



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Second Annual General Meeting of COPE Ontario will be held on Saturday, May 30 and Sunday, May 31 in Ottawa, and we look forward to an even more successful meeting than our first AGM in Thunder Bay. As was the case in Thunder Bay, our second AGM will provide the opportunity for us to gather informally and catch up on the news from different parts of the province.

Education will again be a pivotal part of this annual meeting, and we will be offering two educational

workshops – Pay Equity and Organizing. The Pay Equity workshop will focus on the wide-ranging responsibilities of both unions and employers under the *Pay Equity Act*. Growing our Union has been a priority of COPE Ontario since its inception, and the Organizing workshop we will be offering in Ottawa in May is designed to further develop the skills of the membership in this critical area.

Looking forward to a great turnout in Ottawa next month!



## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

### WHO IS WHO IN COPE?

The Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union (COPE) came into being just five years ago. COPE Ontario, the provincial body responsible for providing servicing, education and organizing for Ontario's twenty-five local unions and their members is just two years old. We are finding that there is a disconnect between the average union member and how their bargaining unit fits within the local union, provincial or national body and who is responsible for what within the various levels of our structure. In order for us to be the most effective organization we can be, and to build our membership, it is necessary to close this gap. It is also of extreme importance that people understand

how their union works and have confidence in COPE and its structure in these most difficult of economic times. We want to reach out to all of COPE's members over the next several months. To this end, we have scheduled several area meetings to which all COPE Ontario members and local union officers are invited to attend and to suggest agenda items. The notice and schedule appears in this newsletter. I will be attending all of these meetings along with a representative from the National Executive Board, area staff representatives and COPE Ontario Executive Board members. We look forward to meeting you in your city.

## ECONOMIC CRISIS

It will not be news to any of you that we are in the most severe economic downturn of our collective lifetime. Tens of thousands of Canadians are losing their jobs in this world wide recession. We have not been untouched by this crisis, although we have not suffered, yet, to the extent of some other unions.

We asked some of the industrial unions to provide us with articles on how the crisis is impacting on their

union. We include, in this issue, an article from Bob Huget, Ontario Vice President of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union (CEP). This is timely, as we have lost and are losing members in this sector, at Iroquois Falls, Local 151 (Abitibi-Price) and Marathon, Local 219 (Marathon Pulp).

## NEW WEB SITE

If you haven't visited us at [www.copeontario.ca](http://www.copeontario.ca) for a while, make sure you do. We launched our new web site in February. We are proud of it and would like to

hear what you think. By the time you read this, the French side should be fully operational.

## EDUCATION

COPE Ontario educational workshops are open to any member. There is no registration fee. You do not need to be a union steward, officer or committee member to attend. They are open to all interested members. Visit our web site for listings.

We are currently working on the curriculum for two four to five days courses to develop leaders within COPE. It is our hope that graduates of these courses would take on leadership roles in locals and at COPE Ontario. We hope to have the first level run in the fall of 2009 or early 2010. Further details will be provided, as the plan for these courses is developed.

## ORGANIZING

We have had some modest successes in organizing over the past year. We have two full time organizers and we are ready to expand our membership. Do not forget there are financial incentives for members who bring

contacts to COPE which result in COPE attaining certification of the bargaining unit. See the Fall 2008 newsletter for details on this incentive program.

---

## LEGAL BRIEFS

### ***"It's My(Space) so stay out of my Face(book)!" – A Cautionary Tale.***

Even beyond the section 8 right against unreasonable search and seizure contained in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms most people intuitively believe they have a right to privacy. Some people believe that this right follows them around and encases them in a protective bubble anytime and anyplace they engage in what they perceive to be a private, often equated to personal, activity.

