



# THE NO BULLETIN

JANUARY 2001

## It's time for Regional and Convention elections!

Happy New Year everyone! I do hope we all had a Merry Christmas.

Well, it's that time of year again: Convention. This year there will be a regional election, on March 17, to elect our Region 2 Executive Board Members. From these newly elected board members we will elect our executive board of OPSEU including 'Leah's job' (President) and the Vice President-Treasurer during convention. Convention will be held April 5, 6 and 7 (Thursday through Saturday)

Our Convention status allows for four delegates to attend with full voting privileges. Our local also funds the expenses of two alternates. Our policy states that those alternates requiring daycare make use of the excellent daycare provided by OPSEU at the Sheraton Centre to help defray the cost to the local. Alternates have no voting status but come to observe the proceedings. In the event of an emergency that results in a delegate leaving convention, the alternate would assume delegate status.

If you are planning to run for a delegate or alternate position, you must be available to attend both the Regionals and Convention.

Right now we are in the middle of negotiations. We have met fourteen times to date and although it is running smoothly, it is going slow. Joint Job Evaluation is the absolute number one issue slowing us down. We realize how impor-

tant JJE is so we certainly don't want to rush through it. Please be patient we are meeting regularly.

Speaking of meetings I hope to see you at our upcoming general membership meeting. We wish to put forth some resolutions and constitutional amendments and we must achieve quorum to do this.

Please everyone, come on out, let your opinion be heard. We are on your side!

*In Solidarity*  
*Rob Atkin*

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## Saying it Succinctly

OPSEU 415/Local lines/Calm

Pythagorean theorem: 24 words

Lord's Prayer: 66 words

Archimedes' Principle: 67 words

Ten Commandments: 179 words

Gettysburg Address: 286 words

Declaration of Independence: 1,300 words

U.S. Governments regulations on the sale of cabbage: 26,911 words.

# GOT A PROBLEM?



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# TELL YOUR STEWARD!

## Front line defense!

*Dino McDonnell*

Shift change?!?! I have to work tomorrow? But I was going to see the Bluejays tomorrow, it's my scheduled day off!!! Can the Company do this to me? Who can tell me what I need to know fast?

Sometimes we all have questions about our rights as workers in the Niagara Parks, but knowing who to ask to get them answered can sometimes be as big a problem. Believe it or not, some supervisors don't know what they can and can't do according to our contract. Some supervisors may know and *still* do what they want. That is unless we as a group are educated in our rights and inform our supervisors when they are wrong.

So where do I go, you ask? Well, the best person to ask is the person who best knows both your job and location as well as your boss. That person is your *shop steward*. The shop steward has been the backbone of unions since they started, back when the steward had to collect dues money every pay day off company property.

Today, the stewards main jobs are to make workers aware of their rights and to file grievances on behalf of those workers whose rights have been violated. The benefit of having many stewards is that they understand different jobs and know different people, therefore making it easier to find someone you know and trust with your questions.

So the next time you have a question about your rights, ask your shop steward, you may like what they say.

*And in case you are wondering about the answer to this imaginary scheduling dilemma... you can find the answer in your contract. Article 5.03 if you are full time and article 42.02 if you are seasonal... or you can ask your steward.*

# What's up with seasonal benefits? 8

Marie Stokes

I have fielded a few questions on benefits lately and felt that, as a member of the Seasonal benefits committee that I should bring you up to date on where things stand.

In late November, all of our seasonal employees (over 540) received a benefit meeting notice in the mail. We held a benefit meeting at the Plumbers Hall December 13. The purpose of this meeting was to get a better feel for what you the membership wanted in the way of benefits and how many people were interested in purchasing benefits at all. Sadly, only 47 people attended the meeting. (Less than 10% of the seasonal membership). We are not sure if the poor weather was a factor, or if the interest just isn't there for group benefits.

We had scheduled two presentations with two different approaches to coverage. OPSEU Benefit Trust did not make their planned presentation, which was disappointing as the meeting was booked according to OPSEU's schedule.. Our second presenter, the president of Ball, Hanson and Howlett attended and gave the members an outline of the same presentation that he gave to our joint committee.

