

The St. Patrick's Day Riot

It is a bit unusual in this modern age to hear talk about pride and dignity, and the shame and embarrassment associated with losing them. After the events of this past weekend, all these usually deep-buried sentiments have been considered by almost all of the people associated with Fanshawe College. Downcast eyes, slumped postures, lowered heads and heightened colour have made the presence of shame and embarrassment plain to observers around our unusually quiet college campus this week. Anger too, as people wrestled with the fact that their work, their effort, their *reputation*—another old-fashioned term—had been damaged by the reckless, dangerous acts of others.

Talking to various employees of the college this week—support staff, managers, and faculty—I have heard a range of reactions. At one end of the spectrum is advice to drop the topic, and not to dwell on it. Assurances that this latest incident, one of many, will all be forgotten in a week or so were joined with the statement that enrollment will probably go up! What type of student would subsequently be attracted to Fanshawe is not the question: 'bums in seats' is what matters. At the other end of the spectrum is acute anger, coupled with disgust. Dominant amongst the reactions were expressions of embarrassment and shame, and feelings of loss and sadness.

Most of the students I talked to echoed the sentiments felt by employees—embarrassment and shame, but there was a lot more anger. Students not involved, which of course means almost all of them, are extremely angry. They are trying to focus on final papers, assignments, and preparing for exams

while fielding calls from friends and family. While crossing Sanford some of my students had drivers shoot them filthy looks or give them 'the finger'. They feel horribly and unfairly stereotyped by the actions of the people there that night. They are worried about their employment prospects and the stigma they may face in the future.

After the Vancouver riot, British Columbians experienced the same feelings that many at our college and in London are feeling now. Going from the high of the Winter Olympics to the low of the hockey riot 16 months later was a precipitous plunge. The citizens of B.C. were deeply wounded, and flailed around for a way to heal. We may have to go through the same process.

CBC commentator Rex Murphy noted after the Vancouver riot that "fools don't need a motive to be fools. Destructive and threatening fools are no exception to this rule." While the Vancouver riot was on a much larger scale than the St. Patrick's one here, they shared one frightening element: both crowds scorned and actively attacked the emergency personnel who had been called in. Even fire fighters, needed because of a fire, were turned back. People who believe that this event was just one of drunken revelry gone wrong should take time to contemplate the violent assault of the emergency workers.

I have spoken to a few students who admitted to being at the riot. Their comments? "It was really interesting." "I was never in danger. The people were really friendly and having a good time." "The cops were the enemy, and we were all focused on that." One particular student looked happy when recalling

being united against a common foe. No remorse was shown. There was no feeling at all for the human beings who were being pelted with bottles and debris. The police officers were completely dehumanized, a frightening fact.

In contrast to the happy post-riot glow of some participants, it's plain that the rioters and enabling bystanders have caused great unhappiness in others.

Many are engaged in speculation about the causes of this riot. Almost all reasons offered are questionable, because an event of this sort did not happen elsewhere. Unseasonably warm weather. Saturday. Binge drinking. St. Patrick's day. Students being students. Student ghetto. This bleeping generation of no-account kids and their...(list what's wrong with this generation). The "perfect storm." Well, all these factors are true of almost all other post-secondary schools around Ontario, and this event didn't happen anywhere else. What is it about London, or Fleming Drive, or Fanshawe College?

Perhaps answers to the causes of the riot will come one day. But now, we have to move from shock to action. We can support grassroots attempts to repair the physical damage. But we must also address the non-physical damage that has been caused, to our dignity, our reputations, our pride.

If you don't think that the riot was a big deal, fine. But for those of us who do, we need first to acknowledge and validate what many members of the London and Fanshawe communities are feeling. Then, we move forward to rebuild and restore. ☙

Jennifer Boswell

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Local 110 gives \$10,000 gift

Local 110 is proud to announce that our members voted for a \$10,000 donation to establish a new student bursary fund. This gift will be eligible for matching contribution from the Province of Ontario Ministry of Training and Colleges and Universities. The resultant combined amount of \$20,000 will generate one bursary **of \$500** to be presented annually in perpetuity to a Fanshawe College student.

This bursary is one more way we teachers, librarians and counsellors are helping our students. ☹



Jason Drury, Mgr. of Awards and Scholarships, Catherine Finlayson, Exec. Dir. of Development Office, and Darryl Bedford, President of Local 110, faculty union

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President's Message *by Darryl Bedford*

Making a Difference



It has been nearly two years since I was elected Local President. Time has flown by for sure.

