

“News At 11”

District 11 OSSTF TBU Newsletter



October 2008



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Dan Machuk



From left to right: Dave,
Colleen, Nancy, Mary
Lou, Tony, Laurie

Federation Services
Officers:

Colleen Canon
Mary Lou Cunningham
Nancy McDougall
Tony Stokes

Executive Assistant:
Laurie Lafraniere

President's Message

The Canadian Federal election is now behind us and our congratulations go out to the three District 11 OSSTF members who ran great campaigns. Special congratulations go to Irene Mathysen on her successful bid for re-election in London Fanshawe. While public news media has been dominated by elections and the state of our economy, your second edition of **News At 11** aims to update you on Federation matters.

OSSTF Negotiations are a story that you are not continually seeing in the press and that, quite frankly, is by design. Your OSSTF leaders, at the provincial and local levels, believe that we can achieve successful collective agreements while allowing confidence in public education to grow, by staying out of the media spotlight. As long as that remains true, we will continue with our present course.

Other educational unions have agreed to a “framework” of specific wage increases and other monetary items at what are being referred to as Provincial Discussion Tables (PDTs). OSSTF teachers and occasional teachers do not currently have a provincial framework agreed to at a PDT. In fact, OSSTF bylaws prevent our provincial organization from conducting provincial negotiations on behalf of teachers and occasional teachers until affected OSSTF members are allowed to vote on the issue. Please be assured that when or if this happens, our District Office will use all means necessary to communicate the issues and the timing of such a vote. In the meantime, OSSTF District 11 continues to maintain the current focus on local issues with updates to CBC Representatives.

OSSTF Lobby Days at Queen's Park, held for the second time on October 6th and 7th, provided a forum for local OSSTF members to highlight key educational issues with our MPPs. Deidre Modritsch, R.J. Wiczor and I proudly represented District 11. We met with five local MPPs and had the opportunity to speak directly with the Minister of Education, Kathleen Wynne.

Our goal this autumn is to communicate directly with you, our members. Friday morning **School/ Worksite Visits** are a priority. Our TGIF visits include a short update on current issues while you enjoy coffee and assorted pastries and goodies. We hope that this proves to be a simple recipe for a successful Friday! Please ask your Branch President for more details on your school's planned visit from members of your District Office.

There has never been a better time to become more involved in OSSTF, your Federation. Please seriously consider participating in our **District 11 Dinner and Workshops offered at the Best Western Lamplighter on Thursday November 13th**. Following a dinner provided at no direct cost to you, four workshops will be offered (see page 4 for more details). Registration begins Wednesday October 22nd through our District 11 website at www.osstf11.com. We look forward to seeing you there!



David Russell

“Let us not take thought for our separate interests, but let us help one another.”

* **RSP Plan (Article 13.2)**

There are 150 contract teachers who have now completed 2 years of service and **MUST** complete an OTG Financial RSP account application to become eligible for an RSP deposit of money from the Board next February. The OTG account application must be returned to the OSSTF District 11 Office *immediately*. Branch Presidents have the applications for newly qualifying members.

* **In School Staffing Committees** must meet prior to Oct.31st to review Class Size reports.

* **Secondary Staffing Timelines** for 08/09 are being finalized and will be posted on our website.

* **New teachers** are strongly encouraged to register for the TVDSB's NTIP opportunities to complete their legislated requirements of NTIP.



Mary Lou Cunningham
Federation Services Officer



Student Achievement Awards (Marion Drysdale Awards)



Nancy McDougall
Federation Services Officer

Each year OSSTF sponsors the OSSTF Student Achievement Awards in honour of **Marion Drysdale**, a secretary at Provincial Office for twenty-two years. This writing & creative arts contest challenges students intellectually and showcases the wonderful talents that abound within Ontario Secondary Schools. In the past, District 11 has celebrated the talents of several Thames Valley students as regional and provincial winners. The topic for this year's contest is **Beyond the Screen**. In a world inundated with monitors, what do you see beyond the screen? For more information on the theme, a list of the prose/poetry and visual arts categories, judging criteria & the student entry form, please visit the District 11 website (www.osstf11.com).

District 11 School level entrants will each receive a certificate of participation while school level winners will receive an engraved medallion. District 11 judging will take place in late November and winners at the District level will each receive a trophy and have their entries submitted to the Provincial Office for regional and provincial level judging. Provincial level winners are honoured at the Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly in Toronto in March 2009 and each receive a cheque for \$300.

Please help promote this contest with your students. Let's show the province, once again how talented the students in Thames Valley are!

**Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation
District 11, Thames Valley**

Negotiations Update

**From the desk of the
Chief Negotiator**



Tony Stokes

At a recent meeting of the Provincial Council of OSSTF, all Teacher and Occasional Teacher Bargaining Units were placed in Provincial Responsibility for Negotiations (PRN.) PRN provides direct assistance to bargaining units by assigning a provincial negotiator and a member of Provincial Executive to work with the local bargaining team. This step was taken in order to increase pressure on employers to make progress at the bargaining table.

As was indicated in my last update, some unions representing education workers have signed provincial framework agreements at Provincial Discussion Tables. These frameworks address some collective bargaining items, such as salary, while local negotiating priorities must be addressed at the local table. While OSSTF does not oppose the PDT process, we must be certain that a provincial framework agreement would create a more positive local negotiating environment. At this point in time, the provincial office does not feel that this criteria exists for attending a PDT for Teacher and Occasional Teacher bargaining units. It is important to note that OSSTF bylaws require that before negotiations can take place at the provincial level, a vote of the membership be taken in order to give the provincial office the mandate to bargain.

