

IN SOLIDARITY PRESENTS

Day 3

CONVENTION UPDATE

April 22, 2006

David Suzuki wins audience and Knowles Award

Friday afternoon brought Dr. David Suzuki to the podium where he enlightened and entertained the attendees of the 2006 OPSEU Annual Convention.

His life stories and real examples of our individual effects on the environment opened many eyes to the critical state of our planet and eco-system. Dr. Suzuki was also here to accept the Stanley H. Knowles Humanitarian Award which is given to individuals or groups who exemplify dedication and ideals rooted in social justice.

Dr. Suzuki is best known as the long-time host of the CBC TV's *The Nature of Things* and has been at the global forefront of science, genetics, civil rights and environmental protection. He has also been voted one of the top ten Canadians of all time. His passion and knowledge for all things environmental shines through and his dedication to the cause is truly inspirational. He told us of the warnings that have been issued by prominent scientists for the last 40 years which have been virtually ignored. It is imperative to take action and responsibility for the eco-system and become

involved in the sustainability of our planet. Dr. Suzuki highlighted our need to "inter-connect" and relate how our personal lifestyles and actions affect both the environment and humankind.

Dr. Suzuki stressed our need to establish concrete objectives and timelines to make a difference and to attain sustainability...and reiterated that the time to make these changes is now. Human beings have the ability to foresee the future and, in the past, it has been the key to our survival. This is a period in history when decisions will be made that will not only affect our children and grandchildren but the future of the human race and all life on this planet.

"Dr. David Suzuki...world crusader on issues affecting this planet"

- Leah Casselman

How can we do our part? To start, log onto the David Suzuki Foundation website and commit to the Nature Challenge. So far, over 200,000 Canadians have signed up and have committed to small but important changes like car-pooling, using public transportation, reducing energy usage in the home and recycling.

What Happened?



OPSEU to fight for the Ontario Human Rights Commission

A resolution debate that started on Thursday afternoon continued Friday for OPSEU to support an independent Human Rights Commission, and condemn government attempts to hamper access. Delegates passed the resolution unanimously.

Fight for successor rights given the thumbs up

Delegates asked OPSEU to support a campaign to maximize pressure on the Ontario Government to restore successor rights. The resolution passed by an overwhelming majority.



Ontarians with disabilities resolution receives support

This resolution asks OPSEU to lobby the provincial government to increase funding to the Ontario Human Rights Commission. It also resolves that OPSEU appoint commissioners to handle caseload related to disabilities and provide staff resources to members requiring assistance in filing a claim. This resolution was passed.

Centres of Excellence Campaign to continue

Delegates gave strong support and passed the resolution to direct OPSEU to continue to fight the closures of the three Developmental Services Regional Centres and maintain the funding and support for the Centres of Excellence Campaign.

Locals' Area Council dues to remain capped

A resolution requesting increased funding for Area Councils was put to the test Friday morning. This resolution requested the removal of the cap on local rebates for area council dues but was defeated.

Death Benefits to be excluded from dues levy

Delegates resolved to exclude dues payments on death benefits as well as termination payments made to a member's estate. During this debate, there was a request to refer it back to the committee to divide the two issues of the death benefits and the termination payments, but that motion was defeated.

Who's Here?	
Delegates	825
Alternates	368
Observers	170
Executive Board	20
Committees	40
Retirees	7
Solidarity Guests	15
Guests	31
Total	1476

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

OPSEU Goes Green

Delegates approved the resolution to allow the Executive Board to develop, approve and implement “Green Programs” during the coming year. The new initiatives that are implemented will be listed on the OPSEU website, with a detailed “report card” of such programs and actions to be presented to the 2007 OPSEU Convention.

OPSEU’s eight-point action plan includes:

1. Network of green stewards
2. Standing up for green jobs
3. A greener union
4. Greener workplaces
5. Greener pensions and funds
6. Greener lifestyles
7. Greener labour movement
8. Greener environment

OPSEU pledges financial support to Leonard Peltier Defense Fund

Delegates voted in favour to continue the financial support to Leonard Peltier’s fight as a political prisoner. This support includes an annual donation of at least \$5,000 per year to the defense fund (LPDF Canada) until he gains his freedom.

Six Nations Reserve gets support from Delegates

A resolution asking OPSEU to condemn the Ontario Government and the Ontario Provincial Police for their actions and shameful treatment of the native protestors over disputed land was passed. This resolution asked OPSEU to demand a negotiated settlement between the government and the First Nations people of Ontario.

Fighting for Fanshawe College’s DSW Program

Convention delegates carried the resolution to call upon the provincial government to stop the suspension of the Developmental Services Worker program. They have also asked that the Auditor General to conduct a value-for-money audit with a focus on the mismanagement of community colleges.

OPSEU to organize AMAPCEO Members

There are an increasing number of AMAPCEO positions being created in the OPS which is causing a divisive situation in our workplaces. The delegates supported this resolution giving OPSEU the mandate to plan and implement the organization these ubiquitous AMAPCEO members and bring them into our fold.

