

Inside: Members of Local 82 Rally Against Cuts and Privatization. Page 7

Local President Sends Out a Message of Solidarity.

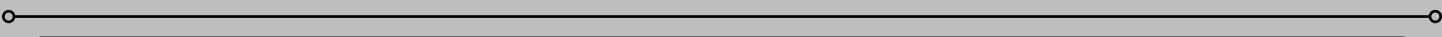


Also Inside: Photos from the Annual NSGEU Family Picnic



NSGEU THE 20-20 STAND

SUMMER 2015





President Jessome hands out prizes to members' children during the annual family picnic.

Dear members,

After the very difficult fall and winter we just weathered, I certainly hope you have had the chance to spend some quality time with your family and friends this summer.

Here at the NSGEU, staff are preparing for what promises to be a very difficult round of bargaining with this Liberal government, which has very publicly stated they plan to freeze wages, target the public sector's long-service award, and roll back job security protections.

So far, the Liberals have made major cuts to our public services.

They started in March with cuts to our child welfare services, closing two offices and issuing layoff notices to 15 members, and eliminating vacant and managerial positions within the department. More recently, the Department of Community Services announced they were closing Dayspring, a small residential facility in Bridgewater, and laying off all the members who work there.

The government then started to slash away in our provincial parks and visitor information centres (VICs). They closed the Pictou and Digby centres, claiming there was no demand for the service, and laid off those employees, many of whom are still awaiting placement. Shortly after, the government funded a private-sector group to take over the Pictou VIC and provided funding for Bay Ferries to replace a union member on the ferry from Digby to St. John. In our parks, approximately 30 seasonal workers were laid off as government decided to pay for an automated, Ontario-based company to take reservations by telephone.

Forty-one members working in the Department of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism were also laid off when their department was suddenly eliminated on budget day. Almost all of those workers have been placed or have taken severance. This Department has been replaced by the much

smaller Department of Business, where every employee is excluded from belonging to the union. We are challenging these exclusions.

On the educational front, library staff working in the Chignecto Central Regional School Board once again narrowly escaped the threat of their jobs being eliminated as their school board struggled with a decision to close schools or keep staff, as a result of reduced funding from the government. And at NSCAD, another 16 Administrative and Custodial workers lost their jobs, as their Administration followed the government's mandate to balance their budget at any cost.

To top it all off, the Liberals have slashed funding for mental health and long-term care, virtually frozen funding for health care and home care services, and turned their backs on critical community groups, like the CNIB.

Their mantra has been: "The cupboards are bare."

We beg to differ. Our public coffers are not in any worse shape than they have been for any previous government, and in fact, our members' taxes represent a significant contribution to those coffers. More importantly, the public services you deliver are critical to our province.

The fact is, Nova Scotians pay their taxes and deserve to get quality public services in return. This government wasn't elected to dismantle the important public services families count on every day.

When a government decides to privatize, it hands off its responsibility for ensuring good services, and there is no accountability to citizens. The corporations who get these contracts answer first and foremost to their shareholders (think Nova Scotia Power).

In reality, privatization means cuts to services, because in order to make profits, corporations will cut jobs, reduce services and cut corners. Privatization also means people will pay more, through rate hikes, user fees and extra charges. And these corporations often are based out of other provinces – even other countries – which means they take their profits out of Nova Scotia instead of investing back into our communities.

And privatization will hit our smaller communities even harder, with service cuts, fewer jobs and less money for local businesses in those communities.

This government needs to focus on creating new jobs, and stop attacking people who already have jobs.

Your Union is ready to remind the Liberals about the value of our public services and the people like you, who deliver them, when we head to the bargaining table (See page 4).

Joan Jessome, **President, NSGEU**

THE STAND

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together FAIRNESS WORKS

The Union Stand is proudly produced by NSGEU with the help of members of the Unifor Union of Canada in Local 165.



Face painting at the Family Picnic on July 11, 2015.

CONNECT WITH US!

We want to hear from our members. If you have thoughts on this issue of The Stand, or ongoing union issues, send us your feedback! You can email us at inquiry@nsgeu.ca or connect with us:

facebook.com/NSGEU

@NSGEU @PrezJoan

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NSGEU TWEETS

Tony Tracy (@Tony_Tracy)
Had a great time presenting today on mental health at the @NSGEU Bullyfree Workplaces conference. Excellent group! #thanks

Nora Smith (@sminor00)
@NSGEU great day for fun day at Oakfield Park

Maureen MacDonald(@maureenmla)
When liberals tender home care services this fall will they be limiting submissions to NS non profits? #nspoli @CUPENovaScotia @NSGEU

Bill Zebedee (@Bill_Zebedee)
Jade Peak #SUNSCAD, Christina Warren @NSGEU Local 82 & Alvin Comiter #FUNSCAD in solidarity against @NSCADUniversity

Dave Hansen (@Davhansen2163)
@bsichel @Tony_Tracy @NS_nurses @NSGEU All Nurses need to speak up. We need them, but system does not support them. Know Nurses? Thank them!

Bargaining: A look ahead



Meeting of the Bargaining Unit Negotiating Council for the Civil Service in June, 2015.

Many contracts now open, NSGEU staff and bargaining committees prepare for tough round of negotiations ahead.

The NSGEU represents almost 30,000 members working in an incredibly wide variety of sectors and settings: from government and education to acute and community health care. These workers belong to 99 separate locals, which are all governed by their own collective agreement, or contract. Currently, more than three quarters of those collective agreements are "open," which means that they need to be renegotiated (it's important to note that while a contract is "open," your rights and benefits remain in place until a new agreement is reached).

The Liberal government has already intervened during our negotiations for home support workers and registered nurses last year, and has strongly hinted that they will be aiming for wage freezes and possible legislation that would diminish our members' job security and benefits. So, we fully expect the next round of bargaining will be an arduous task.

But we are no strangers to bargaining with difficult governments, and are preparing for some tough rounds at the bargaining table, with a team of skilled negotiators on-staff to assist our bargaining committees.

Here is where we are with bargaining in our various sectors:

CIVIL SERVICE

On May 8th, members of the Bargaining Unit Negotiating Council (BUNC) met to begin discussions surrounding upcoming bargaining issues. They spent a lot of time talking about recent cuts and layoffs that have taken place throughout the province, the value of their current layoff provisions, and the contracting out of services.

Members are quite concerned about the next round of negotiations with this government, especially since they have indicated they are considering legislating away the public service award, removing an important job security provision (the "Memorandum of Agreement #2"), and bringing in wage restraint, and possibly even wage freezes.

Bargaining surveys have been completed and BUNC met at the NSGEU office last fall to discuss key issues. The Union Negotiating Committee (UNC) met with staff over the winter for initial discussions, and we are now working with the employer to set dates to exchange bargaining proposals.

