

Fishing for fairness: Bonfield at six months

Six months after being forced to go on strike, Township of Bonfield employees, members of CUPE Local 4616, were given a strong show of support by community members and workers from across the province on Saturday, February 1.

CUPE National President Paul Moist, CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn and North Bay CUPE District Council President Henri Giroux joined the striking workers for a bonfire, fish fry and day of ice fishing on Lake Nosbonsing.

"It didn't need to go on this long," said Brother Moist of the strike. "If there's one message we have for these workers, it's that they don't walk alone. They belong to the largest union in Canada. We have a saying in the labour movement that we will be here one day longer, one day stronger than the mayor."

The local went on strike August 1, fighting a long list of concession demands including attacks on sen-



iority, job security and the threat of contracting out.

"We will stand with our members until they get a fair deal," said Brother Hahn. "But that can't happen until the mayor and council come to their senses."

Local 4616 members said the event

was an important boost to them during the long winter.

Support the workers by sending a donation and message of support to Local 4616 c/o the CUPE North Bay Area Office, 120 Lakeshore Drive, North Bay, Ontario P1A 2A8



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Full house for first-ever Secretary-Treasurers Conference

More than 250 members from across Ontario gathered in Richmond Hill in January for “Dollars & Sense,” the first-ever CUPE Ontario Secretary-Treasurers Conference.

The popular event filled quickly, and on opening night the hall was packed for addresses by CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn, Secretary-Treasurer Candace Rennick and Diversity Vice-President, Aboriginal, Joanne Webb.

On the first full day, the room was again bursting at the seams for a session on WSIB, followed by Sister

Rennick’s presentation on Bill C-377 and a financial accountability session.

“The turnout is amazing,” said Sister Rennick. “This is our first conference for financial officers, and it’s great to have so many members here to discuss big issues and also gain the practical, hands-on skills it takes to

make a local run smoothly. I think it’s safe to say this conference will be back by popular demand.”

The four-day conference included two days of financial officer workshops, training on budgeting and reading



financial statements, the basics of Excel, CUPE per capita taxes, and by-laws and local union policies. Members were also invited to participate in a series of lunch & learn modules on subjects including fraud prevention and support for small locals.

Despite a snowstorm, delegates continued

meeting Saturday morning with a presentation from CUPE National Secretary-Treasurer Charles Fleury and a political activism panel moderated by CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn, including Trish Hennessy from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and Local 4948 President Maureen O’Reilly.

Ontario locals standing up for fairness

Across Ontario, more than 600 locals have already participated in *Stand up for fairness* leadership training and more than 200 locals in communicator training.

With a provincial election likely this spring and municipal elections in the fall, it is more important than ever that members know about the good their union does for everyone and the political threats we face. Through one-on-one conversations between members, *Stand up for fairness* builds strength at the grass roots. It is the strength locals will need for the political fights and tough rounds of bargaining ahead.



“I thought at first it would be hard, but it was a positive experience,” says Helen Lapp, vice-president of Local 1295 at Brock University. “Members appreciated the two-way sharing of information and were aware of the difficult situations we face...most members had no problem signing the cards.”

“Stand up for fairness came at a perfect time,” said Srila Perine, president of Local 3137, Community Living Essex. “We are going into negotiations and used it to strengthen and mobilize our membership. Through our conversations we got two new stewards and a new activist elected to our bargaining committee.”

To find out more about *Stand up for fairness* tools, to get your local involved and to share your stories, contact Dan Mackenzie at 905-739-9739, Darcie McEathron at 519-433-1753, or visit our website at standupforfairness.ca.

School board workers rally for respect

On a frigid January night, CUPE Ontario members rallied outside the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board office in Mississauga. The members called on the board to respect the agreement signed by the provincial government a year earlier and ratified by CUPE school board members across the province.

The rally followed a press conference at Queen's Park with CUPE National President Paul Moist, CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn and OSBCC Chair Terri Preston.

"The Liberal government has refused to honour

and enforce the agreement it signed with us a year ago under Bill 115," said Brother Hahn. "Now they want us to trust them with even greater powers under their centralized bargaining bill, Bill 122. They have not lived up to their commitments, and as a result, we cannot support Bill 122."

While most school boards have implemented the terms of the agreement between CUPE and the province, a dozen continued to refuse to implement key measures

including sick leave benefits.

"The government is producing inequality in schools, the very opposite of what central agreements achieve," said Sister Preston. "Support workers doing the same

jobs, working just down the road from one another but employed by different boards are receiving different treatment. That makes no sense. It's not fair and that should never happen under the agreement we bargained."

