

Our World Our Way

May 25, 2007

Volume 1, Issue 1

Toronto members: Don't miss this important meeting

Saturday, June 9

11 a.m.,

Rosedale Heights Secondary School, 711 Bloor Street East (across from Castle Frank subway station)

Agenda includes bargaining update and other important issues. Please try to attend and make your voice heard!

Editorial Team Wanted

Can you picture yourself here?

Working on the newsletter is a great way to get involved with your union local.

Training and support provided by CUPE.

At the table for a first collective agreement

Your bargaining committee has been busy at the negotiating table, working to win a fair first contract for all child care providers at Kids & Company in Toronto and Ottawa.

This is the first in a series of newsletters that we hope will help you keep up to date with what's happening in negotiations and CUPE's ongoing efforts to organize other Kids & Company locations in Ontario.

It's one of many methods we'll be using to stay in touch — an ongoing challenge when we're spread out across so many workplaces. Your involvement in the union is



CUPE 4823 bargaining committee, left to right: CUPE National Representatives Laura Moore and Jim Morrison, Vice-President Elishia Prendergast, President Sharon Cummins, Recording Secretary Elana Eisenbaum, Ottawa bargaining unit representative Catherine Kruger

important. Please make an effort to attend meetings and stay informed. After all, it's your union! You pay dues. And, you'll be working under the terms of the contract we negotiate with the employer.

That includes wages, hours of work, grievance procedures, health and safety and all the other issues that concern us at work. We're looking forward to your participation and your feedback.

Bargaining is "huge learning experience"

Belonging to a union is a new experience for most of us — and your bargaining committee is no exception. Here's a chance to get to know the people who are representing you at the bargaining table and hear a bit about how they see the experience.

Who: Sharon Cummins

Position: President

Works at: Consilium

"I take this process very seriously. It's a place where we can stand up and be accountable. I think my biggest surprise was my own capability



when I came into it knowing

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Our World Our Way

Learning at the table Continued from previous page

next to nothing. We have to keep our sense of solidarity. We have to be as one.”



Who: Catherine Kruger

Position: Ottawa Bargaining Unit Representative

Works at: Ottawa site

“I’ve been learning how the back-and-forth goes. It feels like you’re trying to make both sides happy by making a better workplace for everyone.”

Who: Elishia Prendergast

Position: Vice-President

Works at: Wellington

“This has been a huge learning experience. I was surprised to learn how big CUPE is and how much support we have. I didn’t really know much about unions. Then I went to the social service workers conference in Ottawa last March. Everyone was so friendly and welcoming.”



Who: Elana Eisenbaum

Position: Recording Secretary

Works at: Wellington

“I’ve normally worked with kids all my life. It’s interesting to see the interaction in the “corporate” adult world. It’s been very educational and I feel like I’m learning a lot of lifelong lessons. We need to keep the family going, trust each other, believe in each other and the rest will follow.”



Did you know:

- *CUPE has 560,000 members across Canada?*
- *Those members belong to 2,200 locals?*
- *In Ontario, CUPE represents more than 5,000 child care workers?*

Bargaining Glossary

When a group of workers choose CUPE to represent them, they form their own **CUPE local** or join an existing one.

A local can have several bargaining units. A **bargaining unit** is made up of a group of workers covered by one collective agreement. Right now, CUPE 4823 has a Toronto bargaining unit and an Ottawa bargaining unit. We hope to soon be joined by units in each Ontario Kids & Company location — Ajax, Waterloo, Oakville and Newmarket.

Collective bargaining is a method of determining conditions of employment. It involves direct negotiations between the union and the em-

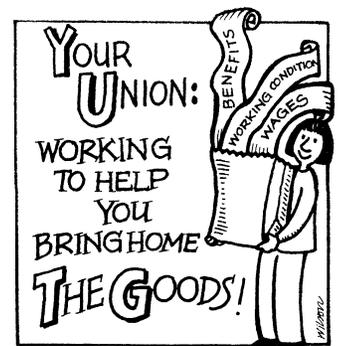
ployer (also known as the parties). In our case, although Ottawa and Toronto have separate agreements, we are bargaining together at the same table with the employer.

Sometimes when negotiations drag on or there is an impasse, one or both of the parties can ask for **conciliation**. An outside person from the Ministry of Labour attempts to help the parties reach a compromise and resolve their dispute.

If a voluntary agreement cannot be reached, the conciliator issues a “no board” report. Under Ontario’s labour law, there can be a legal **strike** or **lockout** 17 days later. Those 17 days are viewed as a “cooling-off” period when the

parties can enter into **mediation** and make another effort to reach an agreement.

The vast majority of collective agreements in Ontario are reached without a strike (action by the workers) or a lockout (action by the employer). But that doesn’t mean negotiations are always friendly. We must stand our ground for what we believe is right.



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