ACUTE HEALTH CARE

Acute Healthcare Bargaining unit members at NSGEU spent the last year and a half battling the McNeil government's various forms of legislation including Bill 37, which imposed Essential Services requirements upon Acute Healthcare workers and Bill 1, which attempted to force 9,000 health care workers out of the NSGEU and into another union.

While court challenges on Bill 37 remain to be fought, the union was very successful in retaining its membership in the face of Bill 1. This was thanks in large part to decisions made by arbitrator James Dorsey. Mr. Dorsey recognized the true intent of Bill 1 was to weaken NSGEU, and he made it impossible for the government to accomplish its objective. In the end, all acute health care workers were reorganized into four bargaining councils: Administrative Professional, Nursing, Health Care, and Support Services. Each of these councils will bargain their respective collective agreements for all 25,000 workers across the province.

Since the Dorsey decision and the subsequent creation of the Councils, the four involved unions (NSGEU, CUPE, Unifor and NSNU) have met on more than ten occasions in an effort to prepare for bargaining a single Collective Agreement. These discussions and meetings will continue throughout the summer and early fall.

In the meantime, the NSGEU has elected its representatives to each of the four Bargaining Committees. Those representatives will meet again in September to prepare proposals based on the work now being undertaken by union staff.

While an enormous amount of work lies ahead for each of the bargaining committees, the representatives seemed ready to take on the challenge. The bargaining committees will begin meeting on September 21st and 22nd for training and to prepare bargaining surveys.

Once proposals are formed, they will be brought to each of the individual Bargaining Councils, who will discuss them and prepare final proposals for bargaining.

At the same time, the Councils in each of the four Bargaining Units must begin Essential Services negotiations, as required by government's own legislation: Bill 37.

The Councils' Essential Services Committees met with the employer on July 8th. During that meeting, the union representatives proposed beginning discussions and negotiations on the framework agreements related to Essential Services. These framework agreements form the rules in the event a strike should take place. For example: the framework agreements would determine how disputes are resolved; what would happen if staffing levels are too high or too low; what rights union members who remain at work would have under the collective agreements; and so on. During this meeting, the employer indicated it was not yet ready to present a staffing plan for each of the four Bargaining Units across the province in the event of a strike, and asked the unions to be patient as it prepared that work.

It is also clear from public announcements by the Premier and other government officials that the Province will

attempt to get rid of key collective agreement provisions, including freezing retirement allowances and wages, during this next round of bargaining. It is quite likely, given their track record, that this government will legislate these issues rather than attempt to fairly negotiate them at the bargaining table. If that happens, it will likely take place in the late fall.

COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE (includes Home Support, Long Term Care Facilities, Group/Small Options Homes):

Many of our group homes, home support and long-term care contracts are also "open," and while staff and bargaining committees have come together to prepare for bargaining, we are faced with developing essential service plans for each, as per the Liberal government's Bill 37.

Bill 37 not only affects workers in the acute health care sector, but those working in long-term care, residential care facilities, adult residential centres, group homes, EHS communications/dispatch, ambulance services, home support, and child protection/child residential services.

Similar to the work that must be done in the acute health care sector, the union must work with each of the employers to negotiate Essential Service staffing levels, which would determine what will happen in the event bargaining breaks down and we are forced into a strike position: we would need to determine how disputes are resolved during a strike; what would happen if staffing levels are too high or too low; what rights union members who remain at work would have under the collective agreements; and so on.

Bargaining committees have been elected for each local in Home Support, Long Term Care and Group Homes. In the early fall, the bargaining committees for each group will come together at the NSGEU office for bargaining strategy sessions as follows:

- Home Support: September 14, 2015
- Long-Term Care: September 15, 2015
- Group Homes: September 16, 2015

At the strategy sessions, the bargaining committees will discuss current issues in their locals and design bargaining input surveys. Afterwards, bargaining input surveys will be sent to all members in the sector and the bargaining committees will begin preparations to go to the bargaining table with their employers.

Continued on page 6

Bargaining: (continued from page 5)



Colin Sutton, President Local 79; Christine Warren, President Local 82; Robin MacLean, NSGEU Executive Director, and Ray Larkin, NSGEU Legal Counsel appeared before the Law Amendments Committee with objections to Bill 100.

EDUCATION

(Schools, Universities, NSCC):

In late April, the Liberal government passed Bill 100, *The Universities Accountability and Sustainability Act*. This piece of legislation severely restricts the rights of unions (and their members) working in post-secondary education, by allowing university administrators to declare financial emergency and nullify the respective union's ability to bargain collectively or to strike.

Here's how it works: a university's Board of Governors would notify the government that they have a "significant operating deficiency," which may initiate a "revitalization planning process." Once that process has been initiated, all unionized workers at that institution would be banned from striking for one year.

This type of legislation is the first of its kind in the country, and has been soundly criticized by Opposition parties, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), and involved unions. The NSGEU was successful, along with other unions, in achieving some amendments to Bill 100. These amendments go towards mitigating the worst effects of the legislation.

So far, in 2015, new tentative collective agreements have been ratified by Local 92 (Dalhousie University/Agricultural Campus) and Local 99 (Dalhousie University Trades/Occupational Support). The Local 77 (Dalhousie University Administrative Professional, Library & IT) bargaining committee is close to achieving a tentative agreement.

Bargaining is already underway for Local 88 (St. FX) and preparations have started for Local 79 (SMU) and Local 81 (MSVU). Local 82 (NSCAD) will begin bargaining in 2016.

Preparations for bargaining for Local 267 (NSCC) will likely begin once NSGEU ascertains the landscape for Civil Service and Post-Secondary bargaining.

Collective agreements for most NSGEU school board locals

expired in the spring of 2015 (Local 71 – CCRSB; Local 70 – SSRSB; Local 72 – CSAP; Local 73 – AVRSB; Local 74 – TCRSB). At the school board locals' bargaining strategy session, which was held in January 2015, the bargaining committees for the respective locals developed bargaining input surveys. The surveys have been sent to the members, reviewed and analyzed, and will guide the bargaining committees in their preparations for bargaining, which will start this fall.

The collective agreement of Local 53 (HRSB) does not expire until September 2016, so bargaining will not start for that Local for another 15 months at least.

The NSGEU represents members who work for most school boards in Nova Scotia, in a variety of occupations, including Administrative Assistants, Education Assistants, Library and IT employees, as well as Student Support Workers. The NSGEU also represents members who work as school bus drivers and are employed by Stock Transportation, which has the contract for school busing for the HRSB and the CSAP. The collective agreements for these locals expire in 2016.

Local 80 (APSEA) is currently negotiating for the renewal of their collective agreement. Talks will continue this summer and hopefully a tentative agreement will be reached early in the fall.

