

# Newsbreak

Volume 21, Issue 5  
May 2011

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## Professional Development Days

*by Orville Getz, OPSEU Local 562 President*

You are entitled to 10 days of professional development leave each year. If you do not use these days each year they will disappear as they do not accumulate. This is a time for your own professional development to develop your professional and/or teaching expertise. Your professional development time can be used in several different ways and at various times during the school year.

It is important to use these days at your own convenience during May/ June, during Reading Week or at any other times which may work for you. Some faculty in the past have attended important conferences during teaching times by planning ahead with their deans and thus being able to get class coverage while they were

away. This can be done with prior discussion and planning.

These 10 days could be used to participate in events offered by your school, events offered in other schools in the college or events which are offered college-wide such as Showcase. You may also want to participate in events or training sessions at other colleges or universities or in industry-related activities in your area of expertise. You could also work on your own, doing research to help with your own development in your teaching area.

These days were negotiated and are assured by the collective agreement. Don't give up your rights to these 10 days. 🗳️

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## General Membership Meeting

Guest Speaker:

John Cartwright, President, Toronto & York Region Labour Council

**Monday, June 6**

Humber Room

Sit-Down Lunch

See page 10 for the full agenda

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# Support staff bargaining

Adapted from 2011 Bargaining Bulletin, May 10, 2011

[opseu.org/caat/caat\\_sup/bargaining2011/bulletins/bargaining-bulletins-issue-1.htm](http://opseu.org/caat/caat_sup/bargaining2011/bulletins/bargaining-bulletins-issue-1.htm)

The support staff contract ends August 31, 2011. The new bargaining team was elected in fall 2010 and the final demands were brought forward in February 2011. With the new rules the first date that proposals can be exchanged with management is June 3, 2011. Proposals will be exchanged on June 7, 2011.

To ensure that the teams can get a deal by Sept. 1, the union bargaining team has set aside the same number of days for bargaining this round as they have in the past, which is

approximately 20 days over the period of June until August 31. In the period of three months they will be doing what has previously taken eight months to complete.

This is the first round of support staff bargaining to take place under the new Colleges Collective Bargaining Act. This round of bargaining is interesting because the contract expires on the eve of provincial election campaign. The provincial election is October 6, 2011.

Stay informed by visiting the OPSEU website.



**NewsBreak** is a publication of the Humber College Faculty Union, OPSEU Local 562, intended to provide information and stimulate discussion. We invite your participation and welcome your contributions. All articles and letters should be signed, though in some circumstances the author's name will be withheld upon request. We encourage thoughtful discussion that respects human rights. We reserve the right to edit for libel, length, and clarity.

Articles reporting on union business will be signed and will include the author's position of responsibility in the local. Where an article has the author's name only, the views are those of the author. You may e-mail the editor: [sylvia.ciuciura@humber.ca](mailto:sylvia.ciuciura@humber.ca) or drop materials at the Faculty Union office – H109, North Campus, ext. 4007.

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# President's notes

*by Orville Getz, OPSEU Local 562 President*

## **Summer Union Office Coverage**

The union office will not be staffed during the faculty vacation period from June 27 to August 26, but Local 562 officers will be checking voice mail and email regularly. If you have any questions or concerns, please call ext. 4007 and leave a message or email us at [opseu562@yahoo.ca](mailto:opseu562@yahoo.ca). We will respond as soon as we can. Don't wait until your return on August 29 to contact us as this may be too late to deal with your concern effectively. I wish everyone a very safe and happy summer.

## **SWF –Your Contract with the College**

This is your contract and you need to vigilantly monitor your workload. Under a new section in the Collective Agreement 11.1 F2, if your student numbers total to more than 260, you must be given additional time for student assistance. You should receive an additional .015 hours, for every student in excess of 260. This number should be noted on the second page of your SWF and the complementary hours line on the front page. Check to make sure this is happening.

