

Report on the Annual General Meeting – COPE Ontario
Sheraton Gateway, Toronto, Ontario
October 1-2, 2016

Greetings Sisters and Brothers:

We are pleased to submit this report on the Annual General Meeting of COPE Ontario held in Toronto on October 1 and 2, 2016. The agenda was full and included a rally on Saturday afternoon at Queen's Park organized by the Ontario Federation of Labour to show support for decent work and decent living wages calling for a minimum of \$15 an hour. The crowd enjoyed a break in the rain and gathered in front of the legislative assembly to the sound of music and voices from Union leaders (OFL, CLC, etc.).

The meeting reconvened in late afternoon with remarks from David Black, COPE National President, followed by a panel discussion on various subjects surrounding the theme of decent work and decent wages. This format was very informative and provided the participants with a deeper understanding of precarious working conditions members of COPE Ontario and their families must deal with on a daily basis in this province. The presenters on the panel brought forth personal experiences and knowledge on the matter which provided a deeper understanding of this situation that affects the working class, here in the province and now in 2016.

You will find attached the newsletters that were produced and distributed during the weekend outlining details of the event. You are also invited to visit the new website www.copeontario.ca for more information.

On Sunday, the Director and Regional reports presented an overview of challenges faced by the membership affiliated to COPE Ontario.

We were happy to learn that COPE Ontario, who will be celebrating 10 years in 2017, is moving forward with a strategic planning process that includes extensive consultation with the membership across the province. This exercise will give a voice to members on where and how they can better engage in a positive movement representing a diverse group of workers. The steering committee was named; and we are honoured that COPE Ontario has welcomed COPE 491's suggestion to possibly include another person on the committee. We want to encourage all COPE 491 members to answer the call when the consultation process opens. Again, we ask that you visit COPE Ontario's website on a regular basis for more information.

We also want to emphasize the importance for locals to inform young workers that a Summit organized by the CLC will be held in Ottawa on October 23-25, 2016. If you know of a young worker that may be interested in this Summit, please refer them to

<http://canadianlabour.ca/event-calendar>. The web page provides a link to all workshops being offered during the Summit.

The general meeting also included a presentation on the Union and Its Structure. We found this information useful as we were able to identify other locals within COPE Ontario that are similar in structure to COPE 491. We were able therefore to introduce ourselves to other participants in order to establish a connection for future reference, especially with the upcoming strategic planning exercise.

In conclusion, we wish to thank COPE 491 for delegating us to the COPE Ontario annual general meeting. It was a positive experience for us which could open the door to opportunities for engaging more COPE 491 members.

Submitted in solidarity by Lindsay Mills and Madeleine Vachon

Attach.



**NEW NATIONAL
PRESIDENT DAVID
BLACK WITH ED
BROADBENT**



**COPE ON SECRETARY
TREASURER & LOCAL 24
MEMBER THOM FOSTER
AT THE MIC**



**COPE LOCAL 550
MEMBER KATHERINE
MCAULIFFE AT THE MIC**

NEWSLETTER



COPE NATIONAL CONVENTION 2016

Welcome to the COPE Ontario Annual General Meeting! We are excited to spend this weekend together planning for our next convention and the future of COPE/SEPb. We had an incredible weekend with our sisters and brothers from across Canada at the COPE/SEPb 2016 National Convention. Our guest speakers were inspiring and engaged our membership throughout the weekend. We would like to once again thank outgoing National Regional VP Liz Fong for her contributions and dedication to COPE Ontario, COPE Local 343 and the National. We wish her all the best for her retirement.

We would also like to congratulate Regional VP (Seat Reserved for

*The National Convention
was a huge success with
many new faces joining
our leadership.*



Woman), sister Patty Clancy, on retaining her seat at the National. And finally, we would like to congratulate sister Valerie Roberts-Francis, our new National Regional VP. We are looking forward to an exciting three years for COPE/SEPB National.

A Message from our Director, Janice Best



Just four months from now, COPE Ontario will be celebrating its tenth anniversary. Our organization was created at a founding convention in 2007. It brought together the customs and culture of three separate and distinct organizations

The Mid Canada Council and the Central Ontario Council merged their finances, assets, liabilities, and staff together. At

the same time Local 343 moved its staff to the new entity. This centralization of services can only be described as a very positive, and constructive move for our Ontario organization.

With centralized services, and staff, we were able to provide better service, more education, bilingual representation, and have our own in house legal counsel. Without amalgamation, much of this would not be possible. The hiring of in house counsel has saved our locals hundreds of thousands of dollars, that would otherwise have been paid in legal fees.