School board workers in Peel Region were among those affected, and both the public and Catholic boards there



were among the holdouts. Just prior to the rally, the public board announced they would respect the agreement.

During the OSBCC conference in Niagara Falls, members again took to the streets, drawing attention to the District School Board of Niagara's refusal to honour the agreement.

You can find out more and watch the entire press conference at cupe.on.ca/s24/school-board.

Beating back an unprecedented lockout

On September 30, continuing education students at Ryerson University in Toronto were shocked to learn their student association had walked away from the bargaining table and taken the unprecedented step of locking out their full-time employees.

After four months of struggle, facing an unfair labour practices hearing,

the employer, CESAR, finally returned to the table on January 28.

"We're pleased they joined the union at the table to negotiate a fair settlement to the four-month lockout," said Saira Chhibber, president of the local. "Lockouts have harmful repercussions for students and the broader movement for social justice in Canada, in which student unions

and labour unions are proud partners."

CUPE Ontario congratulates the members of Local 1281 on their victory. The lockout began after members took a strong stand against concessions that would have created a two-tiered workplace.

Budget 2014: Setting the table for our collective future

For years, the Ontario government has followed a global trend of cutting corporate taxes and then redirecting resources away from public services to make up for the lost revenue.

On January 15, CUPE Ontario presented its pre-budget submission, “Setting the table for our collective future” to Ontario’s finance committee. The report pointed out how the government’s approach has failed and how we can build a better Ontario.

“Ontario government program spending is now lower, per capita, than in any other province in Canada,” CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn told the committee. “In Ontario we have seen that corporations do not use their tax-cut windfalls for capital investments or for research and development. Instead, they stash away billions in cash reserves.”

For too long, he said, government has only set a place at the table for corporations. It is time to set a place for everyone.

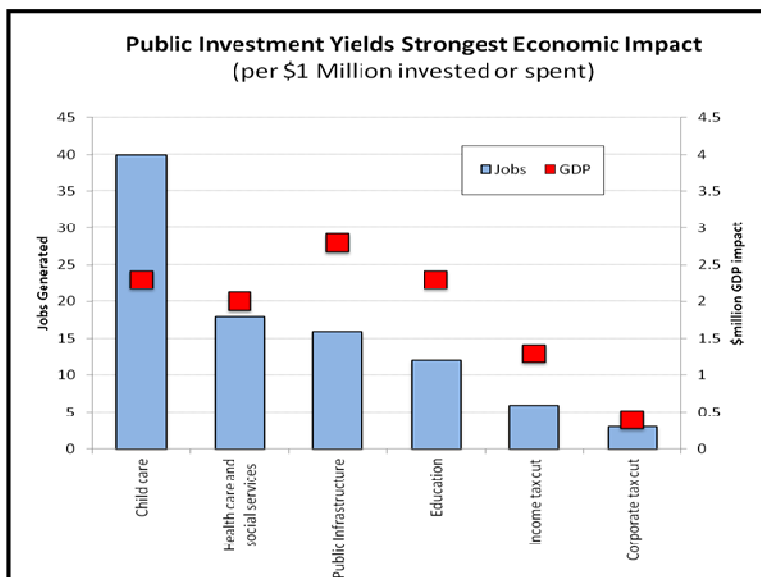
The table for our future must be a sturdy one—one that is supported by four legs or core principles.

Preserve and strengthen public services

For years, provincial budgets have cut program spending and not kept up with inflation and population growth.

The result has been a reduction in the real service levels available to Ontarians.

As the chart on this page shows, investments in public services are investments in good jobs and in the economy. They far outperform the government’s approach, which has been to cut corporate taxes.



Generate revenue through fair taxation

Ontario is not spending too much, it is earning too little.

Corporate tax rates are now at their lowest since the 1930s. As a result, individual Ontarians are now shouldering an unfair share of our revenue burden.

Our submission details how the government can generate more than \$10 billion annually in new revenue, rising to between \$12 and \$13 billion by 2018/19.

Restoring fairness to our tax system will leave more money in the hands of working-class Ontarians—people

who will spend it in our communities and get our economy rolling.

Stop wasting money on privatization

In addition to growing our way to prosperity, we must stop squandering resources on foolhardy privatization and P3 schemes.

Ontario wasted billions on gas plant cancellations, the ORNGE air ambulance scandal, the eHealth fiasco and P3 capital projects such as the multi-billion dollar Brampton hospital.

Keep public infrastructure in public hands for greater accountability and so public funds are used for public services, not for private profit.

