

2016 Ontario Division Report

May 25-28, 2016

Sheraton Hotel, Toronto

I would like to thank the Local for allowing me to attend the 2016 Ontario Division Conference. It was well-attended with 261 Unions and a top attendance of 1,044 members. Such highlights over the few days were:

- Elections seeing some new faces as well as Fred Hahn and Candace Rennick being re-elected as President and VP respectively.
- CUPE saw a rise in 7,000 new members affiliating this year.
- The Strike Fund is currently sitting at \$85 million dollars as reported by our National Treasurer, Charles Fleury.
- Pledges to Black Lives Matter saw donations in the amount of \$40,000 with \$15,000 being donated from our National Treasurer.
- Electronic voting was an exciting new venture by the Division. Unfortunately, after SEVERAL attempts, it was ultimately decided voting by ballots/Voter Cards would be used.
- Patricia Pitt-Anderson was recognized as the Racialized Worker Award. If you've attended any conferences, you'll know Patricia's passionate and sometimes lengthy comments on burning issues of various Locals. One thing, Patricia is always involved in local issues.
- At the Treasurer's Breakfast, our National Treasurer, Charles Fleury gave an over-view of the Union's financial status as well as the importance of submitting the Audit in a timely manner.
 - Charles noted currently 45% of the locals are on direct remittance. Although this provides funds to national in a quicker manner, quite a few locals were concerned about the amount of time National is sending overpayment back to Locals (sometimes months later).
 - Charles also noted Per Capita dues from members should not include Overtime, shift, on-call, vehicle allowances, severance and various other types of income.
 - Mark Stevens who works closely with Charles confirmed that a letter accompanying any monetary gifts to members is the correct process to currently follow. This ensures the best adherence to the Local's requirements of the CRA (Canada Revenue Agency) are met due to changing tax laws.
 - Charles also encouraged Trustees and Treasurers to attend the new Financial Treasurer's course to find out about new information.
- Donations to Ft. McMurray were also held. Donations towards the end of the conference totalled just over \$40,000.

One particular speaker was Sue Jeffries; a member of the nursing community who was terminated for speaking out about working conditions at a conference. Sue has been terminated from her position within the nursing field 3 times; and each time, winning her position back. Sue did note that prior to one termination, management thought it a good idea to leave Sue a dead chicken with it's head cut off on the hood of her car and mail funeral home literature to her home. CUPE members are working to get Sue her job reinstated yet again.

It was sad to see the low turnout on Saturday yet again. Business of the day did continue with more Resolutions being discussed and passed; ultimately we lost quorum around 11am and the Conference was closed. Any resolutions not tabled were to be remanded to the Executive Board for consideration.

Again, thank you for allowing me to attend – these are always wonderful opportunities to learn, network and obtain new points of view from sisters and brothers.

Yours in solidarity,

Marg Lemoine
Treasurer, CUPE Local 973