

Celebrate and demonstrate

It's been a hot summer and CUPE has been putting the politics into Pride celebrations across Ontario.

Together with the Pink Triangle Committee, CUPE Ontario is participating in Pride events in more than 14 communities, including Halton, Durham, Niagara, Thunder Bay, Hamilton, Sudbury, Windsor and London. The theme of Pride events in Toronto, which drew hundreds of thousands of spectators and a record number of CUPE members, was "Celebrate and Demonstrate." CUPE did just that. At the Trans March, we raised awareness about Trans Rights and celebrated the new, long overdue recognition of Transgender equality in the Ontario Human Rights Code. At the Dyke March we leafleted to rally support for striking members in Local 966.

CUPE members are also distributing thousands of leaflets at Pride events across Ontario this summer, highlighting the important role education workers play in preventing bullying at school and calling on Dalton McGuinty to stop his bullying of school board workers with threats of legislation.

CUPE members have come out in record numbers to all Pride events, including the more than 40 members who marched in the London Pride Parade with CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn. Members also organized CUPE's first contingent in Kitchener Pride events. Visit cupe.on.ca to find information about upcoming Pride events, including Ottawa and Peterborough.



INSIDE THE PULSE

Celebrating African-Caribbean culture
Dalton McGuinty: Creating a crisis in educationIt's
Labour Day – Solidarity against austerity
Labour Day Chart

Page 2 Standing up to anti-worker politicians
Page 3 Standing together against hard-line employers
Page 4 Retirement security for all
Page 5

Page 6
Page 7
Page 8

Celebrating African-Caribbean culture and taking politics to the street

On August 4, more than a hundred CUPE Ontario members jumped up and danced in the streets in full masquerade at the annual Caribbean Carnival (formerly Caribana).

With a new banner, bandannas and leaflets, CUPE members brought Carnival's political past into the present, calling for a better Ontario that includes employment equity, anti-racist education and police accountability.

Members spent months preparing for the parade, building elaborate costumes. The "Hope for Tomorrow" theme included six sections and took spectators from a natural paradise through the ravages of corporate greed and pollution, then to people fighting back to protect the environment and restoring natural beauty and hope.

Trinity-Spadina MP Olivia Chow joined the CUPE Ontario contingent.

"The carnival brings all of us together," Chow said. "It's a unifying party where you can dance on the street; we're celebrating Caribbean culture and new music."

Visit cupe.on.ca for more spectacular Carnival photos!



Dalton McGuinty: Creating a crisis in education

Taking a page from the playbook of former Premier Mike Harris, the McGuinty Liberals have stepped up their efforts to create a new “crisis in education.”

At the end of July, the Liberal government published a memo to School Boards with timelines for filing for conciliation and No Board reports in order to force education workers into a strike/lockout situation before September 1, suggesting Boards could then unilaterally change working conditions. Education Minister Laurel Broten, had previously demanded school boards follow her government’s instructions to complete negotiations before the school year begins — even though local school board bargaining has barely begun and unions have publicly committed to ensuring that schools would open in September.

“Dalton McGuinty is manufacturing a crisis in education,” said CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn. “Instead of threatening to rip up collective agreements and threatening to strip communities of control over their school boards in a desperate bid to win a by-election,

the Liberals should be spending their time improving public education and giving our kids a brighter future.”

In July, the Liberals signed a memorandum of understanding with the union representing English Catholic teachers. Premier McGuinty described it as a “roadmap” for school boards.

“It is a roadmap to disaster,” responded CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn at a press conference the next morning. He was joined by the presidents of ETFO, OSSTF and AEFO, who all agreed that the deal with the English Catholic teachers was not one that would be good for students, schools, workers or communities. School boards across the province have also rejected McGuinty’s “roadmap.”

“Our members work hard every day to keep our schools free of bullying,” he said. “If the Premier truly cared about education, he’d stop bullying those workers and let the school boards do the job that local voters elected them to do.”

Watch cupe.on.ca for ongoing developments.



CUPE Ontario members marched with the Grassy Narrows First Nation for Native land rights in June.

Labour Day – Solidarity against austerity

On the Labour Day long weekend, CUPE members across Ontario will march together to show pride in their union and to celebrate the historic gains we have made for workers in the province.

The public services our communities rely on are being attacked by the Liberals and Conservatives.

Together, we can send a strong message to Queen's Park and Ottawa that Ontarians reject the austerity agenda and demand a better Ontario.



