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Yukon Employees' Union
Public Service Alliance of Canada
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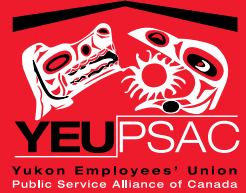
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YEU

NEWS

All About YEU – Your Union

July 2007



Posted on www.yeu.ca July 28

Mould, asbestos, weapons endanger both workers and residents New Children's Receiving Home needed now

The Yukon government and Health Minister Brad Cathers remain unwilling to appropriately address serious health and safety concerns at the Children's Receiving Home.

Workers there have repeatedly pointed to the threats, confrontations and assaults that are a daily occurrence. The poor design of the structure itself compounds the problem. Cobbled together over the years, the building is a maze of blind corners, small rooms and narrow hallways.

New dangers continue to surface.

On June 4, a report by Theodor Sterling Associates confirmed the presence of visible mould throughout the structure. Sterling was retained by the Property Management Agency of the Yukon government to carry out a mould investigation in early May. Mould issues at the home had been documented in the past, according to the report.

The report also noted that base-board heaters throughout the home

were found to be very dirty. There was not an adequate seal around the toilets and tubs in the wash-rooms, contributing to the problem.

In addition to the presence of mould, Minister Cathers confirmed the presence of asbestos in the walls.



Workplace health and safety issues continue to plague the Children's Receiving Home.

He told the local media that, "A further investigation found that there's asbestos in the drywall filler, a compound used to tape and fill joints in the drywall surfaces of the building."

The Sterling report specified that, "Due to the age of the home the client must also provide bulk-sampling results for suspected asbestos containing materials prior to commencing any mould abatement work."

We remind the Minister that this facility is a workplace for our members. Its design is totally inadequate to ensure the physical safety of the employees.

Its age and obsolete construction methods impose health risks from mould and asbestos. Its design will never meet an appropriate standard for such a facility. It should be closed permanently.

This structure is more than a dangerous workplace – it is a dangerous 'home' for children in care. Yet, in spite of all the evidence pointing out the problems, the facility remains occupied.

Mr. Cathers says that the government will not build a new facility. We urge him to reconsider this decision.

Public Services are Cool !

PSAC is taking a message about quality public services out into the fresh air this summer. Members will be handing out "Public Services are Cool!" fans and leaflets at outdoor events. They'll be meeting with MPs and federal candidates to raise issues and promote the benefits of quality public services.



PSAC hosted a barbecue at the YEU office on July 18th. It was the first of several events offered as part of the *Public Services are Cool* campaign.

Help spread the word about quality public services by getting involved in the summer actions!

On Canada Day, members from various local and committees passed out "Public Services Are Cool" popsicles and fans to people enjoying the parade and the festivities in Rotary Peace Park.

The petition to raise the Northern Residents Tax Deduction was also taken to the park, with many signatures being collected.

There was a BBQ in the parking lot of Yukon Employees' Union on July 18th. About 60 people attended. The winners of the Alpine



Bakery gift certificates were Ryan Hodgins, Russ Carpenter and Nathan Doering.

If you would like to be involved with "Cool" events in your community contact the PSAC office at brohmaj@yt.sympatico.ca or call us at 667-2331.

Anti-Homophobia Day

Writing contest results announced

May 17 was **International Day Against Homophobia**. The International Day Against Homophobia, held every year, is a rallying event offering an opportunity for people to get together and reach out to one another. *Fondation Émergence* promotes the event, mainly on a pan-Canadian level, and encourages organisations and individuals to draw public attention to it.

Yukon's Regional PSAC office sponsored an Anti-Homophobia Day writing contest. Congratulations to all who entered. This years contest winners were:

1st Place - \$500.00 - **Barry "Jack" Jenkins** of Whitehorse, Malcolm's Choice

2nd Place - \$300.00 - **Lisa Vollans** of Whitehorse, Some Kind of Ellen Joke

3rd Place - \$150.00 - **Joann Vriend** of Dawson City, Decisions, Decisions

Thanks to all of the participants. All of the stories were great. And, thanks to the panel of judges: Al Pope, Marcelle Dube and Andrew Richardson. The winning entries can be read online at <http://www.psnorth.com/yukon>.



YEU from the President



By the time we go to press, we will have held the first Joint Consultation with

the government since signing the new Collective Agreement.

We will be seeking a status report on the policy intended to address violence in the workplace. It has been a year since the committee made recommendations to government, yet we have not seen results.

Children's Receiving Home

Our concerns about the receiving home and the danger the structure

presents have not been addressed. We are preparing for a joint consultation meeting with Health & Social Services and the management team for Residential Youth Treatment Services (RYTS).

Call Back Pay

It has come to our attention that there is confusion about the application of Article 18.01 of the YTG-PSAC Collective Agreement.

If an employee receives a call at home after regular working hours to provide information – then that employee is paid to the nearest 15 minutes for the time spent.

However, if work is generated, then that employee is entitled to 4

hours pay at the straight time rate.

City of Whitehorse

We continue to work to resolve an issue with the City of Whitehorse about positions classified as “Permanent Relationship Employees”. Such a classification is not defined in the Collective agreement. We understand payment of certain entitlements has been withheld.

