

Convention 2007

Daily Update

April 19th
Day 1

Brought to you by the OPSEU In Solidarity Editorial Committee

OPSEU honours Louise Arbour

Spirit, dedication and ideals rooted in social justice exemplified Stanley Knowles. He was one of Canada's best-known and most-respected opposition MPs. His dedication to justice for all made him influential across all party lines. OPSEU annually recognizes individuals or groups who exemplify the spirit, dedication and ideals of Mr. Knowles.

Canada's Louise Arbour is the highest-ranking human rights official – and probably the best-known judicial figure – on the planet.

After serving as vice-president of the Canadian Civil Liberties Union and associate dean of Osgoode Hall law school, Arbour joined the Supreme Court of Ontario and then the Ontario Court of Appeal. In 1996 she was appointed chief prosecutor of war crimes for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia before the International Criminal Tribunal in The Hague. In 1999 she was appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada and in 2004 she accepted her current position as the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.



In the spring of 1999, as war raged in Yugoslavia, Arbour investigated the rape camps, ethnic cleansing, and mass killings that were tearing that country to shreds. Determined to act, Arbour issued a warrant for the arrest of

Yugoslavian president Slobodan Milosevic, charging him with war crimes and crimes against humanity. It was the first time an international court had ever indicted a sitting president. Her critics – and there were many – accused her of putting the peace process in danger. She replied: “No credible, lasting peace can be built upon impunity and injustice.”

Currently, Ms. Arbour is using her position at the UN to stand up for human rights from Darfur to Uzbekistan, from Chechnya to Colombia. Her voice has the power to sway governments.

Recognizing Ms. Arbour underscores not only OPSEU's dedication to human rights (as traditionally defined), but also our broad commitment to social justice for all people.

Her life and work exemplify the values the Stanley Knowles Humanitarian Award stands for. ☺

Rainford Jackson Education and Development Fund

Native Women's Association of Canada

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is founded on the collective goal to enhance, promote, and foster the social, economic, cultural and political well-being of First Nations and Métis women within First Nation and Canadian societies.

The NWAC and their Sisters in Spirit Campaign bring awareness of the alarming rate of violence against aboriginal women in Canada, in particular the high rates of missing and murdered aboriginal women in Canada.

The main objective of the Sisters in Spirit

initiative is to address violence against aboriginal women, particularly racialized and/or sexualized violence, that is violence against aboriginal women because of their gender and aboriginal identity. They are increasing public awareness and knowledge at a national level of the impact of racialized, sexualized violence against aboriginal women that often leads to their disappearance and death. See www.nwac-hq.org. ☺



This award honours a former board member who died too young. Rainford Jackson was a Region 1 activist with a strong interest in education and human rights.

WE WANT YOUR RECIPES!

The *In Solidarity* editorial committee is asking you to share your favourite recipes for a new cookbook. Have you ever wanted your name in print? Do you think that wonderful soufflé, stew or dessert of yours should be shared with the world? Have you ever wanted to share that favourite family recipe with everyone? Here's your opportunity.

Send in those recipes, whether it's for a special drink, a delicious BBQ item, tantalizing sauce, or a mouth-watering soup.

Send in your recipe including a note on who you are, what local you belong to, and if you are a steward, executive member, member of your health and safety committee, etc.

This call-out is also for our hard working OPSEU



staff to submit their beloved recipes. All members of the Ontario Public Service Staff Union (OPSSU) are invited to send in your scrumptious palate-pleasing portions of food delights. We challenge all members of MERCs, sector committees, equity committees, retirees, local presidents and all of the Executive Board Members to send in a recipe. We welcome submissions of any cultural recipes, vegetarian meals and healthy and even the not-so healthy hunger-pleasing dishes.

The committee wants to organize all the recipes and put them together in a ringed cookbook that will be available for purchase to all members. We want to keep the costs down, so all we will want to do is recover costs and have the ability to raise some funds for charity. Send your recipe to mason@tbaytel.net. ☺

In Solidarity Committee

Who we are: Len Mason, Local 737; Laurie Sabourin, Local 368; Larry Farr, Local 559; Karrie Ouchas, Local 340; Mandy Dumais, Local 680. Ex-officio members are: James Tocker, Executive Board Liaison and Don Ford, OPSEU Communications.

Health and Safety Awards

Frank Pezzutto, Mr. Health and Safety

Frank retired from the North Bay General Hospital and remains a retiree of Local 662. Frank was instrumental in bringing OPSEU into the hospital in the 1970s. He was on the



hospital's Joint Health and Safety Committee for more than a decade. He also managed the hazardous waste storage room at the hospital, ensuring that waste was stored and

shipped out properly for many years. He served as the safety officer, teaching and developing procedures for WHMIS and the Transportation of Dangerous Goods.

At the provincial level, Frank served as the Safety rep on the Hospital Professionals Division Executive of the BPS. He was known as Mr. Health and Safety and was involved in many campaigns including the campaign for safety-engineered sharps.

