
Issue 1

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THE NUFA NEWS

“Our union makes us
strong.”

Welcome!

Welcome to the first issue of **The NUFA News**, the monthly newsletter of the Nipissing University Faculty Association. Through the publication of news items, notices, interviews and other materials related to union membership, it is hoped that the *News* will contribute to the enhancement of communication between and among Members and the realization of the goals of our organization. Your contributions are welcome and your feedback is valued, too. The members of the NUFA Communications Committee are: **Rob Breton, Joanne Kmiec, Uldis Kundrats (Chair), and Jeff Scott**. It is expected that responsibility for preparation of individual issues of **The NUFA News** will be shared between and among members of the committee. Additional content will likely be made available on the NUFA web-site.

Feature Interview

BILL DEW of CASBU

When did you first become aware of unions and what they can do?

I've been aware of unions for quite a while. My father was actually president of a printing union in the Soo for *The Sault Star*. He was a printer and he became active in the union for a very long time. My mother was a college professor and she was very active in the union. I remember . . . when we were taken out during an OPSEU strike and we got to spend the time in a little shack with my mom. So we were introduced to unions very young.

Did you learn, at an early age, about the kinds of issues that crop up when there is a strike or a labour dispute?

Yeah, fairly young, and into high-school as well. The year after I left high-school, there was the potential of a labour disruption, and it was quite interesting, because I had a different view on it than most of my cohorts. A lot of the students were very concerned they were going to lose a year. But personally, I was very concerned that the teachers were not getting what they deserved. So at a fairly young age . . . I was exposed to unions and the good that they can do--how incredibly helpful they are.

Did you find yourself paying special attention to items in the news or on television or radio, when there were labour disputes or discussions of union activity?

I guess I have always been drawn to the union. I mean, one of the big things--I'm from Sault Ste. Marie--one of the major things in the Soo is the steel plant. And the activities of the union--the union was absolutely essential for the existence of the Soo, to some extent. They eventually purchased Algoma Steel to keep it going, so that everyone would have a job. That really drove home the importance of the union. A union is there to make sure we get a fair shake in contract negotiations. But they went a further step to ensure that there was actually somewhere to go to work. So yeah, I've--been exposed to it many different ways. It's just the absolute importance of the union.

Are there values and ideals that many unions have in common that stand out for you?

Oh, yes. The idea of fairness across the board, of equal work for equal pay, of being treated not as merely an employee, but as a partner. Especially in a university, being treated as a partner, as opposed to being an employee of administration, is very important. Yeah, I do find myself drawn to a lot of union issues.

Tell me about CASBU. There may be some people who aren't even sure what it stands for, in terms of what the acronym denotes. Perhaps you could highlight some of the specific elements that go into it and what significance it has.

There's been a great deal of confusion about CASBU in general, and the union more specifically . . . and exactly who is in the union. For NUFA--the Nipissing University Faculty Association--anybody who teaches any course besides AQ courses at Nipissing University is a

faculty member, a full-voting member of NUFA. Anybody who is a full-time member--all the levels of professor: assistant, associate and full, as well as a lecturer is a part of the full-time bargaining unit, under the NUFA umbrella. And then there's a second umbrella called the Contract Academic Staff Bargaining Unit, CASBU, as we refer to it. We both bargain, independent of one another, but we have as much cross-over as possible.

CASBU is not just one or two classes--there are numerous classes. You have laboratory instructors, seminar instructors, service course instructors. The lab instructors are mainly in Geography and in Biology. The seminar instructors are mainly in English and History. And the service course instructors--there's a number of them--(in) Computer Science, also in English now. On top of that, we also have ABQ instructors . . . Additional Basic Qualifications instructors, through the Education Faculty--a very large group, a very important group. We've also got (instructors for) CCBE, which is the Centre for Continuing Business Education. . . And (in) our last group--and probably one of larger groups--are the part-time instructors. So anybody who comes and teaches a single-semester course or a number courses up to two courses per semester is a classified as a part-time instructor. So we've got a very diverse group of people and to some extent, it makes negotiation and getting a consensus fairly difficult, because each of the groups has different numbers of people. For example, for lab instructors, there would be 10 . . . members of the union. For part-time instructors there are probably 70 or 80. . So it's a very diverse group. It makes negotiating very interesting.

Bill Dew was interviewed for *The NUFA News* by Uldis Kundrats on December 5, 2007.

Party Time!

Last Saturday night, NUFA held its End of the Year Party at **100 Georges**. Those attending were treated to an evening of convivial fellowship, warmed by flickering flames from a fireplace, lively conversation, and an extensive array of tasty snacks.

NUFA President **Roman Brozowski** told the *News* before the party that "It's kind of nice for everybody to get together to enjoy themselves and to say, 'Well, we finished another successful term.'" Brozowski said that "Some people come in groups, some come by themselves. Some come just with their partners. So it's a real mix of different people.

The party provided an opportunity for full-time NUFA Members to meet CASBU Members. President Brozowski said "It's nice to have CASBU Members come out and meet with the full-time Members, and the full-time Members to know who the CASBU Members are."

After the party, which attracted more than 30 people, Brozowski commented that "Everyone had a good time on Saturday. It was a chance for faculty and partners to mix and get to know each other better. It was an enjoyable evening."

It is likely that there will be another NUFA-sponsored gathering at the end of the academic year.

NUFA Notes

Adam Adler has been working with a new choral group made up of students, faculty, staff, and administration from all faculties at Nipissing University as well as Canadore College. This talented group of singers have named themselves the **Near North Singers**. They gave their first public performance on Monday December 10—a brief appearance. in the Education Concert, as well as their own mini-concert on Tuesday December 11 at 1 p.m. in the Nipissing Theatre. New Members are always welcome—look for announcements in the new year. . . NUFA President **Roman Brozowski** reported to Members on November 30 that a meeting had taken place between the NUFA Executive and the Executive of Nipissing University. “We discussed a number of issues, from computing to relations between ourselves and the Executive. Given Faculty concerns computing was an important topic on the agenda”

NUFA Members who would like to share noteworthy information about their activities in teaching, research, or committee work or have something they would like to announce or publicize can send NUFA Notes items to any member of the Communications Committee.