



# The C.U.P.E. Connection

May 2006: Inside: Coalition Notes, Election News & More

## President's Message: Council Decisions Good for City workers



I was having a hard time coming up with something to write about in this article for this month, and then I went to a Council meeting. No problem writing the article now.

The council meeting was actually a council retreat at the Winspear Centre. The topic of discussion for the day was "What was City Hall going to do with all that surplus money that they had budgeted for but didn't spend last year?". You know this is money that we as city workers helped save through all of our hard work and innovative ideas. There was also a WCB rebate that the city received because we all worked safer last year. Let me tell you about this money first. This money is usually allocated back into Health and Safety programs or projects that make our workplace safer. This is what WCB encourages employers to do with their rebates. After all, a safer workplace means less injuries and that means less WCB premiums. It seems like simple math doesn't it? During the discussion Mayor Mandel

thought it might be a good idea for the WCB rebate money to pay for the extra policing along Whyte Ave for the celebrations/riots after Oilers games. Now I am an Oilers fan and wish them the best of luck, however I don't understand how extra policing along Whyte Ave after Oilers games should come at the expense of the safety of our members. It seems to me that if the bar owners along Whyte Ave ( who enjoy a very healthy increase in business because of the playoffs), require extra policing and clean up then shouldn't that be reflected in their annual tax base? Partying on Whyte Ave as a celebration is not a new concept. Take one city street, let alcohol serving establishments set up and compete with each other for patrons to consume their wares, and yes, you have a ready made party. There goes that simple math thing again. At the end of the day the majority of councilors used common sense and voted to put that money into improving the quality of the air at Bus Garages so workers there will be able to enjoy a safer work place. **A good council decision**

The Surplus money debate has been going on for a couple of months now with some Councilors wanting to do the popular thing and give a rebate back to taxpayers. A good thing if it is feasible. When you are talking about a city that has an infrastructure deficit of billions of dollars it made more sense to put the money in cover rising construction costs. At the end of the day that was what council decided to do. **A second good decision made by council.**

Now that council has gone through this process and made some very good steps to improving the future of the City of Edmonton as a whole. Let's hope they will take that train of thought with them into the budget deliberations for 2007 and look at the work the city has to do and the people it is going to take to do it and increase the number of FTE's in there budget line. **That would be another good decision by council.**



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## CUPE Alberta Weeklong School 2006

First I would like to thank the membership of Local 30 for giving me the opportunity to attend the CUPE weeklong school in Red Deer. I took the arbitration course along with Mike Scott, Dennis Mol and Rob Kuziw.

The week started off with an opening assembly on Sunday at 7 PM with workshops beginning immediately thereafter. We had a chance to meet our facilitator and receive our workload for the week. Afterwards we headed back to the dorms with our thick and heavy course binders giving us an indication of what was in store for the upcoming week.

Monday we started with going over the proper procedures and times lines for filing grievances. This part was just to refresh our memories of the process. The remainder of our time through Wednesday we covered other topics such as, Forwarding to Arbitration, Arbitration History, Arbitration Roster, Appointments, Gov't Appointments, Preparing for the hearing, Start of the hearing, Arbitrability, Types of preliminary objections, Exclusion of witnesses and the Order of Proceedings.

At the end of each day we were given assignments for the next day's class. On Wednesday when we returned from coffee break to find we had volumes of Labour Arbitration Casebooks and the Brown and Beatty research books. I must admit that I found these books a little intimidating, but once our facilitator explained how to use these books it wasn't so scary.

We were then given our assignments for the next day. That evening after dinner my partner and I spent about two and half hours preparing to do the research that was required in order for us to write an opinion letter.

Thursday morning our class went to the CUPE office in Red Deer where we spent the entire day using the library doing our research and preparing our opinion letter for presentation to the class and to be evaluated by our facilitator. I have to add that this was quite a stressful day trying to get all the facts and preparing our opinion letter in a proper and professional manner to which I might add that we all succeeded with a great sense of accomplishment.



