

News from the Society of Energy Professionals

Historic meeting sets new labour agenda for

GTA



Toronto & York Region Labour Council President John Cartwright presents plaque to Society President Rod Sheppard, expressing the Council's gratitude for the Society's "vital support of the costs involved with the Stewards' Assembly." (names of those pictured on p. 2)

Canadians need to take action to protect jobs and repair the social safety net for working families, said more than a thousand union representatives meeting last Thursday in Toronto.

"The red-suspended traders in the paper markets created this problem," Canadian Autoworkers (CAW) economist Jim Stanford told the assembly. "We are the ones who produce."

The leaders of the largest Canadian unions and labour federations were present at what Toronto and York Region Labour

Council President John Cartwright termed the first meeting of its kind. In response to the economic crisis that began last fall, more than 1,600 labour representatives assembled at the Sheraton Centre in downtown Toronto on Thursday, May 7th to "map out a collective defence of our collective agreements and the standard of living of our members."

As the Society/IFPTE Local 160 was a sponsor of the event, the Society's delegation was "piped in" to the meeting by the "Cassava Latin Band." (See photos, Labour Council web-site.) IFPTE International President Greg Junemann flew up from Washington, D.C. to co-lead the Society's delegation.

The Assembly was given a brief but pithy "Economics 101 for union members" by Jim Stanford, a researcher for the Canadian Autoworkers Union (see *NewsCast* 2008:04 for a brief synopsis). "This crisis ... was caused by the greedy, irresponsible, unproductive machinations of the financial sector," he said, "but if we're smart and act strategically we can come out of this crisis stronger than we went into it."

The Assembly heard from several workers who had been affected by the downturn, who had lost their jobs and were fighting back. While some were in pretty dire straits, there were a few who had successes to report. For example, **John Cameron**, a Hydro One Local unit director, stirred the Assembly with a recounting of the Society's 2005 struggle against two-tier wages and benefits for new-hires at Hydro One, noting the crucial support received at the time from the Labour Council.

Toronto Mayor David Miller was in attendance, and endorsed the aims of the Assembly. "I'm so impressed that you're all here together to fight for the right things, he said."

The first thing we have to fight for is to make sure that in Canada, in Ontario, and in the City of Toronto that we have good, decent jobs that pay people properly, where people have the right to organize ... and that's exactly what we're doing in the City of Toronto.

Those assembled considered a “solidarity checklist” handed out at the meeting. The list includes:

- ◆ Don't blame ourselves—or *other* workers: the current crisis was caused by those who getting million-dollar bonuses, outsourcing production, and engaging in all kinds of risky speculation
- ◆ Remember how the rules were changed—corporate lobbyists have held sway for dozens of years, calling for deregulation and cuts to the social safety net
- ◆ Ask tough questions about the “big picture” —when the wealthy tell us we have “no choice” but to accept concessions, they're lying to us
- ◆ Put fair rules in place—business needs to be governed by clear, enforceable rules of conduct
- ◆ Work hard to renew solidarity—just looking after one's *own* members won't be enough to get through the current downturn; we must look after each other
- ◆ Stand together for what we believe in! —adopting the labour movement's vision will provide good jobs and a decent quality of life for all

Two of the most important objectives of the campaign will be:

- ◆ Fix the (un-)employment insurance (EI) program—many, many of those laid off due to the downturn aren't eligible to collect EI, and the federal government continues the “economic robbery” of taking in far more in EI premiums than are paid out

Caption for photo, p. 1: (from left), Ralph Chatoor (OPG); Greg Junemann, IFPTE President; Bill Fitzpatrick, IFPTE Canada; Michelle Byck-Johnston, Hydro One Local UD; Dan Kellar, Society Staff Manager; (behind Kellar) Jim Botari, Hydro One Local UD; Cartwright; Sheppard; Leslie Forge, Society EVP Policy; Deodatt Somaru, OPG Local UD; Jennifer Pinks (New Horizon); Tracy Miller, Vertex Local VP.



