

# NEWSCAST

## News from the Society of Energy Professionals

**Hydro One:  
Almost all  
back to  
work!**



**Toronto Mayor David Miller (white shirt) and CLC Vice President Hassan Yussuf with terminated strikers in Labour Day parade (see p. 2)**

**M**ost Society-represented professional employees of Hydro One are now back on payroll, including the new university graduates who'd been let go while the strike raged, and eight strikers who had been "terminated" for "illegal picket activity."

Eighteen Society members have yet to return—temporary employees whose contracts expired during the strike. The Society is pursuing their reinstatement and contract extensions to make up for their lost work opportunity. Mr. Kaplan will hear their cases in October.

The eight Society members who had been fired have now been reinstated. Arbitrator Kaplan rescinded their terminations after hearing their cases last night, and ordered that they be recalled to work effective today, with no loss of seniority or service credits.

"I'm very happy," said **Michelle Byck Johnston**, who had been fired with several others after Hydro One managers tried to push through a picket line at Dundas TS. "We showed unity the whole way, and there were full exonerations, no suspensions, no letters on file...it's over."

Kaplan also rescinded the nine or so discipline letters issued during the strike.

The other striking professionals had returned last week to what is in many places a tension-filled workplace, in which many managers are hostile. "Management doesn't seem to be taking the position that we should let bygones be bygones, and get back to work," said Society President **Andrew Müller**. "The fight for fairness and respect will have to continue locally."

"One thing's for sure," he added. "A lot of work is required of Hydro One management to improve relationships with their professionals before the company can move forward."

The strike settlement provided that provincially-appointed mediator William Kaplan would settle all the issues involved in the employees' return to work, and he's been busy.

First, a decision had to be made regarding the date the strikers returned. Hydro One management was willing to take 124 back on Monday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, while the rest would

have to wait until Monday, the 26<sup>th</sup>, depending on "productivity," "security issues," and other vague hesitations management had about employees actually being in their places of work. Arbitrator Kaplan ordered a three-day return: 124 on Monday the 19<sup>th</sup>, 100 on Tuesday, and the remainder on Thursday.

In addition, the appointments of all university graduates whose start dates were after June 1st were reinstated.

Some employees' returns were disrupted by what appear to be attempts at unilateral restructuring of jobs in the Society's jurisdiction. In particular, some sector control supervisors at the Ontario Grid Control Centre were told their jobs had been eliminated, and were offered management positions. The Society referred these allegations to Mr. Kaplan. When Hydro One denied they were doing any such thing, Mr. Kaplan issued a decision that took them at their word. As a result, Society-represented employees are expected to return to their pre-strike positions, and any restructuring

Hydro One management wants to do will be as per the collective agreement.

Many employees were greeted with strict new rules, including set hours of work, no flextime,

no overtime, no personal calls or e-mails, no working from home, etc. Many might not be re-issued their corporate cellphones ("Hooray!" said one), and internet-access policies would be reviewed.

One Society member agreed in an interview that the battle doesn't seem to be over. "It's going to be long, and it's just beginning," she said.

**Production of the Society Newscast was unavoidably suspended during the Hydro One strike. In the next two issues, we'll attempt to bring readers up to date with everything that's gone on in the last five months.**

## Pickering A's Unit 1 synchronized to grid

On Tuesday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, Pickering 'A' Unit 1 was synchronized to the grid, and sent electricity for the first time since December, 1997.

The unit is expected to be available for dispatch by the system operator within a few weeks.

"This has been a complex management and construction challenge, encompassing more than 1.9 million hours of work, 40,000 tasks, and almost 3,000 people at its peak," said OPG Senior Vice President and Project Manager Bill Robinson. "It's gratifying to see concrete evidence of our ability to successfully bring a project of this dimension to completion."

"This is great," said Society OPGN VP **Olaf Heilandt**. "It shows that when OPG is allowed to get on with the job the job will get done. I've got to give a great deal of credit to the provincial government—they did things right on this one. "

The Society blamed the cost overruns and missed timetables of the Pickering A Unit 4 project on pressure from the government of Mike Harris, which was in a rush to get more capacity online before the electricity market opened in 2002. That government's clear preference for private sector solutions led to OPG contracting out a great deal of *control* of the Unit 4 project, leaving no one clearly in charge. The project, not surprisingly, got *out* of control.

