

## THE 1550 UNITER!

Volume 1, Issue 1

June 2011

### Special points of interest:

- Help us help you stay updated
- Your Union stands firm for its members
- Health and Safety is everyone's concern

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### Greetings from the President

I am happy to announce our Newsletter is back.

Communication is an essential component to an effective Local. Through our strategic planning we have made great strides in improving our communication with the members in order to build a strong Local.

We have had many successes with defending our rights under the Collective Agreement and we are committed to getting that type of information to you.

More members have been taking CUPE Education courses and are now becoming activists. I am proud to have more Stewards in the workplace becoming the first line of communication regarding the collective agreement.

With healthcare facing many challenges and with the upcoming round of bargaining, our focus needs to be on having a strong, informed membership. Together we have much more strength and ability to defend our workplace rights and raise our own profile regarding the importance of support workers in Health care.

In solidarity, Rose Streick, President



### Annual Shop Steward Conference 2011

On May 12-13, 2011, the shop stewards of Local 1550 met at the Local office and spent 2 days on developing their skills.

The stewards were put through three education modules from CUPE's New Steward Learning Series facilitated by Jodi Jowett, Secretary-Treasurer and Mark Kernaghan, National Rep. This included - What's Our Duty, Building Our Case and Handling Discipline and Discharge. They were also updated by Mark on some current grievances and arbitrations and how these settlements or awards affect the membership.

It was a successful two days as it engaged a lot of dialogue among the stewards. While we were learning the objectives in each module, we were able to apply it to real situations that have happened within the local and this gave us a better understanding of what we were learning.

The shop stewards list is posted on the CUPE boards throughout the workplace and on the website. If you have any collective agreement questions please feel free to contact one of the stewards on the list.

Submitted by Gary Irvine, Shop Steward

## Meet Your CUPE Local Representative

Mark Kernaghan was assigned as the National Representative to Local 1550 in the fall of 2006 and he says he's enjoyed 'almost' every moment. "Healthcare was new to me" says Kernaghan, "I understood collective agreement language, but the day to day work that our members do and the diversity of the jobs done by them was pretty overwhelming when I first started. I am still learning new aspects about the work at HSC."



He says he became involved with the union, CUPE Local 744 when he realized that he saw how an employer could sometimes treat people. He was elected as shop steward in 1989 and held various executive positions within the Local as well as within CUPE Manitoba in the ensuing years. "It was sort of a natural fit for me. It melded well with my character!", joked Mark

His passion was always grievance/arbitration and collective bargaining. "I started becoming more and more involved with those processes as my interest and skill developed! CUPE would provide me with the tools and training then set me loose on the employer! I'm pretty sure they must have spent many hours wishing they had never made the mistake of deducting Union dues from me!"

Mark first went to work for CUPE in 1998. He did work briefly as a Province of Manitoba Ministerial Assistant in 1990 but came back to CUPE after about a year. "My heart has always been with CUPE," he says.

Over the years Mark has held various assignments within CUPE representing workers in healthcare to Women's shelters and states he has enjoyed them all. In the last few years he has tried to balance his work life with other activities and subsequently took up running and learned how to play guitar. "When it comes to guitars there is a saying: One's too many and twenty is not enough!", exclaimed Mark.

Mark and his partner are about to become grandparents for the first time this fall which he is really excited about. "it's that next stage of life! I'm ready"

Submitted by Mark Kernaghan.

## Why CUPE?

Bargaining is about power and strength. CUPE Representatives are assigned to each local and are skilled negotiators, known for negotiating fair settlements for their members. With CUPE you have access to professional communication, research, health and safety, and legal support, as well as, the political strength of 600,000 members across the country.

Supporting bargaining for our 2,400 locals across the country is CUPE's national strike aversion fund which currently sits at \$43 million. CUPE also sets aside \$2.3 million annually to support locals with campaigns such as raising the profile of CUPE members and the work they do, bargaining support and support for local campaigns, whether the campaign be aimed at the members, the employer, politicians or the community.

190,000 CUPE members work in the health care sector across Canada. That represents nearly one in three CUPE members .

Submitted by Judy Lavallee



## Why Participate as a Shop Steward

When you can see results from helping a fellow brother or sister, it makes it all worth while. Knowing you made a difference, helping them overcome something that upsets them, it makes it all the worth while. It could be something as little as not getting their break, or it could be something like not getting their full pay. We regard each member's concern as they do.

