

THE CORD WEEKLY

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www.wlusp.com

Negotiations halted

Strike Mediator Fusco leaves table and suggests a solution through arbitration

Bryn Boyce

Morale is less than stellar at WLU and it has nothing to do with cold and flu season. What plagues Laurier is the condition of the labor dispute; prognosis: negative.

Sentiments in the school community turned gray like the skin of a dying man as it was announced last night that the Administration's and WLUSA's bargaining teams reached an impasse in the negotiation process. After more than a week of seemingly constant talks, independent mediator Luke Fusco left the bargaining table. No further talks have been scheduled and the media blackout surrounding the dispute has been lifted. Both party's respect Fusco's call for an impasse on Wednesday, just around midnight.

The university's VP: Finance and Administration Jim Butler expressed his "deep disappointment" that the parties have not yet been able to reach an agreement. Butler clarified that "the university

had the right to contract out in the previous collective agreement but the process for doing so was the source of many disputes."

"The fear of WLUSA members having no employment security as a result of contracting out had been addressed in principle since September 24th," Butler said. "In light of WLUSA uneasiness with the original university offer, the university had, in fact, accepted the WLUSA language on employment security prior to talks breaking down."

Butler stated that the major stumbling blocks are differences union proposals and concerns. These include the fear that the new contract gives the administration power to systematically reduce the size and strength of WLUSA, new levels in the salary grid that would increase salary ceilings, and various fringe benefits for part time employees. According to Butler, the university has tried to eliminate these blocks by making



Matt Benassi

Administrators Jim Butler and Dr. Arthur Sziado in Students' Union Board room

significant movement on its monetary offer and by improving the offer on various benefits, such as vacation entitlement and tuition benefits for part-time members' spouses and children.

In the university offer, each constituent group of WLUSA received an increase in monetary compensation and benefits. "We don't have unlimited amounts of money and these last couple of days have been all about money, it has-

n't necessarily been about these high profile issues from before", commented Rosehart in reference to contracting out.

In an address to the Laurier community, Dr. Robert Rosehart stated that "a serious effort must be made immediately to get negotiations back on track...the focus must be on the task at hand - reaching a settlement." He later added "I hope they [WLUSA] come to some very clear direction on how they want to pro-

ceed because the offer on the table last night was a very fair offer. They [WLUSA negotiators] spent about 3 hours deciding whether they would take it or not." Other Department Chair's in the university "do not understand why there is a strike" stated Szabo in a telephone interview late Thursday.

SEE ADMINISTRATION PAGE 2

WLUSA favours arbitration

Stefan Sereda

With the media blackout lifted, the Laurier campus no longer bears resemblance to Stalinist Russia. As a result, WLUSA members have issued comments to the media regarding the current breakdown in negotiations.

Although disappointed that an impasse has been reached in the negotiation, the leaders of the Staff Association have declared their support for Binding Arbitration with WLU Administration.

First suggested by Dean of Social Work Luke Fusco, who had been mediating the debates, Binding Arbitration is a formal process in which the two sides of the labor dispute would have to present their views to a neutral judge in court. The arbitrator will then decide how to resolve the dispute. "I think that's what is best for Laurier", stated Fusco.

This solution could have the striking staff back to work as soon as Monday, October 28, 2002. The staff would then work under the framework of their old contract until a new one could be drawn up. This option places the new contract directly in the hands of an outside judge and poses a large risk to either side in this dispute. This process could also take weeks or even months while business continues as usual at Laurier. However, this would be the most immediate solution to the labor dispute, as the other options (which include returning to the negotiation process or doing nothing at all about the job action) are bleak. To follow through with the process of Binding Arbitration, both parties involved in the dispute would have to agree to it.

"It's always disappointing when negotiations break down", WLUSA President Dr. Bruce Wolff stated on Thursday, October 24. "But we have a committed group with a strong resolve to stick to their

cause."

