



THE

# ECHO

Information for OPSEU members in the Liquor Board Employees Division - Issue 21 - June 27 2008

## *Tour de farce!*

### **LCBO management slams door on union request for Durham warehouse tour**

What began as a simple proposal from LBED for a joint labour-management tour of the giant LCBO logistics warehouse in Durham region ended up in a needless dust-up – and cancellation of the tour – after management objected to the number of participants from our union.

This pitiful story begins in April when OPSEU proposed a tour of the Durham facility for the benefit of LBED executive members and OPSEU staff who are assigned to LBED but who had never visited the state-of-art warehouse which serves as the key distribution centre for much of southern Ontario and the GTA.

OPSEU Local 378 represents 310 LBED members at the facility. The tour was scheduled for June 16.

The union originally proposed a delegation of 12, including First VP-Treasurer, Patty Rout, who lives in nearby Courtice and who represents Region 3 on the executive board.

No way, replied Bruce Pizzolato, director of the warehouse. Too many people .... never done this before .... unmanageable .... security ....

OK, replied LBED Negotiator Rob Field, who then whittled the union contingent down to six by eliminating all staff but keeping the key divisional executive members and VP Rout.

That's still too many, replied Pizzolato. Can't

handle six unionists. It's either a maximum of five from labour or the tour's a no-go. He also indicated that he was "not accustomed" to having to debate his decisions with "individuals whom I am accommodating in some fashion".

Unable to reason with Pizzolato over the inclusion of **one** additional LBED member, Field fired off his final email:

"Old customs can change as labour relations improve and mature. I have now been able to discuss your comments with OPSEU VP Patty Rout and LBED chair Vanda Klumper and I am authorized to advise you that the Union is withdrawing its request to tour the Durham Logistics facility at this time."

It appears that the LCBO needs to be reminded that it operates as a Crown Agency of the Ontario Government. As such, it is responsible for all Retail and Logistics facilities as a 'public trust' for the citizens of Ontario. The LCBO also needs to be reminded that the Union, as exclusive bargaining agent for employees of the LCBO, is a contractual stakeholder in that trust. The collective agreement contains provisions for the Union to access the Employer's premises in the course of fostering better labour relations.....that's not an 'accommodation' .....that's just 'good business'!

To learn more about the Let's Keep it Public campaign, visit: <http://www.opseu.org/lbed/privatization.htm>

**PLEASE POST  
AND CIRCULATE**

## LBED Executive Contacts

Vanda Klumper  
LBED Chair  
Local 165, Stratford  
vklumper@rogers.com

Denise Davis  
LBED Vice-Chair/ Local 378  
Durham Warehouse, Whitby  
djdcones@yahoo.ca

Paula Sossi  
LBED Secretary-Treasurer  
Local 285, New Hamburg  
paulasossi@rogers.com

Susan Lusty  
Chair, Benefits & Pension  
Committee  
Local 376, Barrie  
susan\_barrie@hotmail.com

Tracy Vyschaft  
Chair, Health & Safety  
Committee  
Local 377, Oshawa  
tcshaft@explornet.com

Colleen McLeod  
Chair, Education &  
Communication Committee  
Local 5107, Toronto  
colleenmacleod@opseu5107.org

## EAP Hotline 1-800-263-1401

The LCBO Employee Assistance Program is a confidential, hassle-free counseling service for eligible LCBO employees and their immediate families.

For assistance, please call 1-800-263-1401. To find out more about the program, visit:

[www.opseu.org/leb/eap](http://www.opseu.org/leb/eap)

## Get on the list!

You can receive the Echo directly by fax or e-mail. Just let us know how to reach you. Give us your secure email address or fax number by calling OPSEUdirect: 1-800-268-7376 or 416-443-8888.



# LCBO gets new political master

In a mini-cabinet shuffle announcement on June 20 by Premier Dalton McGuinty, responsibility for the LCBO has been transferred to the Ministry of Finance under the tutelage of Dwight Duncan (Liberal-Windsor Techumseh).

The LCBO had previously been the responsibility of the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Renewal under David Caplan, who has now been moved to the Ministry of Health. LBED's relation with Caplan was fleeting at best, especially after he cancelled out on two meetings last summer with OPSEU president Warren (Smokey) Thomas and LBED chair Vanda Klumper, citing more pressing engagements.

The jury is still out on what the shift to Finance means for the LCBO. Since the Minister of Finance is Ontario's head cashier, the move may signal the government's intention to squeeze as much money out of the crown agency as possible.

If so, that augers well for our efforts to repatriate Agency stores. A financial analysis of the Agency store program in 2007 indicated the provincial government could stand to gain \$340 million over 10 years if it repatriates almost 90 Agency stores.



