

November 4, 2005

UPCE Triennial Convention

UPCE held its 13th Triennial Convention, in Halifax, from October 23 to 25, 2005. This event was attended by 29 delegates and about as many observers and guests. Highlights of this Convention include:

Sister Sharon Macdonald, member from Antigonish Local 80823, was awarded a Honourary UPCE Membership for her long years of service to UPCE. We wish her well in retirement. Good Luck Sharon !

Title change for National Executive from National Directors to Regional Vice Presidents.

The delegates approved a needed dues increase to maintain the full time structure as determined by delegates, and the services to the members. It is needed to meet the many challenges ahead to service the members. I understand that there might be some resistance, and that some members might be upset with the increase in dues, but the delegates and the National Executive reviewed all the options, and in the end the delegates made it clear that they wanted to keep the full time structure to maintain the services to the members.

It wasn't an easy decision but one that needed to be made. I think that in the end members will come to realize that we did it because service to the members was our number one priority.

In order to do what needs to be done over the next three (3) years, such as organizing more members to make us bigger, better, and stronger, and representing all members, a full time structure was/is needed.

When we look at our health care and education system with the cut backs that have occurred over the years, and how the public services have suffered with cut backs, we didn't want our membership affected the same way.

Natural gas, fuel, insurance, and other things have risen, the cost to maintain the service to members has gone up, and to maintain services to the membership, a dues increase was needed and approved by the majority of delegates, representing all members in UPCE at the Convention.

Between 1996 and 2005, the UPCE raised its dues by only 0.03%.

The percentage of the UPCE portion will be at 1.144362 for the next three (3) years.

The average increase per member per month is approximately \$4.19, with those earning less paying the smallest amount approved by the delegates, and those earning more, paying slightly more.

The current average salary for a UPCE member is \$ 40.701 per year

The average increase of union dues per member per year is about \$50.32, which delegates felt was fair and reasonable.

The focus was on the survival of our great union, and sacrifices were needed to be made for the union to work. No one knows that better than the National Executive and Union representatives. We have made the necessary changes and cut backs without taking away the service to the members, but we can cut only so much without it affecting the services to the members.

Over the next three (3) years the National Executive will be focusing on organizing new members to join UPCE. We will be working hard to get more youth involved in their union. We have also committed to all members to look at all possibilities to reduce expenditures, and to look at any and all means of maintaining representation, but hearing loud from you, to research all possibilities in the future for UPCE.

The following members were elected for a three (3) year term:

National President: Richard Des Lauriers
Atlantic Regional Vice President: Mike Moeller
Quebec Regional Vice President: Ginette Chartrand
Ontario Regional Vice President: Marilyn Adlam
Western Regional Vice President: Janet May

The next three (3) years are going to be very busy and I would encourage all members to get involved in their union. It is the members union to guide, direct and lead.

In Solidarity,

Richard L. Des Lauriers
National President
Union of Postal Communication Employees