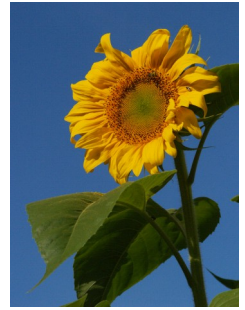




ALL THE NEWS FOR OPSEU LOCAL 420



THE BOTTOM LINE

VOL. 3, NO. 2 SEPTEMBER 2008

College support staff authorize strike action

by Wallace Rendell

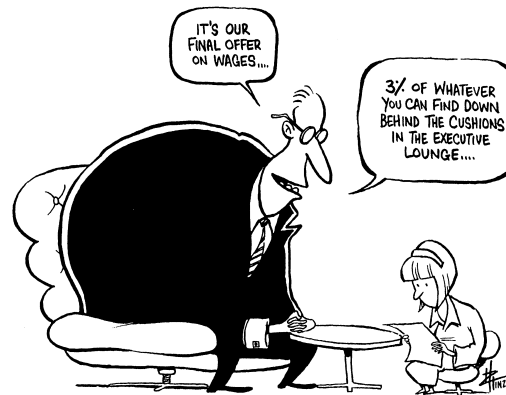
During July over 6,000 support staff for Ontario's 24 colleges voted to authorize a strike. Sixty-six percent of eligible voters participated. On separate ballots, 79% of voters rejected the contract offer from the Colleges Compensation and Appointment Council, while 69% supported giving their bargaining team the chance to call a strike.

Currently, bargaining between the parties is on hold until 27 August, with a media blackout in place regarding negotiations. Bargaining resumed for the first time after the strike vote on 12 August. Given that their current contract expires 31 August, support staff could strike 1 September.

Some of the Issues

Issue sheets released by the CAAT Support negotiating team through OPSEU's website prior to the strike vote describe some of the contentious issues.

One is the proposed salary increase offered by management—3% each year for two years. Given that faculty (4%), college administrators (4.2%; i.e., for those earning over \$100,000 in 2007 and 2008), and college presidents (10.8%, averaged over last three years) all received higher annual raises, and given that cost-of-living increases on fundamental day-to-day items often greatly



exceed 4% (see p. 2), support staff are arguing for a 4.34% increase.

Related to this issue, management tabled a 'wages and benefits comparison letter' indicating they want to compare college support staff compensation with industry outside the college system. "We can't count on [them] to compare us to Ryerson University [5% annual increase for support staff], or Brock University [4.5%]. We must protect ourselves from the employer comparing our work to positions such as employment consultants at YMCA, cleaners at Comfort Inn, or cashiers at Wal Mart", said one issue sheet. Their concern is their wages will be driven down by such comparisons.

Another important issue includes curbing bullying at work, where a recent survey estimated that 37% of workers experience various forms of abuse annually.

Source: www.opseu.org

IN BRIEF

- Loyalist College administration grows 38%
- Give blood through Partners for Life
- Check your pay stub for your raise
- Ontario finally recognizes part-timer's right to organize
- 2008-2009 Local Executive Committee members
- Olympism is about athletes, not politics

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COST OF LIVING ON EVERYDAY ITEMS

Year-to-year Increase

| | |
|---------------------|---------|
| FUEL OIL | + 49.3% |
| FLOUR & FLOUR MIXES | + 42.0% |
| PASTA | + 31.0% |
| GAS | + 15.0% |
| BAKERY PRODUCTS | + 13.2% |
| CEREAL | + 12.7% |
| WATER | + 10.7% |
| MORTGAGE INTEREST | + 8.9% |
| VEHICLE INSURANCE | + 6.3% |
| PUBLIC TRANSIT | + 5.3% |
| NATURAL GAS | + 5.2% |
| MILK | + 4.8% |
| PROPERTY TAXES | + 3.8% |

Source: Statistics Canada Consumer Price Index 2008

Disproportionate growth seen in Loyalist College administration since 2003

by Bernie Belanger

In May of this year I sent Loyalist College a *Freedom of Information* request asking for the number of administrators the College employed from 2003 to 2008. I received the answer and was dumbfounded!

In 2003 the College had 32 administrative employees. By 2008 the College increased the number to 44 administrative employees. This is a 37.5% increase in the number of administrators over a five-year period.

This increase seems exorbitant given that our student population has remained relatively stable over that period (except for the 7% increase in student numbers last year). Likewise, our faculty compliment has re-

mained relatively stable for the past ten years (\cong 130 full time faculty). The support staff compliment has not gone up significantly, certainly not to warrant an additional twelve administrative staff.

