



# THE NO BULLETIN

OPSEU Local 217  
The Niagara Parks

Volume 26 Issue 1

November 2004

## Taking time to remember!

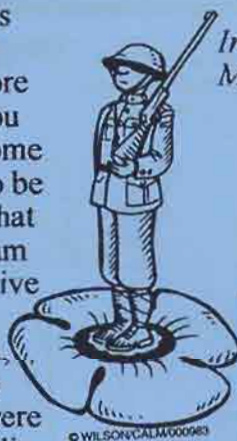
Christmas is fast approaching. It seems that every year the trappings of the holiday appear earlier in the stores. This year I saw Hallowe'en items jostling for space with Christmas. Its hard to believe that its just November.... Just November... In our fastpaced lives it is just a breather between Thanksgiving and Christmas, but it is something more

I hope this year that you donned you red poppy over your heart and took some time to reflect on how lucky we are to be Canadian and to enjoy the freedoms that so many gave their lives to defend. I am sure that everyone can think of a relative or loved one who served our country, wether it be in the Great Wars, Korea, the Gulf, or more recently the War on Terror.. How lucky for us that there were so many brave young men willing to die for their country and the freedom it stood for. Even today, courageous men and women are putting their lives on the line to protect our values and our lives. Every year we set aside a moment of silence to honour our fallen on November eleventh. It seems so little to honour so much!

Some days we gripe and complain, we aren't where we want to be, we hate our jobs, life seems so hard and unfair. We all do it. But we should also take the

time to reflect on the blessing that we do have, especially when we see the plight of so many around the world. We should honour those souls who gave their lives so that we may live as we do today. Freely, in a country of plenty

*In thanks and remembrance  
Marie Stokes*



© WILSON/CALM000983



### IN THIS ISSUE

Words from our secretary. **2**

Time for a reality check! **3**

Greetings from the Chief Steward. **4**

We have a website! **5**

Mark these dates on the calender! **6**



©SHANE/CALM/000245

## Ain't it the truth!

The day *after* you finally throw out all that junk you had been saving (just in case) is the day when you find you need it!

## A few words from our secretary

In this issue let's talk about apathy. For those who do not know the word means to **show lack of interest or concern**. From looking at the attendance sheets since I was elected as secretary and over the years that I have been a member of the Union, the numbers are not too impressive. The meeting at the Niagara Falls Golf Club was a perfect example of apathy. Since I have been secretary, I am still hearing the same phrases, the Union is no good, the Union sucks and so on... Of course these comments are coming from the members that do not show up to the meetings and do not talk to the appropriate members that are not negative towards the membership in general. The Executive has had some ideas on incentives to entice the members to attend, but I think they are only temporary ones. If we can receive some ideas from the rest of the local, as well as some feedback from the Executive and Steward body it would make more of a concensus for the local

I remain optimistic that the majority of the local that do not show up to the meetings are reading the newsletter and viewing the website and therefore are informed.

*Yours in Solidarity,*  
Fred Hopkins



©CALM/000243



THE EMPLOYEES HAVE DEVELOPED A RETRAINING PROGRAM FOR MANAGEMENT!



... MANAGEMENT NEEDS A REALITY CHECK

# Time for a reality check! 8

Marie Stokes

I'm sure everyone saw the posters up on the bulletin boards about Take our Kids to Work day. The premise was to give children an idea about what the 'real world' was like and what their parents did to support the family. After all, these kids will soon be entering the work force themselves and it would give them a preview of what to expect. A great idea, wouldn't you say?

I happened to notice another similar poster up one day, and when I read it I howled, and thought: Yes! This was a great idea too!. The poster advertised November 3 as "Take our Senior Managers to Work Day". Like the earlier concept The objective of the day was to give the Senior Managers an idea about what the 'Real World' was like.

Imagine, your Senior Manager would actually come to understand what their staff do in the department they manage. What a novel concept! They would learn about what it is like to actually be on the front line with the other grunts. But it shouldn't be just for the day, it should be at least a week or two, so they can get a true feeling about all the aspects of work here..

Think of it, your Senior Manager would actually get a taste of what it is like trying to do the work of three people because its busy and they already laid off most of the staff to save their budgets. Or

to have their pay and hours cut because it was a slow day and all the staff wasn't needed, (after all, we must be efficient). Or better yet to be laid off early and feel what it is like to worry if they have enough hours to qualify for unemployment and wonder how they will manage their mortgage or the kid's braces when hours fall short.