OTHER

The NSGEU represents several locals of members who work for employers that were former divisions of the provincial government (for example, Local 46 – Property Valuation Services Corporation; Local 44 – Nova Scotia Business Inc.; and Local 48 – the Pensions Services Corporation), as well as the Workers' Compensation Board of N.S. (Local 55).

While Local 48 concluded its collective agreement in late 2014, the other locals will begin preparation for bargaining in the fall of 2015. ■

NSGEU Local 82, NSCAD, protests layoffs and budget cuts!



On June 17, six administrative and nine custodial workers many of whom have worked for NSCAD for over 20 years learned they were losing their jobs.

The NSCAD Administration, in an attempt to trim their budget, cut administrative supports for their faculty and students and will be contracting out custodial work to a private company.

These cuts came out of the blue. There was no way to anticipate support staff numbers could get any lower. Staffing has been paying the price ever since the Administration overextended themselves in building acquisitions capital expansion from 2002 – 2006.

How could the university function? That was our question. The administrative staff perform so many critical functions for the day-to-day operations of the facility and are the only support for students and faculty. The idea they could eliminate these staff members was jaw dropping.

Administrative staff members support the students and faculty each day by arranging studio bookings, organizing purchase orders, managing the departmental budget, booking models for drawing classes, and coordinating room bookings. They must be on-hand to help solve a variety of administrative/studio problems that students encounter throughout the day.

The affected custodial staff members have worked at the university for up to 24 years. The custodial staff know the



complexities of working around artists in the maze-like downtown campus. They are trusted individuals, which is necessary in this tight knit artistic community. An art and design university is not an environment conducive to contract custodial work with its characteristic high turnover rates.

After the initial shock, a lunchtime rally was organized for Thursday, June 25 and speakers were organized. President Jessome was away at a NUPGE conference but insisted the rally take place sooner rather than later.

The small membership of the NSCAD local was reeling from the news that between 40 and 50% of their bargaining unit was being lost. Rick Clarke from the Federation of Labour came to speak at the rally along with Alvin Comiter, President of the Faculty Union of Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (FUNSCAD), Jade Peek, VP External of the Student Union of Nova Scotia

Continued from page 7

College of Art and Design (SUNSCAD), and Michaela Sam, Chairperson, for the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) – Nova Scotia. President of Local 82, Christina Warren, gave a very inspirational speech about solidarity and hope.

The speeches called on NSCAD to reverse their decision to cut and contract out support services - the backbone of the institution. The student leadership told the crown that students need these supports and good jobs when they graduate. It was an inspiring rally.

However, the climate of austerity championed by this Liberal government is leading universities to cut staff and privatize services. "This government has clearly signaled to university administration with Bill 100: Universities Accountability and Sustainability Act that they must put their budget and bottom line before anything else. They've essentially handed them a baseball bat, and the administration is taking a swing at these workers," President Jessome said in a press release. The Bill requires universities with a "significant operating deficit" to initiate a restructuring process in order to continue to receive government funding that can include the suspension of collective bargaining, workers' rights, the curtailing of academic freedoms.

Demonstrations were held against the Bill in April and May and representatives from labour, NSGEU and other Faculty Associations spoke against it at the Law Amendments Committee Hearing on April 30.

In other university bargaining news: Negotiations with Saint Mary's University are ongoing and have also involved cuts to positions. We have reached a tentative agreement with our members who work at Dalhousie in Local 99 – Operational Support and Local 77 - Dalhousie Staff Association. Negotiations for Local 88 - St. F.X. University are ongoing. ■

School Board Occupational Council Meeting

On Friday, June 12, members of the School Board Occupational Council came together at the NSGEU to discuss a variety of issues in their workplaces. Our members work in offices and schools in six different School Boards: Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial (CSAP); Annapolis Valley Regional (AVRSB); South Shore Regional (SSRSB); Tri-County Regional (TCRSB); Chignecto-Central Regional (CCRSB); and Halifax Regional (HRSB). They are Administrative Professionals, Educational Assistants, School Support Workers, IT support, library staff, bus

drivers and monitors, and more.

Council members reported on issues facing the membership including health & safety, bargaining, and workload. They also shared concerns about upcoming school board budget reductions and discussed possible implications on the important services they provide in libraries, classrooms, school, and board offices.

There were many questions from members working in IT as government is bringing these members into the

Pride



Members of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour, Anti-Racism Human Rights Committee decorated the float for the Halifax Pride parade on July 25. The rain stopped just in time and the streets were lined with parade goers who celebrated tolerance and respect for LGBTQ plus rights and the rights of all.

There was also a great turnout by labour union affiliates and activists for the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour and Cape Breton District Labour Council's float and contingent at the Pride Parade Day Celebrations in Sydney, Cape Breton on August 8.

It was a great celebration of Pride in Halifax and Sydney! ■



Civil Service this summer as part of a shared services strategy. President Joan Jessome and Employee Relations Officer (ERO) Nicole McKim were at the meeting to give an overview of what is happening in the rest of the union, hear reports from council members, answer questions where possible, and follow up where needed. ■

5th Annual NSGEU Family Picnic!



The Annual Family Picnic is held each year on the second Saturday in July. Circle it on your calendar for 2016! We'll see you again next year!

The annual NSGEU Family picnic was held on July 11, 2015 at Oakfield Park from 12-4 pm. A record number of members, their families and friends attended to enjoy a fun filled sunny afternoon. Everywhere, children's laughter and excitement could be heard. Adults mingled and introduced themselves to one another. A fantastic day for NSGEU!

The bouncy castle and jousting arena were popular as well as the face painting and fish pond. Children participated in the 3-legged races and sack races as well as the hoola hoop game. Children received tickets at these games to be redeemed for prizes to take home. Many stopped by the "Candy Guess" and registered their guess at how many candies filled the huge jar. Winners won Gift Certificates to Chapters.

Adults dropped by the M.A.D.D. (East Hants Chapter) kiosk to chat and try out the vision goggles. Thank you to Patrick Diagle Local 100 for hosting this display.

Door prize tickets were drawn mid afternoon. NSGEU theme prizes went home with 40 members, family and friends.

Special thanks to our volunteers who worked so diligently throughout the afternoon and made our event into such a huge success!

Thank you to all those who attended. Our committee has so much fun planning and participating in this event every year. It is very heartwarming to have so many attend. ■

In Solidarity,

Edie Fraser (Chair) on behalf of NSGEU Social Recreation Committee

North American Occupational Safety & Health Week

On May 4, for the second year in a row, we launched North American Occupational Safety and Health Week (NAOSH) here at the NSGEU in partnership with the Nova Scotia Chapter of the Canadian Society for Safety in Engineering (CSSE). The theme was "Make Safety a Habit for Your Career", and the day offered an opportunity to reflect on, deepen, and strengthen a commitment to reducing the impact of injury and stress in workplaces, communities and homes. The Launch Committee is chaired by NSGEU's Occupational Health & Safety Officer, Paul Cormier.

