

# Weekend negotiations update

## OPSEU set to fight use of replacement workers

by Ted Montgomery, Chair of the Bargaining Team

By now you'll have news of Thursday's rally in Toronto and the return to the table, Monday March 20. [The faculty team was ready to return at any time.] You can expect a news blackout to be imposed and once again should read nothing into that. It is standard practice and means neither that progress is being made nor that there is no progress.

The return to the table is a direct consequence of the success and strength of the 5000-strong faculty rally and all our efforts so far at the colleges. The students' rally and emails, and, we hope, the meeting with the Minister also played a part. Though it was quite positive and helpful, there was nothing concrete from our meeting with the Minister. At this time we have not seen any change in management's offer. We do hope to see those Monday.

Unquestionably, a return to the table is a positive sign and we are certainly hopeful. However, we have been hopeful in the past – following the 96% rejection and 81% strike vote. Those votes did not produce an offer from management that came to terms with the workload and quality issues. We all hope that these meetings will be different.

Saturday's *Toronto Star* wrote: Joy Warkentin, chair of the colleges' bargaining committee, maintained that "we have a good offer on the table," which includes a 12.6 per cent wage increase over four years and a commitment to no increased workload.

If management come to the table with that same message then we will know that they are simply trying to buy more time. However, if management is finally at the table to settle, we should know soon and will work until a settlement is reached.

Key to achieving that settlement will be to continue the pressures that have brought management back to the table... unequivocal demonstrations of faculty's resolve to have the quality issues addressed. This is the time to redouble our efforts if the hopes for settlement are to become reality. If management still is unwilling to table an offer that addresses the quality issues, we must press Mr. McGuinty to act to get that settlement.

Rick Miner, Chair of the Committee of Presidents, is quoted in *The National Post*, March 15<sup>th</sup>, regarding the Semester Completion Strategy: "Obviously we hope the strike doesn't go on, but what we're really trying to do here is but time."

We have heard that some colleges, certainly not all nor the majority, are planning to hire replacement workers to do our jobs. If those plans are put into place, OPSEU will join with other education sector and labour partners to see that struck work does not get done by replacement workers.

## Strikebreaking

By Doug Brandy

### Resumption of talks

At his request, both parties met with Colleges Minister, Chris Bentley Friday morning. Following their session, the Colleges negotiators requested a meeting with our Team to

take place Monday morning, March 20. Assisting the talks will be mediator, John Mathers and his supervisor.

Although resumption of bargaining is positive, the strike continues and we must maintain our solidarity and continue the pressure to make sure our strike concludes successfully.

### **Strikebreaking**

Any attempt to do our work by anyone outside our bargaining unit is strikebreaking. This applies to support staff, sessional and part-time employees and managers. I have been in touch with my support staff counterpart to make it clear that we expect his members not to accept our work. I have sent a message to Algonquin managers that you should find elsewhere in this issue (see page 4) and on our website, [locallines.org](http://locallines.org).

I've also posted a message to sessional and part-time employees. If you know of anyone in those groups whom you think the College may have contacted or may be considering contacting, please convey our message to them, politely but firmly.

Strikebreaking is very serious. We object to it not just on principle. Strikebreakers threaten our jobs and prolong a strike.

### **Challenges of quality education**

I think the public doesn't realise and management doesn't admit to the challenges associated with our work. I teach computer skills. I find students with technical skills approaching mine (although they're light on ability to apply), at the top end and those who've barely seen a computer, at the bottom end. The College allows new students to join the section after as many as four weeks following the semester start.

I'll describe two sections I taught in the fall semester. I'll refer to them as the "mainstream" and "aboriginal" classes. The latter comprised a group, many from small communities near James Bay, with an enriched student-teacher ratio as agreed between the College and the Aboriginal Education Council.

Here are a number of questions that would help the public to understand what we face. I'm giving my own answers. What are yours?

### **What are your class sizes?**

Mainstream: 36, another 7 withdrew during the semester.

Aboriginal: 25, another 3 withdrew.

