

## **Law Society Lawyers Chapter Report from the Chairperson**

It has been a busy year for your Executive Committee. Sadly (for us) David Newell left the Law Society in February to become an adjudicator with WCAT. We'll miss him but certainly wish him well. Lance Cooke has replaced David as Vice-Chairperson.

Your union representatives have mostly been occupied with 2 areas in 2009: the Union/Management Committee and bargaining.

The Union/Management Committee is established under the Collective Agreement to discuss matters relating to the workplace that affect the union, the employer or PEA employees. The union representatives on the Committee are Jack Olsen and me. The Committee has held 5 meetings so far this year. The minutes, once approved, are posted to the PEA website. I encourage you to check them out. The issues discussed at the meetings have included: the administration of overtime; term employee benefits; telecommuting during the Olympics; joint job evaluations; the safety committee; staffing in PLTC and bargaining dates.

Since May, your bargaining committee (Jonathan Corbett, John Nalleweg, Jack Olsen and I) have been actively engaged in preparation for bargaining and, since September, in bargaining. The union met with members June 9, 2009 to discuss the results from the on-line survey conducted in anticipation of bargaining. Thereafter we worked to develop a comprehensive set of proposals that we presented to the membership at a meeting September 17, 2009.

The bargaining committee and our PEA labour relations officer, Ernie Gorrie, met with the employer's representatives on seven days in September and October. Your committee presented the proposals reviewed with you at the September 17, 2009 meeting. The employer presented 7 proposals – these are described in Bargaining Bulletin #6. The employer then suggested that we roll the existing agreement over for another year with some small changes. While many of the employer's proposals were acceptable, negotiations broke down over the amount of the salary increase. The Law Society proposed a 1% increase and was unwilling to increase its offer even after the bargaining committee reduced its salary proposal from 4 to 3.5%. As we have not achieved a tentative agreement as of this date, the next step will be to set more dates for bargaining. I have asked Jodi Jensen, the Executive Director of the PEA, to provide us with an update on where the bargaining is at.

In addition to the activities described above, Jack Olsen and I attended the PEA's Biennial Convention in Victoria in May. A full report on the convention can be found on the website.

Respectfully submitted,

Carmel Wiseman  
Law Society Lawyers Chairperson