The existence of such a general right to privacy is, however, unclear and nowhere more unclear than in the workplace. In cases involving an employee's e-mail "account" on a workplace e-mail system it has been found that there is no expectation of privacy such that an employer is within their rights to access those accounts and impose appropriate discipline for misuse. Obvious misuse being the sending and receipt and storage of unacceptable material. Material of a racist or sexist nature is by definition unacceptable and would

obviously merit discipline. An employer will be found to have acted reasonably in accessing employee workplace e-mail accounts in particular when investigating a complaint and likely in the course of an established employer practice in an effort to provide a discrimination and harassment free workplace.

Beyond the question of discipline for inappropriate material employees should generally be aware that absent a collective agreement provision an employer has unfettered access to the equipment and systems they provide to employees. Personal use of an employers' equipment and systems could lead to disciplinary issues not just where the employer has expressly prohibited their use for other than business purposes but when an employer has found that the personal use during working hours has become so excessive it amounts to theft of time. Monitoring of computers and systems has become so sophisticated

that employers who are so inclined can not only access e-mail but can monitor internet use as to time spent on line and actual sites visited. This brings us to the ubiquitous MySpace, Facebook and YouTube. Employees should be wary of and guard their use of these sites, and not only from the perspective of workplace time.

As the unfortunate candidate in the British Columbia election found, as have others before him, the internet is forever. If you are employed in a capacity or for an employer for which public perception is an important criteria of that employment then be sure you do not expose yourself, literally or figuratively. Notwithstanding the security assurances made by website providers such as MySpace and Facebook anything you post could just as conceivably wind up on YouTube. This caution applies not only to imagery but also the written word.

And even if your employment is not particularly sensitive to public perception you should be aware that if you engage in egregious criticism of your employer which becomes widely disseminated it could amount to a breach of the employment relationship ending in termination. So if you have an axe to grind, grind it in the privacy of your home and realize that just because you may be accessing these sites from your home they are not in your home and exist outside of it.

As an adherent to the Sachel Paige philosophy of "just because you're paranoid it doesn't mean they're not out to get you!" I would propose that just as in real life we all in our virtual lives should keep it clean and be respectful. This is not legal advice but it is common sense.

Submitted By  
Sean Clancy, COPE Ontario Counsel

---

# LOCAL UNION PROFILE

## Local 96

Local 96 is a composite local comprised of a number of bargaining units, with 10 collective agreements to administer. This can only be done with a very dedicated core group of members, who serve on our executive and the unit committees within the work sites. We currently represent approximately 450 members.

Local 96 has always been committed to the education of our members and we will continue to lobby for courses to be held in Thunder Bay so that our members in the area will benefit and more of our members will be able to participate. As well as all of the workplace committees, we participate in Thunder Bay & District Labour Council, have members on Credit Union Delegate Committees, and have individual members who have membership in the TBRHSC. We have had members elected to LU's Board of Governors.

At Thunder Bay Regional Hospital we represent approximately 300 members who consist mainly of office staff. Presently we are in the process of Pay Equity and starting our negotiation meetings as our contract term ends March 31st, 2009. We have representation at Labour Management meetings, Occupational Health and Safety, and the current implementation of our COPE website at the hospital.

Having this web site will enable us to communicate with our members on current issues and lists of representations well as having links to other COPE websites. We have just become re-involved with the Ontario Health Coalition after sending 2 members to a conference in Toronto.

Lakehead University Unit has about 120 COPE members that work in Academic Departments, Printing and Mail Services, the Library, the Bookstore, Residence and any department that requires support staff. COPE members hold positions on the Internal Relations Committee, Pension Advisory Committee, Job Evaluations Committee and the Health and Safety Committee. This unit is also involved on a provincial level with the Confederation of University Staff Associations. This unit will be starting on proposals for the collective agreement this spring.

