

Message from the Chair

The Ontario government is planning the biggest change to how alcohol is sold in Ontario since the LCBO and the Beer Store were established almost 90 years ago.

The government has announced it will permit as many as 450 grocery stores in the province to sell six-packs over the course of the next several years starting this holiday season. In fact more than 40 grocery stores started to sell six-packs of beer on Dec. 15.

It has also been reported that by 2017 grocery stores will be allowed to sell wine.

No matter how you measure it, these changes will have impacts on the LCBO and the Beer Store and the security of well-paying jobs, as well as the social costs and the social harms associated with wider availability of alcohol.

As your elected union leaders we take these changes very seriously. We have conducted extensive public surveys that confirmed that Ontario public support for expanded alcohol sales drops when people are told of the health care and social impacts caused by a wider availability of spirits, wine and beer.

Without a doubt your Liquor Board Employees Division has been very busy building networks

and building public awareness. We published a full page advertisement in the LCBO's *Food and Drink* magazine and purchased radio advertising. We've distributed buttons to our members in the workplace about our public message. We believe in keeping our communities safe and reducing risks caused by the rapid expansion of alcohol sales. Our commitment to social responsibility is second to none.

We take our work seriously. Grocery stores are no place for alcohol sales of any sort. To go to the extent of selling alcohol products in grocery stores when people need to focus on buying nourishing food for their families is reckless. It amounts to "normalizing" alcohol like any other food product.

We have been in close contact with other liquor board components in provinces across Canada thanks to our umbrella union, the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE). As representatives of unionized LCBO workers, we regularly join conference calls with union leaders elsewhere to



share strategies on how we might best fight back against the privatization of alcohol retailing.

Here in Ontario we became a founding partner in the Coalition for Responsible Alcohol Retailing where we work with several other public advocacy groups to heighten the public awareness of the shortcomings of the government’s plan of privatizing wine and beer sales. Dr. Norman Giesbrecht of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) and an internationally-recognized expert on the harmful effects of expanded alcohol retailing is a regular participant in the Coalition’s discussions and strategy development. Others in the Coalition include Meridith Kratzman, manager of health promotion with the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, and Anne Leonard, chief executive officer of the anti-drunk driving organization, Arrive Alive.

OPSEU President Warren (Smokey) Thomas has provided numerous media interviews on the issue over the past year. We have met with government

officials responsible for implementing the plan to expand and privatize beer and wine sales and have told them the government has failed to consult with experts on the harmful social and health effects caused by wider alcohol availability.

We have asked you, our members inside the LCBO, to wear the “**Responsibility**” buttons in your workplaces. If you haven’t received your buttons to wear, please contact your local president immediately. We are allowed to wear the buttons on the job, so please do!

Let me take this opportunity on behalf of your divisional executive to wish all of you and your families a safe and restful holiday season and New Year.

In Solidarity,

Denise Davis

Chair, Liquor Board Employees Division

Two new members selected to sit on the employment equity committee

Your divisional executive would like to send a big Thank You! to all those members who applied for a position on our employment equity committee. We congratulate our two new members: Adam Ly and Paige Malcolm.

Adam has been an employee of the LCBO for seven years where he works in retail as a customer service

representative. Adam is also active with OPSEU’s young workers committee. Paige has been an employee with the LCBO for 25 years. She is active with OPSEU’s Region 4 equity committee and the union’s Aboriginal Circle.

Welcome aboard Adam and Paige!

Our Responsibility is to You

Your division, as well as various health care advocacy groups such as the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Arrive Alive, Students Against Drunk Driving, OPSEU’s Health Care Divisional Council, OPHA Alcohol Working Group and several others have adopted the position that privatized sales of beer and wine in supermarkets are a bad idea and that the LCBO does a very good job of enforcing social responsibility. As our partners from the Coalition for Responsible Alcohol Retailing agree: it’s been demonstrably proven that increased distribution of alcohol leads to increased consumption which leads to greater costs in health care, social services and the criminal justice system.



Along with our partners in the coalition, we have demanded that the current Liberal government under Kathleen Wynne should consult with experts and the public before making alcohol available in supermarkets.