## Society leads Toronto Labour Day parade

The Society was given the great honour this year of leading the Toronto Labour Day parade.

**"It's going to be long, and it's just beginning."**

Society members responded to the honour by turning out in droves—over 900 members, mostly members on strike at Hydro One, turned out with family members and other supporters to march from University Avenue to the Canadian National Exhibition, a distance of six kilometres.

A good time was had by all, with "end discrimination" t-shirts, "proud energy professional" water-bottles, and balloons and "why us?" t-shirts for the kids. Marchers carried special "day 97" (of the Hydro One strike) banners. One highlight of the day was the large trailer-truck that hauled a group of about 60 Society strikers' kids on the parade route

Toronto Mayor David Miller marched with the Society for part of the route, as did federal NDP leader Jack Layton and Canadian Labour Congress Vice President Hassan Yussuf.

Unions on strike traditionally head the parade. The Society was followed closely by locked out CBC workers, members of the Canadian Media Guild.

At the CNE, Society President Andrew Müller thanked all who worked hard to make the day an enjoyable and well-organized one, many of whom were new grads unfairly fired by Hydro One. He also thanked the United Steelworkers, who provided the tractor trailer.

Society contingents also participated in Labour Day parades in Hamilton, Sarnia, and Port Elgin.

## OPA hears Society on generation issues

Natural gas-fired generation should be phased out in Ontario, says the Society, but current procurement poli-

cies ensure privatization—and more natural gas.

In July and August, as the members of the Hydro One local were pounding the pavement, the Society made presentations to the Ontario Power Authority concerning the future generation supply mix, and procurement processes through which to achieve it. The Society recommends strategies of:

- ♦ Conservation
- ♦ Load-shifting, including the development of more pumped-storage generation, refurbishment, where economical, of current nuclear assets, and building new nuclear generation
- ♦ Maximizing the use of renewable sources, including hydroelectric and wind power

The replacement of coal-fired generation with natural gas-fired generation is not a tenable "carbon mitigation strategy." Instead, the Society argues, it will replace the burning of one fossil fuel with that of another—one that the government appears to believe, erroneously, is already "clean."

The Society recommends instead that Ontario's electricity system make maximum use of non-fossil sources of electricity generation—the only way to ensure carbon mitigation. Where fossil sources must be used (and they undoubtedly will, in the foreseeable future), Ontarians should invest in emissions controls and emerging clean-coal technologies. The Society notes that the Canadian Energy Research Institute has concluded "gas-fired generation for baseload supply looks unattractive in nearly all scenarios due to forecast increases in the price of natural gas."

Adequate, affordable, reliable power requires system planning, the Society notes. Unfortunately, current and expected procurement processes, including the Ministry of Energy's Requests for Proposals, and observed behav-

**Natural gas-fired generation should be phased out in Ontario**

**Adequate, affordable, reliable power requires system planning**

ious of the Ontario Power Authority, indicate that the procurement of supply will continue to operate without system planning, in fact, in such a way as to *undermine* planning.

Outcomes are predetermined, in effect, by the dual purpose of the process—to replace coal and privatize.

In the end, the Society observed, the reliance on the private sector and its hugely preferred method of generation—natural gas—will lead to a system which is not planned, not reliable, and not the lowest life-cycle cost.

The Ontario Power Authority is expected to make its recommendations on supply mix to the provincial government by December 1<sup>st</sup>. While most of the media are

concentrating on Dalton McGuinty's recent announcement—admittedly, a breathtaking one—that he would be open to new nuclear generation if that's what the OPA recommends, the more important

movement will likely be in the direction of more privatization, and more natural gas.

### **Board highlights: Spring-summer**

While the production of the Society Newscast was unfortunately suspended, the Society's Executive Board met six times to direct the affairs of the union. Here are the highlights:

**Approval of the Society Work Plan and Budget:** The Society's work plan and budget received an unusual amount of attention this year, and took quite some time to approve in its final form. While the workload involved in conducting a strike at Hydro One was undoubtedly a complicating factor, it's fair to say as well that several members of the Board inspired a close examination of

the Society's policy work program.

