



Issued January 17, 2007

Current News

- ❑ On Monday, January 29, the Waltown group will be holding a Wal-Town Film Screening and Discussion at the Kelley building room 210 on the UPEI campus, 550 University Avenue, at 7pm. Admission is free. The group will discuss their campaign and screen the recently released Wal-Town: The Film. This National Film Board documentary chronicles the group's antics and activities over two years of touring in which they traveled Canada coast to coast. The current tour will use the film to prompt important questions about the role of Wal-Mart in Canadian communities, as well as the role of activists and the media in tackling important issues.

- ❑ On Thursday, January 11, 2007, the federation received a letter from Bonnie Blakney, the Director of Legislative Review, inviting us to submit names for consideration for membership on the Advisory Committee reviewing the Workers Compensation Act. In the letter, Ms. Blakney states that preference will be given to persons with experience in a workplace covered by the Workers Compensation Act as well as having general knowledge of the purpose and intent of the Workers Compensation Act. If any of our affiliates, wish to submit names for consideration please submit by Fax (368-3192) or email (peifed@pei.aibn.com) the person's name, contact info, and a short resume outlining their experience related to the WCB to the Federation. The deadline for submissions is at 4:00pm Tuesday, January 23th, 2007. If you require further information regarding the review, Ms. Blakney can be reached at 902-620-3478 or toll free at 1-804-2375049.

- ❑ On Wednesday, December 6, it was announced that the unemployment rate on PEI for November was 11.2% up 0.1% from October's 11.1%. You currently need 490 hours to qualify for EI on PEI.

- ❑ On Wednesday, November 29, the federal government announced that they will be closing 12 of the Status of Women Canada's 16 offices across Canada by April 1, 2007

cutting 61 positions including 1 position on PEI. Staff in Atlantic Canada will be amalgamated into the Moncton office.

❑ On Wednesday, November 29, the Province tabled legislation that would create a Young Child Tax Credit that would give families a \$1,200 credit for each child under the age of six as of Jan. 1, 2006. The maximum credit for 2006 itself will be \$600, to reflect the fact that tax changes were first implemented July 1.

❑ On Wednesday, November 29, it was announced that the 2006 PEI Provincial Government employee's fund-raising campaign for the United Way raised \$127,415 surpassing their \$120,000 goal. The money was raised through payroll deductions, fund-raising barbecues, pancake breakfasts, dress-down days and 50-50 draws. The average gift this year was \$95.

❑ On Tuesday, November 28, the Provincial government tabled more than 50 pages of amendments to the Police Act. One of the biggest changes is the creation of an independent commissioner to handle complaints against police, so municipal police would no longer investigate themselves. Police unions on P.E.I. have expressed concern over this change and are upset that the Attorney General didn't give them a look at the final draft of the legislation before tabling it in the legislature as she had promised.

❑ On Friday, November 24, the members of UPSE who work at Tremploy voted unanimously to accept a new contract with their employer. The new contract, which will run until June 30, 2010, includes a new article on severance pay, a wage increase of 11% over the 4 year term, a \$500.00 signing bonus and improvements to many of the existing articles.

❑ On Wednesday, November 22, the NDP-sponsored Bill C-303, the Early Learning and Child Care Act, passed its second reading by a 144 to 116 vote in Parliament. The Bill lays the foundation for a national child care system governed by principles and accountability. The bill also ensures reliable funding for the provinces and guarantees child care tax dollars are invested in not-for-profit centres. Bill C-303 now moves to committee for clause by clause examination by MP's before being brought back to the House of Commons for a third vote.. All 4 Island MP's voted for this Bill. The Federation urges its affiliated members to contact their MP and tell them to support not only this bill but also Bill C-257 (Anti-Scab legislation) which passed its second reading on October 25th .

❑ On Tuesday, November 21, it was announced that UPSE has reached a tentative agreement with the P.E.I. government for the more than 1,000 health-care workers it represents in government hospitals, manors and community programs on PEI. The

details of the 3 year agreement won't be made public until members have had a chance to review the proposal. A ratification vote will be held before the end of January. The current agreement expired on March 31, 2006.

