
CUPE 2950

LOCAL NEWS

JUNE 2010

'UNION' IS NOT A FOUR-LETTER

Unions have always mattered. They continue to be the one institution that most dramatically improves the lives of the majority of the people.

Documentation consistently shows that not only do union members benefit from being in a union – but, maybe more importantly, non-union workers benefit by the sheer existence of unions in their community. Therefore, it's understandable that when union density decreases, as it has over the past decade, the overall “quality of life” in our communities diminishes.

In this new era of “political deregulation,” unions matter more than ever.

Corporate employers threaten to move operations to lower-wage parts of the country or to poorer countries. But, in most cases, these are idle threats. The companies that operate in our communities benefit from our community infrastructures. They use our roads to move their goods. The quality of life we offer in our communities allows those very employers to recruit and retain better employees.

Over the past twenty years, elected governments in Canada, and around the world, are controlled more and more by corporate interests. It's no doubt been the biggest failure of organized labour not to provide a viable counterweight. “This void has allowed a corporate-political alliance to sweep away most of the safety nets that protect us.”*

Our health system is in tatters. Fewer workers every year have health benefits through their employers. Fewer yet have dental plans. And even fewer have work place pension plans. A large portion of the Canadian workforce is struggling just to hold onto full-time employment. Our social safety nets are under attack by a propaganda campaign aimed at privatization. Those very programs created to support workers who lose

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their jobs, whether through downsizing or because of an accident or health issue, have been shredded or gutted by governments.

“Canadian workers, especially workers in BC, have lost ground economically, while those who hire them and invest in their companies, those who loan them money or hold their mortgages, have taken what workers have lost and lined their own pockets.”*

Inequality of income and wealth has not been this great since the 1920s.

It is becoming increasingly clear that this full-on attack of the working-class cannot be challenged, let alone eradicated, without strong unions and a vibrant labor movement. We all need a compass to find our way. For workers, local unions and a vibrant labor movement provide that compass. Many unions, CUPE in particular, continue to support the fight for global justice – the fight against the uncontrolled globalized greed that continues to drive wages and working conditions downward worldwide.

Non-traditional “labour” issues such as child care, affordable housing and “a living wage for all” are now at the forefront of the labour consciousness. It’s not only about the wages we take home – but it’s about the world we’re creating. Work/life balance is the new mantra. It’s pretty hard to get any balance when you’re working two, sometimes three, jobs.

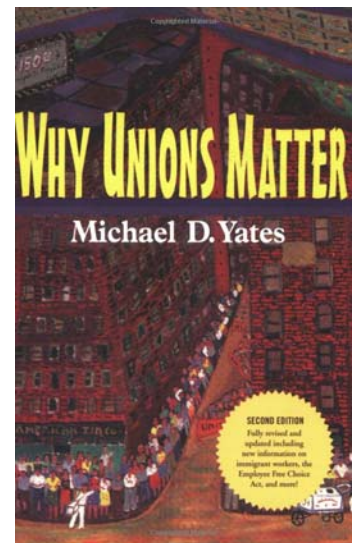
I believe unions are needed more now than ever. We need more involved citizens committed to helping rebuild our union movement from the inside. It’s high time, we, as union members take back the local and national relevance we once had.

There are union officers around the world and right here on campus, struggling to educate and mobilize their members. It’s more important than ever that we feel empowered in our workplace and in our communities.

In Solidarity,
Nancy

*Quotes from: *Why Unions Matter* by Michael D. Yates (ISBN: 978-1-58367-190-0, \$17.95 paperback, 200 pp.) Available for loan at your local Union Office.

*“It’s not only about
the wages we take home –
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we’re creating.”*



THANKS!! (NARAMATA WEEKLONG COURSE)

By Leslie Hodson, CUPE 2950 Office

Thank you so much for sending me to the Communicating CUPE course at Naramata 2010. What an incredible opportunity you gave me. I learned how to get a message out to the public through the various forms of social media, including Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and the Web and, of course, the familiar ways of hitting your target audience with flyers, newsletters and just talking to people (which is still the most effective way to communicate to people). The facilitators, Janet Szliske and Ian Clydsdale, were so experienced and knowledgeable at all levels of communication. They provided us with invaluable information on how reach audiences through effective messaging. What resonated for me was communicating using humour, because I love to laugh and I especially love to make people laugh.