On the issue of Binding Arbitration, Dr. Wolff asserted that "We support Luke Fusco's call for binding arbitration and to go back to work under the existing collective agreement until a decision is reached...accepting Fusco's proposal is in no way a sign of weakness. It is a necessity for us to get back to work."

WLUSA Treasurer Rick Henderson commented that "going back to work will be difficult in the short term and it won't be easy for us given how we've been treated. But for the good of the university community, we will do it."

The Staff Association met in the basement of St. Michael's Church on Thursday, so that the leaders of the union could gauge the support of its members on the possibility of agreeing to Binding Arbitration.

"I think our members agree that this is a reasonable way to go," said WLUSA negotiator Trudy Trudel.

"I would hope that the University has the same commitment to getting everything back to status quo and would agree to the process." WLUSA members could go back to work as soon as the administration indicates its agreement on this issue", according to Trudel.

University Administration are set to meet at 8am on Friday October 25th to discuss whether or not they will agree to the process of arbitration.

When asked why WLUSA rejected the University's final proposal at the bargaining table, Henderson articulated that many of the issues were too complex to be discussed. Henderson felt that many of the articles concerning job protection were incomplete and that they did not provide enough protections for WLUSA members.

SEE WLUSA PAGE 2

For continuous coverage of the strike,
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www.clublaurier.ca

WLUSA CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Henderson refused to comment on specific points of the proposal as he felt publicly discussing these issues would delay the parties reaching an agreement on the use of outside arbitration. "If we talk about issues that are specific it implies that we don't need to move forward", Henderson stated. He did note that specific issues may be discussed once the staff is back to work.

As of 8:00pm on Thursday October 24th, the Administration had yet to contact WLUSA to discuss when an arbitrator would be decided on and who it would be. "The issue now is when we can go back to work. That's all that matters", stated Rick Henderson.



Christine Cherry

WLUSA members leave St. Michael's Church after a closed meeting.

ADMINISTRATION CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Faculty of Science Dean Dr. Arthur Szabo, who joined the bargaining team on the weekend, expressed his extreme disappointment by what he has seen "across the table because I feel that the university presented an offer that would have brought the staff back to work." Dr. Szabo continued to say "the university has made proposal after proposal that can only be described as superior... the major issue for the university was the ability to have an unencumbered right to contract out. The parties essentially agreed to this and the university accepted WLUSA's language on employment security for its members. On all other matters, the union made no significant counter-proposals to those the university advanced. Rather, they continued to insist on the demands they'd been representing since I joined the bargaining process on Friday."

There are a couple possible directions that this dispute could take. The two parties are now required to decide whether they want to return to the bargaining table or if they want to enter into binding arbitration. "The thing if you go to binding arbitration is that it takes months", said Rosehart. Binding arbitration would force a resolution but it's slow

and risky for both sides of the dispute. "It's not as simple as it appears, it's not just a simple step, there's a lot to it, there's a lot of risks for both sides so I think it will be something that has to be reviewed very thoroughly", said Dean David McMurray. This process would also require negotiations to determine who would be appointed arbitrator. The process of appointing an arbitrator was a controversial issue in the failed negotiations and could prove to be a painfully slow process.

Frank Anatol, WLUSA's Media Contact has confirmed that they have accepted Luke Fusco's advice to enter into binding arbitration and return to work. This, however, must be coupled with an agreement from the administration so that the process of arbitration can begin. "The administration is to discuss this situation at a Board of Directors Executive and Governance meeting on Friday morning. It is "inappropriate for anyone to approach the Union without talking to the board" said Szabo when asked why administration was slow to respond to WLUSA's decision. If the administration accepts binding arbitration, regular services will return and all contract disputes will be resolved between the two negotiating teams and the arbitrator.

The other possibility is a reopening of negotiations. "This would require a negotiation process to decide if formal collective bargaining negotiations would continue. Again, this could prove to be a slow process and it runs the risk of returning to the tailspin of last the 6 weeks. On the other hand, if both sides take this break as a chance to reassess their positions, perhaps they could reach a quick agreement in further negotiations. "We may not have had the right combination but we were awfully close, they took 3 hours in deciding not to take it" said Rosehart Thursday. "My big frustration is we're probably not very far from a deal."