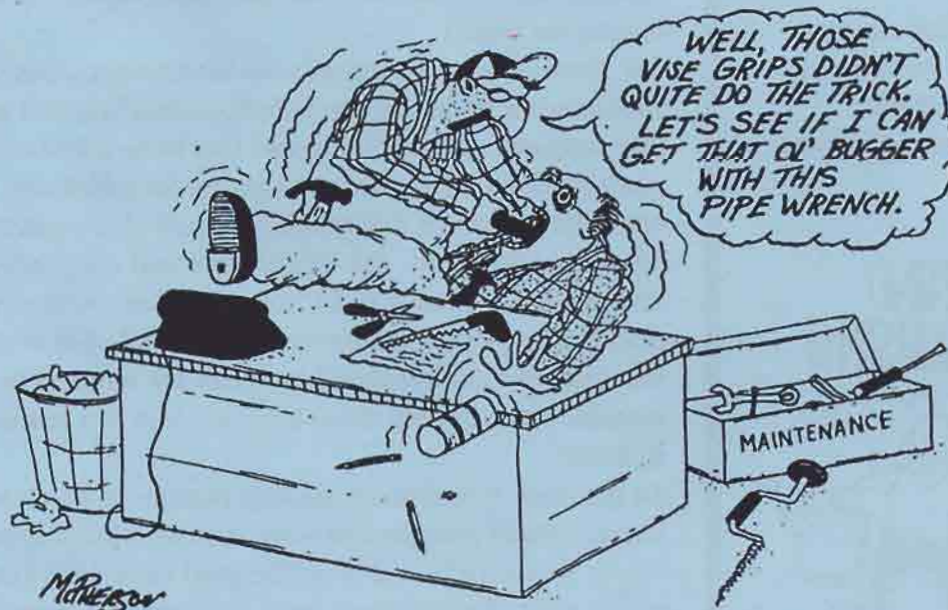
Reaction to the meeting seemed to be cautious optimism. But it was difficult to come to any definite consensus when the members had none of the OPSEU material to compare to. We had hoped to have something more concrete in the form of a package available when the

seasonals start back in April. Things are still a little up in the air and as a result it may be difficult to promise a package by then. Please have patience, this is a very complex issue.

In the meantime, I'd like to pass on some valuable information from Mr. Hanson. If you or your household spends a large part of your income on prescription drugs, the Trillium Drug Plan can help cover the cost.

After you spend a certain amount on prescriptions each year, you will receive drug benefits. This amount is called your deductible. The deductible is based on the number of people in your household and the household's net income. The deductible is approximately 4% of your total income. Example: a family of three with a total household income of \$19,000 would get coverage after paying for the first \$289 of prescription costs.

**There is no cost to apply to the plan, simply ask your pharmacist for a Trillium Plan application and carefully fill out the form.** There is an instruction manual with the application. All you require is your previous years tax statements and a valid health card. I urge you all to take advantage of this free service. It may help tide you over until we get something in the works at the Parks!



THUS FAR, FRANK WASN'T TOO IMPRESSED WITH THE COMPANY'S DENTAL PLAN.

# Through the Grapevine

My apologies for leaving this section of the newsletter out for the past few issues. I have not kept a good handle on what has been happening around the park and no calls have come in from members with news. I thought it would be fitting to use this heading to congratulate those bargaining unit employees who have obtained new full time status in the year 2000 and the beginning of 2001.

We are sad to see some of our bargaining unit members join the ranks of the excluded, but we wish them all the best. Most of these jobs have been a result of the compliment review. I'd like to welcome those employees that are new to the Parks. In some cases the successful candidate for the position has been with the parks seasonally for more than 15 years. Our hats off to all!!

Peter Aleo: Truck Driver/Labourer,  
Cliff Bergman: Golf Course Mechanic  
Supervisor, Legends (excl)

Gary Bird: Painter

Shawn Black: Police Constable

Lynda Blackley: Cashier

Phyllis Burke: Secretary, food services

Eileen Cullen: Purchasing assistant

Mike Daniels: Truckdriver/Labourer

Lance Dobbin: Police Sergeant

Melissa Harvey: Marketing Communications Assistant

Bob Herniak: Carpenter  
Wayne Hoeschle: Grower  
Jennifer Homen-Camden: Provincial Offences Officer

Martha Lauder: Staffing Clerk  
Anita Marrara: Secretary, Human Resources

Gerry Migneault: Truck Driver/Labourer

Tom Newton: Assistant Golf Course Superintendent, Legends (excl)

Domenic Pansino: Litterpicker/Labourer 3

Lori-ann Primerano: Office Clerk, Revenue Office

Shelly Reed: Food /Bev Secretary

Carl Renshaw: Police Constable

Cheryl Richards: Cashier

Kim Robertson: Payroll Clerk

Assunta Romaniello: Seamstress

Gord Rosa: Mason Supervisor (excl)

Jason Seaward: Provincial Offences Officer

Domenic Skrebeic: Truckdriver/Labourer

Cathy Sterensinic: Supervisor Aerocar (excl)

Josephine Wallis: Office Clerk, Distribution Centre

Christine Zahra: Cashier

## Looking for you support! Walking for Multiple Sclerosis.

The 'Niagara Parks Greenhouse Walkers' will be hitting the pavement for Multiple Sclerosis again this year. We have participated in the Super Cities WALK for MS for the past two years, raising over \$2000 in sponsorships and donations for this worthy cause. I am proud to say that our team has been awarded two plaques for participation and high pledge averages. The ten Kilometer walk will be held Sunday April 22 rain or shine (and believe me, we are hoping for shine)

