a collective agreement.

Either party may apply to the Ministry. If parties are in negotiations, conciliation is mandatory in the sense that the parties must use the government's conciliation services before they

can get into a position to engage in a strike or lock-out."

What if conciliation fails? The website continues on to say: "The conciliation officer informs the Minister of Labour that a collective agreement was unable to be effected. The Minister would then generally issue a notice informing the union and the employer that he or she 'does not consider it advisable to appoint a conciliation board' (cl. 21(b) of the

Act). This notice is known commonly known as the 'no board'. [Conciliation boards are exceedingly rare. They have not been appointed since the 1960s.]"

The website continues on to say: "If the parties have not reached a settlement in the Conciliation stage, the Ministry offers to provide the services of a Mediator who will confer with the parties and endeavour to effect a collective agreement. Mediation is also a process by which a third party attempts to help a trade union and an employer in reaching a collective agreement. Since mediation is discretionary, the service is only used if both parties are amenable to it."

So when can a strike be called? 17 days after the "no board" report is mailed. Is a vote necessary? Employees can lawfully strike at any time after the collective

agreement expires and more than 50% of those voting by secret ballot are in favour of the strike.

**NO PROGRESS BEING MADE AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE. CONCILIATION TO BEGIN**

*When the politicians complain that TV turns the proceedings into a circus, it should be made clear that the circus was already there, and that TV has merely demonstrated that not all the performers are well trained.*

## The Mayonnaise Jar and 2 Beers

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar and the two pints of beer.

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly, he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls.

He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly, and the pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed again that it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up the rest of the space. He asked once more if the jar was full, and his students responded with a unanimous "yes."

The professor then produced two pint glasses of beer from under the table and poured the contents of both into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the grains of sand. The students laughed.

"Now," said the professor, as the laughter

subsided, "I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things - your family, children, health, friends and your favourite passions; things that, if everything else was lost and only they remained, would still make your life full."

The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house and your car. The sand is everything else - the small stuff.

"If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "There is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you."

"Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your children, take time to get medical checkups, take your partner out to dinner and play another 18 holes. There will always be time to clean the house and fix the leaky tap. Take care of the golf balls first - the things that really matter. Set your priorities, because the rest is just sand."

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the beer represented.

The professor smiled. "I'm glad you asked. It goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem to be, that there's always room for a couple of beers with a friend."

*The young lady said to Grandpa, "I noticed that when you sneeze, you've learned to put your hand in front of your mouth."  
"Of course," explained Grandpa.  
"How else can I catch my teeth?"*

## From the Negotiating Committees

I'm Gord Jones and I am a CUPE member...  
**are you?**

First off our committee would like to clarify something: we are not negotiating a contract with the Corporation for ourselves. We are merely representing YOU and YOUR contract. Regular CUPE members were the ones who submitted proposals for changes to the collective agreement—the agreement that we are all bound by every working day. When we say “we need your support” what we really mean is that you need to show the Corporation that you support the work we are doing on your behalf. The power of a Union is in it's numbers. When the 8 people on the other side of the negotiation table are disrespecting us they are **disrespecting each and everyone of you!** With that soapbox speech out of the way lets get on to business 😊

So we are moving into Conciliation, We can't tell you how frustrating it is to have no positive changes come out of our meetings.

Other Unions across the City are signing deals with no concessions AND receiving pay

increases! Here are some examples: In January Council approved a CTB management increase of 2%; Jasper Place employees —2.5%; Police 3.25%. These are agreements that are being signed right here in our region not in southern Ontario where it could be argued that they aren't under the same pressures as the Northwest.

In the spring, news reports everywhere were reporting doom and gloom with the recession predicted to be massive and far reaching.

What a difference a few months have made! Governments around the globe have reacted to nip the recession with far reaching spending plans. The news reports are now predicting that the recession will be over in record time. There are many signs here in Thunder Bay: houses are being put up for sale and sold the same day; new City Hall, new waterfront development, new Court House and Ontario Works buildings, highway reconstruction projects abound, cruise ships will be docking here all summer long for the first time, the list goes on.

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Survey Says Workplace Stress Makes Us Sick

Every year, sanofiaventis, one of the world's largest drug manufacturing companies, surveys Canadian employees about their benefit plans. This year, the survey of a random national sample of 1,500 employees covered by workplace group benefit plans yielded some interesting results:

- Workplace stress: Almost 40 percent of respondents agreed that “Workplace stress was so overwhelming that it has made me physically ill at times.: that's up from 25 percent in 2002. More women (44%) reported feeling stress at work than men (33%).

## Lexophiles

1. A bicycle can't stand alone; it is two tired.
2. A will is a dead giveaway.
3. Time flies like an arrow; fruit flies like a banana.
4. A backward poet writes inverse.
5. In a democracy it's your vote that counts; in feudalism, it's your Count that votes.
6. A chicken crossing the road: poultry in motion.
7. If you don't pay your exorcist you can get repossessed.
8. With her marriage she got a new name and a dress.
9. Show me a piano falling down a mine shaft and I'll show you A-flat miner.
10. When a clock is hungry it goes back four seconds.
11. The guy who fell onto an upholstery machine was fully recovered.
12. A grenade fell onto a kitchen floor in France resulted in Linoleum Blownapart.
13. You are stuck with your debt if you can't budge it.
14. Local Area Network in Australia : The LAN down under.
15. He broke into song because he couldn't find the key.
16. A calendar's days are numbered.
17. A lot of money is tainted: 'Taint yours, and 'taint mine.
18. A boiled egg is hard to beat.
19. He had a photographic memory which was never developed.
20. A plateau is a high form of flattery.
21. The short fortuneteller who escaped from prison: a small medium at large.
22. Those who get too big for their britches will be exposed in the end.
23. When you've seen one shopping center you've seen a mall.
24. If you jump off a Paris bridge, you are in Seine.
25. When she saw her first strands of gray hair, she thought she'd dye.
26. Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead to know basis.
27. Santa's helpers are subordinate clauses.
28. Acupuncture: a jab well done.
29. Marathon runners with bad shoes suffer the agony of de feet.