Everywhere in this dispute feeling of disappointment reigns. "I'm extremely disappointed that my team is not together and that the parties have not reached a successful collective agreement", said McMurray. "I miss them, I want them back and enough is enough"

Despite the fact that the media blackout has been lifted, WLUSA has been very reluctant to make any comment relating to past negotiations. Thus far they have been inexplicably evasive in their reasoning for declining the administration's "superior final offer".

time employees. The post-retirement benefits are opposed by the administration due to their expensive nature. As for the current part-time employee benefits, WLUSA wanted the benefits in form of a 3% addition to each pay period as opposed to a plan. The administration countered that the 3% could be granted so long as it is only used to offset health or dental costs of the employees.

The administration has, in the past, given 48 cash awards to the top employees within the Union. These merit bonuses were not favoured by WLUSA during negotiations but the reasoning for this is not clear.

The speed in dealing with personal harassment issues between WLUSA members and other people was one issue in contention. Butler stated that the administration feels these issues "must be dealt with quickly". The administration was looking for a timeline on when an employee can grieve. WLUSA did not bring this forward and suggested 30 day limit on grievances. Butler stated the administration wanted 5-10 days.

WLUSA was generally unavailable for comment on specific issues. Rick Henderson, WLUSA Treasurer, did state that if WLUSA were to specifically release the issues that impeded the negotiations, they would be implying that WLUSA would not move forward in any negotiations.

Henderson suggested that once the labour dispute is over, WLUSA will release its details on the specifics of the negotiations.

Final offer

Christine Cherry

The university made their final offer to the WLUSA negotiating team at approximately 10:30 Wednesday night. Three hours later WLUSA's negotiating team returned to the table to reject it. Until this time a media blackout prevented either side from discussing the actual terms of negotiations; the university has now released their "Final Offer for Settlement".

The final offer for settlement gave some concessions to WLUSA's demands. Although much has been made of the issue of contracting out, other issues for WLUSA (as stated on their website www.wlusa.ca) are hours of work, job security, benefits and grievance procedures.

Contracting out was believed by the public to be the number one issue holding up negotiations. The new terms for contracting out in the final proposal offered by the university states:

"Article 3.8.1: Circumstances may arise where the University considers it appropriate to contract out. In such cases no Member in a continuing position, as defined under 12.1.1, 12.1.3 and 12.1.5 (ii) shall lose employment, hours of work or salary as a direct or indirect result of contracting out.

Article 3.8.2: In the event a position is declared redundant as a result of contracting out the Member will have access to Article 13 (Position Redundancy/Layoff), Article 14 (Priority Placement) and Article 15 (Displacement).

Article 3.8.3: Affected Members will receive three months notice in addition to the notice period described in Article 13.3 or six months notice, whichever is greater.

Article 3.8.4: The Association has the right to represent the Member throughout the process.

Article 3.8.5: In order to enhance a Member's qualifications, the University will provide the Member with a reasonable level of training for a position(s) that becomes available during the Priority Placement period. The Human Resources Department will work with the Member and the Association Representative to identify future possible vacancies to which the Member's training can be applied.

Article 3.8.6: From the initial notice of redundancy, for a period of twelve months, the Member may choose severance at twice the rate described in Article 13.9.

Article 3.8.7: Should the Member not receive a suitable continuing position during the priority placement process and should the Member be unable to displace into a continuing position in accordance with Article 15 then the University will provide the Member with additional priority placement rights. Every effort will be made to fully utilize the competencies of the affected Member. The Member agrees to work with the University in such efforts.

Article 3.8.8: If the Member's new continuing position is at a lower grade level, the Member will maintain their current salary in accordance with Article 28.2.2.