We may not have all the answers at that very moment, but rest assured we will contact the individuals who do, as soon as possible.

Our rights are forever being challenged and too often the damage is done before we are made aware of it. We deserve better than that, and we will try to rectify it as quickly as possible. We are there to be advocates, a sounding board, a point of reference

and even at times a reassuring shoulder to lean on.

If you want to help your fellow worker, then we strongly urge you to consider becoming a Shop Steward.

Submitted by Gary Irvine



## What is the Local 1550 Health & Safety Committee

CUPE Local 1550 has a Health & Safety Committee that currently meets monthly from September-June. The Local 1550 Health & Safety Committee is there as a support to CUPE members that are actively involved in their departmental Health & Safety Committees at Health Sciences Centre (HSC), CancerCare Manitoba (CCMB) and Diagnostic Services of Manitoba (DSM).

Yvon Leclerc and Gary Irvine sit as the co-chairs on the Local 1550 Health & Safety Committee and are there to provide information, tools, and training through CUPE's education program. They are also there to provide our members with support regarding Health & Safety issues.

There are 76 departmental Health & Safety Committees at HSC alone that consists of representatives from CUPE and management and depending on your department, other unions. CCMB and DSM also have departmental Health & Safety Committees within their sites. There are also Joint Health & Safety Committees at HSC, CCMB and DSM. These committees consist of representatives from all the unions, management and OESH. This committee does inspections throughout the workplace, receives quarterly statistical reports relating to Health & Safety which includes injury near miss reports and how this affects the workplace. Yvon Leclerc and Randy Grandpre sit on the HSC Joint Health & Safety Committee on behalf of CUPE Local 1550.

"Our purpose is to help our members actively participate and take a lead in their department committees" said Yvon Leclerc. "We are also there to share information and update our members on what is going on in Health & Safety throughout our workplace".

**Get involved in the Health and Safety not just for yourself, but others as well. It concerns us all.**

Submitted by the Health & Safety Committee



## Day of Mourning: 'The Fight'

On April 28th, 2011 CUPE 1550 appeared up at the MS mall at HSC to recognize those who lost their lives or were injured on the job. We were also there to promote awareness about preventing future losses and injuries to all workers in Manitoba.

There were staff representing all unions and non-unions, who visited our table. They learned the symbolic significance of the "caged canary" and up to date Manitoba statistics. We also had patients and visitors who came by the table and shared their past personal memories of friends and loved ones who died on their job.

Submitted by the Health and Safety Committee



**Here to Represent You**

### Contact us

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## Editor's Note

It has been some time since our last newsletter. It is our goal to keep our members as updated as possible on the issues that matter to you. We encourage you to visit your local website as frequently as possible. We are currently in the process of reformatting the website in the hope that it will offer fluency and friendly navigation through the various headings. Your feedback is welcome.

Great strides have been made by this local. We have even set bench marks that other locals have adopted. We continue to work tirelessly on your behalf and intend to as long as you will have us. It is a well known fact that this local is the largest health care local in Manitoba and your voice echoes through the entire province, so it is vital that it never goes silent. Whether it is contract negotiating or government bureaucracy, we endeavour to make our members and their concerns heard.

As we move further into the electronic age, we encourage you to help us help you keep in touch with current and ongoing issues. This is especially important as we move closer to the end of the current contract. To this end we would like you to take the time to send us your **email address** as this is one of the more preferred methods for sending information to the membership. You can do this by visiting your local website and selecting the "Contact us" heading. We assure you your information will be held confidential. We would also greatly appreciate it if our members would update their other contact information so you are not left out when we send out information updates. And again we want to emphasize that all members' information will be held in confidence and will not be placed on any mailing list.

We thank you in advance for your participation in this member information update drive.

Remember our mission: **"Committed to Building a Stronger Union"**

Submitted by the Editor



### Local 1550 Communications Committee

Welcome Daniel Andrianov as the newly elected chair of the Communications Committee and Editor of "The 1550 Uniter!" newsletter. "I am very excited about my new position and enjoyed putting together my first issue of the newsletter", says Daniel. "I had the opportunity to attend a Social Media workshop at CUPE's Winter School in February and cannot wait to start working with my committee and implementing the different ways to communicate with the membership. I am looking for member who are also interested in social media and building on our communications with the membership. The Communications Committee meets the 4th Thursday of the month and is open to anyone interested.

Submitted by Jodi Jowett

We're on the Web!  
[www.1550.cupe.ca](http://www.1550.cupe.ca)

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