



PEI FEDERATION OF LABOUR NEWSLETTER MAY 2004 ISSUE

CURRENT NEWS

- The P.E.I. Federation of Labour Executive Committee currently has a vacancy on our committee for Secretary. Any affiliate member who would like to volunteer their time and energy to this position would be greatly appreciated. This position will be up for election at our annual convention this November. Please contact our office at 368-3068; fax at 368-3192 or e-mail at: peifed@pei.aibn.com.
- The position of Vice President (Woman) has been filled by Michele Wright from UPSE.
- On Sunday, May 23, 2004, Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin officially set June 28 as the date for the next federal election.
- On Wednesday, May 19, 2004, the Canadian Population Health Initiative and the PEI Department of Health and Social Services held the Population Health Symposium. Highlights of the CPHI's report on improving the health of Canadians were discussed. The PEIFL was represented at the symposium by Vice President Blair Penny.
- On Tuesday, May 18, 2004, the Standing Committee on Community Affairs and Economic Development announced that they will be accepting written submissions and holding public hearings this fall during their review of the province's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
- On Tuesday, May 18, 2004, the new Occupational Health and Safety Act received second reading in the house. The new act will remove the loopholes in the act that allowed employers with only one employee and farmers to be excluded from the act and ensure every worker on the Island is covered under the Act. The province has agreed to allow a two year implementation period before it comes into law on farms. Currently only 58,109 or 87% of working people on PEI are covered by the act.
- On Tuesday, May 18, 2004, Aliant announced it was postponing vacations for all 1,800 of its managers.
- On Monday, May 17, 2004, CUPE, UPSE, IUOE, the PEI Teacher's

Page 2

Federation, and the PEI Nurse's Union took out a full page ad in the Guardian to remind the current government that the 7.5% wage rollback imposed on provincial government employees by the Callbeck government 10 years ago must never happen again. Currently CUPE, UPSE, the PEI Teacher's Federation, and the PEI Nurse's Union are in negotiations with the province.

- On Monday and Tuesday, May 17 and 18, 2004, the CLC held its Executive Council Meeting in Ottawa. President Carl Pursey represented the PEIFL at the convention.
- On Friday and Saturday, May 14 and 15, 2004 CUPE PEI Division held its 24th Annual Convention. President Carl Pursey represented the PEIFL at the convention.
- On Thursday, May 13, 2004, the fed submitted its submission to the PM's Task Force on Seasonal Work. The submission was written by Executive Council member Leo Cheverie with input from the CLC and affiliated unions. If you wish to see the submission it is available on our website or a hard copy can be obtained from our office. Also the fed's 2004 brief to cabinet is now available on our website.
- On Tuesday, May 11, 2004, consultations on the Millennium Scholarship Fund were held at the Delta Prince Edward Hotel in Charlottetown. The purpose of the consultation was to discuss how the rules governing the Millennium Scholarship Fund could be changed to help improve access to post secondary education. The PEIFL was represented at the consultations by Vice President Blair Penny.
- On Saturday, May 8, 2004, it was announced that the PEI Supreme Court granted a temporary injunction against the CEP members that are on strike against Aliant. The injunction prevents strikers from picketing the homes of Aliant's managers, prohibits them from putting names of employees who are still working on scab-of-the-day signs, and prohibits the strikers from moving their picket lines to worksites where company managers have been doing work. An extension to the injunction was granted on Tuesday, May 18, 2004 which runs until Tuesday, May 25, 2004
- On Saturday, May 8, 2004, it was announced that the unemployment rate on PEI for April was 12.6% up .6% from March's 12%. You currently need 490 hours to qualify for EI on PEI down from 525 hours.
- On Tuesday, May 4, 2004, 39-year-old Wayne F. Murnaghan was

Page 3

involved in a workplace accident that resulted in his death while working at Atlantis Bio Actives Corporation's manufacturing plant at the Charlottetown airport. OHS is currently investigating the fatality.

- On Monday, May 3, 2004, The WCB held its North American Occupational Health and Safety week launch event. The Canadian Life Quilt, a memorial to young workers between 15 and 24, was on display during the event. The Quilt contains 100 patches each containing the information on a young worker and how they were killed. The PEIFL was represented at the event by Vice President Blair Penny.
- On Tuesday, April 27, 2004, it was announced that Holland College has signed a deal with the federal government to allow their students to participate in various activities related to the new Government of Canada building in Charlottetown including an on-the-job training placement program during the design and construction phase of the building. Upwards of 300 students from a host of trades, will take part and interact with local contractors and public and private sector employers. Construction will begin this Fall on the building.
- On Monday, April 26, 2004, IBEW Local 1432 received a letter from Craig Norton, Manager of Apprenticeship informing them that their application for certification of the Electrical trade under the Apprenticeship and Trades Qualification Act has been approved and will become effective on June 30, 2004. The biggest change that will occur will be that everyone who works in the electrical trade will be required to hold a valid certificate of qualification or be a registered apprentice. Tradespeople who have worked in the trade for at least 5 of the last 7 years will have the opportunity to apply to the manager of apprenticeship for a work permit without testing.

