
THE BOTTOM LINE

ALL THE NEWS FOR OPSEU LOCAL 420

No. 13

Wednesday 22 March 2006

SAFETY ON THE LINE! HEAD'S UP!

Picketeer Seriously Injured at Centennial College

A 62-year-old man was seriously hurt when he was hit by a car [that was] trying to cross a picket line of striking college teachers Monday.

The victim was taken to Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre with bleeding head wounds after he was struck by the vehicle outside Centennial College in Scarborough at about 8 a.m.



[Police] say a 22-year-old in a Toyota was trying to get onto the campus when picketers tried to stop him. Somehow, the two collided and the union member fell off the hood and struck his head on the pavement. His condition at this point is unknown.

Toronto Police Traffic Services officers have taken over the investigation. –
Edited from source: www.pulse24.com

Bear in mind your safety at all times on the line! Photo: Joe Callahan

SOLIDARITY RALLIES PLANNED 'ROUND THE PROVINCE FOR THURSDAY!

The stage is being set for Solidarity Rallies at all Ontario Colleges this coming Thursday. Teachers and education workers, anyone who supports our cause, are invited to join in faculty picket lines to show government,

college managers and the Ontario Public that our demands for quality educational environments for our students remain the bedrock of this strike. Welcome these picketers...share a classroom story...show our resolve!

Region 4 Rallies in Ottawa

Keep up the pressure: Montgomery

Striking college faculty must keep up the pressure on management to achieve a contract that improves education quality, says Ted Montgomery, chair of the OPSEU bargaining team.

Bargaining began this morning under a news blackout.

“The return to the table is a direct consequence of the success and strength of the 5000-strong faculty rally and all our efforts so far at the colleges,” Montgomery said in a weekend memo to OPSEU local presidents. “Key to achieving [a] settlement will be to continue the pressures that have brought management back to the table: unequivocal demonstrations of faculty’s resolve to have the quality issues addressed.”

OPSEU Region Four took Montgomery’s words to heart. Over 300 strikers from all four eastern Ontario colleges boarded buses yesterday morning for a lively rally at the Ottawa constituency office of Premier Dalton McGuinty. Local presidents Doug Brandy (L. 415, Algonquin), Graeme Aubert (L. 417, St. Lawrence), Bernie Belanger (L. 420, Loyalist), and Fernand Begin (L. 470, La Cité Collégiale) all spoke at the rally. CAAT-Ac Divisional Executive member Mary Ann White joined Brandy and

Begin (also a DivExec member) for a half-hour meeting with McGuinty’s Executive Assistant, John Fraser.



*Doug Brandy (with megaphone),
Fernand Begin, and Mary Ann
White deliver the quality message.*

“We spoke to him about the fact that this strike is about quality,” said White. “We talked to him specifically about workloads, class sizes, and staffing.

“We pointed out to him that his government’s message, and all this money that is coming into the system, is exactly in line with what we are saying, and is exactly in line with what Bob Rae has said in the past.”

All three OPSEU board members for Region Four also attended the rally: First Vice-President / Treasurer Smokey Thomas, Regional Vice-President Bob Eaton, and Dave Lundy. *Source: OPSEU Online*

Replacement workers? No thanks!

At least a few colleges are looking for people to do full-time faculty work during the strike.

As part of the "Semester Completion Strategy," some colleges are asking part-time faculty to act as strikebreakers.

"The whole idea is outrageous," said Paddy Musson, co-coordinator of the OPSEU provincial strike committee. "Part-timers, who are the most exploited faculty of all, are to be used as cannon fodder in a management battle against full-timers. It's a gross insult to part-timers' professionalism and a bald-faced attempt by management to take advantage of part-timers' poverty."

OPSEU faculty bargaining team chair Ted Montgomery said striking faculty will not tolerate strikebreaking.

"Striking workers have not and will not passively allow replacement workers to take over their work," he said. "Where, to date, picketing has been very peaceful in contrast to labour disputes in other sectors, we can be certain that it will not remain so if the employer tries to use replacement workers."

Part-time faculty or others who are approached by college management with offers of faculty work are asked to report what they learn to the Strike Headquarters for their local. *Source: OPSEU Online*

Faculty Connections: "Gary Kembel...Glen Arendt; Glen...Gary!"

This morning, in conversation with a small gathering, I was asked about my parents in Kamloops. A faculty member, previously unknown to me, said that his parents had retired to Merritt, in the same BC valley. Glen and I introduced ourselves and started to chat about our pasts. We talked about where our parents were prior to retirement, only to discover Glen [Arendt] and I went to the same high school in a small Northern Manitoban town (Margaret Barbour Collegiate was the only high school, graduating a few dozen students each year). Glen

graduated in '79; I graduated in '74. The Pas, Manitoba, about 600 km northwest of Winnipeg, has a population of under 6,000 and was slightly larger then.

