

NUPGE Advisory Committee on Women's Issues

February 27 & 28, 2006 – Ottawa, Ontario

In attendance:

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| NUPGE | Marie Bean Brenda Hildahl |
| BCGEU | Colleen Jones |
| SGEU | Linda Anweiler |
| HSA | Mary Dahr |
| MGEU | Kelly-Ann Ivory Gay Pagan |
| OPSEU | Cindy Haynes Shelly Gingerich |
| PEIUPSE | Eileen LeClair |
| NBUPPE | Susie Proulx-Daigle |
| NSGEU | Martha Brown |
| NAPE | Sheila Beaton |



CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:45 a.m. by Chair Marie Bean. Sister Bean welcomed the Committee members and introductions were made around the table. A special welcome was extended to Sister Gay Pagan who attended as a MGEU observer. Sister Pagan provided the Committee with an update on the Child Care Sector Council. Chair Bean clarified for the Committee the difference between a Committee representative and an observer. Each Component is allowed one representative on the NUPGE Advisory Committee on Women's issue – the travel expenses for these representatives are pooled. Components may send additional members to the meeting as Observers – their costs are covered by their Component (not travel pooled).

Sister Bean advised the Committee that Sister Catherine Bell (BCGEU) was elected as a MP in the recent Federal election. The Committee extended their warmest congratulations to Sister Bell.

A copy of the NUPGE website story on International Women's Day (IWD) was distributed to the Committee. The website story highlighted the fact that NUPGE and its Components have made some significant progress in reducing the barriers women face in running for and getting elected to top leadership positions – the National Executive Board consists of 12 women and seven men. IWD posters and wristbands from BCGEU and posters and stickers from the Status of Women were made available to the Committee.

1. Adoption of Agenda

Chair Bean directed the Committee to the agenda for the meeting. Sister Ivory moved and Sister Beaton seconded, that the agenda be adopted. Carried.

2. Adoption of Minutes – October 3 & 4, 2005

The minutes of the October 3 & 4, 2005 meeting were reviewed. Sister LeClair moved and Sister Proulx-Daigle seconded, that the October 2005 minutes be adopted. Carried.

3. International Sisterhood Conference

Sister Bean informed the Committee that they will meet on the morning of Sunday, October 1 for a condensed regular meeting. The afternoon will be spent on the Conference workshops. The Committee was made aware of two changes to the draft outline for the Conference which were distributed – the Colombian speaker has been changed to Ligia Ines Alzate and the speaker for the cultural event is now Bev Jacobs. The Committee was advised that there will be no conference registration fee to NUPGE participants. The deadline for the hotel registration is August 24, 2006 and the rate for the hotel is \$136 plus taxes for either single or double accommodations.

Brother Len Bush, a National Representative with NUPGE, joined the meeting. Brother Bush provided a brief biography of the speakers who will be attending the Conference. The Committee gave Brother Bush a warm thank you.

Each of the Committee members provided an estimate of the number of Conference participants from their Component. A lengthy discussion was held on the content and structure of the workshops and on the role of the Committee at the Conference.

4. National Union Report

President James Clancy and Sister Carol Meyer joined the meeting. Brother Clancy provided an overview of the current issues the National Union has been working on. He advised that the recent election of the Harper government will turn back the clock on Medicare and child care. The Harper government is akin to the Republican Party in the US in their ideology. President Clancy stated that we will have to go back and do the groundwork to educate our members to bring these issues forward.

In regard to Medicare, a noticeable regrouping of the advocates of the right to for-profit health care has emerged. More private clinics are opening in several provinces and the National Union is working hard to ensure the Harper government lives up to its

responsibility to enforce the Canada Health Act. This could be the definitive public policy of our time.

He advised that the child care issue is critical as the Harper government plans to eliminate the national child care program proposed by the Martin government. He stated the fight is not over the \$1,200 per family but the need for a national child care program. The National Union has made a \$10,000 donation to the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada to assist with their efforts on this issue.

Brother Clancy stated that a victory in labour rights has been achieved at the global level. The World Bank lends money to a country with conditions called Structure Adjustment Programs (SAPs) which typically can include such things as private pension plans and the gutting of public services. For the first time a condition of receiving a loan from the World Bank is that the country must have labour rights in place, i.e. no child labour. During the federal election, the National Union and UFCW Canada introduced an important declaration called the Workers' Bill of Rights. This document reaffirms that workers' rights are human rights and governments in Canada have a responsibility to protect and promote these rights. The leaders of all parties signed the pledge except Stephen Harper. NUPGE is lobbying to get all PC members to sign the Workers' Bill of Rights by asking its activists who live in ridings that elected a Conservative MP to get that MP to sign.

President Clancy discussed the fact that the Harper government has indicated it will move quickly to introduce legislation to address youth crime. NUPGE is working hard to ensure that any legislation contains sensible and progressive amendments. The National Union is hosting a national conference in Ottawa on May 11 & 12 to discuss international trends and issues in the criminal justice sector.

Brother Clancy pointed out that there were some positives in the election. Out of the seven NUPGE women members who ran for office, two were successful in their campaign. Catherine Bell (a former member of the NUPGE Women's Committee) from BCGEU was elected to Parliament and Chris Charlton, a former OPSEU activist, was also elected as MP for the Hamilton area.

5. Component Reports

BCGEU

Sister Colleen Jones reported:

The B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union's newly appointed Women's Committee met in the early fall last year.

A report on the first NUPGE International Conference created a lot of interest and excitement from the different components represented at the meeting.

A proposal for a community conference on migrant workers was put forward as a result of a discussion on the Public Services International (PSI) Migration and Women's Health Workers Project. This project will be discussed at the next meeting.

Incorporating ongoing educational programs for women into the Committee meeting agenda was also an item on the agenda and was discussed fully.

The BCGEU Women's Committee has many ideas for commemorating International Women's Day and Prevention of Violence Against Women's Week. The Committee has designed a wristband with three colours: green, white and violet. On the wristband are IWD March 8 and the BCGEU logo.