Local 96 also services approximately 8 smaller units in different sectors from banking to trades. Our units are Northern Credit Union in Thunder Bay, Construction & Allied Workers, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Thunder Bay & District Labour Council, Carpenters and Joiners Union, International Association of Bridge Structural & Ornamental Local 759

Ironworkers, United Steel Workers 1-2693, and CUPE Local 87 City of Thunder Bay. Proposals are being drawn up for Northern CU and we will be bargaining in March. We have just completed successful negotiations with Construction & allied Workers Union.

As you can see, Local 96 is involved in many aspects of our community as well as the work sites where we work.

Submitted By  
Cheryl Balacko, President Local 96

## Spring Educational Workshops for 2009

The following spring educational workshops are being offered to all COPE members to June 2009.

Workshops may be scheduled in the evening upon request, in order to accommodate members who may be unable to attend during the week or on weekends. Individual workshops may also be scheduled for bargaining units upon request and at a location convenient for the members of the bargaining unit.

**Please note:** Ten (10) Registrants are required for all workshops. All registrations must be received five (5) days prior to the scheduled workshop.

**COPE Ontario is a Fragrance-Free workplace.**

| Workshop  | Date/Time  | Location   |
|---|--|--|
| Contract Interpretation   | May 20, 2009<br>9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.<br><b>Wednesday</b>                                      | COPE Office, Toronto<br>555 Richmond St. W, <b>Suite 701</b> |
| Basic Steward's Training – Part II<br>*Pre-requisite - Grievance & Arbitration - Part I (Basic Steward's Training – Part I) | June 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2009<br>9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.<br><b>Tuesday</b>                         | COPE Office, Toronto<br>555 Richmond St. W, <b>Suite 701</b> |
| Union Leadership  | June 4, 2009<br>9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.<br><b>Thursday</b>                                       | COPE Office, Toronto<br>555 Richmond St. W, <b>Suite 701</b> |
| Dealing with Workplace Conflict   | June 13 & 14, 2009<br>9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. – <b>Sat.</b><br>9:00 a.m. – 12 Noon – <b>Sun.</b> | Holiday Inn Express<br>1325 Seymour Street,<br>North Bay, ON |

For more information regarding the scheduling of workshops, please contact Maureen O'Halloran, Staff Representative or Endera Singh at 416-703-8515, ext. 223; fax: 416-703-8520; email: [esingh@copeontario.ca](mailto:esingh@copeontario.ca).

Please visit our web site at [www.copeontario.ca](http://www.copeontario.ca) for more information.

## CEP MEMBERS BEAR THE BRUNT OF THE FOREST INDUSTRY CRISIS

The forest industry has been in crisis for at least five years. Many factors, including the softwood lumber dispute and most recently the spiraling economy, have thrown major industry players into financial turmoil and even bankruptcy. The result is thousands of laid off workers from coast to coast, and hundreds of devastated forest communities.

CEP has explored every angle to save forestry jobs and mills. Our members have done more than their fair share to help companies survive. Since 2004, pulp and paper and sawmill workers at almost every worksite have been in constant negotiations and restructuring to assist struggling mills. They have negotiated efficiency and productivity measures worth hundreds of millions of dollars in savings for the companies.

Our union has also been unrelenting in pressuring the federal government to step in to provide loan guarantees for viable mills in financial difficulty so that they can continue to operate through these difficult economic times, sustaining families and communities. We want assurances that the pensions of workers and retirees will be protected. We have never asked for bailouts.

Yet despite our best efforts on these fronts, governments have given us the back of the hand, and many employers continue to demand concessions.

Adding to the frustration is that newspapers and public airwaves are filled with stories of government plans to aid the auto sector, yet forestry employs twice the number of workers in Canada as the auto sector.

It all makes quite a farce out of the Conservative election promise of "standing up for Canada." A promise that will undoubtedly come back to bite them at election time.

But for now, CEP members are beyond fed up. Anxiety levels are high. Frustration levels are high. And anger is mounting.

Plans to step up the CEP fight-back campaign are well underway. A special "mobilization" meeting of the Eastern and Western Pulp and Paper Bargaining Caucuses is scheduled in Montreal, May 14-16.

