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WELCOME TO THE NRCAN CAPE LOCAL NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the sixth Newsletter from the NRCan CAPE Local. An NRCan local for the National Capital Region was first created in March 2006.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Mark your calendars for May 13, 2010, in Camsell Hall at 580 Booth from 12:00 to 1:00. A light lunch will be served.

**NRCan CAPE Local
Annual General Meeting
May 13, 2010
Camsell Hall**

AGENDA

1. Introductions / Welcome
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes from June 11, 2009
See: http://www.acep-cape.ca/EN/local_520/AGMminutes_e.htm
4. Local Executive Report
5. National Office Report
6. Election of the Local Executive
7. Questions / Discussion
8. Other
9. Adjournment

Please confirm your attendance with Elizabeth Walsh elwalsh@nrcan.gc.ca by April 30, 2010.

THE LOCAL EXECUTIVE NEEDS YOU!

We are looking for new members to join the Local Executive! This is an opportunity for you to get on the ground training in leadership, running meetings, handling difficult situations, communications and outreach. This is your opportunity to make a difference and make NRCAN a better place to work.

While that may sound interesting, there are those who worry that being involved with the union is career limiting. Some feel that the union does nothing for them. Or, some just want to concentrate on their work and do not want to make any waves.

Here are some counter arguments:

- Is it career limiting to sit across from the Deputy Minister, Assistant Deputy Ministers, or others in NRCAN management? Labour – Management Consultation is a workplace requirement. NRCAN Management needs us to represent employees. Union participation does not necessarily mean confrontation and being confrontational. There is certainly room for collaboration in a shared goal of making NRCAN a better place to work.
- Where do people in the workplace go when they have a problem with harassment, bullying, unfair appraisals, competitive processes, classification, bureaucratic red tape, overwork, underwork, inconsistent application of workplace policies, workplace health & safety, or compliance with the terms of your collective agreement regarding leave, training, professional development, or overtime?

Many employees do not know the answer until they encounter such a problem. Both the Canadian Association of Professional Employees (CAPE) and members of the Local are here to help you! Unions do make a difference.

While I do not have a crystal ball, there are definitely possibilities for disruption both here at NRCAN and in the public service. Employees will need representation.

- Acting as a member of the Local Executive is professional development. Tell your manager that this is a NO COST way for you to get experience. You can put it on your training plan. You will also get free training from CAPE, and moreover, CAPE will pay your salary for the duration of the training.

This is likely my last term as President before I retire. There must be some gutsy people out there who would like to take on this kind of challenge!

Carol Fairbrother

LABOUR MANAGEMENT MEETINGS

Labour-Management Consultation Committees (LMCCs) provide an opportunity for union and management to communicate and maintain a sustained dialogue. The departmental LMCC meets twice per year as well as a number of sector level LMCCs.

Members from the CAPE Local Executive try to attend these meetings.

To read the minutes, refer to this link: <http://wwwint.nrcan.gc.ca/ci/ems/1/h-srumc-e.htm>

Do not hesitate to contact a member of the executive if you have an issue that needs to be brought up at the sectoral or departmental level. We could also use more representatives from the Corporate Management Services Sector, Earth Sciences Sector and Canadian Forest Service.

PENSION ISSUE

You may have also seen news reports or newspaper articles that either criticize or sound the alarm about our public service pension. There are those who claim that the public service has a gold-plated pension plan that needs to be brought in line with other pension plans or made fair for those who have no such arrangements or have seen their pension plans disappear with the companies that used to employ them. A recent report from the CD Howe Institute, “*Supersized Superannuation: the Startling Cost of Fair Value of Federal Government Pensions*” http://www.cdhowe.org/pdf/backgroundunder_122.pdf, is based on inaccurate assumptions and full of misleading and inaccurate information. The former president of CAPE, Bill Krause, and former member of the Public Service Pension Advisory Committee has contributed to an analysis of the report. The facts are quite different than what is purported in the CD Howe report. As public servants we have paid for, and paid handsomely, for our pension. It is not a gift at the expense of tax payers. Read CAPE’s analysis of the CD Howe report at the following link: http://acep-cape.ca/pdfs/General/files/ACEP_CAPEanalyse_analysis_e.pdf

With the release of the 2010 budget, we also have reassurances from the Clerk of the Privy Council, as well as the Deputy Minister, that planned wage increases and our pensions will not be affected by the freeze on operating budgets. One wonders what the hoopla was all about, but then the public service is always a favourite target that garners little public sympathy.

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE FOR 580 BOOTH STREET

CAPE participates in the Workplace Health and Safety Committee (WPHSC) for 580 Booth. Galina Obolenskaia, CAPE Local Executive Vice President, was elected as the co-chair. In 2009, the Committee actively dealt with hazardous occurrences, environmental sensitivities, fire hazardous issues, and other important occupational health and safety (OHS) matters.

The Committee has undertaken an integrated approach in developing the Small Appliance Directive for 580 Booth. The Directive addresses specific OHS challenges identified by PROFAC (the company that manages the building), WPHSC, the Building Emergency Organization, and the Corporate Management and Services Sector. It ensures that the OHS needs of the employees are respected and that they have reasonable access to small appliances, while at the same time, accommodating those who have special needs. Not only does the Directive encourage safety and accommodate employee needs, it also contributes to the “greening” of NRCan by promoting a reduction in energy consumption. Information on the Directive, designated kitchen areas and the list of approved and banned small appliances can be found on the Wiki at: http://wiki.nrcan.gc.ca/index.php/Small_Appliances_Communications_Plan.

WPHSC is contributing to the Early Warning System Portal by working on issues of building maintenance that have the potential to impact employees with environmental sensitivities. A new intranet site is being launched to provide more information. The monitors in 580/588 lobbies will also be advising of building maintenance events.

Employees are encouraged to report health and safety issues via the hotline number 1-800-463-1850. In addition, employees are encouraged to report even seemingly minor incidents or accidents to first aid attendants; this may help if there are unanticipated consequences. Finally, do not hesitate to contact Galina Obolenskaia at 995-7560 if you have any matters relating to health and safety at 580 Booth Street.