### **How many special needs students, even if not identified through CSD?**

Two students registered with CSD. Neither demonstrated any obvious difficulty with the course; in fact their marks were among the best in their classes. Based on my observations, at least another 10 had some degree of learning difficulty. One of the aboriginal students was mobility impaired.

### **How many students have second language issues?**

For most of the aboriginal students, English is a second or third language.

### **How many students have jobs that make it hard for them to keep up with the course?**

Most of the mainstream students have one or two jobs at night and/or weekends.

**How many individual e-mails do you answer a day?**

The students send all their assignments and tests to me by e-mail. They also e-mail me with questions and notes about attendance and other issues. The average per day would be about 30.

**How many tests, quizzes and assignments do you mark?**

Over the semester, each section had thirteen assignments, four tests, and three in-class quizzes.

**How often do you modify Blackboard content?**

At least twice a week. In many weeks, daily.

**Do you have students with a wide range of prerequisite skills?**

Yes. Some students need very little help doing the assignments although they may need to be reminded to follow instructions carefully. Other students need one-on-one guidance for even basic tasks. In both groups it was a major challenge to pace the class to keep the advanced students engaged while not losing the students with less prior learning.

Students' ability to solve problems logically severely limits their effective use of Excel. For example, without help fewer than 10 per cent of my students would be able to create a formula that calculates the cost of an item after 7% GST is applied. A typical reaction: "I don't do math."

**Does the College add new students to your sections after the courses are underway?**

The mainstream class had new students added in the second week. In the past, this has happened up to the fourth week.

**Are there other issues associated with your classes?**

Many students don't pay close attention to written details, even when it seems assignment and test instructions are set out clearly.

Some of the students in the aboriginal class come from communities where there are no educational opportunities after high school. There are also few employment options. Some were as young as 17 and had spent little or no time in the South or in a big city. For some, the temptations of the bright lights proved too much and their school work suffered as a result.

Another issue with some of the aboriginal students is a cultural barrier. It's evident some of them have a very different concept of time and punctuality in relation to attendance and assignment due dates. Also, some are reticent almost to the point of being non-communicative and must be drawn out with patience and good humour.

Students in both groups tend to be seduced by other attractions on their computers. I must constantly watch to see they don't get distracted by video games, websites not related to the course and e-mail and instant messaging to each other.

# Navaho East trailer vandalized

by Tom Fernie

Regrettably, some windows were broken in the Navaho East trailer

I met with Officer Hadden and gave the information such as it was.

The damage was discovered at 10:35 a.m Sunday when I was putting folders and other items into the various trailers.

Lacombe has been advised, and new windows will be installed today.

## Message to part-time and sessional teachers, counsellors and librarians

During our strike, the College may contact you with offers of work. Please be aware that we will regard it as strikebreaking if you accept any teaching, counselling or library work as long as our strike continues.

- The striking members of OPSEU Local 415

## Message to all College managers

Please be aware that during our strike we will regard as strikebreaking any attempt to do our teaching, counselling or library work by individuals outside of our bargaining unit. This includes, but is not limited to, teaching, preparation, evaluation and counselling of students and development of learning materials.

You must realise we will all be working together again after the strike ends. Future collegial and effective working relationships will depend on how everyone behaves now.

Algonquin's President has made statements that show little regard for students' interests and no respect for those of us on strike. We hope you will demonstrate better judgment.

Please refer also to <http://www.locallines.org/>

- Doug Brandy, Local President for the striking members of OPSEU Local 415

# Colleges risk long-term damage with use of replacement workers

By Ted Montgomery, Chair of the Bargaining Team

The value of an academic credential is determined by the reputation of the institution which grants that credential. That reputation is established over time. It is developed by the work of the institution's graduates and by the work of the faculty, both teaching, support, and research.

In the case of Ontario colleges there is a value that attaches to each of the institutions and also attaches to the entire system of colleges. The community assesses the value of graduates' credentials – present, past and future graduates – in part in light of each institution and in part based on the strength of the entire system.