Watch your local media for ads, rallies, and other special actions. We will be calling on every CEP member to join in the fight-back. Stay tuned to [www.cep.ca](http://www.cep.ca) for updates!

Submitted by  
Bob Huget, CEP Ontario Regional Vice-President

---

## COPE OUTREACH

### COMMUNITY MEETINGS

These are unprecedented times for COPE Ontario, our locals and our members. As a new organization, we are committed to providing the best possible service and education to all of our member locals and their members. Given the numerous bargaining units, numbers of small locals and the geographic locations of some of our bargaining units, spread throughout the province or the nation, meeting members is often difficult.

COPE Ontario wants to reach out and have its officers and staff meet as many of our members as possible in a less pressurized environment than bargaining or other labour relations contexts. So that we can meet and hear from as many rank and file members and local union officers as possible, the following meetings have been scheduled:

| CITY        | DATE  | LOCATION   |
|-------------|---|--|
| Ottawa      | Wednesday, May 27, 2009 at 6:00 p.m.          | Delta Ottawa Hotel and Suites<br>361 Queen Street<br>Ottawa, ON 613-238-6000 |
| Thunder Bay | June 3 and June 4, 2009 – time to be arranged | To be arranged   |

|                  |   |   |
|------------------|---|---|
| London           | June 24 at 5:30 p.m.<br>June 25 – time to be arranged | To be arranged  |
| Sault Ste. Marie | July 8, 2009  | To be arranged  |
| Toronto          | September 16, 2009                                    | COPE Ontario Office<br>555 Richmond St. W. Suite 701<br>Toronto, ON |
| Hamilton         | To be arranged  | To be arranged  |
| Timmins          | November 4, 2009                                      | To be arranged  |
| Kapuskasing      | November 5, 2009                                      | To be arranged  |
| North Bay        | To be arranged  | To be arranged  |

These meetings are open to all COPE members. We are soliciting agenda items from you. These are your meetings and we want to talk about what you want to talk about. We plan to have light refreshments at these meetings, so registration is important so we can have enough seating, refreshment, and printed materials for all participants. Check back at our web site for updates to this schedule.

**Please fax, mail or e-mail agenda items and registration to COPE Ontario at:**

Facsimile: 416-703-8520  
 Mail: 555 Richmond St. W., P.O. Box 1202,  
 Toronto, ON M5V 3B1  
 E-mail: [info@copeontario.ca](mailto:info@copeontario.ca)

## COPE ONTARIO EXECUTIVE BOARD

Carol Baker  
 Elaine Sinha  
 Gail Overall  
 Janice Best

President  
 Treasurer  
 Secretary  
 Director

### Vice-Presidents

Angela Stewart  
 Dan Rogers  
 John Tonelli  
 Lynda Penny  
 Mary Stalteri  
 Angela Coleman

Cheryl Norton  
 Lori Allen  
 Kelly Casswell  
 Maria Kullman  
 Moira McMillan  
 Robin Kers

## CANADIAN OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES' UNION ONTARIO

### HEAD OFFICE - TORONTO

555 Richmond Street West  
 P.O. Box 1202, Suite 701  
 Toronto, Ontario M5V 3B1  
 CANADA  
[www.copeontario.com](http://www.copeontario.com)

Toll Free: 1-800-696-7348  
Telephone: 416-703-8515  
Fax: 416-703-8520

### BURLINGTON OFFICE

Telephone: 905-336-8029  
Fax: 905-319-2385

### ESPANOLA OFFICE

131 Savicky Drive  
Espanola, Ontario P5E 1N3  
Telephone: (705) 869-9945  
Fax: (705) 869-6238

### THUNDER BAY NORTHWEST OFFICE

929 Fort William Road  
Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 3A6  
Telephone: 807-345-9344  
Toll Free 1-866-439-7337  
Fax: 807-345-5385