Working on the front lines of the public service, our members know how many Nova Scotians need our help. Page 8
The Season of Solidarity

Sharing. Connecting. Celebrating all that we have together. These are the things we strive to do this time of year, and they are what gives the season such power, such warmth, and such meaning.

They are also the values that stand at the heart of solidarity, something I’ve been reminded of over and over again recently by members from all corners of the union.

I saw it at work outside of Sydney early one morning in late October. The sun wasn’t up and winter was in the air when I arrived at the entrance to Cape Breton University. There I joined the 13 tradesmen and rink attendants in Local 18 who had made the incredibly difficult decision to go on strike.

We were feeling cold that morning, and not just because it was still dark. The first moments on a picket line can be a lonely, chilling experience. How long will I have to be out here? What will I do for money? Maybe the employer is right, and I should simply accept that my work isn’t as valuable as I think.

But like every picket line I’ve walked, the warmth of solidarity soon took hold. These workers were sharing their struggle, connecting as people, and publicly celebrating the fact they believe what they do matters.

The spirit spread. Many of the students in the long line of traffic arriving at the school honked and waved their encouragement. Then other workers began to arrive — from CBU, the nearby Nova Scotia Community College campus, and then from across industrial Cape Breton.

Within a week, the members of Local 18 earned for themselves what for months their employer had been refusing to give them: dignity and respect.

The same spirit was on display in both Antigonish and Sherbrooke as some of our newest members struggled to achieve what so many of us can now take for granted: a collective agreement. Both groups of workers came within a hair’s breadth of their own picket lines.

They had no job security. No history with organized labour. No idea, really, what they were getting themselves into. What they did have was each other, and a basic respect for the value of their labour. The contracts both groups eventually achieved shows how powerful a force that can be.

These dramatic displays of solidarity have been a real gift to the rest of us, reminding us that by working together, we can improve our lives and the lives of others.

That’s why it was such an easy decision for us to take the money we normally spend on holiday TV advertising and donate it instead to families across the province through Christmas Daddies.

Working on the front lines of the public service, we see painful examples every day of people who need help. They don’t need our judgment or our pity. They need, like all of us, to be treated with dignity and respect. To share in the spirit of solidarity that we’re all in this together, and that we’re all here to help lift everybody up.

In solidarity,

Joan Jessome, NSGEU President

These dramatic displays of solidarity have been a real gift to the rest of us, reminding us that by working together, we can improve our lives and the lives of others.

In solidarity,

Joan Jessome, NSGEU President

THE STAND is a publication of the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union.

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The NSGEU is a member of the Canadian Labour Congress, the National Union of Public and General Employees, and the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour.

On the cover
NSGEU leaders present two cheques totalling $10,000 to the Christmas Daddies during telethons in both Halifax and Sydney on Dec. 5.

TOP PHOTO, LEFT TO RIGHT: 3rd VP Dawn Ferris, 2nd VP, Don Goss, Secretary/treasurer Darren McPhee, and President Joan Jessome donate $7,000 in Halifax.

BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT: 1st VP Jason MacLean (1st VP), Local 1 President Donnie MacNeil, Local 33 President Chasity Boudreau, and Regional Board Member Garry Smith donate $3,000 in Cape Breton.

Photos by Morrow Scot-Brown (top) and John Ratchford.

Cover design by Colin Jackson.
Health professionals speak up
A new campaign promoting the passion and professionalism of our health care workers is getting ready for launch.  PAGE 10

Cut Stoppers needs you
Civil Service Campaign Co-ordinator Thane Paris implores his fellow Civil Service members to report any unfilled vacancies that they know about.  PAGE 11

NSGEU Members’ Discount List
There are many benefits to being a signed member of the NSGEU: one being the range of discounts offered by retailers and service providers across the province.  PAGE 14

The spirits of success
Enjoying another year of record-breaking financial success, the NSLC is proof that profit and the public good aren’t mutually exclusive.  PAGE 17

Book Review
Raj Patel’s book The Value of Nothing is well written and thought-provoking and will have you asking yourself what’s really valuable in this day and age  PAGE 12

Grievance Report
CDHA tradesmen get the lunch meal allowances they deserve when an arbitrator rules that their managers had been interpreting their collective agreement too literally.  PAGE 23

Bargaining
To make their voices heard, workers at CBU hit the picket line, and workers at St. FX walked an information picket.  PAGE 18

If you have any comments, clarifications, or suggestions, please write to: apedersen@nsgeu.ca
One of the most exciting and important orders of business during the NSGEU’s upcoming Biennial Convention will come on the final day. That’s when the convention delegates elect an Executive Committee which is entrusted with enacting the union’s policies, goals and direction over the next two years. There are five members elected to the committee: President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Third Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer.

Giving every NSGEU member the opportunity to seek election to the Executive Committee — and giving each candidate an opportunity to create and distribute campaign materials to every convention delegate — are paramount to the union’s vibrancy and success.

To ensure these opportunities are open to every member, there are a number of basic rules governing the Executive Committee elections:

In order to run for the Executive Committee, you must first be elected one of your local’s convention delegates. All locals must elect their delegates during a local meeting before March 16, 2011.

In order to run for the Executive Committee, you shall:

• have attended at least 40 per cent of your local meetings over the 12 months preceding nominations
• or, over the past six years, spent at least 12 months as a local officer, a steward, a bargaining committee member, a member of the Board of Directors, a

Any NSGEU member can become eligible to run for the union’s executive. But to keep things fair and open, there are some rules to play by.
member of a provincial committee, or a regional or occupational councilor.

Once elected a convention delegate, eligible candidates must then fill out the “Intent to Seek Nomination” form, which they can get from their local president, the Nominations Receiving Committee, NSGEU head office, or from their convention binder.

Most candidates fill out this form well in advance of convention so they have a chance to create and distribute campaign materials, but there is nothing from stopping an eligible candidate from coming forward during convention itself. “Intent to Seek Nomination” forms must be submitted to the Nominations Receiving Committee no later than the concluding session of the second last scheduled day of convention (which this year is May 27).

Once a candidate has filed a nomination form, they can begin campaigning.

NSGEU Policy 17 lays out the rules governing these campaigns. There are three main ways that

CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE

How to help ensure your local has a strong voice at convention

The upcoming Biennial Convention is one of the NSGEU's most important events. From May 25 to 28, hundreds of members will gather together at the Westin in Halifax to set the union's goals for the next two years, and elect the executive members to help carry them out.

It’s bound to be an empowering and exciting experience: it always is. Friends are made, connections are forged, and ideas are exchanged in a safe and supportive environment.

The number of delegates your local gets to send to convention depends on the number of signed members in your local.

By encouraging all of your co-workers to sign a card (which they can get from their steward, local executive, or by contacting the union (424-4063, 1-877-556-7438 or inquiry@nsgeu.ca), you’ll be amplifying your local's voice in the union.

SOME VERY IMPORTANT DATES FOR EACH LOCAL:

**Tuesday, Jan. 25, 2011:** This is the date on which each local’s delegate entitlement will be determined. Based on the number of signed members in your local on this day, your local will be invited and funded to send a certain number of delegates.