The conference centre was full - standing room only - and the attendees were interested and engaged in the presentations as the day unfolded. Guest speakers included key leaders in government as well as John Dunsworth, Rear Admiral John F. Newton, Charles Bruce, and more, who spoke about the importance of making health & safety a priority in the workplace. The success of this event shows that there is a continuing and perhaps even rising interest in workplace occupational health & safety by both employees and employers. The event was open to all NSGEU members by registration and was \$10 to attend. Watch your emails for an invitation to next year's launch of NAOSH week. ■

NSGEU Cancer Fund

As a Clinical Social Worker, working in the Nova Scotia Cancer Centre in Halifax, I wanted to provide an update, and a huge 'Thank You' on behalf of all of the members who have thus far been assisted by the NSGEU Cancer Support Fund.

The mainland Nova Scotia portion of the fund (Fund T826) is held by the QEII Health Sciences Centre Foundation, and I am one of the Oncology Social Workers who assists members accessing the fund.

The fund was created by the NSGEU Women's Issues Committee in 2011. The women initially approached me about creating a fund to assist women with breast cancer, but through our conversation they quickly realized the financial impact of cancer is equally devastating to individuals and families coping with all forms of this disease. After I described the limited direct financial assistance available from provincial, community and private resources they decided the NSGEU Cancer Support Fund would be inclusive, for members diagnosed with any type of cancer.

The fund may be accessed to assist a member, their spouse or partner, or their child or parent (by blood, adoption or marriage) who is diagnosed with cancer. The fund provides up to \$200 in financial assistance per individual with cancer.

Words are not adequate to express enough gratitude to all who have contributed to the fund through fundraising initiatives and personal donations. Since the development of the Fund, 105 individuals facing cancer have been assisted with a grand total of \$20,842.83.

Combined, 56 different Locals were represented, those seeking assistance from the fund ranged from members who themselves were experiencing cancer (66), to members whose spouses were experiencing cancer (13), to members whose children were experiencing cancer (7), and members whose parent was experiencing cancer (19). The types of cancer represented were many. From breast and prostate cancer to brain tumors and colon cancers, head and neck cancers to gynecological cancers, sarcomas and hematological cancers and more.

The assistance was requested to cover many costs, including: Travel expenses (the majority of requests), hospital parking fees, utility bills, rent, ostomy supplies, nutrition supplements (Boost and Ensure), groceries, ambulance bills, medication, tattooing for breast reconstruction (nipple tattoos), wigs, Naturopaths/Naturopathic treatments, home modifications (bathroom grab bars etc.), and health care plan premiums.

The December 2014 statement from the QEII Foundation Office, showed a healthy balance of \$8014.74

The fund continues to be a much needed resource as there

are very few programs offering direct financial assistance to individuals facing this often financially devastating disease. I am privileged to be able to assist members accessing the fund. I see the tears of gratitude and relief and receive the thanks, thanks that is meant for all who have contributed to this fund.

So, on behalf of all who have been supported thus far with the fund, Thank You to the NSGEU membership who continue to do an incredible job raising funds and offering support to our brothers and sisters in need. ■

In Solidarity,

Sincerely,

Alyson Currie, BSW MSW RSW

Clinical Social Worker, Local 42, Nova Scotia Cancer Centre

To access this fund call the Nova Scotia Cancer Centre Social Worker at 902-473-6000.

NSGEU
NOVA SCOTIA GOVERNMENT & GENERAL EMPLOYEES UNION

Cancer Support Fund

A fund created for members of the NSGEU or their immediate family who is diagnosed with cancer and who is in need of financial assistance.

The Nova Scotia Legislature: Our house, their Rules?

During the last provincial election campaign in September In 2013, then Liberal Leader Stephen McNeil promised to make Nova Scotia "the most open and transparent province in Canada". Are we any closer to this desired state a year and a half later? If anything, I would argue we have moved backwards, rather than forwards, towards that goal.

I have been in and around the Legislature for over 30 years, including 19 years as a staff person with the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union. As a result, I have spent a fair amount of time at the Nova Scotia Legislature during the past year during the government's introduction and handling of Bills 30 and 37 to impose essential services legislation on all health care and community service workers, and of Bill 1 to dictate a new bargaining structure and union representation system under a new provincial health authority.

As disturbing as those three government bills were, I'd like to focus on how the Nova Scotia Legislature has been operating. For ordinary citizens who want to attend and participate in proceedings at this venerable institution, it has been a nightmare.

To illustrate, there are more security guards and police officers than ever before and present in every room in the Legislature. There are more passes required which have to be constantly changed depending on where you go.

All bags have to be checked in with an identification tag. You have to leave a piece of photo ID at the commissionaire's desk once you are issued a pass. Cell phone use is not permitted anywhere in any of the main meeting rooms.

The situation is even more controlling if you want to participate in the Law Amendments Committee hearings to present your views on a specific piece of government legislation. There is very little advance notice given for these Committee hearings. This is unlike the practice for other Standing Committees of the Legislature, which generally set agendas weeks in advance.

Interested presenters are often given less than 24 hours' notice of when they come to make a presentation. When they arrive, they have to get a pass as a presenter and another pass if they want to observe. When they finally get to the Red Chamber where the Committee is meeting, they also often find they have to wait literally hours before being able to speak. When they get to speak, they only have 10 minutes to speak and answer any questions from Committee members if they are speaking as individuals, or 15 minutes to speak and answer any questions if they are representing an organization.

To make matters worse, no Hansard written record is publicly available and posted unlike almost every other



Standing Committee of the Legislature. No photos or video recording is allowed other than for established media outlets, even though this is supposed to be a public hearing process. Worse still, at the Law Amendments Committee hearing on March 30, the Chairperson went out of her way to state that no tweeting of any part of the proceedings is allowed.

Furthermore, there are "Special Procedures" found on the Legislature's website, which are to be followed when the House is sitting. This includes the broad, sweeping provision of "You are to comply with all security measures in place at the House of Assembly and with any direction from security personnel or Assembly staff". In other words, any ad-hoc, arbitrary restrictions may be applied without warning at any time.

At the same time, I understand the need to ensure the safety and security of MLAs, staff and members of the public, as the government claims. However, these wide-ranging

measures for the Legislature in general and for the Law Amendments Committee in particular, clearly seem more designed to actively discourage and prevent people from coming to the Legislature and meeting with MLAs. In case you needed more examples, remember what happened on this year's budget day: the day when our government tells us how they will spend our money, and those wanting to be in the gallery or just respond to the budget in the media scrum were escorted out of the lobby, apparently because of fire safety rules. What is going on?