Constitutional Amendments that hit the floor

- Delegates approved the re-naming of the Youth Committee to the “Young Workers Committee.”
- Members defeated a proposal that added two Youth delegates per region to convention.
- Two constitutional amendments limiting the terms for President, First Vice-President/ Treasurer and the Executive Board were defeated.
- An amendment to purchase real estate using the General Fund was defeated. Real estate will continue to be bought through the Strike Fund as per past practice.
- Locals with seasonal employees, where their membership number fluctuates throughout the year, will continue to have their convention representation be based on their count of members as of Dec. 31.

Budget passes

With Constitutional amendments that change the allocation of revenues to the Strike fund, delegates passed the Budget as presented.

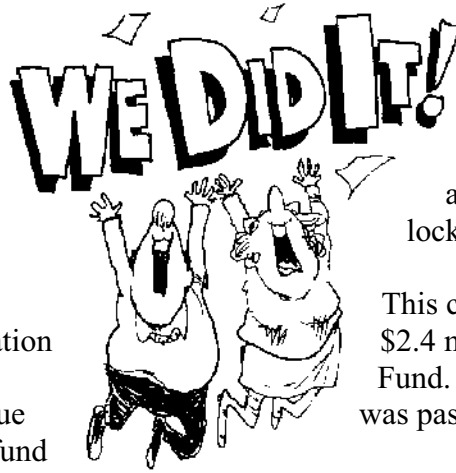
The Executive Board met until midnight Thursday night, as directed by delegates, to discuss the budget and propose a new plan to increase the allocation of revenues to the General Fund. The constitutional amendment was presented to the delegates late Friday morning.

The amendment changes the allocation of revenues to the Strike Fund. Currently, ten per cent of all revenue goes to the Strike Fund. Once the fund

hits \$50 million, this amount changes to two per cent.

The new amendment changed the formula from ten per cent to five per cent. There is also a provision that allows the Executive Board to invoke a temporary dues levy of 0.2 per cent if the strike fund reaches \$50 million then falls below it again as the result of a strike or lockout.

This change translates to an additional \$2.4 million allocated to the General Fund. The constitutional amendment was passed by the delegates.



Caring kids create craft for cancer research

On July 6, 2003, Lisa McBride of Whitby, mother of two beautiful young girls, Taylor and Spencer, succumbed to non-Hodgkin lymphoma; Cancer. Taylor and Spencer would not let their spirit be defeated by their loss or this disease. In memory of their mother, these courageous girls began a fund raising campaign for cancer research by selling hand-made beaded bracelets. They've called it "Lisa's Beads".

Taylor and Spencer, with several of their cousins, sell these gorgeous bracelets for \$5 each. All proceeds go toward cancer research and to help fund the new cancer treatment centre at Lakeridge Health in Oshawa.

In 2004, Haley Sanders' father was diagnosed with cancer. Shortly after this Port Hope family

received the devastating news, Haley's mother came home from work with a beaded bracelet and a story of two brave little girls. Haley was inspired. She contacted Taylor and Spencer and asked what she could do to help. Haley has joined the team and was here at Convention selling the bracelets.

The story ends on a positive note. Through sales at OPSEU Convention 2006, "Lisa Bead's" raised \$3,005. This amount has been matched by OPSEU for a total of \$6,010 to be used towards the fight against cancer.

Today, Haley's father is in remission.

For more information or to place an order after Convention, call (905) 433-4339.

Women honoured at annual breakfast

The Provincial Women's Committee (PWC) held its annual Convention Breakfast on Friday morning. Members woke up early to enjoy coffee and muffins in the Dominion Ballroom.

OPSEU President Leah Casselman welcomed the guests. She thanked everyone for all their hard work and dedication, and encouraged each and every person to get involved in municipal politics this fall.

We were entertained by the "premiere" of an original satirical play; one with a strong political message. Entitled "You get what you Elect", PWC members transformed into a cast of "Cats", each dressed up as a different candidate.

They gave speeches committing to get our vote. We listened, heckled and then voted for whichever "Cat" we thought would do the best. Sound familiar? As the lights went down, we watched an animated video "Mouseland" which is based on a speech made in the 1940s by then CCF leader Tommy Douglas. The CCF became the NDP and the video highlighted how our

political challenges continue.

Also, donations are collected for school breakfast programs around the province. This year, \$411 was collected.

The Bread and Roses Award was presented to Doris Rossi for her outstanding contributions to the women's movement.

The following women received a Regional Recognition Award and a rose for their contribution in moving forward women's issues.



- Region 1 – Florry Lang
- Region 2 – Libby Simpson
- Region 3 – Marion Burton
- Region 4 – Tara Langford
- Region 5 – Mary Piro
- Region 6 – Helen Riehl
- Region 7 – Doris Meredith

Brought to you by ***IN SOLIDARITY***

This is the thirteenth year that the editorial committee of ***In Solidarity*** has produced the daily updates. We will provide a record of Convention events and happenings.

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 Public Affairs.