The key measure of the academic strength of post-secondary institutions is the work of the regular faculty. Some of the recently publicized plans to give students their diplomas and certificates will do irreparable damage to Ontario's college system and to not just this year's students but to past and future graduates as well.

So far, various colleges have announced a variety of "strategies" to complete the semester. Some have managers teaching, others, support staff, others say they will try to hire replacement teachers to teach full-time. Some colleges have indicated that they will only complete courses with the regular faculty. Any and all of the strategies to complete the semester without the regular faculty will result in a serious and long-lasting devaluation of every credential from every Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology.

Unlike elementary and secondary schools, college teachers do not maintain daybooks that outline the details of the curriculum covered. Students have experience with supply teachers in the secondary system and know the vast differences between these teachers and their regular teachers. Those differences will be magnified significantly for college courses. Only the teachers who have delivered the curriculum to date will know what has been covered, what has been tested for, what students needs are. It will not be possible for any replacement workers to complete the courses of study, because, even if they had the skills to do so, they lack the knowledge of what has taken place in the courses up until March 6.

The right to confer marks and credentials rests with the colleges, but any claims that the courses of study can now be completed without the regular faculty are a pretense – a very dangerous deceit in terms of the long-term health of the college system.

### **All credentials will be suspect**

Not only will the credentials of this year's graduates from those colleges that pretend to complete the term with replacement workers be forever tainted, the credentials of graduates from all colleges will be brought into question.

The public education sector is not like the industrial sector where replacement workers might be able to pick up the tools and perform the tasks of the workers on strike. Colleges are not like mines or assembly lines. A new teacher cannot be dropped in and successfully complete the course of study. Where replacement faculty are necessitated because of sick leaves or similar circumstances, those replacement faculty are always guided by the person they are replacing, wherever possible, or by other full-time faculty, or by both.

### **Unprecedented**

The use of replacement workers in the education sector is unprecedented and for good reason. Aside from the damage to the value of credentials, if replacement workers were to be used in place of college faculty, there would be staggering damage to relations in a system that depends on a considerable degree of collegiality. That would be destroyed.

### **Well-documented**

The destructive effects of replacement workers on labour relations in other sectors are well-documented. Firstly, striking workers have not and will not passively allow replacement workers to take over their work. Where, to date, picketing has been very peaceful in contrast to labour disputes in other sectors, we can be certain that it will not remain so if the employer tries to use replacement workers. Secondly, once the strike is over, there will be long-lasting, serious negative impacts on labour relations and on critical academic relationships. Those impacts will assuredly result in damage to the reputations of Ontario Colleges for decades.

The threatened use of replacement workers is not about completing courses of study. It is what such actions are always about – strikebreaking. Management has made zero effort to settle since at least February 7 when the strike vote was taken. They have kept the same offer on the table and even knowingly made it worse at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour. That speaks volumes to their interest in completing the semester. Settlement would have accomplished that. Settlement might not have been possible. That is one thing. But no effort was made to settle. That is quite another.

### **Students lose**

Students have complained that they were being used as pawns. The so-called semester completion strategies are actually the prime example. Naturally, the promise of finishing the year ASAP is attractive to students. That is completely understandable. However, students would be well advised to consider extremely carefully the long-term impact of supporting or endorsing such a scheme. The credentials they would receive via this expedited but fatally defective process will devalue that credential enormously. Post-secondary degrees and diplomas can be obtained via the internet quickly, handily, and cheaply. But as soon as institutions acquire the taint of being diploma mills, those credentials are worthless.

### **Quality is in the teachers**

Making curriculum available is not education. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology now has detailed curricula for over 900 courses up on its free “OpenCourseWare” site. When the site was launched in 2001, MIT president Charles M. Vest was not concerned about a decline in enrolment because, as he noted, students come to MIT for interaction with the teachers there. The quality of the institution’s teachers is the greatest determinant its credential’s value. Once lost, a good reputation is exceedingly hard to regain.

Ultimately, the responsibility for allowing replacement workers to undercut and damage the value and credibility of Ontario’s colleges will rest with the provincial government.

