



## CUPE Local 227 Quarterly Newsletter



### CONTENTS

#### PAGE 1

“We Are CUPE”

#### PAGE 2

2017 CUPE National Convention

CUPE National Officers Re-Elected

HRM Pension Plan Update

Local 227 Social

#### PAGE 3

Union Meetings

Members at Work

UNSM Conference

NSFL Convention

#### PAGE 4

4 Steps to Resolving a H&S Problem

L227 ELECTIONS

L227 Donates

### HAPPY HOLIDAYS from the Local 227 Executive

#### “We Are CUPE”

##### BY-CUPE National

We’ve been together for over 50 years.

We do different jobs that require different skills. We are diverse – from all sorts of backgrounds in all corners of the country. But we’re connected by a common purpose. Together we’ve fought for the things that matter most.

#### **Fairness. Equality. Dignity.**

There’s still much to be done before we have a truly just society. Empowering young workers, women’s rights, racial equality, dignity for the disabled,

as well as justice for First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples.

We have made Canada a better place for millions of workers and their families. We will keep fighting for a Canada where ALL workers have a decent wage, retirement security, dignity and a safe workplace.

As we move forward, we are undertaking an unprecedented initiative to speak with every rank and file member in order to re-create our movement.

We are 650,000 public service workers. We will back each other up. We will speak with one voice.

**We are CUPE.**



## 2017 CUPE National Convention – Toronto

More than 2,200 delegates, on behalf of the 650,000 CUPE members from across the country, attended CUPE’s National Convention in Toronto in early November. L227 VP Paul Naugle and President Dave Dort represented L227 at the convention.



## CUPE National Officers Re-Elected

CUPE National President Mark Hancock (L) and National Secretary-Treasurer Charles Fleury (R) were both re-elected at the National Convention in Toronto. In their acceptance speeches, they vowed to continue to strengthen our union and work with members to build a more fair and equitable Canada.

# HRM PENSION PLAN - UPDATE

Submitted by – Br. Martin Austin, L227 Pension & Benefits Committee

On the evening of December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017 the L227 Pension Committee along with L227’s President met with L108 and other CUPE stakeholders of the HRM pension plan to get an update on the plan. Currently members of L227 that were working in the wastewater division prior to the merger with Halifax Water (2007) have a pension in the HRM plan, not Halifax Water’s plan. The plans are invested the same, but there are some differences in benefits, how well the plans are funded and the required contribution rates (the amount of money taken off your pay). HRM is currently seeking to change the governance of the HRM pension plan. Currently the HRM plan is governed by their board of Trustees, which is composed of an equal number of representatives from various unions and management. Each union and management group has a veto over any benefit changes; CUPE L108 has a veto and member on the board, other CUPE locals do

not have either a veto or a board member. HRM wants the plan changed so that there are two boards, one of trustees and one of professional administrators; more importantly they are seeking to remove the veto ability from all groups.

HRM is also seeking to put a cap on how much the plan cost can go up. If the plan costs go beyond a certain threshold then they want it set up so that automatic benefit reductions occur.

These changes are very troubling; automatic benefit reductions without discussion or agreement can lead to retirement insecurity. Seeking to remove the veto from union groups will mean that unions no longer have real control over what happens with their pension. If this happens changes could happen without L108’s consent. Approximately 40% of our members are in the HRM plan; we should be ready to help and support L108 in any way they need in the future, as they are defending our member’s pensions.



**On Saturday September 23, 2017 CUPE Local 227 members and guests spent an afternoon socializing at Dooly’s Pool Hall in Burnside. There were prizes and lots of great food. Br Pierre Noel from the Bissett Depot was the champion beating out Br Dave Dort in the final.**



Brother Pierre with his prizes.

Looks like a debate over a shot!



# KEEP CALM AND GO TO THE NEXT UNION MEETING

**CUPE Local 227 Monthly Membership Meetings** are open to all Local 227 members.

The meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month starting at 5pm at the CUPE Atlantic Regional Office, 271 Brownlow Avenue in Dartmouth.