Fight poverty and create jobs

Income inequality is on the rise, and Ontario needs to fight it with good jobs, not McJobs.

Setting the Table includes calls to raise the minimum wage to \$14 an hour, restore social assistance rates and supports to prevent poverty from growing further.

Our poverty reduction and job creation measures will not only create a happier Ontario, but will ensure more Ontarians are able to fully participate in our economy.

Read the full report at cupe.on.ca.

Taking our message to the province

Across the province, CUPE Ontario members have been speaking at finance ministry hearings. Here's what four executive board members have said.



Veriline Howe, Diversity VP, Racialized Workers

I support individuals with disabilities in a group home setting in Toronto. That means I help people with things like administering their medication, showering, getting to doctors appointments.

On any shift now there are two people working instead of three. That prevents us from having time to take people out into the community or to visit family. The result is that when people come home from a day program, they end up just sitting in front of the TV. There's no interaction.

Government underfunding not only increases workloads for people like me, it also lowers the quality of life for people with disabilities.



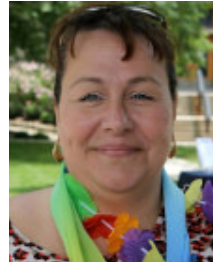
Michael Hurley, 1st Vice-President/OCHU President

The movement of surgeries and procedures to private clinics will be much more costly and result in higher death rates. It will lead to smaller community hospital closures and open the door to private

delivery of these procedures. Ontario health policy also exploits personal support workers as sweatshop labour in an under-resourced home care system, leading to a 60 percent annual turnover in caregivers, and that is unacceptable.

The government must cancel regulations that move core hospital work to private surgery and procedure clinics that will destabilize many local hospitals and increase health risks for patients.

Studies clearly show private delivery of health care is more expensive. Ironically, it is more expensive and provides inferior care and higher death rates.



Tracey Newman, Member-at-large

I have worked in many schools in the Halton Catholic District School Board as an educational assistant supporting children with special needs.

Support staff play a very necessary role in the education system, different from that of a teacher. There must be adequate funding for custodians, clerical support, ECEs, librarians and others who provide necessary services in every school community.

Underfunding means EAs face increased violence in the workplace because of increased workloads and assignments that include students with higher needs. It means higher levels of WSIB claims, fewer people to cover absences and a lower quality of education for children with special needs.

Our children, and especially our children with exceptionalities, deserve the best possible education they can receive, and balancing the budget on the back of education is not something that we, as citizens of Ontario, would like to see.



Henri Giroux, 4th Vice-President

I am a cook in a long-term care home in North Bay.

Most residents in long-term care are over 85. Nearly three-quarters have some form of Alzheimer's or dementia, and most need help with feeding,

bathing, toileting and getting out of bed. With not enough people on a shift, residents don't get the care they need.

We need a legislated care standard for a minimum of four hours per resident each day, adjusted for acuity level and case mix. Public funding must be tied to provision of quality care and staffing levels meeting the legislated minimum of four hours.

CUPE members recognized as heroes



Every day, tens of thousands of public-sector workers do their jobs. Without them, our communities and economy could not function. They are the hands supporting us all, sometimes unseen, but indispensable.

But when a crisis erupts, the public gets a glimpse into the important work these people do.

December's ice storm was just such an occasion. As power went out across Southern Ontario, hydro crews went to work under dangerous conditions.

In Toronto, more than a quarter-million homes lost power. Working in darkness interrupted by the blue flash of exploding transformers, with ice-laden tree limbs crashing down, crews worked rotating 12-hour shifts until every home had heat and light again.

This effort led the Toronto and York Region Labour Council to present CUPE Local 1 members with a plaque honouring them as "Hydro Heroes."

But these workers were not alone. Workers in other municipal systems and at Hydro One laboured under similar conditions. And when power was restored in their own communities, they headed to Toronto to lend a hand.

Ambulance and paramedic crews drove icy roads on long shifts to rescue people in accidents or suffering carbon monoxide poisoning. City arborists worked tirelessly to contend with the forest of limbs and trees taken down by the ice. Water, sewage and road crews struggled to keep everything flowing during the freeze.

It is impossible to list everyone whose work kept people safe and sound during the ice storm. But we are all grateful for the work everyone did—and continue to do – to support our families and our communities.

Shortly after the ice storm, brothers Rick Herculuck and Randy Smith demonstrated their own heroism. The St. Catharines municipal workers, members of CUPE Local 150, risked their own safety one January morning to rescue a family from their burning home before emergency responders arrived to douse the blaze.

