

# The Rapaport Report

Volume 1, Number 13

November 2006

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*The only way I know how to organize is to talk to one person,  
and then you talk to another person,  
and then you talk to another.*

Cesar Chavez

## The Editors' Weekend

Earlier this month, I attended the Editors' Weekend. About 100 OPSEU activists honed their communication skills at writing, editing and designing newsletters and web sites. *The Rapaport Report* has a new look as a result.

OPSEU started this annual conference in 1993. It is terrific that we promote communication among activists this way.

The editorial board of *In Solidarity* organized the conference. I cannot thank them enough. They also produce the stewards publication *In Solidarity*. Visit at <http://www.opseu.org/insolidarity/insolindex.htm>.

I still have a copy of the first issue of *In Solidarity* from March, 1994. The Point/Counterpoint was between **Dennis Wilson** and **Connie Huziak**. They debated on whether we should bargain under **Bob Rae's** Social Contract. I contributed an article critiquing Total Quality Management, the management trend of the day.

**Do Not Forget to Vote on November 13<sup>th</sup>. It does make a difference, a big difference.**

## Strategic Planning

At the Executive Board retreat in June, a report by OPSEU's internal auditor, **Sunil Aneja**, advised us to examine how we make decisions and how we implement, monitor and control them.

At the September Executive Board meeting, **Sunil** advised us to use a 'strategic planning' approach to the development of the budget.

The Executive Board held a budget meeting on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> with Sunil's recommendations in mind.

My understanding of the strategic planning approach is that the Board first agrees on strategic plans. The budget is then created around those plans; as a strategic plan is to an operating plan. It is a good political and business practice to look at the big picture and then drill down from that.

Region 5 Executive Board Member **Peggy Maybury** is on the Executive Board's Strategic Planning committee. **Peggy** has contributed an article on that process. We also received articles from **Len Mason**, vice chair of the Ministry of Corrections MERC and **Elaine Bagnall**, chair of the MNR MERC.

## Strategic Planning

Peggy Maybury, Region 5 Executive Board Member

We often find ourselves in new situations that come upon us without much warning. We respond to these situations by thinking about how they should be handled. The way in which we react determines whether we will handle them successfully.

On the other hand, when situations come up that we have anticipated, we find it much easier to handle them. This is because we have had the time to plan and prepare. We find this to be true both in situations at work and in our personal lives. To take it a step further, being prepared for new situations is helpful for everyone, from individuals to cities to nations, and even for organizations of all types.

In our union, being prepared for the future has taken the form of preparing an annual budget. In this activity we attach dollars to the various functions and responsibilities that the union wishes to carry out of behalf of its members.

The “budget”, however, is now considered an outmoded concept. The complexities of today’s business world require a lot of thought to go into the preparation of the activities of next year. Well-managed organizations now prepare an integrated “Operating Plan”. Numbers are then developed to indicate the dollars needed to carry out the operating plan, and these numbers are called a financial plan.

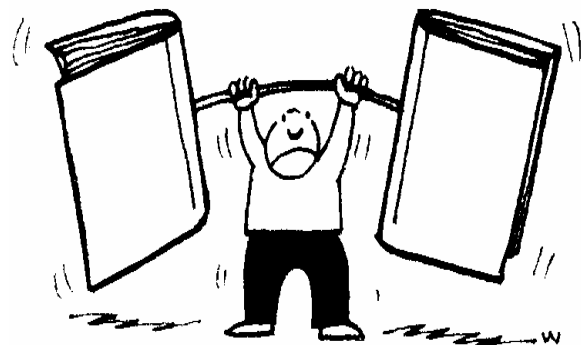
Planning, of course, does not have to be for just one year. In our own work in

OPSEU we can anticipate changes that will occur over the next several years. It therefore becomes necessary to plan the actions that we should take, on a year by year basis, as the changes start to occur. Planning is therefore an activity that anticipates changes several years into the future.