Glen studied Computer Science at the University of Manitoba, I completed my first Architecture degree at the same institution. Another coincidence, we both have twin brothers living in the United States! – *By Gary Kembel*



*Editor's Note: The basis for rumours that replacement workers will be used at some colleges to enable students to finish their semester includes an open letter sent to all students in the college system last week. We reprint the letter below. Along with this (see page 5), colleges like Algonquin stated publicly they felt this was a strategy they would employ. Of course, the use of replacement workers by any college would alter significantly: 1) the relationship between management and faculty during the strike, 2) the manner in which picket lines are conducted, and 3) the relationship between management and faculty for years to come. Read **OPSEU / CAAT UPDATE NO. 2** to learn more of the Union view on this tactic. – Wallace Rendell*

OPEN LETTER to Students

Re: Semester Completion Strategy

The interruption in classes caused by the OPSEU strike at Ontario's colleges is regrettable.

Students are concerned about the impact on their education and we are, too.

While Ontario's colleges continue to urge OPSEU to end its strike and return to the bargaining table, we have an obligation to ensure that each student will have the opportunity to complete the semester.

Therefore, we are offering our assurance that, despite this strike, students will have the opportunity to meet their essential program requirements.

This commitment applies for each student, in each program, at each college.

How we achieve semester completion will depend on individual student progress to

date, the programs of study and the length of the strike. We will partner with our professional faculty and all dedicated staff in the college system to ensure a quality educational experience. We will use strategies and solutions that will protect academic quality, while ensuring that graduating students are ready for the workforce.

Each college will have semester completion strategies in place to address various circumstances. College staff will begin advising students next week on the best approach for successful semester completion – starting with students who are in their final semester.

This is our commitment to our students.

Signed,

Ontario's 24 Colleges

Management announces semester completion plan

Ontario's 24 colleges have launched a plan they say will ensure students affected by the strike will be able to complete their semesters. The Semester Completion Strategy was announced [last] Tuesday by Dr. Rick Miner, chair of the colleges' committee of presidents and details were released by ACAATO, the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario.

"Our priority has to be the students," said Dr. Rick Miner, chair of the colleges' committee of presidents, in a media release. "Ontario's colleges have today launched the strategy to ensure students are able to meet their program requirements. This commitment applies for each student, in each program, at each college." Each college is to work out the specifics of the plan and details are to be provided to students [this week].

The announcement stated that colleges were "committed to ensuring that

graduating students are ready for the workforce," and promised that the strategy will consider individual student circumstances and programs of study. In announcing the plan, Miner said the length of the strike is a factor, but pledged the strategy will ensure students can still meet their requirements, regardless of how long the strike continues.

According to a Canadian Press report, Algonquin College President Robert Gillett said colleges will determine the essential work necessary to complete each course, *with management teaching classes and marking assignments and exams if necessary*. Gillett acknowledged the completion strategy was not the preferred option to finishing the semester. "Obviously, our first choice would be to have faculty back, and complete it that way," he said in an interview. Sources: ACAATO, Canadian Press

Priorities, Priorities, Priorities

During the '90s and early '00s, during a time of significant attacks on education by the Ontario government, during a time of fiscal restraint, during a time of increasing class-sizes, declining numbers of full-time faculty, decreasing student satisfaction, and decreasing value of college education...

President	College	Salary - 1996	Salary - 2004	% Change
Gillett	Algonquin	\$ 127 332.00	\$ 219 135.71	+ 72%
Polonsky	Durham	\$ 114 445.00	\$ 227 520.96	+ 99%
Gordon	Humber	\$ 129 824.00	\$ 259 024.39	+ 99%

Just where are their priorities? Students want to know! – Source: Ontario Ministry of Finance

LABOUR PAINS

Courtesy Carol Simpson © Productions. Source: www.calm.ca



*"Can't we just buy out the union
and downsize it like we do everything else?"*

Su Doku

If you've never tried one of these puzzles before, here are the rules. A puzzle is complete and correct when: each row and column have the numbers 1-9, and each demarked box has the same. No number may be used more than once in any row, column, or demarked box. Good luck!

	7	5		4				3
9	2			3	5		8	6
	6						1	
4	5	9						
			5		9			
						8	5	9
	3						4	
8	9		4	7			2	5
5				9		6	7	

Source: www.free-sudokus.com

WHAT'S INSIDE?

