

## *In this Issue -*

*Collective Bargaining, Strategy Session, PSAC National President Here, President's Message, Don Galbraith Appreciation ... and more*

## **Kaushee's Succeeds - Memorandum Signed YTG Contract Mediation Fails**

The terms of a Collective Agreement between the Yukon government and its employees will be established by an Arbitrator.

Meetings held in Whitehorse on September 8th and 9th with Mediator Vince Ready failed to reach a negotiated settlement. Discussions concluded abruptly when Mr. Ready advised that, in light of the government's unwillingness to move at all from their previous position, further dialogue would be fruitless.

### **National President Here This Month**



Nycole Turmel, National President of the PSAC, will be in the Yukon from September 25th to 28th.

Meetings in Whitehorse and Dawson City have been scheduled. For more information and details of Sister Turmel's agenda, contact the YEU office.

The Union's negotiating team was prepared to consider several options to break the impasse, including a proposal that would allow for a 4 year term as insisted upon by the employer. None of the Union's proposals were considered because the employer announced at the outset that their position was non-negotiable.

Representatives for both parties will now prepare written position statements and rebuttals. Ready's report detailing the final terms could be completed in 4 to 6 weeks.

### **Kaushee's Place Signs Memorandum of Settlement**

A Memorandum of Settlement which amounts to a Tentative Agreement has been reached between the PSAC and the Yukon Women's Transition Home. The settlement is subject to ratification by both parties.

The new Collective Agreement would expire on March 31, 2006. Highlights include a 3 year term - April 1, 2003 to March 31, 2006; a pay increase of 2% per year on April 1st; an Aboriginal Day holiday scheduled to begin on June 21, 2004; a Vacation Leave increase after 18,000 hours of employment; and, a new Job Share article.

The negotiating team unanimously recommended that members accept the terms of the Tentative Agreement.



**The community enjoys the fruit of our Labour Day ... Local News, Page 4**

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## Labour Day Barbecue

Hungry Yukoners got a taste of Union hospitality again this Labour Day in Rotary Peace Park. The



annual event, sponsored by Local Y010, YEU, YFL

and the Social Justice Committee offered up a free lunch of burgers and hotdogs to all comers.

Thanks to the sponsors and participants. Good food and great company made September 1st, 2003, another Labour Day to remember.



## Yukon College Holds AGM, Elections

Yukon College Local Y011 held its Annual General Meeting Wednesday afternoon, August 27th.

Along with an update on negotiations and reports to the membership, elections were held for the positions of VP Faculty, VP Non-Faculty, Chief Shop Steward, Secretary, Director 2, and for Shop Stewards.

Newly elected or re-elected were:

Norm Easton - *VP Faculty*  
Pam Zgeb - *VP Non Faculty*  
Rose Fleet - *Secretary*  
Helen Voogd - *Shop Steward*  
Gord Bradshaw - *Shop Steward*  
Simon Rudge - *Shop Steward*  
Elinore Frederickson - *Shop Steward*.



Diney Williams, Brian Paul, Gord Bradshaw, Elinore Frederickson, Maureen Stephens, Pam Zgeb, Helen Winton, Norm Easton, Simone

The position of Chief Shop Steward is currently vacant. The position of Director 2 (Alaska Highway communities and Carcross) shall be elected as per our bylaws within sixty days of the AGM by calling for nominations from the district.

## Bursary Deadline

The application deadline for the 2003 YEU/PSAC Bursaries is Sept. 30th. Application forms are available from the YEU office.



## YEU you asked

"Here are some answers to questions that might affect you or your co-workers."

**Q.** I am an AOC working for YTG. I've been told that if I refuse a call to work 3 consecutive times, I could lose my job. Is this true?

**A.** Yes, though the employer must demonstrate that you were spoken to directly, or sent a registered letter. A telephone message is insufficient. The key word is "consecutive". You may refuse two work assignments, go to work on the third, and refuse the next assignment. That does not constitute 3 consecutive refusals.

**Q.** I am thinking about retiring soon. Is there anyone I should speak to about this?

**A.** Yes. If you work for YTG, you should call and make an appointment with the Public Service Commission. They have all the information to help you successfully plan your retirement. If you work for another employer, be sure to contact a financial planner for assistance.

**Q.** Is there a difference in severance pay if I resign my YTG

position or wait until I am eligible to retire?

**A.** Yes. According to Article 19 of the Collective Agreement (PSAC and YTG), if you resign after 5 years of continuous service, you will receive a *half-week* of salary for every year of continuous service. Upon retirement, you will receive *one week* of salary for every year of continuous service (if, on termination, you are eligible for an immediate annuity or allowance under the Public Service Superannuation Act).

## Information Meeting Held

Union member employees of the Yukon Territorial Government met on Wednesday evening, September 10th, at Yukon College. The agenda included a status report with the results of collective agreement mediation hearings held the day earlier.