The new SWF form also has a new column on the front page for additional evaluation time which can be used by the College to record extra time needed to deal with exceptional class circumstances. Coordinators should be especially vigilant concerning the number of

hours they are credited for coordinator duties. Many programs have opened new sections or added more students to existing sections and yet most coordinators have never been given more time. In fact, most have had their coordinating hours slowly eroded over the years.

## **General Membership Meeting**

There will be a General Membership Meeting on Monday, June 6 in the Humber Room beginning at 11:30 a.m. Our guest speaker has been confirmed and he is John Cartwright, President, Toronto and York Region Labour Council. If you did not receive the invitation and agenda via email, please contact our office.

## **Sabbatical Announcement**

For the upcoming academic year 2011–2012, a total of 11 fulltime faculty have been confirmed for sabbaticals. Just a reminder that the sabbatical application process begins each fall in early November. The Local officers are always available to discuss your sabbatical plans and answer questions concerning the application process. 🙏

# Environmental Hero: Paul Formby Story

by John Steckley, Professor, School of Liberal Arts & Science

Usually there is an overwhelming sense of ‘there is nothing I can do.’ when we think about doing something for the environment or for those most affected by human destruction of the environment, Big corporate interests are served well by that sense. Here is an example to the contrary.

Paul Formby graduated in philosophy from the University of British Columbia. Feeling the Canadian call of the north, he went north to Clinton Creek, Yukon, where he started work in the asbestos mine there. He ended up taking charge of the miner’s union’s safety and health committee, an often thankless task that few want to be part of. He soon encountered significant resistance from the mining company:

As far as the company was concerned, ...asbestos dust levels were a taboo subject. From the company’s point of view, the most important safety measure was safety glasses. As long as we all wore safety glasses, everything was supposed to be O.K. It was almost as if it was more important to keep the stuff out of our eyes than out of our lungs. By arguing in this way, the company was trying to shift the responsibility for health and safety off of its shoulders and onto ours. The company refused to admit that the work environment it created could possibly be hazardous to its workers.” (Tataryn 1979:20)

At issue was the union’s right to test the air for asbestos contamination, as well as the questionable claim that the white asbestos or chrysotile that they were mining was far safer than the dangerous blue asbestos found in the mines of South

Africa, an issue that was a red herring (a logical fallacy in which a fundamentally irrelevant topic is presented in an argument in order to divert attention from the original and more important issue). The relative safety of blue asbestos was not at issue, the danger of white asbestos physicians may have actually believed in the safety of white asbestos, but their lives were not in the peril like those of the miners were:

“During contract negotiations, the company absolutely refused to discuss the union’s right to test the air,” he says. “The management stated emphatically that asbestos dust levels were not an issue in Clinton Creek. Furthermore, they assured me that the white asbestos found in Canada was so safe I could pour it on my breakfast cereal every morning and suffer no ill effects. The bad stuff,” they said, “was the blue asbestos that is mined only in South Africa.” (Tataryn 1979:21)

Young and enthusiastic, Formby wrote a letter to Dr. Irving Selikoff. Dr. Selikoff was the head of the famous Mount Sinai Medical School’s Environmental Sciences Laboratory in New York, one of the world’s leading authorities on asbestos diseases such as asbestosis (the scarring of the lung by the body’s reaction to the hard fibres of asbestos entering the lungs) and lung cancer. Early in 1974, Selikoff replied positively, especially taking issue with the ‘safety’ of the white asbestos. Both forms kill.

*Continued on page 6*

# Chief Steward's report

by Audrey Taves, OPSEU Local 562 Chief Steward



## Overtime Work

### Can full-time faculty work overtime hours?

Our Collective Agreement places restrictions on overtime work for all full-time faculty. Full-time faculty can work limited overtime hours under certain conditions and only with voluntary agreement. For full-time faculty the overtime is restricted to one extra teaching hour, or three extra workload hours/week. The collective agreement also identifies the correct rate of overtime pay.

### What about probationary faculty?

For probationary faculty however, the Collective Agreement allows NO overtime work under any circumstances. New probationary faculty have much to deal with in their first two years at the college— all new courses, increasingly onerous pro-dev requirements, teaching for the first time, learning to navigate the college system etc. The restriction on overtime was put in place to protect them during this vulnerable period.