On April 23rd, about a dozen Society and IFPTE personalities rallied at Queen's Park with thousands of other union members in support of labour demands that governments protect pension funds and benefits

- ◆ Guarantee Canada's pension funds, ensuring they are protected from the damage caused by speculative financial markets

National and provincial union leaders from the private and public sectors—from CAW President Ken Lewenza and United Steelworkers President Ken Neumann to Ontario Public Service Employees Union President Smokey Thomas—stood as one to endorse the “solidarity agenda.” Society President **Rod Sheppard** said, “On behalf of the 7,500 members of the Society of Energy Professionals, we pledge to support this [solidarity] campaign going forward.”

As reported on rabble.ca, Cartwright considered the evening a resounding success.

What we were trying to do was to reach deeply down into the labour movement and engage the true front-line activists that are our stewards, first in a common

understanding of the economic crisis, and secondly, hoping to secure a commitment to building a common response and collective defence of our achievements.

I'm hearing from people who are very, very enthusiastic about it. We brought a lot of folks into that room that haven't got together before.

The Assembly called on members and affiliates in the next month to:

- ◆ Promote the Council's EI petition to members in the workplace, with a target of having them submitted to the Legislature by the end of the month, as a show of solidarity with those who've lost their jobs
- ◆ Place "solidarity checklist" posters in every workplace
- ◆ Hold discussions with members about the solidarity campaign and what it means
- ◆ Prepare for a "good jobs for all" rally on June 13th at Metro Hall, downtown Toronto

Each table of about a dozen members of the Assembly turned in worksheets of ideas for the campaign. Cartwright says the Council is reviewing those ideas for the



Society President Rod Sheppard spoke on the Day of Mourning at Richview TS in northwest Toronto

purpose of formulating an action plan to roll out by Labour Day this year.

Society: We're all responsible for safety

Society representatives were active across the province on Workers' National Day of Mourning, advocating for safer workplaces.

At Richview TS, a Hydro One facility in northwest Toronto, Society President **Rod Sheppard** noted:

[On] the Day of Mourning we collectively pay our respects to our fellow workers who have been killed on the job, and we remember their sacrifices and those of their families.

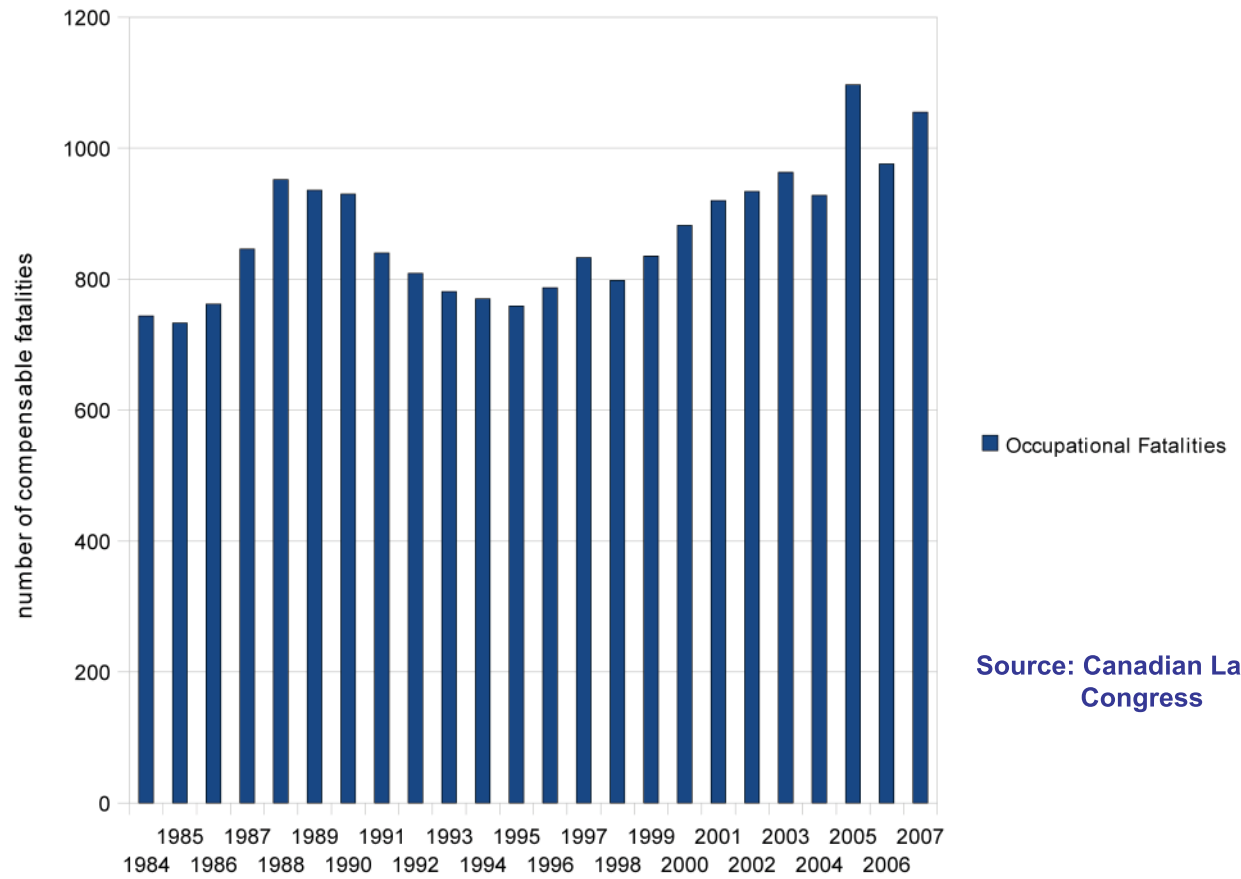
He and many other Society representatives participated in observances of the National Day of Mourning. The first National Day was held by the Canadian Labour Congress in 1984, making 2009 the 26th such day. In 1991, the day was recognized by the federal government, and is now observed across Canada. The Day of Mourning has spread to about 80 countries around the world, and has been adopted by the AFL-CIO and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