The two issues that took a few Board meetings to deal with were

- ♦ the value received for our participation in outside organizations and
- ♦ a detailed plan for the Policy portfolio for this year.

OPGN Local VP **Olaf Heilandt** and Bruce Power LVP **Rob Stanley**, among others, wanted to ensure that the Executive Board were thoroughly briefed of all expected expenditures in the Policy program before it was voted on.

When finally passed at the August 3<sup>rd</sup> Board meeting, the 2005-6 Society budget foresees an end-of-year deficit of \$16,000 in a \$5.9 million operation. Society EVP Finance **Bill Jones** says the budget as approved—in essence a balanced one—meets expanded needs as our membership grows.

**Hydro One strike support:** Much of the Executive Board's attention was taken up by the attack of Hydro One management on the Society's collective agreement, and the resulting strike it provoked. Among other things, the Board:

- ♦ authorized the expenditures necessary from the Collective Agreement Renewal Fund, including for strike pay, beginning in April
- ♦ in July, raised strike pay from \$250 per week to \$500, beginning the fifth week
- ♦ approved an advertising campaign directed at Premier McGuinty, arguing that he shouldn't countenance discrimination at Hydro One, at a cost of \$60,000
- ♦ authorized a "back-to-school" \$100 lump-sum payment for each Hydro One picketer with school-age children
- ♦ authorized loans from the Training Fund to keep strike pay coming

- ♦ appointed a subcommittee of the Board to provide strategic advice
- ♦ Agreed to meet every two weeks to review the progress of the strike and the level of strike pay

Board members were also active in the solidarity-picketing events held during the strike, including at the IESO, at the meeting of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, and at the sit-in at the Toronto Board of Trade.

**Non-dues income:** The Board is formulating a policy on the disposition of non-dues income, such as payments made in lieu of dues under purchased services, and profit distributions from the Society's ownership position in Bruce Power.

While a policy has been formulated, and is under consideration by the Board, it has yet to be implemented. In the meantime, such income has been assigned at various points to the Society's operating reserve, the CAR Fund, and the Hardship Fund.

Income from the Bruce Power investment is held separately, in trust.

**Server replacement:** As the Hydro One strike raged, the Society's servers decided to give up the ghost. The Board authorized their replacement, at a cost of \$52,000.

**Environmental Assessment:** The Society has invoked provisions of the *Environmental Assessment Act* in the provincial government's implementation of its Coal Replacement Program (see article, page 6). The assistance of counsel has been necessary in intervening in, and responding to, submissions of other parties.

**Supply Mix/Procurement:** The Board approved the Society's submissions to the Ontario Power Authority on the topics of the future supply mix in Ontario generating assets, and the procurement process by which that mix should be achieved (see article, page 3).

## SPEA prepares for bargaining with AECL

Things are looking up these days for Atomic Energy of Canada, Ltd.

They've been appointed the contractor for the refurbishment of NB Power's Point Lepreau nuclear. In the event that the Government of Ontario gives Bruce Power the go-ahead to refurbish Bruce A's Units 1 and 2, AECL has the contract to do the retubing part of the project. Finally, the crown corporation has just signed a "joint agreement on nuclear cooperation" with the government of China.

Premier McGuinty has announced that Ontario will build new nuclear plant—if the Ontario Power Authority recom-

ommends it, and it seems quite likely that they will—and AECL will definitely be bidding on those jobs.

Finally, there's renewed discussion around the

issue of whether it's not just a bit unwise to use a valuable feedstock like natural gas to make steam to extract oil from the Alberta oilsands. Though Premier Klein has poo-pooed the idea of using nuclear power to make that steam, AECL will likely be among those to benefit when the industry (and therefore Mr. Klein) comes to its senses.

"It's a good time to be bargaining," says Paul Hnatiuk, President of the Society of Professional Engineers and Associates (SPEA), the trade union that represents AECL engineers and scientists. "We feel we're in a very good position to be recognized as quite valuable assets to the company."

SPEA has had a sometimes stormy relationship with AECL management—they had to strike to get the cur-

**Income from the Bruce Power investment is held separately, in trust.**

rent collective agreement—and the union says it's good to be in a little better position of strength this time around. The new work means AECL needs to expand, and SPEA expects a round of hiring is imminent.

