



Clockwise from upper left: Sophia Dricos, Ewen McCormick (co-chair), Trent McLaughlin, Bert Munn, Karen McVeigh (co-chair), Pat Peardon, and Stuart McCready (editor).



STUART MCCREADY
Editorial

What do you believe in?

I believe in fighting for justice, not just for myself, but for all.

This can be a simple step, such as defending those who cannot defend themselves. Or on a larger scale, just look at the actions of all the people who toppled the Berlin Wall 20 years ago. I was in Berlin in 1990 and still remember the energy and euphoria that was flowing through the city.

I believe in a society where all members are valued. To cast aside a sector of society that you may fear, find to be different or think to be “unworthy” will not further your own goals.

Social and union solidarity begin with you.

World AIDS Day is December 1. Much has been achieved, both in social changes and in medical research and treatment, but there’s still so much work to do. For every step we take forward, there’s someone trying to push us backward.

I believe in you.

HEU is steered by our membership. We, as members, provide the direction to our union. I attended the Wage Policy Convention in early-November. We discussed, debated and passed bargaining demands to be brought to the table. The demands that we debated were submitted by you, and I thank you for having the opportunity to hear our members’ points of view.

Please get involved at your local or in whatever way you can, so that we can all learn and benefit from our diversity.

In pride,

Stuart

Committee Report

PTSC appoints representatives to national LGBT committees



KAREN MCVEIGH
committee co-chair

In September, a few of us did Vancouver’s AIDS Walk for LIFE, and raised \$1,200. We hope to organize a bigger team for next year.

Pink Triangle Standing Committee (PTSC) member Sophia Dricos and I went to the CUPE National Convention in Montreal. It was an informative convention with much discussion and productive debate.

Our committee submitted nine bargaining demands to HEU’s Wage Policy Convention, earlier this month. Three of us attended the conference at the Sheraton Airport Hotel in Richmond. And many of us attended the various Occupational Conferences in September.

The PTSC recently held our last meeting of the year, where we discussed how to reach out more to members, and we worked on the Pink Triangle information booklet that’s given to new HEU members during orientation.

We appointed Sophia to be our Canadian Labour Congress representative to attend their meeting in October. I was chosen to be the CUPE Pink Triangle representative, and will be meeting with them in December.

And the committee also made a decision to shutdown our Pride Pages website. You can still get information about Pink Triangle events and copies of *Pride Pages* on the HEU website <www.heu.org>, or email us at <glesbian@heu.org>.

Our next committee meeting is in January.

We wish everyone happy holidays!

Karen



LGBT ISSUES AND INFORMATION LINE

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! *Did you know that we have...?*

- a confidential HEU LGBT Issues and Information telephone line: **604-456-7192, ext. 3**, or toll-free **1-800-663-5813 ext. 7192**
- a quarterly newsletter, *Pride Pages*
- a Pink Triangle Standing Committee that meets three to four times a year to work on all types of things for you
- community events and campaigns that all are invited to attend or become involved in
- an equity conference every two years with registration open to all LGBT members

Email us at glesbian@heu.org, phone us at **604-456-7192, ext. 3** or call toll-free at **1-800-663-5813 ext. 7192**.

ALL CALLS ARE CONFIDENTIAL

Report on CUPE National Convention

By Victor Elkins, Provincial Executive

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), the national union representing about 600,000 members, held its National Convention (October 5-9) in Montreal.

More than 2,000 delegates attended – including our union's leadership, as HEU is B.C.'s health care services division of CUPE National. I'm sure for most of the attendees – of whom 40 per cent were first-time delegates – the task of debating national resolutions was a daunting one. But as the week unfolded, the delegates stepped up to the task and passed close to 100 resolutions and the 2009-2011 Strategic Document.

It became clear that no matter where we live and work in this country, our issues are basically identical. As usual, our HEU delegation took to the microphones and spoke passionately on issues covering everything from international solidarity, pensions, contracting out, the environment, and equity issues.

Strategic document

CUPE's Strategic Document covers many of the issues discussed at convention. And the Resolutions Committee Report has a record of the resolutions passed and the substitute resolutions.

I've included a couple of items either passed at convention or forwarded to CUPE's National Executive Board.