- Prevention of Violence Against Women, April 17 – it was suggested to launch the Silent Witness Project in April and do the full program at our Policy Convention in November 2006.
- The BCGEU Region 1 Women's Conference was held in October 2005. The school focused on two items:
 - Political Action: A question and answer panel was held with BCGEU women who were running for office within their communities. The main focus of this event was to encourage women to become politically involved within their communities, to run for office to help move our issues forward and to support candidates that are BCGEU members and labour activists in the municipal elections.
 - Women's History: The motto for this course was, '*Just don't say it, wear it.*' We created T-shirts with political slogans and pictures to emphasize women speaking out about their issues and community issues.

BCGEU Bargaining

Wages and employment security are the top priorities for the BCGEU public service contracts, which started in Victoria on January 17, 2006. Years of wage controls, staff downsizing, service cutbacks, and privatization have affected many of our members. Employment security is an ongoing issue as the Liberal Government continues contracting out and privatization.

Many of the BCGEU existing contracts expire March 31, 2006 and bargaining continues in both the private and public sector.

SGEU

Sister Linda Anweiler reported:

In SGEU the following has taken place since the last NUPGE Women's Committee meeting of March 2005.

Sector Reports

Community Services Sector: Meetings took place on March 1 with the minister to discuss what new money means in terms of new programming.

Health Sector: Talks with Cancer Agency have broken off.

Crowns Sector: Public meeting with Wascana where a brief where more funding needed for Wascana Centre. Worker's Compensation has settled where they reached an agreement.

Public Service Sector: In the midst of proposal gathering. Proposal Conference scheduled for May 2006.

SGEU Women's Committee Report

Women's Committee To Do List for 2005

Agenda: Convention resolutions; budget; committee mandate review; brochure draft.

1. Women's Information Network

- a. The Committee is collecting the attached forms from members.
- b. A list needs to be compiled.
- c. An e-mail discussion list needs to be set up with Web Networks. This can be coordinated through the communications department.

2. International Sisterhood Around the World

- a. This is an international NUPGE conference planned for October 2006 in Ottawa. NUPGE is asking each Component to send 10 delegates.
- b. A budget needs to be written up. The Women's Committee members are willing to sleep on floors, use their holidays or do whatever it takes to get there.
- c. A fundraising plan needs to be devised, if SGEU will not pay for it.

3. Education and Networking

- a. The Committee wants to work with the E&P on education and mentorship activities, and to be plugged into the Stewards' Task Force (see attached action plan). I have been talking with Adriane about it, and it needs to be followed through with her.

4. Silent Witness

- a. The Committee is researching this anti-violence campaign with the intention of encouraging a Saskatchewan women's organization (not the Women's Committee) to take it on.

5. Committee Mandate

- a. The Committee wants to develop a more focused mandate (example NBPEA), and possibly take on the Pay Equity and Balancing Work and Family mandates.
- b. This will need to be part of their next meeting agenda, and will need to be plugged into the SGEU re-visioning process.

6. Update their Brochure

- a. This should be coordinated through the communications department.

On November 28, 2005, the SGEU Women's Committee met where the following took place:

Resolutions to Convention

We worked on the following resolutions (complete drafts attached) regarding:

1. Control of pension investments;
2. Dependent care expenses for overnight union activities;
3. Retiree Health Plan (currently PSGE only); and
4. Health Benefits for members on Reemployment Lists.

Silent Witness Campaign

The pamphlet that we received from New Brunswick was reviewed and a discussion took place. We have to be able to find statistics for launching this campaign. Discussion ensued. Where to find the information? The 2005 Saskatchewan Women's Directory was distributed to each member. (Please ask if you did not receive.) Under the 'Violence Against Women' portion, we found two provincial organizations – PATHS (Provincial Association of Transition Houses of Saskatchewan) and STOPS (Saskatchewan Towards Offering Partnership Solutions to Violence). We came up with 15 basic questions from which we hope to be able to gather the basic information that we require:

1. Since November 1995 how many women were murdered in Saskatchewan in domestic violence?
2. Who did it? Husband? Boyfriend????
3. Age of the victim?
4. Were drugs / alcohol involved?

5. Was there a previous history of violence?
6. Of those, how many were murder / suicide?
7. How many resulted in a conviction?
8. How many children were involved, orphaned, etc.?
9. Was anyone else murdered, injured in the attack?
10. Where did the murder occur? (home / office?)
11. Did this occur in a rural or urban environment?
12. What was the weapon of choice in the attack?
13. What was the relationship status? Married, separated, divorced, common law?
14. If separated, how long since the relationship ended?
15. Was the victim stalked or had she asked for protection before?

It is interesting to note that 10.1% of all murders in Saskatchewan this year were due to domestic violence. It is also sadly noted that Saskatchewan has the second highest rate in Canada of deaths due to domestic violence.

This campaign will involve a lot of work to get up and running by Convention. We will begin to compile information. We will do some researching and phoning for stats. Will contact the Silent Witness

Convention 2006 – Women's Luncheon Plans

On December 12, 2005, our Committee met and discussed numerous activities and important upcoming agenda topics such as: Budget, Convention, CLC Women's Conference, SFL, PSUW, NUPGE, Silent Witness Project, funding for the International Sisterhood Conference and meeting dates for 2006.

Budget

Upon review of our budget proposal for 2006, our Committee members expressed concern with the format and unorganized presentation in which our budget was prepared.

We learned that some of our worksheets were coded incorrectly and difficult to follow and understand for the Finance Committee and Provincial Council, perhaps resulting in less funding than possibly allocated.

The members present at today's meeting spent considerable and cautious time to reformat the budget worksheets in hopes to resubmit and be reconsidered for a more reasonable budget to operate for 2006.

Our budget proposal was submitted for \$82,087.00. We received \$38,000.00, with hopes and plans, if possible, to resubmit a new proposal of \$76,000.00.

Convention

Our Committee will be respectfully requesting names and persons to honor for our Silent Witness Project. Due to the time consuming research this new project will incur, and our limited number of meetings that we are financed to meet, we are unable to include this project in this year's Convention. However, it is our intent to include this project in our Conference in the fall of 2006.