Coming together to build a better Ontario

This winter, CUPE members are participating in a dizzying series of conferences and will be making plans to stand up for fairness for their sectors and to build a better province for everyone.

In February, more than one hundred members will meet in Richmond Hill for the Racial Justice and Human Rights Conferences. In addition to an exciting lineup of

guest speakers, delegates will elect members to CUPE Ontario's Pink Triangle, Racial Justice, International Solidarity, Young Workers and Workers with Disabilities committees and Aboriginal Council.

School board workers are also meeting in February, and OSBCC delegates meeting in Niagara will be lending a hand in the by-election (see page 7) and rallying for respect (see page 3).

Niagara Falls will also play host to CUPE Ontario's University workers conference at the end of the month, just before Spring School in Toronto. March will see social service workers meet in Ottawa, library and municipal workers in Richmond Hill.

For details about these conferences and more, visit cupe.on.ca.



Get involved—Catch election fever

As CUPE Ontario members, we are all proud of the vital public services we provide in communities across the province.

But our ability to provide quality public services is under serious threat. The Ontario Liberals have brought in budget after budget that reduced services for the public. Tim Hudak and the Tories want to go even further with massive public-sector job cuts, including 10,000 school support workers. Municipally, we only need to look to Toronto and Bonfield to see why we must all get active in local politics.

In February, CUPE Ontario members are canvassing and supporting candidates who will stand up for fairness in Thornhill and in Niagara Falls, where there is a golden opportunity to elect Wayne Gates, a strong pro-worker candidate.

CUPE Ontario has resources to help you and members of your local get ready for the provincial election,



anticipated to happen this spring, and in municipal campaigns next October.

Visit cupe.on.ca to see what our members are doing, or call Dan Mackenzie at 906-739-9739.

The Fairness Tour—Coming to a city near you

This winter, CUPE Ontario will be bringing the Fairness Tour to a city near you.

This full-day political action meeting is open to all CUPE members. It will help us prepare for a very tough year of bargaining, for a likely spring provincial election and for municipal elections in the fall.

We've all heard about an increased push for concessions, privatization and the dangerous new wave toward two-tiered contracts.

CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn and Secretary-Treasurer Candace Rennick will host the sessions, which will include tools your local can use to prepare for tough bargaining in the year to come.

This is a unique opportunity to share the challenges your local is facing and prepare for the ones we all face.

In coming elections we must ensure that no government will undermine our collective bargaining rights and we must stop Tim Hudak's threat to weaken unions and pass so-called "right-to-work" laws. The sessions will also include an open and frank discussion on voting and elections.

Details are still in the works, so watch the CUPE Ontario website and your email for more information in the weeks ahead.

FAIRNESS TOUR DATES

February 26—Windsor
February 27—London
March 7—Niagara
March 14—Ottawa
March 19—Hamilton
March 31—Kingston
April 2—Sault Ste. Marie
April 3—Thunder Bay
April 4—Sudbury
April 15—Toronto

At press time, several dates are still tentative. Please watch cupe.on.ca for up-to-date information and locations.

Convention 2014: Don't miss the action in Windsor!

CUPE Ontario's 51st annual Convention begins on May 28 in Windsor. You won't want to miss any of the action—engaging guest speakers, a mass rally, not to mention elections for the CUPE Ontario officers and board.

Several important Convention deadlines are fast approaching. The deadline for submitting names for committees is March 1, election material must be submitted by March 14 and per capita must be up-to-date by March 31.

Resolutions and constitutional amendments are due by April 10. Nomination deadlines for the Health & Safety Award, Injured Workers Award and Sisters in Solidarity Award are April 24. You can download nomination forms, registration and credentials information and get updates on the



exciting lineup of speakers and events from the Convention web page.

For more information and Convention updates, visit cupe.on.ca/convention2014.

Upcoming Events

Racial Justice and Human Rights Conferences

Feb. 10 to 13 – Toronto Sheraton Parkway North

OUWCC Conference

Feb. 20 to 23 – Crowne Plaza Hotel, Niagara Falls

Spring School

Feb. 25 to Mar. 4 – Toronto Sheraton Centre

SSWCC Conference

Mar. 20 to 23 – Delta Ottawa City Centre

Library Workers Conference

Mar. 25 to 26 – Toronto Sheraton Parkway North

OMECC Conference

Mar. 26 to 29 – Toronto Sheraton Parkway North

CUPE Ontario Convention

May 28 to 31 – Caesars Windsor



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