Resolution 222: CUPE National will – campaign to stop insurance companies from discriminatory denial of insurance coverage (whole life, mortgage, disability, travel) for people living with HIV/AIDS and/or any other chronic illness. Any denial of insurance coverage must be based on factual current medical evidence.

From Resolutions Committee Report (*Substitute Resolutions 1 to 4*) – report adopted by the convention to be taken under advisement and review by the National Executive Board:

- Organize a national employment equity/representative workforce conference... to bring together members to set goals, develop strategies and develop an ongoing network that will advance employment equity throughout the union; provide resources and support to allow diverse members and members from smaller locals to attend the conference.
- Ensure that there is equity training in all leadership training programs.
- Form a working group for HIV/AIDS to educate and promote HIV/AIDS awareness within our locals.
- Establish the position of HIV/AIDS staff coordinator.

More information can be found on CUPE's website at www.cupe.ca.



Decades of struggle for equality allows same-sex marriage for Canadians

By Ewen McCormick, co-chair



Frank and Ewen's wedding day.

Same-sex rights in Canada have come a long way since 1965. Back then, you could be labelled a "sexual offender" and jailed for having relationships with a same-sex partner.

Today, our community enjoys much more freedom and social acceptance, particularly in Canada. We are no longer imprisoned for our sexual orientation, and many openly gay or lesbian Canadians hold prominent positions in business, government and many churches.

In 2003, Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien unveiled a legislation that changed the definition of marriage to include same-sex couples with the same rights and benefits as those of the common straight couple. That legislation upset many churches, which said the government should not have the right to define the meaning of the word "marriage".

In December 2003, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that Ottawa had the right to say who could be married in Canada. It wasn't until two years later, in 2005, that *Bill C-38* was passed federally. This gave us the right to marry our true loved ones.

There are still many countries around the world where gay rights are met with homophobic laws and resistance. In places like Kenya, Sudan and Trinidad, for instance, you can be imprisoned anywhere from two years to 15 years just for being homosexual. There are also countries like Mauritania, Nigeria and Iran, among others, where it's not uncommon to see the death penalty carried out, if you get caught even showing affection toward a same-sex individual.

Countries like those make me very proud to be a Canadian. It means a great deal to me that I can enjoy freedoms today that so many of the LGBT community couldn't in the past.

Thanks to the exhausting fight for equality over many decades in Canada and other countries, I was able to legally marry my partner Frank on September 12.

Without our extended community fighting for equal rights for everyone, I would not be in this great position in my life.

What's on people's minds?

"It's time society grew up about gender. Gender is not an either/or. There is a continuum and somehow, we all fit along that continuum."

NICKY PHILLIPS IN A SEPTEMBER 19, 2009 VANCOUVER SUN FEATURE ARTICLE ABOUT INTERSEX PERSONS WRITTEN BY AMY O'BRIAN

"We get what we fight for. And we are not fighting. Every single one of us is not fighting. They fight better than we do. There is a concerted and never-ending vein of hate in this country and in this world dedicated to keeping us in our place. It is evil to force people to be what we are not – free. We are not free."

GAY ACTIVIST LARRY KRAMER SPEAKING AT DALLAS GAY PRIDE, SEPTEMBER 20, 2009

"The *Canadian Human Rights Act* does include women, but the *Criminal Code* does not. So, if we lose Section 13, there's no protection for hatred against women anywhere."

LESBIAN CONSERVATIVE SENATOR NANCY RUTH ON THE MOVE TO STRIKE SECTION 13 FROM THE *CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS ACT*

"Today a discriminatory travel and immigration ban has gone the way of the dinosaur and we're glad it's finally extinct. We've now removed one more hurdle in our fight against AIDS, and it's long overdue for people living with HIV who battle against stigma and bigotry day in and day out."

U.S. SENATOR JOHN KERRY, CO-SPONSOR OF THE BILL REGARDING LIFTING THE TRAVEL BAN FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS TO ENTER THE U.S.

PRIDE PAGES IS A PUBLICATION OF THE HEU PINK TRIANGLE STANDING COMMITTEE.

Editor: Stuart McCready • Layout: Carol Bjarnason

You can receive *Pride Pages* by writing to: *Pride Pages* c/o HEU Provincial Office, 5000 North Fraser Way, Burnaby, B.C., V5J 5M3 • We invite your articles, pictures and letters to the editor.