



Newspaper of the  
Provincial Council  
of Social Affairs

CANADIAN UNION  
OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

VOLUME 22 N°1  
February 2009

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## 2009 Event Calendar

### General Council

Room 2000C, Centre des congrès de Québec  
March 9

### SCFP-Québec Convention

Centre des congrès de Québec  
March 10 to 13

### Health and Safety day

Hôtel Sheraton de Laval  
May 19

### Insurance day

Hôtel Sheraton de Laval  
May 20

### General Council

Hôtel Sheraton de Laval  
May 21 and 22

### Conference on the draft collective agreement

Auberge Universel de Montréal  
September 21-22-23

### General Council

Auberge Universel de Montréal  
September 24 and 25

### CUPE Convention

Palais des congrès de Montréal  
October 5 to 9

### General Council

Hôtel Loews Le Concorde de Québec  
December 2-3



# The Review

**DEADLINE: MARCH 31, 2010**

## Is a real negotiation possible?

by Michel Jolin

WHO COULD ANSWER THIS QUESTION RIGHT NOW? BETTER NOT DWELL ON THIS TOO LONG BECAUSE IT COULD BE DISCOURAGING. LET'S BE POSITIVE AND LET'S WORK AS IF NEGOTIATING IS A POSSIBILITY.

At the seminar held last year under the theme *The Union Movement : Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, the group studied how we can change things, and one of the issues that we apprehended was the next round of negotiations. We reminisced on the past, the famous 1972 Common Front, and we said: **Why not?**

What is preventing unions to work together for a same cause? We came back from Gatineau, where the meeting took place, with a non-raiding protocol between CSN and FTQ in hand, and some even dreamt of an agreement bringing together all union confederations. The objective being not to tear ourselves apart, and to be together to face the government.

I agree, we did not have the opportunity to validate what was said with our members. Michel Poirier, CUPE Director for Québec, met with us and explained how he sees the situation. Right, wrong, we each have our own opinion, but deep down we all know that such a protocol could help us during the next negotiation.

Will it be enough to convince the employer—now a majority government—to remove their blinkers so they can see the anguish in the eyes of the health and social services network personnel? Not sure !!!! But we will find out soon enough; preparation for the next negotiation having already started.

Discussions are ongoing between the union and the government for an eventual reform of the negotiation system. We do not know yet the results of these efforts, but we have, for the time being, to abide by the existing rules and then, we will be able to see the true face of this government.

The first discussions with the government will be to settle the number of union liberations allocated to the Negotiating Committee for the preparation and the negotiation of our new collective agreement.

Regardless of what happens, we will have to elect, on March 9, 2009, the next PCSA Negotiating Committee. Four individuals from four categories will be called upon to form this committee: one from Category 1 (nursing care and cardio-respiratory personnel), one from Category 2 (para-technical, auxiliary services and trades), one from Category 3 (office, technicians, and



admi-  
nistration personnel)  
and one from Category 4 (technicians and health and social services professionals).

The first mandate of this Committee will be to organize the Conference on the draft collective agreement. To do so, they will prepare a survey/questionnaire; this document will be sent to all the PCSA members so that they may give their opinion on the demands that will be made at the next negotiation. The Committee

**TO BE CONTINUED PAGE 2**

## A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Pierre Soucy



I certainly hope that 2009 started well for all of you, and I would like to wish all members of the PCSA team, health, happiness and success. Talking about success, negotiations with the government will start shortly. We are awaiting an answer with regards to the PCSA union liberation requests. We anticipate an

early reply that would indicate a serious commitment for the next negotiations. I wish ourselves the best success ever!

In closing, I would like to thank Locals who participated to the financial campaign to support Emergency Personnel. \$21,625.00 has been collected. One third was donated by Social Affairs Locals. I thank you on their behalf and we all hope that they will settle their collective agreement in 2009.





# A word from our Secretary General

by Michel Jolin

WHAT'S IN STORE FOR 2009?  
HONESTLY, I THINK IT WILL BE  
VERY INTERESTING BUT ALSO  
VERY BUSY.

