

## Thousands rally to defend public health care

Hundreds of CUPE members converged on Niagara-on-the-Lake June 25 for a mass rally with community groups to protect public health care. More than 2000 people participated at the event, held outside a meeting of provincial and territorial premiers.

"Public health care is something every Ontarian cares about. For years, budgets have been squeezed while the population grows. As a result, communities across the province are losing hospital beds and emergency rooms are closing," said CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn. "It is beyond

disappointing that Prime Minister Stephen Harper does not share our commitment to public health care. He didn't even bother to show up."



The meeting was the final Council of the Federation before the federal Health Accord expires in 2014. The rally called on premiers to join together in pressuring the federal government for a new Accord to protect and enhance public health care.

"Combined with provincial austerity, the federal government's cuts are creating a crisis in health care," said Candace Rennick, a long-term care worker and Secretary-Treasurer of CUPE Ontario. "We all rely on public health care, and it's time for governments to stop creating a crisis and start building a health care system that serves the needs of all Ontarians."

Hahn and CUPE Ontario Secretary-Treasurer Candace Rennick were joined at the rally by CUPE National President Paul Moist, HCWCC Chair Kelly O'Sullivan and many CUPE Ontario board members and Local leaders from across sectors.



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## *Standing Up for Fairness — for the win!*

CUPE Ontario is taking the Stand Up for Fairness message to events across Ontario this summer, including many Pride and Labour Day events. Over the August long weekend, that message was delivered as part of our award-winning entry in Toronto's Caribbean Carnival.

The annual event attracts about one million spectators and participants from across North America. Nearly 200 CUPE Ontario members and community partners danced in our group, which won its category for Overall Appearance and came in second for Band of the Year. The elaborate "King" costume also placed fourth in the King and Queen competition.

"Carnival is a tremendous celebration and our band is truly a community collaboration. Hundreds of people work for months to decide on the theme and create the costumes," said CUPE Ontario Diversity Vice-President, Racialized Workers, Veriline Howe. "We join together to celebrate, but also to educate about the historic ties between Carnival and the end of slavery, and also to let people know how CUPE Ontario stands up for fairness for racialized workers."

Carnival takes place on Ontario's Emancipation Day long weekend — a date chosen to commemorate the act which abolished slavery across the British Empire in 1834. In Toronto, it is also known as Simcoe Day, recognizing the lieutenant-governor who passed an Act Against Slavery 220 years ago, in 1793.



*Want to see more photos of our costumes? Visit [Facebook.com/CUPEOntario](https://www.facebook.com/CUPEOntario).*





## Celebrating CUPE Ontario history at Pride

This summer CUPE Ontario members are participating in dozens of Pride events in communities across Ontario.

“As a union, we have a 50 year history of standing up for equality and fairness,” said CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn, the first openly gay president of a major union in Canada. “Bargaining and campaigning for LGBTQ rights are important parts of the work we do for our members and our communities, all across Ontario. Let there be no doubt – LGBTQ issues are union issues.”

Pride events began in early May and run throughout the summer. The largest — the Toronto Pride Parade — attracts nearly one million people and more than 100 CUPE Ontario members participated. Our final Pride of the summer will be Peterborough Pride on September 27.

At this year’s Pride events, CUPE Ontario highlighted our history of advancing LGBTQ rights.

CUPE pioneered the use of collective bargaining to advance equality and anti-harassment policies in the workplace. Members voted at a 1985 convention that their union's policy would be to bargain such language into contracts.

In Ontario, CUPE also brought forward the Rosenberg case,

which led the federal government to re-write the Income Tax Act to recognize same-sex spouses. And CUPE Ontario supported member Martine Stonehouse in her landmark human rights case, which led to a re-listing of gender reassignment surgery with OHIP.

“Pride is important to CUPE Ontario because our members are part of the LGBTQ communities, and because many of our members provide important services and

supports to the communities,” said Diversity Vice-President Marlon Picken, who participated in many Pride events, including the inaugural Thunder Pride Parade in Thunder Bay.

*For a list of upcoming Pride events, visit [cupe.on.ca/pride2013](http://cupe.on.ca/pride2013).*



## *Labour Day: Fairness in every community*

On the Labour Day long weekend, CUPE Ontario members will stand up for fairness in parades and events in communities across the province.

"We will march together and we will celebrate 50 years of standing up for fairness for Ontario workers," said CUPE Ontario Secretary-Treasurer, Candace Rennick. "We have a proud history of gains made at the bargaining table that benefit everyone in the province today."

Labour Day has its roots in labour's eight-hour day movement, which advocated eight hours a day for work, for recreation and for rest.

In Canada, we began celebrating Labour Day on the first Monday in September in 1880. Since then, the union movement has made many gains for workers that are now commonplace, including health and safety regulations, parental leave, a minimum wage, pay equity laws and same-sex spousal benefits.

Like these, many gains were first made by unions at the bargaining table, but proved so popular with the public that they became commonplace or the law of the land.