Our message to the premier is straight and to the point: **“It’s just a bad idea, Kathleen.”** We may not be able to stop the expansion of alcohol into grocery store but we can slow it down.

By now all LBED members should have already received their in-store buttons with the message: **“Our Responsibility is to You.”**

The button is part of our inside-the-LCBO campaign that was kicked off with our full-page advertisement published in the last edition of *Food and Drink* magazine. What we are saying to the public is that our jobs are in customer service, but our

responsibility rests with the community as evidenced by last year turning away more than 400,000 minors and others who attempted to purchase alcohol when intoxicated or on behalf of those who are under-age or intoxicated. Frontline retail workers know from experience that they are frequently called on to contact police when they witness a drunk get behind the wheel of an automobile. This is what we do best. We provide a safe environment to sell alcohol.

Remember, **“Our Responsibility is to You.”**

If you have not received your buttons, please contact Rick Woodall, chair of LBED’s anti privatization committee at woodall@bellnet.ca

Wishing everyone a great holiday season!

Rick Woodall, Anne Makela, Greg Wilson
Members, Anti-Privatization Committee

Meet your 2013-15 LBED Executive

Denise Davis

Chair



This is Denise’s fourth term as the chair of the Liquor Board Employees Division. She has served as the chair of several committees including grievance and provincial health and safety. Since OLBEU merged with OPSEU in 2005, Denise has been a member of three bargaining teams and chair of one of them.

Denise has been employed by the LCBO for 32 years and during this time she has worked in retail as a fixed term, casual, and permanent full-time as a customer service representative. Denise currently works at the Durham warehouse facility and has worked in various capacities that include case handing, forklift driving, loading and unloading trucks as well as performing administrative duties.

Denise’s goal as LBED chair is to build solidarity among the locals and to provide assistance to all local presidents and divisional committees. Denise believes strong communication is key to effectively running a division.

Jennifer Van Zetten

Vice Chair



Jenn started her LCBO career in 2001 and has been a dedicated OPSEU activist ever since. This has been demonstrated through her tireless efforts to engage the employer at the local level and as the two-term Chair of LBED’s provincial health and safety committee. Jenn has spent the past four years ensuring that our

members have been provided with health and safety educationals while pressuring the employer to make all LCBO workplaces safe and healthy.

As vice-chair and head of the grievance committee, Jenn plans to employ her passion for justice and fairness by enforcing the collective agreement and fighting for our members’ rights. Jenn believes the key to success in her position is enhancing communication between the grievance committee, OPSEU staff and LBED members.

When Jenn isn’t championing members’ rights, she enjoys baking, cooking, and taking mini-vacations with her family.

Colleen Macleod

Secretary/Treasurer



Colleen attended her first picket line at the age of seven when her grandmother brought her along so she could witness what it's like to fight for workers' rights. A daughter of parents who were both union stewards, it not surprising that Colleen is serving her fourth term as president of Local 5107, one of

LBED's largest locals. This is currently Colleen's third term as secretary/treasurer and fifth term as an elected member of the divisional executive.

Says Colleen: "Running a large local requires a great deal of organization and it's critical to a president's success. I've taken what I've learned at the local level and applied it to the divisional level. My goal is to continue keeping local presidents up to date and ensuring divisional finances are transparent and available."

Colleen has previously served as chair of the central region labour-management committee and chair of the education and communication committee. She has served on the past two bargaining teams.

Rick Woodall

Chair, Anti-Privatization Committee



Rick has been a casual for ten years at different locations in Muskoka. During this time he has been a local vice-president for three terms and is currently serving his second term as president. This past June he was elected to his third term as chair of our anti-privatization committee.

Throughout Rick's tenure as a member of the anti-privatization committee, he and his committee members have implemented

campaigns with the assistance of OPSEU staff to fight back against the threat of privatizing the LCBO. The committee has helped defeat the Liberal government's bid in 2010 to fold the LCBO into an entity (with Ontario Hydro) called SuperCorp. The committee has also pushed back against the Ontario Convenience Store Association and its efforts to put beer and wine in corner stores.