YEU President Dave Hobbis provided an update on the Union's recent actions in response to the employer's computer use investigation. He reviewed the Union's plans and expectations as the process shifts from the interview-discipline phase to appeals and adjudication in the coming months.

Attendees then learned of the government's intransigence at the mediation table. Hobbis explained Union proposals to resolve the issues, including the modified wage proposal which would have allowed a 4 year agreement. All were rejected without discussion. A Collective Agreement will now be imposed by Mediator Vince Ready.

Speaker Jean-François Des Lauriers, PSAC's Regional Executive Vice-President, North, briefly offered his perspective on the employer's recent behaviour.

For the balance of the allotted time, our members broke off into working groups to discuss effective and safe communication with management, letters to newspapers, and other initiatives from job actions to an upcoming food drive.

## YEU from the President



For the last eight months the Yukon Party government has squandered whatever employee-management good will that remained in the wake of last year's election. They have done so by embarking on a moralistic crusade against Union members employed in public service, and by abandoning collective bargaining in the eleventh hour. In so doing, they've succeeded only in alienating their employees; the very people on whom they depend to carry out the work of governing.

The employer's decision to abandon collective bargaining, inexplicably taken on the verge of success, forced YEU's team to call for binding arbitration. Then, our last-ditch effort to reach a resolution was flatly rejected, forcing the Arbitrator to impose an agreement.

The government's treatment of its workers during the computer use investigation was equally incomprehensible. In our view, it is unlikely that either the process nor the extreme punishments will stand the scrutiny of adjudication.

As this regrettable period of confrontation moves to the

adjudication phase, it's useful to reflect on the consequences of the employer's actions.

Evidently the Yukon Party learned nothing from their last taste of power. Then too, they rejected all opportunities for constructive dialogue. The result was a resounding defeat at the polls.

This fiasco is a no-win situation. The dollar cost is appalling. Yukon taxpayers are shouldering the burden of cut-backs in services; the economy is suffering from unemployment and a reduced tax base; social programs have been weakened by inattention and reduced funding. Yet this government wastes over a million dollars on an issue that could have been addressed by policy, education, and an ounce of common sense.

The workforce demoralization that resulted from the government's inquisition burdens all Yukoners. Valuable employee time is wasted responding to exaggerated accusations and excessive punishments. Employees spend days preparing for and attending unnecessary meetings and appeal hearings. Efficiency declines through stress related work-loss.

Our members are dedicated to their work and proud of their contributions. Yukoners will be better served if the current government chooses, during the balance of its mandate, to respect and cooperate with its workforce.

Any other course of action is just an echo of the Yukon Party's past. We believe the outcome will be the same.

## Calendar:

Monthly - 2nd Thursday, 6:30 p.m.

### YEU Executive Meeting

Union Office. All members are welcome to attend.

Sept 25 - Sept 28

### PSAC National President in Yukon

Oct 29 - Nov 2

### Local Officers' Advanced Training

Yukon Inn, Whitehorse. 5 day residential course open to Local Officers and Stewards.

Nov 15 - 16, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

### Building Union Solidarity

YEU Boardroom.

Dec 5

### YEU Human Rights Day Open House

Dec 6

### White Ribbon Campaign

Dec 6 - 7

### Health & Safety Committee Member Training

YEU Boardroom.

## YEU people

### Don Galbraith

This Spring we lost one of our most active and sincere brothers, Don Galbraith. Ever the optimist, Don could be counted on to always see the positive in people and events. He was an active participant in the Local and Component Executives, the collective bargaining process, the White Ribbon Campaign, and a variety of volunteer initiatives. Don's strong social conscience and desire to affect change for the betterment of others will not soon be forgotten.

In recognition to Don's significant contribution to the Yukon Employees Union and its members, a bursary is now offered in his name in the area of Human Services.



Don gives the always nattily chapeau'd Florence Roberts a hug of support at the grill during the Labour Day barbecue in 2001.

## Workshops:

October 29 - November 2, 2003

### Local Officers' Advanced Training (LOAT)

Yukon Inn, Whitehorse. 5 day residential course open to Local Officers and Stewards. See LOAT Information PDF on the YEU website for details.

November 15 & 16, 2003

### Building Union Solidarity (BUS)

YEU Boardroom, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Covers Knowing Your Rights, Protecting Your Rights, Exercising Your Rights, and Improving Your Rights. *Note: the BUS course is a prerequisite for all PSAC in-residence courses.*

Dec 6 & 7, 2003

### Health & Safety Committee Member Training

YEU Boardroom, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Improves understanding of the Yukon Occupational Health & Safety Act and Canada Labour Code Part II, recognition and Identification of health and safety hazards, and workers' perspective on H&S issues.

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Office Hours:

Mon-Thurs 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

Fridays 8:30 am - 12:00 pm

1:00 am - 5:00 pm

Members are reminded to notify the YEU office of any change of address or name changes. Call Linda Bidrman - Membership Services, email [lbidrman@yeu.ca](mailto:lbidrman@yeu.ca) or fax the number above.