

OPSEU



SEFPO

# Frontlines

April 26, 2002

Don't believe the new Tory ad

## Who cares about fishing? Everyone!

OPSEU's decision to focus on the opening of the trout season at Algonquin Park has attracted more media attention than just about anything else we have done in recent weeks.

The prospect of anglers being turned away from a weekend of recreation has drawn more coverage than 10,000 strikers on the lawn of the legislature while Ernie Eves was sworn in as premier.

Dan Slater of Local 306 was featured on CBC Radio's noon-

## Bargaining continues

The corrections table has been meeting with the employer and talking about issues.

The central table has not met since Sunday, when we tabled our comprehensive offer for settlement.

The actual work at the table has taken a conscious break to allow members to turn up the heat on MPPs, and for the team to connect with members.

Despite the employer's advertising, the offer currently on the table is by no means acceptable to the team.

When the members get to vote, it will be on something better.

hour news and information program Ontario Today, explaining the work of OPSEU members in the park and the dangers to visitors because the work has not been done.

Even "The FAN," Toronto's all sports radio station decided it was time to do an item on labour relations.

With Ethel Birkett-LaValley, secretary-treasurer of the Ontario Federation of Labour, holding the fort at the east entrance to the park, and OPSEU First Vice-President/Treasurer at the western gate, nobody was going in without getting an earful about the strike.

A new lime-green leaflet talks about Algonquin's place in history as Ontario's oldest provincial park.

It reminds people that they have no access to emergency help during the strike, and cell phones don't work in the vast reaches of the park.

Members of Local 306 include Conservation Officers, wardens, canoe rangers, park planners, biologists, support staff, maintenance staff, and resource and compliance monitoring technicians.

Together, they protect, manage and sustain the park so tens of thousands of people can enjoy it safely every year. The opening week-end of the trout season alone usually attracts about 10,000 visitors.



**April 28 is Labour's Day of Mourning for workers killed and injured on the job.**

**Hamilton plans a memorial service at 10:30 a.m. at the monument to workers killed or injured on the job. It's at Bay and Main streets.**

**Speakers include Mayor Bob Wade.**

### Want to reach Ernie?

Here's how:

Ernie@ErnieEves.com

163 First Street,  
Orangeville, ON L9W 3J8

Phone: 519-941-1255

Toll-Free: 1-866-225-3837

If you **are** going to Orangeville to picket Eves' office or to get involved in the campaign, give Tim Little a call. That way the local campaign will know you are coming and can plan for your participation.

Tim's cell number is:

416-540-7003

Check the web: [www.opseu.org](http://www.opseu.org) has the latest on everything.

## Pickets visit Legislature

Premier Ernie Eves met with his cabinet Thursday, as strikers chanted, banged drums and pounded on the legislature's door.

"We won't back down," they shouted. Riot police and mounted units patrolled as about 300 pickets pressed against the east door, pounding its window with their fists.

"We're tired of the government not listening to us," said Paul Foster, of Local 527. "They're trying to destroy our union."

Management Board Chair David Tsubouchi continued to say he was waiting for the union to respond to a government offer, a statement denied by Region 5 Vice-President Terry Downey.

"I'm here with hundreds of other OPSEU members on strike to ask Ernie Eves to come out and speak to his employees to tell them what he is doing to speed up bargaining," she said.

## Hamilton area MPPs get visits

Region 2 MPPs were seeing OPSEU constituents Wednesday.

Labour Minister Brad Clark met with two local presidents (202's Joe Peretta and 204's Ed McCartan) several members and Hamilton District Labour Council President Wayne Marston. Clark told them that as labour minister he had to be neutral in the dispute.

Tourism Minister Cam Jackson wasn't in his office when about 30 members visited, waiting for an opportunity to see him.

About 40 strikers sat in at Gary Carr's constituency office. Graham Ferri of Local 204 reported good response from passing traffic.

## Stop the sweet nothings

*Good morning, Mr. Eves:*

We have heard nothing but conciliatory remarks from your office since you assumed power but have seen no move to match your words.

Do you not see that this trio [Wilson, Smeaton, Tsubouchi] continues to seriously disrespect the people who work for you?

Do you not see that if they are not removed or given specific instructions from you, that they will continue to disrespect us with their puny and insulting moves at the Bargaining Tables?