Our Committee will be hosting a women's luncheon at Convention. The presentation will include our members sharing stories about our Committee and our union involvement. In 2005, our Committee and guests felt our video of a 1/2-hour was too long, resulting in a plan for our members to share personal stories about our Committee, and possibly show a video of 15 minutes or less on Wal-Mart.

We will be supplying a box for shampoos and toiletries to donate to the Bethany House or YWCA. Our members are asked to donate prizes and items around their house. There will be a craft display for PSUW and we highly encourage our members to attend the PSUW in 2006. Applications are not yet available on the SGEU website. Members, please be available in advance to set up brochures, displays, presentations, and greet women during the luncheon!

Conference

Our planned date for the Women's Conference is November 23 & 24. We anticipate enough funding to invite 50 women to join us.

Meetings

Our tentative Committee meetings for 2006 will be Monday, May 15, Monday, August 28 and Monday, October 23.

Silent Witness Campaign

Members were asked to research material on Violence against Women to find answers to three questions each, prior to our meeting in May. The next meeting is being held at the SGEU office in Saskatoon on May 15.

Our agenda and attention will be focused on planning the Women's Conference, compiling our research and information to complete the Silent Witness Project, and options to 'fund' our members to travel to Ottawa to attend the Building International Sisterhood Around the World – International Sisterhood Conference in October.

Registrations, commitments, flights, accommodations and leaves will need to be confirmed and booked soon.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

This has been an update on what has been happening in SGEU since March 2005. Respectfully submitted Linda Anweiler, Chairperson, SGEU Women's Committee.

HSAA

Sister Mary Dahr reported:

Best wishes for a productive meeting. We hope all the delegates will find it re-invigorating and will have an opportunity to renew old friendships, and to establish new ones.

Like all components, we have had an active and exciting year.

Negotiations

HSAA concluded a three-year agreement for our provincial table, which includes a total of approximately 11,000 members. Major terms were increases of 3.25%, 3.25% and 3% on April 1 of each year, with the contract expiring March 31, 2008.

The long service increment, which was part of the previous arbitrated settlement, and awarded to full time employees after six years at the top of the salary scale, was converted to a simple annual increment, i.e. after one year at the top.

Highlights:

- Improvements are made to mileage from 35¢/km to 38¢, and 50¢ for those who are required to provide a vehicle.
- There is supplementary vacation of five days at the 25th, 30th and 35th anniversaries (five days total, not five days / year).
- There are additional pay steps for some classifications.
- Local conditions were negotiated separately and some of these are still pending.
- A major classification review project has commenced for this bargaining unit, and we hope to have it completed prior to the expiry of this three-year deal.
- A joint benefit review committee has been formed to examine ways of managing benefit costs without reducing, and optimally with the goal of improving supplemental health and dental benefits.
- Finally, a joint committee was formed to deal with interpretation issues arising from contract changes, with good success on a couple of issues, notably taxation of travel expenses and implementation of the supplementary vacation provisions.

Subsequently, a number of separate collective agreements were concluded on similar terms.

A number of other separate agreements, both first and renewal, are in various stages of negotiation.

Organizing

On February 6, HSAA launched a major organizing drive in an attempt to bring the approximately 800 – 1,000 employees of DynacareKasper Medical Laboratories (DKML) into our union. DKML is a private provider which provides the vast majority of laboratory services to the Capital (Edmonton) Health Region. About 300 of the employees were former HSAA members who were lost through the privatization of the mid-nineties.

In planning the campaign we made a strategic decision to take a rather unconventional route. Rather than ‘flying under the radar’ we are taking an ‘in your face’ approach. Our drive is wide open, including a giant billboard easily viewed by employees at the Edmonton based laboratory, radio, TV and print advertising, as well as posters on buses and Edmonton’s light rail transit. In addition, a DVD has been produced for distribution to prospective members, and a dedicated website will allow them to access information from the privacy of their homes. We know of no other organizing drive that has used internet technology to this extent. A number of organizers have been hired for this drive. Our team is encouraged by results to date. Ongoing assessment will determine when we file an application for certification with the Labour Relations Board, and the scope of the bargaining unit that we apply for.

We have also succeeded in organizing a number of new ambulance units and have concluded, or are in negotiations for, first collective agreements.

We have also made a joint application with the Peace Health Region to amalgamate a number of ambulance units into a single bargaining unit. This is the result of a provincial pilot project that has transferred responsibility for ambulance services to the health region. This transfer was to occur province-wide in 2005, but was abruptly restricted to two regions when the government discovered that its cost projections were completely inadequate.

Sponsorship and Advocacy

We are participants with Alberta’s Friends of Medicare in the latest campaign to thwart privatization of health services. Since January of 2005 the government has been touting a ‘Third Way’, and internal documents indicate that they intend to shift to private health insurance for ‘non emergent services’, to increase private provision and to convince Albertans that we should expect less of our public system. However, the speech from the Throne made no specific mention of this ‘Third Way’, and we hope that the opposition we have been able to marshal has cooled the enthusiasm for

privatization somewhat. Nevertheless, a report on the feasibility of private insurance commissioned from AON Corporation is expected shortly, and it is likely that some legislation will be introduced. A \$1B cancer strategy was announced in the speech, with the lofty goal of reducing the incidence of cancer by 35% and the death rate from cancer by 50% by the year 2025. Given that cancer rates have been going nowhere but up, Alberta is producing more oil (and therefore pollution) than ever and the lukewarm approach to environmental protection, it appears to be somewhat unrealistic.

HSAA is entering its third year as the signature sponsor of MADD Canada's (Alberta) 'Signs of Summer' campaign. The campaign involves radio ads, billboards, posters, postcards, etc., and runs from the May long weekend to the Labour Day weekend.

We also support and participate in the Parkland Institute, which has been called 'communists' by the Premier, and Public Interest Alberta. The latter, unlike the Parkland, is an advocacy organization that tackles a broad range of issues in the public interest, including democracy, child care, poverty, seniors' issues, etc.