Thinking back on my term, I considered the solid base that the local executive had to work with. There is a checklist that OPSEU provides to new local presidents that details what it is that they should ask for on the first day of office; everything on the list was already in place. That solid foundation was built by Paddy Musson, Gary Fordyce, and Tom Geldard.

We then got to the business of transition while at the same time providing advice and guidance to other locals. We held a workload workshop for the CAAT(A) locals in Southwestern Ontario.

We launched *The Educator*. We maintained our membership in the London and District Labour Council and our ties with the house of labour.

When there were emergency situations such as member illness, we responded. During my term, we negotiated and sought OPSEU approval for twelve local agreements with Fanshawe College. We have shown how we can engage in a respectful dialogue with administration. We have become more strategic on the issue of under-staffing at the college.

Our members stepped up and made record donations to United Way, either through the employer or on their own.

When Local 109 members were on strike, we made \$30,000 in donations and provided thousands of dollars in supplies. No doubt that was a bold and unprecedented level of support from any union anywhere at anytime. These are people we work with every day. It sent a strong message not just to the support staff but to management as well.

When CAW Local 27 members were locked out by ElectroMotive, we were there with a \$500 donation and support, walking beside them during the lockout. CAW 27 had always been there for Locals 109 and 110 during our work stoppages, so it only made sense.

We undertook a campaign to remind the college

community and the public of the good work that our faculty do every day. The focus has been on buildings and amenities for too long. Recent ads had a single, fleeting image of the core mission of the college—guiding students, in and outside the classroom. We say that Fanshawe's people are "the heart" of the college. The good day-to-day work of faculty often goes unrecognized and unheralded. The college's "Our Values" project aims to record extra special stories from employees. I see it as no coincidence that the employer announced the 'Values' project the very morning our first billboard went up.

The events on March 17 and 18th on Fleming Drive are a challenge that we have to tackle together. Locals 109, 110, and the FSU have been sharing information and advice on issues that affect the college community. The FSU has shown great leadership through all of this and we will help Veronica Barahona and her executive where we can. We know that you as faculty were disturbed by the events and we will work with different stakeholders inside the college to address the concerns raised by faculty.

The daily work of the union continues. Although we settled some grievances and managed to change the forms used by Morneau Shepell, the college's third party health provider, we have had problems where members have been denied access to sick days despite medical evidence. There have also been some grievances on bullying and harassment. Members come to us frequently for help and advice. Every day the union works toward its goal of a healthy and happy workplace.

We have made a difference.

We can continue to make a difference, no matter what 2012 brings.

Our members have the talent and the commitment.

Together, we *will* make a difference. \$

Darryl

The Rumour Mill: Layoffs?



Some members have brought to our attention that rumours about layoffs are circulating around the college, and are rampant in certain schools or departments. The gist of the rumours is that with the expiration of the collective agreement on August 31, 2012, there will be a round of layoffs to follow.

The rumours also relate the idea that it is wholly at the discretion of the Chair of departments who will be laid off. An extension of this assertion is that seniority will mean nothing, and Chairs will get to decide who stays and who goes because of student enrollment and program offerings.

Another layer to the message is that faculty will be bumped by not only other full time workers from other departments within the college, but by contract workers, and that many will find themselves out of a job.

Whew. There's a lot to address here. First, an editorial comment—*what?* Layoffs? With growth targets of 2% per year? With \$8.6 million surplus in the operating fund? With campuses opening up downtown, and classrooms at Oxbury Mall? With class sizes as large as they are in many schools/departments? With student enrollment numbers as high as they are? With 11 *net new* faculty hires in Lane Trotter's academic plan? Layoffs are not impossible, perhaps, but very unlikely.

There are some areas of the collective agreement (CA) in particular that you could familiarize yourself with if you are indeed worried. First, Articles 27.05 and 27.06 in our collective agreement lay out a complex series of actions that have to take place before layoffs can occur. Based on these articles, there is no way that layoffs will come without notice, and lots of it. The very first thing that the college must do if they are contemplating layoffs is to notify the Union Local President, Darryl Bedford, and the College Employment Stability Committee (CESC). **No such notification has been received.** What is the CESC? Look at Article 28.02: it is a committee composed of 4 members, two appointed by the College and two by the Union Local. The purpose of this committee is to (28.03) deal with issues of employment stability. It guides the implementation of the provisions of Article 27 relating to layoffs and placing and displacing 'bumped' workers if layoffs are underway.

