



# PEI Federation of Labour Newsletter September 2005 Issue

## Current News

- ❑ On Monday, November 28, Islanders will vote in a plebiscite on whether the province's electoral system will change from the current first-past-the-post system to a two-ballot, mixed-member proportional system. Under the proposed mixed-member proportional system, 17 MLA's would be elected in their district, and another 10 would be elected from ranked lists provided by the parties, based on the results of the second ballot which will establish the percentage of the vote the party gets provincially.
  
- ❑ On Friday, November 4 and Saturday, November 5, the PEI Federation of Labour will hold its 41<sup>st</sup> annual convention at the Howard Johnson's Dutch Inn in North River. The following positions will be up for election at convention: 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Treasurer, and VP (women). If your local has not received your credentials by September 15, 2005 or your local wishes to submit a resolution to convention please contact our office at 368-3068; fax at 368-3192 or e-mail at: [peifed@pei.aibn.com](mailto:peifed@pei.aibn.com). The deadline for resolutions will be October 5, 2005.
  
- ❑ At our convention, the federation will be electing a new VP(women) due to the recent resignation of Michele Wright (UPSE). The federation would like to thank Ms. Wright for all her efforts in the role and we hope to work with her again in the near future. We would also like to wish UFCW representative on our Executive Council Vimy Gregory a happy retirement and thank him for all his efforts on behalf of the federation.
  
- ❑ On Monday, October 24, 2005, the Federal Labour Standards Review Commission will be holding public hearings in Charlottetown. The mandate of the Commission is to conduct a comprehensive review of Part III of the Canada Labour Code which sets out labour standards for workers and employers under federal jurisdiction. Federal labour standards currently address such issues as hours of work, minimum wage, unjust dismissals and annual vacation. Further information on these hearings has now been posted on the Federal Labour Standards Review website ([www.flc-ntf.gc.ca](http://www.flc-ntf.gc.ca)). The Federation plans to present a submission to the Commission if any of our affiliates have any issues they want included in the federation's submission contact our office at 368-3068; fax at 368-3192 or e-mail at: [peifed@pei.aibn.com](mailto:peifed@pei.aibn.com).

□ On Saturday, September 24, it was announced that five members of Correctional Services (Warren Banks, Dwayne Stride, Mike Chaisson, Brendon Ellsworth and Tom Francis) will represent Prince Edward Island at the 28th annual Canadian Police and Peace Officers Memorial Service on Sunday in Ottawa. This special memorial service which is held on the last Sunday in September of every year commemorates Canadian police and peace officers who have died in the line of service. This is the eighth year that attendance at the memorial day service is co-sponsored by the Union of Public Sector Employees and the Office of the Attorney General.

□ On Friday, September 23, the federal government launched Service Canada in Charlottetown. Service Canada offices integrates services from a number of federal departments under one roof. Those services will now include parental and pension benefits, employment insurance or information on how to obtain Social Insurance numbers. Service Canada centres are located in Charlottetown, Summerside, O'Leary, Wellington, Montague and Souris. More than 200 people will work for Service Canada in P.E.I., with 30 employees providing front-line services. Once completely rolled out there will be 320 Service Canada points across Canada. There is also a website ([servicecanada.gc.ca](http://servicecanada.gc.ca)) and a tollfree hotline (1-800-0-Canada.)

□ On Wednesday, September 21 it was announced that the Provincial Cabinet has appointed Jeanette MacAulay to spearhead the new Department of Social Services and Seniors. MacAulay has been named assistant deputy minister of Health and Social Services, with responsibility for social services and seniors but she will become the deputy minister of Social Services and Seniors once the new department is created. Before this position MacAulay was vice-president of development and external relations at Holland College and deputy minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. It is expected that the new Minister for the Department of Social Services and Seniors will be in place by mid November.

□ On Monday, September 19, it was announced that the federal government will contribute \$269,568 for a P.E.I. Department of Health and Social Services injury prevention strategy for health-care workers. The federal contribution, to be delivered in fiscal years 2005/2006 and 2006/2007, will be used for a project that will allow the Department of Health and Social Services to expand its musculoskeletal injury programs for employees, and to develop provincial strategies, standards and resources that will ensure continued commitment to safe and healthy workplaces.

□ On Saturday, September 17, it was announced that the Quebec labour board has ruled that Wal-Mart didn't prove that a unionized store in Saguenay, north of Quebec City, was in financial trouble when they closed it last spring. The UFCW has argued the closure of the Saguenay store was designed to intimidate other workers who might want to

unionize. Wal-Mart insisted the store was closed because it wasn't profitable. The decision has opened the door to employees being compensated for losing their jobs at the Saguenay store. The board also rejected Wal-Mart's bid to get the names of employees who were in favour of the union.