"They need to play ball with us," says SPEA Vice President **Peter White**. "It's better for them to see us as a partner, so we can go where we want to go *together*."

SPEA signed a servicing agreement with the Society this year, a primary goal of which was to get Society assistance for this next round of bargaining.

So SPEA and the Society have invested significantly in preparation. Campaign planning is underway, and IFPTE Director of Organizing **Andy Banks** held two and a half days of training for SPEA leaders recently. Also, says White, Society Staff Officer **Denise Coombs** has been helping to deal with the backlog of grievances, "to get them off the table before we go into bargaining," says White.

The major stumbling blocks in their bargaining relationship, says Hnatiuk, are career-oriented items: "performance review system reform, promotions procedures, career progression."

The SPEA collective agreement expires on December 31<sup>st</sup>. AECL and SPEA are scheduled to open bargaining in mid-October.

## **Society: Government must follow environment act in replacing coal**

The Society says the Ontario Government can't shut down the coal-fired generating stations without an environmental assessment.

"Energy Minister Dwight Duncan is required by law to submit his Coal Replacement Plan to an environmental

assessment before he implements it," says **Leslie Forge**, Executive Vice President of the Society of Energy Professionals. "The plan, and the impact of the Plan on the environment and the economic life of this Province, must be fully disclosed to the public. As well, a complete examination of the alternatives is crucial to the assessment process."

In July the Society took a number of actions to ensure the Liberal government's plan for the coal stations meets the requirements of the Environmental Assessment Act, including:

- ♦ Writing to Energy Minister Dwight Duncan and Premier McGuinty to inform them of their obligations under the Act
- ♦ Writing to the Ontario Ministry of the Environment to request that the Greenfield Energy Centre (GEC) project in the Sarnia area be subject to an individual environmental assessment
- ♦ Writing to the Federal Minister of the Environment Stéphane Dion to request that he refer the GEC project to a review panel in accordance with federal legislation

If it goes forward, the GEC project will replace the Lambton Generating Station with a natural gas-fired generator. It is one of two natural gas-fired generating stations awarded contracts in the Sarnia area under the so-called Clean Energy Supply RFP.

"The Coal Replacement Plan is largely about building expensive natural gas-fired generation stations in our neighbourhoods," Forge said. "The problem is, it isn't generally known in the public that burning natural gas has its own negative effects on the environment, or what the socio-economic impact of the coal replacement plan will be."

The Society has received replies from Ms. Laurel Broten, Ontario's Minister of the Environment, who acknowledged receipt of the Society request, but made no deci-

sion; and Mr. Dion, who informed the Society that the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency would be conducting an investigation into whether the project involved will result in significant adverse effects on the nearby Walpole Island First Nation.

Further detail will be reported in the next *Newscast*.

## Society addresses Sarnia town hall

Society President **Andrew Müller** took the Society's view of the provincial government's Coal Replacement Plan on the road last week.



**In July, the Affordable Energy Alliance and the Society's Hydro One strikers showed up at a sod-turning for an ethanol plant to make their concerns known to Premier McGuinty. Here a *Sarnia Observer* reporter chats with Society Delegate Dale Lane, a Hydro One picketer, and CAEA co-chairs Susan Grant and Carol Chudy.**

Addressing a "town hall" meeting, organized by the Clean Affordable Energy Alliance, and held in the Sarnia offices of the Communications, Energy, and Paperworkers Union, Müller said the Coal Replacement Plan is a way to privatize electricity generation "under the cloak of environmentalism."

*[But as] an environmental initiative, the Coal Replacement Plan is simply unsound. It serves only to replace one form of fossil fuel generation with another. In doing so, it does not move us away from a dependence on fossil fuel generation to meet our electricity demand. Instead, it entrenches fossil fuels as a primary fuel for electricity generation for well into the future—at least the life cycle of a new fleet of private sector natural gas plants.*

The CAEA, "representing residential, commercial and industrial users of natural gas and electricity," opposes the replacement of Ontario's coal-fired generating stations with natural gas-fired ones.

President Müller shared the podium with Bill Brooks, PWU Chief Steward; Claudette Drapeau, of the Service Employees International Union; and Steve Nielo, of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union. Drapeau and Nielo discussed the sorry state of Sarnia-area hospitals under public-private partnerships. (Due to the lack of security staff, emergency room staff have to dial '911' for some emergencies—such as violent patients.)