The year starts with the election of the members of the Negotiating Committee. A very important moment because the Committee members will be our voice when dealing with government representatives. 2009 will also be a busy year for union authorities: the CUPE Quebec convention, the CUPE National Convention, the Conference on

the draft collective agreement, two PCSA theme days (a day devoted to health and safety and one to insurance plans), and of course the usual general council meetings.

As you can see, many decisions will have to be taken in 2009, and you will be called upon to state your opinion on various issues and files. Your participation to general assemblies is essential; you are the power propelling your union. On this note, I wish you all health and happiness in 2009!

## WHEN TECHNOLOGY REPLACES HUMAN BEINGS... SENSELESSLY!

by Guy Jolicoeur

EVERY DAY, WE HEAR ABOUT TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES THAT ARE SO REVOLUTIONARY THAT THEY CAN REPLACE HUMAN BEINGS. BUT, DO YOU KNOW WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES SECTOR?

The results are not that credible. Let's take for example the evaluations carried out by CLSC social resources working with senior citizens who are no longer self-sufficient: these social workers would meet with their clients and their families in their home in the morning and would finalize their evaluation in terms of hours/care per day. Less than 2.5 hours\* of care per day, services would be provided at home; more than 2.5 hours, they would consider placement in a facility.

Now it has changed. Quebec has made the use of the software ISO-SMAF mandatory for the evaluations of needs of clients who are no longer self-sufficient. Montreal, the last region not using this software, had no choice but to go along, otherwise they would be penalized financially. The software itself is not being blamed here, but rather constraints resulting from its use: filling the form is time-consuming and social workers must therefore prioritize the evaluation of one client in the morning in order to be able to finish it on time.

So, what are social workers doing? They rely on verbal reports from other staff members providing services to these clients, like family and social aides, occupational therapists, nurses, etc. – with all the risks associated to an oversight because the evaluation is concise. The ISO-SMAF evaluations must be received on time for CSSS to benefit from the necessary funds to provide the services. Hence, it is a race against time at the end of each fiscal period for social resources to give their evaluations even if the client situation has somewhat changed since.

Utmost irony: the software that Quebec is forcing CSSS to use is not even operational at the Ministry of Health Care and Social Services in Quebec, where they are supposed to convert the data from ISO-SMAF forms into hours/care. It is a case of the biter being bit! Difficult to believe that Quebec has not provided anything in its budgets to be able to get this important software itself.

In short, we cannot but be surprised of the decision made by the bureaucrats to favour uniformity and lower the quality when social resources must be satisfied with one visit per day – when they can – and with second-hand statements to properly evaluate the needs of a vulnerable clientele. Technology here is not involved in the decision because it is human beings that are essential.

\* Recently hours have been somewhat increased from 2,5 to 3 hours in Centres d'accueil.

# Synopsis of the General Council meeting held on December 10 and 11, 2008

by Michel Jolin

AT THE LAST PCSA GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN QUÉBEC CITY, VARIOUS ISSUES AND TOPICS WERE DISCUSSED AND DEALT WITH, PRIMARILY:

At the last PCSA General Council meeting held in Québec City, various issues and topics were discussed and dealt with, primarily:

Me. Ronald Cloutier, Union Advisor in the Legal Department at CUPE, made a presentation. He explained the status of Law 30 and Law 142 being challenged. The government's appeal of the decision on Law 30, rendered by the Superior Court, will be heard in April 2009. The dispute on the interpretation of Law 142 will be heard in 2009.

Ms. Lise Simard, Advisor in the Job Evaluation Department at CUPE, talked to us about maintaining pay equity and internal equity. Maintaining pay equity consists in ensuring that changes made to jobs, salaries and benefits with a financial impact do not create new salary gaps between male and female categories of the Pay Equity Program. As for internal equity, it will be an important issue in the next round of negotiations.

Alain Tessier, Coordinator for the Social Affairs, summarized for the delegates the discussions between the unions and the government on the negotiation system reform for the public and parapublic sector. At these meetings, the parties involved are trying to agree on various issues to improve the negotiation process. Let's mention a few:

- Negotiation levels (intersectorial, sectorial, and local)
- Issues/topics to be discussed at each level
- Delays/deadlines for different steps
- Mediation
- Arbitration
- Right to strike

It is too early to say that there will be a new negotiation system, but discussions are in progress.