Affiliations

In our third year of affiliation with the House of Labour, we are active participants with the Alberta Federation of Labour and District Labour Councils, as well as within NUPGE.

We are increasing the number of members we sponsor for various events, and the level of activism within HSAA is growing.

Membership

Our membership continues to grow. Over the past five years it has increased by over 50%, and has almost doubled in the last ten. Consequently, we have had the pleasant problem of running out of office space. Late last year we purchased a new space for our Calgary office, and have just authorized renovations for our Edmonton office to tide us over in the short term, and will be preparing a five-year plan for our Board.

MGEU

Sister Kelly-Ann Ivory reported:

Activities of the MGEU Women's Committee

Since our last meeting the MGEU Women's Committee has been very busy preparing for our own conference, Balancing Act: Encore, to be held March 3, 4 & 5, 2006. It is anticipated that we will have more MGEU women attending as participants and an increase in the number of MGEU women facilitating. This will be a conference that is facilitated by union women for union women identifying the issues, services and supports that women may use in the various stages of their lives. Since this has been

the major focus of the Committee there has been limited time to participate in other activities.

Some of these activities have included:

- Some of the Committee members attended the LEAF (Women's Legal Education and Action Fund) Person Day Breakfast held on October 28 at the Winnipeg Convention Centre. The keynote speakers were Dr. Fiona Sampson and Rita Shelton Deverell.
- The Committee Chairperson attended the launch of the Silent Witness Project for Manitoba as part of the activities in honouring the month of November as DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION AWARENESS MONTH: The month of November was dedicated by the provincial government to increasing the public's understanding of abusive behaviors, and to encourage the public's involvement in helping to stop domestic violence. Posters, brochures and buttons for this campaign, titled Promises aren't the only things that get broken were made available by the Family Violence Prevention Program.
- Committee members along with other MGEU women attended the Manitoba Federation of Labour Women's Conference titled Maximizing Women's Potential on November 24, 25 & 26, 2005.

Summary of Events from the MGEU

Bargaining

- Health Care Support Services negotiations have been completed with a comprehensive long-term plan to standardize the wages throughout the province.
- Manitoba Public Insurance local initially rejected the offer made in December but recently ratified an agreement with needed wage adjustments and other enhancements to benefit plans.
- Civil Service Master Bargaining is well underway. It is hopeful that this will be concluded by this spring / summer.
- MGEU was successful in certifying Sandy Bay First Nations in November 2005. We are very excited about the opportunity to represent workers at the First Nation Reserve, and the newly formed local executive are preparing to begin negotiations for a first collective agreement.

Campaigns

Child Care Campaign

There is ongoing organizing with child care locals. The MGEU has tried various ways to bring all centres to a common bargaining table but there remains a constant resistance from the government to accept this concept. The MGEU Board of Directors recently

passed a motion to grant approval for child care employees to become affiliate members under the MGEU's Constitution. This would be done only if this becomes a strategy the union takes in organizing the child care sector. Last year Manitoba signed a five-year agreement with the federal government which would see \$25 – \$30 million for day care. With the recent change in the federal government this agreement is no longer as secure.

Public Service Workers Awareness Campaign 'Proud to Work for You'

The first part of the Campaign involved the distribution and collection of Membership Questionnaires, and the results of the questionnaires were posted on our website. The second phase of the campaign involved having MGEU members attend the Manitoba Minister of Finance's pre-budget consultation meetings across the province. The third phase, which is currently underway, is having MGEU members attend a training session on how to lobby with their constituency MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) addressing their concerns within their workplace. It is the intent to have all these individual meetings complete before the next provincial budget is presented in March 2006.

Other Events

Youth Committee

Sixty-two young members attended the Young Members Conference held late September. Most members were first-timers to any kind of Union function. A number of issues were discussed and feedback was positive.

Club 1919

The longstanding tradition of Winnipeg's Union Centre offering a restaurant and bar has come to a sad end. On December 23, 2005 the doors of Club 1919 closed.

CLC Prairie Regional Officer

Sister Debbie Jamerson, former 4th Vice-President and staff member of the MGEU, was the successful candidate for the CLC Prairie Regional Officer – located in Winnipeg.

OPSEU

Sister Cindy Haynes reported:

OPSEU, SEIU, ONA and CUPE will be holding meetings across the province on the Liberal LHIN (Local Health Integration Network) legislation during the week of January 16, 2006. The local health integration networks exist solely to contract out health care services to the lowest bidder.

Four large provincial unions are launching a protest against the Liberal government's controversial Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs), starting with a strategy session in Sarnia. Hundreds of members of the Ontario Nurses' Association are expected to meet with members from the SEIU, OPSEU and CUPE/OCHU to discuss strategies.

"We've never put out joint statements about anything before but it affects all of us equally this time," said Pam Gallie, president of ONA's Local 019 representing local registered nurses. The unions want key amendments to Bill 36, which is the enabling legislation that will dictate how the new LHINs function.

The old District Health Council system has been dismantled in favour of new health networks, which will oversee health care on a local level and control the budgets of local health care organizations. Staff and office space have already been set up for the LHINs, but the enabling bill has not been passed yet. Public hearings are scheduled in February.

"Union leaders are concerned the new system will erode patient care," Gallie said. "They intend to take services out of the hospital and redistribute them into communities where the sick and elderly could have less access to care."

"Patients may have to travel to other cities for specific services," said Gallie. One of the demands being made by the unions is for the Liberal government to ensure travel expenses are paid if patients have to leave their own communities. There's also concern that some of the services will be offered within a for-profit model.

"The legislation is so ambiguous," Gallie said. "It really is a frightening piece of legislation for the unions, because LHINs Board members are appointed and accountable only to the minister. It all seems quite secretive."

Ultimately, the unions worry that creation of LHINs will jeopardize unionized jobs, as well as wage and benefit levels.

Stella Yeadon, representing CUPE workers, said meetings are being held simultaneously in Sarnia, North Bay and Hamilton. More are planned in 17 Ontario cities over the coming weeks.

"Our hope is that we can mobilize our memberships and get them out there to educate the public. With enough public pressure, the government will have to hold widespread consultation sessions," Yeadon said.

