

## Communication & Education

**YEU Executive Members spent 2 days, February 17th and 18th, reviewing where we are as a Union and setting priorities and workplans for the coming year.**

The themes of Communication and Education figure strongly in the needs of our Union. Members need to be informed and educated in order to protect their rights and preserve their quality of work life in the midst of the uncertainty that comes with changes in government leadership and priorities, economic and personal stress and even global unrest.

**While plans were made in a number of areas, four were recognized as having immediate priority:**

### More Action More Information



The YEU Executive sets priorities for the coming year.

- Contract negotiations - 4 bargaining units, including our largest, YTG, are currently in negotiations;
- Further negotiations, orientation and welcome of the new members devolving from DIAND on April 1st (see Page 6);

- Implementation of the new Grievance Procedure for YTG members, once the contract is signed off;
- Patriation of the YTG Pensions from the Federal Superannuation Plan.

Come the fall, activities will commence in the additional areas of Community Involvement, a Union Orientation for all new members, Youth Development and Organization of First Nation workers.

*“YEU Executive is committed to serving YOU as members. We hope to have the opportunity to meet many of you over the next several months as work on the above initiatives proceeds.*

**Executive –**

**Yukon Employees Union**

inside **Union Store is Open**  
great gear to wear proud

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**Union Store Grand Opening May 21st from 4-6 p.m.**

# YEU member of the month

**Norm Easton has been with the Yukon College since 1986, and a YEU member since 1988.**

Norm can always be counted on to speak strongly on behalf of the membership and in particular his fellow faculty at Yukon College. When the past Liberal government cut community training funds, Norm, as staff representative to the college's Board of Governors, offered a powerful voice pushing for restoration of those funds. During

*"Norm has been an active member of the bargaining input team and will undoubtedly bring a great deal of energy to the college's negotiating team".*

**Maureen Stephens –  
President, Local Y011**

a recent round of layoffs at the college, Norm played and continues to play a significant role in bringing the issue of post-secondary funding to the attention of Yukoners through the media.

secondary funding to the attention of Yukoners through the media.

When asked why he is so strongly committed to the union Norm replied, "I have had experience working outside of a union organized

workplace, and have a prior knowledge and history of relationships between workers and management or owners. It is an

undeniable fact that the levels of exploitation and abuse of those who work have only been mitigated by organized and collective workers response."



**Norm Easton - Within Yukon College Local Y011, Norm holds the position of Vice President Faculty.**



## YEU you asked

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

**Q.** *I have some Health & Safety concerns about my workplace. How do I get them addressed before I end up getting hurt?*

**A.** WCH&SB Regulations state that any employer of over 20 employees must have an active Health & Safety Committee in the worksite. Ask your supervisor who is the employee representative on your worksite committee and bring your problem or concern to them. If there is no representative, contact your local Executive or the Union office.

**Q.** *I work in two YTG Auxiliary Seasonal positions, one in the summer and one in the winter. I rarely get sick in the summer, so can I use the sick leave I earn in the summer when I am working in my winter position?*

**A.** Yes, sick leave is earned by the individual, not by the position. It is also the case that if you accept a permanent or term position, the sick leave that you have earned as an auxiliary seasonal employee comes with you to your new position. Consult Article 25 of the YTG Collective Agreement for more details on earning and using sick leave.

**Q.** *Is leave for corrective eye surgery eligible under the authorization of section 24.05 (1) (b) of the Special Leave section of our YTG Collective Agreement? I am looking into the procedure and it requires going to Vancouver for this.*

**A.** The appointments and any necessary travel and intervening time would be covered under special leave clause 24.05 Special Leave sections (a) (b) and (h). Any additional time may be taken as sick leave under 25.02 (1) ●



**YEU** from the President

# Internet Use at YTG

## The Investigation

**An investigation by YTG into inappropriate email and internet use in the workplace by government employees began in January.**

Since that time, Union representatives have participated in a number of meetings and discussions with the Public Service Commission. Our goal throughout has been to resolve the employer's concerns in a constructive manner, while also addressing our member's expressed concerns about the aggressive and punitive nature of the investigation.

Your representatives have acknowledged the inappropriateness of viewing, sending or willingly receiving questionable materials in the workplace. However, we also noted from the outset that the employer had failed to educate employees about government policies and expectations regarding email and internet use, and to enforce established standards prior to undertaking this investigation.

Unfortunately, our attempts to find a constructive solution have not been well received. The employer, through the office of the Public Service Commissioner, has instead expressed its intention to pursue a policy of blame and discipline.

The PSC is specifically targeting material containing nudity and sexual content, including jokes, pictures, cartoons, video and audio clips. There is, however, no evidence that the employer is concerned about materials containing inappropriate references to race, creed, colour, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, family status or disability. We have expressed our dismay at this moralistic focus.

