

The Sentinel

UUP-Oneonta

Volume 3, Number 8

November, 2003

Air Quality: Labor-Management Collaboration

by Bill Simons, President

At times, Labor-Management relations are intense: despite mutual respect and cordiality, the Administration and the Union do not always agree. On many issues, however, UUP Oneonta and the College Administration share common ground. A recent collaborative effort by UUP and the Administration concerning air quality provides one such example.

Even as a new UUP Executive Board took office at the beginning of the current semester, individuals came forward with concerns about the quality of the air in the basement areas of Netzer, Schumacher, and the IRC, buildings adjacent to a connecting tunnel that had been closed for years. Confidential discussions revealed employee anxiety as to whether a health and safety issue was involved. Anecdotally, anyone walking through the basement of the IRC became aware of an unpleasant odor. Two members of the UUP Executive Board accepted an invitation to inspect the sealed tunnel; as a result, the Exec Board asked the Administration for air-quality tests in the basements of IRC, Netzer and Schumacher prior to abatement work in the tunnel, which had been scheduled for October 6th

Over the next few days, the Exec Board took crash courses in mold control, asbestos abatement and air testing in general. Statewide UUP President Bill Scheurman reassured us that the union had dealt successfully with similar situations before. NYSUT Health and Safety Officer Wendy Hord led us to qualified professionals. Greg Swinski—an industrial hygienist from the Central New York Occupational Health Clinic at the Upstate Medical University, SUNY, in Syracuse—answered innumerable technical questions. Swinski strongly recommended that we contact John Van Raalte to do the testing.

An M.S. graduate of the University of Cincinnati's Kettering Laboratory in Environmental Health and Industrial Hygiene, John Van Raalte is a Certified Industrial Hygienist and the Director of Industrial Hygiene Services at the Occupational and Environmental Health Center of Eastern New York. Although the Center is state funded and state mandated, it is an independent operation. Prior to his service at the Center, John was a Senior Industrial Hygienist for Oregon OSHA in Portland. John is a well-respected scientist, experienced in conducting environmental testing at educational facilities.

The Administration played a pivotal and equal role with the union in facilitating air testing. President Alan B. Donovan made a strong commitment to safeguarding the health of employees, students and visitors to our campus. Leif Hartmark, Vice President for Finance and Administration, provided financial support. And Tom Rathbone, Associate Vice President for Facilities, coordinated implementation.

The Administration responded affirmatively to our request for pre- and post-abatement tests. Management even offered to pay for the testing. Furthermore, after evaluating John Van Raalte's qualifications, the Administration endorsed UUP's proposal that John serve as tester.

John deserves great credit for rearranging existing commitments and making the Oneonta project a priority—the imminence of scheduled abatement work and the pressures of his own schedule could have created very real problems. On October 2nd, John arrived on campus—meeting with representatives of Labor and Management before and during his pre-test of the tunnel's air quality.

The entire college community—members of the bargaining units of all unions, administrators, students, guests—were invited to a public forum, hosted and funded by UUP, on October 21st in Morris Hall. At this program, John Van Raalte provided a clear, informative, detailed presentation. He responded to a series of insightful and probing questions. As of this writing, John's final report is unfinished. We expect that it will be completed shortly, and it is UUP's intention to publish the official final report of the pre-test in *The Sentinel*. After the final report is completed, John has agreed to continue to answer questions from concerned individuals. Moreover, John will do a post-test when abatement work is completed, and those results will also be made public.

This endeavor was a result of a joint commitment by the Administration and UUP: Labor and Management were partners in this enterprise. It is our hope that this will be a precedent for other joint ventures in the future.



Pictured, right: President Bill Simons & John Van Raalte, shown during atmospheric testing in the Schumacher-IRC tunnel.



Fred Miller Recognized at Fall Delegate Assembly in Rochester

The inimitable Fred Miller (left), a longtime Oneonta-chapter unionist, is shown (almost) accepting an award from UUP President Bill Scheuerman. Fred was attending his 90th Delegate Assembly; he was toasted for his many years of service in the cause of solidarity.



November 2003

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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30						

Schedule of Events for November

- 11/10 — Labor-Management Meeting: Netzer 342, 3:00
- 11/10 — Pre- and post-L/M meetings: Netzer 333a, 2:30 & immediately following
- 11/17 — Executive Board: Human Ecology 206, 2:00
- 11/18 — Food for Thought, Chapter Meeting: *Le Café*, Morris Hall, noon
- 11/21 — College closes for Thanksgiving Break



Statewide UUP President and Chief UUP Contract Negotiator To Be Featured at Food for Thought on Tuesday, November 18

The next Food for Thought chapter meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 18, at noon, in *Le Café*, Morris Hall. At this month's gathering, we have two speakers of note: Bill Scheuerman, statewide UUP President, will discuss future funding for SUNY and the budgetary and political exigencies that affect that funding; Chief Negotiator Phil Smith, statewide UUP Vice President for Academics, will discuss current contract negotiations. Both speakers will respond to questions.

Please join us for this very important Food for Thought.

FREE!


- Pizza
- Salad
- Plastic forks
- INFO!

UUP-
Oneonta


Ask a delegate, or
call x-2135

Eat &
Learn!

Drop In to Find Out
about
the
State of
Contract
Negotiations!



11/18 at noon, *Le
Café in Morris Hall*



Bring a
Friend!