The Insurance Committee advised us that our new group insurance program is effective January 1st, 2009, and here's the good news, premiums went down:

- Basic health insurance - 4.5%
- Additional health insurance (optional plan) - 8.5%
- Dental insurance (optional plan) - 8.7%

Additionally, effective January 1st, 2009, we only have to pay our portion of the cost when filling a prescription at the drug store.

Other committees also tabled a report:

- Committee responsible for the organization of the fight against PPPs (COOPPP)
- Committee representing Category 1 personnel
- Committee representing Category 2 personnel
- Committee representing Category 3 personnel
- Committee representing Category 4 personnel
- Committee on Health and Safety
- Committee representing Youth
- Committee representing Women Status

Executive Board members also summarized the discussions held last September in Gatineau, during a seminar under the theme *The Union Movement: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*. An action plan is being developed focusing on three main objectives:

- Reform of our negotiation system
- Next negotiation
- Continuity in the health and social services network

The first phase of this action plan will be the analysis of the format and the content of our general assemblies to determine why participation is low.

Michel Poirier, CUPE Director for Québec, talked about the non-raiding memorandum of understanding between CSN and FTQ.

**PCSA, I believe in it, and I care!**

### REAL NEGOTIATION / CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

will also have to seek advice from various PCSA Committees in order to benefit from the expertise of these elected members who sit on these committees.

The Committee will study the surveys and will prepare a list of propositions that will be tabled at the conference and voted on by delegates attending.

A final document listing all our demands will be developed by the Negotiation Committee and

given to the government in October 2009.

After, well, it will depend on how long the government takes to react and gets going with the negotiation to reach an agreement and a new collective agreement. This agreement will be presented to the PCSA members so that they can vote to accept or reject it.

It would be nice if it would be so simple. We will need all your cooperation. Be ready, be mobilized and be convinced of our importance.





# Louise Valiquette, a woman of her word!

by Guy Jolicoeur

WITH THE APPROACHING RETIREMENT OF LOUISE VALIQUETTE, THE REVIEW HAS DEEMED APPROPRIATE TO CONTACT TWO COLLEAGUES WHO WORKED BY HER SIDE THROUGHOUT HER CAREER THAT SPAN OVER 25 YEARS.

Louise was President of her Union at Hôpital Saint-Laurent, PCSA President, Union Advisor and finally Assistant Director at CUPE Quebec. As she steps down, she leaves behind an impressive legacy of union activism and militancy. We are sharing with you some of the comments made by her colleagues.

« Louise is a pearl. She is determined, always calm and collected, witty, eloquent and always in a brilliant form, said without hesitation Lisette Dubé, a colleague and one of her best friends. She very rarely

raised her voice; she was able to get everybody's attention. »

« She was the first one to bring her union to CUPE in the 80's, commented Francine Barrette, Advisor at CUPE. We were both union officers and members of the Syndicat des employé-es des Hôpitaux de Montréal. You probably remember the split-up within CSN and some hospitals left. Literally, Louise showed us the path to follow. »

« Team work is one of her strong points. She has a special talent, she is able to develop people's skills, make them more independent, make them reach new heights». Louise would say: « Get involved in a committee, Francine added, even if you do not have any experience, you will learn. Louise is a woman who had a vision, she would not lose any time making a decision because she always had carefully thought out the issue. My only regret is to see her go. »

All the PCSA team and associated locals are united today to wish Louise a good retirement; she certainly deserves it!

## UNION INVOLVEMENT IN HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT PLANS

by Karine Rainville

ALMOST ALL LOCAL AGREEMENTS FOR PCSA MEMBERS ARE NOW SIGNED. NEARLY ALL THE LOCALS HAVE RENEWED THE PROVISIONS OF FORMER ARTICLE 36 COVERING HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT. HOWEVER, EVEN IF WE ARE ALL FAMILIAR WITH THE PROVISIONS, WE MUST REMAIN VIGILANT.

Actually, this article requires our employers to seek the opinion of our Locals and to obtain their approval when developing and implementing a training plan. Several employers within the network are willingly forgetting to do so

The importance of union involvement in human resources development plans is unquestionable. Not only is it a rare opportunity to influence the decisions of the employers concerning investment in substantial budgets, but it is also an opportunity to demonstrate to human resources managers that it is us, nurses, attendants, educators, office workers and their elected representatives who know better than anyone else the training needs of the thousands of members that we represent.