Currently, the only public meetings near Sarnia prior to the bill passing are scheduled in London from January 30 to February 2.

Dr. David Suzuki will be presented with our Stanley Knowles Humanitarian Award at the 2006 convention.

CAAT-A members (these are mostly female college support staff) will be taking a province wide strike vote on February 7, 2006. The strike mandate will force management to negotiate a fair and reasonable contract. The very well experienced Bargaining Team has set a strike deadline of March 7, 2006.

Our Liquor Board Employees Division will hold a Local Assembly on January 23 & 24, 2006. LBED locals across the province were chartered following the LBED assembly held January on 23 & 24, 2006 in Toronto. Region 1 has four new locals. Executive elections will start February 26 and conclude March 5.

Our provincial Women's Committee hosted a Women's Conference on November 4, 5 & 6 in Barrie, Ontario. The theme was 'Building our Communities', and it focused on empowering women to network and develop strong community ties within our workplaces, unions and communities.

We launched our new fundraiser for the eradication of AIDS, with 10% of sales from union members going towards our Live and Let Live Fund. The website for the charms and the charm bracelets is www.thatsamorecharms.com. It has a special section on union charms which are geared towards women and unions, including the OFL charm and the NUPGE charm.

OPSEU (LBED)

Sister Shelly Gingerich reported:

Since my last report to this Committee the union formerly known as OLBEU has been attempting to complete the merge with OPSEU. As one would expect there have been a few bumps in the road, which are currently being worked through by the transition team. The following members form the transition team.

OLBEU Members: John Coones, Joanne Fisher, Mike Sullivan, and Tom Galli.
OPSEU Members: Heino Neilsen, Nancy Pridham, Terry Moore, and other OPSEU support staff as required from time to time.

The process was broken down into five steps:

- 1) Vote to merge by OLBEU members
- 2) Local assembly
- 3) Local elections
- 4) Local educationals
- 5) Founding convention, before the end of 2007.

We have completed the first two steps in the process and by the time you read this report, most locals will have also completed step three.

As I mentioned getting to this point in the five-step plan has had its problems. However, once we begin to learn the structure and the politics of OPSEU, we will be able to move forward. There has been a steep learning curve not only by OLBEU members but also for OPSEU staff and members.

As we strive to harmonize our two Unions we must not forget that our members voted to merge with OPSEU, and this merge was promoted by our Executive. We are moving slowly (sometimes too slowly) but we are cautiously optimistic that the merge will be completed within the timeframe as set by the transition committee.

PEIUPSE

Sister Eileen LeClair reported:

Our Committee has been very busy over the past few months with the Silent Witness Project. We now have four silhouettes constructed and an additional five silhouettes to be constructed over the next year.

In November 2005, we did two presentations for School Boards across the Island and will be doing an additional three presentations to students from grades 7 to 12 next week. This is something we have been aiming for and are now getting the opportunity to do.

On December 6, we did a noon time presentation in Charlottetown for the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women and an evening presentation called Vigil of Remembrance and Hope for church groups in Summerside. We also did a presentation at the PEI Federation of Labour Convention and were approached by CUPE and IUOE to do one at their upcoming Conventions. Very satisfying to receive these requests.

UPSE has had a very turbulent nine months with Program Renewal and the introduction of Bill 44. This called for the disbanding of the five regional Health Boards and bringing Health Care back under Civil Service. This was all under the guise of cutting costs and making the system more effective. An Early Retirement Incentive package was introduced in the hopes of eliminating 500 jobs. The age limit was 53 years and older and the money allocated for those salaries would be a savings or directed to other sources. This sounds good, except that a large number of those who chose to take the package had to be replaced. The remaining employees who weren't replaced were expected to perform the extra duties. Union sisters and brothers who didn't qualify or weren't interested in retiring were issued lay-off notices – only to have these notices rescinded within a week or two because it was determined that the employees were indeed needed. A very stressful time for everyone and it certainly took a toll on workplaces.

What to do now with the Health Care Agreement? Do we combine with the Civil Service Agreement? This is a tough decision for all Health Care Workers to ponder. The Health Care Agreement expires on March 31, 2006. Our Negotiating Team meets on February

8, 9 & 10 and it will be determined at that time whether we maintain our own or combine with Civil Service.

Last May, a newly elected Negotiating Team was elected and combined with the existing Civil Service Negotiating Team to deal with issues arising from the implementation of Bill 44. After numerous meetings with the Government Negotiating Team, it was determined that a negotiated decision could not be reached on some outstanding issues. An Arbitrator, George Adams, was agreed upon. Those unresolved issues were referred for Mediation / Arbitration.

Some of the agreed to issues were:

- Consequential expenses, e.g. travel allowance, altered work hours and relocation expenses.
- Bi-weekly meetings would be held with affected members at the workplace during work hours.
- Job postings of all vacant positions would be offered first to those who were laid-off, red-circled or displaced due to Bill 44.
- The Employer would assume all costs of the UPSE Bargaining Team's wage replacement.

Mediation Results

Mandatory time limits changed from seven days to 14 days for filing an initial grievance. Every effort shall be made to settle within 15 days of the arbitration. Expedited arbitration process shall be completed, including issuing of the award within 60 days. Cost of the Arbitrator shall be paid by the Employer. Parties agreed to Susan Ashley becoming Mediation / Arbitration and she should be contacted within one week and an additional eight weeks later to deal with any disputes that may have since arisen. This expedited process was something we did not have prior to this time.

Arbitration Award

Declined to issue an award on a resolution of Equitable Treatment of UPSE members under the same Employer, i.e. Adverse Weather Conditions which equals three days paid leave.

All UPSE Health and Civil Service vacancies will be reviewed with an Employer representative and a UPSE representative selected from a 3/3 Committee to determine if an Employee on recall or red circled can be considered for the available position.

Resolution of Excluded / Included positions dispute: 21 included and 136 excluded. For one year, the Employer shall refrain from seeking the exclusion of any existing positions.