**Wednesday, March 16, 2011:** Deadline for each local to elect its convention delegates and alternates. These elections must take place at a special or regular local meeting. Locals that do not hold elections prior to this date will not be eligible to send delegates to convention. The NSGEU Constitution & By-Laws does not permit or provide exceptions to this article.

**Friday, March 25, 2011:** Deadline for each local’s secretary to submit:
- The names of the Local’s elected delegates and alternates to convention.
- The resolutions or constitutional amendments that the local has decided to submit to the convention. Your local’s president and secretary must certify that these resolutions or amendments have been approved during a local meeting. During convention, these resolutions or amendments will be considered and perhaps voted upon.

**Monday, May 23, 2011:** Deadline for the local secretary to submit the official credential form for each local delegate.

**IMPORTANT DATES FOR EACH COMMITTEE:**

**Monday, February 28:** Deadline for committee chairs to submit to the executive director the recommendations and resolutions their committee would like to see considered at convention.

**March 4 & 5, 2011:** Board of Directors will consider and vote on which committee recommendations and resolutions their committee would like to see considered at convention.

**Wednesday, April 6, 2011:** Deadline for committee chairs to submit their full committee's report to the executive director.

**April 8 & 9, 2011:** Board of directors will consider and either approve or send back for revision all reports to convention.

**Monday, April 25, 2011:** Copies of all approved resolutions and recommendations to be received by each local.

**Friday, May 13, 2011:** All convention delegates will receive a copy of the convention binder that contains all the schedules, agendas and proposed resolutions and constitutional amendments.

All of these convention deadlines and more are posted on the union’s website. Please check regularly for updates.
candidates are allowed to campaign:  
**PERSON-TO-PERSON:** Each declared candidate will be provided with a list of the names and home contact information for each convention delegate. The candidate must sign a declaration promising to use this list only for campaigning purposes.

**THE UNION STAND:** Each declared candidate will have an opportunity to have a picture and personal statement of no more than 600 words in the Spring 2011 issue of *The Union Stand*. Photographs and statements must be submitted by March 25, 2011.

**LEAFLETS:** For each declared candidate, union staff will copy, stamp, and mail a one-page leaflet to all delegates. This leaflet will be mailed-out within 10 days of the candidate submitting the material for their leaflet to the Nominations Receiving Committee c/o NSGEU Head Office. Each declared candidate will also be provided with sufficient copies of this leaflet for distribution to delegates during the convention itself. Please note, however, that distribution of campaign material is only permitted outside of convention hall. Election material shall not be posted within the convention hall.

Other NSGEU members may offer assistance in kind to candidates in the development of their campaign, or in the contacting of delegates and the distribution of candidate material at convention. Campaigns will be kept internal and candidates will not seek out the media as a means of communicating with the membership.

Other than the article in *The Union Stand* and the one-page leaflet, the union (nor any body of the union such as a local or a committee) will not offer donations, materials or assistance in kind to a campaign.

Donations, materials or assistance in kind from outside sources will also not be permitted. Except for copying, stamping, and mailing of campaign material, there shall be no staff involvement in the political process. If there are any allegations of staff interference, the complaint should be made in writing to the Executive Director who will refer them to the President for due process and action if warranted.

Elected members or candidates seeking election shall not initiate involvement of staff in the political process. Should staff have complaints, they shall make them in writing to the Executive Director who will refer them to the President for due process and action if warranted.

In accordance with Article 13 - Discipline of the NSGEU Constitution, no candidate shall produce literature or make statements that will bring disrepute on the union, other candidates or its members.

**Welcome to new members at Elizabeth Fry, Northwood**

The NSGEU now has more than 29,000 members. Meet some of our newest:

- **Local 68** — Six employees of the Elizabeth Fry Society voted unanimously to join the NSGEU and have elected their Executive, Bargaining Committee and Councilors.
- Our new members are a Community Outreach Coordinator, Federal Outreach Coordinator, Manager, Assistant Manager and Floor Manager of Our Thyme Cafe.

- **Local 41** — Employees at Northwood Bedford West Continuing Care Centre voted overwhelmingly in favor of joining NSGEU.
- There are 149 new members. Our new members include: Continuing Care Assistants, Client Support Assistants, Recreation Programmers, Environmental Services Workers (Housekeeping/Laundry), Food Service Workers, Maintenance, and Area Support Clerks.

**Big demand for Bully-Free Workplaces**

In November, we held 13 two-hour sessions and six six-hour sessions. These included sessions with employers such as the South Shore Regional School Board, the NSCC Truro campus, and the Tri-County School Board, just to name a few.

The program is already booking into the spring.

We are very excited to be continuing to refine and develop the Bully-Free Facilitator materials with the assistance of our new Bully-Free Co-ordinator, Susan Coldwell. Susan has been working at the office since November and will be here through February.

She has a list of important tasks: refining
the two-hour awareness session and the six-hour workshop; recruiting and training new facilitators; ensuring facilitation manuals match the power-point presentation; continuing to develop the program evaluation process and developing a FAQ, among others.

Susan and the NSGEU’s Occupational Health and Safety Officer, Jeff Brett, are interviewing prospective new facilitators to help meet the demand.

Pension solvency relief

Employers continue to approach us to ask us to allow them to request an extension of their pension’s solvency deficit over a 10-year period as opposed to the required five years.

Solvency relief is like an extension of your mortgage — instead of amortizing the mortgage over 10 years, the “solvency relief” is allowing the deficiency to be amortized over 20 years.

In two of these cases, our members have voted on the employer’s request.

Local 77, members of the Dalhousie University Pension Plan voted and are directing the NSGEU to allow their employer to apply for solvency relief.

Local 70, members of the South Shore Regional School Board Pension Plan, completed a vote and are also directing the NSGEU to allow their employer to make application for solvency relief.

Daryl Budden (Local 70 - South Shore Regional School Board) and Danielle Buck (Local 72 - Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial) is a member of the School Board Occupational Council (see inset below), which will be heavily involved in developing the union’s strategy to fight the cuts.

SCHOOL WORKERS FACE MASSIVE CUTS

Union and local leadership are already taking action

The provincial government has asked school boards across the province to prepare a plan to deal with massive budget cuts. Representing more than 1,500 workers at six school boards, the NSGEU says these potential cuts are unacceptable.

“The last thing public schools need now is funding cuts,” says NSGEU President Joan Jessome. “Whatever savings may be achieved will have major adverse impacts for the future of our province.”

Jessome has already written to Education Minister Marilyn More, urging her to reconsider. “We hope that you will provide an opportunity for unions representing school board staff to provide some input into this budgetary process,” she wrote.

NSGEU school board members provide a wide array of support services including as: Educational Assistants, IT specialists, Administrative Personnel, Bus Drivers and Monitors and Library staff.

Early in the new year, the presidents of all the union’s school board locals will meet with Jessome and union staff to plan and coordinate further action.
THE GIFT OF GIVING

Across the NSGEU, members are leveraging the power of the union in the name of charity

The signs of struggle are clear to see: unemployment rates are rising and so is the demand on food banks.

Many of our frontline workers come face to face with the people behind these statistics, and it’s driving them to do what they can to help as individuals.