### How does the union monitor for overtime?

All SWFs are reviewed by the union each semester. We note if any faculty are in an overtime situation, ensure that they have signed the voluntary agreement form and that they have been issued the overtime pay. For probationary faculty we flag the SWFs who are close to the 44 hour workload maximum. Having a SWF so close to 44 hours is potentially problematic as the SWFs are made up using estimates of student numbers and any increase in actual student numbers could push the probationary faculty into overtime. As many of us know, probationary faculty often feel vulnerable and may not ask for a student number reassessment

(or aren't aware they can) if their class numbers are higher than the SWF estimate.

This past Winter SWF period, we noted many probationary faculty were over 43.5 hours on their SWFs, in fact one probationary faculty member had a SWF of 44 hours with what looked like artificially low class sizes. We raised our concerns at a CWMG meeting back in January right after the winter semester had started. The SWFs for the probationary faculty were not checked by HR until April, by which time at least one probationary faculty member had been forced into an overtime position for the entire semester. It is essential that the union be given the information we need to prevent this type of situation from recurring (see grievance on next page).

### What can faculty do to address overtime issues?

1. Recognize that overtime is voluntary – if you are requested to work overtime – you have the right to refuse.
2. If you are close to the weekly maximum of 44 hours, watch your student numbers. If you have more students in your classes than are predicted on your SWF, be sure to ask your Associate Dean for a reassessment of class sizes after the college audit date (Nov 1<sup>st</sup> or Mar 1<sup>st</sup>), then follow up to ensure you get an answer. If your student numbers are up, a new SWF will be issued and if you are over 44 hours, you will receive overtime for the entire semester.

*Continued on page 6*

# Chief Steward's report

*Continued from page 5*

## Grievances:

### 1. Probationary Overtime

This union grievance followed a situation in which the college allowed a probationary faculty member to enter into and remain in an overtime situation in violation of the Collective Agreement both for probationary and regular full-time faculty (i.e. beyond the limits even for full-time faculty). This grievance has gone to Step 2.

### 2. Interference due to Referral to CWMG/ Union Activity – Health Sciences

This personal grievance relates to repercussions on workload as a result of the faculty member previously referring a concern regarding evaluation factor to the CWMG. This grievance is currently at Step 2. 🏠

# Environmental hero

*Continued from page 4*

This led Formby to his next move. He asked for and received a leave of absence from work (the company was probably glad to be at least temporarily shed of a trouble-maker). He travelled across the continent to New York, and walked into the Mount Sinai hospital asking to be trained in the taking of air samples to test for asbestos fibres. Rather than treating him like some kind of fanatic, they trained him.

He then went to Montreal to contact the union that represented the workers in Canada's largest mine, in what is now the Quebec town of Thetford Mines, to talk to the union's health and safety representative about testing for air particles. They received him well and agreed to work with him to test the air in their workplace.

Then it was back to Clinton Creek, where he secretly tested the air, and then quit. From there, he went south to test the air in the mine in Cassiar, British Columbia. Living out of a suitcase, and occasionally sleeping in his old car, Formby went back to Thetford, where he trained the miners to collect air samples. They

had to do this in secret, as they could get suspended or fired for such an action (you can't have people knowing how unsafe their workplace is).

The samples from the three mines were sent to Mount Sinai Hospital for testing. The union got a team of doctors and technical experts - Canadian and American - to come up to Thetford to examine the miners for signs of asbestosis and cancer. Although the miners had previously received Class A health ratings from the doctors who worked for the mining companies, the independent experts found many sick, some dying.