Union Advisors

I'm pleased to welcome back Kathy Hanifan from her year and a half secondment with the Yukon government.

My sincere thanks to Mark Bowers and Craig Battaglia for their service during Kathy's absence.

Courses developed by CLC offered to members

The Yukon Federation of Labour is proud to offer our membership the opportunity to develop Labour leadership skills through the following courses, developed by the Canadian Labour Congress:

Steward Training, Level 1: This course will provide a solid framework for learning the roles, rights and responsibilities of a Steward as a problem solver. The basics of identifying and handling complaints and grievances are covered. It encourages educated activism, and challenges participants to broaden their understanding of the labour movement within our community, and globally. **Course Date: October 17, 2007**

Steward Training, Level 2: This course builds on the framework of steward skills established and strengthened in the Level 1 course. This course will focus on representation issues:

- Knowing your membership
- Working with your union executive
- Grievance preparation
- Problem solving, conflict resolution and representation skills.

Course Date: November 22, 2007

Leadership: Fine tune those leadership skills you may not even know you have! This course covers leadership styles and myths, along with skills like how to chair meetings and motivate others. **Course Date: February 21, 2008**

Assertiveness & Problem Solving: Union member or Shop Steward, if you are looking for ways to develop better skills for dealing with stressful situations and conflict at work, this is the course for you.

Course Date: March 20, 2008

Cost per course is \$75.00.

Requests for sponsorship to any or all of these courses may be made by submitting a YEU Training Request form to the YEU Education Committee or your Local Executive.

Watson Lake trip planned

YEU President Laurie Butterworth, Union Advisor Rebecca Anderson, and trainers Sue Christianson (YEU) and Nancy Debrecini (PSAC) will be in Watson Lake for meetings with YEU members on August 10-11.

Three training sessions will be held:

- *Your Union and You*
- *Forming a Local*, and
- *Grievance Handling*

Discussions will also be held with members in the community about the possibility of forming a Watson Lake Local.

The training sessions and meetings will be held on Friday and Saturday

at the Wye Lake Cabins.

All YEU members employed by the Yukon government in Watson Lake are encouraged to attend.

To register or to obtain up-to-date information on course and meeting times, please call the YEU office at 667-2331 (collect).

Training opportunity reminder

Several valuable courses are regularly offered through the Yukon government, in cooperation with the Yukon Employees' Union.

Your Union and You is a course taught by YEU representatives who provide an overview of your rights as union members. It introduces you to the benefits you'll receive –

including special discounts and arrangements, just for being a union member.

Excellent courses on grievance processing and problem solving in the workplace are offered. Other courses help establish healthy and safe job sites. Check out the *PSC Staff Development Quarterly* on the Yukon government website for more information:

http://www.psc.gov.yk.ca/pdf/quarterly_summer07.pdf

YEU calendar

Upcoming Watson Lake Courses

Friday & Saturday at the Wye Lake Cabins. *Your Union and You*, *Grievance Handling*, and *Forming a Local* – presented by YEU and the PSAC.

CLC Courses (offered in Whitehorse)

Shop Steward Training Level I, *Shop Steward Training Level II*, *Leadership, Assertiveness & Problem Solving*. Presented by the Yukon Federation of Labour. For details, call 667-6676.

Workers' Compensation Courses

Presented by the Yukon Federation of Labour. Three courses will again be offered beginning in September. Contact YFL for more information: 667-6676.

Shop Steward Round Tables

Monthly, Every first Thursday. 9:00 a.m. until noon, YEU Hall.

YEU Monthly Executive Meeting

2nd Thurs., 6:30 p.m., YEU Hall

Local Y010 Monthly Meeting

2nd Wed., 5:00 p.m., YEU Hall

Local Y017 Monthly Meeting

4th Wed., 7:30 p.m., YEU Hall

Local Y025 Monthly Meeting

2nd Tues., 4:30 p.m., YEU Hall



YEU News is published by the Yukon Employees' Union.

201-2285 – 2nd Avenue, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, Y1A 1C9

Tel: 867-667-2331 Fax: 867-667-6521

email: contact@yeu.ca; Web: www.yeu.ca

Office Hours:

Mon-Thurs 8:30 am – 5:00 pm

Fridays 8:30 am – 12:00 pm

1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Please notify YEU about address and name changes. Call or fax Linda Bidrman – or email lbidrman@yeu.ca.

Contacts:

Staff (867) 667-2331

Linda Bidrman, Admin Assistant, Membership Services; lbidrman@yeu.ca

Rebecca Anderson, Union Advisor - contact for members and Shop Stewards; randerson@yeu.ca

Kathy Hanifan, Union Advisor - contact for members and Shop Stewards; Khanifan@yeu.ca

Carolyn (Toody) Boland, Admin Assistant, Financial; tboland@yeu.ca

Gwen Wain, Admin Assistant, Secretarial; gwain@yeu.ca

Bob Nardi, Communications Officer - contact for Newsletter and Website; bnardi@yeu.ca

Denise L. Norman, Executive Director - contact for YEU and Local Executive Members; dnorman@yeu.ca