At the Ontario Grid Control Centre in Barrie, Society member **Lorraine Vella** asked that we:

...remember those who have gone before us, completing similar jobs as we do, but were not able to go home at the end of the day, or returned radically changed physically and/or mentally from when they left for work. [We] must also remember and honour their families and pledge that we will do all we can each and every day, that another family may never have to suffer such an unbearable tragedy.

Ceremonies were held all across Ontario Power Generation, including at R.H. Saunders GS near Cornwall, and Lennox GS near Kingston. OPG produces a video each year which is shown at its ceremonies. In the video, Presi-

Canadian Compensable Occupational Fatalities 1984 through 2007



dent Sheppard is quoted: “By the time you finish reading this message, another Canadian worker will be injured on the job—maybe even killed. Sadly, young, inexperienced workers are particularly at risk.”

At Kinectrics, commemorations are coordinated with OPG, and a mass safety meeting is held. At the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO), no ceremony is held, but a moment of silence is observed. Society Local VP **Scott Travers** gathered with other Society members in the IESO cafeteria for that moment. At Bruce Power, a ceremony is held in the Support Centre, and the assemblage

is then piped out to the ceremonial stone, where a prayer is said and the flag lowered.

Across the province, flags fly at half mast to honour the workers who have lost their lives over the years.

According to the Public Service Alliance of Canada, since the Day of Mourning came into existence more than 25,000 Canadian workers have lost their lives, including 488 in 2008 in Ontario alone. In that number must unfortunately be included Albert Plourdes, a member of the Canadian Union of Skilled Workers who died last May after falling at a Hydro One construction site outside Ottawa.

The most disturbing thing is that, despite the attention the labour movement's been able to bring to the issue over the last 25 years, the number of deaths is *on the increase* (see graph, p. 4) since 1996. This is most shameful, says the Canadian Labour Congress: it contrasts unfavourably with almost every other OECD country, where the incidence of workplace fatalities is declining. The Congress is calling for tough, new action:

It's time for the provinces and territories to appoint special prosecutors to lay charges against employers when their actions cause death or serious injury. More inspectors must be hired to ensure employers comply with the law. It's also time for all governments to enact new regulations that deal with known dangers in today's workplaces, including workplace violence, exposure to toxins and carcinogens, repetitive stress injuries and injuries caused by poor ergonomics, workplace harassment, and stress. Any workplace death or injury is preventable.

Society representatives noted in their speeches that everyone involved has duties in the effort to reduce workplace injuries, that each—including management—must take their part to ensure that 2009's fatalities are reduced, hopefully to zero.