*“Unfortunately, our attempts to find a constructive solution have not been well received.”*

**Dave Hobbis –  
President, YEU**

The standard of activity that will lead to investigation includes receipt of just one email containing objectionable material, a concern in itself because email containing such material is often unsolicited.

The key points the employer says are being examined include:

- the nature of the material
- the volume of the material
- the recipients
- the senders
- the key distributors.

We are concerned that this employer has embarked on a dreaded "witch hunt". To date, approximately 200 employees have been identified as subjects for investigation and interview. This number is expected to grow.

So please remember, you are entitled to Union representation. If you are called for an interview on any matter related to your computer use, we strongly recommend that you insist on your right to have a Union representative present.

### **...ON THE YTG BUDGET**

Review of the Yukon Party Government's proposed 2003-04 budget for O&M and Capital is underway. No money has been allocated for negotiated increases. The budget as tabled imposes rollbacks in almost every department of government. This promises to be very interesting given the Minister for the Public Service Commission's statement that no layoffs are contemplated. The rumour mill has been generating its fair share of ideas including, but not limited to 9 day fortnights, 2 month seasons for auxiliaries, etc.

# YEUnion partnership

**As a Gold Sponsor of Skills Canada Yukon, YEU and YOU are helping to promote young people entering Trades in the Yukon.**

Skills Canada is an organization geared towards helping interested youth learn skills through skills clubs and mentorships.

The Fifth Annual Skills Canada Competition (Saturday, May 10th at FH Collins) is a chance for young men and women to compete nationally in a wide range of trade

## YEUnion and SKILLS CANADA



**Laurie Butterworth, YEU 1st Vice-President, passes on a cheque for \$5,000 to President Duncan Miller and Executive Director Vernon Beebe of Skills Canada Yukon.**

and technical areas. Those who are deemed to have the highest level of skill in selected areas are given the chance to travel with Team Yukon and participate in the National Skills Competition in

Kitchener Ontario. Youth come from all over Canada to challenge themselves in this fun, dynamic olympic-style event.

The YEU had a display at the competition, which was manned by Communications Officer Bob Nardi, and Admin Assistant Rebecca Anderson.

Young people are the future of our union. It's great to see what they can

do. If you would like learn more about Skills Canada, contact Laurie Butterworth, (magnuts@yknet.yk.ca), or the YEU offices. ●

## YEUnion local news

### Y016 - Whitehorse Correctional Centre

It's been a busy year for members of Y016. Planning began for the new jail, and then the project was put on hold. We continue to deal with the fallout. Ensuring the rights of our members seems to be a full time job for the entire Executive. Initially, our members were excluded from the "Steering Committee" for the new jail, but the Local Executive succeeded in rectifying the situation.

While we lost both Kyle Keenan and Bruce Bengert from the YEU Executive, Cam Kirkpatrick was elected at the Triennial

Convention. Although new to the Executive, members can be assured that Cam will fight for their rights, particularly when it comes to AOC and Pension issues.

We were also delighted to welcome our Brothers and Sisters from the Young Offenders Facility to Y016. This move is designed to better serve members who have like concerns and problems. Susan Koser sat on the Y016 Executive representing her members at YOF until the spring elections.

Given his position on the Component Executive, Cam resigned as Local President. He's been replaced by Kyle Keenan.



**Congratulations to Kyle Keenan, Local Y016's New President!!**

# YEU issues in the workplace

## Call to Community Members

Anyone interested in sitting on our Community Representation Committee to work to find better ways to serve your fellow rural members, please contact Kathy Donnelly at (867) 993-6054 or [donnelly@cityofdawson.ca](mailto:donnelly@cityofdawson.ca).

## YTG Health Benefit Plan

As our carrier is changing from Clarica to Mutual, there will be administrative changes. Diane Anderson is replacing Graham MacCannell on the Joint Union-

Management Health Benefit Committee. Matters on the table include contract renewal, possible administration changes, up-front billing, and the election of a new Chair and Co-Chair.

## Violence in the Workplace Committee

This committee will draft a corporate policy to help prevent violence in the workplace. Members with issues or ideas that they would like considered in the development of the policy should contact Sue Christianson or Diane Anderson at the Union Hall.

## YEU Education

# union development program

## YEU Members Attend PSAC Northern Union Development Program

Four YEU members joined 17 other northern PSAC members in a 16 day training program focused on developing union leaders.

During 5 days in Whitehorse, 5 days in Yellowknife and 6 days in Iqaluit, the group experienced a taste of the life of their northern neighbours, while learning how to be part of a stronger union. YEU's participants were Renee-Claude Carrier from Women's Transition Home, Eleanor Clubb and Cynthia Fraser



*"Passing tasks on to other people is a skill we must consciously teach our leaders and ourselves".* **Eleanor Clubb – Vice-President, Local Y017**

from the Human Services Local and Sue Christianson from Local Y010. The Whitehorse session included a presentation by one of our Yukon College members and local entrepreneur, Helen Voogd, on the importance of supporting fair trade. Other topics covered included globalization, literacy,

clear language, strategic planning, union activism, and giving and receiving effective feedback.