Combined with the great annual salary increases of administrators, listed in the previous issue of *The Bottom Line* (Vol. 3, No. 1, April 2008), have these new administrative hires contributed to the College's \$1.8 million deficit?

Ooops,... sorry! The deficit is caused by faculty pay raises and increases to our benefits this September (see below). Not administrative bloat. *Never* administrative bloat.

Partners for Life program aims to increase blood donations to CBS

by Wallace Rendell

You may have heard of *Partners for Life* if you've recently given blood. Canadian Blood Services (CBS) introduced the program to increase the number of people making donations of much-needed blood products, and to motivate corporations and institutions to look on blood donation as a means for team-building and meeting goals of social responsibility.

OPSEU and the Quinte Labour Council (QLC) are partners, so you are, too. You can help save lives with a simple donation of blood every two months, so please take the time to do so when you can. Our partner ID number is QUIN009012, and for more information about the program, visit the following websites: QLC, www.lcs-quinte.ca/qlc, or CBS, www.bloodservices.ca

Pay raise coming your way this September

by Bernie Belanger

As of 1 September 2008 our pay will increase by 4%.

This increase will also coincide with the last year of our contract. The Union will commence bargaining in January 2009.

It may seem that we were only on strike just a short while ago, but the strike was actually in March 2006. The contract was for a four-year term (recall, we had already gone one year through the term due to prolonged bargaining).

Labour here...

Bargaining rights of part-timers and sessionals recognized in Bill 90



by Wallace Rendell

In mid-June 2008 Ontario's Liberal government finally introduced Bill 90, designed to entrench the rights to organize in a union, and participate in collective bargaining, for part-time and sessional support staff and faculty in Ontario colleges.

Roger Couvrette, OPSECAAT President, was quoted as saying: "I think it is important to emphasize that this bill did not come about because of a sudden burst of generosity on the part of the colleges or government. It came about because for the last three years part-timers and sessionals have fought hard to make their case to their co-workers, to politicians, to the news media, and to anybody else who would listen".

Since 12 June, the status of *Bill 90, Colleges Collective Bargaining Act, 2008* (official title) has been "Ordered referred to the Standing Committee on General Government", according to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario website. No further action is expected on the bill until the Legislature reconvenes late this summer.

Part-time and sessional college employees have been legally excluded from organizing in a union and collective bargaining by the Colleges

Collective Bargaining Act (CCBA) for over three decades. Bill 90 is "an Act to enact the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act, 2008, to repeal the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act, and to make related amendments to other Acts".

Because of the original CCBA, college administrations have kept salaries and benefits for part-timers and sessionals lower and fewer, respectively, compared to full-time colleagues. This despite the fact that the CCBA contravened the Charter of Rights and Freedoms of our nation, as recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada in its June 2007 majority decision presented by Justices Louis LeBel and Beverley McLachlin. "We conclude that Section 2(d) of the Charter protects the capacity of members of labour unions to engage, in association, in collective bargaining on fundamental workplace issues".

Congratulations to OPSECAAT and, at Loyalist, Jennifer Bryan, Eric Pierson, and Bernie Belanger for their part in this historic organizing drive.

Sources: The Part-time Times, www.collegeworkers.org; Legislative Assembly of Ontario, www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills

"Working with OPSEU, we will do everything in our power to see that our rights are recognized in law. The day is coming soon when those rights will be recognized in reality as well."

ROGER

COUVRETTE

OPSECAAT

PRESIDENT

...and labour there

"I have conducted operas in the West, and it was so troublesome. They only work four-and-a-half days each week. Every day there are two coffee breaks. There cannot be any discomfort, because of human rights. We do not have that. We can work very hard, we can withstand lots of bitterness. We can achieve in one week what they can achieve in one month. Other than North Korea, no other country in the world can achieve this."

ZHANG YIMOU

CHINESE FILMMAKER, ORGANIZER OF BEIJING OLYMPIC GAMES OPENING AND CLOSING CEREMONIES

Source: Globe and Mail, 23 August 2008, "China Games a Tour de Force", by Geoffrey York

CALM yourself

Our source for labour humour and articles

by Wallace Rendell

CALM is the Canadian Association of Labour Media. As members of CALM, THE BOTTOM LINE has access to a vast number of labour-oriented graphics and written articles.