Board highlights: April-May, 2009

The Executive Board met on Tuesday, April 7th, and Tuesday, May 5th. In addition to the budget and workplans (see below), the Board dealt with the following items.

Recognition: The Board recognized the following for outstanding contributions to the Society since the last meeting:

- ◆ **Joseph Fierro** for his monthly reports to members of the OPG Local on the doings at OPG
- ◆ Joseph Fierro and **Alex Saba**, both of the OPG Local, for their work on the Standing Finance Committee in helping the EVP Finance pull the budget together

- ◆ **Scott Travers**, IESO Local VP, for his educationals on the electricity system and markets

IFPTE Convention: The International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers will hold its 56th triennial convention in August in Las Vegas, Nevada. The IFPTE's convention is the supreme legislative, judicial, and reviewing authority of the union and its 85,000 members. While due to its numbers the Society is eligible to field more than 45 delegates, the Board chose to limit the Society's delegation to the Principal Officers, the Staff Manager, and one representative per local, for a maximum of 18.

Audit Committee: The Board appointed **Jim Botari**, a Hydro One protection and control supervisor (and Society unit director), and **Vesna Markovic**, an IESO market accounting and reporting analyst (and CGAI) to the Audit Committee. They join **Lanny Totton**, OPG Local VP, and **Tracy Miller**, Vertex Local VP, who are the Executive Board members of the Committee.

WiN Conference: The Society will sponsor two members of Sisters in Society (the Society's women's group) to the global Women in Nuclear conference in Washington, D.C. in July. The theme of the conference is "Enhancing our World through Nuclear Technology," and will offer Society representatives a range of technical topics and professional development opportunities. Attendants will also tour a nuclear power plant in Pennsylvania or Virginia.

FY 2009-10 budget/workplan set Non-dues income to supplement dues

Over a process taking several months, the Society's Executive Board has arrived at and approved a balanced operating budget for the 2009-10 fiscal year (FY).

"All our hard work has paid off," said Executive Vice President Finance **Bill Jones**. "Not only did we balance this year's budget, but we've also fashioned a way to benefit from our share in Bruce Power that is sustainable *and* balances our current and future needs."

By using [our asset base] wisely we'll be able to stave off a dues increase in the near term.

-Bill Jones

In dealing with the triple-whammy of a static dues rate, the need to pursue strategically Society members' interests in the current economic and political situation, and unforeseen expenditures from previous years, the Board was forced to make use of the Society's "non-dues" assets, Jones said. "Our asset base is extraordinary for a trade union, and

by using it wisely we'll be able to stave off a dues increase in the near term."

At its first glance at the 2009-10 FY in February, the Board was faced with a dues rate and a set of priorities for expenditures that would have resulted in a \$2.3 million operating deficit over the year. In addition, the Society's "reserve (contingency) fund" needed to be augmented, as it had fallen below amount set out in the Bylaws.

The situation has been building for a few years. Since 2002, when the Society dramatically re-structured itself, the number of fronts on which the members' interests have had to be protected has expanded greatly. In the past several years, among other things, the Society:

- ◆ Undertook a very active and public effort to force changes in 2004's Bill 100, a series of changes to the *Electricity Act*
- ◆ Undertook actions under the *Environmental Assessment Act* to ensure that new generation projects met environmental requirements
- ◆ Monitored closely and intervened in developments in the legislature, the Ontario Power Authority, and the Ontario Energy Board to protect members' interests
- ◆ Launched the "getting it right" lobbying campaign on electricity industry policy for the 2007 provincial election
- ◆ Fought a very public battle to prevent the offshoring of Society jobs in Inergi and New Horizon System Solutions

- ◆ Has been much more active and politically involved in the labour movement

In 2005-7 (and continuing), the Society, with substantial assistance from the IFPTE, undertook a massive governance audit, and implemented the Action Plan that resulted. In 2007-8, a workplace investigation was triggered and undertaken, many of the recommendations of which are expected to be implemented over the 2009-10 fiscal year.

"In all, it's been an extraordinary five years," said Jones, "which we carried out without a dues increase." He noted that many of the programs the Society took on over this time period would have been impossible without the Society's substantial income from sources other than dues. As no dues increase referendum is contemplated in the near future, he proposed, and the Board agreed, to institutionalize the practice (see "annuity payments," below).