This series of actions significantly raised the profile of the dangers of asbestos, both for miners and for other workers exposed to the deadly material. Documentaries, in print and in film were produced, and action was taken at least in Canada that made people 'safer' from asbestos. Much of this is thanks to Paul Formby. 🏠

# Mayworks Festival: from the margins to centre stage

by Maureen Wall, OPSEU Local 562 Retiree

I've been a devoted fan of Mayworks since attending a remarkable dance performance during the 1998 festival. The piece, called *The Rite of Steam*, was a collaboration between professional dancers and Local 128 of the Boilermakers union. The choreography and percussion were based on the movements and sounds of the trade, and actual boilermakers scaffolding mounted on the stage. I was hooked! (Full disclosure – after that first eye and mind-opening event, I became a festival volunteer and then board member.)

## Mayworks 2011 Festival : diverse and dynamic

Running from May 7 – 15, this year's festival once again featured dynamic cultural work by established and emerging artists. A sample of the diverse events:

- *Workers On Site* — artist talk and tour of site-specific art at the Evergreen Brick Works
- *Land of Destiny* — a film about an petrochemical workers
- *Mapping Our Work* — A labour history walking tour of Spadina
- Community launch of the Workers' Action Centre *Stop Wage Theft!* Campaign
- *Young Voices: Work It!* — works in progress by emerging Indigenous playwrights
- *Working Songs* — Juno-nominated musician Maria Dunn in concert with John Wort Hannam

## A proud 26-year history

Every May for 26 years, the Mayworks Festival of Working People and the Arts has celebrated artists as workers and workers as artists in a week-long multi-disciplinary festival. Founded in 1986 by the Labour Arts Media Committee of the Toronto and York Region Labour Council, Mayworks is Canada's largest and oldest labour arts festival. The Toronto festival has inspired similar celebrations in communities across Canada.

Mayworks Festival was built on the premise that workers and artists share a common struggle for decent wages, healthy working conditions and a living culture. Mayworks' goal is to promote the interests of cultural workers and trade unionists, and to bring working-class culture from the margins of cultural activity onto centre stage.

## Mayworks year-round

Mayworks is more than a festival. Through Mayworks' Consulting Services, unions and progressive organizations hire Mayworks to do conventions and other events. Mayworks has worked with CUPE, PSAC, CLC, CAW, and other groups to program artists that are aligned with principles of workplace justice, social unionism and equity.

More information at [www.mayworks.ca](http://www.mayworks.ca) and on Mayworks' Facebook page. 📱

# Student feedback questionnaires

by Audrey Taves, OPSEU Local 562 Chief Steward

I can remember, wayyyyyyy back – as an undergraduate, filling out questionnaires on my teachers and hoping that my comments would make a difference for future students. So, do I think that student feedback is important to my teaching? Definitely! However, the SFQs that are used at Humber may not be the best tool for getting this feedback, or, perhaps, the procedures around the SFQs need to change.

As the chief steward for our local, I frequently hear concerns about the SFQs. Some of these concerns include:

- Partial-load faculty tell us that they have to keep the SFQ scores high – even if it means passing all students – or they won't be hired for the next semester.
- Probationary faculty are chastised for one set of poor SFQs and forced to spend hours developing learning plans to improve. There seems to be a threat that SFQs are the key factor for “passing their probation”. Maybe they just need to be given more time to plan and teach all of those new courses?
- Full time faculty worry that a negative comment from an anonymous student will be taken out of context.
- Many faculty comment about the unsupervised aspect of the SFQs – that the professor must leave the room – and the impact of that on completeness and on accuracy.
- It takes too long to get the results – too late to implement changes for that group of students.
- We have reports of some Associate Deans receiving copies of the collated comments for each faculty member, yet the faculty union has been assured by Eileen DeCourcy, Director, Professional Development that only the faculty member sees the hard copies of the SFQs and therefore the written comments. What is really happening?
- After 28 years of teaching at Humber, I just received my first ever “student feedback analysis” comparing my results and the average results in my program and in the college on each question in the SFQ – what took so long?
- Faculty who are held to a high standard when completing their own research are asking about the validity and reliability of the SFQs.
- And – a bit of tongue-in-cheek – as students sometimes comment on the professor's clothes or hair style – are there pro-dev funds for wardrobe and stylists?

Is it time to revisit the SFQs or the procedures surrounding them?