This brings me to two words that should become very important to all of us. These words are Strategic Planning. There isn’t a large, successful organization out there does not practice this. Strategic Planning is the process of anticipating changes in the external and internal environments, and planning appropriate actions and communicating them to everyone in the organization. It leads to the more detailed steps of preparing a one-year Operating Plan, and a Financial Plan to go with it.

There can be no doubt that this important technique of planning and preparing for the future should be adopted by every organization, including OPSEU.

Favorable outcomes do not occur by chance; we have to plan for them and work for them. All of us, whether we’re in a local or in the OPSEU head office, need to think about the issues and challenges that we face. We have to develop strategies that will lead us in the direction in which we want to go. To sum it up, we have to think strategically. It is our best preparation for the future.



## Executive Board Meeting

The Executive Board met November 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>.

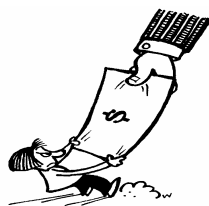
## The Budget

The budget process is well underway. In the late fall and early winter of every year, sometimes longer, the Executive Board, with senior staff, prepares a proposed budget. That proposed budget goes to Convention for final approval. The year is almost four months old before Convention gets to give its stamp of approval.

To understand the budget process better, it is helpful to understand OPSEU as an organization. It is also useful to know about our governance structures.

## OPSEU Governance Structures

The Executive Board is the elected political leadership of OPSEU. The President and the First Vice President are technically and constitutionally the elected day-to-day leaders and, pardon the expression, management of OPSEU. The President's Office focuses on policy, political direction and managing the staff. The First Vice President's Office is responsible for the money, for the cash flow. They both make proposals and provide information to the Executive Board. The Executive Board is there to 'advise and consent' and to govern between Conventions. Convention gets the last word in April of every year.



The budget is a very political document. OPSEU is a very political organization; political in the sense that there are competing interests and views, all legitimately vying for a piece of the budget. That gets played out at the Executive Board and a second time at Convention.

The budget process is our single most important and our most debated process. It is our blueprint for the year.

## The OPSEU Organization

What follows is a description of the OPSEU organization as opposed to a description of membership activities. I do that regularly with my newsletter.

OPSEU is pretty complicated. By the numbers:

- Revenue for fiscal year 2007 is projected at about \$75 million.
- We have about 260 employees, 19 regional offices, 11 stand-alone membership centres and a head office in Toronto.
- We represent about 115,000 members.
- There are 499 Locals; including 213 composite locals and 76 multi-site locals.
- The average age of our stewards is 45.56. 45% of stewards are over 50.
- We now have 484 bargaining units, up from 182 in 1988.

At the senior level, administrators run the six Divisions in OPSEU. Each Division is responsible for a major area of OPSEU activity.

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- The Local Services Division looks after organizing, staff reps, collective bargaining and the regional offices.

- The Planning, Programs and Policy Division is responsible for contract enforcement (grievance, arbitration), research and benefits.

- The Communications Division looks after media relations, political action, education and equity.

- The Operational Services Division includes the financial office.

- The Staff Relations Division performs our Human Resources and bargains with our two staff unions.

- The Legal Division looks after all of our legal matters.

The Operational Services Division reports to the Vice President/Treasurer. The other Divisions report to the President. The President and the Vice President/Treasurer report to the Executive Board. The Board reports to Convention. Their performance is ratified every two years in elections at regional meetings and the Convention.

## Back to the Board Meeting

On the first day of the Board Meeting we heard from the administrators. We heard about their plans, priorities and initiatives for the 2007 fiscal year.

Although not a strategic plan, what we did receive on Wednesday were six one-year divisional plans. We did debate the plans and direction of the Divisions before looking at the actual dollar figures on

Thursday and Friday. This is a step forward for us.

Five priorities are identified for 2007.

