

News from the Society of Energy Professionals

Board Highlights: May to October



On June 21st, the Society sponsored its second annual charity golf tournament at the Deerfield Golf and Recreation Centre in Oakville. More than 80 golfers participated, raising more than \$5,000 for the Children's Wish Foundation. (Photo gallery on Society web-site.)

The Society's Executive Board met early in each month from May to October.

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

- ◆ All Society representatives who participated in and spoke on behalf of the Society at events held to commemorate April's National Day of Mourning for Workers Killed and Injured on the Job
- ◆ All Society members who participated in the Public Sector Leadership Summit in Toronto on April 15th

- ◆ All Society leaders and members who attended the Electrical Safety Authority Local's barbeque and rally on May 12th, providing a tremendous show of cross-local support for that Local's bargaining team and members
- ◆ Staff Officers **Lynda Crichton** and **Cheri Funston** for their work in producing a pocket guide to Roberts Rules of Order
- ◆ Member Services Officer **Laura Langmaid** for her work on the Society's 2nd annual charity golf tournament
- ◆ Hydro One Unit Director **Michelle Byck Johnston** and Member Services Officer **Laura Langmaid** for their contributions to organizing the Society's contingent in the Labour Day parade in Toronto

Society Growth: VP Membership Services **Dennis Minello** reported that the Society's total represented membership had topped 8,000.

Executive Committee: Each year at its April meeting, the Executive Board elects three members of the Board to sit on the Executive Committee, in addition to the four Principal Officers (President and three Executive VPs). The Board chose to re-elect **Joseph Fierro** (OPG), **Keith Rattai** (Hydro One), and **Rob Stanley** (Bruce Power) to serve another year term.

ESA Local bargaining: The Board followed and supported bargaining for a renewal collective agreement for the Society's local at the Electrical Safety Authority. In preparation for bargaining, the Board authorized the Local to pursue a compensation system to replace the Ontario Hydro performance pay plan that is still in effect, giving the Local strict parameters within which to bargain. In June, when bargaining was reaching a boiling point, the Board authorized the Local to

access the Collective Agreement Renewal fund, in preparation for a strike vote and possible strike action. Finally, after the Local conducted a very successful strike vote, in July the Board welcomed the news that the dispute had been resolved, with a number of issues sent to arbitration. (See article, next *Newscast*.)

EVP Finance: In August the Executive Board accepted, with regret, the resignation of **Lanny Totton** from the position of Executive Vice President Finance. The Executive Board has appointed **Rob Stanley** (Bruce Power) Acting EVP Finance. Meanwhile, the Board approved a bylaw change requiring an election to be held when a position is vacated shortly into its term. (Society Council approved that change on October 25th, and so an election for EVP Finance will shortly thereafter be held.)

The Board appointed **Tracy Miller** (Vertex) to take the position on the Executive Committee opened by the Stanley appointment. Her appointment to the Executive Committee left a vacancy on the Audit Committee, so the Board appointed **Stanley Pui** (OPG) to that position.

Toronto Initiative: The Society has extended an invitation to two groups of municipal professionals to affiliate with the Society. In June the Board approved an affiliation agreement with the Toronto Municipal Professionals (see *Newscast* 2009:05), who are currently organizing in an attempt to negotiate a bargaining agreement in their city. The Board also approved a proposed affiliation with the Civic Association of Non-Union Employees (CANUE) in Windsor. In the Windsor case, CANUE has already been recognized as a bargaining agent, and has an agreement with the City.

Finances: In August the Board approved the audited financial statements for Fiscal Year 2009-10. They have been posted to the members-only pages of the Society web-site. The Board re-appointed Grant Thornton to serve as the Society's external auditors for FY 2010-11.

In September, the Board approved a "Society Payment Procedure" that allows for the issuance of invoice payments up to a limit of \$100,000 through electronic funds

transfers (EFTs). EVP Finance **Rob Stanley** argued that the Society should move to paperless transitions wherever possible. The payment procedure ensures that the approvals process for EFTs will be as stringent as that for cheques (which requires two signatures).