In his retirement, Frank continues to give Safety courses to the north through the Workers Safety Center in Sudbury whenever they need him. He has continued to encourage and teach others, so that we all benefit from his experience and knowledge. ☺

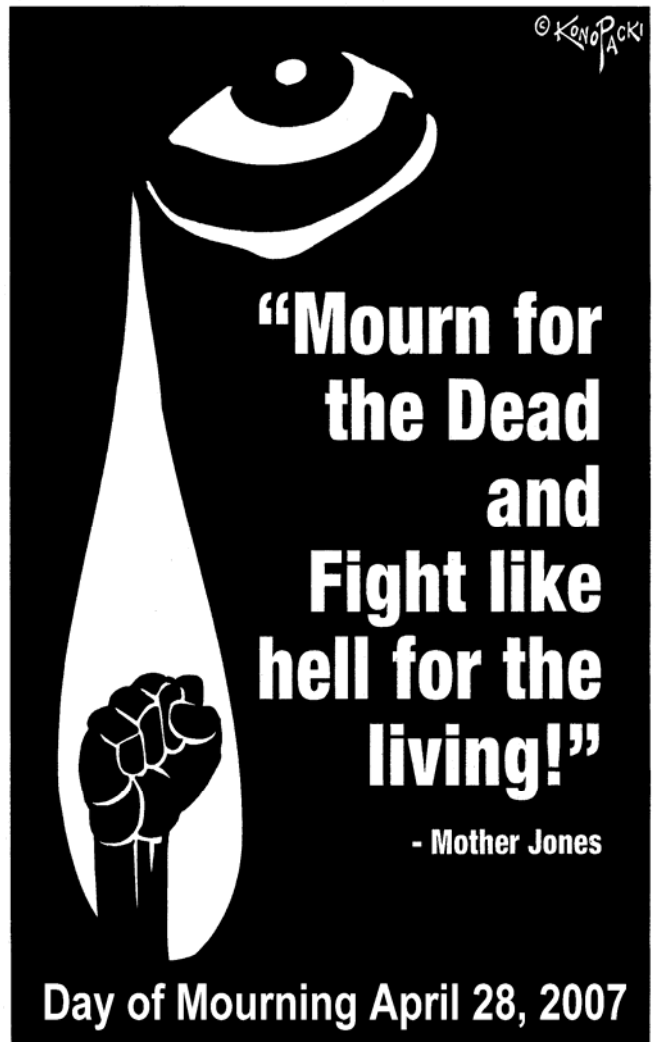
Work refusal at Windsor courthouse gets results

On April 4, 2006, court workers refused to enter the courtrooms after an incident the previous day when a man, armed with a box cutter, slashed himself during his sentencing hearing.

Court clerks staged the work refusal. All court cases that day had to be adjourned, and Windsor Police were brought in with metal detectors to search lawyers and clients.

The actions taken by these members produced results. For two weeks, Windsor police used hand-held detectors to search those entering the building. Stationary metal detectors were installed a month later, and fully staffed. Video cameras and duress buttons have been upgraded and a full risk assessment has been completed by the local.

The local also managed to get an agreement that all the changes implemented are mirrored in both the Ontario courthouse and Superior court building. ☺

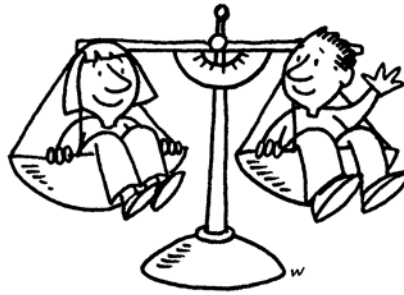


Human Rights Award

Carol McGregor: Advocate for human rights (posthumously)

Carol was well known as a strong advocate for injured workers. She became a member of OPSEU Local 525 when she started working in 1995 with Injured Workers' Consultants (IWC), an independent community legal aid clinic in Toronto.

Prior to working with the IWC, Carol had worked with disability rights organizations, including Co-director of Disabled People for Employment Equity and Executive Director of People United for Self Help Ontario.



She served as an Advisory Group member to the National Transportation Committee; Member of the Premier's Council of Ontario under the Rae government; Member of the Council of Canadians with Disabilities; and Member of the Native Circle and Aboriginal Council of Toronto. Undeterred by losing her sight, she quickly

mastered and worked in one of the most complex, paper-intensive areas of law, often with few or no accommodations. Many injured workers are grateful for her results at the highest level of appeal at the Ontario Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal.

Carol attended many Conventions with her "spirited" and faithful dog companion, Xayla, and will be remembered for her passionate contribution to debates on disability rights, workers compensation issues and other equality and human rights issues. ☺

Honourary Lifetime Membership Award

Bob Reid

As a member of the Region 1 retirees group, Brother Bob had and continues to have a very distinguished career serving our union and working people.

Bob served 14 years as an OPSEU Executive Board Member, 15 years as president of Local 106 and a team member of five provincial bargaining teams. For three years he was president of the Ontario and National Society of Respiratory Therapy.

Harry Plummer

Harry Plummer was an activist with OPSEU's CAAT-Academic bargaining unit from the time the union won bargaining rights in the community colleges until his retirement last year at age 65

Harry was elected to serve OPSEU Local 420 as Treasurer, President (for 16 years), and Chief

Steward. He was also elected to the Executive Board of the union, serving one term from 1978 to 1980.



Harry took a lifelong interest in benefit coverage for college faculty, and served for decades on the union-management Joint Benefits Committee for the CAAT-Academic bargaining unit. He also served on six bargaining teams between 1985 and 2006.

Len Hupet

Len, from Local 718 at the Fort Francis Jail, was an active member of OPSEU for 32 years and served as our 1st Vice President/Treasurer for four years. He served on the Executive Board of OPSEU from 1986 till 2001. Len was a true unionist and labour leader for all of his working life. ☺