Of the sixteen member Executive Board members elected at that founding convention, only two of the originals remain. With such impossibly high turnover, any of the newer members do not understand where we came from, all that we have accomplished, and how we met the challenges we faced as a brand new entity.

The Executive Board has agreed that it is time to review our organization to determine what changes may, or may not, be required going forward. In the next several months we will be conducting that organizational review. Organizationally, we have many strengths, and we have some weaknesses. We hope this important initiative will identify areas we need to change and improve, making us an even stronger and better organization. Here's to a fantastic weekend celebrating the growth and future of COPE Ontario.

A Fond Farewell to Liz Fong, National VP Region 2, Organizer & President of COPE 343



We cannot thank Liz enough for her invaluable contributions & dedication to COPE Ontario, COPE Local 343 and COPE National. Liz was integral in the formation of COPE and COPE Ontario. She will be greatly missed by her colleagues and fellow COPE sisters and brothers. All the best for your retirement! Solidarity!



CTV INTERVIEW WITH
SISTERS FROM COPE
LOCAL 96



COPE LEADERS
GETTING READY TO
MARCH WITH LABOUR



COPE 527 SISTERS AT
THE OFL RALLY FOR
DECENT WORK & PAY

NEWSLETTER

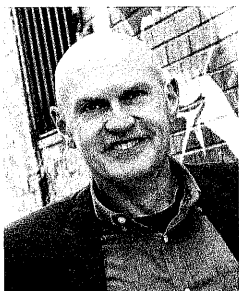


OFL RALLY FOR DECENT WORK & PAY

Welcome back to day 2 of the COPE Ontario Annual General Meeting. Thank you to all our members who joined us at the OFL rally for Decent Work and Pay! We were excited to have so many participants available to represent COPE Ontario here in Toronto for such a very important cause - we need decent work and pay now. A \$15 minimum wage is just the start of what we need to see happening in Ontario. A living wage for Toronto is considered to be \$18.52 an hour according to Living Wage TO, and \$16.50 an hour in Thunder Bay according to the Lakehead Social Planning Council, for two different geographic comparators. As former National President Simon Berlin highlighted in his opening remarks, the politicians, journalists and business owners opposing the \$15 minimum wage increase are making far more than \$15 an hour themselves. It is time for the government to stand up and demand that working people live above the poverty line. We were proud to march for Decent Work and Pay with our OFL & CLC brothers and sisters. End the precarious work cycle and demand \$15 and Fairness now!

The AGM resumed after the rally with a fantastic COPE Ontario Panel leading an informative evening of conversation and discussion around precarious work, marginalized workers, fair wages, decent work and the OFL campaign. Thank you to our panelists and moderator for their opinions, experiences, research, hard work and contributions.

Important Legal Changes to Combat Sexual Harassment, Glenn Wheeler



Important legal changes to combat sexual harassment at work and elsewhere are now in effect. Under Bill 132, employers had until September 8, 2016 to update policies and procedures to deal with sexual harassment at work.

The changes affecting employers are contained in amendments to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA), one of several laws being changed under a provincial government initiative. According to stats provided by the province, "28 per cent of Canadians say they have been on the receiving end of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours or sexually charged talk while on the job." According to the province, "sexual assault victimization rates are five times higher for women under the age of 35."

Bill 132 amends OHSA to expand the definition of "workplace harassment" to include "workplace sexual harassment," which includes vexatious and unwanted comments against a worker because of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, as well as sexual solicitation and advances.

Furthermore, an employer is required to put in place policies and procedures so that a worker who believes he or she has been the victim of workplace sexual harassment can report it and have the complaint investigated. Identifying information about the individuals involved will not be disclosed unless it is necessary to provide a remedy or if required by law.

Employers will be required to review the policy at least once a year and educate workers about the contents and procedures. If there is a Joint Health and Safety Committee, it will assist in the development of the policy and procedures. An inspector can order an investigation to be carried out by an external investigator at the expense of the employer.

Because the OHSA provides minimum benefits for Ontario workers, unions can rely on the new provisions as if they were contained in the collective agreement. In other words, even if your collective agreement does not contain policy and procedures covering sexual harassment, you can rely on the OHSA as if it was part of your agreement.

Welcoming our 30 New Members at Saugeen Credit Union, Bert Poulin

It is with great pleasure that we welcome 30 new members from the Saugeen Credit Union locations in the Bruce Peninsula to COPE Ontario.

In February 2015, during negotiations with Northern Credit Union (NCU), we discussed upcoming credit union mergers with the employer. After some lengthy discussions, it was agreed that any new employees in future mergers would fall under the COPE Agreement at Northern Credit Union because of our recognition and jurisdiction clause.