In Toronto, the Labour Day theme is "Together Fairness Works," which reflects CUPE Ontario's "Stand Up

for Fairness" campaign. For more information on our campaign, visit [standupforfairness.ca](http://standupforfairness.ca).

"In the last couple of years, we've fought back against unprecedented attacks on unions, workers and collective bargaining rights," said CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn. "We spent decades creating bargaining and arbitration systems that are fair and balanced. This Labour Day, let's march in record numbers so everyone knows we'll stand strong and united in our defense of fairness."

For an updated list of events, visit [cupe.on.ca](http://cupe.on.ca).





**Area****2013 Labour Day Events**

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Brantford &amp; District</b>   | Monday, September 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 8am<br>Soap Box Derby starts the day off at Iccom Drive and Lorne Bridge 8am-12pm.<br>A Solidarity march will follow, departing from the Labour Centre ending with free admission to Earl Haig Fun Park for a Family Fun Day.<br>Activities include: Lazy river, water slides, mini golf batting cages and children's water play area. |
| <b>Chatham-Kent</b>               | Monday, September 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 11am-3pm<br>Chatham Banquet Hall, 280 Merritt Ave.<br>Activities include: BBQ, entertainment and fun activities for the kids.  |
| <b>Oshawa &amp; Durham Region</b> | Monday, September 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 11am-3pm<br>Memorial Park in Oshawa – Corner of Simcoe Street and John Street.<br>Activities include: Free BBQ – hot dogs, hamburgers and pop will be served. Live music, face painting, and radio-controlled cars and track.  |
| <b>Hamilton</b>                   | Monday, September 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 10:30am<br>Parade starting at York Blvd, west of Queen Street. Picnic to follow at Dundurn Park.<br>Activities include: Dancers, magician, face painting, and BBQ at a low cost with proceeds going to the United Way.   |
| <b>Kenora</b>                     | Monday, September 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 11am-2pm<br>Picnic at Beatty Park in Keewatin.<br>Activities include: BBQ, guest speakers and games (including the minnow race).   |
| <b>Kingston</b>                   | Monday, September 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 10am<br>Parade to City Hall and picnic with fun events at Skeleton Park.<br>Activities include: Free BBQ and fun activities including a bouncy castle, face painting and 3 bands – fun for all ages. Donations will go to United Way.  |
| <b>Peel Region</b>                | Sunday, August 31 <sup>st</sup> – 12pm-2pm<br>Eldorado Park, 8520 Creditview Road, in Brampton.<br>Activities include: Entertainment and amusement for all ages.   |
| <b>London</b>                     | Monday, September 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 12pm-4pm<br>Activities include: Picnic at Thames Park (off Ridout just south of Horton Street).  |
| <b>Niagara Region</b>             | Monday, September 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 11pm-5pm<br>Parade starts at the Pen Center with festivities for all ages at CAW 199 Hall, 124 Bunting Road.<br>Activities include: Pony rides, inflatables, live music, BBQ and beer tent.  |
| <b>North Bay</b>                  | Monday, September 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 11am-4pm<br>North Bay Waterfront.<br>Activities include: Parade of flags, Family Fun Day and BBQ.  |
| <b>Ottawa</b>                     | Monday, September 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 12pm-4:30pm<br>Activities include: Parade starting at City Hall, marching to McNabb Park for BBQ and Family Fun Day.   |
| <b>Peterborough</b>               | Monday, September 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 11:30am-2:30pm<br>Picnic at Nicholl's Oval Park Pavilion, corner of Parkhill Road East and Armour Road.<br>Activities include: BBQ, music and kids games.  |
| <b>Sault Ste. Marie</b>           | Monday, September 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 11:20am-4pm<br>Family Fun Day starting at Roberta Bondar Pavilion.<br>Activities include: BBQ, carnival with games, face painting and motorcycle show.   |
| <b>Sudbury</b>                    | Monday, September 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 10am-4pm<br>Bell Park on Paris Street.<br>Activities include: Free BBQ, music, bouncy castle and more.   |
| <b>Toronto &amp; York Region</b>  | Monday, September 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 9am<br>The Parade starts on the west side of University Ave., south of Dundas Street. And finishes near the CNE grounds. Participants get free access to CNE.  |
| <b>Windsor</b>                    | Monday, September 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 10am<br>Parade departs from CAW Local 200/444 Hall, march to the Fogolar Furlan Club.<br>Activities include: Free BBQ, children's village, entertainment and air bounce.   |

## *CUPE Ontario contributes to historic by-election win*

On the night of August 1, President Fred Hahn stood alongside CUPE Ontario members and NDP supporters in London West and congratulated Peggy Sattler on her breakthrough victory. Sattler became the first New Democrat to capture the London seat. Hahn spent part of his vacation volunteering on the campaign, together with members from across the city, as well as from Sarnia, Windsor and Hamilton.

"Ontarians clearly rejected the anti-worker agenda of Tim Hudak and voted for fairness and respect instead," said Hahn. "Voters in London West made an excellent choice. Peggy Sattler will be a strong, progressive voice in the legislature and I am proud to have volunteered on her campaign, along with so many CUPE Ontario members."