□ On Friday and Saturday, November 17 and 18, UPSE held their annual convention at the Delta hotel in Charlottetown. At the convention, the delegates considered over 30 resolutions on various issues. Also Ron Kelly, former Communications and Education Officer and outgoing Directors; Marsha Carrier - Local 10, Leo Creamer - Local 10, Frank Dawe-Local 12, Bernadette MacDonald - Local 16, Greg Peters - Local 20 and Dwayne Stride - Local 14 were recognized for their contributions to UPSE. There were also two positions up for re-election during the convention. Eileen LeClair was re-elected as second vice-president and Debbie Bovyer was re-elected as secretary-treasurer. Federation President, Carl Pursey attended this year's convention on behalf of the Federation.

□ On Friday, November 17, Representatives of the Federation and the CLC met with Island MPs Shawn Murphy and Wayne Easter as part of the CLC's Fall MP Lobby. We also met with Island MP Lawrence MacAulay on Monday, Nov 27. The issues brought before the 3 MPs were to get their support for Bill C-303, the Early Learning and Child Care Act and Bill C269 (EI Reform), and to seek their help in getting Bill C 55 the Wage Protection Act proclaimed. All 3 MPs were generally supportive of our positions on these issues.

□ On Thursday, November 16, in its speech from the throne, the Province announced that the Retail Business Holidays Act will be amended to allow Sunday shopping on PEI starting on the third week of May and continuing until Dec. 31 with a review of the situation after one year. The government also promised to change how seniors in long-term care pay their bills. They promised to determine a senior's ability to pay based on their income, rather than their assets. Seniors will also no longer be required to pay the medical costs of nursing-home care. The government also said that it will look into selling off the 4 government owned golf courses to the private sector. Since the Supreme Court ruling defeated Sunday shopping rules in Nova Scotia in October, both Federation President Carl Pursey and Vice President Blair Penny have been in the media expressing disapproval of allowing Sunday shopping on PEI.

□ On Wednesday, November 15, the Federal government announced that it will ease regulations on foreign workers coming to Canada. Under the new federal program which is limited to B.C., Alberta and Saskatchewan, Companies trying to find workers for those jobs will no longer have to advertise as extensively for Canadians to convince the federal government of their need. Also, The length of time to process an employer's application for workers will be reduced. The program will cover 170 occupations with high demand,

ranging from housekeepers and cooks to head nurses and chiropractors in Alberta and 129 occupations, including the expected long list of trades jobs, physicists, professors, editors and veterinarians in B.C. The list of occupations for Saskatchewan is not yet completed. The BC and Alberta Federations of Labour have expressed concern about the ability of the federal government to protect these foreign workers from exploitation and about Canadian workers being pushed aside.

□ On Thursday, November 9, Dawn Hardy, President of Union of Taxation Employees Local 90006 made a presentation before the Commons Standing Committee on Finance in an effort in to save the upwards of 80 jobs threatened by the cut of the Visitor Rebate Program. Hardy expressed her hope that the government will either reinstate the program or replace it with another program that will at least maintain the current employment level at the center. The decision to cut the rebate program also drew strong criticism from tourism industry representatives who also presented to the committee.

□ On Thursday, November 9, it was announced that the 14 members of the UPEI security force represented by CUPE Local 501 have unanimously ratified the tentative agreement they struck during conciliation. The 3 year agreement which expires on April 30, 2007 includes a wages increase of 7.43 % over the term of the agreement, improvements to shift premiums, sick leave accumulation and other monetary benefits. The security personnel's last contract expired on April 30, 2004.

□ On Tuesday, November 7, the Canada Employment Insurance Commission announced that workers and employers will be seeing yet another drop in EI premiums. Employee premiums are set to fall 7 cents on Jan, 1 to \$1.80 /\$ 100 of earnings while premiums for employers will fall 10 cents to \$2.52 /\$ 100. In response to this, the CLC sent out a press release calling on the federal government to do the right thing and find ways to make the EI program work better for the millions of Canadians who pay for it rather than make an ill-advised cut of a few cents to EI premiums. The CLC also called for responsible employers to join with workers and call on the government to support Bill C-269 which essentially brings forward the recommendations in the 2005 Report of the parliamentary committee on Human Resources.

