

"What we desire for ourselves, we wish for all"

Message from the President:

Canadian politics became very heated during the final weeks of 2008 culminating in a prorogued parliament. Prime Minister Harper convinced the Governor General to allow this desperate move to protect himself from the inevitable. For the first time in recent memory, the opposition parties were poised to command control of the government. A coalition was struck between the NDP and Liberal parties. All eyes were on the Conservatives and their January 27th budget.

Sadly, the budget has missed its mark. Finance Minister Flaherty has not come close to addressing the concerns of a struggling nation. While the budget increases the duration of EI benefits, over 600,000 Canadians who have paid into this fund do not qualify to receive benefits. Canadians who have lost their jobs needed government to help by removing the two week qualifying period and changing the eligibility criteria; workers need improved access to benefits. The Liberal party has alerted the Harper government that they've been put on notice; produce, or prepare for a showdown.

Labour's response is clear; take care of the people who make this country strong!

In solidarity,
Alex Furlong



YFL President Alex Furlong



Yukon Labour Leads the Way

The Yukon is one of Canada's last holdouts when it comes to protecting young workers. With no laws in place to ensure minimum age, training, or supervision requirements, Yukon kids are at risk. Everyone has seen them...12 year olds bagging your groceries, elementary school kids serving your ice cream or "helping out" on a job site. As the business community cites a labour shortage, more young people are working for pay. The Yukon NDP party has taken on the challenge, and the government of Yukon is moving forward to develop legislation to keep kids safe.

Human Resources Minister Diane Finley Insults the Unemployed

Asked why the Conservatives refused to raise benefits and make it easier to qualify for EI, Human Resources Minister Diane Finley said "We do not want to make it lucrative for them to stay home and get paid for it." Ken Georgetti, President of the Canadian Labour Congress says "Working people had nothing to do with the short-sighted business decisions that caused the economic crisis, yet Ms. Finley is attempting to blame the victims."

A surplus of over \$54 billion has built up in the Employment Insurance fund because of deep cuts in benefits and eligibility rules during the last fifteen years. That money was supposed to be a rainy day fund for the workers who paid into it. Instead, it was used for all manner of expenditures including corporate tax reductions. In 2006/2007, only four in ten unemployed workers and even fewer women, qualified for benefits.

In 1996, the maximum weekly benefit was \$604 in today's dollars. Today's maximum is only \$447, and the average benefit is just \$335 per week. That's \$1,340 per month.

Georgetti says, "We intend to keep the pressure on the government to make EI work for people who have faithfully paid premiums believing that they would receive the insurance they paid for when they find themselves unemployed."



What is political action? How can YOU effect change? What can one person, one organization, one march, one movement, one united voice accomplish?

ANYTHING & EVERYTHING!

If you are interested in learning how you can truly make a difference, this is an event you won't want to miss.

Join us at the High Country Inn Friday April 3 through Sunday April 5 for a weekend jam packed with powerful speakers, informative hands on work shops and the chance to hear from people who walk their talk every day. Our sessions will include the fundamentals of political action; identifying

your issue, understanding how the system works, developing your team, setting up and performing a lobby, talking to politicians, and understanding the political landscape. Learn from experts in communications how to use traditional and new technologies to define your message, and deliver that message to your target audience. Create a communications plan, get your message out, learn to use the new media; just imagine what you can do!

The labour movement is about solidarity and action; when we work together, tremendous things can happen. This conference is an opportunity for the labour movement, as well as the larger community to come together and be stronger for it. Whether your issue is women's equality, the environment, political change or any other topic, you will benefit from this weekend of powerful seminars.

**Contact us at 667-6676, or visit our website and register today!
Registration is \$195, maximum 60 participants.**

Visit www.yukonfed.com
to register online



PSAC Postal Workers Strike Resolved

On December 21, 2008 the 2100 members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) working at Canada Post accepted the final offer tabled by their employer. The workers, striking since Nov.17 had voted to reject the employer's offer to replace sick & family leave with the employer's poorly designed Short-Term Disability plan. Highlights of Canada Post's final offer, ratified by the striking workers, include salary increases of 2.5% in '08 & '09 and 2.75% in 2010 & 2011 for a four year contract, along with a \$500 signing bonus. "The PSAC is glad to have reached a settlement that is acceptable to our members after a long struggle with a very difficult employer" says Jean-François Des Lauriers, Regional Executive Vice President of PSAC North. "Due to the solidarity of these workers, we were able to successfully protect their job security, rights and well being."



get educated!

YFL is very proud to offer Yukon Labour Activists the chance to participate in high level Labour training courses right here at home. We have a full slate of courses developed by the **Canadian Labour Congress**, and facilitated by experienced members of the Yukon Labour movement, all trained to provide top quality adult education. Take advantage of our newly updated website to register online!