"We will march together and we will stand up for the people of this province," said CUPE Ontario Secretary-Treasurer, Candace Rennick. "Public-sector workers did not create the deficit. Average workers did not create the deficit. Corporate tax cuts and policies benefiting highly profitable corporations and banks created the problem. It's time they contributed to the solution, instead of taking

more and more from average Ontarians."

Labour Day parades, picnics and barbeques will take place in dozens of communities across the province. In Toronto, CUPE Ontario will lead thousands of workers in the province's largest Labour Day parade. "This year we'll be right up front. Our message will be seen and heard by everyone," said Rennick.

"This is a great opportunity to remind everyone how important public services are to our communities. I know that members will come and march with us in record numbers."

Watch cupe.on.ca for information about Labour Day events across the province.



LABOUR DAY EVENTS: September 3th 2012 ACROSS ONTARIO

<u>Area</u>	<u>Event Details</u>
Brantford	Monday, September 3 rd - 1pm March starts at 1pm and Family Funfest starts at 1:30 at the Labour Centre parking lot, 1100 Clarence Street south
Durham/Oshawa	Monday, September 3 rd - 11am-3pm BBQ in Memorial Park in Oshawa - Corner of Simcoe St. & John St. Activities include: Live music entertainment and kids face painting
Hamilton	Monday, September 3 rd - 10:30am Parade starting at York St., South of Queen to Dundurn Activities include: Parade and park picnic/BBQ being held by Locals
Lindsay	Sunday, September 2 nd - 12pm Memorial Park Activities include: Bouncy castle, face painting, children's games, prizes and BBQ - all free
London	Monday, September 3 rd - 12pm-4pm Activities include: Picnic at Thames Park (off Ridout just south of Horton Street)
North Bay	Monday, September 3 rd – 11:00am-4pm North Bay Waterfront Activities include: Fish pond, train ride and BBQ
Ottawa	Monday, September 3 rd – 12pm-5:00pm Activities include: Parade starting at City Hall from 12pm, marching to McNabb Park for BBQ & Family Fun Day
Peterborough	Monday, September 3 rd – 12pm-3pm Picnic at Nicholl’s Oval Park Pavilion. Corner of Parkhill Rd. east and Armour Rd. Activities include: BBQ, Music & Kids Games – fun-filled free events for all ages!
Thunder Bay	Monday, September 3 rd - 12pm Lakehead Labour Centre, 1-929 Fort William Road Activities include: Live music
Toronto & York Region	Monday, September 3 rd – 8:30am Parade departs from University Ave. & Dundas, march at 9:30am to Exhibition Place
Windsor	Monday, September 3 rd – 1pm Parade departs from CAW Hall Local 200/444 Union Hall, march to the Fogolar Furlan Club Activities include: Mini golf, crafts, pony rides and a children's entertainer

Defending workers from political attacks

Federal and provincial Conservatives launched two campaigns against unions in recent months. These campaigns play on popular misconceptions about labour and were designed to cripple the ability of working people to have a voice in politics.

In June, Ontario PC leader Tim Hudak released his “Paths to Prosperity: Flexible Labour Markets” policy paper. It is the second in the series of papers to be released by the PCs, and follows a widely panned paper on the privatization of energy distribution corporations in the province.

The new policy paper has a broadly anti-union position and does not present an economic plan for investment or for economic growth. Instead, it presents cheaper labour costs, the elimination of benefits, the privatization of the WSIB and an undermining of workers’ unions as a solution to the province’s economic problems.

Despite being thin on ideas, Hudak’s anti-union rhetoric got a lot of undue attention this summer. In response, CUPE Ontario is mounted a fight back against Hudak’s proposals and will launch a full campaign when the Legislature resumes sitting in September. Members are encouraged to talk with friends, family and neighbours

and let them know about the important public services they provide, the importance of being a union member and how public services strengthen our economy and our society.

Meanwhile, at the federal level, unions are under direct attack by Bill C-377. Dressed up as a benign financial reporting measure, Bill C-377 is actually, as the far-right Canadian Centre for Policy Studies admits, the “first step” in a campaign to prevent unions from spending money to campaign on political and social issues such as our campaigns for a minimum standard for long-term care or our Raise the Rates anti-poverty campaign. It is an attack on free speech and an attack on the ability of unions to advocate for their members and communities.

CUPE Ontario members, working as part of a Canada-wide campaign, are engaging politicians and the public in an information campaign on the dangers Bill C-377 poses to freedom of speech and Canadian democracy.

