

THE SKOPEIN

Newsletter for CUPE 1975

Saskatoon & Regina Members

November, 2008

President's Report

The Interest Arbitration hearing to resolve the two outstanding issues from our strike began on September 11 and 12. Prior to this hearing the U of R, U of S and CUPE 1975 submitted briefs to Arbitrator Andrew Sims. At the hearing all parties discussed their differences with each other's briefs and Mr. Sims asked all parties to submit their additional comments on the briefs to him by October 10, 2008. Our next hearing dates are set for October 28th, November 13 and 14th.

ASPAs are encountering the same difficulties at negotiations as we went through with the University of Saskatchewan. This continues to confirm our belief that there is a problem with Labour Relations at this University of Saskatchewan. Why is ASPA having to go down the same road as we did? Why did another bargaining unit have to take a strike vote and give strike notice to the University? When will the University realize there is a problem with how they conduct negotiations and commit to having an open dialogue with all bargaining units to discuss Labour Relations in order to improve working relationships? This needs to be accomplished so that we can build and have a productive, co-operative working relationship on an ongoing basis to reach tentative agreements. Based on what we are seeing, it appears

the University still believes that everything is fine with their approach to negotiations.

Found Guilty of Violating the Constitution by Crossing the Picket line during the CUPE Local 1975 Strike

Garth Parry, Technician

Chemistry,

Gweneth Jones Clerical

Assistant Engineering,

Sherri Haberman

Clerical Assistant Engineering

Eva Ogilvie, Clerical

Assistant, University

Advancement.



ASPAs were very supportive of our local when we were on strike and we will forever be thankful to them, not only for their generous financial support but also their morale support when they walked the picket line with us.

CUPE 1975 supports ASPAs in their attempt to reach a fair Tentative Agreement with the University. Should job action with any bargaining unit on campus occur our members must remember that our collective

agreement Article 4.9 "Crossing Picket Lines during a Strike and Handling Goods", states that, "An employee covered by this Agreement shall have the right to refuse to cross a picket line arising out of a labour dispute or to refuse to handle goods, commodities or products of another employer who is involved in a labour dispute with that employer's employees, providing by so doing, it does not result in property damage to the University. This refusal shall not be grounds for disciplinary action, but if the refusal results in the employee(s) not being able to perform their normal duties and other work is not available, the employee(s) may immediately be taken off payroll until once again able to perform their normal duties."

Members have been enquiring as to what happened to the *Scabs* who crossed our picket line. As per our constitution the trial committee has found the following members guilty of been in violation of the constitution:

At September's General Membership Meeting our membership approved the recommendations for the penalties to them. Found Guilty were **Garth Parry, Gweneth Jones, Sherri Haberman, and Eva Ogilvie** and the approved penalties are as follows:

Continued Page - 2 -

The accused are not permitted to attend any General Membership meetings or any other CUPE sponsored event and/or activity for the duration of their membership in the Canadian Union of Public Employees including being prohibited from attending any conventions, conferences or educations.

The accused are prohibited from holding any office or position in conjunction with the Local of CUPE 1975.

The accused are prohibited in voting in any election or other vote that the Local may conduct.

In order to implement monetary fines, our Local Bylaws must have been in compliance with Section 36(4) of the Trade Union Act of Saskatchewan prior to the commencement of the strike. Unfortunately, we did not receive official confirmation from the National President approving our local bylaws until November 14, 2007 and we are therefore prohibited from imposing any fines. We now have these bylaws in place.

We thank the following trial committee members for their assistance to our local on this matter: Ron Abernethy (Chair), Lois Dumbovic, Roger Laursen, Sam Nowaselski and Doug Sobry.

In the past few months there has been some confusion in regards to applying for CUPE positions on campus. Please remember that when applying for positions, it is in your best interest to include a cover letter. We have

members who just submit the application to management and it gets buried. Include a cover letter to let management know your interests, what you bring to the position and why you are interested in the position.

Article 8.2 states that employees may bid on posted positions by completing an application for transfer and accompanying it with a resume and submitting it to Human Resources within seven days of the date the position is posted. All paper applications must have a transfer form submitted or you will not be considered as an internal applicant. Please remember that when applying in person you must include a transfer form and a resume. **On-line applications do not require a transfer form.**

CUPE 1975 Executive have been very busy dealing with issues in the work place. Job postings, selections, conflict in the workplace, discipline, terminations, hours of work, sick leaves and back to work accommodations were issues facing our members.

We recently represented several members who have been terminated for being absent from the work place on an ongoing basis. The employer has the right to discipline members including termination if they do not report to work or have prior approval to being absent. It is important to note that if someone is absent continually, including been absent for illness, it may lead to termination if your attendance record demonstrates excessive absences. The term for this is called non culpable. What this means is your absenteeism does not imply your

absence is your fault however, it does cause frustration on the employment relationship and causes the employer undue hardship. We were unsuccessful in having these members reinstated.

Management can ask for a doctor's note when we are absent but this does not mean that we should be singled out every time we are ill.

The Employee Assistance Program may also help you should you have day to day issues which are affecting you, have personal and/or emotional problems, family crisis, relationship problems, work performance issues or if you just need someone to talk to. The EAP is here to help you with access 24 hours a day/seven days a week. Confidential counselling services are provided. You can access the many different services which EAP provides by visiting -

<http://www.usask.ca/eap/>

or www.humansolutions.ca.

1-800-663-1142 or 966-4300 on campus. The above website has many resources which our members can access and we encourage all of our members to use these services. There is no cost to you. Remember you are not alone and there is always someone to turn to.

I wish to thank our Executive as well as those who serve on the various committees for volunteering their time and their commitment to serving our membership.

In solidarity,
Glenn Ross, President
CUPE Local 1975