Safety and Rally on the Line	1
Ottawa Rally - Monday	2
Replacement Workers	3
Management's Pledge	4
Management's "Strategies"	5
<i>Labour Pains, Su Doku</i>	6
One Professor's View	7
Love on the Line	9

TODAY'S WEATHER



High	2°C
Low	-5°C
Condition	Isolated Precipitation
P.O.P.	30%
Wind	W 15 km/h
Feels Like	-2 to -11°C

5-day Forecast on page 7

ONE PROFESSOR

Source: *The Toronto Star*

Mar. 8, 2006

By Daniel Girard

Ray Holmes has traded in his wrenches for a picket sign, abandoning his Centennial College classroom to join in the first strike of his 15-year teaching career. He does not want to do it. He feels he must.

"Everybody is frustrated," Holmes, 48, said last night. "Something has to be done."

Holmes, the co-ordinator/professor of the Acura/Honda automotive apprenticeship program at Centennial's Ashtonbee campus in Scarborough, is one of 9,100 full-time college faculty who walked off the job yesterday in a dispute over workload and class sizes.

With a class full of students completing their fourth and final eight-

week course on their way to becoming qualified mechanics, Holmes is well aware that the strike could have a huge impact on his pupils. But he feels it's a fight that will ultimately benefit those who come after them.

It's about improving the quality of education, Holmes insisted. That's why he bristled at a suggestion by Joy Warkentin, the colleges' bargaining committee chair, who said when talks broke down Monday night that the union received "a very good offer" because it would have seen top-paid teachers' salaries increased to \$94,300 by 2009. The offer would also see the lowest-paid teachers earning \$54,924 by 2009.

But the offer would not have improved the ratio of students to teachers, he said.

"This is not about wages," said Holmes, a Stouffville father of three teenaged boys who earns about \$78,000 a year. "It's all about the frustration of the class sizes."

In the past four years, Holmes said his class size has increased by 50 per cent — from 20 to 30 students. While that may not sound like a large number at a post-secondary institution, he noted that the course requires extensive hands-on work done on as many as seven vehicles crammed into a tiny room.

"We're jammed in tight and it's all driven by the almighty dollar," he said.

Holmes graduated from a mechanics course at Centennial in the late 1970s. It actually had more students, he said, but was taught in a classroom that was at least four times as big as his current one and required much less hands-on work.

"The big difference is that these guys today have to get their hands on vehicles a lot more than we ever did," Holmes said. "The way things are now, it's a real struggle for them to do that without bumping into each other."

Faculty Profiles



Peter Snell - It's a bird, it's a plane no it's SUPERPICKETER! In a quaint metropolitan picket line, mild mannered partial load professor Peter Snell gets lift-off on the line Tuesday (Week 2) with the help of gusty north east winds. Snell, who has taught in the journalism programs at Loyalist for seven years, vows he will keep his feet on the ground if there's a settlement soon.



Kip Haddock - A veteran of the 1989 strike, Kip Haddock, retired professor in the former School of Technology, joined the somewhat soggy picket line on Monday (Week 2) as his grandson was being picked up from the early childhood centre. Some will remember Kip's creative picket tactics including an unorthodox costume....anyone remember the details? – *Text and Photos by Joe Callahan*

Love on the Picket Line

A (not so gentle and it wasn't spring yet) rain was punctuating the unfolding splendour for a couple of couples on the picket line on Thursday, Week 1. Ah, yes, love knows no boundary as an "Us against the world" kind of energy pervaded Day Three on the line.

Ron and Lynn Foxall, who teach in the school of business and usually share a hallway at work not a picket line, took the opportunity to wander by the stream...again and again and again. I'm not sure, but I think they thought this was a creative date away from the kids.

They asked if the local executive could send a note of appreciation to the colleges' negotiating team to thank them for providing this opportunity to re-kindle the flame. [It's in the mail!]

Meanwhile, Wally Rendell and Karen Holder embrace spontaneously on the line because they haven't seen each other since the strike started. Wally has been working too many hours getting the local strike efforts organized. Hey, you guys! *Time? Place? Get a room!* – *Text and photos courtesy of Joe Callahan*



KEEPING IN TOUCH

Local 420 President Bernie Belanger is available to speak to, or visit with, all members of the media and general public, daily during weekdays, 8:30 am – 9:30 am, at Local 420 Head Office. At other times of the day, join him as he walks the line, or phone him at the number listed below. When you need the facts, go to the source! **Local 420 Address:** 205 North Front, Suite 1; **E-mail:** union@opseu420.org; **Fax:** (613) 966-7933