In fact, the primary aim of CALM is to help labour locals start up and maintain newslet-

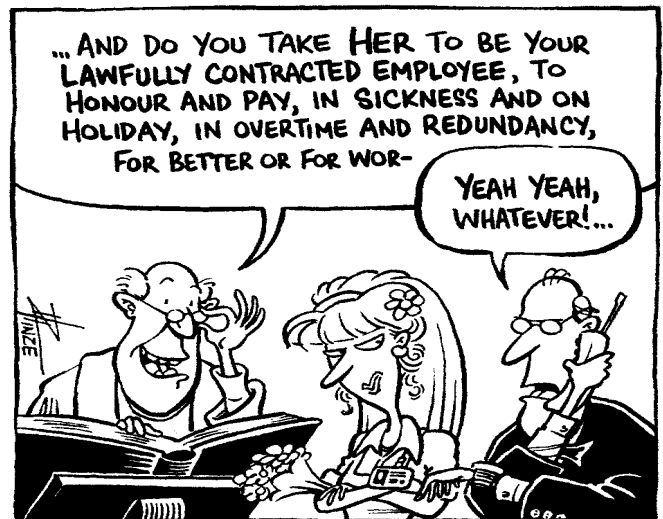
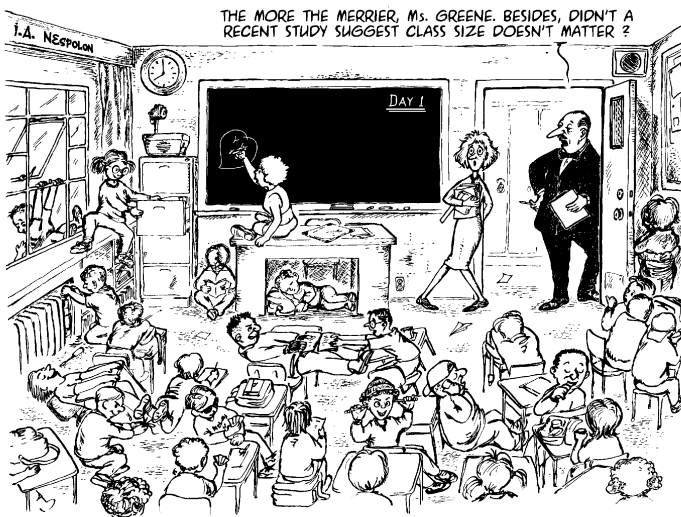
ters that inform and stimulate their membership. As a novice, their assistance has been invaluable to me.

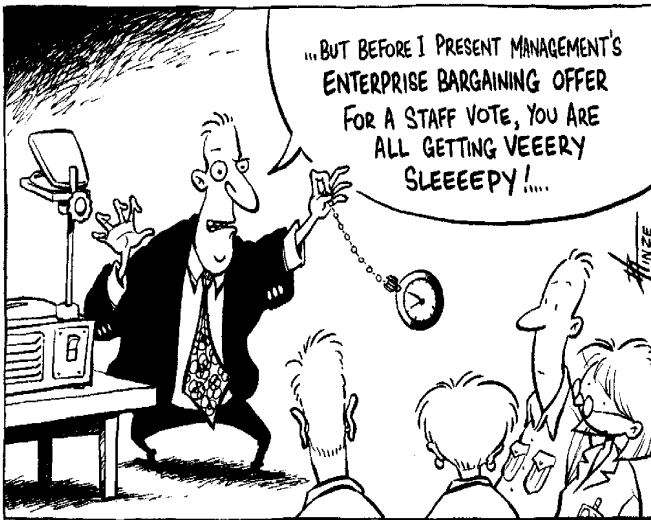
Rosemarie Bahr and Sally Leitch are responsible for the day-to-day running of CALM, and they answer to an executive of 15 people elected every

three years from across Canada.