Müller noted that the announced closing of Sarnia's Lambton Generating Station would result in the loss of more than 400 jobs to the area. "But, take heart: we can turn this around."

The CAEA and the Sarnia Health Coalition held the town hall meeting to gauge support for the holding of a pro-public healthcare plebiscite in the area. The CAEA encourages *Newscast* readers to visit their web-site (<http://www.caealliance.com/index.html>), and sign their guest-book.

## Society meets, greets Canadian Labour Congress at convention

The Society sent an impressive contingent to the Canadian Labour Congress in June.

Nineteen delegates and alternates were in Ottawa to meet fellow labour representatives and pursue their support of the Society's strike at Hydro One. "We went down to introduce the Society to the broader labour movement," said Executive Vice President **Rod Sheppard**. "We made good, strong contacts, trying to get to large groups in labour so they could put their political influence forward to help us."

The Society made contact with Ken Newman of the United Steelworkers, Paul Moist and Sid Ryan of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, and Buzz Hargrove of the Canadian Auto Workers, among many others.

Sheppard says those contacts paid off. "Our struggle was well presented [to Convention delegates] by the CLC leadership, so people know who we are now." Hydro One strikers **Lyla Garzouzi** and **Elias Lyberogiannis** were there to talk to delegates about the issues involved in the strike.

Several representatives of the Society of Professional Engineers and Associates (SPEA) were also in attendance, as *their* introduction to the wider labour movement.

Cavan, a supplier of branded promotional products, donated two leather jackets, which the Society delegates were able to raffle. "We were able to raise \$670 for

the Society Hardship Fund," said Sheppard. "Thanks to Cavan for a very kind gesture."

## Pensioners' Chapter kicks off

The Society's Pensioners' Chapter is up and running.

Twenty Society retirees met at the Canadian Legion at Yonge and Sheppard in Toronto on May 11<sup>th</sup> to give the Chapter its official kick-off.

"We were really pleased with the level of interest in the Chapter," said newly-elected Chapter President **Ian Elder**. "Several members expressed willingness to help and there is much to do. Our top priority is building up our membership, so we can become recognized as the focus for retired Society represented pensioners."

The first general meeting of the Chapter was greeted by President **Andrew Müller** and Vice President Finance **Bill Jones**, who discussed the origins of the Chapter in the organizational changes of 2002 and 2003, and the vital role envisioned for it.

"It's great to see you all here," said Jones. "Since

the Society has bargaining rights over many pensioner benefits, it's important that you have a voice. It's an appropriate time for this to get started now, because I'm sure many of you will want to find a way to support the Hydro One Local in their labour dispute."

The Chapter adopted bylaws, after a spirited discussion, and several amendments to the drafts having been approved. Dues were approved at \$24 per year. In addi-

**Our top priority is building up our membership, so we can become recognized as the focus for retired Society represented pensioners... -Elder**



tion to President Elder, a New Horizon retiree, the Executive Committee consists of the following officers:

- ◆ Vice-President: Fred Hodgson (New Horizon)
- ◆ Secretary: John Kroeger (New Horizon)
- ◆ Treasurer: David Mintz (Kinectrics)

Members also discussed the need to develop policies and/or take action on the financial difficulties facing AEA Technologies, the parent of Kinectrics, and support work for the Hydro One Local in its current labour dispute.

"It's easy to join," says Elder. "Just send the Chapter a note with your name, address, home phone, old company name and your email address together with a cheque for \$24 payable to the Society Pensioners' Chapter." The Chapter can be contacted at the Society office.

The Chapter's Executive Committee met on June 8th to develop plans out of the ideas generated at the general meeting.

## Monitoring Board Member Expenses

The Society has financial controls in place to monitor the expenses of Executive Board members, embodied in the Management Control Framework (MCF). This document has recently been revised to improve control and increase usability. A training module is in preparation.

In general, expenses incurred by any member as a volunteer on Society business will be reimbursed with a flexible interpretation of the MCF guidelines, with the proviso that the claimant is accountable to the Society membership under Constitution Article 4.7 for exercising integrity, prudence and judgement.

