

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION COUNCIL - PSAC

Volume 2, Number 2

Fall 2003

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Want to know more?

- about the National Capital Region Council? Ask for our pamphlet, "Doing It! [Doing What?]"
- about Local Development? Request our leaflet, "The Good Local."
- submit an article THIS@psac.com
- about getting in touch? Phone, fax or e-mail us:

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<http://www.pfac-afpc.com/ncro>

PSAC Ottawa Regional Office:

560-2560

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PSAC Hull Regional Office:

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Fax: 777-9407



from left to right: Bob King, Lise Lévesque, Nadine Lethbridge (alternate), Sylvain Schetagne (research officer), Barre Campbell (alternate), Mark Power, John Gordon (National Executive Vice-President), Julie Chiasson (administrative assistant), Francine Taillon, Lynn Whittaker (negotiator), Gordon McAllister, Mary Veilleux, Tony Nicolas (alternate), Barbara Hall, Bruce Clark, Ian Chinnery.

National Bargaining Conference (July 6-9, 2003)

I was fortunate to attend, as a delegate, the National Bargaining Conference that was held July 6-9, 2003 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Ottawa. This was my first time attending a bargaining conference and I was ultimately elected to serve as a bargaining team member for Table 1 in the upcoming round of negotiations with Treasury Board.

The process of being selected to attend the National Bargaining Conference occurred 6 weeks before at the Eastern Regional Bargaining Conference which was held in Ottawa at the Congress Centre May 24-25, 2003. At the Eastern Conference we had an opportunity to review the bargaining demands that were submitted and we met in discussion groups to deal with table specific demands. At the end of the process we elected two delegates from each region to attend the National Bargaining Conference. Delegates and their alternates were selected by election for each Table by region. In our region, I was selected as the 1st Delegate for Table 1 and Sister Barre Campbell



Drop us a line at THIS, c/o the Ottawa Regional Office, PSAC, 233 Gilmour Street, Ottawa, ON K2P 0P1
Or e-mail THIS@psac.com We look forward to hearing from you!





Robert Miranda

was selected as the 2nd Delegate. The other tables elected the following brothers and sisters as delegates: a) Table 2: John Irving, Charlie Murray; b) Table 3: Gary Trivett, Barb Eamer; and c) Table 5: Chris Rogers, Céline Préfontaine. Delegates from both the Eastern and Western Regional Bargaining Conferences attended the National Bargaining Conference. A number of additional delegates were chosen by Components with members in the bargaining units who did not have delegates elected at the Regional Bargaining Conferences, members appointed by the AEC and members of the National Board of Directors.

At the National Bargaining Conference, each Table was responsible for prioritizing all the bargaining demands and submitting the top 25 demands. This process was carried out over three days, and each demand was carefully reviewed. We also had the opportunity of attending workshops to help in the upcoming round of negotiations. I selected the "Communications Workshop", which prepared me to potentially face the media and to help develop quick 'sound-bites' that could be used in the media. Towards the end of the Conference we compared

our priorities with other Tables to see if we had common demands that affected all Tables. We also had a number of demands that were considered 'Union Demands'; these are the demands that the PSAC decided should be in all rounds of negotiations such; as the Social Justice Fund which was voted at our Triennial Convention in May 2003.

Finally, we had to vote from each Table the members that would form the Bargaining Team. The elections were held on July 8, 2003. From our region, the following delegates were selected as bargaining team members: a) Gordon McAllister (myself) for Table 1, b) Gary Trivett for Table 3 and c) Céline Préfontaine for Table 5.) We also elected a number of alternates for each table from the NCR (see group photo on cover page).

The bargaining demands were delivered to Treasury Board on August 1, 2003. Our first round of negotiations for Table 1 is set for September 15-19, 2003. For further information regarding Treasury Board negotiations, I would advise you to look at the PSAC website (<http://www.psac-afpc.com>).

I look forward to participating in this process and will make myself available to meet with Locals about the progress of this round of negotiations for Table 1.

*By: Gordon McAllister,
Table 1 Bargaining Team*

Look for bargaining demands package at
<http://www.psac-afpc.com/bargaining/treasuryboard/index-e.shtml>

Treasury board: Callout for bargaining team support...

With fall fast approaching we find ourselves gearing up for another round of negotiations with Treasury Board. That means it's time for us to start thinking of strategy. We must be prepared to demonstrate a well organized and united front to support our negotiating teams.

We need to ensure that the lines of communication are flowing in both directions in order to strategize for maximum effectiveness.