It wasn't all work and no play. Naramata Centre has 13 acres located right on Okanagan Lake. The food was incredible and CUPE did a

wonderful job of keeping us entertained after the classes were over (thank you Rosemarie and Brad). We went on a wine tour, played volleyball, and had a campfire and a dance. I met lots of wonderful people and even made some new friends. Thank you to Bernice Koh for being such a great roommate!

Bernice, Lavana Lea and I will be revamping the website, newsletter and creating a Facebook page for 2950 over the next few months. I encourage you, as 2950 members, to provide us with input on what you want this to look like. We need a newsletter name and we

need to know what it will take for you to read it.

What an awesome feeling to be part of such a large group of people who really want to make a difference in the world. I often feel very discouraged about the level of apathy I'm surrounded with in my personal and professional life (me included). After this week-long course,

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I was re-energized and ready to take on the world again (or at least try and do my part to make it a better world for my daughter and grandkids). It sounds daunting and maybe that's why so many of us think "why bother"? Why bother to vote, why bother to recycle, why bother...why,



because every action counts! I challenge each and every one of us (including myself) to just do SOMETHING! Volunteer at your local community, make your vote count at the next election (the NDP only lost by 5000 votes), or dare I say attend a membership meeting! It was so discouraging, after attending such a motivating conference, to see 12 members attend this month's membership meeting (out of 1500 plus members). I do want to acknowledge the 12 members who did attend. The union belongs to the members...aka you. The strength of the union is directly dependent upon

members' involvement. If every unionized person at UBC showed their strength by getting involved with their union, attending membership meetings, going to rallies, signing petitions or even voting for the party who will determine what they get in their collective agreement, maybe and just maybe, we wouldn't have had (including the next 2 years) 9 years of ZERO percent increases. It's up to you and me!

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BCFed — BC Federation of Labour
CUPE — Canadian Union of Public Employees
CoDev — CoDevelopment Canada
GMM — General Membership Meeting
HST — Harmonized Sales Tax
JE — Job Evaluation
JSTP — Job Skills Training Program
NDP — New Democratic Party
UCBC — Universities Coordinated Bargaining Committee

CUPE LOCAL 2950 AND CODEV

CoDev is proud to have over 40 organizational members supporting our work with our partners throughout the Americas. Representing a range of sectors, including public employees, teachers, and building trades, our organizational members raise awareness of global justice among their membership and their communities. As with individual members, our organizational supporters have voting rights at CoDev's AGM, are kept up-to-date on CoDev's actions and events and can receive discounts on CoDev resources.

One of CoDev's long standing supporters is CUPE local 2950 at the University of British Columbia. CUPE Local 2950 represents over 1,500 clerical, library, and hospital workers and has worked with CoDev for over twelve years. We asked local president Nancy Forhan to share some of her thoughts about CoDev and the links to her organization.

How did you first hear about CoDev?

We first learned of Co Development Canada at a CUPE BC Convention. We were immediately drawn to your organization by your level of commitment to social equality and global justice.

As union members and community activists it's motivating for us to see firsthand how organizations like CoDev work to protect people's rights or to help women fight the social and economic inequalities they face.

What benefits do you see for your members in getting involved in CoDev's work?

Supporting your organization allows us to be a small part of all CoDev does for social change and community empowerment around the world. We applaud your continued commitment to bring labour issues to the forefront of people's consciences and your fight to educate the next generation about the dangers of climate change and the environmental impact of how we live.

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“It's a sad truth that the political powers of this world don't see global justice as a worthy fight or social justice as a worthy goal. It's more important now than ever to have organizations like CoDev continue to raise these issues on the global stage.”