## Quote of the day

“...what have teachers to do with quality of education?”

Bob Carrol, Global TV Toronto on 6:00 p.m. news, March 17, 2006

# BBQ Wednesday March 22

You and your stalwart colleagues are invited to a BBQ (beef hamburgers and veggieburgers) next Wednesday, March 22.

We'll have a couple of grills going between 9:45/10:00 am and 11:30 am to catch the first shift and again at 4:30-5:30 to catch the last shift. College support staff Local 416 is providing the condiments, the chefs are doing the BBQing and your own Local 415 are providing the beverages, beef courtesy of Kennedy Farms of Nepean, Ontario.

Details on specific locations later, but follow your nose next Wednesday

## A few words from our picket captains

### **Sometimes there are things you have to take lying down**

We had a great day on the line Wednesday. We had fun with our line's contest "name that smell". This followed earlier contests we had: 1. Name the disease you most resemble and why, and 2. Name the disease that best exemplifies your manager.

Please let other picketers know that if a truck stops they should ask them to respect the line and turn around. All union trucks including garbage will honour that request. You must request them not to enter.

Using the out door potties is a challenge when they are overturned. Hard, but not impossible, to pee lying on your side.

— Don Longchamps

### **Unsolicited support appreciated**

We appreciated the surprise visit from Laurel Gibbons, the NDP candidate in the Nepean-Carleton provincial by-election NDP. She handed out hot breakfast sandwiches to our members who were very welcoming of this gesture of support. She stayed to walk the line with our members. A loud round of applause to Sharkey's Towing, who left us with 8 dozen large muffins. I believe he also left some at our other sites.

— Marc Duval

### **Giving the grey matter a workout**

We had a good day on the line Thursday, topped by a rousing, raucous, boisterous game of trivia to keep the brain cells active. We picked up a few pizzas Friday and shared lunch together at the end of the second shift.

— Dave Osborne

### **Supportive students**

Spirits lifted with news of “back to the table order.” Several students stopped to talk, in general they say they are supporting their teachers “but not the union.” They saw us as being driven by “the union” rather than as members of that body, an interesting distinction.

We had support from an Ottawa Carleton Public School Board teacher, “Carol,” who brought fruit and cheese, coffee from Timothy’s again today. Two support staff local members came out to walk at lunch time.

Also a part time teacher was out. He spoke to Merlyn Gamble re his situation, he has been teaching part-time for Algonquin in a joint degree program, but at Carleton due to space constraints. He was laid off, with two week’s pay, at the start of the strike. He has been contacted by Carleton and asked to resume teaching this course “for Carleton” until the strike is over (same course same students) He feels caught between a rock and a hard place. Luckily, Merlyn came along and I referred him to her for advice.

— Nan Lowe

### **Syndikat Solidarität**

Wednesday was a quiet shift - not much press presence - more concern being voiced by faculty about the lack of any talks. A good suggestion was made by Noni Stukel that if we are not already e-mailing local lines and other important info to the many members of our local who do not picket that we should do so - perhaps it could be sent to everyone. (Editor’s note: All information in *Local Picket Lines* is posted daily on the union local website.)

CTV, CBC, A Channel, CFRA, as well as the Nepean This Week and the Charlatan all wanted interviews after today’s meeting announcement and the colleges’ save the semester plan publication. One of our most active picketers today was a visiting Engineer from Berlin, Mr. Matthias Trinks a member of Transnet a German transportation union. We also had support from several OPSEU locals.

