

The **C.U.P.E.** **Connection**



October 2005

Here's hoping we all had a safe and happy summer!!

EPCOR/DRAINAGE

On 28 September 2005, after more than 20 hours of debate and 31 presentations from concerned citizens, **City Council voted 7-6 to reject EPCOR's proposal** that it surrender ownership and operation of Edmonton's sanitary sewage and stormwater drainage system to EPCOR.

CUPE Local 30 would like to thank the hundreds of Edmontonians who took the time and spent the effort to become informed about this very complex issue, and who shared their opinion with City Council.

Several Councillors mentioned during the public hearing that they had been inundated by phone calls and e-mails from citizens opposed to the proposal. **There is no doubt that you helped shape the outcome of this debate.**



**CUPE Local 30 Supports
Telus Workers!**

**Next General Meeting on
October 26th at 4:30 pm**



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Got a Story?

We'd love to hear from you!

Please forward your submissions for the Newsletter to the Local 30 office either by mail, interdepartmental mail or email:

local30@shawbiz.ca

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Signed Articles Do Not
Necessarily Reflect the Views or
Policies of
CUPE Local 30

All Articles are subject to approval by our Editorial Committee



Want to get hold of one of our Business Agents?

rickcolwell@shawbiz.ca

billspring@shawbiz.ca

Relief BA (Oct/05): kirkoates@shawbiz.ca

Flowers & Baskets

We wish all the best to our
Brothers & Sisters
Speedy Recovery!

Jan Tollenaar	Leonard Thompson
Ralph Heighton	Lyle Kreamer
Martin Murphy	Norman Woroschuk
Danny Dunn	Arnold Thomas
Bob Acker SR.	Bruce McDonald
Kevin Milley	Bill Quilty
Selby Dzemaalovic	Philip Robertson
Roger Aubin	
Mark Kinahan	



With Sincere Sympathy

We wish to express our deepest Sympathy to our Brothers and Sisters who have recently lost a loved one

Don Robertson	Paul Demeulenaere
Mike McCann	Jim McGillis
Maurice Pelletier	Mike Alexander
Brenda Watson	Brian Quaale
James Oakes	Terry Ream
Laura Farmer	John McIlwrath
Sandra Hellike	Randy Girodet
Dennis Mol	

The Families of :

Derek Woodman,
Brian Aherne, Eugene Woywitka,
Brent Brisson, Leonard Wysocki,
George Snider, Victor Heinz,
Peter Dowhan, Bruce Gaw,
Eli Pich, and Peter Balutis

Up-Coming Events

General Meeting: October 26, 2005
Kids' Christmas Party: December 3, 2005

President's report: One battle won, another just beginning

Last month, the citizens of Edmonton and we as CUPE members won an enormous victory at city hall. In a dramatic, narrow vote, council voted to keep drainage as a city department rather than move it over to EPCOR.

Were it not for the efforts of CUPE, and our coalition partners I truly believe the vote would have gone the other way.

While there is no question that we have a good relationship with EPCOR as an employer, this move could have had a negative impact on Edmontonians. At the very least it would have disrupted our members in both the Drainage department as well as our members in EPCOR.

Drainage's mandate is to serve the public. If drainage was run by EPCOR, services could have been cut and fees could be increased. Urban planning would be transferred from elected city councillors to an unelected, unaccountable to the public, board of directors – most of whom don't even live in Edmonton.

It was a great victory, and there is a lot of credit to go around. Our drainage committee worked tirelessly for months to build a great campaign, and we should all be grateful for their efforts. Together at union meetings we passed the motions, spent the money and gathered our people power to make a difference, we were strong and united and we achieved the goal we set.

It's in battles like this one that we should be glad to belong to the largest union in Canada. CUPE was able to provide research assistance, a national perspective, and a host of resources to call upon in our battle. It also paid for a large portion of the costs associated with the campaign.

We are soon going to have to call upon the resources of CUPE National as we enter into bargaining with the City of Edmonton. This is not going to be an easy round. We are expecting to have many battles with the City to get the contract improvements you've told us we need. The strength of CUPE will be essential in this battle.

But as comforting as that strength is, we can't simply rely on CUPE National. In order to get through this round of bargaining successfully, we are going to have to present a strong, united front to the City. This doesn't mean we can't have differences within our union, those are a healthy part of a democratic organization.

But we have to be united when we face our employer. If we are united, and we are strong, we will get the contract we deserve.

Cupe Local 30 at this year's Labour Day BBQ:

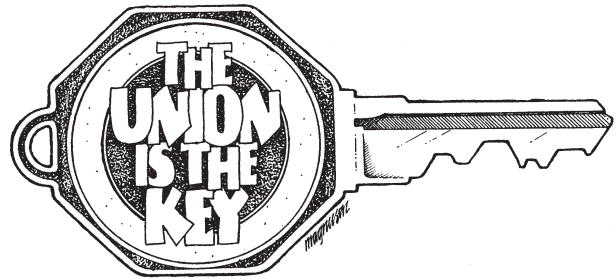


ANOTHER VERY BUSY SUMMER

Another very busy summer is coming to a close, all CUPE Local 30 members can be very proud of the services that we have provided for our citizens. With all the special events that have taken place this summer, you have showcased your skills and talents in every way.