In resolving the budget situation, the Board took the following actions:

- ◆ For each of the 2008-9 and 2009-10 fiscal years, \$1.1 million will be taken from the Society's "special events" fund (made up largely of distributions from the Bruce investment) and placed in the Reserve (contingency) Fund, in order to return it to the level required by the Society's Bylaws
- ◆ A "balanced budget policy and procedure" was passed that calls for budgets to balance over a five-year period; if this cannot be accomplished, a dues increase referendum is triggered
- ◆ The Society will take action to maximize its Bruce Power share, where possible, which will tend to increase distributions from the Bruce investment over time
- ◆ The Board will consider in May, and likely pass, a "dues annuity payment" from the "special events" fund that will supplement dues income into the foreseeable future
- ◆ To balance the budget in the longer term, the Board has set in motion a plan to stabilize dues income



On May 11th, Sisters in Society, the Society's women's group, rode a "big bike" in Oshawa, raising more than \$4,000 for the Heart and Stroke Foundation. The "big bike" tours more than 200 Canadian communities yearly in support of the foundation.

with regard to inflation; a referendum on the matter will be held sometime this fiscal year

- ◆ The Board continues to take action to strengthen internal accountabilities and controls

The Board passed an operating budget and workplans that include expenditures of close to \$8 million, on dues revenue of \$7.1 million. (The "operating budget" consists of the normal expenditures of the union, such as processing grievances and arbitrations, running the locals, bargaining collective agreements, etc.)

The Board also approved a number of special projects, including:

- ◆ Society members' dependants scholarship fund:

\$15,000 (start-up funding only)

- ◆ Aboriginal education fund: \$50,000 (start-up funding only)
- ◆ Engineering education: \$20,000
- ◆ Social events: \$10,000 (\$100,000 in up-front expenditures, and expected to net \$90,000 in participant contributions)
- ◆ Women's Committee: \$82,000
- ◆ Youth project: \$33,000
- ◆ Pensions project: \$60,000
- ◆ Governance/Strategic: \$20,000
- ◆ Donations and promotions: \$130,000

Last, the Board will devote \$155,000 to complete the Board training required by the 2007 Audit Action Plan.

“The workplans and projects are designed to meet the strategic priority objectives set by Society Council last November,” said Jones. Those were: internal organizing (the Solidarity Project); strategic and coordinated bargaining; and external organizing (see Newscast 2008:04).

As configured, after an “annuity payment” of some \$1.5 million, the budget will balance, and the overall situation of the Society will improve by \$800,000 by year’s end.

“I will run”: Sheppard

Society President **Rod Sheppard** has announced at a get-together at his home local that he will run for re-election in this fall’s Principal Officer election.



Society President Rod Sheppard to Bruce Power Local BeefFest: I’ll be running

Newscast 2009:01

While I’m here, while I’m home, I’d like to announce that I’m running for the presidency of the Society of Energy Professionals in the election commencing November, 2009... I’ll be honoured if I can represent you for three more years.

Sheppard made the announcement, which was followed by a long ovation, at the Bruce Power Local’s “BeefFest” in late February. More than 200 members of that local gathered at the community centre in Underwood, a hamlet about 12 km north of Kincardine, for a membership meeting, a festive meal, information from Society leaders about Local business and Society-wide issues, and door prizes. A photo gallery has been posted to the Society web-site.

Elections for the position of President and the three Executive Vice Presidents happen every three years. A call for nominations will be issued on September 8th, 2009, coinciding with that day’s meeting of the Executive Board.

Shaikh elected Director of Unit 6

Acting unit director **Shaukat Shaikh** has been elected to the position he’s held since last July.

He was challenged by senior engineer **Anthony Pin**; Shaikh won with 58 votes to Pin’s 37.

Unit 6 is a unit at OPG’s Pickering NGS, including, among others, that station’s training division. The position of unit director became vacant on the retirement of former UD **Jim Bristow**.

Shaikh promised voters to be a “conduit of information between Society members and leadership” and to “improve communication between the Employer and the Society.”