❑ On Wednesday, September 14, it was announced that the B.C. Labour Relations Board has certified a union at a Wal-Mart Tire & Lube Express in Cranbrook, British Columbia after a majority of the workers there voted to unionize with UFCW Canada Local 1518. It is the first time a majority of workers at a Wal-Mart location in Canada have voted to unionize. Two additional B.C. Wal-Mart locations may also soon be certified. Applications for certification of two Wal-Mart TLE's in Surrey are pending a decision of the B.C.L.R.B.

❑ On Tuesday, September 13, a new collective agreement was signed on behalf of the 4 UPSE members in the Charlottetown Driving bargaining unit. Highlights of the new two-year agreement include: a wage increase of 50 cents/hour as of January 1, 2005; a wage increase of 40cents/hour as of January 1, 2006; an increase in vacation days from 15 to 18 per year; an increase in the maximum accumulation of sick leave from 20 days to 26 days; a short-trip allowance increase from \$2.00 to \$4.00; and, the addition of Remembrance Day, the first Monday in August and Christmas Eve afternoon (4 hours) as Statutory Holidays. The parties also agreed to work on revisions to the classification specifications.

❑ On Friday, September 9, The CLC sent out a press release calling on the federal government to develop a clear action plan to provide working families with relief from the impacts of higher energy prices - and sustain economic growth in the country. The CLC proposes that the federal government introduce a temporary excess profits tax on the oil and gas industry for one year, with proceeds directed to a cut in federal taxes on consumer energy purchases; an increase in GST credits for low income families; and higher investment in public transit and renewable energy programs.

❑ On Thursday, September 8, American President George W. Bush issued an executive order allowing federal contractors rebuilding in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina to pay below the prevailing wage. Bush's executive order suspends the requirements of the Davis-Bacon law for designated areas hit by the storm. The Davis-Bacon law requires federal contractors to pay workers at least the prevailing wages in the area where the work is conducted. It applies to federally funded construction projects such as highways and bridges.

❑ On Wednesday, September 7, 2005, it was announced that after at least 50 years in business, the construction division of the former M.F. Schurman's Company Ltd. will

close by December 2006, putting 14 "direct employees" out of work. The construction centre in Charlottetown will be the first to close around the end of this December and the eight jobs there will be terminated. Followed by the Summeriside location in December 2006 when its remaining six employees will be laid off.

☐ On Saturday, September 3, it was announced in the CLC's "Is Your Work Working for You?" Report Card 2005 that despite a year of solid job growth and lower unemployment, 30 per cent of workers expect to lose their jobs over the next couple of years and moreover 18 % of workers say that their income does not meet their basic needs. The reason for this maybe the fact that two-thirds of all the jobs created in 2005 came in the form of temporary contracts, part-time work or self-employment. The report card also found that 8.6 per cent of workers experienced racial harassment or discrimination at work. The "Is Your Work Working for You?" Report Card 2005 is available on [www.working4you.ca](http://www.working4you.ca)

### **Oil Discount For Affiliate Members From Palmer Fuels**

☐ The Federation was recently contacted by Palmer Fuels. They are offering all members of unions affiliated with the federation a **4 cents / litre discount** on furnace oil and a **\$100.00 bonus** for initial sign up on a new account.

☐ They also have a 250 litre no-runout guarantee, will bleed your furnace free of charge, and deliver across the Island. (**Please note that in order to get the discount you must be on automatic delivery.**)

☐ To receive an application just call 1-902-566-4391 (hit option #2) and ask for Gary McLaine.

### **Federation's Press Release on the Death of Gary Robichaud , Former Leader of the Island New Democrats**

☐ On Thursday, September 8, Gary Robichaud, former leader of the Island New Democrats died at his home in North Bedeque after a two year battle with lung cancer. Mr. Robichaud had stepped down as NDP leader this Spring due to declining health. He was 42. At the federation's September meeting Council signed a sympathy card and voted to send \$100 to his daughter's trust fund.

-On September 9, the federation sent out a press release:

-The Prince Edward Island Federation of Labour would like to join with many others

across the Province and Canada mourning the loss of Gary Robichaud, former leader of the Island New Democrats.

-“Gary Robichaud was a strong and passionate voice for the rights of workers in this Province” states Leo Cheverie, past president of the PEI Federation of Labour. “He committed himself to the struggles of workers during his leadership as he advocated on behalf of the rights of many including UFCW workers at Polar Foods, injured workers and supported the women of CUPE 3373 in Montague, and even in the past few weeks joined the CBC workers on their picket line after they were locked out by CBC management.”