We thank those co-workers who have so generously supported us in the past and we hope that you will continue that support this year. We would like to surpass our last years pledge amount and are looking for additional sponsors by way of this article. We will gladly accept any amount of donation, the MS Society will issue official tax receipts for donations of \$15 or more. Just think what we could raise if every employee participated.. For every \$500 we raise, we can provide 2 batteries for scooters or a portable ramp to help those affected with MS retain some mobility

To get more information, make a pledge, or if you would like to collect pledges and walk with us, please contact Marie Stokes (357-4219) or Sue Stoll (354-1721) or come see us at the Parks Greenhouse. Hope to hear from you soon!



# Hazard assessment training on the move!

It's finally here!!

Although still ongoing, the hazard assessment of workplaces of the Niagara Parks has finally reached a point that we can start into specific hazard training. The workplace assessments that Jody Cant and I have done this past year, coupled with your concerns and training requests have been compiled into a report that I have presented to the health and safety department and the Joint Committee. Together with Bill Poole we have identified over 100 areas that require additional training. The new health and safety legislation requires not only certified members to complete the training, but also the workers that are exposed to the hazards.

With the backing of the Joint Committee and Bill Poole, I have contacted the Ontario Service Safety Alliance (OSSA) to get the process rolling. Training courses ranging from 2-8 hours will be starting in early February. The sheer numbers of people needing training has made it necessary to prioritize our course topics and to offer each course several times over the course of the year. We hope to cover twenty-five topics this year,, ensuring that all our certified members, and every worker that is exposed to the hazard as part of their job are fully trained.

Our long term goal ambitious. We will cover twenty five topics per year until all aspects have been covered. We will also be training all new employees and offering refresher training so all employees stay current with the information and finally we will be developing a list of all relevant health and safety training for each job and job site.

This training is not a part of the training being conducted by Katherine Fisher. It is coordinated and run through the Health and Safety Office. There are enough dates set through the year to accommodate everyone for the training. Your supervisors should be coordinating with the safety office to schedule you into the training

sessions.

Remember, the training is there for you.. Together we can make the Parks a safer place to work. The following is a list of course topics that have already been scheduled for training.

- \*Lifting and ergonomics (for physical work) ; *all workers except office*
- \*Lifting and ergonomics (for office staff); *office staff, supervisors, instructors, etc.*
- \*Commercial Kitchen
- \*Propane Handling
- \*Physical energies/ Heat and Cold; *Horticulture, trades, kitchen, golf, bus etc.*
- \*Electrical hazards/ Lockout; *trades, horticulture, janitors, office*

\*Forklift Training

**Additional training to be scheduled for 2001 is as follows;**

- \*WHMIS
- \*Fire Extinguisher
- \*First Aid/ CPR
- \*Good Housekeeping and Clean up
- \*Vehicle Safety
- \*Confined Space
- \*Emergency Response
- \*Chemical Agents
- \*Transportation of Dangerous Goods
- \*Personal Protective Equipment Training
- \*Good Communication
- \*Biohazards
- \*Working at heights and Fall protection
- \*Road construction and Traffic Control
- \*Welding and Welding Materials
- \*Photolab Safety
- \*Compressed gasses.

I will be visiting the last remaining job sites this spring. It is very important to make all your concerns known. Everything discussed is kept confidential, only my name appears on the hazard assessment.

*Yours in solidarity Colleen McComb-Page*



*"The safety classes are great. The more I'm away from the plant.....the safer I feel."*

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## Humour Bits

*Kraftworker/CEP1115/Calm*

- \*Forty-two point seven per cent of all statistics are made up on the spot
- \*Ninety-nine percent of lawyers give the rest a bad name.
- \*Honk, if you love peace and quiet.
- \*Nothing is foolproof to a talented fool
- \*Eagles may soar, but weasels don't get sucked into jet engines
- \*The early bird gets the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.
- \*Borrow money from pessimists -- they don't expect it back.



### Our Motto (Besides No Bull!)

The *No Bulletin* is published quarterly and mailed to all signed in members. The *No Bulletin* is **your** newsletter. If you have any related articles, jokes or cartoons, please give them to:

*Marie Stokes (Editor)*  
at 6548 Dunn St NFO L2G-2R1.  
(357-4219)

We welcome your comments and suggestions and we reserve the right to edit for length and content.

Authorized for distribution:

### Mark these dates!

#### General Membership Meeting

**Tuesday, February 13th**

Fire Fighter's Club, 7pm

\*Election of convention  
alternates (2)

and delegates(3)

\*Constitutional amendments and resolutions

**Regional meeting March 17**

Sheraton, Niagara Falls

**Convention: April 5,6 and 7**

Sheraton Centre, Toronto

### Come and participate!