It was the first ever UDP designed and held exclusively

in the north. From all reports it was a great success. Congratulations to the graduates!

# GLOBAL ISSUES...

## Let Charities Speak

Did you know that the Canada Customs and Revenue agency has a four hundred year old law restricting the rights of charitable organizations to question public policy? Any charitable organization that spends over 10% of its revenue for the purposes of debating, questioning and lobbying to enhance their organization's structure and function may lose their charitable status. Diane Anderson, President of the Yukon Area Council stated that "we must stand united against any group that chooses to deny our civil rights and freedoms." You can find out more on this at the IMPACS (Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society) web site:

<http://www.outreach@impacs.org>

## Union Activists Unsafe in Third World

In February of 2003, Columbian labour activist Fredy Perilla Montoya was murdered by unknown individuals. On the same date, human rights /social/ union activist Alexander Lopez received a phone call warning that another attempt on his life was being planned. To learn more about this and how you can help, go to:

[www.campaignforlaborrights.org](http://www.campaignforlaborrights.org)

"Let's not turn a blind eye to the plight of fellow human rights activists who put their lives on the line every day to obtain the things that we so readily take for granted in Canada." **Jean-François DesLauriers –**

**REVP North, PSAC**

# Workplace News...

## DEVOLUTION

As of April 1, 2003, Department of Indian and Northern Affairs employees are members of the Yukon Employees Union. Late hour discussions resulted in a resolution of many outstanding concerns. While YTG would not move on the issue of red versus green circling, they did agree to a fair classification appeal process, the protection of seasonal indeterminate status and hours of work. YEU welcomes all our new members and encourages them to visit to the union hall to meet us!

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Department of Economic Development is being reconstituted under a new Deputy Minister. First steps include public consultations with various chambers (Commerce, Mines, etc.). The structure, roles and objectives will then be determined. Finally, a decision will be made on staff selection from existing departments. The new department has been identified in the 2003/04 budget without a final dollar allocation.

## TEMPORARY DUTY EXPENSES

YEU made it clear during meetings with the Public Service Commission that changes to the current policy are unacceptable. The proposed changes would circumvent rights under Management Board Directive 13/84, Travel & Accommodations.

# YEU hot issues

## Family & Children's Services

### HIGH CASELOADS JEOPARDIZE WORKERS AND CLIENTS

Workers at YTG Family & Children's Services are carrying caseloads that average 85% more than those recommended by the Child Welfare League of Canada. This unreasonably high caseload is as a result of the inadequate staffing and resources. Concerns focus on liability, professional service and worker safety, including issues of stress and burn-out.

Because services to families and children are mandated under law, the government is obligated to provide them. With the increasing complexity of cases, additional court time, and too many cases per worker, a number of these legally mandated activities are not being completed. These include referrals for mental health assessments, counselling and parenting assessments, as well as a sufficient number of regular visits to government facilities such as group homes and receiving homes. Sometimes children remain wards of the Director because time does not permit assistance for families in court to allow them greater opportunity to have children return to their care. If something goes wrong, the responsibility normally falls on the head of the social worker and/or

their supervisor. There is concern that if an individual worker is sued, the government may not provide full protection and coverage because the employee would not have fulfilled all of their duties. In the union's view, if the government fails to provide adequate resources, then the department, Minister and government bears the liability, not the worker. Even so, the social worker's professional credentials may be in jeopardy through no fault of their own.

*"It is impossible for workers to complete everything that is required by legislation and policy."*

**Dave Hobbis –  
President, YEU**

Social workers and support staff find themselves working 30 hours overtime in a month, succumbing to stress related illness, or using vacation leave for recovery instead of recreation and rejuvenation.

Worker stress is compounded by the fact that there are no auxiliaries to fill in for periods of leave, there are health and safety issues that continue to be ignored and the antiquated computer systems and software that prevents efficient handling of files.

The issues are many and profound. The union has been urging the government to understand and accept that staffing levels are inadequate and that additional O & M funds are necessary NOW, in the 2003/2004 budget.

# YEUnion store

**Y**EU would like to introduce our new union store. We have had a glass display cabinet installed in the back entrance of the Union Hall. Stop in for a look!