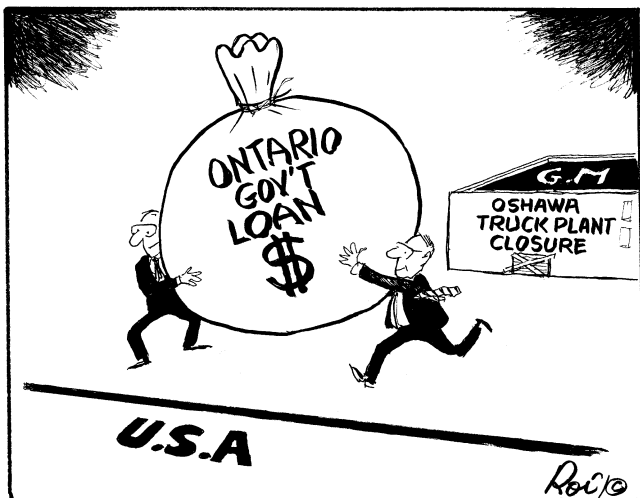
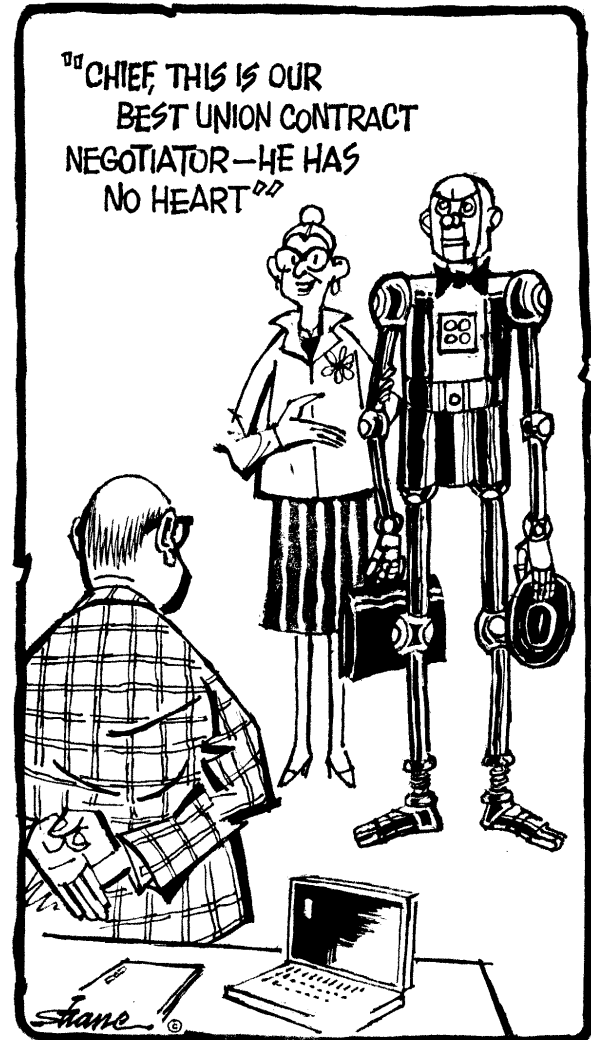
Reprinted for you on these pages is a selection of recent graphics from CALM to tickle your funny bone, or get your blood boiling.

Visit www.calm.ca to learn more about the Canadian Association of Labour Media.





"Careful. She's a tough negotiator. She can get a 3-year old out of a grocery store without buying a single piece of candy."



TAKE THE MONEY AND RUN



Faculty's Local 420 Executive Committee elected spring 2008

by Bernie Belanger and Wallace Rendell

For the benefit of new faculty here at Loyalist College, we reprint this article, updated and modified from The Bottom Line, Vol. 3, No. 1, April 2008.

During March-April 2008, Local 420 held elections for the following positions during two General Membership Meetings.

The results for elected stewards, the local executive, the health and safety representatives, and trustees are listed in the table below.

We know that this team will ensure that our collective agreement rights will be upheld, and that they will provide the best representation that they can.

| Local Executive Committee | | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|--|----------------------------------|
| President | Bernie Belanger | | | |
| Vice President | Pat Dockrill | | | |
| Chief Steward, Treasurer | Eugene Tay | | | |
| Secretary | Brian Gibb | | | |
| Stewards | | | | |
| Corporate Training & Skills | Brian Gibb | Karen Scott | | |
| Business, Biosciences, & Justice | Eric Bauer | Pat Dockrill | | Vicki Ryckman Wallace Rendell |
| Health & Human Studies | Bernie Belanger | Doug Lafreniere | | Robin Keller |
| Media & Building Sciences | Steve Bolton | John Rosebush | | |
| Steward-at-Large | Eugene Tay | | | |
| Trustees | Ron Ford | Deirdre Way | | |
| Joint Health & Safety Committee | John Mercer | Bernie Belanger | | |

Beijing's Olympics....continued from back page

impact on China's human rights record. The IOC never believed it would. While they may have stated this was one of their hopes when granting the games to China, they didn't believe anything lasting would happen soon.

Consider China. It is an ancient and populous mosaic of over 55 recognized ethnic groups. It has always been ruled by an iron fist, whether by a ruling emperor, or many disjunct feudal warlords. Colonial expansion, rebellions and civil wars over the centuries have cost millions of lives. In establishing the strong central rule of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the dictators recognized that such diversity and historical societal unrest could only be controlled through manipulating citizens to believe in one-party rule and the motherland and, when that didn't work, by squashing dissent. Tiananmen Square was a stark reflection of this reality.