Articles 27.05 and 27.06 identify a chain of events that have to happen before full-time members who have completed their probation can be laid off. The articles do favour full-time members and their seniority, then partial-load members and their seniority, then part-time employees, and lastly sessional employees.

Basically, the chain goes like this: if a full-time member is to be laid off, after the union president and the CESC are notified, the full-time member under threat of layoff—

1. Has the option to fill another vacant full-time position
2. May be reassigned to displace another full-time employee with less seniority in the same classification

3. May be reassigned to displace another FT employee with less seniority in another classification

4. May be assigned to displace two PL employees

5. May displace one PL employee or two or more PT employees

6. May displace PT employees

7. May displace sessional employees.

Upon completion of the assignments of the displaced employees, the FT employee can fill a FT position if it's available. "Approved retraining activities" are also possible. All such displacements are conditional on the fact that the person under threat of layoff "has the competence, skill and experience to fulfill the requirements of the position concerned." Failing all this, layoff is possible.

Another editorial comment: it's terrible to talk about the possible displacement of more vulnerable colleagues, but the above paragraph does represent what happens under layoff conditions.

Additionally, through the CESC, the Joint Employment Stability Reserve Fund (JSERF-see Article 28.08) may be utilized to support tuition for retraining for the purposes of continued employment. Currently, there is \$260,000 in the fund. Also, a laid off person is considered for two years after layoff for any positions opening up at the college.

There has been no notification to the CESC of possible layoffs. So why the layoff rumours?

It's not responsible for anyone to be circulating talk about layoffs when there is so much work to be done—and so much work available.

In our opinion, the rumours are a scare tactic used by certain Chairs.

If you still have concerns, please come talk to us in D2018. ☺

Volunteer activities:

a) Important; b) Not important; c) both a) and b)

Recently there has been a series of communications from Dr. Howard Rundle, our esteemed president, about volunteering outside the college culminating in the announcement of a 'Fanshawe People' page on the ever-popular Portal. This new page is to provide information to the Fanshawe community including "a new feature on the myFanshawe portal where we'll share news about the volunteer activities Fanshawe employees participate in." I am not quite sure who the 'we' is that is mentioned. On this page Howard once again espouses how he feels:

"It was heartwarming to know how many of you are involved in charitable organizations like Habitat for Humanity, Meals on Wheels, Foster Parents, the Food Bank, Diabetes Association, Canadian Cancer Society and more; so many of you are involved in coaching soccer, hockey and baseball; you are mentors and advisors with groups like Anago, Original Kids, the Canadian Cadets and Scouts; and you have special interests in the arts, culture, heritage and environmental groups to name a few. It's an endless list of contributing to the vitality and strength of the communities in which we live."

I am glad he feels this way. And, so are a number of you. It recognizes the contributions of the faculty and staff to the community at large. So it was somewhat of a surprise when a faculty member referred her timetable to the Workload Monitoring Group after she was scheduled to teach a

class during the time she had requested to be exempt from, by way of a 'timetabling exception request', citing a long standing volunteer commitment. Her request for a timetabling exception had been turned down--which was a bit of a surprise to her since the same request had been accepted the previous semester.

I spoke to the faculty member to learn the details of the referral and, as co-chair of WMG, I presented the faculty member's concerns to the management representatives on the WMG. I described how she has been involved with this volunteer organization for more than 20 years and sits on local, provincial and national committees and boards. Management representatives took the faculty member's concerns away to consider--and returned with no resolution. In an attempt to resolve the referral, I made a motion during the next WMG meeting that the faculty member's "timetable be revised to allow time to complete her volunteer obligations without undue hardship." The faculty representatives on WMG voted unanimously in favor of the motion, but it was defeated.

Considering it might be difficult to retroactively change a faculty member's timetable, as we all have been told "this would cause a ripple effect disrupting the entire college scheduling system" which is

another matter entirely--I made another motion:

"That the Workload Monitoring Group recommend the College revise the scheduling exception process to include consideration of volunteer activities to reflect the importance of volunteer activities and their social contributions *as expressed by the president of Fanshawe College.*" (emphasis added).

