



TableTalk *update*

The latest bargaining and mobilizing news for OPS members

December 19, 2008

Now it's up to the employer

Bargaining continued at the Central/Unified table this week as the teams tried to work through as many issues as possible prior to the Dec. 23 deadline.

Late Friday, the teams tabled a comprehensive package with the employer. This package incorporated all outstanding items on the Central/Unified table with the union's demands for resolution.

The employer has asked that they be given a few days to consider our offer. We expect now to hear from the employer on Monday, Dec. 22.

The teams thank the members for continuing to show strength and solidarity in the workplace. Now, just ignore the rumours and have a good weekend. We will report again as soon as possible.

Corrections asks for actions to continue

This past week the Corrections Team has been dealing with an employer who is intent on stripping our member's rights away. We are aware our mandate is to negotiate improvements to our collective agreement for all members and classifications within our bargaining unit, and we are anxious to move onto the demands set by the members.

However, the employer is still seeking to extremely limit our members' rights to sick leave, eligibility to earn overtime and cut weekend premiums. The Corrections Team has signed an agreement to bring the sick leave proposals to our table; this will allow only OUR members to vote on OUR sick time.

It is imperative that member actions continue across the province. These actions will send a clear message to the employer that this bargaining unit will not stand idly by as our rights and entitlements are stripped.

"This bargaining unit has a history of standing up to the employer," says Paul Johnstone, Region 2 member. "This has allowed the bargaining team in previous rounds to make gains for our members. I am confident at this time we will continue to receive the support of our members so we can fight off these archaic takeaways."

In the next week, local presidents can anticipate a phone call from their regional Corrections Team representatives regarding bargaining developments.

Corrections Quote of the Week

"All that is required for evil to triumph, is for good men to do nothing"

Know the issues

Issue sheets on the main employer bargaining takeaways are now posted on the OPSEU website. The elimination of termination pay accrual, Surplus Factor 80 and reasonable efforts language are all concessions being demanded by the employer.

You can access the issues sheets at <http://www.opseu.org/ops/barg2008/issue-sheets.htm> Read the information, and make sure you download the sheets and post them in your workplace.

It's your contract – know what's at stake.

OPS mobilization gets busy and creative

The Central Bargaining Team asked for members to show their visible support for a fair contract...and members responded. Members were creative and many of the activities revolved around the holiday theme. The 28 member mobilizers report that interest is high in bargaining, and what follows is just a selection of the many activities going on out there:

Locals in Belleville and Napanee produced buttons that said "all I want for Christmas is a fair contract" that are being proudly worn by members. Bake sales in support of United Way are being organized by locals in London. "Our locals are recruiting new stewards," reports London mobilizer Jayne Mackenzie. "The face-to-face contact with members makes all the difference," adds Kingston mobilizer Daryl O'Grady.

Local 618 members in Sudbury braved the cold and snowy conditions Dec. 17 to put black ribbons on more than 60 vehicles. They also put placards on the back of cars demanding a fair contract. More than 400 Christmas cards with the stickers, "All I want for the holiday is a fair contract" will be delivered to managers from OPSEU locals in Whitby and Oshawa. More than 4,000 letters to Liberal MPPs have been signed by Local 506 members in the greater Toronto area. Local 553 members at the MOE lab in Toronto wore OPSEU scarves to show their support.

"I had over 70 members in one previously less-interested local sign an OPSEU placard," says Toronto mobilizer Ibrahim Bozai. "I'm being stopped wherever I go by members, asking for information and expressing support for the bargaining team to get a fair contract." Sudbury mobilizer Normand Pilon adds, "We're reaching members that we never normally see at meetings."

Numerous pizza luncheons were hosted by locals across both the northwest and northeast, while food drives and monetary donations were organized by locals in Timmins, New Liskeard, Kirkland Lake, Hearst, Geraldton, Gogama, Sudbury and Sault Ste. Marie. More than \$1,800 was raised by locals in Sudbury alone. Members in Hearst also painted their faces blue on Dec. 17.

Court reporters in Thunder Bay wore blue extensions in their hair to show support for the team and as part of their Day of Action, Dec. 16. Courthouses across the province participated in the Day Of Action, including those in Windsor, London, St. Catharines, St. Thomas, Toronto, Oshawa and Thunder Bay. Court staff wore black ribbons or

armbands to express their mourning for the integrity of the record if the Ministry of Attorney General's plans for court reporting go through. Members report a lot of support from defense counsel, crowns and judges.

Mobilizers report that members are wearing OPSEU blue and the "All I want for the holiday..." stickers when they attend holiday parties or lunches with the employer. The issues sheets are being posted in the workplaces.

Many locals have decorated their office Christmas trees with OPSEU stickers and cards. Local 340 in Oshawa participated in the employer's "decorate a gingerbread house" contest using OPSEU buttons, stickers and cards. Members have made holiday deserts with the OPSEU theme. Hearst OPSEU members made cookies with "OPSEU" on them and court staff in Thunder Bay made OPSEU cupcakes.

A number of locals held very successful information pickets this week, including Local 135 at the Windsor Jail, Local 123 at the Sarnia Courthouse, Local 115 at the St. Thomas Probation Office, Local 252 at the Niagara Detention Centre and Local 234 at the Maplehurst Correctional Centre and Vanier Centre for Women.

All these actions are giving the bargaining teams the support they need at a critical time. Congratulations to everyone!

For photos of these activities, please go to the OPS bargaining photo gallery.

Authorized for distribution:



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