At the Nova Scotia Community College in Yarmouth, for example, Local 267B members recently ran their fourth annual Mitten Tree Campaign. Support staff erect a tree outside the campus library and use it to collecting hats, mittens, gloves, and scarves to decorate the tree.

All those donations are then distributed to non-profit organizations across southern Nova Scotia. Now in its fourth year, these workers have collected more than 1,000 donations.

Local 267B’s Mitten Tree is similar in spirit, if not in scope, to the Human Rights Committee’s incredibly successful Sock It To Poverty campaign.

The committee challenged each of the union’s eight regions to try and outdo each other in donations of socks, gloves or hats.

Committee chairperson Rocky Beals says the campaign collected 3,000 pairs of socks or gloves or hats (which are worth at least $5,000, which is more than double what the campaign generated last year).

She says Metro B takes the credit for the most donations, but honorable mentions go out to CS Valley Local 4 for its sock-hop event, Local 246 for the significant number of home-made items donated, and to Local 97 for the largest cash donation.

The committee decided to spend the cash donations it received with a company here in Nova Scotia, and purchased thousands of warm new socks from Stanfield’s, the Truro business that has been making quality clothing here for generations.

All the Sock It To Poverty clothing is being distributed to 20 charitable organizations across the province.

The desire to help has also reached the NSGEU Board of Directors. In November, board members voted unanimously to take the $10,000 usually spent on holiday TV advertising and donate it instead to Christmas Daddies, which provides support to people in need across the province. Seven thousand dollars was donated specifically to mainland Nova Scotia, while $3,000 was donated to Cape Breton.

The response from members has been overwhelming. Visit www.nsgeu.ca for some of the dozens of congratulatory notes inspired by these donations.

The NSGEU Board of Directors also recently endorsed The United Way as an organization dedicated to providing high-quality and universal services to people who need help.

Thank you to all the members who have gone the extra mile in support of their communities and families.
Peter Henderson has been a CDHA electrician for more than 20 years, tending the power that lights and heats Dartmouth General, the Nova Scotia Hospital, the Crothall laundry facilities, and even parts of the Nova Scotia Community College.

Three are aging buildings that constantly require his care and attention. But Henderson had never encountered a challenge quite like the one that greeted him when he picked up his phone early on the morning of November 3.

“It the worst situation I’ve seen there,” says the 45-year-old. “The power was gone, and there were a lot of different things we had to do to get it back on.”

It all started with a simple traffic accident: a truck carrying a large girder took a turn too tightly, and knocked over a power pole in front of the Nova Scotia Hospital on Pleasant Street.

Nobody was hurt, but the collision cut one of the main power lines running into the hospital complex. There were backups in place, but a minor failure set off a series of other failures that quickly cascaded into a major problem.

“The hospital has a generator that should have started automatically when the power went down,” says Henderson. “The generator did start, but immediately blew a fuse. Just one of those things.”

Without power from the broken line or the generator, the hospital complex was suddenly running in what electricians call a “single-phased” state. He explains: “It can cause some of your equipment to overheat, and that’s exactly what happened.”

By this time, Henderson was on site, struggling desperately to restart the generator that had blown a fuse. “That’s when smoke and sparks started coming out from under the door to the boiler room electrical vault,” he says. “One of the transformers in there had caught fire.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS SPEAKING UP

With passion and pride, our health care workers are about to show us all how truly vital they are to Nova Scotia’s health

The spotlight is on Nova Scotia’s health care professionals. As the provincial government’s ER advisor recently recommended, our entire health care system could benefit mightily by tapping into the care and professionalism of the NSGEU members in Locals 22 (IWK), 42 (CDHA), and 43 (Canadian Blood Services). From diagnostics to laboratories and from pharmacy to outreach, the work these people do helps save lives. Every day.

It’s perfect timing for the upcoming launch of the Health Professionals

FIGHTING CANCER FROM BEHIND THE SCENES

By Meg Federico

Joanne Hamm doesn’t work in an operating suite. She doesn’t have patients or clients, and she doesn’t wear a white lab coat. “The public doesn’t know I exist,” says the Sambro native. “My health care profession doesn’t have a face.”

But it certainly has an impact. Day in and day out, Hamm is tracking cancer in order to help find effective treatments. She does it by collecting and registering cancer statistics — the numbers trailing every cancer case in the medical system — from the moment of detection all the way through treatment.

She assembles each patient’s “story,” “capturing the details of appointments, surgery, consultation, radiation, or chemotherapy — and every outcome.” The information is added to the data pool used by researchers, government and policy analysts to set resources for cancer care in the future. “Every individual’s experience of cancer benefits the greater community,” she says.

Though Joanne rarely meets the people behind the statistics, and then only by coincidence, she sees the pain. “A cancer diagnosis used to mean imminent death, at least in worst cases,” she says.

“Now, with accurate testing, cancer can be detected early, and tracked. Knowledge IS power, and because of what I know, I am not afraid of it.”

One day, she hopes, nobody else will have to be afraid of it, either.

Meg Federico is the author of Welcome To The Departure Lounge, which is about caring giving.
Campaign that will celebrate these members and the work they do. The campaign will show Nova Scotians the pride in the work these members do, and encourage students to follow in their footsteps, ensuring that we all have the care we need into the future.

Already, dozens of members have volunteered to share their stories. Members like Anil Snook, the ER Paramedic who is helping prove that our professionals have the skills and passion to make health care better.

“I love doing this,” says Snook. “I love knowing that I’m making a difference.”

There are many more:

- **We make sure that patients don’t lose their sight, or even their life, while they’re still on the waiting list** – IWK Orthoptist (Eye specialist)
- **The dietitian tries to reach the person’s own inner motivation to change. It is an art form. Sometimes, patients come back and say, ‘You have changed my life. Thank you. I want to give you a hug.’** – CDHA Clinical Dietician
- **A mother and daughter were in a car crash when I was on a back shift. They were both in critical condition. With nobody else working, it was very stressful. But it is with great satisfaction that both mom and daughter survived this accident and both are alive with the aid of my work.** – CDHA Medical Lab Technologist

The campaign will tell these stories and many more.

To help, we’ve engaged some of the city’s most talented writers and photographers. The material they produce will be featured in upcoming issues of The Union Stand and on a dedicated section of our website: www.nsgeu.ca/healthprofessionals.

Public exposure will follow: some mix perhaps of billboards, bus ads and even an online video.

And if you’ve got a story to tell — either as a health professional or as somebody who has helped by one — please visit www.nsgeu.ca/healthprofessionals and click on the “I’ve Got A Story” button.

Stay tuned for more!

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**CIVIL SERVICE CAMPAIGN REMAINS IN HIGH GEAR**

For the sake of their co-workers and the public, Civil Service members are urged to fight the cuts

By Thane Paris, Civil Service Campaign Co-ordinator

At the first budget address of the first New Democratic government in the history of Nova Scotia, the party long heralded as the “labour party” shocked many of their core supporters, myself included.