Consent Award: The Workforce Renewal (Early Retirement) Phase II shall be extended for UPSE Health until March 31, 2006.

This is a condensed version of how Bill 44 has impacted sisters and brothers in UPSE. We are unsure what will happen when Bill 44 is rescinded but have been assured that UPSE will be notified 60 days before it will be introduced.

NBUPPE

Sister Susie Proulx-Daigle reported:

General Information

In 1999 the leadership of our union was determined to develop an organization that was as relevant to our members as we could be within our resources. In order to do that the leadership felt it was important to provide each and every member the opportunity to speak to the organization about the organization. Members' input ensured we were relevant and contemporary. Cultural Research's report to us in 2000 proved invaluable. We planned, forecasted and made decisions in the interest of the membership, much based on what the members told Cultural Research.

As the organization grows and matures, the leadership recognizes a sophistication and maturation of the goals and ideas of the membership. In order to be able to maximize our resources, advance our members' objectives and make the right decisions for the members, we returned to Cultural Research for an update.

While this is an interim report, the findings are extremely positive and supportive of the directions taken by the leadership on behalf of the membership. In its interim report, Cultural Research reviewed 13 key areas of the union involving input from more than 2,000 members. The 2005 findings were compared to the 2000 survey results. According to Mark Nuttal of Cultural Research, the growth and development of the New Brunswick Union over the past five years has been significant.

On another note, New Brunswick Unions which have members of the Public Service Superannuation Pension Plan have asked both the Auditor General and the Ombudsman to look into the governance of the PSSA. This is an issue of great importance to our members. The reason is that union members deserve a voice in the management of the PSSA but government refuses, even though history is quite clear in terms of the relatively lackluster performance of the PSSA managers, through the New Brunswick Investment Corporation.

Negotiations

As for the negotiating process within the NB Union, we are currently engaged in the bargaining cycle that will see the re-negotiations of the collective agreements for each of our negotiating units. My last report stated that our Resource Officers, who started

the negotiation process in January 2004, had broken off after failure to reach an agreement. As of February 15, 77% voted in favor of strike to back their position for a fair deal. During the week of February 10, another group of ours, Nursing Home workers (Loch Lomond Villa) voted 99% in favour of strike action. Their employer conceded their 16 rollback positions.

The Admin Group (includes Clerical and Regulatory, Administrative Assistants, Office Data & Duplicating Process Groups) have completed 15 days of direct bargaining and are now requesting to go to conciliation. The contract has expired December 31, 2004. We are presently on a provincial tour in order to start getting the word out that the only way to a fair deal is by using the entire bargaining process, including the 'strike' vote. The government has proven time and time again that if you're not ready to go to the plate, you don't get a fair wage settlement.

The transfer agreements of the Public and Mental Health Clinics to the Regional Health Authorities impacting our Specialized Health Care Professional and Administrative Assistant groups were introduced as an administrative change to enhance service delivery, not as a cost saving government measure to be borne on the backs of the employees. At issue were the wages and working conditions affecting psychologists, human service counselors, social workers and administrative support workers. The government sought to roll back wages and benefits negotiated in good faith through the Free Collective Bargaining Model. However, as the deadline approached, the Employer finally acquiesced to what was fair in relation to the transfer agreements.

Women's Committee

The Committee has only met once since my last report – February 13, 2006. We spent a bit of time reviewing how our planned activities went during the AGM last fall. We also had discussions surrounding the death of one of our members, Monique Breau, who was shot and killed by her estranged husband, who then shot and killed himself. Their two children, 3 month old Vincent, and 2½ year old Meghan are now orphaned. We looked at fund raising for the two children as well as getting in touch with the family to seek interest in the Silent Witness Project. The membership has been encouraged to contribute to the Breau Family Trust Fund to help the family spiritually and financially.

We also spent some time on planning fundraisers during the upcoming Union Activists Session in March as well as for the Convention in October. Also in the works is the development of a Committee pin.

NSGEU

Sister Martha Brown gave a verbal report.

NAPE

Sister Sheila Beaton reported:

NAPE continues to face many challenges under the Williams government. We are facing these challenges head on and continue to lobby the government to treat our public workers with respect and fairness. Since our last meeting the government has agreed to increase our next pay increase by 1%, giving our public workers a 3% increase rather than the 2% that was legislated. The government has also agreed to revisit the pay equity issue.

Home Care

We have been successful in certifying many of our home care agencies and for the past year we have been trying to set up Locals and Negotiating Teams for these agencies.

More Job Cuts Expected

On September 10, 2004, the government announced its intention to merge 14 Health Care Boards into four integrated Boards. With the merging of the Boards, there will be a need for a Health Care Transition Agreement. A team has been put in place to negotiate the transition agreement. NAPE's goal is to try to maintain consistent agreements throughout the province.

Pay Equity

NAPE members were extremely disappointed with the decision by the Supreme Court of Canada. The decision says the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador discriminated against NAPE members employed in health care in 1991 when it withheld retroactive pay equity payments. It also says, however, that the provincial government was justified in discriminating against these workers because of the province's fiscal situation.

The provincial government has agreed to revisit the Pay Equity Issue. Government has appointed a committee to discuss the issue and create a plan of implementation of agreed funds.

Activities of the Committee

The Women's Committee meeting is set for March 11, 2006. Plans will be made at this time for upcoming events. We continue to strive to meet the needs of our female membership.

6. Child Care

Sister Gay Pagan, NUPGE representative on the Child Care Sector Council, provided an update on the Council's activities. The Council met on February 24 & 25 in Ottawa. On Friday evening they held a candlelight vigil outside Sussex Drive during the Premiers' meeting with the Prime Minister. The Council wants the government to honour the child care five-year agreements that have been signed with Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba. The Council is updating their website and communications. As there are 29 other sector councils, the government could not take away funding from just the Child Care Sector Council. The Council is concerned about two groups that have been established – Family First and REAL Women of Canada which both promote keeping women at home raising children and strongly oppose the concept of universally available, government subsidized child care. Sister Pagan distributed material from the Code Blue for Child Care campaign established by the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada (CCAAC). This is a Canada wide campaign to protect the progress made on child care. It brings together national and provincial/territorial child care organizations; labour, women's and social justice groups; and Canadians from all walks of life to speak for the 64% of Canadians who voted for a child care system. More information can be found on their website www.childcareadvocacy.ca.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

Meeting reconvened at 9:15 a.m. on February 28, 2006.