- 1) The building of local capacity to enforce contracts, represent members and promote OPSEU;
- 2) The coordinated bargaining initiative in the BPS Developmental Services sector;
- 3) Improved contract enforcement and grievance/arbitration;
- 4) The CAAT part-time campaign;
- 5) The Provincial election and possible referendum on electoral reform scheduled for October 4, 2007.



The Executive Board is still committed to saving money and paying down the line of credit. That was the voice that we heard loud and clear at the 2006 Convention after lowering our contributions to the strike fund from 10% to 5%. The difference goes to the general fund.

I heard a few themes on Wednesday. I heard about robust plans for campaigns, particularly for part-time workers at The CAATs and the Broader Public Service. I heard about plans to bring in-house some of our legal services.

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I support that idea. Too many hearings and arbitrations are farmed out to lawyers. It keeps the knowledge of these arbitrations outside OPSEU. Also, it is way more expensive to use outside lawyers instead of grievance officers.

We currently run a pilot program of temporary grievance officers funded by the savings on not using outside lawyers. We expect to hear an evaluation in December.

We have almost 14,000 outstanding grievances. When I was last on the Executive Board ten years ago, there were thousands of outstanding grievances. We can handle the same amount of arbitration hearings for less money. Or, we can handle more hearings for the same amount.

2007 is a relatively light year for collective bargaining. There are no big central contracts to negotiate. There is a NUPGE Convention and an OFL Convention. Also, there are Regional meetings in March for elections. Once again, Executive Board Members face elections in March, 2007. Where does the time go?

## Strike Fund Investments

I reported in an earlier issue of *The Rapaport Report* that I was on a committee with Vice President/Treasurer **Smokey Thomas** and Region 4 EBM **Dave Lundy** to reconsider how we invest our strike fund. We did re-invest and did quite well. According to calculations, we realized about \$1 million more since June, 2006.



## Cutbacks at the Ministry of Natural Resources

By Elaine Bagnall, MNR MERC Chair

**O**PSEU members at the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) need your help in the campaign to increase ministry budgets in the spring.

In the past year, MNR experienced many cuts to staffing and program levels. The Enforcement Section is experiencing budget issues. Conservation Officers are responsible for enforcing the Fish and Game Act. The budget was not increased to recognize the rising cost of fuel for vehicles and now they have to double up.

This year unclassified members at Ontario Parks suffered cuts. There were also shortened contacts and early park closures. Many Ontarians saw first hand what budget cuts have done to park services. There are no longer educational components to the parks, even though one of the top five priorities of the government is education.

This is just the beginning. The Ministry of Natural Resources is one of several Ministries being flat-lined. These cuts need to be brought to the attention of Ontarians. We need to heighten the awareness of the type of work we do and its importance to the province.

What can you do? On November 16<sup>th</sup> wear black. Repeat every Thursday until the spring budget is read. Visit or write your MPP. You can purchase orange flag tape to put on your car aerial or put it on your clothing. Your support will make a difference! Visit [www.savethemnr.ca](http://www.savethemnr.ca) after November 15<sup>th</sup>.

## Updates

### Developmental Services Sector

The leadership of the BPS Developmental Services Sector met on September 28<sup>th</sup> to forge a common bargaining approach on behalf of these relatively low-paid workers. At the top of the list are improved wages for all, job security, benefits, pensions and parity for part-time workers in wages. OPSEU represents 63 bargaining units in this sector, of which about 35 units have contracts expiring at the same time in early 2007.

Wages in this sector are below those for comparable jobs in hospitals and school boards. This sector is shamefully under-funded by the Province. The aim is to catch the attention of the Government to increase funding to an appropriate level.

OPSEU is working with CUPE on the coordinated bargaining strategy. CUPE has 45 units negotiating early in 2007 at the same time as the 35 OPSEU units.

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### Ontario Federation of Labour Pension Conference

On October 25<sup>th</sup>, the OFL hosted a meeting for union pension activists, trustees and sponsors to discuss the state of Defined Benefit plans in Canada as well as

investment strategies. We had a long discussion about Private-Public Partnerships - P3s.