**Ash City Golf Shirt Sand/Black (left) or Red/Black (right)**



Union, not corporate apparel. (In line with today's relaxed dress code) This shirt is 100% cotton, and made in Canada. **\$30**

**Brightline Ladies Baby Tee Black**

This slim fitting ladies long sleeve tee modelled by Jazzmyne K. Brohman is 100% cotton, machine washable, and made in Canada. **\$15**



**King Fashions Tee-Shirt Black**



This basic black unisex T-shirt sporting the YEUnion logo is 100% cotton and made in Canada. **\$12**

**MWG Denim Shirts Ice Wash or Denim**  
Check out these popular long sleeve denim



shirts. They sport the bold new YEUnion logo and are Union made in Canada. **\$35**

**King Fashions Sweatshirts Red or Black**



New to the YEUnion are long sleeve sweatshirts. They are 100% cotton, made in Canada and have our new logo. **\$22**

**Tristar Baseball Cap Red/Black**



These caps are 100% cotton, made in Canada and very sporty. **\$10**

**Harris Baseball Cap Black**

These caps are Union made in Canada, 100% cotton and very sporty. **\$10**

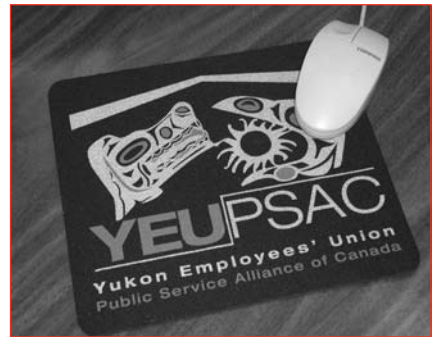


**TriStar Headwear bucket hat Off White**



Keeping with today's ever changing style this bucket hat is great for those beautiful Yukon days. **\$10**

**Mouse Pads Black with YEUnion Logo**



Mouse pad getting worn? Try one of these, only **\$3**

**Ceramic Mugs Ivory or Black**



Great for home or office, why not enjoy your morning coffee in Union style! **\$4**

**Water Bottle White with YEUnion logo**



The average human takes in over 16,000 gallons of water during their lifetime. These large 1 litre bottles are ideal for temporary storage! **\$4**

Wednesday, May 7th, 5:30p.m.

**Y010 Monthly Executive Meeting**

All Y010 Members are welcome to attend.

Thursday, May 8th

**Monthly Component Executive Meeting**

Contact the Union Hall if you want to attend.

Saturday, May 10th, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

**Skills Canada Yukon Competition**

Stop by our booth at F.H. Collins.

Wednesday, May 21st, 5:30 p.m.

**Local Y023 monthly Executive Meeting**

All Y023 Members are welcome to attend.

May 30th & 31st

**Yukon Area Council Retreat**

## YEU staff member profile

**Carolyn (Toody) Boland**



"YEU has been my "home" at work since 1988, at 208 Strickland Street, where the boardroom was a cold, dark, cement garage, and the only staff members were Dave Hobbis, the PSAC Rep, Moe Ritchie, and I. Man, have things changed! Now we have a new modern office, 7 YEUC staff, 2 PSAC staff and a four-fold increase in membership and budget."

"My main work now at YEUC is financial accounting. It is generally quiet work,

except on check issue days where I become much more popular."

When we asked Toody how she managed to last here for 15 years, she admitted that it was partly the fact that everything is constantly changing - not only the faces.

*"There's also the satisfaction of seeing members who come into the office upset, with a problem, leave feeling happy and relieved."*

**Toody Boland - Admin. Assistant**

### Workshops:

June 8 - 11, 2003

**Canadian Labour Congress - 12th National Women's Conference - Ottawa**

YEUC along with the Yukon Federation of Labour and the Regional Women's Committee will be providing financial support for Erica Turner, a member from the Yukon Women's Transition Home, to attend this conference/workshop. Upon her return, Erica is committed to delivering a short workshop to women based upon what she learned at the conference.

### Contacts:

**Staff (867) 667-2331**

**Linda Bidrman**, Admin Assistant, Membership Services; lbidrman@yeu.ca

**Kathy Hanifan**, Service Officer - contact for members and Shop Stewards; khanifan@yeu.ca

**Alex Furlong**, Service Officer - contact for members and Shop Stewards; afurlong@yeu.ca

**Carolyn(Toody) Boland**, Admin Assistant, Financial; tboland@yeu.ca

**Rebecca Anderson**, Admin Assistant, Secretarial; randerson@yeu.ca

**Bob Nardi**, Communications Officer - contact for Newsletter and Website; bnardi@yeu.ca

**Denise L. Norman**, Executive Director - Admin contact for YEUC and Local Executive Members; dnorman@yeu.ca



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201-2285 - 2nd Avenue, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, Y1A 1C9

Tel: 867-667-2331 Fax: 867-667-6521

email: mailbox@yeu.ca

Web: www.yeu.ca

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 YEUC office of any change of address or name changes. Call Linda Bidrman - Membership Services, email lbidrman@yeu.ca or fax the number above.