Perhaps they can see how cold it actually gets working outside on the machinery in the spring and fall and get a better appreciation of why workers want their winter coats. Its easy to be nitpicking about the meaning of winter weather when you are snug inside you heated office. A day on an open tractor in the mist would undoubtedly change their tune in a heartbeat.

Senior Managers can step into the shoes (and the pay) of a seasonal worker and see what it feels like to work 50 weeks a year, a whole week longer than a full time employee and not have any benefits, or job security, because they only require three weeks notice to lay you off.

It would also be refreshing if Senior Managers also had a better understanding of what it is like working beside a full time employee and doing the same work, yet not being paid the same rate. Some wage differences are quite significant between seasonal and full-time positions. Maybe they wouldn't be dragging their heels getting

moving on the seasonal joint job evaluation if they had a little taste of that reality.

Wouldn't it be great to see your Senior Manager struggling to do a job manually, or with outdated equipment, knowing that the job would be much easier with the proper equipment. What a shame that the budget cuts forced the department to make due for another year.

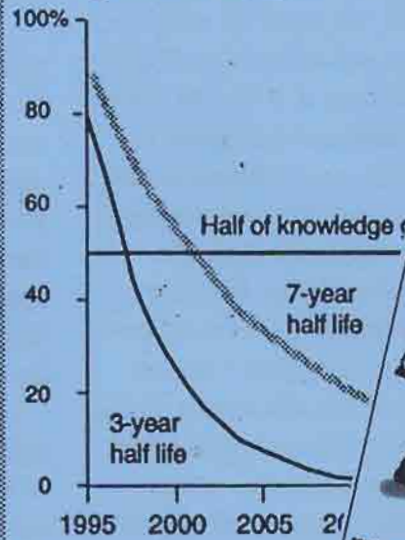
Maybe the Senior Managers would learn the fear of having their future and the future of their job in the hands of people who often don't have a clue about what actually happens in their department. The frustration of not knowing what to expect next because everything is such a big secret and the sense of unfairness that we don't seem to be able to have any input on the decisions that affect us all.. Perhaps they would better understand the workers mistrust of the Parks Commission when what is said does not really match up with what is seen. Maybe then they would realize the importance of open and honest communication throughout the workplace at all levels.

Yes! I definitely think that "Take our Senior Managers To Work Week has some merit and I applaud the creative soul who thought it up.... You can bet it wasn't a Senior Manager!"

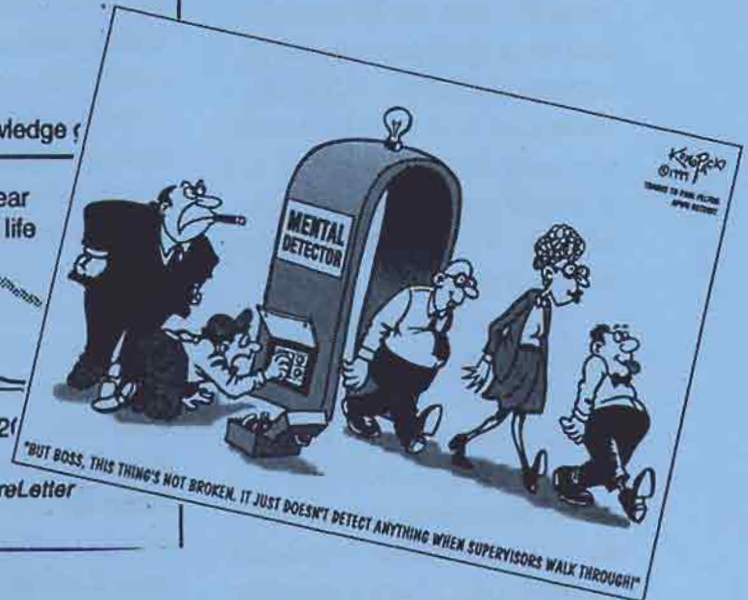
## ZAP YOU'RE STUPID

"Half the skills of technical workers become obsolete within three to seven years of completing a formal education," says the Canadian Labor Market and Productivity Centre. In other words, the half-life of knowledge is three to seven years, says futurist John Kettle. As Mr. Kettle projects in this chart, if you're one year out of college, you will have already lost 9 per cent of what you learned (if the half-life is seven years) or 21 per cent if the half-life is three years. In the most rapidly changing fields – such as biogenetics – most of what you know will be wrong in four years. "Unless you act like a student for the rest of your life while keeping your job going, you're going to be hopelessly out of touch," he says. "Or have to go into management."