Article 3.8.9: Semi-annually the Joint Association University Committee (JAUC) will review all work that is contracted out. The purpose of the review is to determine if there are more effective and efficient ways to carry out the work with Bargaining Unit Members. In preparation for the semi-annual review the University will provide the Association with either a copy of

the previously signed contracting out agreements or will use the form in Appendix B if the contract(s) contain proprietary or confidential information that cannot be shared."

Under a broad range of benefits the university offered changes to supplementary benefits for parental leave. Covered in Article 25.11.4.6 the final offer presented noted that, "In addition to the supplementary benefits received during their pregnancy leave, mother will receive supplementary parental leave benefits for a maximum of four weeks. The University will provide them with income equal to the difference between Employment Insurance benefits and 95 percent of their current salary."

The proposal stated that a staff member who is on parental leave as the primary caregiver for a newly adopted child will be entitled to supplementary benefits of 100 percent of their current salary for the first two weeks. For a period of up to ten additional weeks the university would provide the difference between the Employment Insurance benefits and of 95 percent of the staff member's full salary.

All other staff eligible for parental leave were offered additional benefits of two weeks at 95 percent of their salary, with an addition of a maximum of two additional weeks equal to 95 percent of their salary. Under the expired contract these staff members, including fathers, are eligible only for leave without pay.

Increases in Extended Health benefits were offered as well. Benefits for speech therapy and massage therapy were raised from \$300 to \$400 each per calendar year; orthopedic shoes' benefits were raised from \$250 to \$400. There was an increase from \$300 to \$400 for the services of a physiotherapist, chiropractor, osteopath, podiatrist, naturopath and Christian Science Practitioner. The dental plan was extended to cover the repair of dentures. Retirees also gained a \$5,000 increase in the Extended Health Care Plan, to a maximum of \$30,000 per calendar year. Article 26.2.1 was changed to require retirees to have at least five years continuous, full-time service immediately prior to retirement in order to qualify for these benefits. Under the expired contract staff with only one day's service would qualify.

For staff members required to wear uniforms their provision was increased to five articles of clothing (shirts, shorts, pants) and one article of outerwear and an allowance of \$175 every two years for safety footwear. Under the expired contract staff received two uniforms per year and \$120 every two years for safety footwear.

Part-time staff (who on a continuing appointment and work a total of 910-1249 hours per year) saw an increase in spousal and dependant tuition benefits. Spouses and dependant children of part-time staff would be eligible to receive a 35 percent waiver of academic tuition fees and a 35 percent scholarship towards four half-credit undergraduate course in each 12 month period commencing May 1. Under the expired contract these part-time staff members were not eligible for any form of tuition or scholarship assistance.

Under the old contract part-time staff who worked less than 910 hours per year did not receive any benefits under the Extended Health Care or Dental Plan.

SEE OFFER ON PAGE 4

40 days



What the hell happened?

Bryn Boyce

Now that some of the truth is beginning to seep out from behind the closed boardroom doors, a major question stands to be answered: what issues made the talks drag on so long?

How many times have we heard the words 'contracting out' muttered in the corridors or chanted at the rallies? Well, there's good reason because it is one of the most vehemently controversial issues in this dispute. According to Jim Butler, VP of Finance and Administration, the old WLUSA collective agreement permitted the contracting out of jobs but it was wording in the agreement that inhibited the administration's ability to functionally contract out.

Another pitfall was WLUSA concern that the administration would be granted the power to reduce the number of members in the union and thus deplete its strength. The union has grown by 41 members since the last contract.

The salary grid system in the contract provides ceilings for each employee. As employees gain seniority, their pay climbs up the grid until the ceiling. WLUSA wants to add another level to this grid. Butler said the administration is reluctant to offer this because it would mean a 1.8% increase in costs to be factored in to the University's salary budget.

The next divide in the negotiations was post-retirement benefits for part-time employees and benefits for current part-

I got beef...

