

A message to our members

Only one week left to the 2019-2020 school year. How did that happen? We have had a year unlike any other with bargaining, work to rule, strike preparation and finally, a new Collective Agreement, as the highlights of the fall. The new year found us managing more work action while other education workers struggled to achieve their collective agreements.

As we approached March Break, everything changed. None of us could have predicted that we would not return to the schools for the remainder of the school year. We cancelled plans, learned new ways of keeping each other safe and used technology to connect with family and friends. We washed our hands, we cleaned, we disinfected. We practiced social distancing, waiting in lines and staying home as much as possible.

Many of you have already been to the work sites and most will be there at least once before the end of June. I want to remind you to follow the protocols that are in place. They have been established to keep us safe as we retrieve our belongings and help the students and families collect theirs. The temptation to be social will be strong. Being back in familiar surroundings makes it challenging not to fall into old ways. We have spent the last three months trying to prevent the spread of the virus by adopting new behaviours and observing physical distancing when interacting with others out in public. It is important to continue to follow the rules.

I wish I could tell you what the new normal will be when we prepare to return at the end of the summer. Those plans are yet to be made and will be shared when they are completed. Take time over the summer to enjoy, to destress, to relax and to connect safely with others, as the rules allow. I will leave you with these thoughts from a quote by the late Federal NDP leader Jack Layton: "My friends, love is better than anger.. Hope is better than fear. Optimism is better than despair. So, let us be loving, hopeful and optimistic. And we'll change the world."

Please notify your local union of any changes to your personal contact information.



A big shout out to our committees

Education Committee

Our committee has had so much fun presenting many exciting education opportunities for members who wanted to learn more and get involved. We were able to send people to many different conferences, conventions and union education workshops. Join us next year for more great opportunities to learn and get involved.



Stewards Committee

The Stewards Committee has been very busy this year acting on your behalf. We have filed more than 40 grievances, attended Attendance Management meetings, Return to Work meetings, spoke to your Supervisor with you and for you, plus many other things. We continue to represent you and file grievances for you during this time when you are working remotely and will continue to assist you during the summer. Please continue to stay healthy and work safely!

Joint Occupational Health and Safety

Your elected committee has worked hard this year to put more focus on the violence in schools. This included making sure forms were filled out correctly, looking at the process of getting supports in schools and providing resources for workers to feel safe while working. Please continue to check the CUPE Local 4186 website and emails for more information about returning to school in the fall.

Bargaining Committee

Your Bargaining Committee negotiated a local collective agreement this past year. Please visit the CUPE Local 4186 website in early July for the new agreement. A huge thank you to every member who lent their support during bargaining and came out to get information prior to the votes. We came together like never before. If you know of members who are not receiving emails please have them send in their information. What we have learned this past year is that bargaining is never finished. We need to stand strong together every day.

10 tips for safe summer grilling

Many Canadians choose to take their cooking outdoors in the summer to make the most of the long days of sunshine. However, it's important to take precautions when barbecuing to prevent potential fire-related injuries and damage to your home. Before you light up the grill this summer, make sure to review the following grilling safety tips.

For more information, visit www.otipinsurance.com/article72.



Sun safety tips

You can protect your family and still have fun under the sun.

- **Cover up.** When the UV Index is 3 or higher, protect your skin as much as possible. Wear light-coloured, long-sleeved shirts, pants, and a wide-brimmed hat made from breathable fabric. When you buy sunglasses, make sure they provide protection against both UVA and UVB rays.
- **Limit your time in the sun.** Keep out of the sun and heat between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Look for places with lots of shade, like a park with big trees, partial roofs, awnings, umbrellas or gazebo tents. Always take an umbrella to the beach.
- **Use sunscreen.** Put sunscreen on when the UV index is 3 or higher. Use sunscreen labelled "broad spectrum" and "water resistant" with an SPF of at least 30.
- **Drink plenty of cool liquids (especially water) before you feel thirsty.** If sunny days are also hot and humid, stay cool and hydrated to avoid heat illness. Dehydration (not having enough fluids in your body) is dangerous, and thirst is not a good indicator of dehydration.

Meeting Attendance Incentive Draws

As many of you know, our local gives members who attend the General Membership Meetings an opportunity to win incentives for having attended. At the June Executive Meeting, it was agreed that we should draw the end-of-the-year prizes using the ballots that had been collected over the course of September to March.

Winners will be notified and hopefully will appear in the next newsletter.



Charitable Donations

Our local donates to charities every year in December and June. With many people out of work and visiting the food banks, the Executive made the decision to donate to the food banks in Oxford, Elgin, Middlesex and London, to Graces Café, and to the MS Society (who traditionally hold fundraisers at this time of year).

Important dates and reminders

- If you want to defend your pension rights, send a message to the OMERS SC Board of Directors before their next scheduled meeting on June 24. To find out more, visit DEFENDYOUROMERS.CA or the CUPE website cupe.on.ca
- CUPE Local 4186 members can shop at the Columbia Warehouse until June 26. Present the coupon you received earlier and have employment ID to present.
- Last day of school for 10-month employees is June 26. For all our members, have a happy, healthy summer. We will hopefully meet in the fall for Local elections and committee appointments.



Continue to check your personal email and the CUPE 4186 website.

Keep in touch

If you know of any member who is ill, has had a baby, has recently married or experienced a loss in his/her immediate family, please contact your Local. Send an email to cupelocal4186@gmail.com or leave a message at 519-679-4186.