See page 10 to give your comments, opinions and questions about SFQ's. 🗣️

**Everyone needs support.** 

# National Day of Mourning, April 28

by Orville Getz, OPSEU Local 562 President

This remembrance day commemorates workers whose lives have been lost and also remembers workers who have been injured on the job. In 2010, there were 491 work-related deaths in Ontario and 242,371 workers reported occupational injuries and disease. The remembrance ceremony at the Woodbridge monument on April 28 remembered those workers. The annual observance of this day strengthens the resolve of everyone to establish safe conditions in the workplace for

all workers. It is as much a day to remember the dead as it is a call to protect the living.

OPSEU members mark this day with sadness and pride. Sadness, because so many preventable deaths, injuries and diseases continue to strike workers down. Pride that OPSEU members have helped to make significant changes in the Occupational Health and Safety Act through participation in workplace safety and violence campaigns. The challenge for all of us is to strive to prevent death, and injury in the workplace. 🚧



Monument in front of Woodbridge arena and pool – Highway 7 and Islington Ave

# Questions about SFQ's

by Audrey Taves, OPSEU Local 562 Chief Steward

I would like to hear your comments, opinions and questions about SFQ's

Here are some questions for you to consider about the SFQs:

1. How important are they?
2. How important to you?
3. To the students?
4. How valid are the SFQ results?
5. How reliable are the SFQ results?
6. Should our probationary faculty be measured by their first few SFQs?
7. Are the SFQs just a measure of how well the students like the teacher?
8. Does this matter?
9. Who sees the computerized results?
10. Who sees the handwritten comments?
11. Who should?
12. Are the results returned to the faculty quickly enough to make changes for that term?
13. Do you regularly get the comparison between your results and your program or the college? Have you ever seen the comparison?

What do **you** think about the SFQs?

Send your comments/concerns to [audrey.taves@humber.ca](mailto:audrey.taves@humber.ca)

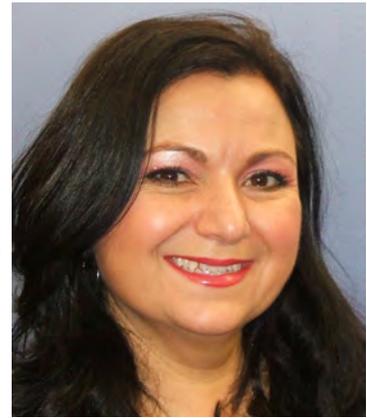
**OPSEU Local 562  
General Membership Meeting  
Monday, June 6, 2011  
11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
Humber Room, North Campus**

**Due to food order requirements, please RSVP by Monday, May 30. Email your reply to [orville.getz@humber.ca](mailto:orville.getz@humber.ca) or leave the office a message at ext. 4007.**

1. Mix and Mingle at 11:30 a.m. (appetizers will be served)
2. Sit-Down Lunch at Noon
3. Guest Speaker: John Cartwright, President of the Toronto and York Region Labour Council.  
*John will speak on the topic of the importance of unions in Ontario and will give us his perspective concerning the front line work he has been doing for many years with unions in the Greater Toronto Area. John has fought for many years for social justice and strong public services. He believes in the power of working people working together to make a positive difference to our future.*
4. Financial Report
  - A) Current state of the Local's finances
  - B) Trustees' report for the calendar year 2010
  - C) Strike fund report
5. Contract Update
6. Other Business

# Up at the Board

by Franca Giacomelli, Board of Governors Faculty Representative



Is this really the last issue of Newsbreak before summer break? There are 2 Board meetings left before the break, and I will report on those in the September issue. The following is a summary of the April meeting.

## International Students

International students add richness, depth, and of course, some challenges to our classrooms. The number of international students is on the rise. The meeting started with a panel of four international students. They shared with us why they chose Humber (reputation and the website seem to be the biggest factors), highlights of their experiences (mostly positive), and some of the challenges (winter, food, far from home and family). All of the students who presented spoke positively about the education they are receiving and they were unanimous in their praises for the faculty. They appreciate the professionalism, experience and knowledge of Humber faculty. When asked what Humber could have done better they suggested scholarships to help offset the high tuition, more printers in labs, better selection of food, and more events at the Lakeshore campus.