Jennifer Asselin

Misplaced forms, services compromised, untrained substitutes... the list goes on and on. Throughout the past few weeks, students at Laurier have had to deal with plenty of things that the average university student shouldn't need to think twice about.

As a student, I can safely say I have suffered from the lack of services available due to the irreconcilable situation faced with the strike. Whether it be something as simple as being delayed while trying to cross the picket lines or something as important as not being able to obtain research information, the strike has affected me as well as everyone else at Laurier.

Although the strikers on the picket lines have been, for the most part cooperative, there have been times where students just haven't had the time to stop and ask what's going on. In these circumstances, strikers simply smile as you whiz past them in hopes to gain the education you've paid a copious amount of money for. Unfortunately for students who drive, the task of crossing the picket line has not been as easy. Not to sound inconsiderate but the constant stop and go traffic coming in and out of campus has been a nuisance for those of us who just want to get to class.

As well, the restriction of services has been a huge disappointment. For example, the Special Needs Office only having shorter working hours, the Writing Center being completely closed, and most significant to myself, not being able to obtain research material at your own university library for a research project worth half of your course mark.

Enough ranting though because the point is, even though all of these events have taken place and we as students have suffered, so have the staff that have been on strike. If and when these people, who have paced the surrounding streets of the Laurier campus in the freezing cold as well as the extreme heat, do decide or are sent back to work, we need to react in a manner that is both respectful and legitimate.

Yes, we have dealt with a lot of crap in the last month and a half but we need to approach the WLUSA members with a willingness to listen to their concerns because believe me, they still have them. Just because we might see the staff back at work does not in any way mean that this situation is going to disappear.

Don't get me wrong, I have my beefs but I don't intend to take it out on the workers as this will only result in an uncomfortable learning environment. My suggestion to you is if after WLUSA members return to work, you are still experiencing let downs with a lack of services or if you feel the quality of services have declined, discuss this with others. Don't stew about it but make a difference by going to the source and talking to Rosehart or someone else of supposed importance. Bombard him with questions because we all know you probably won't get the answers you want but at least you will have made a conscious effort.

Though WLUSA members may be coming back to work, students need to know that there will be many delays as the university tries to get things back in order. Patience is the key to sanity right now as many in the WLUSP office can surely attest to as we work diligently to produce this special edition paper.

Right now, I look around the office at people who, time after time, put forth that extra effort to bring you a quality paper, a service if you will, much like those WLUSA members who deep down only want to increase the quality of services this university provides. With this idea in mind, read this paper front to back — yes, all four pages — and take into account what it is that's gone on since this strike began. Not only for you, as a student but for the university as a whole. Approach staff members and ask questions. Most importantly, think before you speak. This isn't a time for self-ish acts of lashing out at staff but rather a time to understand the issues and create a little peace on a campus that's been through far too much lately.

Strike vocabulary

Arbitration is an informal process in which two parties present their views of a dispute to a neutral third party, an arbitrator, who will decide how to resolve the dispute.

Binding Arbitration is a means to get a fair and objective decision from a neutral third party when both parties come to an impasse in negotiations. Binding Arbitration is not invoked unless both parties fail to reach a mutually acceptable agreement between the Local and the County. One must first exhaust every effort to reach an agreement. Once you have entered into the Binding Arbitration process, each party submits its proposal to the arbitrator. The arbitration process is very similar to the negotiation process, however, both parties continue to present proposals to one another under the guidance of the arbitrator. Failures to arrive at an agreement, both sides carefully propose their final offer to the Arbitrator. The arbitrator considers various constants, the county financial situation, their ability to maintain bond ratings, comparable wage and benefits in the surrounding jurisdictions and many other comparable matters. At that time, the Arbitrator makes the final decision.

Collective bargaining consists of negotiations between an employer and a group of employees so as to determine the conditions of employment. The result of collective bargaining procedures is a collective agreement. Employees are often represented in bargaining by a union or other labor organization.

Better Business Bureau's arbitrators are volunteers who have been approved as arbitrators by a local BBB. They are normally not paid.