Led by Darrell Dexter, the NDP announced that as a measure to reduce the size of Nova Scotia’s deficit, it is going to reduce the size of the province’s Civil Service by 10 per cent, or approximately 1,200 positions. In his official budget address, Finance Minister Graham Steele stated that there will not be any lay-offs, but that the reductions will be achieved solely through attrition.

As a card-carrying member of the Nova Scotia New Democratic Party, and a worker for the province, I was outraged by this attack on our public service. Unless this government changes their position to reduce the size of Nova Scotia’s public service, I will not re-new my NDP membership.

As a workplace steward, I see everyday how completely unrealistic and unfair it is for this government to shift the failures of previous governments onto the shoulders of workers. The dedicated and hard-working men and women that make up the public service should not bear the burden of past financial failures and current scandals. This government should not be trying to balance the province’s books on the backs of the people who work in our communities, the people who are our neighbours, and the people who make up Nova Scotia.

Most of the people I know in the public service, including myself, have at some point felt the added pressure of having a colleague go on a leave, resign or retire. When one of our coworkers leaves the workplace, the work does not leave with them. The workers who remain are left to pick up that added work and continue our duties as professionals.

If we do not join together, if we do not stand up as brothers and sisters to say no, to fight this government now, we will all suffer together in the future. That position left vacant will not be filled and that work will become yours permanently.

In our new collective agreement, our bargaining team made some great gains around job postings, job security, and vacation entitlements. But government’s insistence that we take one per cent wage increase, and this plan to cut our workforce, has made me say: “Enough!” As the co-ordinator for our Civil Service Campaign Committee, I ask you to stand up for yourself, to stand up for your co-workers, and to stand up for Nova Scotia.

Over the next few months, please attend your local meetings, report vacancies in your unit to “Cut Stoppers,” and write to your local newspaper or your local MLA about our shared struggle.

**Thane Paris (Local 7) is a Clerk IV at the Department of Labour and Workforce Renewal in Halifax.**
COURSES AND WORKSHOPS THAT HELP YOU SHAPE YOUR WORKPLACE FOR THE BETTER

The NSGEU offers its members a regular schedule of workshops and courses that are informative, thought-provoking and entertaining.

If you are interested in participating in any of these workshops, the union can help make it happen.

We will cover your transportation and child-care costs (as defined by the NSGEU Board policies), and will also help arrange for your time off work.

The first step is to make sure you’re eligible for the workshop you’re interested in (see the prerequisite column in the schedule below).

Next, make sure you can get the time away from work; ask your supervisor if you’re able to take the time off, and let him or her know that the union will reimburse them for the wages you’re paid while off on union business.

(Some, but not all, of the collective agreements negotiated by the NSGEU allow employees to spend a certain amount of their work time on union business.)

If you’re eligible, and you can get the time off, fill out an application form. To get a form, contact the Labour Resource Centre at 902-424-4063 or 1-877-556-7348. Please note that space is limited in each workshop.

UPCOMING NSGEU WORKSHOPS & COURSES

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Metro = Metro A, B, C | CC = Cumberland, Colchester | CB = Cape Breton | PAG = Pictou, Antigonish, Guysborough | SS = South Shore | Val = Valley

ASK YOURSELF: WHAT HAS TRUE VALUE?

World-travelling author says our devotion to the dollar isn’t making us as well off and happy as we think

By Margaret Anne McHugh

Raj Patel’s book – The Value of Nothing – is a great read. It is relatively short and written in plain language, but is well footnoted. It is subtitled: How to re-shape market Society and redefine Democracy.

It is a treatise on how the world is organized, especially economically, why that does not work, and what kind of organization might replace the one we have. The current organization – one organized around unregulated markets, profit and greed, does not work for most of the population of the Earth and does not hold much hope for a more equal, just and prosperous future. As an example, Patel talks about the hidden or “externalized” (you and I don’t pay for it) environmental and social costs of a hamburger. If we really paid all the costs in terms of economic justice and environmental degradation, that hamburger could cost as much as $200.

The title of the book comes from Oscar Wilde: “Nowadays, people know the price of everything and the value of nothing.” Patel means that people don’t take into account the value of family and community, or the value of real food, and instead glamourize wealth (the price of everything) and the increasing commodification of the world. Everything is subject to the “market” … and this is using up resources, spoiling the world, hurting the food supply, and ensuring that there are more and more billionaires while 70 per cent of the people on the planet live on less than $10 a day. Not to mention climate change.

This is not just a book about problems, though. It also suggests some solutions and offers remarkable examples of ways that people are taking back control from “markets.”

As Patel says on page 146: “By choosing to value the world through markets, we choose the principle of ‘The more money you have, the more you can get.’ This, however, is not a very democratic way of distributing public funds. Although modern
Politics often seems to run along the lines of ‘one dollar, one vote’ some municipalities have discovered that there are other ways of dividing their common resources.” He then provides examples of participatory budgets, open source software development, and the Creative Commons Licensing, Wikipedia and other team efforts that can make politics and the economy operate more democratically.

Patel also talks a lot about the environment, because, as he says, “mother nature doesn’t do bailouts.” We are using up the resources and allowing the benefits of those resources fall into fewer and fewer hands.

As Naomi Klein, author of the Shock Doctrine, wrote: “With great lucidity and confidence in a dazzling array of fields, Patel reveals how we inflate the cost of things we can (and often should) live without, while assigning no value to the resources we all need to survive. This is a deeply thought provoking book about the dramatic changes we must make to save the planet from financial madness – argued with so much humour and humanity that the enormous tasks ahead feel both doable and desirable. This is Raj Patel’s great gift: he makes the most radical ideas seem not only reasonable but inevitable.”

This is an excellent book, that this writer highly recommends for a new look at the world’s problems, one that provides both analysis and solutions in relatively plain language but is well footnoted for those who want the evidence.

Patel also has a blog with interesting short videos at: www.rajpatel.org

Margaret Anne McHugh is the NSGEU’s Education Officer.
NSGEU MEMBERS’ DISCOUNT LIST

With your membership card, you can save lots of money on a variety of items and services across the province

### ACCOMMODATIONS

**Holiday Inn Harbourview**
101 Wyse Road, Dartmouth
(902) 463-1100, 1-888-434-0440
info@hiharbourview.ca
$95 + taxes, includes Internet, parking.

**Citadel Halifax**
1960 Brunswick Street, Halifax
(902) 422-1391
$99 + taxes, includes Internet, parking.

**The Westin Nova Scotian Hotel**
1181 Hollis Street, Halifax
1-877-993-7846
reservations@westin.ns.ca
$99.00 + taxes, includes Internet, parking, downtown shuttle (M-F select times).

**Bridgewater Bogan Villa Inn**
35 High St., Bridgewater
(902) 543-8171 or 1-800-565-8171
10% off regular rates.

**Cape Cod Colony Motel**
234 Water St., Shelburne
(902) 875-3411
10% discount

**Hertz Canada Ltd.**
Dartmouth, Halifax, Bridgewater, Digby, Yarmouth, & Truro; 1-800-263-0600
Gov’t rates or whichever is lowest at time of booking, refer to CDP # 297165

**Midas Muffler Shop**
2662 Robie St., Halifax
(902) 454-7496
10% off Midas in-stock parts (special order parts do not apply).