Relevance of what a 1994 graduate learned



Source: John Kettle's FutureLetter



## The Chief Steward's Corner

Please allow me to introduce myself. I am Barb Wilson. I have been working seasonally with the Parks for ten years. I drive a peplemover. I became involved with the Union several years ago because I wanted to make things better for workers at the Parks. This past June I was elected Chief Steward of the Local. I would like to thank the members for their support and confidence in my abilities.

Things have been going well despite being very busy including a move to a new house. I am now a resident of Thorold and my new phone number is 905-227-9082. Please make note of the new number because it is not on the business cards we sent out to you with the last newsletter. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to call me or any of the local stewards

Just to update you on what has been happening the past few months, we have been working with regional office in Fonthill to arrange mediation for our outstanding grievances that are at the arbitration stage. If you have a grievance that is at stage three and you haven't heard from me yet, please give me a call. Better yet, why don't you come out to the next meeting and speak to me there. I am looking forward to getting to know more of you better

*In Solidarity,*  
Barb Wilson

# I'm Thankful

CEP777/CEPress/CALM

## I am Thankful

For the teenagers who are not doing dishes but are watching TV, because they are at home and not out on the street.

For the taxes I pay, because it means that I am employed

For the mess I have to clean up after a party, for it means that I have friends.

For the huge heating bill, because it means that I am warm.

For too much e-mail, because I have friends who think of me.

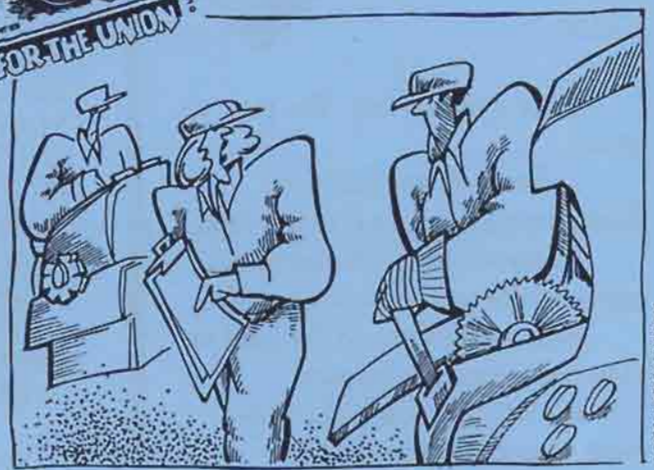
For the woman behind me in church who sings off key, because it means I can hear

For the alarm that goes off in the early morning hours, because it means that I am alive.

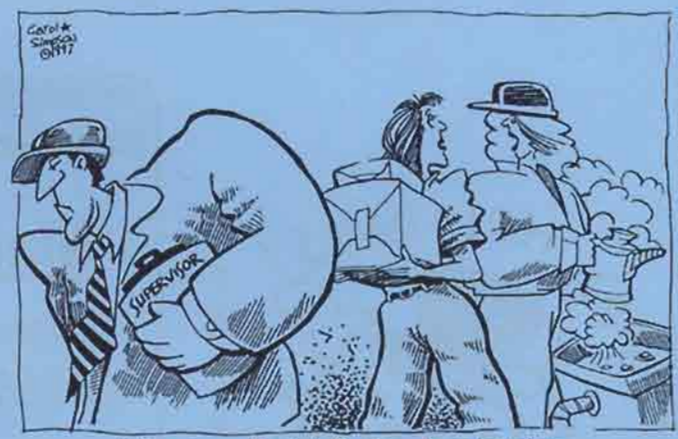
For the lawn that needs mowing, windows that need cleaning, and the gutters that need fixing, because it means that I have a home.

For the clothes that fit a little too snugly, because it means that I have enough to eat.

and finally, for the pile of laundry and ironing, because it means that I have clothes to wear.



"Our productivity is up 23%... Just enough to keep up with management foul-ups."



"It's not your English, Carlita... I was born here, and I don't understand a word he says either."

# We've got a website!



© WILSON / CALM / 9707\_35P.TIF

Our website is up and running! You can find us at [www.opseu217blogspot.com](http://www.opseu217blogspot.com). We would really like to hear from you, our members. There is a link to our e-mail address. This is a great way to pass on your concerns and ideas to the Executive and our members. There are many ways you can use this website. You can update any address changes through the e-mail link to Fred, Our secretary. You can pass on ideas for Demand set or how

to better our contract. You can submit ideas or info or articles for the Newsletter.