Mediation is a process in which a third-party neutral, whether one mediator or more, acts as a facilitator to assist in resolving a dispute between two or more parties. It is a non-adversarial approach to conflict resolution, where the parties generally communicate directly; the role of the mediator is to facilitate communication between the parties, assist them in focusing on the real issues of the dispute, and generate options for settlement.

Conciliation is a process in which the parties to a dispute, with the assistance of a neutral third party (the conciliator), identify the disputed issues, develop options, consider alternatives and endeavor to reach an agreement. The conciliator may have an advisory role on the content of the dispute or the outcome of its resolution, but not a determinative role. The conciliator may advise on or determine the process of conciliation whereby resolution is attempted, and may make suggestions for terms of settlement, give expert advice on likely settlement terms, and may actively encourage the participants to reach an agreement.

Impasse is the failure of a public employer and public employee organization to reach agreement in the course of negotiations.

Compiled by Jennir Asselin



Christine Cherry

Unions unite

Melissa Allen

The United Steelworkers of Ontario Director Wayne Fraser has made a \$10,000 donation to the Wilfrid Laurier University Staff Association and has made a guarantee of providing an interest-free \$100,000 loan to WLUSA to cover the costs to WLUSA members incurred by the strike.

The United Steelworkers, the union that represents administrative and technical staff at not only the University of Toronto but also the University of Guelph, is coming to the financial aid of the WLUSA. "This immediate \$10,000 donation and the \$100,000 loan will [help] WLUSA members who are in financial need, as well as allowing WLUSA to continue its efforts to defend the rights of its membership."

On the verge of completing its sixth week on strike, WLUSA members are undoubtedly feeling the financial strain of being out of the office and on the picket lines. "WLUSA members are engaging in a struggle that affects all university staff in Ontario," said Fraser. "We want to do our part to help WLUSA members achieve the contract they deserve."

The United Steelworkers have been actively supporting WLUSA by attending their demonstrations and spending time on the WLUSA picket lines. The United Steelworkers are adamant about helping to strengthen the voice of the WLUSA strikers. "We continue to encourage our members to spend time on the WLUSA picket and we will continue to help in other ways that WLUSA deems useful." Committed to endorsing WLUSA, The United Steelworkers want to provide the best possible means for a fair outcome. "The financial aid will, we hope, have a positive effect as well," comments Fraser.

WLUSA's response to The United Steelworkers was welcoming. "We are elated with this help from the Steelworkers," said WLUSA President Bruce Wolff. "It helps us continue to send the message to the Administration that we need a fair deal."



Christine Cherry



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The Strike: Day by day

Written by Thomas Thompson and Stefan Sereda, compiled by Melissa Allen

1995

WLU Staff Association created.

June 2002

Contract between Wilfrid Laurier University and the Wilfrid Laurier Staff Association, which represents the clerical, support and technical staff of the University, expired.

Contract enters period of renegotiations.

Tuesday, September 10, 2002

Meeting held to discuss latest contract proposal for the University's Administration and to vote upon it. The vote was made on whether or not to accept this proposal and by 10pm, the first round of voting had been completed and the ballot box was locked and sealed.

Wednesday, September 11, 2002

A second round of voting took place that morning.

At 2:00pm, results of the vote were made public: WLUSA votes to reject the University Administration's contract proposal.

Friday, September 13, 2002

WLUSA may assume legal strike position at 12:01am.

Sunday, September 15, 2002

If a collective agreement is not reached before this date, both parties will be in position to create a legal work stoppage. This means that a) the staff union can strike (refuse to work) or b) the university administration commences a lockout whereby the University staff is refused work.

Monday, September 16, 2002

Negotiations between WLUSA and the University Administration fall through and the WLUSA strike begins.