On Friday we spent the first part of our morning recapping all that we had covered over the past week. After that we got together for class pictures and closing plenary.

I would like to take the opportunity to say thank you to our facilitator Linda Huebscher, CUPE Alberta's lawyer, for the wealth and experience she shared with us over the week. I would also like to thank CUPE Alberta for putting on the Red Deer weeklong school.

I would also like to add that this Arbitration course, coupled with the other courses I have taken through CUPE, AFL and the EDLC, has given me the knowledge and tools as a shop steward to be able to deal with the many issues that we as Civic Employees face in our work place. In my opinion it is very important that we as shop stewards get the education that is necessary to deal with these issues.

Again to the membership of Local 30, "THANK YOU"

In Solidarity, Terry Jardine



# Coalition Beat

*Dave Loken, Liaison Representative*

Spring has sprung and so have a lot of other issues. Bargaining has begun once again and we are very early in the process. City Council has set the tax rate for 2006 and with the many surpluses and a one-time dividend from the Ed-Tel fund there are no lack of projects to spend the money on. **We hope they save some for the bargaining table.**

Some of the issues that we are currently involved with are the Hotline/Whistleblower and the Diversity and Inclusion policy. City Council just recently voted and approved this issue to go forward with direction to the City Auditor. It has been controversial from the start. The Coalition's position on this issue from the start has been that we are not in favor of the employee hotline. We do see merit in a whistleblower policy that protects our members but we have to be careful that we do not compromise our role as unions at the same time. We have just recently written to the City Auditor telling him that we cannot take part in the formulation of this policy. It is going for final approval on June 13 in front of council.

Many questions have been posed and the City Auditor has given few answers. We will continue to observe and monitor this policy as it develops. We are most concerned with the kind of workplace that could be created as a result of this policy and we will endeavor to make sure that it is done fairly and with minimal disruption. The City Auditor is busy with a number of audits currently being carried out in Transit and Drainage. The Drainage Audit is particularly strange because a consultant hired to do the audit has stated that it is a very well run branch. It seems some politicians may still be a bit upset over the failed attempt to transfer it to EPCOR. Get over it!

The new Diversity/Inclusion initiative is a major one that is being driven by SMT and City Council. We are very early in the process here as well and I have little to report so far other than a few observations. The coalition is part of the working group that will steer this project with the overall objectives to and I quote "develop and promote strategies to increase the diversity of the city's work force and promote a customer service strategy that recognizes the diversity of its citizens and customers within the city."

I would like to close with some positive news for CSU 52 members who work in the area of short term counseling. There has been of late some nervousness as to how this area would continue to offer the very valuable services that it provides. A City Auditor's report back in the fall pointed out some issues specific to the service delivery in this area. It recommended three options on how the service should continue or not at all. I am happy to report that City Council unanimously approved the second option, which will improve the service and continue it in a more positive way.

Have a great summer !

**CUPE Local 30**

**BAR-B-QUE**

**JUNE 17, 2006**

**11am – 2pm**

**Rundle Park**

**FREE TO ALL MEMBERS AND THEIR  
FAMILY**

**\*PLEASE PHONE THE UNION HALL  
TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE**

**426-6050, BY JUNE 9<sup>TH</sup>, 2006**

## Frank's Corner

Every day we hear in the news of a new hit and run, or murder, or perhaps of a senior being attacked or scammed out of their life savings. The courts appear to find every excuse possible to issue as light a sentence as they can give to these poor unfortunate criminals that leave the poor victims with the feeling that justice is not served.

It is becoming extremely common for hit and run drivers to be given a slap on the wrist and handed a short jail sentence or a suspended sentence and not a very long license suspension which lets them back on the road perhaps to do it again.

Another factor that has become evident is that the poor criminals' mental state at the time of the crime seems to be a major point of the legal system and carries a lot of weight with the judges and are often seen as outrages of the public which leaves the victims feeling that there is no justice.

We have had protests going on around the world over the cartoons that were published by Danish newspapers which upset Muslims globally. Unfortunately most of the people attacked were not party to the cartoons, but innocent victims.