Bell elected Director of OEB Unit

Michael Bell has been elected Director of Unit 40—the Ontario Energy Board Local.

Running against Bell were **Dawn Hayle** and **Janet Sakaue**. Bell won with 54 votes to Hayle’s 16 and

Sakouye's 21. Turnout was high: more than 80 per cent of those eligible to vote did so.

Bell served on the bargaining team that negotiated the OEB Local's first collective agreement, as did Sakouye (see *NewsFLASH* 2008:05). In his campaign statement, he promised that he would be "committed to working with Management to develop a professional relationship that will address your issues of concern," and that he will "ensure that the lines of communication will always be open."

Kinectrics scientist wins technical award

Society member **Gabriel Ogundele** has won a technical achievement award from his professional group.

Ogundele's award is from NACE International, formerly the National Association of Corrosion Engineers. NACE has more than 20,000 members in over 100 countries.

"This award is very important to me," says Ogundele. "It's very satisfying that my contribution to the area of environment assisted cracking of metallic materials is so highly valued."



Kinectrics principal scientist Gabriel Ogundele

The award is based on his development of NS4, a simulated groundwater electrolyte that has become the standard for most corrosion laboratories worldwide for studying stress corrosion cracking of pipeline steels in near-neutral pH environments.

According to NACE, corrosion is the second leading cause of pipeline failure in Canada and the United States, costing more than \$8 billion per year.

Joining Ontario Hydro in 1988, Ogundele is presently a principal scientist in the Materials and Equipment Reliability Department at Kinectrics Inc. He is involved in numerous corrosion issues related to various components that include steam generators, heat exchangers, moderator cover gas systems, and buried piping.

Born and raised in Nigeria, Ogundele obtained a higher diploma in mechanical engineering from The Polytechnic in Abadan, Nigeria. He later attended the University of Calgary, where he obtained a MSc and PhD in mechanical engineering, specializing in metallurgy and corrosion. He has been a member of NACE for more than 30 years, and has held several leadership positions. He has authored more than 30 publications in corrosion science and engineering, and was co-winner of the Paul Cohen Memorial Award for the "most precise and innovative paper in the field of power systems water technology for the paper titled 'Corrosion Fatigue of Boiler Tubing - Effect of Water Chemistry,' presented at the 54th annual International Water Conference in 1993."

Ogundele is married, lives in Mississauga, and has four grown children—all in their twenties, and all of whom are at or have graduated from university. He has been a grandfather since last September, thanks to his first daughter, who is currently working for Shell in Malaysia. He is active in his community, both as archdiocese representative on the Central Committee for Catholic School Councils of the Dufferin-Peel, a leader in his church, and as past Grand Knight of a local chapter of the Knights of Columbus.

Kinectrics acquires Candesco

Kinectrics has acquired Toronto-based Candesco Corporation.

“Candesco’s specialized capabilities in the regulatory field and track record of success make it an ideal complement to expand Kinectrics’s position as a premier provider of nuclear-related engineering and testing services”, said David Harris, President and CEO of Kinectrics, Inc.

Candesco specializes in providing regulatory affairs consulting for the Canadian power industry, as well as licensing, safety assessment, radiation and environmental protection, and operational safety support.

Candesco will operate as a separate company in the Kinectrics “family” of companies. The Society expects the deal will result in more than 20 new Society-represented positions, as well as potential for significant growth with further Kinectrics successes.

“This is good for Kinectrics, good for the nuclear industry, and good for the Society,” said Society President **Rod**

Sheppard. “We’re happy to be participants in the successes of our Employers.”

Candesco was formed in 1999-2000 by several former employees of Atomic Energy of Canada, Ltd. and Ontario Hydro/Ontario Power Generation looking for new opportunities in the nuclear power industry. Their successes include several projects for AECL, Bruce Power, the CANDU Owners Group (COG), OPG, the Nuclear Waste Management Organization, ITER Canada, and others.

In 2007, Kinectrics acquired Axiom N.D.T. of Cambridge, Ontario, a company involved in field inspection of critical components for power generation and other industries.

Update: Sully re-elected

Hydro One Local member **Alourdes Sully** has been re-elected to the Board of the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers. See *Newscast* 2008:07 for the original story.

Society Newscast 2009:01

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