We have done a lot of work at the union hall to make us a better Local, I wanted to update you on some changes that we have accomplished from the Shop Steward Restructuring Committee.

Every 5 years all stewards have to go back to the members that they serve and be reaffirmed a steward, this should make your shop steward more accountable to you and your area needs. If you are presently having problems with your steward contact your Chief Shop Steward or the President, we need to hear from you so that we can help you resolve the problem.



We also have implemented immediate training for our new stewards; prior to the changes, our stewards had to wait until courses were available. No more. All new stewards are given a correspondence course on stewarding: this course is offered through CUPE Alberta and it gives the stewards a jump start to the education that they need to better serve the members.

Stewards are becoming more involved with member and management conflicts, they are the front line support. You are encouraged to contact your steward to resolve your problem. If your area does not have a steward or your steward is not doing their job then you should be contacting your Chief Steward. Do not let your issues go unresolved.

The Steward Restructuring Committee is working on many more issues and ideas to improve the steward body. You can help us, how you ask, you need to become more involved with the business of the local and you can do that by attending the membership meeting held every fourth Wednesday of the month. Meetings are usually about two hours long and are held at the Local. Presently there are a handful of members who are deciding YOUR future.

As we head into fall and the winter months, all the best to you and your family and we hope to see you at the union hall.

D. Mol

Can't Get to See Your Business Agent???

Have you ever come into the Local 30's office to see a B.A., only to find that there isn't a Business Agent available? They are either away at meetings (grievance or otherwise) or are busy with a member.

Perhaps next time, please try phoning and making an appointment to see the person that you want to see about a problem. You can't just walk in and expect someone to drop everything and see you. It makes it much easier for the Business Agents and also much easier for the front office staff if you call ahead and make an appointment. This way you will not be disappointed and annoyed that you were unable to talk with someone.

J. Figol

CUPE Local 30



Children's Christmas Party

**Location: ACT Recreation Centre
Rundle Park 2909 – 113 Avenue
10:00am to 1:00pm**

Saturday, December 3, 2005

SANTA WILL BE THERE TOO!

**Santa will be giving out small gifts to our Members' children
(Up to and including "Eleven" years old)**

**In order for your children to receive a gift from Santa,
you must contact the Union Office at 426-6050
to pre-register your Children**

**NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2005
NO EXCEPTIONS!**

**Entertainment for all Children
Sleigh Rides, Balloon Man, Face Painting, Magician, Food and Refreshments**

CUPE Local 30 Union Office – 426-6050

Membership cards must be presented at the Door



"We're doing a seminar on growing old gracefully."

What is the Alberta Society for Pension Reform?

The Society was incorporated in April 2001. Since then, it has been lobbying the Provincial Government about a number of issues inherent in the three largest government pension plans – the Local Authorities Pension Plan (LAPP), the Alberta Teachers’ Retirement Fund (ATRF) and the Public Service Pension Plan (PSPP).

On November 26, 2004, the Society filed a class action lawsuit against the Province of Alberta and all LAPP, PSPP and ATRF employers (487 in total) for a total claim of \$3.75 billion. The claim related specifically to LAPP is for \$1.25 billion.

Who are the members of the Society and how is it funded?

The Society is an independently registered society, whose stated goal is to improve pension benefits for working and retired members of the ATRF, LAPP and PSPP. The Society has an unpaid volunteer executive. Kenneth Smith is the President of the Society. Society memberships, at a cost of \$15.00 per year, cover the cost of running the Society. The Society is also approaching unions, employer associations, and opposition political parties across Canada to ask for support in the lawsuit.

What is the lawsuit about?

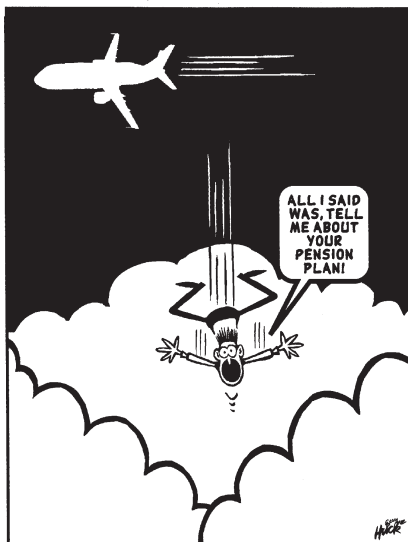
The Society believes that they have discovered a fundamental flaw in the way the pensions are calculated. One issue that surfaced a couple of years ago revolved around inconsistent wording in the regulation that led to a “mismatch” between a participant’s highest five years average earning and the Year’s Maximum Pensionable Earnings (YMPE) used to calculate the size of the pension benefits. This “mismatch” cost participants retiring after the 5 per cent wage rollback in 1995 approximately 2-3 per cent of their pension entitlements.

