

# CUASA COMMUNIQUÉ

Volume 36 No. 2

Editor: Arnd Bohm

December, 2005

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## **Bargaining**

Bargaining is just around the corner. Like Christmas lights at Halloween, bargaining has a tendency to creep up on us. Our present Collective Agreement will end on April 30, 2006 and we can officially start bargaining as of February 1, 2006. Our bargaining team is composed of Sonya Lipsett-Rivera (Chief Negotiator), Brett Stevens (Salary Chair), Gerald de Montigny (Grievance Officer) as well as Laurie Campbell, Janet Siltanen, and Pat Finn. Apart from direct consultations with those units who requested it, the team is considering the many responses to our bargaining survey and preparing our position going into bargaining. We would like to thank the many people who responded to our requests for information. We hope to have a meeting with the general membership early in 2006.

*Sonya Lipsett-Rivera*

## **Editorial: Defending our Rights**

Sorry, folks – there's no Santa Claus in the world of labour relations to bring us gifts and free goodies. Every right and benefit we have under the Collective Agreement has been gained at the bargaining table, paid for by wages foregone and other concessions. Through CUASA's successes in past negotiations, our members have benefits that many others institutions can only envy, but there can be no standing still. And certainly we don't intend to go backward.

The team that will bargain in the next round of negotiations has been formed. In close consultation with the Steering Committee, they are drafting proposals based on what members have indicated as priorities. Management has indicated a willingness to start bargaining early in 2006. Once things get under way, you will receive bulletins to inform you of progress. We are optimistic that we won't see brinkmanship as the management style this time, but we are also determined to get significant improvements in wages and benefits.

At the same time, CUASA is determined to protect rights and benefits that are spelled out in the Collective Agreement. While there has been some improvement in the rate with which grievances can be settled, there are still too many grievances dragging on too long, putting undue and unnecessary stress on members.

Quite troubling is management's recent tinkering with sabbatical applications. The reasons behind these moves have not been explained to our satisfaction. Both the relevant clause in the Collective Agreement and the past practice are clear. Article 21 (see the full text at: <http://www.caut.ca/cuasa/agreement/s1.html> ) stipulates:

1. All members are entitled to sabbatical leave.

2. Members have until “three (3) months prior to the beginning of the sabbatical” to submit statements of how they will use their sabbatical. For sabbaticals beginning on July 1, the deadline for the statements is **March 31**.

3. Sabbaticals will not be unreasonably denied.

Please bring any attempts by management to erode or weaken your entitlement to your sabbatical to the immediate attention of CUASA.

Another area of growing concern is the workplace environment. There can be no tolerance for harassment or verbal abuse of anyone on campus — and that includes faculty. Whether it emanates from superior, colleagues, students, or anyone else, abuse and intimidation are simply unacceptable. CUASA will use all available instruments to make sure that our members can feel welcome and secure.

Changing conditions pose new challenges. The end of mandatory retirement will need cooperation between CUASA and management. CUASA is working to make sure that members will be treated fairly and equitably once mandatory retirement comes into force. A joint committee will be meeting to address relevant issues. CUASA looks forward with interest to discussions with management on the elimination of mandatory retirement that will start once management names its members to the committee. If you have concerns, do pass them along to CUASA, either through your unit's representative on Council, or directly to any member of the Steering Committee.