All of the sweet nothings you have whispered in the media's ears will be recognized for what they are: another line of political rhetoric.

If you want to continue to have a dedicated workforce to keep this province running smoothly when this is over, you must see to it personally, that the attack on the province's workers stop now.

Our work stoppage has been orderly, calm and professional.

Even you cannot deny that our quiet strike is now affecting more and more people who have supported your party in the past.

Now is the time to mend fences and to start doing damage control for the hardships Mr. Harris inflicted on all residents of this province.

If that is not the intent behind your words, then all I can say is that I hope you have not burned all of your private sector bridges.

– Loraine L. Menard, Local 468

## Poor form

The government's form letter factory has been working overtime, churning out responses to OPS members who write about the progress of the strike.

Seems it doesn't much matter **what** you write to Management Board Chair Dave Tsubouchi, you get a form response. If you send an email, you get a bunch of attachments giving you the government's propaganda line.

It's not good enough for Mike Peshko of Local 270.

"I am disappointed at the responses regarding hastening the end to our labour disruption, and or any replies to special cases or other inquiries," he wrote

Most government websites have technical troubles, because OPSEU members are off the job. Instead of providing citizens with useful information, they direct people to [www.ontarioservicesupdate.com](http://www.ontarioservicesupdate.com), which extols the government offer.

## Neither kinder, nor gentler

*Dear Mr. Eves:*

New legislation to allow the sale of Hydro One: how can anyone be surprised? When you don't get your way through one door, you just change the rules to do what you want through a newly-installed door that you build yourself.

What next sir? Will it be against the law to have a pension after you steal the OPSEU funds? Will it be against the law of Ontario to have a union? When do you stop?

This is not a kinder gentler Ontario under your leadership. It is the same Ontario that you helped Mike Harris destroy.

– Ken McWatters, Local 447

## Rattling a contractor's chains

Local 725 Atikokan has kept the contract computer employee out of Quetico Park, where he came to set up the reservation system for the season.

Local President Twila Smitsnuk told the fellow that the line would not let him in as his work had a direct affect on the work of the picketers.

He waited at the line for nearly one hour and then left. Twila followed him as he blew a stop sign and drove away from Atikokan.

She tried to follow him west towards Fort Frances, but he was going too fast.

She reported the high speeds and

the stop sign violations to the OPP.

Other picket lines should be on the lookout for a white Subaru Forester wagon, Ontario plate AJAK 940.

“Heads Up. He was rattled when he left here,” reports Twila.

## Mandatory redeployment

Managers at the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities have been offered “mandatory redeployment” this week according to a ministry source.

They have been offered the choice of working in Provincial Schools or Probation and Parole.

## Thunder Bay's Magnificent Seven

*by Mark Roddick, President,  
Local 713*

Thunder Bay normally has more than 250 active firefighters, but for the last week, the region has had only seven.

Those seven, on the line since April 1, are Steve Pauluzzo, Dave Tarini, Frank Smale, Dennis Gilhooly, Jim Gordon, Cory Lemieux and Steve Boudreau.

They were called in last week when a municipality asked for help fighting a fire, making them the first crew to fight a fire under the ESA.

Since then, management has asked for more firefighters daily, and the “Magnificent Seven” have been pushing the envelope from the inside. They are refusing non-emergency work, not getting on contract helicopters or loading them, doing no retrieval or mop-up work nor any non-emergency tasks, despite threats of discipline and/or dismissal.

The “Seven” have a combined

130 field seasons. They were joined Monday by flying fire boss Dave Thomson, adding another 35 years to the count.

Eight men, 160 years’ experience, on one of the most dangerous jobs in the OPS, protecting almost a third of the province, treated like second-class citizens.

## Pickets stall fire training

Fire crews in Kirkland Lake have been honouring a picket line set up by Local 644.

Since April 15, fire managers have been trying to conduct “mandatory” training for crew leaders. This training was in contravention of the emergency/essential services agreement.

So since April 15, a picket line has been set up at the Swastika Attack Base. Crew leaders called in for training have honoured the line despite threats of verbal reprimands or worse.

## New way to trail(er) ministers

You know you have arrived as a power in cabinet when a trailer is delivered to your office door.