The Society claims that current plan members are charged a contribution rate based on 2 percent of their earnings, but only receive benefits based on 1.4 percent of their earnings.

What will be happening next in the lawsuit?

At this time, only the Government has been served with the lawsuit. The Society has until November 2005 to serve other named parties.

Once all the parties are served, there are still Statements of Defence to be filed. There are quite a number of legal processes that will have to occur before the lawsuit can go before a judge. All of the various legal processes involved will mean that it will be a long time before this matter goes to court, if it ever does.



What does this lawsuit by the Society mean for my Local Authorities Pension?

At this time there will be no impact on the operations of LAPP or any effect on current retiree's benefits or future retiree's benefits.

At this time, to the best knowledge of the LAPP Board of Trustees, only the Provincial Government has been served with the Statement of Claim. The Government will be vigorously defending against the Claim.

Regarding this statement of claim against the LAPP by the Society for Pension Reform, the LAPP Board is stating that "with respect to all the issues that have previously come to the Board's attention, the Board has concluded that the plan has been administered, contributions collected, and benefits paid in accordance with the law and the plan rules as they existed at the relevant times." Furthermore, if this goes to Court, there will likely be an appeal, which will take considerable period of time in the Courts.

Is LAPP flawed?

The benefit formula for the Pension Plans is not flawed and retirees are receiving the pension they are promised. The formula for each plan is set out in legislation and is published in the plan member's handbooks and other plan documents, and has always been clearly stated to members.

LAPP is financially sound; the unfunded liabilities that built up during the 1980's when the Government threw pension contributions into general revenues have been eliminated.

The "flaw" in our pension plans is that they aren't top-of-the-line models, they're mid-line plans.

What do I have to do personally as a contributing LAPP member?

This court action does not require any action by LAPP members.

What does my CUPE Local have to do?

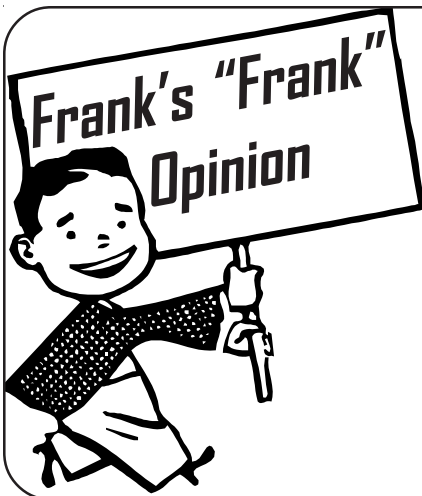
At this time, each CUPE Local does not have to take any action. Further information about this court action will be provided by CUPE when it becomes available.

What does my CUPE Local do if approached by the Society?

At this time, a wait and see attitude would be the best approach for the locals. We are aware that the Society may be contacting those unions and union members who are contributing to the LAPP.

CUPE will be obtaining a legal opinion regarding the Society's lawsuit in order to provide perspective on what the lawsuit is about and its chances of success. We would ask that Local Unions await this opinion before making any decisions regarding the Society's approaches and requests for funds.





How much importance do you attach to decisions that are made at City Hall that could affect your future as a City of Edmonton employee, especially when Council are pressured to transfer its authority to some other group. Very recently City Council was asked to transfer Drainage to EPCOR.

When decision making is transferred to large corporations or multinationals the main objective becomes maximizing profits and that can lead to many changes to its operations within its jurisdiction. A clear case at the present time can be seen in the oil industry where the price of gas and oil is increasing at a great rate and although we own the gas and oil and despite all the government's bluster they are helpless to make changes and that is why council should not make changes to its present position.

Frank McGregor

RETIRING OR THINKING OF RETIRING?

Fall is quickly upon us and now is the time to get motivated to take classes, join clubs and do those little things that you have been talking about doing once you retire.

If you have retired or are thinking of retiring , this is a great club that you must join. It is called the Society of Retired City of Edmonton Employees Association. They meet for lunch on the fourth Friday pf the month at St. Andrew's Church at 12810-111 Avenue.

The lunches usually have guest speakers, speaking on topics relative to retirees. There are several activities held during the year and it is a good chance for you to get out and talk with fellow retirees.

For more information please call Thelma Hanson at 454-5630 or John Somerville at 476-2581. - J.Figol

TODAY'S UNION WORKER



IS TOMORROW'S UNION RETIREE!

Northlands Park now hiring Temporary and Casual Labourers for the Farmfair International & Canadian Finals Rodeo for more info see the website www.northlands.com.

Congratulations to Selby and Kristian on their new baby girl