RECENTLY ANNOUNCED CHANGES TO EI

- On Tuesday, May 11, 2004, the federal government announced changes to the EI rules in regions with unemployment rates of 10 per cent or higher. The move has been condemned by the PEIFL as an election motivated band-aid to a system that is in need of major improvements. Amendments to the program include:
 1. A pilot project offering seasonal workers the possibility of receiving up to five more weeks of EI benefits to encourage them to find more work, and therefore reducing the income gap when EI runs out before the seasonal work begins again.

Page 4

2. The extension of the transitional Employment Insurance boundary measures in the Madawaska-Charlotte (New Brunswick) and Lower St. Lawrence/North Shore (Quebec) regions for another year. Approximately 15,000 EI claimants will benefit from the extension through increased access to benefits and longer benefit duration.

3. Provinces that participated in the Older Workers Pilot Projects Initiative will be offered additional funding in 2004-2005. The projects are designed to help older workers aged between 55 and 64 to remain employed or reintegrate into the labour force.

-On May 13, 2004, the fed sent out a press release on this issue. The release appeared in the Guardian on Monday, May 17, 2004 unfortunately the Guardian replaced 45 billion in our release with 45 million.

-“The EI Act needs major improvements not politically motivated band-aids” states Carl Pursey, President of the PEI Federation of Labour

-While the PEI Federation of Labour encourages any improvements to EI, even minor ones announced solely for election purposes, there is still such along way to go to even get the Employment Insurance program back to the point it was 10 years ago when the Liberal government gutted it.

-'' Tuesday's announcement is almost an insult to the unemployed on Prince Edwards Island.'' says Pursey

-Less than 40% of unemployed workers are eligible for EI, thousands can't qualify because of the high number of hours needed, more are getting less because of the divisor rule and almost **\$45 billion** dollars has been stolen from workers. This is the real picture, this is what the Martin government has to deal with.

-“We are asking ourselves, where are the Island MP's on these questions.

-We gave them the information on the negative impacts of the cutbacks on workers, their families and their communities. Why are they not standing up for Island unemployed workers'' asked Pursey

-The degradation of the EI program has caused major hardships for our province and for the federal government to use minor improvements to the Act to try to get the public to forget the

Page 5

controversy swirling around them is despicable.

-We are including with this press release a copy of the PEI Federation of Labour's submission to the Prime Minister's Seasonal Worker's Task Force to show where we think the government should be going with the EI Act to make it truly serve Canada's unemployed.

REPORT FROM THE THIRD ANNUAL PROVINCIAL "NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING" CEREMONY

-On April 28, 2004, the PEI Federation of Labour and its affiliates in conjunction with the Workers Compensation Board and the provincial government held its third Annual Provincial "National Day of Mourning" for Workers Killed and Injured on the Job Ceremony at Province House in Charlottetown. Approximately 70 people attended this year's event.

-The solemn event started inside with O Canada sung by Gaye Hood followed next by the Invocation read by Donna Murphy MacInnis, and then by speeches from Wayne Collins (representing the province), Charlene Mac Innis (Injured Workers), and Carl Pursey (President of the PEIFL).

-Bagpiper Wayne MacKinnon and the honour guards led everyone outside for the wreath and rose laying ceremonies. There were 16 wreathes laid this year including one laid by the family of Brenton O'Brien who was killed on the job on January 31, 2004. Roses were laid by loved ones in honour of 15 other workers who died on the job in previous years. PEIFL treasurer Daryl Coles did an excellent job as emcee for the evening's event. After the closing song, there was a very nice reception at the Coles building.

-After the event wreathes were taken to the fisherman's monument in Souris (a picture of laying the wreathes at the monument appeared in the May 3rd edition of the Guardian) and the memorial for workers killed on the fixed link project in Borden.

-The fed would like to thank everyone who helped make the event the success it was, especially the Occupational Health and Safety Committee who put a lot of effort into organizing the event.