Recent statements by IOC members better reflect their true perception of what the games might do for China with respect to human rights. In February 2008, IOC President Jacques Rogge said the Olympics can be a catalyst for change, but not a "panacea for all the ills of the world". More recently, Canadian Richard Pound, former head of the World Anti-doping Agency, claimed that no country that has hosted the games is ever the same again, and that the Olympics "will accelerate progress on human rights issues in China, but it won't happen over night". He stated: "I don't think you accomplish anything by isolating China and saying none of the rest of the world will come to your games. That would be really counterproductive...".



Quiet Reform May Be Starting

A fully-laden oil tanker moving full speed ahead at sea doesn't readily turn in the opposite direction. It takes time and effort to turn that ship around.

So goes the story for The Middle Kingdom—an undemocratic, despotic, and desperately poor nation for the past 6000 years. The Chinese Consul General in Toronto, Zhu Taoying, pointed out good-naturedly to the CBC that, "In China we only have 49 years of peaceful development".

With surprisingly rapid movement toward a vastly improved economic quality of life for many in China, with the World watching China throughout the Olympics, and with broad access to world views through rapidly evolving technologies, the Chinese people may have subtly started to turn that ship around, whether we perceive it or not.

Why Watch the Olympics?

I guess I watch the Olympics because I still admire the ideals set out by Pierre de Coubertin at the dawn of the

modern Olympic games. We can argue for days as to whether or not any or all of his ideals have been honoured in the Modern Era, but they still mean something to me. Some of these include:

- *The Olympic Games are for the world, and all nations must be admitted to them.*
- *Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy found in effort, the educational value of a good example, and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles.*
- *The Olympic Games were created for the exaltation of the individual athlete.*

All of his quotations were made in the context of sport (even number two, above); at no time did de Coubertin state that the Olympics should be a vehicle to force political change. To him, it was about the athletes, and the athletes alone, and it is we who have mistakenly tainted the Olympics with the added expectation that systemic political corruption and disparate political philosophies will be resolved simultaneously to our satisfaction.

When we stop forcing political issues and causes, and international differences-of-opinion, on what is meant to be the peaceful, inclusive and grandest stage of all for human athletic achievement, the Olympics, then we can all sit down together and admire every athlete's drive toward "Swifter, higher, stronger".

Sources: The Guardian, Wikipedia, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation



ALL THE NEWS FOR OPSEU
LOCAL 420

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Congratulations to Dragon Boater

Elinor Brunet, Professor of Biosciences, and her crew, Outer Harbour Dragon Boat Club Senior Women of Toronto, captured gold in the 2000 m, and two bronze in 200 and 500 m sprints, at the 6th International Dragon Boat Federation Club Crew World Championships, held in Malaysia, 31 July—3 August 2008. Once again, Canadian crews dominated the regatta.

Elinor is standing, back row, middle, glasses, no hat.

Leave politics at the door and let the athletes have the Olympic stage

by Wallace Rendell

Unlike Local 420's President Bernie Belanger and his resolution to not watch the 2008 Summer Olympics as a personal protest of China's abysmal human rights reputation (*The Bottom Line*, Vol. 3, No. 1), I admit that I don't have the spine to ignore such international sporting competition. When possible I grabbed large helpings of the spectacle that was the opening ceremonies, and any heat, repechage, or final involving Canadians. Ever since I was a boy, sports have been like food to me—regular meals, of great variety—I'm too weak to break the habit.

Of course, I view everything I see at an Olympics with a skeptical and critical eye—from the world records and even the gender of some of the participants, to the presentation of their "glorious" culture and society by any host nation. Rampant, persistent doping has coloured my view of the former; human rights violations and other past atrocities, the latter.

True to form, China quelled any evidence of unrest by their citizen's during the games. For example, they denied 77 applications to protest in three city parks earmarked for

such displays of democracy. The Vice-President of the Beijing Organizing Committee, Wang Wei, was quoted as saying that the issues had been "resolved through dialogue and communication—this is how we do it in Chinese culture".

Really? For two elderly women, Wu Dianyuan, 79, and Wang Xiuying, 77, simply *applying* to protest eviction from their homes near the Olympic site in 2001 has led to them receiving one-year sentences of "re-education through labour". Like a thumbed nose at the hopes of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and human rights organizations the world over, the sentence was handed down in the middle of the Olympics.

IOC View of Human Rights

It would be truly naïve of us to think that the coming of the Olympics would have any significant, immediate

...continued on p. 7