

# STRIKE BULLETIN

ISSUE #6

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*Volunteers at Conestoga College could scarcely keep up with demand Wednesday at a solidarity BBQ that attracted almost 600 supporters*

## GIANT RALLY ON CONESTOGA PICKET LINE TURNS TO DANCE PARTY!

What was originally billed as a picket line rally featuring speakers from local organized labour turned into a fun-filled and spontaneous dance party Wednesday at Conestoga College, that included a free BBQ, scores of students and a D.J. who volunteered his services in support of striking support staff.

“It was absolutely awesome,” said Sherry Johnston, president of Local 238. “We had a great turnout and, yes, we even had a few women dancing along to the music.”

Johnston estimated the crowd at close to 600, which successfully plugged up the main entrance to Conestoga’s Doon campus in Kitchener. Her estimate was based on the BBQ menu which served up 400 hamburgers and more than 150 hot dogs. At one meal per person, there were no leftovers.

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“Everybody had a great time and it was gratifying to see so many students turn out.”

Speakers at the rally included representatives from the Ontario Secondary Schools Teacher’s Federation, the Ontario Federation of Labour, the Ontario Elementary Catholic Teachers Association and United Steelworkers.

Also on hand to demonstrate their solidarity with support staff were local NDP candidates for the Oct. 6 election: Mark Cairns, Isabell Cisterna and Cameron Dearlove.

Fred Oliver, representing the CAAT Support bargaining team, also spoke to the crowd.

Johnston said she was particularly impressed with remarks delivered by Shelby Scott, an unaffiliated Conestoga student who asked to speak to the picket line.

“(Shelby) told us she knows what we do to keep the colleges running and that the students missed us inside. She said she hoped we get everything we’re bargaining for,” said Johnston.

A local D.J. who goes by the name of Ron of *Melody Train Musical Entertainment* stopped by and offered, at no cost, to set up his sound system and music for anyone who wished to perform some karaoke and a bit of dancing on the sidewalks.



## OPSEU PRESIDENT JOINS STRIKERS AT CAMBRIAN, BORÉAL & SAULT



Sault Ste. Marie

OPSEU President Smokey Thomas spent a busy Tuesday visiting picket lines in Sudbury and Sault Ste. Marie where he urged striking college support staff to maintain solidarity in face of management’s refusal to resume contract talks.

Smokey’s day kicked off in Sudbury where he was greeted by close to 200 support staff on the picket line at Cambrian College before he headed off to Collège Boréal and more than 100 pickets at that campus. Local Sudbury police closed down a lane of traffic to allow striking members to

safely march around each campus.

From Sudbury, Smokey moved on to Sault Ste Marie where he joined a BBQ rally outside the OPSEU regional office. Once again, he rallied the spirits of striking Sault College workers by saying their fight was a just one that would lead to a contract settlement.

“His visit was a great boost to our solidarity and our spirits,” said Local 612 president Lorri Foley.

Following the BBQ, Sault support staff and other local labour activists marched on the College in the company of NDP candidates Celia Ross and former Member of Parliament, Tony Martin. Along the route they passed the campaign offices of provincial Liberal David Oraziotti where they called on him to support their struggle with college management. Oraziotti had no comment.

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## GEORGE BROWN STUDENTS TO HOLD TOWN HALL MEETINGS FOR STRIKE INFORMATION

The Student Association of George Brown College has announced it will hold town hall meetings to help students understand the reasons for the support staff strike.

“We’re holding these meetings to help facilitate a dialogue between the students and the college administration so students can better understand why their services are being adversely affected,” said Cindy Brownlee, director of education and equity at the Student Association of George Brown College.

“We also hope to use this opportunity for our members to understand the education system in Ontario, and the college system in particular, is chronically underfunded, and the underfunding manifests itself in various ways, including labour unrest and strikes.”

The meetings will be held at St. James in the student lounge on Thursday, September 13, 2011 at 2:30 p.m. and at Casa Loma on Tuesday, September 20 at 2:30 p.m. in the student centre. Refreshments and ASL interpretation will be provided. Members from the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) will be in attendance.

“The college has declined to attend a meeting with the union in attendance, citing the college is unable to comment on current labour negotiations, and the union has no such restriction,” said Brownlee.

## ACADEMICS DONATE TO SUPPORT STAFF STRIKE FUNDS

Striking support staff workers at two Toronto colleges are the recipients of generous cash donations from their sisters and brothers representing their colleges’ respective academic bargaining units.

Within days of walking out on Sept. 1, Local 562 representing CAAT Academic staff at Humber College, passed a motion to donate \$10,000 to the strike fund of support staff at Local 563.

And on Labour Day, CAAT A at George Brown College Local 556 agreed to donate \$2,000 to striking support workers represented by Local 557.

“The money is there for them to use however they see fit,” said Local 556 President Tom Tomassi. “It’s a gesture of our solidarity with our support staff.”

## MORE PICKET LINE VISITS FOR OPSEU PRESIDENT & VP

OPSEU President Smokey Thomas and First Vice President / Treasurer Eddy Almeida will wind down the week with a busy schedule of picket line visits.

On Friday, Smokey will stop by an early morning picket line at Confederation College in Thunder Bay to share solidarity with striking members of Local 731.

Meanwhile, vice president Eddy Almeida has plans to visit picket lines today at St. Clair College in both Windsor and Chatham. He then heads up Highway 401 for a picket line stop at Fanshawe College in London.

On Friday, Eddy will join a picket line rally at Mohawk College in his hometown of Hamilton.

## NDP CANDIDATE A REAL FRIEND OF LABOUR!

Support staff with Local 351 at Fleming College in Peterborough are grateful for the relentless support of local NDP candidate, Dave Nickle.

The candidate for the riding of Peterborough has been out on the picket line at Fleming College everyday since Day One of the strike. Despite the heavy demands of campaigning for the Oct 6 provincial election, Dave hasn’t missed one day of picket line duty since our strike started Sept. 1. He arrives each day at 7:00 a.m., ready to put in an hour or so with our members.

Dave has held various positions within the Ontario Secondary Schools Teachers Federation, including service as President for District 14. Most recently he served as Provincial Councillor for District 14 and an Executive Member of the Peterborough and District Labour Council. He is an active member of the Peterborough Health and Electricity coalitions and a campaigner for electoral reform. He is a member of the board of directors of the Community Legal Centre and a social and labour activist.

Solidarity forever, Dave!

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## SHARE YOUR PICKET LINE PLANS AND STORIES WITH EVERYONE!

Rallies, demonstrations, BBQs and demonstrations of solidarity are breaking out at CAAT Support campuses everywhere around Ontario. Share the good news with your sisters and brothers across the province. Have your OPSEU staff representative send breaking news, and other information about developments on the picket line to your daily Strike Bulletin. They should send the details to OPSEU communications officer Greg Hamara at [ghamara@opseu.org](mailto:ghamara@opseu.org)

### CONTACT YOUR TEAM!

If you have any questions at all about bargaining, feel free to e-mail your team at any time.

Our address is [bargaining@rogers.com](mailto:bargaining@rogers.com).

### PLEASE POST AND CIRCULATE.

This publication is authorized for distribution by:

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## GOOD JOBS TODAY GOOD JOBS TOMORROW