P3s are a perceived solution to the government's infrastructure problem. There has been insufficient public investment in public infrastructure in the past ten or so years. The government at Queens Park claims not to have the funds to invest. Instead, it is turning to public sector pension plans and other private investment pools as a source of investment for public infrastructure. At the conference, we agreed to oppose any attempt at using public sector pension plans to finance the privatization of public services through P3 takeovers.

### The Ontario Health Coalition Annual Assembly

OPSEU, led by our BPS Health Council, was well represented at the October 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Assembly of the Ontario Health Coalition. The OHC is an association of health care activists and unions that promotes the preservation of the public health care system. The coalition's strategy for the coming year includes continuing the fight against P3-funded hospitals.

### Pension Liaison Committee

On October 18<sup>th</sup> the PLC held its annual meeting with OPSEU trustees and sponsors from our many pension plans; OPSEU Pension Trust (OPT), the CAAT Plan, Hospitals Of Ontario Pension Plan (HOOPP), the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System (OMERS)

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and the OPSEU Staff Pension Plan.

We heard from pension specialist **Don Lee** on the state of Defined Benefit plans in Canada. They are facing a rough ride in Canada now because of the poor returns in the early part of this decade and low interest rates. Contribution rates have gone up in some plans.

## Information Technology in the Ontario Public Service

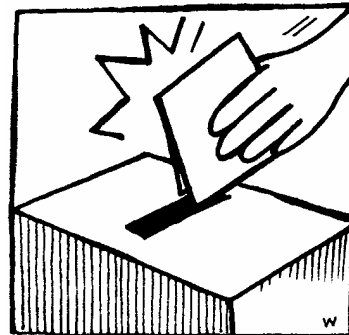
The Central Enforcement and Renewal Committee (CERC) is developing a focused Information Technology table. **Dale Divell** of Local 508, **Doug Peebles** of Local 2, **Gary Shaul** of Local 520 and myself have been meeting with representatives from the Office of the Chief Information Officer. We have had meetings and conference calls with IT professionals in the OPS. We are holding a one-hour IT meeting at the OPS Divisional meeting on Saturday afternoon, November 25<sup>th</sup>, Saturday at 5:00 PM. Contact me for more details.

## Delta-Chelsea

The union UNITE-HERE represents hotel workers in 23 hotels in the Toronto area. They have been struggling to raise the living standards of hotel workers. OPSEU has supported their struggle. They have achieved breakthrough collective agreements at the Sheraton Centre and the Hilton. They are having a rough ride at the Delta Chelsea. I spoke at a rally at the Delta Chelsea on Friday, November 10<sup>th</sup> after the Board meeting.

## Municipal Elections

The Labour Council organized a meeting with Toronto Mayor **David Miller** on October 12<sup>th</sup>. Along with activists from many unions, the Region 5 EBMs discussed the municipal elections. Hopefully, by the time you read this newsletter, **David Miller** is re-elected mayor of Toronto with a progressive, pro-union majority on Toronto City Council. Region 5 activists have worked on a number of campaigns in the Toronto elections; focusing on the campaigns of **Alejandra Bravo** in Ward 17, **Rowena Santos** in Ward 14, **David Robertson** in Ward 41 and **Paul Ferreira** in Ward 11. We also contributed to the school trustee elections of **Joel Dick** and **Maria Rodrigues**. And, of course, **David Miller**.



The phone bank was up for over a month. Thanks to all the phone bank volunteers. A special thanks to **Gloria David** of Local 532, **Bill Garrett** of Local 599, **Abidh Khan** of Local 500 and **Ramona Solevilla** of Local 526 who were each there almost every night. Thanks to all the folks who worked on any municipal campaign.