-Gary Robichaud offered his time and energy to labour in this province always attending the P.E.I. Federation of Labour convention, Labour Day picnic and other activities whenever he could. “One of his passionate interests was in the health and well being of young people in this Province which he not only demonstrated in his teaching career but also in standing up to the rights of young people in the workplace as he heard too many first hand stories about young workers being exploited, paid low wages and working in unsafe conditions.” “He wished to make sure young workers were protected and valued as they entered the workforce” stated Cheverie.

-He also stood up for changes which would benefit all working Islanders including advocating for a living wage, safe working conditions, strengthening labour laws and enforcing the laws currently on the books. Prior to his leadership in the NDP, Robichaud was active within his own union the P.E.I. Teacher’s Federation. He had a vision of P.E.I. where workers were valued, concluded Cheverie.

-Carl Pursey, President of the PEI Federation of Labour on behalf of the Executive Council of the PEI Federation of Labour and the Federation’s 10,000 members wishes to extend its condolences to his wife Jacquie Robichaud, daughter Julia, his parents, brother Wayne and Sister Sandra and families.

## **What the PEI Federation of Labour Is Doing To Support Members of the Canadian Media Guild Locked Out by the CBC in PEI**

□ On Monday, August 15, The CBC locked out about 5,500 employees including 48 Island employees after no substantial progress was made in last-minute bargaining between Canada's largest broadcaster and its union, the Canadian Media Guild. The CBC insisting on having more flexibility to hire new staff on a contract basis instead of full-time is the main stumbling block. The CMG, which represents producers, newsroom staff and technicians, says 30 per cent of the CBC's workforce is already non-permanent,

giving the network all the flexibility it needs. The workers have been without a contract since the end of March 2004.

□ At the Federation's August meeting, we invited members of the Canadian Media Guild to speak to us about the lockout and what we could do to support them. It was agreed to write a letter to the Island's MP's and Senators and we would donate \$200 to their strike fund which we did on September 14<sup>th</sup>.

□ Here is the letter of support that the federation sent out to the Island's MP's, Senators and media on September 13<sup>th</sup> :

**Island MP's & Senators:**

-The Prince Edward Island Federation of Labour would like to let you know that we consider CBC management's decision to lock out their employees and at the same time lock out its loyal Island audience reprehensible.

-The CBC is a public institution funded by our tax dollars and as such we believe CBC provides the best hope, in a country where most of our media is owned by a few large corporations, of providing local news and cultural programs to Islanders that are fair and accurate and in the public interest.

-The mandate of the CBC is to safeguard, enhance and strengthen the cultural, political, social and economic fabric of Canada. We agree with this mandate and consider that the skilled and loyal members of the Canadian Media Guild at the CBC had been, up until they were locked out, fulfilling that mandate on the Island and all across Canada.

-The decision by CBC management to want more flexibility is all too familiar to workers. We know by experience that this word means lower wages, less social benefits (dental plan, vision care, paid vacations, etc.) and above all insecurity for workers and their families.

-We don't want that for ourselves so we certainly don't want it for present or future CBC employees .

-We feel that the CBC should be trying to negotiate a fair settlement to this dispute rather than demanding that their employees entrench the worst features of the current job market into their collective agreement. The CBC must be a model employer and set a standard of fairness in the way they treat their employees that will be a guide for all media outlets in Canada to follow instead of aspiring to be a media production and broadcasting sweatshop.

-We urge you to do what you can to bring this lockout to a speedy and fair end that will ensure that present and future employees at the CBC will have a chance for a secure future so that they can get back to providing Islanders with the quality local programs and news that we have come to expect from our Public Broadcaster.

Yours Sincerely,  
Carl Pursey,  
President of the PEI Federation of Labour

☐ On Friday, September 9, the Federation sent a letter to all Island unions asking them to show as much support as possible by sending a letter or phoning Island MP's and Senators and (cc the Canadian Media Guild), sending a letter of support to the Media, and/or visiting the picket line.

☐ On Thursday, September 22, the Canadian Media Guild held a support Rally at the Farm centre in Charlottetown. Vice President of the Federation Blair Penny attended and spoke on behalf of the federation offering the fed's support to the members of the Canadian Media Guild and the fed's wish for a fair and speedy resolution to the lockout.

### **Update on the Fed's Labour Movement Donation Drive to Establish a Day of Mourning Monument**

-On Saturday, November 6, 2004, at our annual convention the federation kicked off its labour movement donation drive to pay for a Day of Mourning Monument to honour all workers who have been injured or have died on worksites across PEI. We feel that it is very important for labour to come together and supply this very important monument to workers who paid the ultimate price. The goal for the drive is \$8,000.