Monday, September 23, 2002

At 12:00pm, a campaign aimed at getting the staff back to work is launched by several student groups. The petition, drafted by members of the Laurier Activist New Democrats and the Laurier Students for Public Interest Research Group, showed support for WLUSA and called for a "quick and fair settlement." The petition was delivered to Laurier's Vice-President of Finance, Jim Butler, and was signed by more than 400 ID card-carrying students and asked for university president Bob Rosehart to "act like [a] president of this university and present the staff association a contract which reflects the significant contribution the staff of this university makes at every level." Some faculty members signed the position as well.

By this time WLUSU had declared a position of neutrality.

Tuesday September 24, 2002

Negotiations between the two parties resume at 11am. John Mather, Senior Mediator for the Ministry of Labour, sits in on the talks.

At 11:00pm, WLUSU offered students what Pushalik called "a chance to talk and vent" about how the strike has affect their lives at a forum on the Torque Room patio. Forum moderated by Kristi Edward, VP of University Affairs and included concerned students and some staff representatives, Bob Rosehart and Chair of Laurier's Board of Governors, Bryce Walker.

University Administration sent in its 8-page proposal to the Staff Association. The proposal was rejected.

Thursday September 26, 2002

John Mather adjourned negotiations "because the two parties were still too far apart," according to University Administration.

Discussions resumed that evening.

Monday, September 30, 2002

The University Administration announced that fall convocation would have to be "rescheduled." Originally scheduled for November 3rd, 2002, graduates would now have to wait until the Spring of 2003 for a ceremony.

Tuesday, October 1, 2002

At 2:00pm, Wayne Samuelson, President of the Ontario Federation of Labour, led a rally for WLUSA, with close to 200 people in attendance.

Thursday, October 3, 2002

At 3:00pm, Laurier's Faculty Association held a rally in support of the striking staff. The rally took place at the corner of Hazel St. and University Ave. Approximately 200 people, including staff, faculty and media, were in attendance.

Monday, October 7, 2002

Luke Fusco, Dean of Social Work and mediator in the negotiating process, is set to contact both sides.

Thursday, October 10, 2002

At 4:00pm, an emergency meeting of WLU's Senate is held in room 1E1 of the Arts Building.

Wednesday, October 16, 2002

At 4:00pm, Senators, faculty, students and WLUSA members hold two-hour debate surrounding the Academic Senate's "No Confidence" vote. The results of the vote: 26 Academic Senators voted that they still had confidence in President of the University, Bob Rosehart, while 18 Senators did not.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

In the university's final proposal, it offered that these members would receive four percent of their earnings to be applied to the purchase of the plan.

Part-time staff would also see their hourly wage minimum increase from \$9.00/hour to \$9.27/hour effective July 1 2002, \$9.55 on July 1 2003 and \$9.84/hour on July 1 2004.

New language was included under the university to deal with harassment. The new language specifies that, "with respect to complaints arising from student conduct, the Member shall, with 24 hours, advise their manager who shall intervene and try to resolve the Member's complaint. If the Member's complaint is not resolved to the Member's satisfaction, the Member, with the assistance of the Association, shall submit their complaint and attempt to resolve the complaint. If the manager fails to provide a resolution satisfactory to the Member, the manager, with the consent of the Member, shall file the complaint under the procedures outlined within the student Code of Conduct. A failure by a manager to comply with the obligation in this section shall be grievable."

A new grievance procedure was outlined under changes to Article 30. Article 30.4.1 an addition was made that would disallow any grievance filed 20 days after the event that is the basis for the grievance, or twenty days after the staff member should have reasonable

known about the incident. The offer also outlined a new procedure for the selection of an arbitrator where:

1. Each party will select a single legal counselor to form a team of two with the mandate to develop a list of ten arbitrators that both counselors are in agreement with.
2. The team will provide us with a random order in which the list of arbitrators will be selected.
3. The University agrees to provide up to \$300.00 to WLUSA for this process.
4. This process will be completed within 30 days of ratification of this agreement.