The Regional Office is currently looking for volunteers to take on different roles throughout the National Capital Region (NCR). One of the key roles is that of the Area Coordinator.

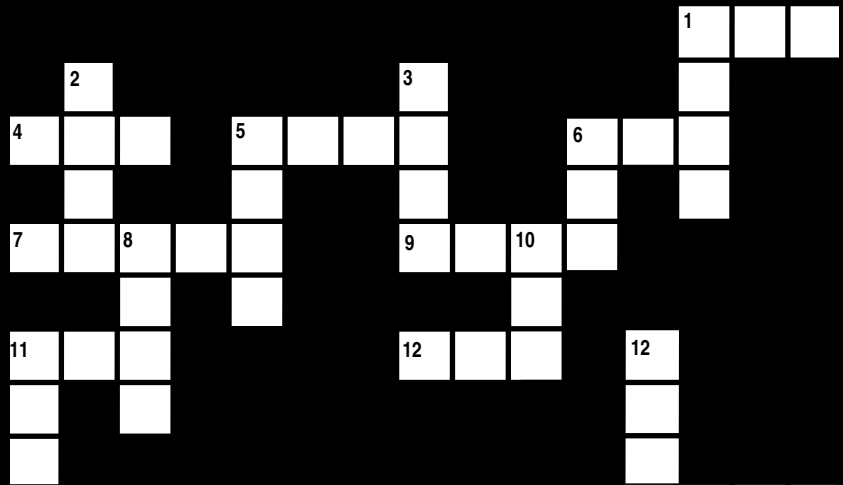
Area Coordinators:

The Area Coordinator is the contact between the Regional Strike Coordinator and the Strike Captains and Local Officers. Area Coordinators serve as members of the Regional Strike Coordinating Committee. Area Coordinators in this region are usually assigned to the zone they work in. The Area Coordinators review with the Regional Strike Coordinator or the regional Strike Coordinating Committee, members' suggestions for making the strike more effective.

If you are interested in volunteering to become an Area Coordinator or would like to get involved in strike support, please call the NCR Regional Office. In Ottawa: 560-2560 and in Gatineau: 777-4647.

Crossword Puzzle PSAC 17 Components

Across	Down
1. Nunavut Workers	1. Health Canada
4. Enviro Component	2. National Defence
5. Postal Workers	3. HRDC Workers
6. Northern Workers	5. Veterans Affairs
7. Custom Excise	6. Taxation Workers
9. Solicitor General	8. Transportation
11. National Component	10. General Services
12. Yukon Employees	11. Natural Resources
	12. Agriculture



A Worker's History

by Sean McKenny

Most will agree that our National Capital Region is of boundless and picturesque beauty. Its quality of life today, although not perfect, has been gained and perhaps earned through a community participation that spans hundreds of years.

Our involvement as individuals, inclusive of families, in our city has always been about protecting that quality of life or altering its direction for the betterment of all. History shows that initially decisions made towards a quality of life were solely designed and implemented by those and for those who had attained the highest levels of wealth – a quality of life for the rich. Some may argue that even today, not much has changed.

Throughout Ottawa's history workers have made and continue to make positive contributions. Indeed, unions have played a major role in helping to define and refine our city. This is not unlike other cities across Canada where involvement and participation ensures a fairer and a more just community.

If our history is not recorded – if we pay little attention to that which was – how do we grow? How do we enhance our quality of life? How do we ensure that for those women and men who sacrificed so very much for the community in which we live and work today, that their efforts and contributions will forever be etched as a guide for all of us to learn and to develop? A part of that process will be an accumulation of actions or contributions that we as union members make today. Fifty years from now the early 2000's will be recorded in our history books.

In that context, the Ottawa and District Labour Council has recently undertaken two very exciting projects. The "*Rideau Canal Celtic Cross Project*" will see a monument erected along the Rideau Canal in Ottawa in memory of those workers who lost their lives while engaged in the construction of the Rideau Canal from 1826 to 1832. In addition, the project will cause an increased awareness of the plight of those workers inclusive of the hazardous working conditions that were commonplace.

Our second project the "*Workers Heritage Museum*" will see a permanent workers museum established within the city of Ottawa. Our vast workers heritage in Ottawa inclusive of the formation of our various unions will be a large part of the museum.

The city of Ottawa has already shown its support for the projects including a full endorsement of the "Rideau Canal Celtic Cross Project" and the inclusion of the "Workers Heritage Museum" in the city's official Master Plan.

The Public Service Alliance of Canada's recent donation to the "Rideau Canal Celtic Cross Project" is very much appreciated.