## Two Programs Approved

The Graduate Certificate in Event Management is a two-semester program (plus four-week field placement) that prepares graduates for jobs such as event coordinator, marketing assistant, promotion coordinator and corporate meeting planners in areas such as wedding planning, sports and recreation, arts and culture, meeting and convention, profit and not-for-profit charitable organizations, hospitality and travel, to name a few.

Bachelor of Fine Arts (Photographic Arts) Degree is a four-year program that prepares graduates to work as photographic profession-

als. This is the first of three Bachelor of Fine Arts

Degrees that

Humber plans to submit for approval.

Learners in this program will be given the opportunity to research, create, shoot, edit and market pictures for the local and global photographic industry.

## Results section of the Annual Report (Draft)

The Board was presented with a draft of the Results Section of the 2010-2011 Annual Report. I recommend reading the report (report format makes it an easy read). The report shows that Humber has exceeded or at least achieved almost all of the targets. Only three of the strategies were only “partially” successful and these were: develop and implement new programs to ensure a balance of credentials that are responsive to market needs, increase international academic partnerships and update succession plans throughout the organization, and provide appropriate development plans for successors. Part of this discussion included a discussion of KPIs. Overall, Humber did very well on the KPIs and was rated number two in the GTA for Student Satisfaction.

## 2011 Ontario Budget Briefing Note

The Ontario Minister of Finance delivered the 2011 budget. Rani Dhaliwal commented that this is a very good budget for colleges. An estimated \$8 million will come to Humber and will be added to revenue bottom line.

I would be happy to discuss the details of any of the Board meetings. Have a wonderful summer. 🌳

# Happy holidays

by Larry Horowitz, Lakeshore Campus-at-Large Steward



As the North American assault on collective bargaining continues, the ammunition fired by the other side includes disparaging remarks concerning the “extended summer holiday” that teachers “enjoy”.

Most legislators have never taught in the classroom. In my decade as a college professor, I’ve been face-to-face with the tremendous emotional and intellectual efforts required to mentor eighteen and nineteen-year-old students.

A teacher doesn’t just go to work each day. We literally turn ourselves over to the shifting currents and evolution of our protégés. It’s an invigorating, satisfying, exhausting ride. It taxes us to extraordinary limits and never, for one moment, is the importance of what we do lost on us. We help shape a generation by contributing to the creation of skilled, informed members of society upon whose shoulders rest the future. The responsibility is awesome. The

rewards, in terms of remuneration, meager.

By May-June each year, I’m not ashamed to say I am burned-out. During the summer, I reorganize and update my methods and curriculum and get some much needed rest. I spend time with my family and restore relationships that were way-laid by my work at school. By the start of September, if I recharged my systems properly, I’m ready to again commit myself, body and soul for multiple semesters.

I would not do this if it were just a job. Silly as this may sound (to some), my teaching is much more of a “calling” than a job. It is a commitment to do right by my students, not just a job. Measuring a teacher by the same standards attributed to some other jobs is an inarticulate, false argument. 🙏

## Canadian Labour International Film Festival

### Films due 30 June, 2011

The Selection Committee of the Canadian Labour International Film Festival (CLiFF) invites you to submit your film or video for possible screening during our second Festival to be held this November in Toronto, Ontario and in 50 communities across the country (and counting).

### About the Film Festival

CLiFF features film and video made by, for, and about the world of work and those who do it, in Canada and internationally. The films we

showcase are about unionised workers, as well as those not represented by unions. We encourage projects regarding any and every aspect of work, as well as issues affecting work or workers.

The festival draws thousands of trade unionists, community members, youth, activists, students, educators, artists, and allies from across North America and one day, we hope, the world.

**Download the entire Call for Submissions:**

[http://labourfilms.ca/CLiFF\\_2011\\_Submission\\_Call.pdf](http://labourfilms.ca/CLiFF_2011_Submission_Call.pdf)