In my view, this situation is a long way from being "the most open and transparent province in Canada." The whole security system at the Legislature needs to be reviewed in order to ensure the broadest public participation possible. This is the people's house; there is no us and them. They represent us. ■

Ian Johnson, Servicing Coordinator/Policy Analyst

Are you planning to vote in the upcoming Federal Election on October 19, 2015?

If you're not, let me try to convince you why your vote matters

First, I need to explain, in case you're not aware, that the NSGEU is a non-partisan union. In accordance with our constitution, we are not allowed to support, endorse or give donations to any political party. Our NSGEU Constitution reads:

ARTICLE 12 - POLITICAL ACTION

Section 12.1 - Program

12.1.1 On the recommendation of the President, the Board may authorize a Political Action Program to promote the interests of the members in the political process and to oppose a government or political party which advocates or implements measures harmful to the members. The Political Action Program shall be comprised of all necessary measures, including mounting a campaign of public information to persuade Nova Scotians to oppose unfair and inequitable treatment of public employees

As you have read, we are allowed to campaign against any political party that works against us and both the McNeil government and the Harper government have been relentless in their attacks on labour. Provincially, the McNeil government targeted us, the NSGEU, when they tried to legislate away the vast majority of our health care members with Bill 1.

Federally, Harper's government has gutted the Civil Service and the Department of the Environment, passed Bill C-525, an Act to Amend The Canada Labour Code, that makes it easier to decertify unions at airports, railways, banks, TV and radio stations, marine shippers and other federally-regulated workplaces. They amended the Public Service Labour Relations Act that restricts employees' right to strike and redefines workplace safety repealing provisions that cited perils like environmental hazards as rightful ground for work refusals. They also pushed through Bill C-377, An Act To Amend The Income Tax Act, (a carbon copy of an anti-union Bill by George Bush's Republicans in 2003) which compels unions to publish confidential data on government website. These are only a few of a long list. The entire labour movement across this country is rallying to get rid of Harper and there are campaigns going on at every level of the labour movement.



Our very own National Union (NUPGE) has developed a few different national campaigns including All Together Now, a campaign for everyone (we are the 99%). As we close in on the Federal election, they have developed materials that outline the record of Stephen Harper's Conservatives over the last three terms. One of the best publications I've seen explaining how we got where we are and the ugly truths about what the Harper government has done is in a booklet published by NUPGE called "Harper Casebook: We're No Dummies" and you can download a copy at http://nupge.ca/sites/nupge.ca/files/documents/harper_casebook_web.pdf

This booklet is "in your face with the facts" and is not for the weak of heart; but it's real, and it explains, in detail, how Harper has treated our veterans, his disdain for

aboriginal people, and his silencing of scientists among other things. It is great reading and I highly recommend it.

You can find all of the NUPGE campaign material on their website at: <http://nupge.ca/> Also look for them on Facebook under All Together Now for more great election material.

As members of NUPGE, we belong to the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). The CLC has also put a lot of effort and resources into a non-partisan campaign to get rid of the Harper Conservatives. Their campaign focuses on four key issues affecting Canadians and they are:

1. Retirement Security - Remember, Steve (a.k.a. Stephen Harper) moved the retirement age for OAS to 67?
2. Health Care - Steve is trying to dismantle the Health Accord and is reducing health transfer payments to

all provinces, shifting the burden of health care to the provinces. Health care services are at risk.

3. Child Care - don't be fooled by the recent vote purchases child benefits announcement. The overall child tax credit is being reduced and the new amounts will be taxable!
4. Good jobs - unemployment rates have increased under Steve's leadership.

Instead of just listening to my opinion, find out more for yourself! The CLC has all of this information on their website. Please visit: betterchoice.ca

Here is my list of reasons why Harper needs to go (I love the "Heave Steve" slogan):

Continued on page 14

Results of Five-Year Review for the PSSP

By Ian Johnson

In the spring issue of The Stand, NSGEU Pensions and Benefits Officer Corinne Carey told us that a five-year funding review was coming for the Public Service Superannuation Plan (PSSP) by June of 2015. As one of the three NSGEU reps on the Board, I am writing to tell you that this review was conducted as planned.

This was the first such review which is required under the provisions of the Public Service Superannuation Act (or PSSA). This Act was changed substantially in 2010 and 2012 to include a number of important changes such as a funding policy.

The purpose of this review is to determine the capacity of the Plan to afford annual cost-of-living adjustments (or COLA) for the next five years from January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2020. For the last five years from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2015, an annual cost-of-living adjustment of 1.25% was guaranteed.

Since the Plan was 104.7 per cent funded as of December 31, 2014 on a market value basis, the funding policy in the Act states that if the funded ratio of the Plan is between 100 and 110 per cent, a COLA may be provided as long as the Plan is not projected to fall below 100 per cent at the end of the five-year cycle, including the impact of granting COLA throughout the five-year cycle. There is also a sliding scale which determines the amount of the funding surplus to be allocated to the fund known as the strategic reserve.

As a result, the Trustee (that is, the joint Board) decided in June to do the following:

- Allocate \$125 million of the funding surplus to the strategic reserve.
- Approve a cost-of-living adjustment of 0.85 per cent for each of the next five years, that is, from 2016 to 2020.
- Confirm there would be no changes to the contribution rates of Plan members and employers for the next five years.

The Trustee's next review of the Plan's funded health will be in 2020. This will be for the next five-year cycle from January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2025. Whether or not COLA will be provided will depend upon the Plan's funded ratio as of December 31, 2019. Under the Act, COLA may only be provided if the Plan is fully funded (that is, at 100 per cent or more), and if determined to be prudent by the Trustee.

For more information on the five-year review, please go to: <http://www.novascotiapension.ca/publicserviceplan/news/5yearpsshealthreview>. The latest Annual Report for the Plan, that is, for 2014-15 can be found at:

<http://bit.ly/1ltdIEB> ■

By Ian Johnson
Servicing Coordinator/Policy Analyst

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Reasons to "Heave Steve"

1. Massive omnibus bills: These bills include everything imaginable with many important items hidden deep within them (i.e. the removal of both the protected status from the majority of lakes and streams in Canada as well as the removal of important Occupational Health & Safety regulations were hidden in a Finance Bill).
2. Contempt for parliament: How many times did Steve prorogue parliament? He did this to avoid questions from opposition leaders regarding scandals. Did we even know the word prorogue prior to Steve...?
3. Betrayal of our veterans: Steve closed veteran affairs offices across this country, making our vets have to sue this Harper Conservative Government to access their benefits!
4. Senate scandals: I could list an entire new section on senator spending scandals, but I won't. You know what I'm talking about. Harper did promise to stop patronage appointments to the Senate and has appointed numerous Conservative senators.