We look forward to keeping you up-to-date on these and other activities of the Labour Council in future articles and as always welcome your involvement.

If you would like further information contact the Labour Council at (613) 233-7820.

Convention notes

Election of the new Regional Executive Vice President for the NCR.

Brother Ed Cashman was elected Regional Executive Vice-President for the National Capital Region (NCR) at the last PSAC Convention which came to a close in Montreal in early May. Brother John Baglow retired this year after some fifteen years as regional leader. Brother Cashman has accumulated several years of solid union experience as Vice President for members outside Canada and as President of National Component. He will work along with Sister Christine Collins, RVP for Ontario of the Union of Canadian Transportation Employees. Sister Collins was elected Brother Cashman's alternate REVP of the NCR.

Delegates adopt globalization action plan

Anti-globalization work will be a priority for the PSAC now that convention has adopted an action plan for the

next three years. **Resolution No. 400** makes bargaining sustained funding of one cent per member per hour for the union's new Social Justice Fund a priority. The plan also includes the development of education courses and communication materials, ongoing work with our coalition partners in forums and demonstrations. Union conferences will now bring an international solidarity and anti-globalization perspective to them. At the end of the debate, National President Nycole Turmel formally launched the union's new Social Justice Fund.

General Committee

Resolution No. 353 provides for a PSAC fully funded Occupational Safety and Health Conference, in each triennial period. This Conference will be capped at 300 members, with a specified funding formula.

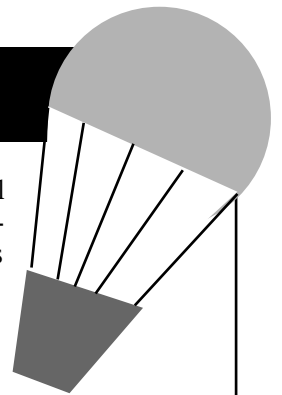
Visit the PSAC website for more news about the 2003 Convention. <http://www.psac-afpc.com/>

Gatineau Hot Air Balloon Festival!

The Comité régional des femmes de l'Outaouais, PSAC, in conjunction with the Ottawa-Gatineau Area Council represented the PSAC and more specifically the National Capital Region Council at the Gatineau Hot Air Balloon Festival that took place on Labour Day Weekend. Representatives of these committees and volunteers from this year's Union School were at the Festival handing out balloons with the Council Logo

on them and recruiting for the Regional Women's Committees and generally raising union awareness for PSAC activities and answering members' queries.

A warm thanks to all who helped make this event a success!



Raising funds for the Ottawa-Colombia, Sisters in Solidarity project.

Members of the Ottawa Regional Women's Committee (RWC) hosted a garage sale on Saturday, August 2, 2003 to raise funds for the Ottawa-Colombia, Sisters in Solidarity project. Despite posting a "no early birds" clause in the newspaper ad, buyers were busy routing through boxes and snatching up treasures well before the official start time of 10:00 a.m.



In addition to selling items, Sisters took the time to explain to passers-by the purpose of the project and to distribute flyers. Surprisingly, many of the people who stopped to browse were well aware of the situation in Colombia and applauded our efforts to sponsor a union activist and his/her family to come to Canada to escape persecution. The RWC wants to thank all those who donated items for the garage sale, all those who took time out from their busy schedules to work at the sale, and all those who stopped by to purchase items. In total, just under \$500 was raised for the project. If you'd like to support the Ottawa-Colombia, Sisters in Solidarity project either by hosting a garage sale or by holding a 50/50 draw at the next AGM or simply through a donation of cash or material goods, contact unions4colombia@hotmail.com.

Contacting "Rands": a win-win situation!

When Justice Ivan C. Rand ruled that all employees benefited from belonging to a union and should therefore pay union dues, non-active union members, who may not have signed their union card, came to be called Rands.

Our local - National Component Local 70125, representing around 1600 members at the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Passport Office, the International Joint Commission and the NAFTA Secretariat in Ottawa, Gatineau and around the world- used to have about 100 Rands, representing about 8% of the membership.

In recent months, our employers went on a hiring spree. In a short period of time, over 300 new employees were hired and suddenly we had over 400 Rands: 25% of our deductees had never signed a PSAC membership card. We didn't have their contact information and, presumably, they didn't have ours either.

In some components, eligibility for Conventions and Conferences is based on the number of full members, not deductees. Due to the high rate of Rands now in our local, we lost out on at least one delegate spot to the upcoming PSAC Convention.

