

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT SEPTEMBER 2014**

### **NEGOTIATIONS**

The following agreements have been negotiated and ratified since my last report of May 2014:

#### **Local 81**

Bombardier – Thunder Bay, ON – Extended to 2015

#### **Local 343**

CUPE Local 79 – Toronto, ON

Canadian Actors' Equity Association – Toronto, ON

Healthcare Municipal Employees Credit Union – Hamilton, ON

Joint Apprenticeship Council – Toronto, ON

Ombudsman Ontario – Toronto, ON – Extended to 2015

UNIFOR Legal Services – Toronto, ON

UNIFOR Local 199 – St. Catharines, ON – Rolled over

UNIFOR Local 462 – Milton, ON

UNIFOR Local 504 – Hamilton, ON

UNIFOR Local 636 – Woodstock, ON

Your Neighbourhood Credit Union – Waterloo, Windsor, ON

#### **Local 468**

Thames Valley Children Centre – London, ON

The duration of these contracts ranged from one (1) year to four (4) years. Increases to wage rates range between one (1%) percent and three (3%) percent. There were improvements to the bereavement leave, new language to lay-off and recall and overall improvements to the language currently in the collective agreements. Increases of 1.5% in lieu of benefits to part-time employee benefits, to RRSP, to meal allowances and additional personal days.

We currently have thirty-six (36) agreements, in total, open, and at various stages of bargaining, throughout our local unions.

#### **Hospital Locals**

We currently have two (2) hospital bargaining units waiting or have confirmed meeting dates for interest arbitration under the Hospital Labour Disputes Arbitration Act (HLDA).

## **Interest Arbitration**

Local 523 – Sensenbrenner Hospital – We have received an award August 15, 2014. The Board awarded salary increases in each year of the agreement, increases in shift and weekend premiums, call-back pay, standby pay and increases to vision, chiropractic and physiotherapy services and improvements to the bereavement leave language.

Local 521 – Dryden Regional Health Centre – We received an award June 25, 2014. The Board awarded salary increases in each year of the agreement and lump sum payments in some years of the agreement. There are increases in shift and weekend premiums and increases in vision, chiropractic and physiotherapy services.

Local 523 – Sensenbrenner Hospital F/ T and P/T Employee's – We met with the Conciliation Officer and received a NO BOARD Report. We were scheduled to a hearing on August 14th in Thunder Bay and prior to the scheduled meeting we were successful in reaching an award under HILDA. The following term under the Interest Arbitration award was a 5 year agreement from April 1st 2011 to March 31st 2016 with wage increments of 2%, 2%, .7%, .7%, .7% with a lump sum of .7% in each of the last 3 years and increases in the following; Call back, Standby, Shift and Weekend Premium. There was also a \$25.00 increase in the Health and Welfare Benefit in 2015. Please note that there was a slight difference in the Lab Tech. Department in their wage increments, they received the following; a lump sum payment in year 2011 and 2012 (retro. Pay) which range from \$0.33 to \$0.44 per hour base on the grid in their classification and a 2.75% increase in year 2015.

## **LOCAL UNIONS**

### **COPE Local 343**

On June 14 and 15, the Local held their first Annual General Meeting in Port Eglin. About seventy (70) delegates were in attendance.

### **COPE Local 550**

The Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) released a paper entitled "Enhancing Community Care for Ontarians, (ECCO) calling for the elimination of all fourteen (14) Community Care Access Centres in the province of Ontario. The report proposes that a role of care coordination should be transferred to organizations such as Nurse-Practitioner-led-clinics, Family Health Teams, Community Health Centres and Aboriginal Health Access Centres.

The committee dealing with this issue met again in May as this issue seems to be getting some more attention at this time.

## **MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

Bill 122, School Boards Collective Bargaining Act, 2013 received Royal Assent on April 9, 2014.

COPE Ontario is part of the Ontario Council of Education Workers (OCEW) which is a group of smaller unions who formed a "Council" and has been recognized by the Minister of Education which enables us to negotiate central issues with the Ministry and School Board Representatives who will be negotiating on behalf of all the school boards (Employers).

Don Talarico and Bert Poulin are the delegates on the Council for COPE Ontario and Lynda Cook is the alternate. We have participated in the many conference calls that the Council and the Ministry, School Board Representative and the OCEW have scheduled the next meeting on October 9th.

## **PAY EQUITY AND JOB EVALUATION**

Currently, we have six (6) files that reps are currently working on. These files are either on a yearly maintenance, about to begin process, awaiting decisions and/or redoing existing files.