**If you are reading these words and if it is before 8:00 PM on Monday, November 13<sup>th</sup> and if you have not yet voted then put on your coat, go to your polling place and**

**VOTE!!!!!!**

## Private Prison Transition is not Simple

By Len Mason, Vice-Chair, Corrections  
MERC

When it was announced that the Central North Correctional Centre (CNCC) was being brought into the Ontario Public Service (OPS) I figured it would be just a matter of rolling staff over and getting on with business.

I wasn't quite that naïve but hoped it wouldn't be as complicated as it turned out to be. Initial talks began in early July and have still not concluded even though November 8<sup>th</sup> was the first day of CNCC running as a public facility.

A "Transition Agreement" had to be negotiated. This agreement included such items as how the employer (Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services) would hire staff from the private jail. Would their seniority be recognized? What would the pension implications be? Would the parties agree to waive Article 6 of the *OPS Collective Agreement* – Posting and filing of vacancies or new positions? Is the facility going to be operated exactly like its identical sister institution – Central East Correctional Centre? Assuming that CNCC employees are hired, we also had a mandate to ensure access for current OPS employees for lateral transfers and unclassified contract transfers.

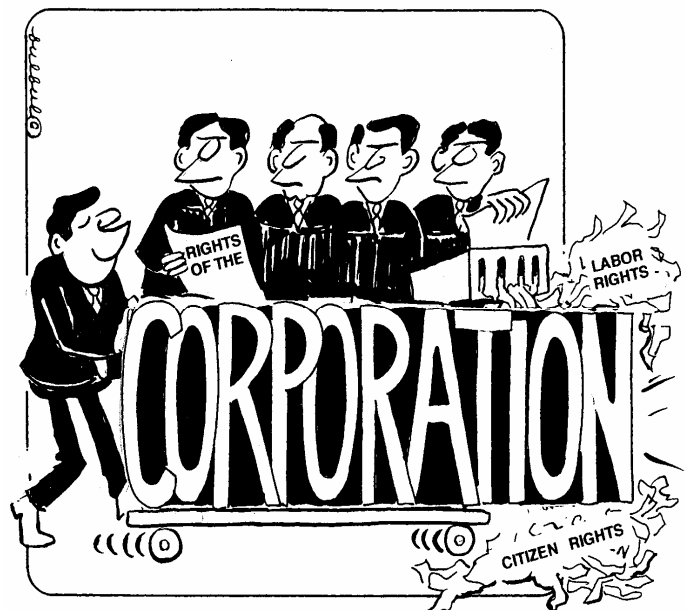
Many issues had to be considered and negotiated; a dispute mechanism was also put into place in case of disagreements. All issues have not been finalized as of yet.

A priority item was to establish a "Local Transition Employee Relations Committee". This committee would look

at such things as shift schedules, post assignments, staffing compliment, training, and among other issues - a review of all policies and procedures. Who would be on this committee? How would they be paid? Would they have access to Management Training Corporation of Canada, a private company, during the transition? This all had to be considered and agreed upon by the union and the employer.

Sounds fairly simple, right? This procedure took months and it's not over yet.

Working on behalf of the CNCC members were **Dave Graves**, MERC Chair; **Gord Longhi**, MERC member; **Sean Wilson**, president of local 369 at CNCC, **Sandra Harper**, OPSEU Job Security and myself. A long list of OPSEU staff and members were vital in the negotiations and acted as consultants on different issues. For more details, the September 26<sup>th</sup> issue of *Locktalk* is available at [www.opseu.org](http://www.opseu.org), this also includes the Transition Agreement.



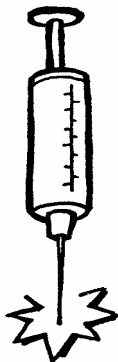
## Future Events

### Region 5 Women's Caucus

Every year, the Region 5 Women's Caucus organizes a memorial for the terrible Montreal massacre of 1989. On December 6, 1989, 14 women students were shot to death because they were women. This year the OPSEU Region 5 event is on Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup> at the Membership Centre at 31 Wellesley East. Long time political activist and long-time friend of OPSEU **Judy Rebick** is the featured guest speaker. Everybody is invited. Contact **Yvonne Bobb** or **Gloria David** for details.