I could continue to list the things that make me mad about Harper, most importantly how he is making Canada more American, but I won't. I am hoping you will go to the websites I've listed and do your own research and draw your

own conclusions.

The bottom line is that Stephen Harper was given a majority government in the last federal election with only 34% of the vote! I'm not sure when 34% became a majority.... But the problem, in part, is because good Canadians did not get out and vote. Now I can't tell you who to vote for, but I can tell you who we need to campaign against and that, my sisters and brothers, is Stephen Harper (a.k.a. Steve), with Stephen McNeil directly behind him. (I will leave that rant for another day).

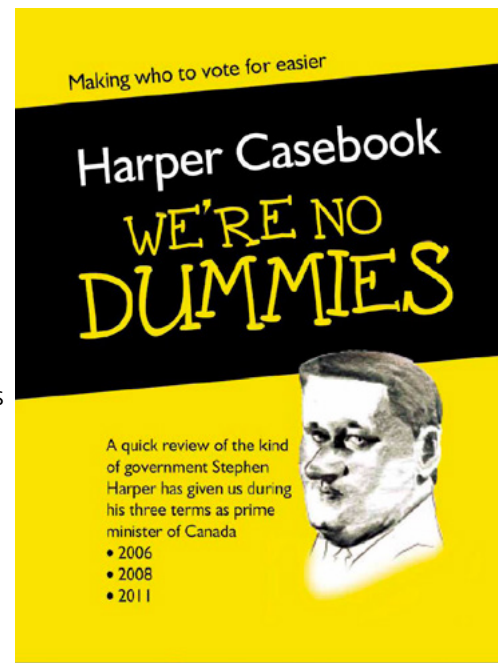
I read a saying recently, "Bad politicians are elected by good people who don't vote". Stephen Harper clearly wants to ensure that people don't vote. He's enacted legislation to make it more difficult for Canadians to vote, and impossible for Canadians who don't live in Canada full time to vote. This is shameful. Donald Sutherland, a famous Canadian actor, has written to the Globe & Mail about it: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/im-canadian-and-i-have-a-right-to-vote/article25731634/> if you want to read his comments.

I would strongly encourage you to check and see if you and your adult children are registered to vote at this website as soon as possible.

<http://bit.ly/1nWfP9G> ■

In solidarity, Dawn Ferris

Chair, NSGEU Political Action Committee



Are you nearing retirement? Want to give back to your community? Get involved with SEEN.

There has been a stream of activity in recent weeks with the joint Saint Mary's University and NSGEU Silver Economy Engagement Network (SEEN) Isolated Population pilot project.

SEEN is about empowering its members (those who are retired, or near retirement) to contribute meaningfully to communities.

This is done by harvesting the skills, knowledge and expertise of anyone

pre-retired or retired "silver", and paying it forward.

We had a kick-off event on May 1 in the Halifax area and a follow-up, "Starting-up, not Shutting Down" workshop on June 4 where three groups were formed to further work on neighbourhood building, mentoring and work.

There have been numerous discussions with key strategic community partners to identify specific communities,

particular needs and other potential partners.

NSGEU representatives have met with some CBRM Municipal Councillors, the Black Loyalists Heritage Centre, the Director of UNSM, Engage Nova Scotia, and South Shore Connects. SEEN had a presence at the Restorative Legal System Seminar, South Shore Connects, and Gwen Coleman's "Economics of Happiness" put on by St. Margaret's Bay Transition Town Hall.

Bully-Free Workplaces: Shifting Culture

NSGEU continues to expand and develop its landmark bully-free workplace program called Bully-Free Workplaces: Shifting Culture as we enter our fifth year of program delivery. Our new theme, Shifting Culture, reflects the need to change organizational policies and procedures, leadership, and the workplace culture. We recognize that bullying is not solely about conflict between individuals.

We continue to offer the program in two-hour awareness sessions and six-hour workshops. New* We have recently added a two-hour, four-module format which increases the options for employers and employees who want more information but with greater flexibility in the delivery schedule. This module also involves an opportunity for skills practice in between sessions.

New* We offer leadership training for supervisors, managers, union representatives, human resources, and occupational health representatives. These are the employees involved in establishing policies and procedures, investigation of workplace bullying, and progressive discipline; and who are required to demonstrate

leadership in promoting greater civility in the workplace and preventing psychological harm.

Organizations can help repair psychological harm in workplaces through our Restorative Practices program which uses principles of respect, responsibility, and reintegration.

An EMPATHIC program is available for those most directly affected by bullying behaviour and for those whom have engaged in bullying behaviour. The program offers opportunity for self-reflection through specific coaching and skills building to understand how one's behaviour may impact another.

To date we have delivered the program to 14,201 participants in Nova Scotia. The program is also being delivered in Newfoundland and Labrador, and Prince Edward Island through our train-the-trainer program; and we continue to receive inquiries from across Canada.

We are excited to be entering our fifth year! As the program continues to grow, we are in need of more facilitators. If you are interested in becoming a facilitator, please watch your email as we will be sending out an Expression of Interest later in the summer.



be alone. SEEN will partner with you. Please become part of something that's taking the province by storm. I look forward to hearing from you.

Dayle Eshelby, SEEN Coordinator

Silver Economy Engagement Network: An Initiative of Saint Mary's University Continuing Education

For more information, please contact: Dayle.Eshelby@smu.ca ■

NSGEU Deputy Sheriffs Get a Comprehensive OHS Review

The government has publicly announced a report which includes 51 recommendations to improve the health and safety of Deputy Sheriffs and the safety of many provincial courthouses. This report was commissioned by the Department of Justice because of the pressure from NSGEU Deputy Sheriffs who have consistently pushed for safety at work. When implemented, the recommendations will improve safety for all those involved in the court system.



Deputy Sheriff II Dustin Rioux, NSGEU 2nd Vice President, and Deputy Sheriff II Stacey Hunter.

Occupational Health & Safety issues have been an ongoing concern for NSGEU Deputy Sheriffs. They deliver court documents, escort people to and from the court, execute warrants, and provide courthouse security, among other things. They work in very volatile and dangerous conditions with members of the public, many of whom are under stress, and can be highly unpredictable.

Safety representatives from both the union and the employer sit on a Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee (JOHSC). This is where employees bring their OHS concerns, i.e. inadequate staffing, lack of protective equipment, and lack of training, among others. During the meetings, concerns are heard, discussed, and ideally, addressed by both parties.

After a courthouse shooting in Brampton that injured a police officer in April, 2014, the Employer was ready and willing to listen. The Justice OHS Steering Committee are members of the JOHSC and was tasked with overseeing an OHS assessment/report on Deputy Sheriffs and courthouse security as well as the implementation of the report's recommendations.

