



# THE VIEW

FROM

# Local 2

## Autumn

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### Program for Progress

The theme of September's Training Seminar was "Making a Difference - Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century" and President Cam Nelson challenged the Local to make the changes necessary to meet those challenges.

When the Brewery Workers joined SEIU in February 2005

next four years is to double our membership to 20,000. In order to reach this goal we will not only need to devote even more substantial resources to the work of organizing new members and getting them agreements but will have to continue to provide the highest quality service to our existing members in both bargaining and administering the collective agreements."



Local 2 had 2,500 members and by the end of this year will represent 10,000 members in Ontario and British Columbia. While some of this growth was the result of mergers, the majority came from the extraordinary success of the Justice for Janitors organizing program which is bringing the benefits of the Union to the most exploited and underprivileged in our society.

Nelson explained "We are committed to growing our Union not just because it is important to bring these workers into the Union, but because the greater the number of organized workers, the stronger those of us who are already organized become. There is strength in numbers - the higher the rate of unionization in an industry the better the contract". Citing the brewery industry as an example, he continued, "our goal for the

the Local to meet these goals and asked the Council to approve them. First was the standardizing of our multitude of dues formula so that all our bargaining units paid the same % of regular earnings in dues - 1.8%. Second was increasing our strike pay to further assist our members on strike and make our bargaining positions stronger. Third was to streamline our Executive Board and Executive Council and fourth was to find ways to service smarter by continuing to train strong stewards and branch local officers.

The Executive Council adopted this ambitious program by an overwhelming margin.

*Full details of these Constitutional changes are available on our website below, or for more information regarding any of the above, please feel free to contact the Union Office.*

### Local 2 President Elected



Cam addressing the SEIU International Convention

Canada gained an additional voice on the International Executive Board of SEIU as Local 2 President Cam Nelson was elected an International

Executive Board member as part of the Stern Unity slate at the Interna-

tional Union's Convention in Puerto Rico in June. While Canada had elected two International Vice-Presidents and two International Executive Board members at the Canadian convention in Halifax to fill the Board seats set aside for Canada in the SEIU Constitution, this was the first time that a Canadian was elected to the International Executive Board by the entire convention.

### SEIU INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT Tom Woodruff supports SEIU Local 2's Plan of Action



elevate standards across the board in major industries on vital issues such as pay, health care, staffing, training, and retirement.

Tom's rousing endorsement of our plan to change, to organize smarter, service smarter, and negotiate smarter—was an important one.

Since 1974, Tom Woodruff has worked hard to make SEIU the largest health care union, the largest property services union, and the second largest public employee union in the United States. More importantly, with Tom's leadership SEIU has become a uniting force for workers that do the same types of work so that they can

As he closed his speech, Tom Woodruff asked of us "why change?"—so that we can leave our kids, our grandkids, and those who come after us with a better place to work, so that we can look them in the eye and know we did our part.

### Congratulations SEIU

As part of the Justice for All program adopted at the International Convention, SEIU embarked on its most ambitious political action program ever - the full support of Barack



Barak O'Bama addresses the SEIU International Convention

Obama for President of the United States. In this effort, SEIU staff and volunteers made more than 12,000,000 phone calls, knocked on over 1,250,000 doors, aired radio and television ads and an enormously effective "Get out the Vote" campaign. In all, the Union put \$85,000,000 (of voluntary member contribu-

tions) into the US election campaigns and were instrumental in bringing about the historic election of Barack Obama on November 4th.

### 2008 SEIU Local 2 Elections

Nominations for the positions of President, Secretary-Treasurer and at-large members of the Executive Board were held at the Executive Council meeting. Brother Cam Nelson was acclaimed for a twelfth term as President and Brother Ted Mansell was acclaimed for a second term as Secretary-Treasurer. Brothers Benny McAllister, Bob Hearn, John Gooden and Sister Amelita Roque were elected as Executive Board Members-At-Large. Cam Nelson thanked the membership for their continued support and for their endorsement for the Local's "Program for Progress" for the next four years. "Ted and I and the Executive Board will continue to work hard to make this Union, which we are justly proud, even bigger and stronger and more effective."



Executive Board member as part of the Stern Unity slate at the Interna-

## SEIU Local 2 BGPWU Training

A record number of members attended this year's Annual Training Conference:

### Basic Stewards Course

Mary Hart and Bruce Price, SEIU Local 2's own legal counsel team are experts at employer relations and the duties and abilities of Union Stewards.



ards. They teamed up to run this year's Basic Steward Training course.