## **BENEFIT REPRESENTATIVE FILES**

There are currently forty-one (41) files being handled by our Benefits Representative. Four (4) files have been closed. Of those four (4), two (2) have been resolved by our member returning to work and by the other by settlement. The open claims are in the following areas: WSIB (Workplace Safety and Insurance Board) twenty (20) claims, LTD (Long Term Disability) eighteen (18) claims, CPP Disability (Canada Pension Plan) seven (7) claims. Some members have claims for multiple benefits, hence the total number of claims listed by category is larger than the number of open files with some files that have been denied and appealed.

## **GRIEVANCES AND ARBITRATION**

There are currently around 131 grievances at various stages. Forty-six (46) of these grievances have been arbitrated, or advanced to arbitration, referred to counsel and/or awaiting dates and hearings. Thirteen (13) of the grievances have been resolved; three (3) were withdrawn, dismissed or adjourned; and eight (8) are held in abeyance. Others are waiting for decisions.

## **ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS TRIBUNAL**

COPE Local 343 is an intervener in an application by a former employee of the Ontario Ombudsman claiming discrimination based on race in a staff fundraising event ("slave for a day"). The next hearing will be December 2014.

COPE 343 is an intervenor in a complaint from former Workers Health and Safety Centre employee Betty Campbell-Alldis. We are awaiting a ruling on the employer's motion to dismiss.

COPE 343 is intervenor in an application filed by a former employee of UNITE HERE Local 75. A mediation date is to be scheduled.

## **EDUCATION**

We held six (6) workshops that were held in Edmonton, Toronto, Sudbury and Kapuskasing.

The Fall/Winter schedule which runs from September 2014 to December 2014, was sent out to Locals' the first week of August. A new course has been added, "The Basics of Being a COPE Union Representative"

## **ORGANIZING**

The organizers follow up on all leads but only pursue those that fit our mandate and criteria with Director approval. Our organizers are also looking into securing google key words that could potentially give more customized leads and targets that fit within our size and demographics. The current issue with the majority of the leads is that they do not fit the 25+ threshold as set out in the Constitution.

## **COMMUNICATIONS and POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

COPE Ontario held its 2<sup>nd</sup> Triennial Convention at the Hyatt Hotel in Toronto. We had a great turn out. COPE turned 10 years old on June 20, 2014. Labour Day was celebrated by many of our members, thousands turned out for the Labour Day Parade in Toronto. Hamilton also has a parade, and it was well attended as well.

Many labour councils arrange activities around Labour Day, and all local unions are invited to participate.

### **Municipal Elections**

October 27 is around the corner to vote for Mayor, City Councillors and School Trustees. Please check your local Labour Council website to see which candidates they are endorsing, and get out and cast your vote for labour friendly candidates.

## **MENTORING PROGRAM**

This Board decided in January of this year that we want to introduce a mentoring program to prepare interested, and qualified, members to take on staff roles. It is expected that a number of positions will open up over the next half dozen years. It is important that we have capable people trained to move into these job openings.

The Mentoring committee met yesterday to fine tune some of the elements of the program. Further refinement, and development, is required. We have two more meetings scheduled before the Board meets again. The targets we have set is roll out at Spring AGM, with implementation of the program, with its first participants in the Fall of 2015.

We will be offering training in four different areas: organizing, instructor/facilitator, benefits representative, and business representative.

## **OBSERVATIONS and CONCLUSION**

Certainly our jobs as local union leaders, staff, and officers do not get easier. Issues in the workplace seem to be more complex, more work is expected with fewer people, and companies, and governments are cutting wherever they can find some place to do so.

We will need to be ever vigilant to ensure our members' rights are protected, and that we maintain our collective bargaining rights. We need to ensure we are relevant in our members' lives, and not viewed as anachronistic organizations well passed our best before date.

We must make our programs interesting for youth. We need to examine our practices, and structures, to ensure that they are relevant in today's world, and that they are inclusive in our multi-cultural society. We must examine what needs to change in our structures to ensure that all feel welcome, regardless of race, culture, or sexual orientation.

Education is a never ending project. Workplace turnover is often brisk, and training needs to be offered often to keep our members and local union officers equipped to fulfill their roles.

It was good to see the enthusiasm everyone exhibited yesterday, as you got into your committee meetings. I think we have a talented group of people on our current board, and I am confident that, working together with our very talented, and dedicated staff, we can move our organization forward to meet the challenges we will face in the coming months, and years.

I look forward to working with all of you to build COPE Ontario into a bigger, and even better organization.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Best  
Director

*cope343*