You may be aware that the government has informed school boards that they have set a funding deadline of November 30, 2008. Clearly, that deadline is between the government and the school boards and we have no plans to change our bargaining strategy due to a deadline to which we have not agreed. We feel that our positions are fair and our demands support you in your daily work. Unless OSSTF returns to a Provincial Discussion Table, we will follow the traditional bargaining process as set out in the Labour Relations Act. Our local bargaining team is counting on your support as we continue to bargain the best local deal possible.

Coping through Difficult Times

Among our fellow members, it is likely that one quarter of colleagues in any school or workplace is coping with difficult life events. Help is a phone call away. Our **Employee Assistance Program** (1-866-644-0326) offers 24 hour response, seven days a week. Wilson Banwell Human Solutions' professionally accredited counsellors offer face to face counselling sessions. They guarantee confidentiality for members coping with workplace stress or family issues, such as marital problems, bereavement and substance abuse. Numerous other counselling services are also available, such as referrals for help with financial or legal problems.

The **EAP** and **Eservices** are available to all members, regardless of whether they carry Manulife benefits. Plan members may access services through www.manulife.ca (Group plan # 85090), while non-carriers may access www.myresilience.com and enter plan #85090, with their employee number, name and birth date. Links offer information on wellness, as well as child and elder care services available in the Thames Valley area. Specific searches can be made for services in a particular region through their Child and Eldercare Database.

For members coping with a recent diagnosis of cancer or a cancer recurrence, and for those who are cancer survivors, support is available through **CAREpath**. OTIP (our LTD provider) offers this **cancer assistance program**, in partnership with leading oncologists and cancer nurses, to our members and their immediate family. Info about this benefit is available at 1-800-290-5106 or info@carepath.ca (LTD policy # L7011-902).

Please keep these contacts close by, and remind colleagues in the workplace that help really is just a phone call away.



Colleen Canon
Federation Services Officer

Manufacturing Matters Rally

Nearly 2,000 people took to the streets of St. Thomas on September 28th, in a rally about manufacturing job loss. The march snaked through the streets of St. Thomas and ended with speeches from various individuals including London & District Labour Council President and OSSTF member Patti Dalton.



Manufacturing Matters



Patti Dalton



**Irene Mathysen, Sandy Ellis,
Patti Dalton, Fred Moroz**

*Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation
District 11, Thames Valley*

Important Dates

November 13

New Members Dinner & Workshop

Best Western Lamplighter Inn
Registration opens online October 22

November 13

Collective Bargaining Dinner & Workshop

Best Western Lamplighter Inn
Registration opens online October 22

November 13

Health & Wellness Dinner & Workshop

Best Western Lamplighter Inn
Registration opens online October 22

November 13

Credit Integrity Dinner & Workshop

Best Western Lamplighter Inn
Registration opens online October 22

February 26

Bishop Townshend Awards

London Convention Centre

April 23

E.C. McTavish Award Dinner

Sir George Ross S.S.

May 7

TBU & District AGM

District Office

June 3

Citizenship Awards Dinner

Thames S.S.

June 11

Annual Retirement Dinner



Although care has been taken in preparing the information contained in this publication, accuracy cannot be guaranteed. The opinions and views expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of OSSTF, District 11.

OSSTF — Uniting Education Workers since 1919

New Members Dinner & Workshop

The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation District 11, Thames Valley cordially invites you to attend a dinner & workshop on:

Thursday, November 13, 2008

Registration - 4:30 p.m.

Dinner - 5:15 p.m. Workshop 6:30 p.m.

Best Western Lamplighter Inn

591 Wellington Road, London

Special Guest Speaker:

Bob Fisher, Provincial Office

"Risks, Responsibilities & Rights"

Please register online at www.osstf11.com and click on New Members Workshop / November 13th.

OSSTF District 11, Thames Valley cordially invites you to attend a dinner & workshop on:

Credit Integrity Presented by David Russell

Thursday, November 13, 2008

Registration - 4:30 p.m.

Dinner - 5:15 p.m.

Workshop 6:30 p.m.

**Best Western Lamplighter Inn
591 Wellington Road, London**

**Please register online at
www.osstf11.com and click on
Credit Integrity Workshop /
November 13th.**

OSSTF November 13, 2008 Workshops

Best Western Lamplighter Inn

To Register go to www.osstf11.com/Upcoming Events

**ATTENTION: CBC Representatives
You are cordially invited to attend a
dinner & workshop on:**

Contract Maintenance & The Grievance Process



**Presented by Karl Dean
OSSTF Provincial Office
&
Tony Stokes
Chief Negotiator**

Thursday, November 13, 2008

Registration - 4:30 p.m.

Dinner - 5:15 p.m.

Workshop 6:30 p.m.

**Best Western Lamplighter Inn
591 Wellington Road, London**

**Please register online at
www.osstf11.com and click on
CBC Workshop / November 13th.**

Work/Life Accord Workshop

*Presented by
Deborah Moskal*

Health & Wellness Dinner & Workshop

Thursday, November 13, 2008

Registration - 4:30 p.m.

Dinner - 5:15 p.m. Workshop 6:30 p.m.

This workshop will focus on presenting an overview on Work/Life Balance and some strategies on how to deal with stress.

Please register online at www.osstf11.com and click on Health & Wellness Workshop / Nov 13th.

Visit our website at: <http://www.osstf11.com>