Rick and the anti-privatization committee have developed a campaign to slow down the plan to put beer and wine in supermarkets. OPSEU took a leadership role in bringing together advocacy groups to create the Coalition For Responsible Alcohol Retailing.

In his spare time Rick operates a successful trophy engraving business in Gravenhurst and enjoys taking to the skies as a licensed pilot.

Susan Lusty

Chair, Benefits and Pension Committee



Susan is currently a C-store manager in Stayner and been involved in the union since 1989. This is Susan's seventh consecutive term on the divisional executive and fifth term as chair of the benefits and pension committee. For more than 10 years Susan and her committee have helped members navigate our benefit

and pension plan while ensuring any changes to the benefit carrier match previous employee entitlements. "Over the years I've worked with so many great people on this committee; it's such a pleasure to help our members understand their rights and entitlements under the collective agreement."

Susan's hobbies include a love for the outdoors and spending time with her family.

Rob Mithrush

Chair, Health and Safety Committee

Rob currently works as a product consultant at store 501 in Thunder Bay. He has been on the provincial health and safety committee since 2007 and is excited to bring his 20-plus years’ experience as a steward to the role of chair of the health and safety committee. In addition to his union experience, Rob is also an instructor at the local Workers’ Health and Safety Centre.

Rob’s goals for the committee are to educate our members in health and safety and to hold the LCBO accountable for managerial decisions that may negatively impact our membership. He believes that workplace safety should be a business priority over all else, and vows to fight to ensure the employer complies with all provincial health and safety regulations. “A safe workplace isn’t a lofty entitlement, it’s a right. It’s a legal right that this committee will enforce through the collective agreement, legislation and member education,” says Rob.

In his spare time Rob enjoys spending time with family, fishing, hiking, and socializing with friends.

Craig Hadley

Chair, Education and Communications Committee



Craig has been with the LCBO for 18 years and works at the retail point of sale help desk where he assists staff with technical and procedural problems. This is Craig’s fourth term on the committee and second term as chair. Craig’s union experience includes working on several OPSEU campaigns and a provincial election campaign. He currently volunteers as a writer for OPSEU’s *In Solidarity* magazine.

The committee’s goal is to integrate the *Echo* newsletter with social media and to find new and creative ways to engage our membership.

Craig holds a degree in work and labour studies from York University.

Update: OPSEU Human Rights Complaint

The direction from the vice-chair of the Human Rights Tribunal reads as follows:

“November 30th (past) and December 18th will be Case Management meetings. All production issues will be completed by January 31, 2016. Further hearing dates will be established once the production issues have been resolved on or before January 31, 2016.”

Although not confirmed, the vice chair has indicated that hearing dates should commence in May, 2016. Please feel free to contact Steve Nield should you have any further questions. Steve can be contacted via the OPSEU direct toll free number **1-800-268-7376** or by email at snield@opseu.org

We encourage all casual members to continue to send in their stories to Steve.

OPSEU Youth Conference

It’s 8:00 a.m., Wednesday Aug 12, 2015. I’m in a room jam packed with anticipation, enthusiasm, ideas, and plenty of brewed coffee. It’s the eighth annual **OPSEU International Youth Day Conference** titled “**Invest in your future**”, and the turnout is the largest to date. Of the 140 participants 75 percent were first

time attendees. This is an exciting result, showing the success of the **OPSEU Provincial Young Workers Committee (PYC)** in its efforts to reach out to young members of our union, and to engage them in discussions that are of the most concern for our youth workers.

In a variety of polls conducted throughout the conference, the priorities that ranked highest amongst the group regarding the future were: pensions, benefits/financial planning, equity issues and, most importantly, organizing and involving the next generation of young workers. These poll results were right on point with the goals set out by the committee for this year’s conference with the addition of workers’ rights and responsibilities surrounding health and safety in the workplace, and the growing trend of precarious employment experienced by youth.

To achieve these goals workshops were organized in three key areas: *Basic Grievance Handling*, *Public Speaking: Finding Your Voice*, and *Mental Health-Challenging Stigma in the Workplace*.