It's a sad truth that the political powers of this world don't see global justice as a worthy fight or social justice as a worthy goal. It's more important now than ever to have organizations like CoDev continue to raise these issues on the global stage. We thank you for all the good work you continue to do and as part of CUPE BC we also thank you for letting us be a small of it.

Reprinted from "Partners in Solidarity" (CoDev newsletter) May 2010.

HELP PREVENT SUICIDE

What is QPR?

QPR stands for Question, Persuade, Refer. QPR is a program that helps us recognize the early warning signs of suicidal intent and provides us with the knowledge to persuade and refer individuals at risk to appropriate help.

For more information on becoming a QPR Gatekeeper, please visit www.students.ubc.ca/counselling/qpr.

To read the entire article, go to cupe2950.ca/documents/QPRNewsletter-May2010v1_3_.pdf.

2010 UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN @ UBC

Each year, two UBC employees are selected to represent UBC on United Way's annual campaign. The individuals selected serve as an extension of United Way staff by acting as a full-time resource person at UBC and various workplaces around the Lower Mainland.

This year we were thrilled to learn that our very own Joel Kobylka has been chosen as one of those employees! Joel will be "on loan" from his position as Front Counter Supervisor in Enrolment Services from the end of August to mid-December. We congratulate Joel on being selected for this incredible opportunity and wish him all the best!

For more information on the United Way's 2010 Campaign you can visit their web site at: www.uwlm.ca.

Help us promote this year's campaign.



TORONTO PARAMEDIC AMONG TIME'S 100 MOST INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE



Toronto paramedic Rahul Singh is one of the 100 people who have most affected the world, according to [Time magazine](#).

But, says the founder of [GlobalMedic](#), “the honour’s not about me. The honour is about the team.”

Singh, a member of Toronto Civic Employees Union Local 416 CUPE for the last eight years, founded GlobalMedic in 1998. Members of his team were among the first disaster responders on the ground after a massive earthquake hit Haiti. An essay by Haitian President Jean-Max Bellerive praising Singh and GlobalMedic will appear in Time magazine.

GlobalMedic is made up of paramedics, police and firefighters who provide rescue and water purification services in disasters and are involved in capacity building at other times. Teams have travelled to countries like Iraq and Sri Lanka at the request of the United Nations to train medics as part of projects like landmine removal.

As he prepares to travel to New York for a Time magazine awards gala, Singh is thinking about the fundraising possibilities. To learn more about the organization or to make a donation, please visit [Globalmedic.ca](#).

Reprinted in part from cupe.ca.

JUNE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The May GMM did not reach quorum. Members who attended toured the space where our Union Office might be relocating.

Come to the June GMM to discuss and ratify bargaining proposals.

Refreshments will be served and the first 25 members to arrive will receive free tote bags.

- **UNION MEETINGS (ARTICLE 10.01)**

“The University agrees to allow nine (9) two-hour lunch meetings (12:30 to 2:30[pm]) in each twelve (12) month period of the Collective Agreement. The Union may arrange when meetings are to be held provided at least ten (10) days advance notice is given.”

- Members use their lunch breaks as part of the time. All members are encouraged to attend.
- Printed copies of Financial Reports are available to members at regular GMMs and from our Union Office.
- Full General Membership Meeting minutes are available for approval at the following GMM and online at www.cupe2950.ca/minutes/gmm_minutes.htm or from our Union Office.

In consideration of those who suffer from allergies and/or respiratory problems, please refrain from wearing perfumes or any scented items.

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CUPE 2950 General Membership Meeting

Thursday, June 24, 2010
12:30—2:30 pm

Buchanan D219 (1866 Main Mall)

Discuss and ratify bargaining proposals.

Refreshments will be served.

The first 25 members will receive a free tote bag.



SAVE THE DATE

WHO: all CUPE local 2950 members

WHAT: 2010 member appreciation BBQ

WHERE: SUB Party Room & Patio

WHY: because we've worked hard all winter

WHEN: Thursday July 22

Stay tuned for more details...

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