### DON’T HAVE AN NSGEU MEMBERSHIP CARD?

To get many of the discounts on these pages, you’ll have to present your NSGEU Membership Card. To get a card, or to replace a lost card, call the Labour Resource Centre at (902) 424-4063 or 1-877-556-7438, or email inquiry@nsgeu.ca

### ACCOUNTING/INCOME TAX

**Wagner Accounting Limited, CMA**
1658 Bedford Highway, Bedford
(902) 832-3633, (902) 456-9301 ewagner@ns.aliantzinc.ca
15% off all accounting, income tax preparation with electronic file and all types of bookkeeping services, week-ends, evenings & house calls at no extra fee. NSGEU membership card required.

### ADVERTISING

**Kaso Graphics**
Kentville, (902) 681-1114
15% discount

**CouponNetwork.ca**
(902) 468-1818
sales@couponnetwork.ca
One month free advertising with signing of a six-month contract.

### CAR RENTALS

**Avis Rent-A-Car**
121 Illsley Ave, Unit N, Dartmouth and
1717 Grafton St., Halifax
1-800-879-2847
Please quote discount # C283900.

**Discount Car & Truck**
Halifax, Dartmouth, Truro, New Glasgow
1-888-636-9333
Corporate rate or whichever rate is lowest at time of booking.

**Enterprise Rent-A-Car**
Please visit our website or call for details.
www.enterprise.com
1-800-736-8222.
Please quote discount # T401246

**Hertz Canada Ltd.**
Dartmouth, Halifax, Bridgewater, Digby, Yarmouth, & Truro; 1-800-263-0600
Gov’t rates or whichever is lowest at time of booking, refer to CDP # 297165

### CAR SERVICE

**M & B Transmission**
5560 Cunard St., Halifax
(902) 543-8171 or 1-800-565-8171
10% off regular rates.

**Midas Muffler Shop**
2662 Robie St., Halifax
(902) 454-7496
10% off Midas in-stock parts (special order parts do not apply).

**Mighty Muffler & Brakes**
6 locations in metro
M-F 7:30 - 7:00 Sat. 8:00-3:00; Castrol Oil loyalty card - 5th oil change free; 10% discount on regular priced parts.
### DISCOUNT LIST

**10% discount**

- **Gerry’s Nursery**
  - Centreville, Kings County
  - (902) 678-1255
  - 10% discount

- **Pretty Posies**
  - 8877 Commercial St., New Minas
  - (902) 681-1166
  - 10% discount

### Framing/Printing

- **Atlantic Photo Supply**
  - 5505 Spring Garden Rd., Halifax
  - 423-6724 www.atlanticphotosupply.com
  - 10% discount on photo supplies (not including cameras or other equipment). 25 free 4x6 photos when you sign up for our online print service.

- **Ivan Fraser Studio Custom Framing**
  - Tantallon (902) 823-2083
  - 40% off custom framing. Pickup and delivery in metro.

- **Frame Plus Art**
  - 2705 Agricola St., Halifax, 455-9762; www.frameplusart.ca
  - 20% off framing and plaque mounting

### Furniture and Appliances

- **A.M. Jazey’s Furniture & Appliances**
  - 267 Granville St., Bridgetown
  - (902) 665-4326
  - 20% on all furniture (discounts do not apply to sale items or appliances).

### Health and Wellbeing

- **Aromatherapy**
  - Roberta Austen, Cert. Aromatherapist
  - The Advanced Wellness Centre, 7-1480 Carlton St., Halifax
  - (902) 423-5922
  - 15% discount

- **MacDonnell Pharmacy Ltd**
  - 10024 Grenville St., St. Peters, NS B0E3B0
  - (902) 535-3196
  - Additional supplementary coverage of up to $4 per prescription. You must present your NSGEU card and if applicable your employer drug card(s). In addition, a 10 per cent discount on certain non-sale items will be offered on front-store purchases.

### Financial Services

- **Province House Credit Union**
  - 1724 Granville St., Halifax
  - (902) 424-5712; Preferred rates on mortgages, loans, RRSPs.

### Clothing

- **Mark’s Work Wearhouse**
  - 3773 Windsor St., Halifax
  - (902) 453-1130
  - 15% discount on “Do It Yourself” retail priced parts, excluding oil and antifreeze picked up at the dealership.

- **Boutilier’s Costume Rentals**
  - 211 Windmill Road, Dartmouth, NS
  - (902) 464-3636
  - www.costumesrus.net
  - 10% discount on all costume rental

- **Tandy Leather Factory**
  - 75 Akerley Blvd., Dartmouth
  - (902) 468-3071
  - www.tandyleather.com
  - 10% discount on regular retail prices. Does not include clearance items, leather, or items in the monthly flyer.

### Decorations

- **Acadia Painting & Decorating**
  - 6243 Quinpool Rd., Halifax
  - (902) 423-4915
  - 10% on paints & accessories

- **Jennifer Allan Interiors**
  - 121 Ilsley Ave., Dartmouth
  - (902) 832-2572
  - 10% off all product lines by Jennifer Allan & Acme Exclusive (except wall coverings).

### Home Heating

- **Superline Fuels**
  - 3479 Barrington Street, Halifax
  - (902) 429-0740
  - $0.04 per litre off posted price in effect at the time and place of delivery. Members must contact Superline in order to have the discount applied to their account.

### Home Improvement

- **Bedford Flooring**
  - 477 Cobeguid Rd, Unit 2, Lower Sackville
  - (902) 864-2488
  - Additional 10% discount on best negotiated price on all products.

- **Glidden Paints / Colour Your World**
  - 75 Akerley Blvd, Burnside, 468-3965;
  - 177 Wyse Road, Dartmouth, 463-5222;
  - 5651 Kaye Street, Halifax, 453-2560;
  - Tacoma Drive, Dartmouth, 434-8292;
  - Bayers Lake, Halifax, 445-5267;
  - Bedford Highway, Bedford, 835-1300
  - Sydney, 562-1170
  - www.epaintstore.com
  - NSGEU ID at time of purchase, up to a 40% discount on all ICI Glidden manufactured paint. 20% on all other in-store accessories

- **LumberMart**
  - 751 Herring Cove Rd., Halifax; 15 Wright Ave. Burnside
  - (902) 477-6500
  - Guaranteed lowest price in metro on same/similar product. NSGEU card required.

### Roofmasters

- New roofs, renovations, repairs, cedar shingles
  - 27 Stratford Dr., Cole Harbour
  - (902) 462-0696
  - 10% discount

### Insurance

- **Johnson Insurance**
  - (902) 453-9521, 1-800-561-0561
  - Preferred Service Plan Home-Auto Insurance

- **SNC Insurance**
  - 181 Herring Cove Rd., Halifax
  - (902) 477-2511, 1-800-838-2511
  - sncinsurance.ca
  - Discount for 2 more policies; life insurance coverage at reduced rates.

### Jewelry

- **Sutherland’s Jewellery Limited**
  - 3650 Hammonds Plains Rd, Upper Tantallon
  - (902) 826-7034, (902) 826-9253
  - 20% off original ticketed price, excluding all Kameleon line. NSGEU card required.