Students began with a group exercise where they discussed a variety of true or false questions regarding their responsibilities as a Union Steward. The activity was designed to give people a good sense of the duties undertaken by Un-

ion Stewards and the variety of roles that they may play in the workplace. Bruce delivered an invigorating lecture and fielded questions on preparing the grievance for filing, conducting the grievance meeting and "how to argue". Finally, the instructors divided the students into three subgroups and presented a video depicting a factual situation. The students took one of the three viewpoints shown in the video and the discussion that followed demonstrated that people will view a situation differently as is informed because of their individual bias.

### Basic Arbitration with John McNamee

Arbitration cases require large amounts of organization and preparation. This is the message that was highlighted in John McNamee's recent course on Basic Arbitration. The course was designed to instill the important value of preparation and organization. In addition, the Arbitration course gave students a flavour of what occurs in arbitration proceedings.

Participants were very enthusiastic. All of the 70 participants undertook various roles in the mock arbitrations. These cases ranged

from discipline arbitrations to those regarding religious freedoms, and from issues of accommodation to issues of proper patient care. The presentations were quite true to life, considering the constraints of time. The seminar was deemed a great success.

### Health & Safety Course

Over 24 returning participants completed the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the Workers' Health & Safety Centre (WHSC) 30 Hour Level 1 H&S Course. Modules taught this year were Toxic Substances, Cancer in the Workplace, Principles of Control, Myth of the Careless Worker, and Violence in the Workplace.

### The Occupational Disability Response Teams, Level II Benefits and Representation

This course was led by George Redmond, the Local's WCB Staff Representative.

Level II training equips participants with the knowledge of what benefits and services are available from the WSIB for our members when they sustain a workplace injury.



Special thanks to Local 2 BGPWU member Dave Stevens (McMaster University Physical Plant and WHSC Instructor) for co-instructing the course with Ted Mansell.

With the completion of this 30-hour course, Local 2 not only has 24 new/additional members that will be effective H&S activists back in their workplace, but they now

they are adjudicated and where and how they can go wrong. With that new knowledge, our members and stewards are provided the ability to intervene at the earliest possible time to correct mistakes and obtain the appropriate benefits for our valued members.

## Local 2 Member gets Achievement Award



A Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Brother Kumar Ramcharran for thirty years of dedicated service to his members at DeMets (formerly Nestle) and to the Local where he has been a member of the Executive Board for the past twenty years. In presenting the award, Local 2 President Cam Nelson thanked Brother Ramcharran for his tireless and creative efforts on behalf of the Local.

"Kumar never stopped working to protect the jobs of his members at Demets and always walked the extra mile to make their lives better, whether it was leading an unlawful strike to protect seniority or supporting the efforts of the Union to find financing for an employee purchase of the factory" said Cam Nelson. He has been a hard working and committed member of the Local's Executive Board, whose opinions were always respected and whose support the Union could always count on. With Demets now closing the plant, he is working hard to obtain the best severance/pension closure agreement possible.

Thank you Kumar.

## Justice for Janitors

### Ottawa

Over 350 workers at Hallmark House-keeping in Ottawa recently won the right to join SEIU. This was the first victory in an effort to organize all of the cleaners in the nation's capital. As we go to press, workers at Ability Janitorial Limited have launched a campaign to join SEIU Local 2.

### Toronto

Workers at Impact Cleaning Services in Toronto continue their fight for better working conditions. In early November, a group of prominent community leaders joined workers in demanding that Impact Cleaning Services and their clients cooperate with an independent investigation into complaints by workers of widespread labour law violations. For regular updates on this effort please visit: [www.Negative-Impact.org](http://www.Negative-Impact.org)

### Vancouver

SEIU Local 2 has launched the Justice for Janitors campaign in Vancouver in October with a campaign at Omni Facility Services. Workers at Modern Building Services - a subsidiary of Omni Facility Services - are currently unionized with Local 2 and are preparing for contract negotiations. Union members at Modern Building Services enjoy significantly better working conditions than their non-Union counterparts including health and dental benefits.

For regular all of the Justice for Janitors campaigns please visit: [www.justiceforjanitors.ca](http://www.justiceforjanitors.ca)