# A pension plan tailored to your future needs

## Plan available to all LBED members – not just full-timers!

Did you know as an LBED member you can enroll in a pension plan that adds stability and security to your retirement years?

Best of all, you don't have to be a full-timer to enroll.

In today's financial environment having a safe and solid retirement income is essential to your golden years. Why, then, take a risk with your future?

The pension plan is the OPSEU-OP Trust retirement pension plan. The OPSEU pension plan manages one of Canada's largest pension funds with assets exceeding \$13 billion. The plan as of Dec. 31, 2001, is fully loaded 27 years ahead of schedule.

There are more than 77,000 members and pensioners in the plan, so you know your investment is well-funded and serving your brothers and sisters in OPSEU.

The OPSEU pension plan has the benefit of being a defined benefit plan. This means you will receive a secure lifetime retirement pension based on a formula that takes into account your salary and pensionable service. This being based on the average annual salary rates for the five consecutive years that produce a member's highest average and accrued pensionable service credit. Unlike a traditional RRSP plan, the value of your OPSEU plan does not change depending on investment market conditions. The OPSEU plan also is separate and distinct from the Ontario government and OPSEU. It only exists to administer the pension plan benefits of the OPSEU pension plan to its members.

Another benefit of the plan is for every dollar a member contributes, their employer matches

that amount to the plan. Also, by joining the OPSEU pension plan you will be offered the opportunity to purchase back several of your pensionable years before you joined the plan. These years can be purchased back in one lump sum, or as a monthly payment divided over several years. This has the added benefit of increasing your retirement pension and not being unaffordable. In many cases your pension earnings from a previous employer may be able to be transferred to the OPSEU pension plan. This also means if you leave your current employer, your pension contributions are portable.

To enroll in the program you must be an OPSEU member. You can contact the OP Trust at 1-800-906-7738. Or you can contact the LCBO Human Resource department in your area. Very soon afterward you will receive an information package to help you enroll in retirement future. And always the OP Trust, your local LBED/OPSEU representative and the employers' human resource department will answer any question you might have about the OPSEU pension plan.

The OPSEU pension plan is a safe and dependable retirement investment for OPSEU members. It is fully funded and very easy for members to afford. Members' contributions are matched by the employer and opportunities are available to affordably purchase earlier pensionable years to increase your retirement funds.

**Submitted by the LBED Benefits  
and Pension Committee**

# Creeping privatization tops agenda at NUPGE meeting

## Labour reps share strategies to protect public retail service

Ontario isn't the only province facing a potential threat to its system of publicly-owned liquor and wine stores in the form of an expanded Agency store program.

Similar threats are in full view across Canada, liquor board union representatives were told at a meeting of the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) in Regina, June 12-13.

"We're here because the threat of privatization, or at least some form of privatization, continues to stalk the system of publicly-owned liquor boards in province after province," said NUPGE Secretary-Treasurer Larry Brown in his opening comments to more than 30 participants at the meeting representing all provinces with the exception of Alberta – which has privatized its wine and spirits operations altogether – and Newfoundland, where workers are currently in contract negotiations with the provincial government

LBED chair Vanda Klumper attended the Regina gathering, along with OPSEU Senior Negotiator Rob Field and Campaigns Officer Greg Hamara. Meanwhile, Québec, which is not affiliated with NUPGE, sent a delegation of four – a move that was warmly greeted by delegates.

As delegates heard, privatization remains a chief concern of unionized liquor board

employees in all provinces, especially those which have elected right-wing conservative governments in recent years.

In British Columbia, for example, the market share enjoyed by BC Liquor Stores has dropped to 53 per cent as the government of Gordon Campbell rolls out the welcome mat in favour of further growth in the private sector. In response, the British Columbia Government Employees Union (BCGEU) has mounted a high-profile campaign that urges consumers to "Shop Public."

The Saskatchewan Government Employees Union (SGEU), which represents liquor board employees in that province, is alarmed by the closure of one of Moose Jaw's two government-operated liquor stores, and fears this is the first step in the direction of opening the door to full-scale privatization similar to the disastrous experience next-door in Alberta.

To better understand the public's mood around privatization, SGEU has funded several focus group studies. Results show the public is concerned about social responsibility if the province's liquor board falls into the hands of private operators.

### Bookmark this address!

[www.opseu.org/lbed](http://www.opseu.org/lbed)

Stay on top of all the breaking news that affects OPSEU and liquor board employees by regularly visiting this website. It has all the information, updates and contacts you'll need when it comes to your union, your rights and your workplace.

*The Echo* is authorized for distribution by:



Vanda Klumper  
Chair, LBED



Warren (Smokey) Thomas  
President, OPSEU

**Got a question? Call OPSEUdirect at 1-800-268-7376**