August saw by-elections in five provincial ridings. New Democrats were elected by huge margins in London West and Windsor-Tecumseh, while the Liberals held onto their seats in Ottawa South and Scarborough-Guildwood. A lone Tory squeaked to a win in Etobicoke-Lakeshore, with pundits attributing the win to the personal popularity of the candidate, a former Etobicoke mayor, and not to Conservative leader Tim Hudak, who now faces calls to step down from within his own party.

## *Mass-signup for Housing Stabilization Fund*

Torontonians crowded into David Pecaut Square in July for a free clinic, meal and rally organized by the Raise the Rates campaign.

Raise the Rates is an ongoing anti-poverty campaign supported by CUPE Ontario, the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty and other community groups.

At the July event, more than 200 individuals and families were given assistance filling out application forms for Toronto's Housing Stabilization Fund.



The city has admitted that the fund is difficult to access because of poor communication about how to apply and overly strict eligibility criteria. It is one of a patchwork of programs created to help people on social assistance access housing resources since the province eliminated the Community Start-Up and Maintenance Benefit (CSUMB) in 2012.

"Cuts to public services and programs come with a real cost. The government's austerity program is increasing poverty, and at the same time they're cutting the programs that help low-income families," said Carrie-Lynn Poole-Cotnam, chair of CUPE Ontario's Social Services Workers Coordinating Committee. "The province should restore programs like the CSUMB and special diet allowance, raise the minimum wage and take poverty seriously."

*To learn more about Raise the Rates, visit [cupe.on.ca](http://cupe.on.ca)*



## *Standing in solidarity across the province*

Across the province this summer, CUPE Ontario members are demonstrating solidarity with workers who are standing up for fairness.

Most recently, CUPE Ontario organized a solidarity barbeque to support municipal workers in Bonfield who were forced into a defensive strike when their employer tried to impose terms and conditions at the end of bargaining.

“These 16 members on strike in Bonfield are not alone. They have the backing of the largest union in the country, and we stand with them today and every day, for as long as it takes to reach a fair deal,” said CUPE Ontario Secretary-Treasurer Candace Rennick.

More than 150 CUPE Ontario members, leaders and community supporters participated in the barbeque, together with Sister Rennick, CUPE National Secretary-Treasurer Charles Fleury and North Bay CUPE District Council President Henri Giroux.



In July, members also held a large and high-profile solidarity picket to support striking CAW members at a Coca-Cola facility in Brampton. CUPE Ontario members and leaders were joined at the solidarity picket by CAW President Ken Lewenza, OFL President Sid Ryan and MP Jagmeet Singh.

The next day a deal was announced and those sisters and brothers are now back at work.



Members in Thunder Bay drew attention to provincial underfunding of child welfare at a solidarity picket with striking Dilico Anishnabek Family Care workers.

“This is not just a problem at Dilico or here in the Thunder Bay area,” said Local 87 President Marie Dean. “The failed austerity program of Kathleen Wynne’s Liberal government has created increased pressures on workers to do more with less and brought cuts to services in every community.”

## *Ontario needs to boost long-term care with rise in dementia, complex medical needs*

The care needs and age of people going into nursing homes are increasing. This means it is more important than ever for the province to pay attention to the more than 100 studies identifying how to make long-term care better and safer.

At events in North Bay, London, Oshawa and Kingston, CUPE Ontario members called on government to enact a minimum of four hours of direct daily care for nursing home residents.

“Many care staff go home at night crying, feeling defeated that they don’t have enough time to provide the level of care that many residents needs and deserve. There simply isn’t enough staff. Many of us come in early and forgo our lunch and breaks —

essentially provide unpaid time to try and give residents more care. We are subsidizing an under-funded system with unpaid work,” said Amanda Farrow, registered practical nurse, at the North Bay rally.

CUPE Ontario is calling on the government to legislate a minimum of four hours daily care per resident, adjusted for acuity level and case mix; to increase funding to and tie public funding to staffing levels that provide that minimum care standard; to make reporting of staffing levels at LTC homes mandatory; to fund specialized facilities for persons with cognitive impairment who have been assessed as potentially aggressive; and to stop closing complex continuing care beds and alternative level of care beds.

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### Join us online!

## *Upcoming Events*

### **CACO Conference**

Sept. 23-24 – Delta Ottawa City Centre

### **HCWCC Conference**

Sept. 25-28 – Delta Ottawa City Centre

### **Food Service Workers Conference**

Oct. 6 – Intercontinental Hotel, Toronto

### **CUPE National Convention**

Oct. 21-25 – Quebec City Convention Centre

Oct. 20—Ontario Caucus at National Convention

### **Ontario Fall School**

Oct. 29-Nov. 3 – Toronto Sheraton Centre

### **Trades Conference**

Nov. 14-17 – Crowne Plaza, Niagara Falls

### **OFL Convention**

Nov. 24-29 – Toronto Sheraton Centre

### **Secretary-Treasurers Conference**

Date TBC

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