Inspirational speakers at the conference included **Nora Loreto**, a writer, musician and, author of *“From Demonized to Organized: Building the New Union Movement”*. Unifor’s **John MacDonald** spoke of the importance, challenges, and workers’ rights that surround health and safety in the workplace.

Jeff Moat, current president of Partners for Mental Health, brought attention to the need for positive change in the mental health system. Farley Flex, a successful music manager (Maestro Fresh-Wes), also spoke with passion about youth and their activist role in communities.

I followed up with some of the attendees after the conference asking what motivated them to attend, what were their most inspiring moments, and what they will take back with them to their place of employment, and communities.

Invest in your future  **August 12-14, 2015**
International Youth Day

A common theme emerged amongst the attendees. They want to get involved. They want to create solutions to tear down the obstacles organized labour faces in attracting new members. They want their voices heard and to meet, learn and share ideas with a host of individuals from across Ontario who occupy a variety of different career paths but who also share a common goal: Get active and get involved.

Andrew Curran, an employee of St. Joseph’s Care Group (Local 720) said he was inspired to participate in an OPSEU educational and complete the Steward 1 course. This coincides with the PYC’s enthusiasm over the results of a poll that asked: “Do you plan to hold a position higher than you currently do?” More than 85 per cent in attendance responded: Yes!

Matt Web of Local 499 appreciated the health and safety portion of the agenda. “I’m glad to know, understand, and ensure that we do not find ourselves in a situation of irreparable harm.”

He also felt that the skills in the public speaking workshop were a beneficial tool that he would put to use not only in union activities, but all areas of life including his job as a product consultant that requires presentations.



All of the participants had favorite speakers that resonated with them for many different professional and personal reasons. But the message OPSEU president **Warren (Smokey) Thomas** delivered to open the conference was one that stood out for **Alex Lane**, an employee of Red Cross Home Care in Brockville. “Respect the past, learn from the past, but do the future *your way*,” Thomas told the group. Alex believes this is a critical message that, “as young members we don’t just repeat the past and hope that it will continually work. We need to evolve the union for changing times. It’s the perfect moniker for our union.”

The enthusiasm that was present at this conference regarding activism spilled over into action. The PYC was thrilled to see a large number of members attend a picket/sit-in at the office of Dr. Eric Hoskins, minister of health and long term care, with the goal of getting him back to the table with one of our locals that have been without a contract for months. “It’s huge for us to see young workers showing solidarity with other sectors and divisions within OPSEU and the larger labour movement.”

All 140 attendees also took to the streets to launch the PYC’s sarcastically-themed “#Don’tVote” campaign in the lead up to the Oct. 19 federal election. We engaged the public on the important issue of poor voter turnout in past elections and why your vote does matter and WILL make a difference. Some of the slogans used in the campaign went like this: “It’s easy to raise a family on minimum wage #Don’tVote”, “Tuition fees are fine the way they are, no problem paying off my student loan up to retirement #Don’tVote”.

The International Youth Day Conference was a resounding success. The PYC plans to build on this momentum with increasing the visibility of young workers in the OPSEU community. The committee aims for an even greater turnout next year.

Yes we are the future and we need to invest in our future, but more importantly, as stated by one attendee, we are “the now.”

Submitted by Katie Sample
Local 499



OPSEU First Vice-President / Treasurer Eduardo (Eddy) Almeida, left and President Warren (Smokey) Thomas, right, with music producer Farley Flex at the International Youth Day Conference.

Life After The LCBO

Submitted by Michael Sullivan
Heart Transplant Recipient

We all have special dates that we will not forget. For me personally May 20, 2010 was the day I retired from the LCBO after a 38-year career. Actually, my career was shortened due to a cardiac disease called ideopathic dilated cardiomiopathy. My heart was enlarged and was not supplying my body with enough oxygenated blood, causing shortness of breath and fatigue.

The doctors diagnosed me with this heart disease 15 years prior to my retirement and were able to provide me with medications to maintain my life.