— Steve Lee

### **Newfound appreciation for night-timers**

Dull and peaceful Thursday on the noontime front. Handed out dozens of flyers and told the students we saw we were back at the table on Friday but don’t expect classes on Monday. But, “we miss you and we’re going to get back to working for you as fast as we can.” Positive responses all ‘round and the news really heartened the team although we know we’re still looking at a bit of a haul no matter what

About five of our group were able to come back for the evening shift. Wow, is the evening shift ever a different “gig”, as we say in the acting biz! Nasty, and you have to be more vigilant. Cars intimidating people, driving the wrong way in a one way, even whoomping over the medians. Ed Strange is really earning his Wheaties here and is being very supportive and good-natured. JT (mon homme) who came out in solidarity – our ACTRA rep — actually got to trot out his De Niro imitation (“I’m wokkin here”) a couple of times — he was delighted, of course. Interesting that cars don’t tend to noodle someone who weighs over 250 pounds.... I’m sure you’ll hear this from elsewhere but Ken Jessome mentioned that somebody on Woodroffe actually had his foot run over! (Editor’s Note: Keep reading.)

Don’t know if I’ve articulated this but one of the many, many interesting things I’ve learned on this strike is the incredible range in quality of managers in the college, and the relationships they have with their staff.

And whoever invented the “hotpaws” should be given a medal!

Back on deck tomorrow for what is obviously the easy shift.

— Lynn Tarzwell

### **Kind gestures from part-time teachers**

Another cold, windy day/night on the line Wednesday. The sandwich board signs are a hit and the trailer has been especially appreciated in the wind.

Two nice things happened - a part-time teacher in Police dropped off a box of Timbits and someone else, students, I think, delivered three trays of coffee saying that if they were crossing the line, the least they could do was provide coffee.

By the way, has anyone told Wayne, Tom, or Pat what a great job they are doing? I'm struggling with one shift a day, and those guys are going all day! Well done! You three are an inspiration!

— Leslie Manion

### **A conversation with Michael**

Two major issues came out of Thursday's picket.

First, Michael Barrett and I had a curbside conversation during last night's shift. We traded points and it was very civil. But he held firm in these two fundamental beliefs: (a) He hasn't heard a single complaint from any student that class sizes are too big; (b) He hasn't heard a single complaint from any student that too many part-time teachers are being used.

He claims to have received upwards of 250 e-mails from students, most demanding we be legislated back to work, and that education be deemed an essential service. His view, he said, is merely reflective of what he's hearing. He stressed he and the SA or not anti-union or anti-management, just pro-student (he couldn't answer how students can be students when they don't have faculty to teach them, but anyway...) He knows he's not exactly popular with faculty at the moment. Of course, I tried to educate him about the fall-out of such legislation (teachers working to rule, less dedication to the students, etc.) and it was to no avail. However, the one thing I got him agreeing to is to meet with faculty, maybe at a local restaurant or hall, to let him know where we're coming from.

Unfortunately we had some serious incidents on the line Thursday evening. A motorist tried to ease her way through the line, trying to work the picketers out of the way in completely irresponsible fashion and as she did so, our line surrounded her vehicle. There were two or three in the front of the vehicle, trying to stop it and loudly telling the driver that she was crossing in an irresponsible way. Some shouting ensued and the vehicle stopped. Our members thought it safe to walk around the vehicle. After a few seconds the driver moved ahead and caught John Tappin's foot under the front passenger side. Very quickly, we all backed away from the vehicle, got the vehicle off John's foot and we had the motorist pull over. Fortunately, John was not injured (thanks to some very good boots which I may order!) other than some numbness in his toes. We had him sit down — I figured he was in shock — but get this — he insisted on continuing to picket! I figured he was in shock but he finished out the shift. The police came after our shift ended and John gave a full run.

I don't know how incidents such as these can be prevented. However, I want to stress the importance of people who are joining the evening picket lines for the first time that they need to report to the picket captains. We need to maintain order when cars start to crowd the line.

Finally, there is an excellent letter by Sue Honsberger in Thursday's *Citizen* on the city editorial page. (Editor's note: Letters and comments by Dianne Bloor, Vertha Coligan, J. Haslip, and Marilyn Schacht have also appeared in the *Ottawa Sun*, *Pembroke Observer*, *Barrhaven Independent*, *Nepean This Week*, *Winchester Press*, and *Kanata Courier*.)

— Joe Banks

### **Dismay over the semester completion strategy**

It was a bitter night on the picket line Wednesday night. The signs were far too big for many of our lady picketers. The road looked like a regatta at a sailing club with folks

blowing about willy nilly. No accidents but at least one of our customers were pulled over by the police for dangerous driving.