Once again the faculty representatives on WMG voted unanimously in favor of the motion, but this motion was also defeated. It is within the mandate of the WMG to make recommendations to the College with regard to workload concerns (Art. 11.01 C 1 (iii)) and I thought we should support the President's volunteer initiative.

I believe if the College promotes volunteer activities as important, they should be considered so consistently by the entire College, not only as it might be convenient for marketing or public relations purposes. This is only one of a long list of inconsistent, at times contradictory, communications by the College that confound a great number of us working here. It also confounds many that our President would wax lyrical about the faculty's endeavors off-campus and be mum about our daily triumphs in the myriad of learning arenas that make up Fanshawe College.

It seems odd to me that our President has taken on volunteering as a crusade to show how faculty and staff at Fanshawe contribute to the "vitality and strength of the communities in which we live." but other managers, including those responsible for timetabling, have not joined him on his quest. ☹

~Fred Varkaris





Chief Steward's Report *by Fred Varkaris*

The importance of being 'SWF'ed— *The SWF is a legal contract between you and the college*

Many of us are already receiving our fall workload SWFs and engaging in discussions with our Chairs with regard to this work. Having this discussion with your Chair is **not** an optional exercise. Article 11.01 A 1 (a) of the Collective Agreement indicates "*Prior to the establishment of a total workload for any teacher the supervisor shall discuss the proposed workload with the teacher and complete the SWF*". This discussion **must** take place.

If, after discussing your workload, you would like to look at previous SWFs, refer to the course information sheet or talk to other faculty members about evaluation factors or the like, you have three days to do so before returning the signed SWF. Before signing, check that the dates listed on the SWF reflect the actual dates they refer to (discussion, receipt and signature). This is an important consideration, as faculty members only

have three days after receipt of a SWF to refer their workload to WMG if they are not in agreement with the assignment (Art. 11.02 A4). Remember that the SWF is a legal contract. The dates also demonstrate compliance with other requirements of the collective agreement such as six week lead time. Underneath your signature you must indicate by checking the box whether you agree with the workload or want the assigned workload to be reviewed by the Workload Monitoring Group.

The Union members of the WMG review all of the SWFs every semester to ensure they conform to the CA but also to ensure equitable distribution of work and to ensure SWFs and timetables match. But only **you** know whether ALL of your work is being captured on your SWF.

The SWF is an integral part of the Collective Agreement and the only aspect of your workload that you and your chair negotiate. The SWF must list all of the courses you are teaching along with the correct preparation and

evaluation for each (which must match evaluation listed on the CIS). All of your other non-teaching work such as time for **meetings, committees, coordinator duties, union duties, curriculum development, competitions, open houses, research and all other work you are undertaking for the College during the semester** must be assigned time on an hour-for-hour basis under 'Complementary Functions.' **The SWF is your contract with the college.** Ensure all work listed can be completed during the period of the SWF. If not, talk to your Chair. The CA outlines how our work is defined and captured, but it is up to individual faculty members to ensure their SWF is accurate and complete.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns please contact me. ☎

Fred Varkaris
Chief Steward &
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NDP Post-Secondary Round Table

On Friday, February 10, Official Opposition Post-Secondary Education Critic, MP Rathika Sitsabaiesan visited Fanshawe College. She was accompanied by London Fanshawe MP Irene Mathysen and London Fanshawe MPP Theresa Armstrong. MP Sitsabaiesan has proposed a federal Post Secondary Education Act that would split out the federal allocation to post-secondary education as a separate funds

transfer. It would add more transparency to the funding process. A petition is available for download at <http://www.opseu110.ca/Post%20Secondary%20Education%20Act%20petition.pdf>

In addition to Local 110, Local 109 and the FSU were also invited to the round-table. College administration was also present. Darryl Bedford and Kathryn Tamasi attended and spoke to

current issues such as increased class sizes, accountability, operating funding, and changes in the classroom environment. Local 109 President Wil Sorrel raised concerns about the commercialization of education. It was a great discussion and a good opportunity to meet the MPs and MPPs and their staff. ☎

Board of Governors' Report *by Kay Wigle*

Board Of Governors votes for transparency in the operational surplus

Scott Porter, Vice-President of Finance and Corporate Services, informed the BOG that there is a larger operating surplus than what was originally projected. The February 23rd Financial Monitoring Report states, "the college completed its Fall Budget Review and concluded there is a surplus of \$1,300,000 for the current fiscal year." Part of the reason given for the increase was due to adjustments in Second Career Funding, an increase of approximately \$2.7 million in net revenue.