-On Monday, January 10, 2005, Charlottetown City Council passed a resolution at their regular monthly Council meeting to provide upkeep and maintenance on the Day of Mourning Monument.

- Thus far, the fed has received donations from:

<b>Union</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
<b>Bricklayers Local 1</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>
<b>Canadian Labour Congress</b>	<b>\$500.00</b>
<b>Canadian Union of Public Employees PEI Division</b>	<b>\$500.00</b>

<b>Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 501</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>
<b>Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 805</b>	<b>\$500.00</b>
<b>Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 1145</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>
<b>Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 1770</b>	<b>\$200.00</b>
<b>Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 1779</b>	<b>\$185.00</b>
<b>Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 1870</b>	<b>\$287.00</b>
<b>Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 2523</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>
<b>Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 3324</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>
<b>Canadian Union of Postal Workers Charlottetown Local</b>	<b>\$150.00</b>
<b>Canadian Union of Postal Workers Summerside Local</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>
<b>Communications, Energy &amp; Paperworkers Union Local 61</b>	<b>\$10.00</b>
<b>Communications, Energy &amp; Paperworkers Union Local 401</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>
<b>International Association of Machinists Local 1934</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>
<b>IATSE Local 906a</b>	<b>\$40.00</b>
<b>International Union of Operating Engineers Local 942</b>	<b>\$500.00</b>
<b>International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1432</b>	<b>\$500.00</b>
<b>PEI Nurse's Union</b>	<b>\$150.00</b>
<b>PEI Teacher's Federation</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>
<b>PEI Union of Public Sector Employees</b>	<b>\$1,500.00</b>
<b>Public Service Alliance of Canada Area Council</b>	<b>\$550.00</b>
<b>Canadian Employment and Immigration - PSAC Local 90152</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>
<b>Canadian Employment &amp; Immigration - PSAC Local 90153</b>	<b>\$80.00</b>

<b>Canadian Employment and Immigration - PSAC Local 90154</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>
<b>Union of Canadian Transport Employees PSAC Local 60905</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>
<b>Union of Parks Canada PSAC Local 90023</b>	<b>\$80.00</b>
<b>Union of Taxation Employees PSAC Local 90002</b>	<b>\$200.00</b>
<b>Union of Veteran Affairs Employees PSAC Local 90001</b>	<b>\$750.00</b>
<b>United Brotherhood of Carpenters &amp; Joiners of America - Local 1338</b>	<b>\$300.00</b>
<b>United Food and Commercial Workers - Local 864</b>	<b>\$1,000.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,982.00</b>

- The Federation of Labour would like to thank all of the affiliated, and nonaffiliated locals and the CLC who have donated to the cause so far. So far the average contribution has been approximately a dollar per member but any contribution would be greatly appreciated.

-We have hit a bump in the road as far as the monument goes with the monument waiting in Sussex, the deal for land around the Coles Building done, Charlottetown City Council agreeing to do upkeep and maintenance on the monument, and the Carpenters having installed the base, we thought the monument would soon be in place. However, The federation then received a call from the Heritage Board asking us to meet with them. After two meetings with the Heritage Board they have informed us that they will be recommending to the City Council that we put the monument elsewhere. The federation will be doing a presentation to Charlottetown City Council on November 8 asking the Council to reject this recommendation. We would like to thank everyone who has been contacting City Council members in support of the monument and hope that those who haven't will before we meet with them for our presentation.

- If you wish to receive copies of our brochure or want to arrange for a fed representative to come to your meeting to discuss the monument. Please contact the fed's office. If you wish to keep up on what is happening with our drive please visit <http://www.peifl.ca/pages/dom2/dom.html>

**Important Dates**

<b>6<sup>th</sup> Annual Labour Day Corn Boil and Barbeque</b>	<b>Monday, September 5, 2005</b>	<b>from 4:00 - 6:00 P.M., at Victoria Park in Charlottetown.</b>
<b>CLC Atlantic Region and P.E.I. Federation Educational</b>	<b>October 13 - 14, 2005</b>	
<b>Canada Labour Code Review Hearing</b>	<b>OCTOBER 24, 2005</b>	<b>Charlottetown (If There is Sufficient Interest)</b>
<b>Immigration Forum</b>	<b>November 2, 2005</b>	<b>Rodd's Charlottetown Hotel</b>
<b>PEIFL Annual Convention Friday and Saturday November 4 and 5, 2005</b>	<b>Friday and Saturday November 4 and 5, 2005</b>	
<b>UPSE Annual Convention</b>	<b>Friday and Saturday November 18 and 19, 2005</b>	<b>Delta Prince Edward Hotel</b>