The Employer secured the services of a retired RCMP manager to do this assessment/report and it was completed in March, 2015. The report's recommendations include the arming of a limited number of Deputy Sheriffs. Others are: an overhaul of Human Resources; Tasers and Taser training; changes to the way casuals are used; and some structural recommendations which would increase the safety when entering and exiting a number of courthouses.

Dustin Rioux, 2nd Vice President of NSGEU (Also a Deputy Sheriff) along with NSGEU OHS Officer Paul Cormier are touring the province and meeting with Deputy Sheriffs to discuss the report with them. "This process began over a year ago with officers raising concerns to the employer and utilizing the OHS process. Now we have a positive report with recommendations that will change sheriff services as we move forward. When these recommendations are implemented, they will ensure the officers, the public, staff and persons in custody are in a

safer environment. So we must be proactive and ensure these recommendations are implemented as soon as possible." - Dustin Rioux. The Department has not released the report publicly because they are concerned vulnerabilities could be exposed.

President Jessome requested a meeting with the Deputy Minister for the Department of Justice on June 6th and repeatedly since then without a response. Other than meeting with the members and agreeing to arm a limited number of Deputy Sheriffs, the government is not communicating an implementation strategy if they have one. This raises our concerns about any timeframes involved in the implementation of the recommendations. Some of the recommendations need attention sooner rather than later.

In a CTV interview, Jessome says, "What I'm hearing so far is that the Department is not making a commitment on anything because they don't know what they can afford. They are saying these are budget issues. However, this is a health & safety issue for the Officers we represent, the public, and for the people appearing and working in the courthouses. We are not going to agree that this should be budget driven. Safety should not have a dollar figure attached to it."

We are proud of the perseverance of our Deputy Sheriffs who have been working to improve Health & Safety through their JOHSC. We are pleased that the Employer agreed to fund this assessment/report and that we now have valuable information and an independent list of recommendations.

What we need now is for the Department of Justice to work with the stakeholders to implement the recommendations as soon as possible. ■

NSGEU Gives Back!

Between 2010 & 2014 the NSGEU has given back to the community in excess of **\$340,000** in the form of donations to Nova Scotia charities and disaster relief efforts, approved by your Board of Directors.

FEED NS: \$86,000 | CHRISTMAS DADDIES: \$46,000 | AIDS COALITION OF NS: \$27,000 | MENTAL HEALTH COALITION OF NS: \$37,500 | BEACON SOCIAL JUSTICE LITERACY AWARD: \$2,000 | HAITI/OXFAM DISASTER RELIEF: \$10,000 | NSGEU CANCER SUPPORT FUND (FUND T826) \$20,000 | KIDS HELP LINE \$33,000 | NUPGE'S SOCIAL JUSTICE SOLIDARITY FUND \$13,400 | NUPGE'S INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL JUSTICE SOLIDARITY FUND \$8,200 | TRANSITION HOUSES ASSOCIATION OF NS \$50,000 | MAYWORKS \$5,000 |





Home support services at risk!

Since December 2014, the Liberal government has been exploring opportunities to further contract out (and privatize) all home support services in Nova Scotia.

Today, there are more than 20 companies providing home support services in the province. The NSGEU represents approximately 1,900 home support workers and schedulers working for 11 of these companies, which are private non-profits.

Our concern is that if a new company is selected to deliver all Nova Scotia's home support services and the current companies lose their contracts, workers do not have the right to follow their jobs. And even if the new company does decide to hire them, they can pay these workers less and not offer them any of the benefits or job security they have today.

The NSGEU has been actively campaigning against the government's plans to further privatize our home support

Continued on page 21

Here is a copy of the statement they sent to the relevant agencies:

"Last December the Department of Health and Wellness, with the involvement of external procurement consultants and Nova Scotia Health Authority, began exploring options that would ensure quality and create more consistent, efficient, flexible and sustainable home care services for Nova Scotians. One of the options explored was a tendering process for home care services. On May 13th, Deputy Minister Dr. Peter Vaughan addressed governments' plans to tender home care services at the Public Accounts Committee of the legislature. You can watch his appearance at: http://nslegislature.ca/index.php/committees/committee_hansard/C7/.

During the discovery work, it became clear that further opportunities to work with our current home care providers could be explored. As a result, the Department, together with Nova Scotia Health Authority, will move forward with the current providers with the goal of implementing performance based contracts to achieve a number of health system objectives and improvements. Depending on the outcome of this initiative, home care services may still need to be tendered for some, or all, regions in the province.

The Deputy Minister was clear that the status quo is not an option. We need to improve access and the quality of care, increase efficiencies and control costs. In the coming months, the Department plans to consult with representatives from the home care sector to obtain feedback on a number of policies, processes, and performance measures that will improve and support the sustainable delivery of home care services."

services.

In early June, the NSGEU received notice from the Department of Health and Wellness that the RFP is on hold – for now – and they plan to continue to try and work with all current home care providers, though they will not rule out the possibility of tendering out and further privatizing the service at a later date.

Though it may seem that government is backing down from further contracting out to for-profit companies, the threat still exists.

Government is saying they need all home care agencies to clear their wait lists, reduce costs and ensure their own overhead costs to deliver the care more consistent, and offer 24-hour care.

We are now working with the employers who are struggling the most with these objectives to see if we can help solve these problems while ensuring our members' jobs are protected. We plan to do this by asking frontline

workers for ideas on how to solve problems with the service as it is today, then bringing these suggestions forward to the employers and government to test out in a pilot project.

Even if you are not a home support worker, chances are, you or someone you love will someday be in need of this important service. We need you to help keep the pressure on! Over the summer months, you may run into your local MLA at community events: use that opportunity to remind them of your concerns over further privatizing this service.

Speak to your friends, neighbours and family members about what has been happening over the past few months, and ask them to speak to their local politicians, as well. It

is absolutely crucial that we keep this issue alive and in the public eye, to ensure that home support as a high quality public service in Nova Scotia is protected. ■



Watch for new Occupational Health & Safety training to start early in 2016!

The NSGEU in partnership with Workers' Compensation Board (WCB), Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), and the Nova Scotia Nurses Union have come together to develop an Occupational Health and Safety training program for all workers and workplaces throughout Nova Scotia – both union and non-union. The training will be delivered in three levels which can be taken in order at different times beginning in early 2016. Although the training is general in nature, there will be industry specific activities depending on the occupations of those attending the sessions (i.e. civil service, school boards, group homes, health care).

Level 1 – OHS Act of Nova Scotia and OHS basics including the role of due diligence.

Level 2 – OHS leadership essential skills and Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) training including exercises on how to be an effective JOHSC member.

Level 3 – Advanced JOHSC and hazardous management training including incident investigation, hazard identification and control, and effective inspections of the workplace.

Workbooks are being developed with OHS expertise from NSGEU, CUPE, NSNU, and the WCB.

We are aiming to send out an expression of interest for program facilitators in the Fall of 2015.