Expenses will be reimbursed when they are:

- ◆ Covered in the Society's budget for the fiscal year
- ◆ Authorized in advance
- ◆ Documented on an expense claim form with original receipts (unless less than \$10 or with approval of a Principal Officer), indicating purpose, and any others who benefitted

There are detailed guidelines for travel, accommodation, and meals. The Society may issue a credit card for elected representatives who incur more than \$1,000 in expenses per year. The Accounting Clerk ensures that Expense Claim forms and credit card reconciliation forms are properly filled out. The Executive Vice-President - Finance or President reviews Local Vice-President and Principal Officer expenses.

Expenses over \$2,000 must also be approved by the individual responsible for the work program involved. Each cheque must be signed by two Principal Officers, neither of whom incurred, enjoyed, or authorized the expense. The Audit Committee reviews Principal Officer expense claims and credit card statements quarterly.

## Ron Bartholomew succumbs to cancer

The Society was saddened recently to learn of the death of Ron Bartholomew.

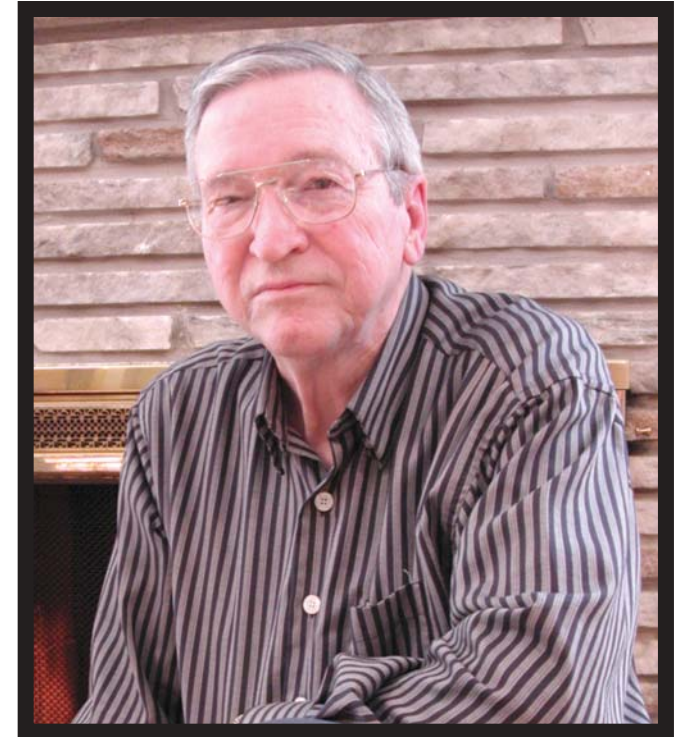
A former Vice-President of production at Ontario Hydro, Mr. Bartholomew was appalled at the actions taken by the provincial government headed by Mike Harris in splitting up the public utility and preparing for the sale of its parts. He spent the last years of his life as a member of Public Power for Ontario, a group of concerned citizens who advocate for a return to a publicly owned and controlled electricity system in Ontario.

Unfortunately, he was also fighting cancer, the disease to which he finally succumbed.

In 2003, he was profiled in the *Society Monitor* article, "Dumb old utility guy," the article name taken from the self-deprecating self-description used by the Public Power for Ontario members (see Vol. 28, issue 3).

Ron was passionate in his belief that privatizing the electricity system was the wrong way to go. "Isn't it interesting that both Quebec and Manitoba have moved to become larger and totally dominant in their 'domestic marketplaces,' while Ontario is scrambling to go exactly in the opposite direction?" he asked.

Society Executive Vice-President **Leslie Forge** attended the funeral, with retired Society delegate Bharat Desai and retired Society member Bernie Lewis. "It was good to see such a great turnout of so many former Ontario Hydro executives," she said. Former Ontario Hydro Vice Presidents Hal Wright and Ted Burdette gave eulogies that placed a great deal of emphasis on Ron's commitment to advancing public power. "He fought right to the end and his work will be carried on by former Ontario Hydro chair Tom Campbell and others," said Forge.



**And that is the Society Newscast for Friday, September 30, 2005  
Members can hear the current Newscast by calling (416) 979-2709 x.2035**

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Society Newscast No. 2005:03

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