7. CLC Women's Committee Report

Sister Bean, the NUPGE representative on the CLC Women's Committee, presented reports on both the October 2005 meeting and the February 2006 meeting.

October 2005

The meeting was co-chaired by Sister Barb Byers and Sister Peggy Nash. Sister Byers has replaced Sister Marie Clarke-Walker. On the morning of October 25, the CLC Women's Committee met jointly with the CLC Solidarity & Pride Working Group to discuss the Sex Trade Discussion paper. This paper will be discussed further at the upcoming Solidarity & Pride Conference in mid-November.

Pay Equity

The government's response to the recommendations provided in 'Moving Forward on the Pay Equity Task Force Recommendations' given by the Standing Committee on the Status of Women is that it wants more consultation. The government will appoint an impartial facilitator to lead discussions with major stakeholder representatives and will consider alternatives that respect basic principles related to pay equity. The members of the Standing Committee do not want to do the whole Pay Equity process again.

However, they feel the government will only hear from employers if they do not participate. It was determined that affiliates will have to participate in another round of consultations and develop strategies to coincide with these consultations.

NAC Consultation

After a lengthy discussion, it was determined that there is a need for a national voice/organization for women, but this organization should not be NAC.

Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA) Report

Nancy Peckford, Director of Programs, outlined a campaign called 'The CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women) Challenge'. This year marks 25 years since Canada ratified the UN CEDAW and three years since the UN CEDAW Committee delivered 23 recommendations to Canada regarding its human rights commitments. The CEDAW Challenge will focus on six of these recommendations which would respond to the weakness in the current social policy landscape. Canada must report back to the UN CEDAW Committee in 2007. Therefore the time is now to move forward and seek implementation on at least these six recommendations through mobilization and public pressure.

CLC Women's Conference, June 11 – 14, 2006, Ottawa

The CLC has not finalized the theme of the Conference. Discussions centered around political action including the possibility of focusing on fighting poverty as it relates to women. A sub-committee was struck to set up and organize the Conference.

February 2006

The meeting was chaired by Sister Barb Byers who advised that as Sister Peggy Nash was elected in the federal election, the co-chair for future meetings will be Sister Carol Phillips.

Federal Election

Chair Byers provided an overview of the CLC 'Better Choices' campaign which focused on six major issues: health care, pensions, training – EI, pay equity, jobs and training, and workers' rights. Child care was added as a major issue due to Harper's platform on this issue.

During the election, there was very little media coverage on women's issues. Only the NDP and the Bloc raised the issue of pay equity in their platforms. All the political parties need to be pushed to ensure their platforms contain women's issues and that these issues are simply not swept aside. There is a huge task ahead to put women's issues on the Tory agenda. As well the problem of not enough women running for

election was discussed. There is a real need to identify women candidates long before the writs are dropped. A discussion was held regarding the fact that there are not enough youth involved. Sister Louissette Hinton, UFCW, stated that she believes young women think that what they have (maternity leave, pay equity, pro-choice, etc.) have always been there and simply do not realize that it could be lost in a flash. Youth need to become more engaged to continue to fight the issues. We have to ensure that youth know the history of the women's movement and that progress is fragile.

CLC Women's Conference, June 11 – 14, 2006

The theme of the Conference is 'Fighting the Blues'. The Committee members liked the double entendre. However, some sisters wanted to ensure the Conference does not lose sight that there are other challenges in the labour movement beside political action. It was generally agreed that a lobby on Parliament Hill at the conclusion of the Conference would be an ideal event. Sister Byers and Sister Sue Genge cautioned that scheduling such an event was problematic but they will look into it. It was also stated that as trade unionists we need to rebuild our foundations as there is no 'second tier' ready to fill in the spaces when someone retires.

IWD, March 8, 2006

It was determined that the main issue for IWD is child care. All messages (e-mails, letters, demos, etc.) will be pushing Harper to honour the provincial agreements reached prior to the election.

Standing Committee on the Status of Women

A discussion was held regarding whether or not the Conservatives will abolish or re-establish the Committee.

Child Care

Sister Jamie Kass, Labour Representative, and Sister Monica Lysek, Executive Director, CCAAC, attended the meeting to provide an update on what is happening with child care. They stated that the \$1,200 (which is similar to the 'baby bonus') will not create child care spaces and it will not provide funds to operate any public child care spaces. Effort must be made to ensure that the signed bilateral agreements are honoured. Sister Lysek provided an overview of the CCAAC's campaign entitled 'Code Blue for Child Care' and advised that March 8 is a good time to promote the campaign and mobilize workers.

PSI Migrant Women Health Care Worker Project

Sister Bean of NUPGE provided an overview of the project which was received with positive comments and interest. Chair Byers stated that this issue will be placed on the agenda for the next CLC Women's Committee meeting.

Pay Equity

Sister Genge stated that we have to go back to the basics – pay equity is not a reality in Canada. The CLC will be seeking a meeting with the new government to assess their intentions. She suggested that an education piece be developed on the pay gap.

8. PSI Migration and Women Health Workers Project

Sister Anne-Marie DeLorey addressed the Committee on the progress of the Public Services International (PSI) Migration and Women Health Workers Project. Sister DeLorey is the Canadian Coordinator for the Project representing NUPGE and other Canadian affiliates, as well as a staff person in the research and campaigns department of BCGEU.

The Migration and Women Health Workers Project was developed by the PSI in response to a growing concern about the effect of the migration of health workers in developing countries – in particular the adverse effect on their already weak health care systems. The Project is also working to address the difficulties of migrating workers, the majority of whom are women, by urging governments in both the host and sponsoring countries to support the development, adoption, implementation and monitoring of Ethical Recruitment Guidelines such as the proposed World Health Organization (WHO) Code of Practice on the international recruitment of health personnel.