With a scheduled return to collective bargaining in the spring, there was also a need to get our act together quickly and sign up our Rands. One cannot easily mobilize workers who aren't members of a union.

With over 400 people to contact, we found the support of our Component office - The National Component - of tremendous assistance with this project. The Component was able to produce a computerized listing of all current Rands as well as a set of mailing labels. We used the pay list codes to identify the applicable work site. The Component Office also sent along a guide to deciphering the membership listing, which was very helpful.

As a first step, we decided on a low cost, low energy project. Using departmental directories, (both phone and email), we were able to locate the internal mailing addresses for our many Rands to do outreach at no cost to the Local. A similar sized mailing using Canada Post would have cost almost \$200.

We created a covering letter explaining the benefits of membership using information from the PSAC web site. We included the package, the covering letter, a PSAC membership application form, a self addressed return envelope using an internal address along with a contact sheet for the members of the Local Executive. We thought that using

the name and address of someone in the workplace on the return envelope would be more personal and effective than simply using the PSAC self addressed postage paid envelopes.

The response from our Rands was very positive. In most cases, people signed and returned the cards quickly with many positive comments. Several wanted to know what took us so long to contact them! **Within a six week period we had over 200 signed cards** to turn over to the Component Office for processing. We sent the signed cards to The Component as we received them rather than accumulate a large number that would create a backlog somewhere in the system.

Again, we found the cooperation of our Component Office key to the sign-up campaign. The Component asked that signed cards be returned directly to them instead of sending them to PSAC. By going through the Component Office, we were able to get the turnaround time for the processing of the applications to half a month instead of the usual two months. Key contact information, i.e. home and email addresses, were entered into the PSAC data base on receipt and thus immediately improved the level of communication from PSAC, the Component and Regional Offices.

We are now in Phase 2 of our campaign, calling up or visiting in person those Rands who did not respond to our first mailing. Sometimes it takes a personal touch to explain the importance of membership. We anticipate being able to reduce our Rand rate even further in the coming weeks.

To ensure that we don't fall behind again, we have reminded our employer of the provision of the collective agreement that requires them to notify us of new workers in the workplace. Now we reach out to our new colleagues within days or weeks of their initial hiring.

Our outreach to our Rands was a rewarding experience all round. With our new members we were able to reinforce the value of a union in the workplace, establish key communication links and ready ourselves for the next round of collective bargaining. We were also able to meet and assist new workers and widen our knowledge of recent hiring practices. **Rands are not all workers who don't want to join the union.** In our Local's experience, we found most of our Rands very willing to join PSAC. They were just waiting for someone from the Local to make contact and help them join. Your Local may have workers wanting to join PSAC as well. ***Good luck with your Rand sign up campaign.***

Ed Cashman, Local 70125
Recently elected REVP for the NCR

Crisis in Colombia



On Saturday, June 21, 2003 Amnesty International and the Colombia Working Group of OPIRG (McMaster University) hosted a one day conference entitled "Crisis in Colombia". As a member of the PSAC Ottawa Regional Women's Committee

(RWC), and the Ottawa-Colombia, Sisters in Solidarity project, a sub-committee of the RWC, I attended the conference to further my understanding of the situation for union activists in Colombia. The Ottawa-Colombia, Sisters in Solidarity project was introduced to members in the winter 2003 issue of the *THIS/ÇA* newsletter.

According to Amnesty International, Colombia has the highest death rate in the world for union activists.

"In 2002 alone, 184 leaders were killed – 86% of all union leaders murdered in the world that year." Despite these horrendous figures the mainstream media's fascination with drug violence and trafficking in Colombia obscures the international political agenda, which perpetuates the violence and oppression. Ironically, union activists in Colombia battle the same issues as their Canadian counterparts -- privatization of public institutions, negotiation of wage and benefit increases in an increasingly profit oriented global economy, and the struggle for social justice for all. Despite our similar battles, the response to Colombian union activists who speak out against their government is very different from what we encounter here in Canada. Threats, intimidation and violence, carried out primarily by paramilitary forces, are used to silence the voices of dissent in Colombia.

Despite the threats, and as I learned at the conference, Colombian activists continue to speak out – whether it's union activists fighting against the privatization of a public utility, indigenous leaders fighting for control of their land, community leaders demanding access to clean water or human rights activists demanding to know the whereabouts of the "disappeared".