Somehow in the near future political leaders must find answers to these problems or the whole world will be in Chaos.

Bro F. McGregor (ret)

I had the opportunity to participate in the 14 week Union Counseling course provided by Local 30 and put on by the United Way, all I can say is WOW, what an experience it was. We met every Wednesday night for 3 hours and 2 full Saturdays for fourteen weeks, we covered many topics with experts in their fields. Our class was of many different unions, backgrounds, past and present life experiences.

We were not trained to be counselors at this course, we were given the skills to get people to help if and when they may need it, whether it be help for stress, sexual abuse, physical abuse, drug addiction, prostitution, family counseling, unfortunately the list was and is endless.

There were 6 CUPE Local 30 members that graduated from this class and we are all ready, able and willing to help any member with any problem that they may have at home or at work.

Union counselors are important in our workplace, if you don't feel comfortable going to the employer for help, it gives you, our members somewhere else to turn for assistance. I strongly recommend this course to all our shop stewards, it gives us the tools to better support our members, I also recommend this course to any member that is interested in helping people in general. We, the local 30 counselors will be developing an information brochure for the members. Counselors are listed on the local web site and remember that all issues large or small are in confidence. In solidarity: Dennis Mol

### River City Credit Union Ltd. suggests ...

Member Card/Debit Card fraud is on the rise, paralleling the Alberta Boom.

Card fraud can occur when a person copies (skims) the information on the back of your card and combines that with your Secret Code (PIN). This information allows the creation of a counterfeit card and will provide the fraudster with access to your account through any ATM or retail store terminal.

The first point of fraud prevention begins with you - the Cardholder.

Be selective where you use your card.

It appears most Member Card/Debit Cards are compromised in places where there is: (i) high staff turnover (ii) minimum/hourly wage employees (iii) minimal supervision of these employees

If you are ever in doubt whether or not to use your card at a particular business – simply pay with cash or credit.

Never let your card out of your sight, even for a split-second. It only takes two seconds to compromise your card.

Never give out your PIN to anyone – not even family members. If you do, and your card is compromised, you are not protected; you are responsible for your losses.

Never use a PIN that would be obvious to anyone who steals your card (i.e. phone number, street address, etc).

Even if you're alone, when keying your PIN cover the PIN pad so no one can see the keys you are pressing (fraudsters commonly use hidden cameras to watch PIN entry). This applies to all retail PIN pads and all ATM PIN pads. If a PIN pad appears modified or unusual in any way, pay with cash or credit (PIN pads may be modified in order to record your key entry).

The Member Card/Debit Card system is a safe system – but to ensure the integrity of the system – system security begins with you - the Cardholder.

River City Credit Union Ltd. personnel are available to provide you with suggestions to protect you and your Credit Union from potential Member Card fraud.

Patrick M. Wright  
River City Credit Union

### *Flowers and Baskets*

**We wish all the best to our**

**Brothers and Sisters**

**Speedy Recovery!**

**(and our sincerest apologies to the Farhat family for our oversight)**

Ray Lewis \* Michelle Brody-Carter

Gary Machney \* Rob Marianix

Mike Kidniak \* Antonio Danese

Zan Figol \* Antonio Salerno

### *With Sincere Sympathy*

**We wish to express our deepest**

**Sympathy to our Brothers and Sisters**

**who have recently lost a loved one:**

Joe DiNatale \* Al Bender

Charlie Bender \* Gary Adams

Gerry Footz \* James Manolescu

Don and Russell Loyie

### **The Families of:**

Brother s James Palkowski , Leo Berube, and Barry Henick

### **Up-Coming Events**

**Next General Meeting June 28th 4:30PM**

**Elections June 9-16 Various Locations/see schedule included in package**

**Family Bar-B-Que June 17th Rundle Park**

**NEXT ISSUE: RETIREMENT/SPRING BANQUET NOTES  
AND PICTURES, ELECTION RESULTS AND MORE**