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**Continued on the next page**
The workers felt good about what they’d been able to accomplish, but their day was only half done. “We’d made a lot of changes to get the power back on,” he says with a chuckle. “Everything that we’d done to make it work, we had to go back and set right.”

Henderson. “Very physical.”

Within a couple of hours, they’d managed to restore some power to the parts of Dartmouth General that needed it. It hadn’t been easy, and it wasn’t necessarily pretty, but Henderson believes that his familiarity with the buildings was one of the reasons they’d been able to make as much progress as they had so quickly. “It made a huge difference,” he says. “No way a contractor could have come in here and started doing what we were able to,” he says. “They’d have so much to learn before they could even start.”

Henderson and his co-workers had made a good start, but still hadn’t managed to restore power to the boiler. “For a while, it seemed like no matter what we did, we ran into a roadblock.” Then, a stroke of luck. One of the NSP crews discovered an old secondary power line running into the complex – perhaps a forgotten fail-safe, or a line that had simply been left strung up after it had been replaced. Whatever it had been there for originally, on this day it took some of the pressure off Henderson and his co-workers – not all of the power to the buildings had to run right through their work area anymore. And by the early afternoon, heat and power had been completely restored.

The workers felt good about what they’d been able to accomplish, but their day was only half done. “We’d made a lot of changes to get the power back on,” he says with a chuckle. “Everything that we’d done to make it work, we had to go back and set right.”
Once again this year, the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation (NSLC) has been making record profits — profits that go back into our provincial coffers. The crown corporation recorded a net income of $212.6 million for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2010, an increase of seven per cent over the $198.7 million recorded during the fiscal year before. The NSLC has been so successful in fact, that it has offered to assist New Brunswick to modernize its public liquor stores in an efforts to pull them out of the red and into the black.

A big piece of the success story in Nova Scotia is due to the commitment, dedication and skill of the employees in the stores, in the warehouses and in the back offices of the NSLC. Union members, both managers and staff, know that quality of customer service counts to the public.

“Over the years the NSLC has become more modernized and customer friendly. It is more of a shopping experience now with excellent customer service,” says Jim Ross, President of Local 470. “When I started, we had to write a test, but we didn’t have the training they do now in customer service and NSLC products.”

Jim has been working for the NSLC for 26 years, 12 of them in Sydney, just a few blocks from where he grew up.

“It’ll be Christmas coming up and a lot of the guys I grew up with will be coming home,” he says. “This will be their first stop. It’ll be nice to see everyone.”

Beginning in November, the NSLC launched a province-wide program called “We ID” that requires clerks to check the ID of anybody who appears to be younger than 30. It’s an even more safety-conscious program than Check 25 program it replaces.

“Keeping liquor out of the hands of minors has always been a priority. For us, we don’t have anything to gain by selling more liquor. Our responsibility is to the public, not to our pocketbook and that is where we differ from the agency stores, in my opinion,” says Jim.

When asked about what makes him most proud of the work he does, he explained.

“I’m most proud of being part of the union and playing a role in turning the NSLC into a decent place to work with decent pay and benefits for the employees.”

“Last month, we reached a long time goal of mine – to get the casuals into the bargaining unit,” Jim explains. For years the casuals who work at the NSLC were not included in the bargaining unit and were denied the same rights as the permanent employees despite working along side each other daily.

Union initiatives that make the workplace a fairer place for all; NSLC initiatives to ensure staff have opportunities to get training and experience in customer service and liquor products; and the front-line ability to turn this training into top notch service is a big part of the NSLC’s success.
BARGAINING UPDATES: Hard-won deals at St. FX and Cape Breton University

For these members, getting a deal meant sticking together and taking their solidarity to the street

St. Francis Xavier University Local 88
Number of members: 150
Contract expiry date: First Contract
Staff Negotiator: Tina Webber

Proposals were exchanged on May 26, 2010, and early negotiations resulted in agreement on some issues, but broke down over job postings, hours of work, the job evaluation process, and wage increases. Conciliation was held on Sept. 29 and 30 but did not yield agreement. A strike vote was held on Oct. 28 with members voting 80% in favour of strike action to support their demands at the bargaining table. The Union requested that the Conciliator file his report, which he did on Nov. 3, putting the members in a legal strike position on Nov. 19. Almost 100 members staged a lunch-hour information picket at the employer’s main entrance on Nov. 8. The parties returned to the table from Nov. 16 to 18, when a tentative agreement was reached. Members voted 87.5 per cent in favour of acceptance. Highlights include 1 per cent wage increases in each year of a two-year contract as well as lump sums of $250 in each of the two years, and five personal days to be used at any time throughout the year. The Employer also committed to undertake a job evaluation through a joint union-employer committee.
Cape Breton University – MOS Employees
Local 18
Number of members: 14
Contract expiry date: July 31, 2009
Staff Negotiator: Art Beaver

The parties exchanged proposals on March 16, 2010, and negotiations continued throughout the spring, but broke off in early summer, and the NSGEU filed for conciliation. Conciliation was held on Aug. 17 and Sept. 2, and the conciliator filed his report with the Minister of Labour on Sept. 8. The local was in legal strike position as of Sept. 24. Several issues remained outstanding: no discrimination to retire due to age; overtime, vacation, leave for storms, standby and callback, sick leave and wages. The bargaining committee recommended rejection of the employer's final offer, and on Oct. 14, the members voted to strike. They were on strike for a week starting Oct. 25. A tentative agreement was reached on Oct. 30 and members voted overwhelmingly in favour of acceptance. Highlights of the agreement include economic increases of 2.9 per cent effective August 2009; an adjustment of $250 on all rates of pay effective August 2010 (on average equals .6 per cent); additional 1.5 per cent on Aug. 1, 2010, 1 per cent on Aug. 1, 2011; and, effective April 2012, the implementation of a new third pay step on all classifications which equals approximately 2 per cent.

Sherbrooke Restoration Commission Local 50
Number of members: 89
Contract expiry date: First Contract
Staff Negotiator: Art Beaver

Proposals were exchanged on July 6, 2009 and negotiations took place throughout the rest of the year, but broke down on Feb. 3, 2010. Conciliation was held on May 3 and 4, 2010, but the parties failed to reach an agreement. On June 7, the members voted 81 per cent in favour of strike. On July 18, the employer presented a proposal that included annual wage increases of 2 per cent, 1 per cent and 1 per cent as well as an extra 2 per cent for seasonal employees in lieu of benefits. The Employer has provided an actuarial valuation of the pension plan. The bargaining committee proposed some.