Training plans cannot just be presented to us as «done deals». Training requirements are felt where the action takes place, and not in the office of human resources managers. Let's demand a stronger union involvement.

## PCSA YOUTH COMMITTEE

by the Committee members: Mélanie Bergeron, local 5436, Simon Beaulieu, local 3247, Nathalie Olivier, responsible and Mikaylou Tamboura, advisor

AT THE PCSA CONVENTION LAST JUNE, ELECTIONS WERE HELD TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO THIS COMMITTEE. THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS WERE ELECTED: MÉLANIE BERGERON, LOCAL 5436 AND SIMON BEAULIEU, LOCAL 3247. THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR POLICIES AND DIRECTLY LINKED TO THIS COMMITTEE IS NATHALIE OLIVIER AND THE ADVISOR, MIKAYLOU TAMBOURA. THE YOUTH COMMITTEE MET IN SEPTEMBER 2008 WITH A VIEW TO DEFINE THE OBJECTIVES AND THE ROLE OF SAID COMMITTEE.

Following meetings and exchanges with members and delegates, we have defined our role which consists in maximizing participation and fostering integration of workers between the age of 18 and 35 within PCSA. The Committee's objectives are as follows:

- Bring up issues appealing to young workers but affecting all members
- Incite Locals to invite younger workers to get involved in workshops
- Implement a coaching system within PCSA
- Become a support mechanism for Locals

### Why a Youth Committee?

As you know, several members will soon retire and it is getting more and more difficult to integrate the succession. We will need it to take over and to follow in the tracks of our predecessors to ensure continuity after our most involved and most experienced members are no longer available.

### Why this age group (18-35)?

When we refer to youth, we refer to those entering the job market. Generally, they are between 20 and 30 years of age.



Simon Beaulieu and Mélanie Bergeron

### Is the Youth Committee only for young workers?

CERTAINLY NOT! It was implemented to integrate young workers and facilitate their participation, but in order to do so, we also need the help of seasoned workers. So, occasionally all members will be invited to join in.

The Committee has already come up with means to be more visible and keep people informed. We now have a link on the PCSA portal for the Youth Committee page. On this page will be displayed the reports of the Committee. It will also be possible to look at short Vox-pop videos filmed during each event. Pictures taken at these events will be displayed as well.

Last December, at the General Council meeting, we have invited members to a «Happy Hour» to start a dialogue between delegates. During this event, the Committee introduced a Vox Pop and this cool idea was greeted with enthusiasm since several people were willing to participate. Well, we have good stuff for you to see! Soon, on the PCSA portal, follow the link to the Youth Committee.

We have an email address also; you can use it for blogs, comments, suggestions and questions. The address is:

**comitejeunessecpas@hotmail.com**



# NEGOTIATION: A MYTH NOT A REALITY

by Francine Barrette

In June 2003 the collective agreement for Medical Emergency Personnel (RMU) working for Urgences-Santé Corporation in Montreal is no longer in effect. Negotiations for the social affairs sector are in progress, and Local 3642, as it has done in the past, is awaiting the end of this negotiation in order to start its own; it is now December 2005. Taking into account that the government has changed the rules and now issues to be negotiated will be divided, the Negotiating Committee must start again all the work it has done in order to reorganize its plan and to adapt it to the new reality. The FTQ agreement is then integrated, parties for the collective agreement appointed and what has to be negotiated are the 26 local issues. Since April 2007, more than 40 negotiation sessions have taken place between the parties. A memorandum of understanding on normative clauses was entered into in February 2008. At the time, taking into consideration the willingness of both parties to settle the financial aspect with the best possible delays and the fact that the spokesperson was leaving on vacation outside the country, Urgences Santé Corporation appointed a new spokesperson and since then nothing has evolved.

Now let's have a look at what the dispute is all about!