There will be a cost to the program but it will be modest because we are only looking to recover the costs spent on delivering it. This OH&S education program is a non-profit initiative.

This training program is an example of the continual OHS improvement we need to see in workplaces around the province. We will be keeping statistics on the program in order to measure its success. ■

New NSGEU leadership and staff

Dustin Rioux, moved into the 2nd Vice President position due to Kelly Murphy's successful candidacy as an NSGEU Employee Relations Officer. Dustin is a Deputy Sheriff and a member of Local 3 who lives and works in the Truro area. He has been active in the union since 2008 and has been both a Chief Steward and President of Local 3.

Sandra Mullen was elected by the Board of Directors as 3rd Vice President to fill the vacancy left as Dustin Rioux moved into the 2nd VP position. Sandra lives and works in the South Shore and Valley regions. She is Vice President of Local 16, and a Licensing Officer in Community Services. She has been active in the union for over 12 years and a member of the Board of Directors for the past two terms.

Robin MacLean is our new Executive Director. She replaces Keiren Tompkins who recently retired. Robin has been with the NSGEU since 1999 where she began as an Employee Relations Officer. She has also held the positions of Servicing Coordinator, and most recently been the Director of Negotiations and Servicing. Prior to joining the staff she worked for the Workers' Compensation Board, Local 55. She has a background in law.

Grant Vaughan is our new Director of Negotiations for Government and Education. Grant has worked for the NSGEU since 1997. Prior to this, he was a Tax Auditor with the Provincial Tax Commission and the President of Local 6. He has also been a union trustee of the Public Service LTD fund since 1995. Grant was the Servicing Coordinator for Civil Service, a position he held for three years.

Joe Edwards is our new General Assistant. Prior to coming to the NSGEU, he worked as a cleaner at Capital Health for four and a half years. We're glad to have his expertise here at the office.

Kelly Murphy is a new Employee Relations Officer currently serving our group home sector. She has been a union activist since her local, Metro Community Living, unionized in 2004. She was 2nd Vice President on the Provincial Executive prior to being



Executive Director, Robin MacLean



Kelly Murphy, Employee Relations Officer



Director of Negotiations for Government and Education, Grant Vaughan

hired. She has been a Community Residential Worker for 14 years and brings her wealth of experience to her servicing assignment.

Pam Watts has been hired in a temporary Labour Resource Centre position. Pam is a member of Local 29 - VON and has been a Scheduler/Customer Service Associate for the past eight years.

Dave MacKenzie is our Information Analyst. Dave has a strong background in strategic policy, research, and information analysis. His last positions were with the private sector and government.

Jo-Ann Bailey is our new Servicing Coordinator for health care. She began her career at the NSGEU in 2005 as a researcher but after a year, became an Employee Relations Officer. Prior to working at the NSGEU she worked at the NSAHO as a researcher for 18 years.

Rick Wiseman is a new Employee Relations Officer. His background is in the group home sector where he was a Residential Counselor and before being hired as staff, had held the positions of Local President and 3rd Vice President of the provincial executive.

Darryl Warren has been hired as a new Employee Relations Officer. He was formerly a member of the Board of Directors and President of his Local 77 -Dalhousie Staff Association. At Dal, he was a Malware Technologist and worked there for 15 years. He has been active in the NSGEU since 2003.

NSGEU EDUCATION COURSES FALL 2015

New Activist

September 15 & 16
Maritime Inn, Port Hawkesbury
Cape Breton and Pictou/Antigonish/Guysborough Region

September 25 & 26
Best Western, Liverpool
South Shore & Valley Region

October 1 & 2
NSGEU Office, Truro
Cumberland/Colchester and Pictou/Antigonish Region

November 16 & 17
NSGEU Office, Dartmouth
Metro A, B, & C Region

November 30 & December 1 NSGEU Office, Dartmouth
Metro A, B, & C Region & Colchester/Cumberland

Pre-Retirement

October 3
Digby Pines, Digby

November 14
NSGEU Office, Dartmouth

Eligibility: Usually within one to two years of retirement.
Description: Overview of pension politics in Nova Scotia. Presentation from CPP and your pension plan, i.e. NSAHO, PSSP, etc. Retirement benefits. Benefit information varies according to location and Local members.

Steward I

September 17 & 18
NSGEU Office, Sydney
Cape Breton & Pictou/Antigonish/Guysborough

November 19 & 20
Best Western, Liverpool
South Shore & Valley Region

November 24 & 25
NSGEU Office, Dartmouth
Metro A, B & C

Eligibility: Stewards with no prior training.

Steward II

November 2 & 3
NSGEU Office, Sydney
Cape Breton & Pictou/Antigonish/Guysborough

November 6 & 7
NSGEU Office, Dartmouth
Metro A, B, C & Colchester/Cumberland & South Shore & Valley

Eligibility: Stewards with six months experience at Level 1.
Description: In-depth grievance investigation tools for dealing with management. Expanded roles and responsibilities of the Steward.

Bully-Free Workplaces: Shifting Culture

October 8
NSGEU Office, Dartmouth

Description: Six-hour interactive workshop that explores bullying issues in depth with small group activities; engages participants to help understand solutions to workplace bullying.

If you're interested in participating in any of the courses or workshops listed here, the NSGEU can help make it happen! We cover your transportation and child/eldercare costs (as defined by the NSGEU Board policies) and will also help arrange for your time off work. For more information contact us by calling 902-424-4063 (toll-free 1-877-556-7438) or emailing: inquiry@nsgeu.ca.

A few words from new NSGEU 3rd VP Sandra Mullen

My name is Sandra Mullen, your new 3rd Vice President. I want to thank the Board of Directors for their support in electing me to replace the vacancy on the Executive created by Kelly Murphy's departure. Kelly will be missed at the Board table but the membership will benefit as she takes on the role of Employee Relations Officer.

At the recent Executive Committee meeting I was assigned duties which include the Liaison to the Women's Issues Committee, Pension and Benefits Ad Hoc Committee, Resolutions Committee, as well as to the South Shore and Valley Regional Councils. I look forward to meeting all Committee members and other members in the upcoming weeks.

We have very busy times ahead with our Leadership Symposium on September 24, the federal election on October 19 (Heave Steve) and our own campaigns to stop the privatization of public services.

As I write this it is summer in the Maritimes and hopefully you are able to enjoy some time with family and friends and recharge your batteries. The vacation you were granted was part of labour battles fought long ago, not just because you have a good employer.

My goal is to help the Board complete the work of the current term. There appears to be lots to do, and I will do my best. I can be reached at sandraannemullen@gmail.com

I look forward to meeting you.
In Solidarity, Sandra



Monday, September 7

HAPPY LABOUR DAY!

Please check nsgeu.ca for information about Labour Day events and activities across the province.



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