Scholarship Policy: In September the Board adopted a policy setting out the specifics of a scholarship program to assist the children of Society members in pursuing post-secondary education. President Sheppard reported that the scholarship program is an important element of the "solidarity project" approved by Society Council in 2009. Beginning for the 2011-12 academic year, the Society plans to award:

- ◆ 14 "Society future leaders awards" in the amount of \$2,500
- ◆ 15 "Society performance excellence awards" in the amount of \$1,000

In addition, the Society's Pensioners' Chapter will fund one of each type of award per year, available only to the children of Chapter members.

Each scholarship will be for one academic year only, and recipients will not be eligible for subsequent scholarships. Applicants will either be enrolled in grade twelve, or in a full-time, accredited post-secondary degree or diploma program at a recognized Canadian education institution.

Application will be made through a module in the members' only pages of the Society's web-site, from December through February in each year. Announcements of the opening of applications will be sent to each Society member in December of each year.

The full scholarship policy will be posted soon on the Society web-site.

Events: The Board authorized President Sheppard's attendance at the District 6 Conference of the United Steelworkers of America (USW), held in August in Halifax. The President was invited by USW Director Wayne Fraser to make a presentation on privatization to the USW delegates. The Board also approved President Sheppard's

attendance at the Energy Roundtable, in Calgary in September. The conference was to discuss investment in a sustainable energy future for Canada. (In the end, President Sheppard was unable to attend.)

The Board also approved the attendance of a Society representative at the 22nd annual conference of the Employee Assistance Society of North America (EASNA), held in May in Montreal. EASNA describes itself as an association focused on advancing knowledge, research, and best practices toward achieving healthy and productive workplaces. **Tony Kokus**, OPG unit director and member of OPG's tripartite Employee and Family Assistance Plan, was slated to attend (and has since done so).

President Sheppard was a guest of honour at the awards banquet of the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, held in Regina in June.

Bruce Power Local physician housing: In September the Board heard a presentation from Mike Smith, mayor of the town of Saugeen Shores. His honour congratulated and thanked the Society for participating in the municipality's effort to attract physicians to the area (see *Newscast* 2009:04) by purchasing a townhome in Southampton. The Board then released the \$350,000 payment for the home. (The money comes entirely from the Bruce Power Local's portion of the Society's equity funds.)

Bruce Power Local Easter Seals: The Board approved a \$25,000 donation to Easter Seals, to come from the Bruce Power portion of the Society's equity funds. For its dona-

tion, the Society sponsored tables at Easter Seals fundraising events.

Pensioners' Chapter: The Society's Pensioners' Chapter held its Annual General Membership Meeting in May, and added two "at-large" positions to its Executive. Such changes must be approved by the Executive Board; in June that approval was achieved.

In June the Board endorsed the Pensioners' Chapter's undertaking to campaign and lobby for federal parliament to pass Bill C-501, a private member's bill to protect Canadian pensions (see next *Newscast* for more detail).

Donations: From time to time, the Society supports the members of other unions where it becomes necessary for them to take strike action (or are locked out by their employers) to achieve fairness for their members. In September the Executive Board adopted a set of guidelines for determining when and in what amounts to donate to such causes. As the guidelines set out, such donations are not altogether altruistic—the Society has been the grateful recipient of such assistance in the past, and may well need it in the future.

The Board donated \$10,000 to the Strike Assistance Fund (SAF) of District 6 of the United Steelworkers of America (USW). District 6 is currently building its SAF, a process the Society underwent in the early to mid-2000s. The Donation will help support a number of USW locals currently on strike in Ontario and the Atlantic provinces.

Society Newscast 2010:02

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N.B. Society Newscasts are numbered in accordance with the Society's fiscal year. Newscasts will be numbered 2010 until March 31st, 2011.