## From the Negotiating Committees... continued

*(Continued from page 5)*

Everyone has heard about the CUPE strikes in Toronto and Windsor. The City of Windsor is attempting to take CUPE's post-retirement benefits off the table even though administration has already secured these benefits for themselves. Toronto's CUPE members began their strike facing the loss of all their banked sick time and minimal pay increases among other things. By staying strong (90% strike vote) they have brought

their employer back to the bargaining table after 4 weeks of strike action. Seems the days of "give us the same contract with a % increase" are gone.

As expected the Corporation of the City of Thunder Bay is posturing. They are making sure that everyone knows that they are making plans to deal with a possible strike.

We'll be distributing CUPE buttons to help you show your support and solidarity. Look for more events to happen this summer to keep you informed and to keep the pressure on the Corporation to come to the negotiating table and talk.

## Popemobile?

One day, the Pope is visiting America and driving around Washington in his limo when he gets an idea.

"Driver? Can I drive for a while?"

"Sure," says the driver. How can you say no to the Pope? So the Pope takes the wheel and starts driving like a maniac all around Washington -- dodging in and out of traffic, going eighty, cutting people off. Soon, a cop pulls him over. But when the Pope rolls down the window, the cop stops dead in his tracks, and goes back to the car.

"We got somebody really important here," he says to his partner.

"Who is it? Is it a senator?"

"No. More important."

"The president?"

"No. More important."

"An ambassador? Who?"

"I don't know. But the Pope is his driver."

**Freedom of the press is limited to  
those who own one.  
- A. J. Liebling**

## General meetings are the 3rd Wednesday of each month

### Computer Use Policy

On June 22nd Marie Dean and Barry Chezick asked to make a deputation to City Council in regards to the Corporation's proposed update to the Computer Use Policy. Of particular concern was the requirement of all employees who use a corporate computer to sign an Acknowledgement Form. CUPE contacted all City Council Members to make them aware of the concerns we had with the Computer Use Policy, in particular Item #7 of the Acknowledgement Form that could result in the termination of employees of the City of Thunder Bay.

There are many corporate policies of which many have serious consequences if they are not followed. Why is this policy so special? The Corporation's answer was simply that it wanted to ensure that people understood what the policy meant. CUPE's position is that this is a training issue! The Corporation has a responsibility to ensure that all employees are aware of Policies that might affect them in each of their work places. In the past, employees have taken training in specific areas with

regards to policies and/or programs. The training was given and an attendance sheet was signed. This should be the method that should continue.

Here are some of our other concerns: How will this Policy be enforced? Will random compliance checks be done? Will someone be hired? Will the Corp. only look at employees who might be causing issues in other areas?

We want to ensure that all employees are treated fairly and that this tool is not used improperly.

The day of the Corporation's presentation to Council the corporation removed Item #7 from the Acknowledgement Form that stated you: "Acknowledge and understand that violation of the terms and conditions of the policy may lead to discipline up to and including termination of employment."

FYI, Council approved the changes to the Policy.

### Your Executive and Committee Members

**President:**  
Marie Dean  
[cupe87@tbaytel.net](mailto:cupe87@tbaytel.net)

**Vice-President:**  
Glen LeBlanc

**Treasurer:**  
Barbra Lix

**Recording Secretary:**  
Luc Connell

**Negotiating Committee Schedule 'A'**  
Paula Zubrecki (Chair)  
Gordon Jones  
Ami Osadec

**Negotiating Committee Schedule 'B'**  
Barry Chezick (Chair)  
Luc Connell  
Al Caddo

**By-Law**  
Pina Pasciullo (Chair)  
Ami Osadec

**Negotiating Committee DSSAB**  
Ardene Rezka (Chair)  
Terry Davis  
Natalie Fortier  
Jackie Livingston  
Marlene Rinala Wideman

**Research Committee**  
Gordon Jones (Chair)  
Tom Elvish

**Sergeant-At-Arms**  
Wade Williams

**Sick & Welfare Committee**  
Jackie Andrew (Chair)  
Verna Connolly  
Suzanne Gustafson

**Grievance DSSAB**  
Marlene Rintala Wideman

**Trustees**  
Chris Morgan  
Verna Connolly  
Ami Osadec

**Grievance Schedule "A"**  
Ami Osadec  
Marie Dean  
Paula Zubrecki  
Barbara Lix

**Grievance Schedule "B"**  
Ernie Rollason  
Rick Rayner  
Sal Piccalo  
Allan Caddo  
Chris Morgan  
Barry Chezick  
Martin Nuttall  
Hank Siegers  
Mike Hanchar  
Wade Williams  
Joe LaDouceur

Mark Wilson  
Jim Allcock  
Glen LeBlanc  
Robert MacMillan  
Harry Hurd  
Sandy Holbrook-Nelson  
Gary O'Leary  
Tony Santos  
Ed Luretig  
Lance Forsberg  
Rob Henderson  
Bob Munson  
Michael Dowhoszya  
Brian Lix  
Gary Garner  
Patty Wilson

**Health & Safety Co-ordinating Committee**  
Martin Nuttall, (Chair)  
Glen LeBlanc  
Ami Osadec