The news on the line is all about the College plans to end the school year without the faculty. We all think it a bit of a lark. If managers are going to take on the duties we ought really to call a spade a spade. The “Ontario Community College” has become “Mickey Mouse U.” Why should students bother registering with us when they can receive the same fine education by sending away for a diploma from some unidentified post box number.

A part-timer contacted me saying that the person’s chair had requested that the teacher prepare a set of essays to be completed weekly by students. The essays would be submitted to the part time teacher for evaluation. The part-timer was asked to do this not only for those courses that she was responsible for but also for other courses within the same department. Since the contact would all be done electronically there would be no need to cross pickets. The teacher felt a degree of coercion during the call. The chair started by reminding the teacher that the request would have no bearing on future employment, but the message taken away was just the opposite.

John Harrison mentioned that a few students has said some part time teachers in the CE program were refusing to cross the picket and had cancelled classes on their own. (This sounds encouraging, but not all that logical since it is not clear to me why the same students would be coming to college for a cancelled class; perhaps they just like to talk to us?).

— Mac M.M. (That’s milk monitor not military medal)

# Why people chose to be on the lines

By Madeleine Whitfield

Our thanks to Carol from the public school board, who came by with fruit (this should wean us off our muffin and cookie diet, and about time too) and to Timothy’s restaurant who sent someone over with free coffees for us. We’ll repay the favour when the strike is over by patronizing your free-trade coffee shop!

## Negotiations???

The news on the line today—somewhat thinner because of the rally in Toronto—was all about Chris Bentley’s message that it’s time he sat down with both sides to find out what’s going on. He’s doing that on Friday, March 17, and may the luck of the Irish be with them. There is strong support for the new negotiations from everyone here—fingers crossed that we’ll be back by Monday!

## Morale and Feelings

Chatting with people on the line today, I got the impression that most are in pretty good spirits. Nobody so far has had any bad effects from the strike, apart from losing money and wanting to be back in the classroom, of course. Someone said that at least those of us who’ve been on the lines will be glowing with health from all the fresh air and exercise when we get back in the classroom! That comes under the Look-On-The-Bright-Side-of-Life school of thought.

This led to a discussion of why people feel compelled to be on the line in the freezing cold. Nobody likes doing it, of course, *cela va sans dire*, but they are doing it for various reasons. This what they said when asked:

- I come out to support my union and colleagues.
- I come out to show solidarity with colleagues.
- Want to do my bit
- It's important to show how we support each other even if it's only dropping off a batch of cookies, but support's the thing.
- I think that since I voted in favour of the strike mandate, I should put my money where my mouth is.
- It's important to show a visible presence, I think.
- Being willing to be uncomfortable for my convictions sends a message.
- If we don't come out, who will hand out the information to the public driving by?

This is just a summary of the answers as many of them were the same. These are committed people and we should be proud of them. At the same time we recognize that some people can't be with us because of ill health and other very good reasons, so there's no stigma attached to not being here. But if you can spare a minute, please just come by and say "Hi" and tell us that you support the picketers.

### **Response to President Gillett's Purported Solution**

Since we had our own comments on the idea of managers teaching our courses, it was interesting and heartening to see that our ideas meshed with no less than the managers of other colleges. It was most interesting to read that Mohawk College president, MaryLynn West-Moynes, said things like "...the idea is impractical and unfair to students... managers can't replace experts... It's disrespectful to students that we wouldn't recognize the calibre of professor required."

Mohawk College evidently operates from the standpoint that professors are integral to showing respect for the customer—sorry, the student.

And from St. Lawrence College's Pennie Carr-Harris, executive director of human resources, we read that she thinks, "Having managers teach...you would enter into [this] with some caution. We want to be very respectful to our faculty."

Being very respectful to faculty—what a novel idea.