Courses available in 2009

Shop Steward Training Level 1	1 day
Shop Steward Training Level 2	1 day
Leadership	1 day
Facing Management	2 day
Collective Bargaining	2 day
Assertiveness & Problem Solving	1 day
Talk Back	1 day
Approach to Conflicts	2 day

1 day course \$99 2 day course, \$175

All 1 and 2 day courses are taught at our Percy Andrews Training Centre Suite 102, 106 Strickland St. Whitehorse YT

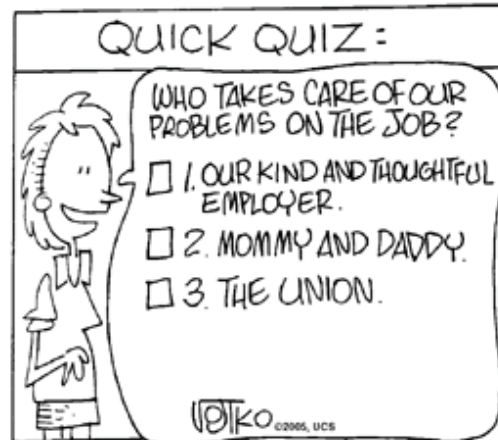
Courses run from 9AM - 5PM.
Register online at
www.yukonfed.com

Course Dates, CLC Courses Winter/Spring 2009

Shop Steward Training Level 1	March 27, 2009
Shop Steward Training Level 2	April 17, 2009
Talk Back	May 22, 2009

Visit our website for more dates over the coming months. More courses will be offered in Fall '09

www.yukonfed.com



Bargaining Updates:

The employees of Kaushee's Place are presently in negotiations with their employer, the Yukon Women's Transition Home Society. The Transition Home is a safe home for women and children fleeing abuse.

Kaushee's Place was established in Whitehorse in the late 1970's and the employees were certified by the Canada Labour Relations Board on April 3, 1990. Since that time the employees have been represented by the Public Service Alliance of Canada in conjunction with the component, Yukon Employees Union.

The present 3 year contract expires March 31, 2009. The bargaining unit employees are members of YO12; one of the smallest locals of YEU, with approximately 18 – 20 employees.

Kaushee's Place is a 24/7 operation and many of the employees work a variety of shifts and are either permanent part-time or full time, however all are members of the bargaining unit. The negotiating team consists of Chief Negotiator Nancy Debrecini, PSAC; Bonnitta Ritchie, President Y012; and Cindy Chiasson, Vice-president Y012.

READY...SET...KNOW!

Recent changes to the Yukon Workers' Compensation Act could seriously affect you, your employees, and the cost of your WCB premiums.

The Yukon Federation of Labour has a 2 part Workers' Compensation & Return-To-Work training series for you & your staff.

READY... SET...

This is a full day program. The morning session offers a basic understanding of the fundamentals of the WCB system.

The claims process is explained, and responsibilities of both workers and employers are defined.

The afternoon session provides a more detailed look at the nuts & bolts of the new legislation and the Return-To-Work program. Learn why RTW matters & what the new legislation requires of you and your employees.

...KNOW!

This step is vital to fulfill the requirements of new WCB legislation. During 3 intensive days of training, you will learn to create Return-To-Work plans; essential if you wish to take full advantage of WCB's Choices rebate program.

BE READY! Call 667-6676 today to learn more or visit www.yukonfed.com to register online.



With assistance from the YWCBP Prevention Fund

Ready, Set, KNOW Course Dates Winter/Spring 2009

Ready, Set:

Wednesday, March 4
Wednesday April 08
Wednesday May 6
Wednesday, June 3

KNOW!

Mon-Wed, March 30-Apr 1
Mon-Wed April 27-29
Mon-Wed May 25-27

www.yukonfed.com
(867) 667-6676 yfl@yukonfed.com
Suite 102, 106 Strickland St.
Whitehorse YT Y1A 2J5



We have so many exciting events coming your way over the next few months!

- We are pleased to announce our second annual **YFL Youth Summer Camp**, a week long camp from June 28-July 4 2009. Registration is open to children of members of affiliated unions, and will begin in May. More information will be published in our May newsletter, so make sure to look for it!
- **International Women's Day**, March 8 2009 Please ensure you take note of the many activities planned in communities across the Yukon.
*Sushi lunch & show at AFY, 12-3 pm



What people have said about our Ready, Set, KNOW course:

"...the Ready, Set, KNOW workshops helped me de-mystify the Return-To-Work process. It made sense out of terms like duty to accommodate and emphasized what an injured worker CAN do."

"Thank You for doing such a great job of teaching the Return to Work course. I found the training to be an excellent opportunity to learn about options and responsibilities"

"The Return-To-Work course given by the Yukon Federation of Labour was just outstanding. I encourage all workers to attend this Return-To-Work program as it is information they need to KNOW!"