Congratulations to Brother Gary McPherson, PT Mill Cove, on winning the November prize of a \$25 gift card.

**REMEMBER - YOU ARE THE UNION!**

## Members at Work



Recently Brothers Justin MacKinnon, L227 Recording-Secretary (above) and Chuck Thomas (below) were seen keeping work in-house at the Halifax Wastewater Plant. The brothers were hauling out the Raw Water Pumps, a task that had previously been contracted out. Great job Brothers!



### UNSM Conference in Halifax

Brother Dave Dort recently worked the information booth at the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities. This annual conference sees representatives (Mayors, Wardens and Councilors) meeting to discuss common topics of interests. This was the 3<sup>rd</sup> time Br. Dort attended representing CUPE NS and the CUPE NS Contracting Out & Privatization Committee. Br. Dort handed out union literature and swag while engaging in conversations with the delegates about many topics including contracting-out & privatization.

CUPE NS again this year was a key sponsor of the event.



## NS Federation of Labour Convention

Local 227 recently attended the NSFL Convention in Halifax. In attendance representing Local 227 were Brothers Graham Downey and Justin MacKinnon (L227 Recording-Secretary).



### NSFL Fights Bad Legislation

The unions in the province has seen some bad legislation imposed on them and their rights to fair and free collective bargaining in the province. The unions affected by those bills have stood their ground in defending their members on those controversial bills and are headed to court on a number of those. Legal challenges have been put forward through the Federation on bills 30 and 37 as well as bill 148 to the NS Appeal Court.



## Health & Safety Tips

### 4 Steps to Resolving a Health & Safety Problem

By-CUPE National

**1-** In all Canadian jurisdictions, the respective occupational health and safety acts state that it is the primary duty of the employer to provide workers with a safe workplace. Your supervisor is the first link in a chain that goes to the top, so they need to be told about the hazards and dangers you discover in the workplace. An important note: no job is worth dying over. In all jurisdictions, workers have the legal right to refuse to perform a task that they feel will cause harm to themselves or others. If you feel the task is unsafe or dangerous, tell your supervisor that you are refusing to do the task because you feel it is dangerous. This should set into motion a series of steps that will

lead to the hazard being removed, or an investigation with your local health and safety representative or a committee member.

**For more information on the right to refuse unsafe work, check out [cupe.ca/health-and-safety/refuse](http://cupe.ca/health-and-safety/refuse).**

**2-** Make sure your co-workers, your union health and safety committee, and your local executive know about the hazard. It is the law that your employer must tell **ALL** employees about the hazards of the workplace, however not all do. To help protect each other, tell co-workers, especially those who will be potentially exposed to the hazard.

**3-** Make sure your joint health and safety committee knows about the problem. All hazards should be reported to members of your JOHSC or your health and safety representative, but this is a

particularly important step if your supervisor does not take action to fix the hazard. A well-functioning committee will address problems brought to its attention, and will conduct regular health and safety inspections to make sure that working conditions are safe.

**For more information on health and safety committees check out [cupe.ca/health-and-safety](http://cupe.ca/health-and-safety).**

**4-** Contact your CUPE staff representative. All CUPE locals have access to a national staff representative. If you have a health and safety issue that you cannot get rectified, your local staff rep can help or refer you to the proper person for assistance.



On Wednesday January 3, 2018, 5pm start at the CUPE Atlantic Office in Burnside, there will be an election for Local 227 President and Vice-President.

Hey, we are on Twitter! @CUPELocal227

### L227 Donates

Sisters Laurena MacDonald and Belinda Dickson (L227 Secretary-Treasurer) spent a day shopping and putting together shoe-box donations for local women's and men's shelters. Donations from L227 and L227 members were used to purchase all of the items.



We can't thank you enough Sisters for your hard work and generosity of time.