□ On Friday, November 3, PSAC held a rally in support of Commissionaires on PEI in front of Province House in Charlottetown. The Commissionaires have been fighting with their employer, the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires for six years for a collective agreement. The Canadian Corps of Commissionaires even fought the application for union certification all the way to the P.E.I. Supreme Court at a cost of hundreds of thousands of dollars . Speakers at the rally included Patty Ducharme, PSAC's National Executive Vice President, Peter Stoffer, the federal NDP critic for veterans affairs , and Vaughan Davies, President of the PSAC P.E.I. Area Council. The Federation's

Executive Council took time off from our convention preparation meetings to attend this rally and show support for the Commissionaires in their fight

- ❑ On Thursday, November 2, it was announced that Ministers from each of the four Atlantic provincial governments have sent a letter to federal Industry Minister Maxime Bernier urging the federal government to support Canada's shipbuilding industry. In the letter the Ministers expressed concern over the federal government's talks with South Korea regarding a free trade agreement with Canada and over the fact that the Harper government has not yet funded the Structured Financing Facility (SFF) which under past governments has supported the shipbuilding industry.
- ❑ On Wednesday, November 1, a private member's bill introduced by NDP MPP Cheri DiNovo to boost Ontario's minimum wage by 29 % from \$7.75/hr to \$10/hr passed its second reading in the province's legislature. The bill will now be debated in committee and then brought back to the legislature for its third and final reading. About 200,000 Ontario residents currently earn the minimum wage, and 1.2 million people earn less than \$10/hour. Also on Wednesday, NDP MP Peggy Nash introduced a bill in the House of Commons that aims to re-establish a federal minimum wage. This bill would also set the minimum wage at \$10 per hour and comes after the Final Report by Commissioner Harry Arthurs on the Review of Part III, Federal Labour Standards (Canada Labour Code) recommended that Ottawa re-establish a federal minimum wage.
- ❑ On Wednesday, November 1, CUPE announced that 12 of the 24 candidates offering for Charlottetown city council responded to their survey on the CARI complex. The survey contained three Questions (two to gauge the candidates knowledge of the CARI complex situation and one to see if they supported the City taking control of the complex.) Of the 12 who did reply, 9 stated they would support a motion to bring the rinks/pool within the authority and control of the city recreation department.
- ❑ On Tuesday, October 31, after eliminating its share of funding to the P.E.I. Literacy Alliance, the Federal government announced that it has approved the alliance's two-year funding proposal for \$135,000 a year. The Federal government had slashed \$100,000 from the group's \$140,000 annual budget as part of nationwide cuts made at the end of September. The restored funding will be used for literacy research and workshops for adult educators. Although money was restored to the Literacy Alliance, the \$325,000 cut to literacy funding for the province remains. The P.E.I. Literacy Alliance is an umbrella organization for 30 literacy groups in the province.

C.L.C. Atlantic Region and P.E.I. Federation of Labour Spring Educational

-The C.L.C. Atlantic Region and P.E.I. Federation will be holding a one day educational at the Murphy's Community Center (former Basilica Rec Center) 200 Richmond Street, Charlottetown, P.E.I. on Thursday, March 8, 2007 8:30 am - 5:00 pm (Lunch provided). The courses being offered are:

Steward Training Level IV: The Steward as Educator

-Education of union members is crucial to the survival of local unions. The Steward As Educator is designed to assist the steward, local union leader, or local union activist develop skills and confidence in educating members around union issues in the workplace and issues that affect the workplace and community issues of the day. The course offers new ideas and methods of discussing membership education and communication and offers participants a look at how they can strategize around making union education and the role of steward a crucial part of the local union culture. Note: It is preferable that participants have completed a basic steward course.

Women Breaking Barriers

-This course looks at women's inequality and how to change things for the better. You will identify the barriers different women are up against in their homes, communities, workplaces, union and other social and economical institutions. A key part of this workshop is developing the skills to get at the roots of gender inequality and why it persists. You will also develop strategies and action plans for bringing down barriers, and personal skills to fight sexism, argue a point of view and speak in public.