On March 31st, the operating fund balance would be \$6.6 million, excluding the Strategic Investment Fund. In the Board Policy D-10 Financial Condition, 2.1 it identifies, "at the end of the fiscal year, the President shall not permit a financial condition where the balance of the Accumulated Operating Funds is less than zero or greater than ten percent of the operating revenue without prior approval of the Board of Governors. A normal balance for the Accumulated Operating Fund is considered to be 2% of operating revenue."

The additional surplus as projected would be more than the 2% approved by the Board of Governors.

There was a motion to move the 2 million dollar Strategic Investment Fund to a new and separate line account. The motion moved was "[t]hat the Strategic Investment Fund be moved from expenditures to a separate reserve." In discussion, some board members expressed concern the surplus would not be as transparent. Board Members voted 7 for and 7 against the motion and therefore the Chair had to break the tie. Chair Britta Winther voted for transparency, and thus against the motion.

One of the questions a concerned board member asked is "what isn't the

money being spent on?" Good question! My guess is most of us on the front-line, teaching in the classrooms, providing counselling or assistance in the library could answer that question.

Tour of the School of Contemporary Media

Prior to the Board Meeting, board members toured the Contemporary Media Centre and the students and faculty proudly demonstrated the labs. Board Members saw a demonstration of computer animation with theatre arts students, music industry arts, the radio and television programs and the photography displays. If you have not seen this area of the college, it is very impressive. The equipment alone is worth seeing.

Meeting Labour Market Needs

Dr. Lane Trotter presented the Report on Meeting Labour Market Needs. This report highlights the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and compares the statistics over the past few years. Dr. Trotter enjoys highlighting areas where Fanshawe excels. He did acknowledge that the information from employers continues to be a challenge because not enough employers are responding to the surveys to make it valid. This is an ongoing problem.

Not surprisingly there is a downturn in the employment rate (92% in 2005/06 to 85% in 2009/10) but it is still slightly above the provincial average. One concern is while Fanshawe has increased the graduation rate from 55.6% in 05/06 to 69.2% in 2010/11 the percentage of graduates working in related areas has decreased by 10% in the same period. In 2009/10, 85% of graduates were working, but 30% were not working in areas related to their field of study. When questioned



about whether this was a concern, Dr. Trotter pointed to the provincial statistics which show Fanshawe is consistent with the provincial stats for large colleges. This is an area to monitor. Are we increasing the graduation rates in areas where the prospect for employment is low?

The Drummond Report

The Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services (the Drummond report) was discussed briefly. One of Drummond's recommendations is that colleges should not be granted any new degree programs. This is counter to the direction in Fanshawe's Meeting Labour Market Needs report where the BOG has encouraged Fanshawe to pursue a differentiated mandate and mission. Fanshawe is exploring the development of up to ten degree programs to be delivered in the next two to five years. Instead of colleges delivering degree programs, Drummond recommends colleges and universities should collaborate on transfer agreements. If the province accepts the recommendations, then the BOG will have to re-evaluate their direction.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this report with me, you can contact me at kwigle@fanshawec.ca ☎

Health and Safety: Terms of Reference Battle

Labour history is filled with stories about how early activists were spurred to action by terrible workplace conditions causing injury, maiming, and death. Workplace safety was, and remains one of the pillars of the union movement. Worker safety concerns had a great deal to do with the growth of unions throughout the last century in Canada. Immediate physical perils posed by jobs such as mining and building the structures that bound Canada together were addressed first, and then attention moved to worker's health concerns such as lung diseases and cancers caused by workplace exposures. You should know that the labour movement was behind every major advance in worker health and safety in Canada.

However, here at Fanshawe College there is a battle underway regarding the 'terms of reference' for health and safety on our campuses. Management at the college has acted to wrest away control over health and safety concerns from the union. Management has acted unilaterally to impose terms of reference for health and safety on our various campuses despite it being the law that they act jointly **with** worker members on the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

Locals 109 and 110 are determined to fight this all the way.

