



Looks like our t-shirts are a great hit!

A reminder of battles won



Delegates found something special in their kits this convention: a "Stop Harper" sign to be used when voting. With each vote, our members are sending a clear message: we will fight back – we won't retreat.

It's a message PSAC National Executive Vice-President Chris Aylward hammered home when he addressed our convention delegates.

"The UNE and the PSAC have a proud history of pushing back and winning," declared Aylward.

The union leader harkened back to other periods in our history when the government of the day was also launching attacks – attacks that we fought and won. Aylward proudly

recalled the 1980 Clerical and Regulatory Workers' Strike, which at that point had been PSAC's largest strike.

For two weeks, PSAC members walked the picket line to get paid maternity leave. That strike was ranked as the top victory for workers in the federal public service by Mark Kearney and Randy Ray in their *Great Canadian Book of Lists*.

"The role of unionized women would never be the same and has continued to grow ever since," the authors concluded.

The win also included paternity leave in a time when mothers were traditionally the ones taking leave.

"We have that because of those brave members that were willing to take a stand when others said it was never going to happen," concluded Lorne Roslinski, who was featured in *Striking A Way Forward For Families*, a documentary about the strike produced by PSAC's Prairie Video Project.

It's a strike that should give us hope – and one that should remind us of what we can accomplish when we band together.

"The power of our members and our union is immense," declared Aylward. "If we mobilise, we can win!"

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ON THE TWITTERSPHERE

@RyakSullax: So excited for the Human Rights calendar. Maybe partially because my son is in it. #UNE2014

@kp9292: Thank god Passport employees stayed with UNE!!! #UNE2013

@jenijealousy: They have finally let me sit down! Yay :D #UNE2014

@mikecue: And the #UNE2014 is off. Look at the size of the binder!

@Eustus: Looking forward to getting down to business at #UNE2014

Tweet with us using #UNE2014!

Visiting Victoria? Ask the experts!

Whatever you would like to do in Victoria during your down-time from convention, the local host committee can help you find it. A group of union members from Victoria and surrounding communities are staffing the information table located outside Carson Hall from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. all week.

Collectively, Wayne, Angeline, Lee, Sharon and Gwen have lived in this area for more than 120 years and they are knowledgeable about both the famous tourist attractions and the hidden gems known only to Victorians. Let these volunteers know what your interests and abilities are and they will tailor their recommendations to suit.

Wayne, a self-professed foodie whose claim to fame is that he has eaten at most of the restaurants in Victoria can recommend something for everyone

whether you are looking for seafood, sushi, or steak. Maybe it is tapas, tearooms or Thai that tantalize your taste buds? No matter, the local dining delights are numerous and this expert tour guide will send you in the right direction.

The host committee also includes Angeline who loves the outdoors; she can share her knowledge about Victoria's remarkable trails and parks with you. Lee can tell you about the social events in the city including where to go take a turn on the dance floor. Sharon loves folk music and politics and can tell you about the city's live music scene. Gwen has eclectic interests so if that is how you are wired too, stop by and ask her about bookstores, tea houses and coffee bars, as well as maritime history.

Have you had the chance to visit Victoria? What are some of the local attractions that you would like to check out?

"I have not had the chance to visit yet and am not sure of what I want to see while I'm here, but I would like to get a really good fish and chips!" said Isabelle Beaudoin, Outside Canada

"We went on a whale-watching tour. It was awesome; we saw killer whales! I would like to visit Butchart Gardens," said Mélanie Coté, Québec

(Foodie Tip from Mélanie Coté on that fish and chips craving: Spinnakers at 176 Wilson Street has an excellent fish'n chips!)

"We did the bus tour of Victoria; they take you everywhere from Chinatown to the cove and tell you a bit about the history of the buildings. I took over 400 photos! It was absolutely amazing! Our group would like to do the sea-plane tour to see the city through a different perspective," said Roman Laroche, NCR

"I've had the chance to see the Vikings documentary on IMAX and then toured the Royal BC Museum. It's really worthwhile for people to do that!" said Lorna MacMillan, PEI

Different workplaces, similar issues

Employer caucuses provide an opportunity for members from across the country to discuss, clarify, or solidify positions about issues that are specific to their employers. In all of Monday's caucuses, the themes were similar: there is a gradual and insidious erosion in the number of workers who are protected by a collective agreement.

At Passport Canada, long overtime hours are used to keep up with sudden increases in demand for services, and yet members are still experiencing the effects of a year-long hiring freeze. In some regional offices, wait times to see a passport officer have lengthened by several hours. Frequently, casual workers, staffing agencies, students and untrained "Service Canada helpers" are used to fill the gaps.

Meanwhile, members at the Treasury Board caucus discussed the new performance management agreement framework. They noted that this new framework asks for quantitative measures of performance but, at the same time, the criteria are unclear,

inconsistently applied, or go contrary to the collective agreement.

At Parks Canada, there is a growing trend of hiring students to perform the same duties as union members.

"We can't see the difference in what students do versus what our members do," said Eddie Kennedy, National Executive Vice-President, "except in their pay and benefits."

For many in Statistical Survey Operations, shift allocation based on seniority is a top bargaining priority. Applied correctly, it could guard against discrimination and favouritism.

"In the field, if they don't like ya, you don't get the work," explained Mary Anne Walker.

At present, field interviewers don't have a base salary; their hours are entirely dependent on how many surveys StatsCan has to do, which can fluctuate greatly. As a result it is not surprising that many SSO members live below the poverty line.



ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

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Comments? Send an email to:
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