Sister DeLorey stressed the human impact on these workers. Migrating workers are often misinformed about their rights by recruitment agencies in their host country (i.e. being told it is illegal to join a union). As well, they often believe they are coming to the host country to practice in their field of health care but end up working in a lower position at less pay. They suffer financial difficulties due to lower than expected earnings and a higher than expected cost of living in their host country. These workers often suffer from serious depression due to the isolation – most of them have left spouses and children behind. Upon returning to their home country they often suffer exclusion as they are seen as deserters (Africa in particular).

As part of the Project, Sister DeLorey has attended Partnership Meetings in the Philippines and Kenya. During these meetings attendees witnessed first-hand how sponsoring countries' health services suffer. Anne-Marie spoke of touring hospitals where, due to health worker poaching, some wards have two nurses to 80 patients. There were two patients in most beds. Nurses often spend a whole shift trying to get medication for a patient. Hospital administrators have difficulty providing work schedules as health workers do not notify the hospital about their plans to leave for another country.

The Project has identified that in Tanzania, in order to deliver priority interventions to the majority of the population by 2015, the size of the health workforce must triple. In Chad,

it must quadruple. In Botswana, health officials say that achieving universal coverage of antiretroviral treatment alone would require doubling the current nurse workforce, tripling the number of physicians and quintupling the number of pharmacists.

The costs of migration for sending countries include:

- Loss of investment in health worker training;
- Decreased entrants in health training programs;
- Brain drain of health workers;
- Health Care worker shortages;
- Decreased quality of care, often in the face of growing health crises;
- Loss of control over national health care planning; and
- Social costs – for example, in the Philippines there is a serious destruction of family supports.

Sister DeLorey stated that the PSI has set the following international project goals for phase 2 of the Project:

- Promote the rights of women health workers;
- Organize women migrant health workers into unions to better promote and protect their rights and to strengthen the capacity of unions to meet their needs;
- Eliminate exploitative and discriminatory recruitment and employment practices in the Health Care sector;
- Strengthen bilateral cooperation between unions in sending and receiving countries;
- Campaign for the application of Ethical Guidelines in the international recruitment of Health Care Workers;
- Advocate for increased spending for quality health services and human resources for health;
- Establish measures to compensate sending countries for the investment made in training and educating health workers; and
- Review and critique migration/poaching policies and activities.

International project activities include developing pre-departure orientation (activities, materials, kits), providing post-arrival orientation and developing union policies on migration and recruitment.

9. Pay Equity

Sister Beaton updated the Committee on the pay equity settlement in Newfoundland. The provincial government is setting up a committee to determine how they are going to

pay out the settlements. Sister Beaton stated that it appears the government will do a lump sum rather than any type of formula. Sister Haynes advised that OPSEU is incorporating pay equity into all current bargaining.

10. 'To Do' Follow-ups

Chair Bean requested that the Committee ensure their reports are sent in advance of the next meeting as the meeting will be condensed due to the start of the Women's Conference.

Chair Bean informed the Committee that included in the meeting binder is material on the following issues:

The Canadian Women's Health Network (CWHN) – Health Canada's Women's Health Strategy

Health Canada's Women's Health Strategy is a framework to guide Health Canada in fully integrated Gender-Based Analysis (GBA) in departmental programs and policies and arises from Canada's international and national commitments to gender equality.

The four objectives of the Strategy outline a commitment to:

- Ensure that Health Canada's policies and programs are responsive to sex and gender difference, and to women's health needs;
- Increase knowledge and understanding of women's health and women's health needs;
- Support the provision of effective health services to women; and
- Promote good health through preventive measures and the reduction of risk factors that most imperil the health of women.

Health Canada plans to review the Women's Health Strategy and develop a renewed plan of action on women's health. The CWHN is undertaking an informal consultation in the form of a survey to learn what Canadians think of the effectiveness of the current Strategy and the progress made in women's health since 1999. The Committee was encouraged to complete the survey on the CWHN website at www.cwhn.ca/resources/cwhn/strategy.html.

Stop Violence against Indigenous Women

Amnesty International Canada is conducting an electronic petition to bring attention to the fact that young Indigenous women in Canada between the ages of 25 and 44, with status under the Indian Act, are at least five times more likely than all other women of the same age to die as a result of violence. They produced a document in 2004 entitled 'Stolen Sisters' which documents the deaths of several Indigenous women in Canada over the past three decades. The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) has

estimated that over the past 20 years more than 500 Indigenous women may have been murdered or gone missing in circumstances suggesting violence. The Committee was encouraged to sign the Amnesty International Canada electronic petition at http://www.amnesty.ca/take_action/actions/canada_stolensisters_2005.php.

11. F Y I

Also contained in the meeting binder was information concerning:

Canada's 5th Report to the UN on Compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

'Women's Civil and Political Rights in Canada 2005' is a submission by the Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA) to the United Nations Human Rights Committee on the occasion of the UN's review of Canada's 5th report. The submission seeks to draw the Committee's attention to Canada's inaction to the serious concerns of the UN Human Rights Committee regarding the state of civil and political rights in Canada. The report focuses on the erosion of social programs that has occurred in Canada over the last decade and on women's poverty.

Organizing Young Workers

Public Services International has produced a document entitled 'Giving Young Workers a Voice in Trade Unions' which aims to raise awareness of issues facing young workers and provides ideas to help voices of young workers be heard in their trade unions. (The document includes a section on SGEU and its 2003 campaign called 'The future is young and Aboriginal – Let's get ready!')

Summary of the Federal Election

Several documents were included in the binder which emphasize the fact that women continue to be unrepresented in government. Canada is ranked a dismal 42nd in female representation in government within 187 countries listed.

Income of Black Women in Canada 2005

This report was produced by the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) and states that African Canadian women are among the poorest of the poor in Canada. It examines the level and distribution of income among African Canadian women. It also explores the impact of racism on Black women's lives in two areas having a direct influence on their income, namely education and employment.

Meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m. Moved by Sister Ivory and seconded by Sister Gingerich. Carried.