What are 'terms of reference' and why are they important? The Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) requires that workplaces set up Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSC) to

oversee the welfare of workers on the job. As you have read in previous articles in *the Educator*, Fanshawe College is like a city under several roofs and houses multiple varied environments, each which poses its own hazards. We have hoists, lifts, welders and compressed gases, along with radiation, electrical and chemical hazards—and so on.

The Joint Health and Safety Committee is required under the law to have an even number of management and worker members. At Fanshawe, this committee is designated as a standing committee of the Senior Leadership Council. That is contrary to the Act in our opinion. The JHSC is not described in the Act as being an arm of the employer; it has a certain independence.

On January 1, 2012 the Senior Leadership Council revised Policy 1-G-04, *Terms of Reference of the Joint Health and Safety Committee* without the agreement of the worker members and passed it. The minutes of that meeting state, incorrectly, that "a copy [of the altered Terms of Reference] was then sent to the Union Executive with no suggested changes received."

One new provision of this policy is of great concern: Article 4.1.9 says that "Committee members are responsible for maintaining confidentiality except where disclosure of information is specifically required by the Act or other law."

If there are incidents or accidents on campus, why would management want to enforce confidentiality? We know that 'sunlight is the best disinfectant,' and a confidentiality article in a unilaterally passed policy, to which our worker colleagues do not agree, stinks to high heaven.

The worker members of the JHSC said they will not abide by the confidentiality article.

Today unions are under attack from all sides. Unionized workers are legislated back to work. New legislation allows employers to ignore collective bargaining, appoint management-approved arbitrators and impose terms of employment. But there's one thing that no-one can deny: unions have always been best at looking out for their members, particularly when it comes to their health and safety. And now,

control over safety too is being targeted by employers.

Ask yourself this question: who would you rather look after your health and safety in the workplace?

We're sure of the answer, and will fight to prove it. ☪



The Grievance Report is a new column that will give faculty members information about some grievances that have been filed by the Local.

There are two grievances currently filed for bullying and harassment. One grievance is an individual one; the other is a group grievance representing several members in a department. Both grievances have been filed against managers, and the College.

Local President Darryl Bedford and other Local 110 officers note that bullying and harassment discussions with members are very common, and are by far the most handled complaint that the local deals with. We have a bullying problem at this college. There are far more complainants and incidents than filed grievances.

Article 4 of our Collective Agreement, *No Discrimination / Bullying / Psychological Harassment* has language that has necessarily been updated as a result of the passing on June 15, 2010 of Bill 168 in Ontario. This bill amends the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) to deal with workplace violence and harassment.

Another group of grievances at the college have to do with Morneau Shepell. Previously known as Shepell, this company is the third party occupational health provider under contract the college. It handles employee health, illness, absence, return to work and worker accommodation arrangements for the college.

There are currently two members with Shepell grievances. Occupational health nurses at Shepell seem to be able to overrule physicians' diagnoses and recommendations.

One grievance against Shepell was settled with revised Shepell forms. Shepell was requesting more personal medical information to be released than it was legally entitled to. The new forms request information that is required to report illness but does not invade the personal privacy of the member.

The next issue of *the Educator* will contain updates on staffing grievances, which relate to efforts to get more full-time hires.

If you have questions, ask your steward or come to the union office at D2018 for assistance. ☎

Local Agreements

According to the cliché, sometimes "stuff" happens.

Our Collective Agreement has a mechanism for dealing with emergencies and local circumstances. This mechanism is called a **local agreement**. Local agreements tend to be short-term in nature and in fact cannot extend beyond the expiry date of the Collective Agreement.

"I've negotiated twelve of these agreements during my term," said Local President Darryl Bedford. "We've handled everything from overtime work for Snowmageddon to ill faculty members to maximizing lab time for Horticulture Technician students."

To ensure that Local Agreements do not infringe on the basic rights of members or undermine the principles of the Collective Agreement, all of them must be vetted by the CAAT Academic Divisional Executive (or "Divex") of OPSEU. When approving or rejecting local agreements, the Divex is acting on behalf of Warren Thomas, the President of

OPSEU. If approved, the local agreement is signed by the Local President, the affected members, and the employer.

When emergencies happen, the employer has a responsibility to contact the Local. "In some cases," adds Bedford, "the emergency can be addressed without a local agreement. Not every emergency requires an exception to the Collective Agreement. It is important to have a discussion to understand the root cause of the problem and how to best accommodate the needs of the students and the faculty members."