Currently the site contains a list of Stewards and the Executive with their phone numbers, contact info for our regional office, and an archive of previous submissions. As we progress we will also try and put the *No Bulletin* on too.

This is your web page so check it out and be a part of it!

*In solidarity*  
Ian Mather

© CAROL SIMPSON / CALM / 848

© CAROL SIMPSON / CALM / 98023

# Truisms

CALM



Once over the hill, You pick up speed

I love cooking with wine.

Sometimes I even put it in the food.

Everyone has a photographic memory. Some just don't have film.

Bills travel through the mail at twice the speed of cheques.

By the time you make ends meet, they move the ends.

## Our Motto (Besides No Bull!)

The *No Bulletin* is published 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 L2G-2R1.  
(905) 357-4219

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

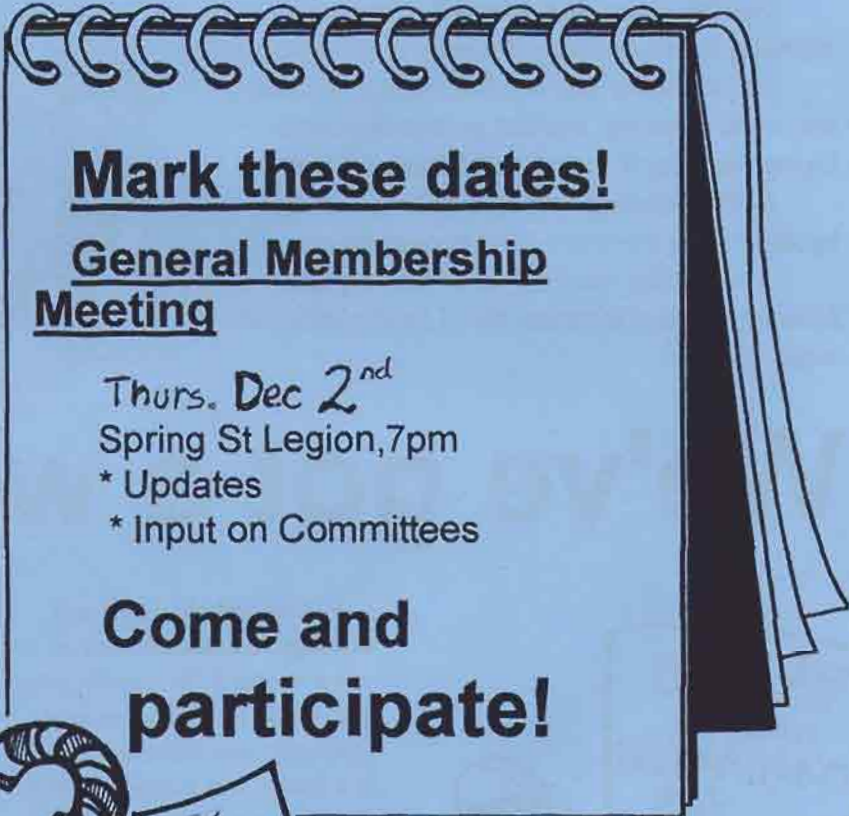
Authorized for distribution:

*M Stokes  
Per  
B Rudd.*

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



© WILSON / CALM / 9707\_22P.TIF

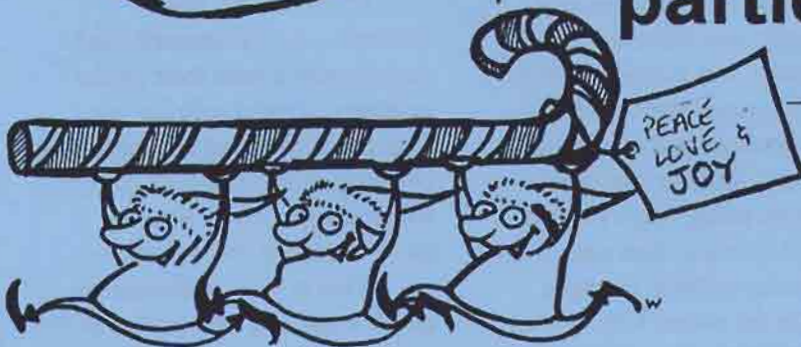


### Mark these dates!

#### General Membership Meeting

- Thurs. Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Spring St Legion, 7pm
- \* Updates
- \* Input on Committees

### Come and participate!



*From the Executive of Local 217*