Under salary adjustment (Article 28.2.1), the university agreed to a three percent increase in the salary grid of staff effective July 1 of 2002, continuing yearly until 2004. Article 28.2.2 states that "Effective July 1, 2003, Members above the maximum for their grade will receive a lump sum payment equal to the economic increase in Article 28.2.1. If the salary of a Member above the maximum for their grade is less than the new maximum, the Member's salary will be moved to the new maximum and the balance of the economic increase will be paid to the Member as a lump sum."

The university's "Final Offer for Settlement" is available in its entirety on www.clublaurier.ca.



One opinion

Stefan Sereda

Week after barren, speechless week this campus has been quieter than (insert metaphor here). Ironically enough, Laurier is also undergoing a heated labor dispute and an event or statement of some sort is taking place on a daily basis. Now, with the negotiations roughly grinding to a halt like a car that needs new brake pads, the media blackout surrounding the labor dispute has been lifted and a decision to call for outside arbitration has been made. So why is the Laurier campus still being kept in the dark as to what is going on?

Neither side is saying anything beyond what they have lamely chirped for the last few weeks.

Comments from key individuals on the issue of the labor dispute and the impasse in the talks have ranged from "I'm extremely disappointed that the negotiations have ended" to "We need to get the staff back to work." Personally, I haven't seen so many bullets dodged since Clinton said "I did not have sexual relations with that woman" and O.J. stated "I will not rest until the real killer is found." Since they refuse to say what has been going on, someone should come out and ask the leaders of these parties "WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? Have you, like O.J., been out golfing when you should be getting down to the business at hand?" I suppose I just did, which should not surprise anybody, since we at Student Publications have been pounding out tour de force coverage on the subject, considering the limited information we have been given.

This may seem like the griping of a whiny volunteer news editor with a virus resembling the Bubonic Plague who was called into the office for ten hours the night before he has a paper due. You are damn right it is! I'm very glad you, the reader, recognize this. Because while the Student Publications staff and myself have been volunteering our time to produce valuable information to the student body, the highly paid heads and bargaining teams of WLUSA and WLU Administration have been as reclusive as Michael Jackson. Sure, they may have released the odd piece of promotional information but so did Jacko every time his new album coming out was weaker than the last one.

Not only are the two teams reluctant to talk to the media, with negotiations over, they have not even contacted each other. University Administration is waiting until Friday morning at 8:00pm to discuss whether or not they will agree to Binding Arbitration, after having thirty-two generous hours to consider it. By the time a decision is made, two days worth of pay that the striking staff could be using to feed their children will be lost, two days worth of labs will be down the drain as well as two days worth of WLU rebuilding its sense of community thrust to the ground.

On the other hand, WLUSA has yet to invite the Administration to talk about moving to outside arbitration except through the media. Once again, WLUSP and the media organization (CKCO) previously assaulted on this campus have to pick up the slack. As I write this, the WLUSA offices are darker than the Argos' hopes of winning The Superbowl. Meanwhile, there is Miles Davis-style improvisation going on in the WLUSP offices.

WHERE ARE YOU?

And more importantly, how do you expect the student body to believe that you have been putting forth the "round-the-clock" effort that you claim to be doing if the night before a major decision both sides are at home dreaming of sugarplums? Especially considering that you have been as reluctant to talk to the media as Vin Diesel is to put out a good movie. You may lug yourselves to the bargaining table every day but do you drag your minds along? Are you still busy entertaining what Dr. Phil said about "finding your inner child" yesterday? Woe for the downtrodden people plodding up the picket lines day after thirty-ninth day! How will you explain to them your lack of effort? Woe to the surgery patient who had his liver operated on instead of his heart: how will you explain to him that his doctor was never given his first-year biology labs? Woe to the WLU community because the compromise between two prominent organizations on campus never came!

My deepest sympathies should be extended to Luke Fusco, who witnessed these atrocities first-hand over a period of six weeks, and who had to announce to everyone that the effort to rebuild this campus had to be given to an outsider.

The opinions expressed in this editorial are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of The Cord Staff, the editorial board, WLUSP or WLU.