For more information and to get involved, visit cupe.on.ca. CUPE Ontario can provide training, a lobby kit and speaking notes that will help you discuss these issues and to bring them to the attention of your MP.



CUPE Ontario members in Thunder Bay deliver “a crate of Ornges” to their MPP to protest Schedule 28 of the budget. Members also made headlines with protests in Windsor, Kingston, Niagara and Kitchener.

Standing together against hard-line employers



It was a long spring and summer on the picket lines for CUPE members in Peel and Renfrew who stood up to employers who put concessions ahead of community services.

In Peel, staff from Ontario Works/Human Services, who provide a variety of income support, housing and employment services, were joined on the picket lines this spring by workers from TransHelp and Public Works, demanding equality and respect.

These members of CUPE Local 966 were simply seeking a contract equal to those signed with other municipal workers in the region.

CUPE Ontario second vice-president Yolanda McClean worked closely with the Local 966 on strike support, organizing leafleting and a successful solidarity barbeque in July that was attended by the entire CUPE

Ontario Executive Board. President Fred Hahn lent his support at rallies and on the lines, and Secretary-Treasurer Candace Rennick walked the lines with workers and delivered lunches to striking members during a tour of picket lines.

CUPE Ontario also introduced an online system for people to send messages to regional councillors, calling on them to end the strike by offering a fair contract.

After months of hard bargaining, Ontario Works/Human Services and Transhelp workers ratified new contracts in early July, with Public Works ratifying an agreement about two weeks later.

In Renfrew County, north of Ottawa, another small Ontario Works unit, members of Local 4989, stood up for the services they provide after their employer flatly refused to

negotiate a contract equal to those of other workers in the county.

The members, mostly women, stayed on the picket lines for months, letting employers across the province know that CUPE will not take their abuse and cutbacks lying down.

CUPE members across the province joined the picket lines over the spring and summer. After 76 days on the picket lines, Local 4989 ratified a new contract on July 24th that should have ended their long and difficult strike.

That day, they were joined and thanked for their unflinching solidarity by about 200 CUPE members from Toronto, Kingston, Ottawa and North Bay at a rally and picnic together with CUPE National President Paul Moist, Ontario President Fred Hahn and Secretary-Treasurer Candace Rennick.



Retirement security for all

Decent pensions and dignity in old age are under attack by governments across Canada.

Last spring, the McGuinty Liberals announced that they would begin a review of defined-benefit pension plans for public-sector workers in Ontario. It now appears that the government is planning to introduce legislation that will significantly affect public-sector pensions this fall.

McGuinty's current plan is a direct attack on the largest public-sector workplace pension plans in the province. The proposals, first discussed in the budget documents last spring, will force public pension plans to shift from defined-benefit plans (where workers know what their income will be when they retire) to defined-contribution plans (where workers know what they pay into the plan, but there is no guarantee of what they will get when they retire).

These changes come amidst a right-wing publicity campaign designed to convince the public that pension plans like OMERS and HOOPP are no longer affordable. In reality, defined-benefit workplace pension plans and the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) are considered the most economical method of delivering retirement income security.

Instead of attacking public-sector pensions, CUPE Ontario believes the provincial government should fight to ensure the federal government doubles the CPP while also strengthening defined-benefit workplace plans by prohibiting employers from taking "contribution holidays."

CUPE Ontario will continue the fight for decent pensions until all Ontarians have enough money to retire in dignity.

Upcoming Events

HCWCC Conference

Sept. 19-22 – London Hilton

CACO Conference

Sept. 24-25 – Valhalla Inn, Thunder Bay

CUPE Ontario Northern Conference

Oct. 3-5 – Delta Waterfront, Sault Ste. Marie

CUPE Ontario Fall School

Oct. 23-28 – Toronto Sheraton Centre

CUPE Ontario Trades Conference

Nov. 6-9 – Crowne Plaza Hotel, Niagara Falls

Women's Conference

Dec. 5-8 – Toronto Sheraton Centre

Injured Workers/Health & Safety Conference

Jan. 23-27 – Crowne Plaza Hotel, Niagara Falls

OSBCC Conference

Jan. 29-Feb. 2 – Toronto Sheraton Parkway North

SSWCC Conference

Mar. 21-24 – Toronto Sheraton Centre

CUPE Ontario Convention

May 29-June 1, 2013 – Toronto Sheraton Centre

Get up-to-date news affecting you every day at:
www.cupe.on.ca