In 2010 I was popping more than 20 pills each day and after weeks of visits to London Health Sciences Centre I was informed that I would be placed on the list for a heart transplant. This was welcomed news because the medications were no longer effective and I was sleeping 20 hours a day and retaining fluid.

My wife and my family had no idea what it meant to be placed on the list for transplantation so we started researching things like who maintains this list, how long will I be on a list and what type of recovery was I to expect? Quite frankly I found the amount of information overwhelming.

After being on the wait list for 11 months I got “The Call” at 1 a.m., Feb. 10, 2011. We were told to travel to London and were told that there was a heart available for transplant. By 7 a.m. I was prepped and lying in the operating room. As I was being prepped by hospital staff the phone rang and it was the call from the Ornge helicopter advising the surgeon that

they were en route with the heart and they would be landing within 15 minutes.

The surgery went off without a hitch and my family visited me at about 3 p.m. that afternoon in the intensive care unit. I



found the next part impossible to believe. I was up and walking by 11 p.m. that night after which I was moved from ICU to the transplant unit from where I was released 10 days later.

During my recovery I decided that I wanted to payback and the way to do that was to get involved with the Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGLN) and talk to Ontarians about organ and tissue donation. I am also currently the treasurer of the Canadian Transplant Association (CTA).

The CTA is a national body that accepts all transplantees from across Canada. Every two years the CTA meets and is responsible for promoting the CTA athletic Games. Since my transplant I have competed in Calgary in 2012 and in Moncton in 2014. I have competed in nine events and have won five gold medals, two silvers and two bronze.

In August 2016 the Games are being held in Toronto and we are expecting more than 600 athletes and supporters. We selected Toronto to host the games to increase the enrollment numbers for organ and tissue donation. It will be an amazing six days of competition and fellowship. The athletes will range from ages five to 80 years old and the competition will be fierce.

So take it from me: There is plenty of life after the LCBO!

For further information on becoming an organ and tissue donor or if you want to check to see if you are enrolled as a donor please go to beadonor.ca. All you need is your OHIP card and three minutes of your time.

Remember: One donor can save up to eight lives.



Updates...

- Our pre-bargaining conference and final demand set meeting in advance of the next round of bargaining in 2017 is being organized and dates will be confirmed in early 2016.
- Labour relations issues and grievance process issues being discussed with the employer have been ongoing since last month and will continue.
- January 14, 2016: Casual in-lieu policy grievance will be heard.
- The grievance committee expects to have arbitration dates between January and May, 2017 for permanent vacancy review and other outstanding policy grievances.
- **Provincial Labour Management Committee (PLMC):** Our most recent PLMC meeting was held on Sept.11, 2015 and our final meeting for 2015 was held on Dec. 2. Minutes from our June 2015 meeting have been sent out and should be posted in all workplaces. The September meeting minutes still need to be finalized. All provincial labour-management committees are booking dates for 2016 and that update will follow once they're finalized.

The Employment Equity Committee

For the first time since its inception, OPSEU had a table at the LCBO's Diversity Day celebration. A member from the OPSEU Aboriginal Circle joined us and presented a smudging ceremony which was extremely well received. For many years we have been discussing the expansion of the LCBO Diversity Day to include other areas and divisions around the

province. It is great to say some new Diversity Day events took place since September at the GTA Service Centre, Thunder Bay warehouse and the Durham warehouse. We all have diverse workforces and celebrating our cultures, heritages and our roots is important to all of us.



Proudly brought to you by the LBED Education & Communication Committee

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Editorial Policy

Content comes from our base of activists, staff, other labour sources and our divisional executive.

Where an article has a byline, the views are those of the author and not necessarily the views of OPSEU or LBED.

While we welcome your contributions, we ask that they be constructive. All articles should be signed and include your local number. They should contribute positively to our division, union and its policies.

We encourage thoughtful discussion of all related issues and reserve the right to edit for libel, length, clarity and to reply to those that seem to reflect a misunderstanding of the union and its policies.

Please send articles to Craig Hadley at: lbed.echo@gmail.com



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Divisional Executive

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Please print and post on union board

The ECHO is authorized for distribution by:

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