-To Promote the Day of Mourning the Fed released a press release on April 26, 2004. Here it is:

-The PEI Federation of Labour in conjunction with the Workers

Page 6

Compensation Board and the provincial government would like to encourage all Islanders to join us on April 28, 2004 at 7:00pm at Province House to pause and remember all workers who have lost their lives on the job on PEI, as the PEI Federation of Labour holds its Third Annual Provincial "National Day of Mourning" for Workers Killed and Injured on the Job ceremony.

- "We will continue our tradition of holding a ceremony on this date and we request that municipalities as well as other levels of government lower their flags on April 28th " states Carl Pursey, President of the PEI Federation of Labour.

- The Day of Mourning started in Canada in 1991 when a private members bill to honour the 800 Canadians who lose their lives at work each year was passed in the house. The bill was brought forth by NDP MP Rod Murphy.

- "The main purpose for the Day of Mourning is to mourn the dead and fight for the living." states Pursey

UNIONS CARE

- On Tuesday, May 11, 2004, it was announced that members of CUPE local 3260 have donated \$3000.00 to the Easter Seals campaign.

- On Tuesday, May 4, 2004, it was announced that members of CUPE local 3260 have donated \$5000.00 to a newly developed IWK fund specifically for use by the Child Life Services program which promotes the well being of children and their families by helping them cope with the stresses of health care through play, education, and other strategies.

IMPORTANT DATES

FUNDRAISER FOR NDP LEADER GARY ROBICHAUD	SATURDAY, MAY 1, 2004	AT THE SUMMERSIDE LEGION AT 6 P.M ALL PROCEEDS GO TO ROBICHAUD'S MEDICAL AND RELATED EXPENSES
NAOSH WEEK LAUNCH EVENT FEATURING THE LIFE QUILT	MONDAY, MAY 3, 2004	2:00 PM MEMORIAL HALL CONFED CENTRE

CLC AND LABOUR COLLEGE OF CANADA 4 WEEK GRADUATE PROGRAM	MAY 10 TO JUNE 4, 2004	OTTAWA DEADLINE MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2004
CONSULTATIONS ON THE FUTURE OF THE MILLENNIUM BURSARY PROGRAM	TUESDAY MAY 11, 2004	8:30 AM AT THE DELTA PRINCE EDWARD HOTEL, CHARLOTTETOWN
THE STRUGGLE TO PREVENT PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC SERVICES	FRIDAY, MAY 14, 2004	7:30 PM AT THE BASILICA RECREATION CENTRE IN CHARLOTTETOWN
CUPE PEI DIVISION 24TH ANNUAL CONVENTION	MAY 14-15, 2004	
TOPSHEE CONFERENCE ON GLOBALIZATION	MAY 15 AND 16, 2004	IN ANTIGONISH, NOVA SCOTIA. THE MAY 14 FAREWELL PARTY ON BEHALF OF EVERETT BAKER HAS BEEN POSTPONED
CLC EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING	MAY 17-18, 2004	
POPULATION HEALTH SYMPOSIUM	WEDNESDAY MAY 19, 2004	AT THE RODD CHARLOTTETOWN HOTEL GRAFTON ROOM NOON TO 2PM
1ST ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON FOR LABOUR REPS AND JOURNALISTS	MAY 26, 2004	AT NOON AT THE BEST WESTERN, CHARLOTTETOWN
PUBLIC MEETING ON PUBLIC AUTO INSURANCE	WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2, 2004	7:00 P.M. BASILICA RECREATION CENTRE - ROOM 108 Guest Speaker: PAUL MOIST, NATIONAL PRESIDENT CUPE
PAUL MARTIN - TIME NATIONAL TOUR- GOING COAST TO COAST	SATURDAY, JUNE 5, 2004	9:30 A.M. - 12:00 NOON BASILICA RECREATION CENTRE - ROOM 205

CLC HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE	JUNE 11-13, 2004	OTTAWA MARRIOTT HOTEL DEADLINE JUNE 4, 2004
FEDERAL ELECTION	JUNE 28, 2004	
LABOUR DAY	MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2004	
CLC NATIONAL PENSION CONFERENCE	OCTOBER 17-19, 2004	FAIRMONT WINNIPEG HOTEL, MANITOBA
2004 PEIFL ANNUAL CONVENTION	FRIDAY AND SATURDAY NOVEMBER 5 AND 6, 2004 (TENTATIVE)	
CLC NATIONAL DISABILITY RIGHTS CONFERENCE	NOVEMBER 11-14, 2004	FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ELIZABETH HOTEL, MONTREAL, QUEBEC DEADLINE OCTOBER 12, 2004
NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE AND ACTION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN	MONDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2004	