### **Out in the Greater World**

As it happens I had a dental appointment Thursday afternoon, and again, as it happens, the dental hygienist was trained at Algonquin. We had a most interesting discussion about the strike (in between having my mouth filled with dental equipment) and she mentioned something that she had wondered about. Her class had suddenly been told they had to buy the teeth cleaning polishers (about \$400-500 each) they were using as part of their training rather than having them provided, as had been the case up to then. She pointed out that this was not only a big extra expense, but left each student with the problem of what to do with the polishers after the course was finished. Hygienists are not like carpenters and chefs who need their own equipment when they get a job.

This raises the money question again. Four to five hundred dollars per student adds up to quite a hefty chunk of savings. Has this been done in other programs? Just a thought.

### **Student Support**

Last but not least is our conversation with a savvy student today. He came by to ask us some questions to get our point of view—which was nice. We had a long conversation with him, until it got too cold to stand still any longer, and he asked up some serious questions about our motivation, our concern for students and so on. I hope we were able to satisfy his need to know what's going on. He has e-mailed and phoned as many people as he can to get info, and has spoken to his MPP. Nice to know. We told him we hope to back in the classroom as soon as possible.

# Keep on paddling

by Jack Wilson

Last Sunday, our interim minister, a distinguished gentleman by the name of Ted Colwell addressed the children of our congregation with the weekly children's story. Moments earlier, he had acknowledged the strike and the effects it was having on the community for both the staff and the students (two students from the nursing program have been working with our parish nurse since last fall).

The children's story involved two nine-year-old boys from around the Spencerville area, sometime in the late '40s. They were walking to school when they decided to take a shortcut through a local dairy farmer's property. While en route, they found two little frogs, and being the mischievous boys that they were, they decided to play a trick on the farmer. They came upon his milk cans that were awaiting pick up, and they placed each of the frogs in separate cans. They continued on to school imagining the surprise of whoever discovered the poor frogs.

The first little frog became so disheartened by its new surroundings, enclosed in the darkness of the can, it said, "Woe is me," and promptly gave up. It was soon a drowned little frog.

The second little frog was also disturbed by the new circumstances in which it found itself. But instead of giving up, it did what it knew best – it swam and swam and swam in the dark even though things looked pretty bleak.

Later, the man responsible for collecting the milk cans picked up the farmer's milk and took it to the local dairy. At the dairy, he proceeded to open the cans and was astonished to find a little dead frog floating in one of the containers. He then opened another can, and was even more surprised, for in this container there was also a frog — but this one was alive and sitting on a lily pad of butter!

Well, the moral of the story was self evident. No matter what the challenges we face in life, we shouldn't give up. We should keep the faith that things will get better if we persevere. Or as Ted said, "Persist and things always churn out for the better."

Now, Ted, never did mention what happened to the frog-contaminated milk, but in a just world I'd like to think it was made into cream, sold to the College, and served in a certain you-know-who's coffee.

# Sidewalk reclaimed by Pembroke picketers

by Shawn Pentecost

Earlier in the week there had been some confusion on the part of the college as to where its property ended. On Monday night we were told that the college owned the property right to the street including

the sidewalk. We were told that the college was “permitting” us to walk on the sidewalk. After some inquiry by Pauline “**Don’t Mess With Me**” Edmonds, the college recanted what was said, and by Tuesday the sidewalk once again belonged to the city.

### **Local union support**

Tuesday and Wednesday nights saw some extra support from other local unions. This proved very helpful. Only about ten people attended CE classes on Wednesday. Thank you to Susan Ballantyne for advising the other unions -- we needed their support. We have received generous support from our colleagues who are not on strike as well as the public. We have been very appreciative of their support.

### **It’s bird, it’s a plane- no it’s a vice president academic.**

Raymonde Hansen visited our campus today for a meeting. She did speak to some of our members about the weather and such before entering the college. Before she left Barb Clarke advised Raymonde that Barb would be “remiss if I didn’t ask for management to suspend the public relations campaign to save the world and get back to the bargaining table to resolve this.” Raymonde said she would pass it along.

At this point spirits have a tendency to drop. However, we couldn’t help but be revitalized.