## Initial demands by the Union

- Salary adjustment allowing to have pay parity with the PARA's of the City of Montreal (911 emergency personnel) by applying a 2% increase from 2006 as provided in the government budget. RMUs earn presently 32% less than them and doing comparable work.
- Increase the team leader existing premium by \$0.50 per hour to have parity with Urgences Santé dispatchers and that this premium be considered for RREGOP.
- Increase premiums for trainers, reviewers and instructors.
- Introduce a multilingual premium because they are the only ones in the province who must be bilingual, a requirement to be hired.
- Add 15 minutes to meals paid to have parity with dispatchers.

The union has also asked the employer to start working on pay equity.

When the discussions started, the employer kept saying no to all salary adjustments because RMUs cannot be compared with municipal employees (according to him they are overly paid) and additionally, he refused even to give them the salary applicable to certified nursing assistants working for the network even though they had this salary before. He reiterated that he must respect the public sector 12.6% salary structure. This is when the union proved to the employer that he could easily give a substantial salary increase while respecting the financial structure of the Treasury Board. Moreover, the union emphasized the fact that it was open to a settlement approach based on applying and maintaining pay equity with CNAs in the network (rank 12) followed by a job evaluation and arbitration (union feels that the RMU job title would be at 14).

A ping-pong game ensued between Urgences-santé Corporation, the Health Care and Social Affairs Ministry and the Treasury Board. Nobody has the power to settle the issue and it is impossible to find out who can. Only one thing is clear, the employer position at the negotiation table:

- 0%, 0%, 2%, 2%, 2%, 2% of public sector without any possible room within the 12,6% balance of the budget structure.
- Application of the pay equity law. No other evaluation is possible on theoretical bases; according to them, this job title must remain at rank 10 even if they are losing parity with network CNAs.



- Integration of the current team leader premium without an increase.
- Refusal to create a multilingual premium.
- Refusal to compare the job with other provinces or to Montreal's PARAs (in spite of declarations made by the Prime Minister Charest following the signature of the inter-provincial agreement on manpower mobility).
- Willingness to reduce the number of echelons for the job title or allow a quick progression in the echelons (there are 10).
- Remains silent and deaf to our demands: 15 minutes per meal, premiums for trainers, reviewers and instructors.
- During this period, RMS set up an internet site and emails sent (petition) to the minister.
- Video created explaining their work.
- Massive application for a job with the City of Montreal.
- Trainers, instructors and reviewers resigned in bulk.
- Two days of strike (providing 85% of essential services).
- Distribution of pamphlets to the population.
- Manifestation in front of the office of the ministry.
- Ads in Journal de Montreal and Le Devoir.
- Tailgating the prime minister and minister Bolduc with a truck displaying RMU's demands during the week before the provincial electoral campaign.
- Stickers «CUPE on strike» placed in Urgences-Santé locals; those involved were suspended for a day.
- Issues explained to various FTQ authorities.
- Complain registered with the Pay Equity Commission because the work has not yet started.

CUPE National is providing financial support with a campaign to share costs. PCSA is exempting them from paying their per capita contributions and is granting them a loan without interest, and a fundraising campaign is currently ongoing directed at CUPE Locals in order to help them continue their fight.

CUPE's Executives as well as the FTQ President are multiplying their interventions with government authorities in an attempt to solve the issue but to date it is still not settled.

**Remember, there are less than 50 RMUs, and this would certainly explain why the government is convinced that it will be bankrupted if it adjusts their salary....**

For CUPE and FTQ, these 50 individuals deserve to be treated fairly and objectively. This is why they are supporting them and will continue to support them so that they can settle. We thank those who have signed the petition and contributed financially and incite those who have not done so yet to consider doing it.

Site where to send emails (petition)

[www.appuyonslesrmu.com](http://www.appuyonslesrmu.com)

To contribute, please send your donations to CUPE Quebec and make your cheque to the order of SCFP-Quebec : appui au RMU.

SO. SO. SO. SOLIDARITY



## The Review

Newsletter published by the  
**Conseil provincial des affaires sociales (CPAS).**

CPAS is the amalgamation of the Unions of the Health & Social Services Sector of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (FTQ)

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**Copy Editor:** Manon Pépin

**Graphic Artist:** Anne Brissette

**Translator:** Monique Mansell

**Printers:** Atelier Québécois Offset 1998 inc.

**Printing:** 12,000 copies in French 1,000 copies in English

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