PREPARING TO BARGAIN, OR NOTICE TO BARGAIN SERVED

Local 2A – Eastern Mainland Housing Authority (Contract expired March 31, 2010)
Local 18 – Cape Breton University, Teachers (Oct. 31, 2010)
Local 20 – NS Hearing and Speech Centres (March 31, 2010)
Local 22 – IWK Health Care Bargaining Unit (Oct. 31, 2009)
Local 23 – IWK – Office and Clerical Bargaining Unit (Oct. 31, 2009)
Local 25 – Tri County Housing Authority (March 31, 2010)
Local 27 – Evergreen Home for Special Care (Oct. 31, 2010)
Local 28 – South Shore Housing Authority (First Contract)
Local 29 – VON Bedford – Caseload Planners (March 31, 2010)
Local 38 – Northwood Home Care Ltd. (March 31, 2010)
Local 44 – Nova Scotia Business Incorporated (March 31, 2010)
Local 63 – Metro Community Living (Oct. 31, 2010)
Local 64 – Colchester Residential Services (Oct. 31, 2010)
Local 80 – Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA) (March 31, 2010)
Local 86 – Mountain Lea Lodge
Locals 89, 90, 91 – District Health Authorities, Clerical (March 31, 2010)
Local 93, 94, 95 – Health Authorities (March 31, 2010)
Local 267 – NS Community College (March 31, 2010)
Local 470 – NSLC Stores and Warehouse (March 31, 2010)
Local 470E – NSLC Clerical (March 31, 2010)
Local 1670 – NSLC Managers (March 31, 2010)
Local 1995 – Cape Breton Regional Police (December 31, 2010)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21
The process of bargaining new collective agreements for all home support workers represented by NSGEU in Nova Scotia, whose collective agreements expired on March 31, 2010, has begun.

A bargaining convention for NSGEU Home Support Bargaining Committee members was held on Sept. 27, 2010. Committee members reviewed the results of the bargaining input surveys; identified and itemized bargaining priorities; and, began to develop proposals. The Bargaining Committees of the 11 bargaining units have met and begun to develop proposals. NSGEU representatives met with the Chief Negotiators of other Home Support Agencies on Sept. 13 to discuss a provincial bargaining table.

The Union continues to work with Employers to develop a provincial strategy for this current round of negotiations.

A proposal has been sent to all agencies that provides the union's list of common items for provincial bargaining. Once the parties have agreed to the list of common items, bargaining dates will be scheduled.

For the first time, hundreds of NSGEU Home Support workers bargaining as one
changes during conciliation on Aug. 24, but the employer said its July proposal was its final offer. In early November, the Employer requested that the Conciliator file his report, which he did on Nov. 22. The parties met with the Conciliator on Nov. 30 and a tentative agreement was reached. The agreement was ratified by the members (91 per cent voted in favour) on Dec. 13.

CDHA – Healthcare Bargaining Unit, Local 42
Number of members: 3,889
Contract expiry date: October 31, 2009
Staff Negotiators: Robin MacLean & Neil McNeil

After exchanging proposals in the summer, negotiations between the Local 42 bargaining committee and the Capital District Health Authority resumed in late September with four days of meetings at the Lord Nelson Hotel in Halifax.

For the first three days, considerable progress was made dealing with non-monetary issues. Agreement was reached on a number of articles that will improve the language of the collective agreement.

Monetary issues were dealt with on the fourth day. The employer did not table a wage proposal, but there was a great deal of discussion between the parties on the wage proposal tabled by the bargaining committee. As of press time, the negotiations were scheduled Dec. 15 and 16.

CDHA – Support Services Bargaining Unit, Local 19
Number of members: 1,221
Contract expiry date: October 31, 2009
Staff Negotiators: Robin MacLean & Neil McNeil

The bargaining committee has been reviewing members’ input surveys and developing proposals, and is in the process of setting dates for the exchange of proposals and the negotiations.

CDHA – Nurses Bargaining Unit, Local 97
Number of members: 2,568
Contract expiry date: October 31, 2009
Staff Negotiators: Robin MacLean & Neil McNeil

Proposals were exchanged on June 30, 2010. Negotiations continued in October and November. An information meeting was held Nov. 29. Some non-monetary items have been agreed. The union has tabled a wage proposal of four per cent in each year of a three-year agreement. This proposal would make Local 97 the highest-paid in Atlantic Canada. Major outstanding items for the members include: increases to shift and weekend premiums, the long service increment, the late career nurse retention bonus, job security, and vacation. There are also outstanding issues concerning nurses specifically, such as charge nurse hiring, in charge pay, and preceptoring/mentoring. The employer’s only major proposal concerns Article 35 – Reassignment. Their proposal is to add language to allow them to reassign nurses on short notice. The bargaining committee is considering the proposal. The Employer has undertaken to respond to the Union’s wage proposal and other items when we return to the table on Jan. 20 and 21, 2011.

CDHA – Office & Clerical Bargaining Unit, Local 246
Number of members: 1,557
Contract expiry date: October 31, 2009
Staff Negotiators: Ann Barrett

Several meetings to prepare have been held. At press time, another prep meeting was scheduled for Dec. 19.

Workers Compensation Board, Local 55
Number of members: 343
Contract expiry date: December 31, 2009
Staff Negotiator: Lorna Blair

The bargaining input survey is complete, and the bargaining committee is in the process of developing proposals. Several prep dates were held through November and December, and are scheduled to resume January 12, 24, 25, Feb. 2 & 3, and March 9 & 11, 2011.

Dalhousie University, Local 77
Number of members: 838
Contract expiry date: June 30, 2010
Staff Negotiator: Tina Webber

The parties exchanged proposals on Nov. 24, 2010. Negotiations took place on Nov. 26 and Dec. 8 and at press time were scheduled to continue on Dec. 15 and 21.

EDC (Agricultural College), Local 3
Number of members: 68
Contract expiry date: March 31, 2008
Staff Negotiator: Grant Vaughan

Proposals were exchanged in June 2008, and negotiations were held throughout 2008, 2009 and 2010 (including a hearing before the Civil Service Employee Relations Board) but have now been referred to interest arbitration. The major issue is parity with universities. At press time, the parties were working with the Civil Service Employee Relations Board set up the Interest Arbitration Board.

L’Universite Sainte-Anne, Local 45
Number of members: 60
Contract expiry date: June 30, 2010
Staff Negotiator: Tina Webber

The bargaining committee presented proposals to the Employer on Sept. 14, 2010. Negotiations were held on Sept. 23 and 24
BARGAINING

CONTINUED FROM THE PREVIOUS PAGE
and Oct. 12. The Employer proposed wage increases that resulted in one per cent in each year of a three-year agreement. On Oct. 12, 2010 the Union advised the Employer that it would be applying for the services of a Conciliation Officer. On Dec. 9, during the first of two days scheduled for conciliation, a tentative agreement was reached. At press time, the members were scheduled to vote on the agreement on Dec. 15.

Nova Scotia Community College – Support Staff, Local 267
Number of members: 596
Contract expiry date: March 31, 2010
Staff Negotiator: Grant Vaughan
The parties met and exchanged proposals on Oct. 14 and a day of bargaining was held Nov. 4. Negotiations are scheduled to continue on January 11, 12, 13, 25, 26 and 27, 2011.

Annapolis Valley Regional School Board Local 73
Number of Members: 410
Contract expiry date: March 31, 2009
Staff Negotiator: Lorna Blair
Proposals were exchanged in April 2009. Several days of negotiations took place throughout 2009. Talks broke down in January 2010 and the union was considering filing for conciliation; however, another meeting was held on March 4. Talks continued on Nov. 25 and a tentative agreement was reached. Highlights included an economic increase of 2.9% on April 1, 2009 and increases of 1% on April 1 in each of 2010 and 2011. Other improvements include an increase in the cost sharing of benefits by the Employer from 50% to 65%, vacation pay of 8% after 20 years of service and a new classification of Student Support Worker 1. The agreement was ratified by 94 per cent at a vote on Dec. 11.