### Second Reading of Bill to Protect the Health and Safety of Hospital Workers

NDP Health Critic **Shelley Martel** will introduce second reading of a bill that enforces safety engineered sharps for hospital workers. Ontario, shamefully, is at the bottom on the ladder. It is estimated that this would prevent 33,000 injuries a year in Ontario and save millions of dollars. Four provinces already have the legislation. Three provinces are on the way. Join OPSEU activists on Wednesday, November 16<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM at Queens Park.



### The Ontario Health Coalition

The OHC is hosting a forum called 'Rising Up! – Social Movements and Defending Medicare' on Friday, December 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 PM at 73 Simcoe Street. The keynote speakers are **Maude Barlow** and **Naomi Klein**. Tickets are \$20. Another OHC forum with Paul Moist from CUPE is Tues. Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>, 5:00, 30 Sewells Road in Scarborough. Call 416-441-2502 for details.

### Fair Vote Ontario

Ontario voters will have the opportunity to change the way we elect our Provincial Parliament. The next election should include a referendum on how to change our voting system.

The Region 5 EBMs, in partnership with the Greater Toronto Area Council, is holding two discussions on this issue. Each discussion will have representatives from Fair Vote Ontario, including former Region 5 Vice President **Gary Shaul**. The first meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 15<sup>th</sup> at the Membership Centre at 31 Wellesley East. The second discussion is on Thursday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Membership Centre at 620 Wilson West.

Please RSVP to a Region 5 EBM or to **Bob Taylor**.

### Liquor Board Employee Division

OPSEU merged with Liquor Board employees in 2005. Never was a match more fitting. They are crown employees and public sector workers. OPSEU members are crown employees and public

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sector agencies. They have a long history fighting privatization. OPSEU has a long history fighting privatization.

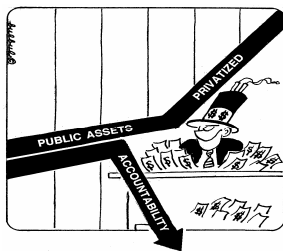
LCBO Privatization is occurring through the back door by the so-called Agency Stores. A private operator becomes licensed to sell alcohol through an existing business; a gas station, a retail operation.

We know what happens. Bargaining unit work is privatized. The existing operation, in this case the LCBO, is undercut.

In 2002 there were 105 agency stores. Now, there are 194 stores. The LCBO announced 20 more stores for next spring.

The Liquor Board Employees Division launched a campaign to challenge agency stores. The campaign kicks off on November 24<sup>th</sup> with leafleting in front of high visibility LCBO stores.

For more details visit <http://www.opseu.org/lbed/index.htm>.



## The College Part-Time Campaign

As reported many times in this newsletter, part-time workers at the colleges do not have collective bargaining rights. The law, the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act, legally forbids them from joining a union. The Colleges are taking advantage of this exemption by hiring more part-timers, at cheaper wage rates, of course.

We have been organizing, lobbying, networking, leafleting, meeting and debating to get this wrong changed. An historic event will occur on the weekend of November 17-19. 48 part-timers from the 24 colleges will meet in Toronto for the inaugural meeting of a provincial association of college part-time workers. A proposed name is OPSECAAT, the Organization of Part-time and Sessional Employees of the CAAT's. The meeting will have one part-time support staff member and one part-time faculty member from each of Ontario's 24 community colleges.

This issue was discussed at at the CAAT-Academic Divisional meeting on October 21-22. **Roger Couvrette**, a part-time instructor at Algonquin College in Ottawa and a CAAT part-time activist gave a rousing speech on 'righting a wrong'.

## In Memory

We lost two outstanding and beloved activists in the past two months.