Region 4 Vice-President Bob Eaton says two senior cabinet ministers from Eastern Ontario are getting much more OPSEU than they had bargained for.

The union has parked large trailers in front of the offices of Public Safety and Security Minister Bob Runciman in Brockville and Transportation Minister Norm Sterling in Carleton Place.

The trailers are decked with OPSEU flags and posters, and accompanied by the appropriate portable sanitation outbuildings.

Police were initially uncooperative in Carleton Place, but were cooperative in Brockville.

Pickets from around the region bolstered local lines while the trailers were installed. There were more than 100 in Brockville alone, from Cornwall, Kingston, Smiths Falls and Kemptville.

“These are powerful people in cabinet, and we want to hold them accountable,” Eaton said. He reports good media attention to the installations.

## Holiday Inn picket

Local 338 is grateful for the action of AMAPCEO member Jack Heads, a mediator with the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal in Barrie.

“Thanks to Jack we were able to form a picket line at the Holiday Inn in Barrie rather than the regular on-site hearing location.”

## It's a boy

Tammy McKellar, a Conservation Officer in Local 603 gave birth at 12:33 a.m. April 25 to Nathan Pierce, 7 lbs. 13 oz.

Tammy was on the picket lines until Monday, although already more than 10 days overdue. She insisted on walking the line through blizzards, rain, sun and whatever else Mother Nature threw at us, facing down anyone attempting to cross her picket line with the same conviction she displays in her patrol area. Tammy drove 20 miles each way to get to the picket lines and hadn't missed a day since March 13.

## And another

And also please welcome Cole Tourond, born April 24 to Krista and Stan of Local 727. He weighed 5 lbs. 6 oz.

## Missing the concept

Some members of Local 542 crossed the line on April 22, reports local president Brenda McCullagh.

April 24 was payday on the line. After finishing her day in the office, one of the crossers showed up to collect her strike pay from the previous week.

"We couldn't find the cheque," said Brenda, "so the woman said she would take it up with HR."

## Canadian Tire again agreeable

At least two more Canadian Tire locations are refusing to sell hunting and fishing licences until the strike is over.

They are on Weston Road and at Keele and Highway 401 in the Toronto area.

## They marked their stand in Owen Sound

The Lake Huron Management Unit, MNR, recorded its stand on Tuesday.

Members of Local 224 in Owen Sound painted their footsteps on the pavement.

"We did this in a move of solidarity and so that we can be reminded of the friendships that we have forged in our fight," wrote Jim Murphy.

"It is also a way for the managers and those that crossed the line to remember what happened.

"Pass this message on to all in the fight, so that everywhere we might travel, we will see our fellow pickets' footsteps and remember the fight and solidarity that happened in the Strike of 2002."

They marked the area "Strike of 2002. We stood together."

## A spouse who understands

From the *310 PEN*, this tale:

Local 310 inside striker Doreen Harris has a husband who works at Kennedy House, Local 361. Andy has been locked out since June 23.

Kennedy House, formerly St. John's Training School for boys, is a young offenders' facility in Uxbridge. The new employer wants to gut the collective agreement to set a new low standard for young offender facilities across the province.

Fundamentals such as seniority, health and safety, human rights and grievance procedure are in jeopardy for Kennedy House members who have been on the line for more than 10 months now.

## Making new friends

by *Jeanne Collins*

Local 635 in North Bay has members doing a wide range of jobs in many ministries, including MCSS, MNR and Agriculture and Food.

The lines are still very strong and it is heartwarming to see each person supporting the others, emotionally as well as financially.

In our worksite, there are two floors, and each picket team has people from different units. We cross-picket worksites and have variety in our schedules.

An MNR team is paired up with a team from MCSS and so on. This allows interesting conversations and sharing of the differences in workplaces. The MCSS staff are adapting to the great outdoors with assistance from our sisters and brothers at MNR. New friendships are being made which will surely continue when we return to work.

## Pub night in the Soo

The Sault Ste. Marie Provincial Liberal Association is hosting a pub night to benefit striking OPSEU members May 1 at the United Steelworkers of America hall.

Tickets are \$5 and can be purchased at 121 Elgin Street or by calling 949-8177. There will be food, prizes and a cash bar.

## Keeping count

Local 711 in Fort Frances figures that Marney Brown has logged more than 160 miles on the picket line.