Chignecto Central Regional School Board Local 71
Number of members: 674
Contract expiry date: June 30, 2010
Staff Negotiators: Lorna Blair
Bargaining input survey is complete. The Negotiator is in the process of developing proposals with the Bargaining Committee. Negotiations are scheduled to be held on January 13, 14, 24, 27 & 28, 2011.

South Shore Regional School Board Local 70
Number of members: 72
Contract expiry date: March 31, 2009
Staff Negotiator: Lorna Blair
Proposals were exchanged April 2009. A tentative agreement was reached Nov. 5, 2010. The tentative agreement is for a three-year period and provides for economic increases of 2.9 per cent, 1 per cent and 1 per cent. The Employer’s share of the benefit plans will increase to 65 per cent, from the previous 55, retroactive to April 1, 2009. Members with 30 years of service will receive additional vacation entitlement. Members voted 100 per cent in favour of acceptance at the ratification vote held on Dec. 1.

Tri-County Regional School Board Local 74
Number of members: 51
Contract expiry date: December 31, 2009
Staff Negotiator: Lorna Blair
Negotiations took place over the last year and the parties were able to achieve a tentative agreement. The agreement will provide for a three-year contract with economic increases of 2.9 per cent, 1 per cent and 1 per cent. The cost sharing of benefits will be 65/35 employer/employee. As well, an additional week of vacation time after 28 years and an increase in the protective-clothing allowance have been achieved. The agreement was ratified by members during a vote on Dec. 8.

Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial Local 72
Number of members: 121
Contract expiry date: March 31, 2010
Staff Negotiator: Lorna Blair
Negotiations commenced on November 29 and a tentative agreement was reached on November 30, 2010. A ratification vote is to be scheduled.
Grievance Report

CDHA MEMBERS GET THE MEAL ALLOWANCE TO WHICH THEY’VE BEEN ENTITLED ALL ALONG

Arbitrator rebukes managers for an overly literal interpretation of the collective agreement.

For 13 tradesmen in Local 19 who help keep a variety of CDHA buildings safe and maintained, a recent grievance decision means that they’ll finally be compensated for a meal allowance if they’re on the road during their lunch.

It’s a ruling that could have implications for any CDHA employee who is required to travel between sites during their workday.

Each of the 13 workers usually worked in one particular building, but were often called to help at other sites and sometimes found themselves on the road during their lunch.

Their Collective Agreement deals with lunch allowances on Page 62 in Article 28.03 (b): “In the event the employee’s work requires her to be beyond sixteen (16) kilometre radius of the Employer’s premises during the employee’s workday.

The arbitrator ruled in the Union’s favour. He added: “It would be otherwise, of course, if the parties had used the model of clarity, I find that its meaning is reasonably clear,” wrote Bruce Outhouse.

“In particular, I find that the words ‘Employer’s premises’ were intended to be used in the singular sense rather than the plural.”

He added: “It would be otherwise, of course, if the parties had used the phrase ‘beyond a 16 kilometer radius of any of the Employer’s premises’, but they did not.”

The arbitrator ruled that the 13 tradesmen should from now on be able to recover eligible meal allowances, and that they should also be entitled to claim meal allowances going back to 25 days before the grievance was filed in 2007 (which is standard practice when awarding remedies).

But most important of all, perhaps, was the acknowledgement that their managers had been misinterpreting the Collective Agreement, even as some of their fellow managers were doing the right thing.

STATUS OF ON-GOING GRIEVANCES

NSGEU staff spend a significant amount of their time working to help members in bargaining. Helping members through the grievance procedure is another major part of their work. As of November, the union was handling 830 active grievances at various stages in the process up to and including arbitration. Of those, 79 revolved around an employee’s termination. Since May 2009, 542 new grievances have been filed, 505 of which have been concluded.

Canadian Association for Community Living,
Antigonish Branch Local 61
Number of members: 22
Contract expiry date: First Contract
Staff Negotiator: Jo-Ann Bailey

The parties met on January 26, 2010 to exchange proposals. Negotiations have continued throughout the year. Major issues include scheduling, assignment of extra shifts and grandfathering of part time employees at pro-rated full-time benefits. The union is applying for conciliation.

Chisholm Youth Services Local 62
Number of members: 16
Contract expiry date: March 31, 2009
Staff Negotiator: Ann Barrett

Proposals were exchanged in June 2009. A new union Negotiator resulted in some delays. The parties held a brief meeting late in April 2010. The employer requested the assistance of a conciliation officer but the parties later resumed attempts to achieve a tentative agreement without the Conciliator. A meeting was held on Sept. 30 and a proposal for the employer’s consideration was prepared. Negotiations continued on Nov. 10. At press time, the Union is awaiting a written monetary package from the employer.

Regional Residential Services Society Local 66
Number of members: 303
Contract expiry date: March 31, 2009
Staff Negotiator: Ann Barrett

Proposals were exchanged on Sept. 16, 2010 and negotiations were held throughout the fall and early winter. A tentative agreement was reached on Dec. 3. At press time, members were scheduled to vote on the agreement on Dec. 16 and 17.

Cobequid Housing Authority, Local 26
Number of members: 37
Contract expiry date: March 31, 2010
Staff Negotiator: Grant Vaughan

At press time, the parties were scheduled to exchange proposals on Dec. 13, 2010.

Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority
Local 47
Number of members: 35
Contract expiry date: First Contract
Staff Negotiator: Grant Vaughan

Proposals were exchanged in December 2009. The employer has clearly communicated that their current mandate will not allow them to go beyond economic increases of 1 per cent. Negotiations broke down and NSGEU filed for conciliation April 12, 2010. The parties met on Nov. 15 and 19. Further dates are to be scheduled. Major issue is parity with other unionized Housing authorities.
Has one of your co-workers left their job for any reason and not been replaced? If so, we need to know.

Remember: We need your information, not your name.

In April, 2010, the provincial government announced it was planning to cut the civil service by 10% by the end of 2013. This translates to approximately 1200 fewer workers in the civil service. Based on this estimate, we can assume that the government will be looking to see nearly 300 fewer employees by the end of this year.

We know the provincial civil service is already lean and that many of you have enormous amounts of work that you are not able to get done in the run of a day.

We know the services you provide are important to you and the public you support.

We know these reductions in staff will just make it worse. We need to fight these reductions. To do that, we need to know where they are happening.

Don’t be left behind

Right now the NSGEU has no way of knowing where these reductions will be made. We do not know which departments are being hit hardest or which regions are feeling them the most – unless you tell us. We do not receive this information from the employer.

We want your information not your name.

In your workplace, has a co-worker left for any reason and not been replaced in the last two years?

So far, we’ve heard from hundreds of you about unfilled vacancies. But we need to hear from more of you.

With this information, we will be better able to help you protect the important services you provide.

www.nsgeu.ca/cutstoppers