Recently a grievance resulted from the employer's failure to seek a local agreement. Two SWFs were submitted for a member in the School of Nursing that exceeded 47 hours. These were violations of Article 11 Workload. The reason given in the supervisor's comments on the SWF was "teacher shortage." The union did not become aware of the situation until the Workload Monitoring Group caught the illegal SWF.

"The member was not to blame," said Bedford, "college management was well aware of their obligations to contact the union. The case law is clear on that." The union filed a policy grievance. A step meeting was held and the Dean sent the written response on behalf of management. She wrote that the college regretted that the union was not contacted "sooner," but in reality the union hadn't been contacted at all.

The grievance proceeded to arbitration. On the day of the hearing before the formal proceedings began, the parties agreed to correct the errors in the Dean's letter.

"It was important to set the record straight and have a truthful response from the employer," concluded Bedford. "It is a reminder that a contract is a contract. The contract has processes in place and you must follow those processes. When you respect the contract and the union's role, you can handle just about anything." ☎



Retired OPSEU Local 110 President Paddy Musson honoured

Paddy Musson, local president from 1984 to 2010, was honoured on March 8, 2012 at the beginning of Maude Barlow's talk on the global water crisis.

Paddy was to introduce Ms. Barlow, a privilege Paddy felt deeply, but before she began her introduction current local president Darryl Bedford surprised the audience and Paddy with a heartfelt speech thanking her for her tireless work on behalf of the local and its members. Paddy also performed a lot of demanding and valuable work at the provincial level for OPSEU, being a long-standing member of the Women's Equity Committee and the Joint Insurance Committee.

The local presented Paddy with a gift, flowers, and a crystal trophy inscribed to her as follows:

Paddy Musson
in appreciation for
27 years
of dedicated, selfless service
to Local 110, the labour movement,
equity and social justice

OPSEU also recently honoured Paddy with a Lifetime Membership award, an award received by few.

OPSEU LOCAL 110 PROUD TO SPONSOR MAUDE BARLOW

Local 110 was proud to be amongst other sponsors of Maude Barlow at Fanshawe College. Barlow is perhaps the most distinguished person the college has ever hosted. Even a partial list of her accomplishments and positions is awe inspiring: National Chairperson for the Council of Canadians, co-founder of the Blue Planet project, author of over a dozen books, and a prominent, apparently indefatigable activist for decades. For the years 2008 and 2009, Ms. Barlow served as the Senior Advisor on Water to the President of the UN General Assembly, where she addressed a UN panel and discussed the issues of water as a commons, equitable access to water, and watershed restoration.

The subject of the two talks at Fanshawe College on March 8, 2012 was the global water crisis, which Barlow sees as the critical problem facing the world today. Astoundingly, earth's most precious resource, water, is not yet openly discussed nor is it a voter issue in most countries around the world. Intense 'water poverty' is already experienced daily by one billion

people around the world; in addition, Barlow referenced a new World Bank study which shows that demand for water is going to exceed supply by 40 percent in twenty years. The human suffering behind this statistic is stunning. Barlow informed the audience that privatization of water is continuing apace, with the biggest players being two French corporations, Suez and Veolia.

Barlow got the biggest laugh of the night when she recounted with pleasure the June 2010 passing of the United Nations resolution that asserted the human right to water and sanitation. After years of wrangling with the big players at the United Nations, and their manoeuvring and blocking of any chance of actual progress, the exasperated Bolivian ambassador to the United Nations Pablo Solon put a resolution directly to the floor of the UN, asking that water and sanitation be declared a human right. This direct action outflanked the big players, who had corporate and political interests to protect. The resolution passed, with 122 countries in support, and over 40 countries abstaining, including Canada and



the U.S. There were no votes against the resolution, as no country wished to be reported as having voted against life itself. Angry recriminations after the vote came fast, with the big players scolding the Bolivian member for acting precipitously and without due consideration etc. The Bolivian member just sat there, with a huge beatific smile on his face, as if to say "What about winning do you not understand?"

Of course this resolution has not changed overnight the severe water issues that face the globe, but it's a start. It was wonderful hearing the inside, human story of one moral victory, after years of effort on the slow and arduous journey to water rights. ☺