On September 1st, 2015, the employer notified us that the merger was official and that Northern Credit Union had acquired the Saugeen Credit Union locations in four different municipalities. We immediately requested a meeting with NCU to discuss the integration of these new members into our existing Collective Agreement. We successfully negotiated a Letter of Understanding (LOU) that would protect and benefit these new members during the transition period, as well as providing any members who decided to terminate their employment with a fair severance package.

This LOU also included site visits to all the locations, allowing us to meet with the employees and introduce them to our Union. They were able to voice their concerns and issues and speak with me, all during working hours. We also scheduled a membership meeting that evening as a "Meet and Greet" to discuss their fears, concerns and what COPE could provide for them. This was a huge success with all but one new member unable to attend. The new site steward was also elected that evening.

I would like to welcome our new Sisters and Brothers to our great union and I hope that they grow with us as strong activists within COPE and in the broader labour movement.



**Rapport sur l'assemblée générale annuelle
SEPB Ontario
Sheraton Gateway, Toronto, Ontario
Les 1 et 2 octobre 2016**

Salutations Consoeurs et Confrères,

Nous sommes heureuses de vous soumettre ce rapport sur notre participation à l'assemblée générale annuelle du SEPB Ontario qui a eu lieu à Toronto les 1 et 2 octobre 2016. L'ordre du jour consistait de rapports des dirigeants et dirigeantes, d'une discussion en panel, d'une présentation sur la structure du SEPB Ontario et de discours donnés par des invités spéciaux. L'après-midi du samedi nous a amené au ralliement à Queen's Park organisé par la Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses de l'Ontario pour appuyer les efforts vers un salaire minimum de 15 \$ l'heure et vers des conditions d'emploi dignes. Nous devions y être pour une bonne raison car la pluie a cessé au moment des présentations et de la musique.

L'assemblée a été rappelée à l'ordre en fin d'après-midi avec une allocution du président national du SEPB, David Black, suivie de la discussion du panel sur divers sujets entourant les conditions d'emploi. Les personnes du panel ont su approfondir nos connaissances sur les conditions d'emploi précaires qui existent encore de nos jours et qui sont vécues par les membres du SEPB en Ontario.

Vous trouverez ci-joint les bulletins de nouvelles qui furent distribués au cours de la fin de semaine fournissant des détails de l'événement. Nous vous invitons également à visiter le site web mis à jour récemment pour de plus amples renseignements (www.copeontario.ca).

Le dimanche avant-midi était consacré aux rapports soumis par les vice-présidences régionales. Les sujets abordés nous ont permis d'avoir un aperçu global des défis que connaissent les membres du SEPB Ontario.

Les délégués ont été heureux d'apprendre que le SEPB Ontario entame un processus de planification stratégique comprenant des consultations exhaustives auprès des membres de la province. Cet exercice permettra aux membres d'exprimer leur opinion et de s'engager positivement dans le mouvement. Les membres du Comité de direction ont été nommés et nous sommes heureuses que le SEPB Ontario a retenu notre suggestion d'inclure un autre groupe à ce comité. Nous encourageons tous les membres du SEPB 491 de répondre à l'appel lors de la consultation. Nous vous invitons une fois de plus à consulter régulièrement le site Web pour vous tenir au courant.

Nous désirons par ailleurs soulever l'importance d'informer les jeunes travailleuses et travailleurs de la section locale qu'un Sommet a été organisé par le CTC du 23 au 25 octobre 2016 à Ottawa. Si vous connaissez une jeune travailleuse ou un jeune travailleur, veuillez la référer ou le référer au <http://congresdutravail.ca/calendrier>. Ils y trouveront les liens aux ateliers offerts au cours du Sommet.

Comme mentionné, l'assemblée générale comprenait aussi une présentation sur le Syndicat et sa structure. Les renseignements inclus étaient très intéressants et nous a permis de faire des contacts avec d'autres sections locales du SEPB Ontario dont la structure est semblable à la nôtre. Un des avantages de ces assemblées générales est la possibilité de réseautage entre les dirigeants et dirigeantes des sections locales et cette présentation nous a permis d'établir des connections avec d'autres groupes, ce qui pourrait être avantageux lors du processus de planification stratégique.

En conclusion, nous aimerions remercier le SEPB 491 de nous avoir offert l'occasion de participer à cette assemblée générale qui s'est avérée très intéressante et positive. Nous croyons que certaines portes se sont ouvertes afin d'encourager la mobilisation des membres du SEPB 491.

Soumis en toute solidarité par Lindsay Mills et Madeleine Vachon

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