Speakers at the conference included Ms Kathy Price and Mr. Wilf Ruland of **Amnesty International** who spoke

about the impact of the Plan Colombia project. This project, funded partly by the United States, is aimed primarily at eradicating the illicit drug trade. Unfortunately, paramilitary groups don't distinguish between outspoken activists and drug traffickers – both are "enemies of the state".

Ms Gloria Herney, co-founder of **Association of Families of the Detained-Disappeared** (ASFADDES) told of how defenders of human rights in Colombia are targeted by the military, thereby leaving those they defend even more vulnerable.

Dr. Manuel Rozenal, co founder of the **Canadian Colombia Solidarity Campaign** succinctly explained the roots of the conflict in Colombia. Despite gaining its independence on August 7th, 1819, Colombia is still heavily influenced by the structural adjustment programs of the International Monetary Fund and multinational corporations who use alliances with the Colombia government to secure control over the production of wealth.

Mr. Asad Ismi, author and freelance journalist, talked about the Canadian business community's involvement in Colombia. His report entitled: *Profiting from Repression: Canadian Investment in and Trade with Colombia* exposes how Canadian companies investing in Colombia perpetuate the crisis.

A Colombian worker's experience

Ms Sandra Cordero-Tova, a member of SINTRATELEFONOS, Colombia's largest telecommunications union, drew on her own terrifying experiences as she talked about the plight of Colombian trade union activists and how union members world-wide can best support Colombia's trade union activists.

Ms Cordero-Tova was fortunate; the Communication, Energy and Paper Worker's Union (CEP) and the Ontario Secondary School Teacher's Federation (OSSTF) sponsored Ms Cordero to come to Canada. Ms Cordero-Tova now lives in Toronto and continues to work to support the union movement in Colombia.

The conference provided an opportunity to learn more about the on-going crisis in Colombia, for making personal contacts and networking, and for gaining access to a host of already available resources including videos, web-sites, subscriptions and pamphlets.

continued page 7...

¹OPIRG = Ontario Public Interest Research Group.

²*THIS/ÇA* Newsletter, Winter 2003, [Solidarity with Our Colombia Sister](#). The Ottawa-Colombia, Sisters in Solidarity project has two goals: first, to sponsor a Colombian trade union activist and her/his family to come to Canada and second, to raise awareness, amongst our members, about the impacts of globalization.

³The [Hamilton Spectator](#) "Hands across borders: Canadian trade unionists reach out to save Colombia union leaders". Monday, June 16, 2003, pg. D9.

Recipe: Bread Pudding

Source: Cuisin'âge

Comments: Ready to serve in less than 30 minutes

Portions: 4

Ingredients:

- 25 ml (2 tbsp) butter
- 1 well-beaten egg
- 50 ml (1/4 cup) white sugar
- 200 ml (3/4 cup) flour
- 50 ml (1/4 cup) 2% milk
- 5 ml (1 tsp) baking powder

Preparation:

- Cream together butter, sugar and egg.
- Add milk
- Mix together flour and baking powder.
- Gradually add to mixture while stirring.
- Pour batter into fairly deep cake pan.
- Melt the brown sugar in the boiling water.
- Pour syrup over batter.
- Cook at 190 degrees C (375 F) 20 to 25 minutes.

Syrup:

- 200 ml (3/4 cup) brown sugar
- 200 ml (3/4 cup) boiling water

This information will be invaluable to me and my fellow sisters, who have banded together under the banner of the Ottawa-Colombia, Sisters in Solidarity project, as we work towards achieving our goal of sponsoring a Colombian trade union activist and her/his family to come to Canada and to raise awareness, amongst our members, about the impacts of globalization.

To fulfil its second objective, Ottawa-Colombia, Sisters in Solidarity will use the information from the conference to develop a 10 minute presentation which can be delivered at union conferences, Local annual general meetings or to community groups. In addition, two workshops, one 20 minutes long and the other 30 minutes long will focus on developing concrete action oriented activities within the union community directed at building support for the Colombian union movement. If you would like to have sisters from Ottawa-Colombia, Sisters in Solidarity give a presentation or workshop please contact unions4colombia@hotmail.com or the Ottawa Regional Women's Committee at RWC-OTT@psac-afpc.com.

by Joyce Giles

Business Serving the Poor and Influencing Canadian Foreign Policy

On February 5, 2003, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters in conjunction with CIDA hosted an event called "Serving the Poor, Profitably". The background paper for the event discussed how multinational corporations could get money from the 4 billion people at the bottom of the pyramid who earn less than \$2000. They say that since people cannot afford houses and food, they can improve the quality of their lives by consuming products and services such as televisions and cellular phones.