**Carol McGregor** passed away on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. **Carol** worked for Injured Workers Consultants and made her mark and reputation fighting for injured workers. She is also known for her work in the disabled community inside OPSEU and the wider world. She was a steward in Local 525.

**Mustafa Cicecki** passed away on October 22<sup>nd</sup>. He was a steward in Local 599 and was former President. He was a delegate to the Greater Toronto Area Council and the Toronto Labour Council. **Mustafa** was also a founder of the Information Technology Working Group.

I knew them both well. I miss them. We all miss them.

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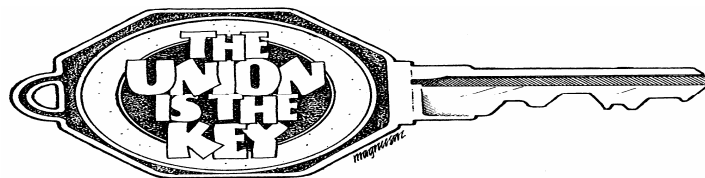
## Calendar of Events

Greater Toronto Area Council (GTAC) meeting – Wed, November 15, 5:30, 31 Wellesley  
Fair Vote Ontario Discussion - Wed, November 15, 5:30, 31 Wellesley (GTAC Meeting)  
Health & Safety Legislation for hospital workers – Thur, Nov 16, 10:00 AM, Queens Park  
Kick-off of MNR Anti-Cutback Campaign – Thur, November 16  
Inaugural Meeting for CAAT part-time workers association – Nov 17/19  
Toronto Youth Union Movement - Mon, November 20, 6:00 PM, 31 Wellesley  
Fair Vote Ontario Discussion - Thur, November 23, 5:30, 620 Wilson West  
Kick-off of LBED anti-privatization campaign – Fri, November 24  
OPS Divisional Meetings – November 25/26  
Region 5 Retirees Group – Tue, November 28, 10:30 AM, Mandarin, Yonge & Eglinton  
OHC Forum on Health Care – Fri, Dec 1, 7:00 PM, St Andrews Church, 73 Simcoe St  
OHC Forum on Health Care – Tue, December 5, 5:00 PM, 30 Sewells Rd, Scarborough  
Region 5 Women’s Caucus – Tue, December 5, 5:30 PM, 31 Wellesley.  
Labour Council Membership Meeting–Thur, Dec. 7, 7:30, OFL Building, 15 Gervais Dr.  
Region 5 Weekend Education – December 9/10  
Executive Board Meeting – December 13/14

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## Region 5/OPSEU Contact Information

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**David Rapaport**, Executive Board Member – [drapaport@opseu.org](mailto:drapaport@opseu.org)  
**Yvonne Bobb**, Region 5 Member, Provincial Woman’s Committee - [ybob1@sympatico.ca](mailto:ybob1@sympatico.ca)  
**Cecil Beckford**, Region 5 Member, Provincial Human Rights Committee  
OPSEU representative on Labour Council Executive - [ceceib@rom.on.ca](mailto:ceceib@rom.on.ca)  
**Carl Mohan**, Region 5 Member, Provincial Youth Committee -  
[cmohan@opseu541.org](mailto:cmohan@opseu541.org)  
**Bob Taylor**, President, Greater Toronto Area Council (GTAC) - 416-482-6680  
**Gloria David**, Contact, Region 5 Women’s Caucus - 416-314-6484.  
**Tony Carneiro**, Chair, Region 5 Retirees Group - 416-787-7033  
**Toronto and York Region Labour Council** – 416-441-3663  
**OPSEU Direct** – 416-443-8888  
**OPSEU web site** – [www.opseu.org](http://www.opseu.org)



*The Rapaport Report* is the newsletter of David Rapaport, Region 5 Executive Board Member of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, OPSEU. I am responsible for the contents of the newsletter. If you have complaints, comments, praise or criticism, please get in touch with me. I would like to hear from you. I can be reached at [drapaport@opseu.org](mailto:drapaport@opseu.org) or at 416-651-1659.