Registration Information

-Please complete the attached form and send it before **February 15, 2007** along with a cheque made payable to the P.E.I. Federation of Labour to cover the registration fee (\$35.00 per person which includes lunch) to: Marjorie Gyurus, Registrar P.E.I. Federation of Labour 22 Enman Crescent, Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1E 1E6

-If you require additional information, please contact: Marjorie Gyurus at (902) 368-3068 or email: peifed@pei.aibn.com or Jean-Claude Basque at (506)-851-7086 or email: jcbasque@clc-ctc.ca

Update on the National, Consumer Boycott against Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company

- On Tuesday, January 2, United Steelworkers' (USW) National Director Ken Neumann

released a press release thanking all those who supported the 15,000 USW members during their 86-day strike against Goodyear. In the release he states that the continent-wide agreement with Goodyear Tire and Rubber would not have been achieved without the support of thousands of working people, their organizations and others who supported the Goodyear strikers in Canada.. The settlement provides better security in terms of preventing Goodyear from exporting production and jobs and Goodyear also agreed to put \$1 billion into the fund for retired workers' medical benefits above the company's previous \$660-million plan.

-With this ratification, the PEI Federation of Labour ends its call for our affiliated members to boycott Goodyear and Motomaster tires. We wish to thank all of our members who supported this boycott.

Report on the Federation's 42nd Annual Convention

□ On Friday and Saturday, November 3 and 4, The Prince Edward Island Federation of Labour (PEIFL) held its 42nd annual convention at Howard Johnson "Dutch Inn" in Cornwall. This year's convention attracted approximately 90 delegates. The theme of this year's convention was "Fighting Privatization and Contracting Out".

-Speakers on Friday included:

- Federation President Carl Pursey who gave the President's Report during which he outlined Federation activities since last year's convention.
- Vaughan Davies (PSAC) spoke on the rally held earlier in the day in support of PSAC Local 90140 (Commissionaires) and the struggles they have faced during their battle with their employer to become union members and now that they are trying to negotiate their first contract and bring better wages, benefits, and working conditions to their members.
- Island NDP Leader, Dean Constable who spoke on his experiences since becoming party leader, the need for an increased minimum wage, what the federal party is doing on behalf of workers, the provincial government's spending public funds on casinos, golf courses, and standardized testing when our healthcare and educational systems are in dire need of money, and the party's preparedness for the upcoming provincial election.
- Leo Cheverie(CUPE) who gave some background on the need for all Islanders to earn a liveable income and the situations facing many low income workers on PEI.
- And Eileen Leclair(UPSE) who gave a very emotional presentation on the Silent Witness Project. A project whose goals are to remember women killed in acts of domestic violence, create awareness of family violence issues and to promote action. As part of the presentation, Sister Leclair introduced Shelly Molyneaux who gave a very powerful speech on her real life experience of growing up in a

household full of domestic violence. Ms. Molyneaux is the daughter of Shirley Ann Duguay who was murdered by her common law husband in 1994. The presentation was completed with the song “Standing in the Rain”

-Speakers on Saturday included:

- Patty Ducharme, PSAC National Vice President who spoke on this year’s theme. In her Speech Sister Ducharme spoke not only on the fight against privatization in all its forms but also on some of the scary policies starting to emerge from the Harper Government and how much more dangerous they would be if Stephen Harper was to ever gain a majority position in Parliament.
- The Minister Responsible for Labour, Elmer MacFadyen who spoke on the recent annual meeting of the Ministers and Deputy Ministers Responsible for Labour in the Atlantic region which was held in PEI, the increase in the minimum wage, National Skilled Trades Day on PEI, and the Province’s response to the recent Literacy funding cuts. He also thanked the Federation for our participation in the recent Employment Standards Act review, for our work on the Day of Mourning Monument, and for the Federation’s annual book donation to the UPEI and Provincial libraries. After his speech, the Minister answered several questions from convention delegates.
- CLC Secretary-Treasurer Hassan Yussuff who spoke on the 50th anniversary of the CLC; EI Reform; Pay Equity; the work that has been done to get Anti-Scab Legislation through Parliament; the need to get Bill C55, Bankruptcy Act proclaimed, to create a real Childcare system and to protect our environment; Harper’s recent cuts to Literacy, the Court Challenges, and Youth Employment programs; the CLC Aids Conference; and the importance of municipal government.
- Scott Sinclair, a Researcher for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives who spoke on the research he has done on Atlantica. Atlantica is a plan being promoted by business interests to economically, socially and politically integrate Atlantic Canada and eastern Quebec with Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and upstate New York to form a single coherent trade zone. He also spoke on the fact that Atlantica is a badly flawed concept that will bring down wages, lower standards, attack public services and programs and is a very poor idea for a future vision of Atlantic Canada.
- United Way Executive Director Clair Smith and Laurie Bowers who is one of the labour representatives on the United Way Board gave a presentation on the programs and services that the United Way provides.

-At this year’s Convention, The delegates debated and voted to accept 18 resolutions on a

wide range of topics including: Atlantica, Public Healthcare, Privatization and Contracting Out, Growthworks, Pharmacare, Post Secondary Education, Federal Tories' Tax Cuts, Livable Wages, the PEI Labour Management Relations Council, the Student Attendant Pilot Project, UPS/NAFTA, Wal-Mart, Universal Public Post Office, Raising Convention Fees, the need to restore funding to Island Homeless shelters, the need for greater transparency and accountability in federal government decision making and Public Private Partnerships.

-The results of this year's election at convention were:

- Brother Carl Pursey (CUPW) was re-elected by acclamation as President.
- Sister Bev MacLean (PSAC) was elected by acclamation as Secretary.
- And Sister Linda Dockendorff (UPSE) was re-elected as VP (Woman). All three were elected for a 2 Year Term.

-Finally at this year's convention the Federation's 9 largest unions were asked to name their representatives to sit on our Executive Council. Named were Sister Shelley Ward (UPSE) who was to replace Brother Sandy MacKay after she took over as UPSE's new President, Brother Paul Chiasson (Carpenters), Sister Donalda MacDonald (CUPE), Brother Vaughan Davies (PSAC), Brother Joe MacKenzie (IAM), Sister Sandra MacKenzie (UFCW), Sister Lisa Shephard (CUPW), Brother Reg Doyle (CEP), IBEW's seat and the seat for affiliated unions other than the nine largest went unfilled. Our 4 largest unions also named Brother Myron Larkin (UFCW), Sister Donna Gormley (CUPE), Brother Ghassan Kassouf (PSAC), and Sister Debbie Bovyer (UPSE) to be the Federation's Trustees.

-The Federation would like to thank departing Council members Brothers Reg Arsenault (CUPW), Leo Cheverie (CUPE), Peter MacIntyre (UFCW), and SandyMacKay (UPSE), and Sister Donna Murphy-MacInnis (PSAC) for all their efforts on behalf of the Federation during their time on Council. We would also like to thank departing Trustee members Sisters Kim Coles (PSAC) and Patricia Strickland (CUPE) for all their efforts on behalf of the Federation during their time as Trustees and welcome all our new Council members and Trustees to their new positions.

-Thanks also goes out to all of those who sat on the Resolution and Credential committees and helped out as Scrutineers and Sargent at Arms during the election at this year's Convention

Important Dates

National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women	Wednesday, December 6, 2006	
Round Table on Atlantica	Thursday, December 7, 2006	Citadel Inn, Halifax.
Wal-Town Canadian Tour Stop on PEI	Monday, January 29, 2007	in Kelley room 210 on the UPEI campus, 550 University Avenue, at 7pm. Admission is free
Opposing Atlantica Meeting	Thursday, February 8, 2007	at 4:30 p.m. at UPSE Office in Charlottetown
The C.L.C. Atlantic Region and P.E.I. Federation Educational	Thursday, March 8, 2007	8:30 am - 5:00 pm at the Murphy's Community Center (former Basilica Rec Center) 200 Richmond Street, Charlottetown, P.E.I.