The event was disrupted by protesters entering the Museum of Civilization lobby, chanting, banging pots and pans and displaying banners. The fire alarm inside the Museum was pulled and everyone had to leave including the CME/CIDA diners. The diners left by the same exit the protesters had been ejected from just minutes earlier. People had a chance to directly express their feelings to the corporate and government elite that put their own profit before the needs of global populations.

The evening's winner of the award for "Corporate Social Responsibility" was Gildan Activewear, a company that has recently been exposed on CBC's program, Disclosure, for unreasonably high production quotas, extremely poor wages, supervised bathroom breaks, polluted factory air, firing workers who tried to unionize and forced pregnancy testing.

CME is one of Canada's top corporate lobby groups. It pushes international free trade agreements, was the first Canadian organization to actively oppose the Kyoto Accord and is involved in ongoing discussions with the Canadian government to promote their pro-business (anti-labour) competitive agenda. The CME's link with CIDA uses CIDA's good name to distract attention from the Enron-WorldCom style corruption that has created dissent against corporations around the world.

On March 31, 2003, CME and the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade hosted an "expert roundtable" to discuss what Canadian business recommends to be the future direction and priorities of Canadian foreign policy. Alarmingly, they claim that the results of this roundtable will be used to "assist the Government of Canada in formulating our future Canadian foreign policy."

by Susan Turansky

Local 70043 NH&WU

We have only been a Local for a year, but in that time our representatives have been to Union School and attended various courses aimed at developing our Local for the benefit of members. Since we started tghelocal, we have had two Presidents, two Vice-Presidents two Treasurers, many changes in building representatives and a year without a Chief Shop Steward when she became our RVP.

If any of our members in good standing are interested in being Chief Shop Steward we are looking for members to attend Steward training to become active members and hopefully fill such roles within the Local. We strongly encourage all our members to attend available training and look forward to seeing them at the next Union School. With six buildings to cover we need all the help we can get.

It has not been an easy year for our Local, as most of our Executive members have young families and the responsibilities it entails. Taking time out to meet with members about their difficulties and establishing if a grievance is appropriate can be time consuming and difficult to balance with other responsibilities. We owe a debt of thanks to the Component without whose help we might have faltered and not been able to stay together and focused as much as we have. The crash training courses that we were given to start our Local and get it running were invaluable to establishing a core representative group who have kept the Union spirit alive in our Local and have been in touch, even if they have not stayed in the Executive.

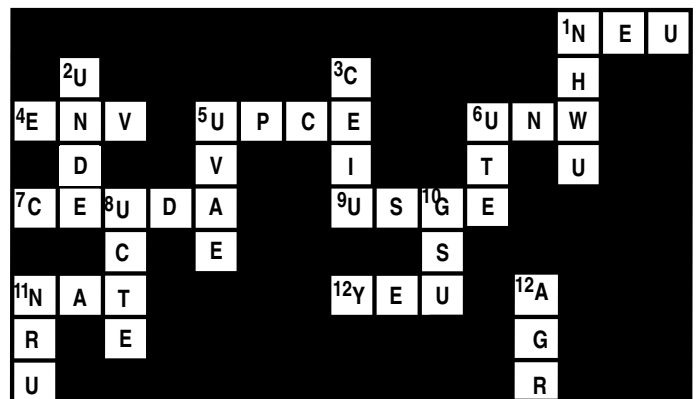
As we approach the anniversary of the awarding of our certification as a Local, all our members should be proud of what has been accomplished and will be accomplished through the hard work of members dedicated to the improvement of the work place, its safety and environment. I am sure I speak for the Executive when I say that we look forward to meeting all members and getting to know you all and your concerns.

*John Murphy
Building Representative
Local 70043 NH&WU*

Union Development Program (UDP)

The deadline for registration for the English is September 9, 2003. The overall aim of the UDP is to develop leadership throughout the union. The course consists of three different levels conducted consecutively at one month intervals: UDP Level 1 (5 days) focuses on mobilizing members to take action in building the union at the Local level. UDP Level 2 (5 days) explores the roles of the union activist within the Alliance, within the community, and in relation to the national and international labour movement. UDP Level 3 (6 days) concentrates on developing the skills needed to demonstrate leadership through action, e.g., problem-solving, team work, communications, and convention skills. UDP develops members to become leaders at the local, regional and national levels of the union. To register please visit <http://www.psac.com/ncro/education/Education-sched-fall-03-E.pdf>

CROSSWARD PUZZLE ANSWER



Disclaimer:

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the PSAC.