UUP Supports SEFA/United Way Campaign

United University Professions has always been a strong advocate for social justice. For example, the Solidarity Committee of UUP has participated in global crusades to invest work with dignity by sponsoring activities which help those not fortunate enough to have the union protections we sometimes take for granted. We salute the many members who give of their time and money to make the world a better place.

But there is work to do right here in Oneonta. At this time each year, we ask you to consider making a contribution to the State Employees' Federated Appeal (SEFA)/ United Way Campaign. Your contribution, regardless of the amount, makes this a better world by investing within our local community. Your gift can have a direct impact on the lives of others, those who live in a world of *we need*, not *we want*.

Too many families and children still lack adequate housing, nutrition and clothing. Too many people still lack access to quality medical care . . . And these are not distant problems: these needs are felt by neighbors and friends right here in our own corner of the world.

Please take a moment, if you haven't already, to look at the SEFA/ United Way Campaign materials that you received. Note that you can designate how your contributions will be used.

If you have any questions about the SEFA/ United Way Campaign or need another form, please contact Gail Feuer (2509) or Kathleen Koenig (2632), co-Chairs of this year's campus campaign. As Gail and Kathleen note, "We have an excellent opportunity to make a real difference to those less fortunate than ourselves. With as little as one dollar a payroll deduction, helping is truly painless! Your donation . . . can significantly help the people who live in our community."

UUP is proud of the participation of its members in this fine project.



Part-Time Concerns Committee

by J. McDermott, Chair, Ad Hoc Part-Time Concerns Committee

Scheduling conflicts have forced one of our members to resign. We would like to recruit at least one more person, preferably an adjunct—and ideally someone outside the Netzer universe. So how about it, those of you in Music, Human Ecology, the sciences, Education? Your time commitment will be relatively small, but you can have a great impact on your union and your academic community. We meet on the second Tuesday of each month to voice our concerns about issues related to part-time employees—issues that can be discussed at Labor-Management meetings throughout the year. Contact J. McDermott (mcdermj@oneonta.edu) or Bill Simons (simonswm@oneonta.edu) for more information—or even just to talk about what the Ad Hoc Committee for Part-Time Concerns is doing.

Workload Committee

by Bill Wilkerson, Chair, Ad Hoc Workload Committee

The UUP Oneonta Committee on Workload Concerns was created to investigate the concerns of members of the UUP bargaining group regarding workload issues. In order to accomplish this we are requesting cooperation from members of this bargaining group in three areas.

1) Please take the time to contact members of the committee at

oneontaworkload@fastmail.fm

with your thoughts and comments regarding your workload. You may also call, visit or otherwise contact the members of this committee with your comments.

2) We will use your comments to generate a brief survey in order to obtain a wide range of campus opinions about workload. Please take the time to fill out and return this survey when you receive it.

3) We will also seek out individuals from a broad range of areas and request interviews. We ask your cooperation and will happily meet any volunteers who would like to be interviewed as part of this process.

Please help us with this by e-mailing the address above or by contacting the following individuals: Bill Wilkerson, committee chair (413 Fitzelle, -3272, wilkerwr); Nancy Cannon (314 Milne, -2025, cannonns); Michael Koch (417 Fitzelle, -3721, kochmp); Loraine Tyler (100 Netzer, -3218, tylerll)

Professional Concerns Committee

by Keith Fitzpatrick, Chair, Ad Hoc Professional Concerns Committee

The Professional Concerns Ad Hoc Committee has met and is developing an overview of the task at hand. The committee will be sending out a survey/questionnaire before Thanksgiving break and asks ALL to respond quickly. We will be looking for feedback from all UUP professionals on a number of issues, and we are also looking for your ideas and concerns. To date, items such as the performance evaluation process, discretionary funds, career advancement, training and workshops, wages, respect, parking, and improving communications among professionals have been raised. We are asking that those who respond to the survey include suggestions for improvements in all facets of our work. The committee will meet at least five more times between now and mid-May. UUP professionals can expect an open forum and/or panels to give voice to concerns and possible solutions. UUP Vice President for Professionals, John Marino, has committed to attending one of these meetings. If anyone is interested on being on the committee, we do have an opening. Contact Keith Fitzpatrick at 3507.



UUP Members Promote Statewide Focus on Part-time Faculty Issues

Hundreds of United University Professions (UUP) members from across New York took up the plight of part-time faculty beginning October 27th, the kick-off to Campus Equity Week (CEW).

Approximately 40 % of the faculty at the State University of New York (SUNY) are part-timers, reflecting the national average. The ratio of part-time to full-time faculty grows every year; on some larger campuses, freshmen go an entire semester without being taught by a full-time faculty member.

CEW—October 27-31—is an initiative of an international coalition of academic, labor and professional organizations designed to raise awareness about issues involving quality, equitable labor policies and standards, and academe's over-reliance on part-timers. UUP, the nation's largest higher education union, is a co-sponsor of CEW.

"While part-time faculty make valuable contributions to their campus communities, most don't have office hours, advise students, conduct research or participate in campus life," said UUP President William E. Scheurman. "At most colleges and universities, they are paid far less for teaching the same courses as their full-time colleagues, and many must teach at several campuses just to make ends meet.

"These conditions are unfair to part-time faculty and to the students they teach."

SUNY faculty—academic and professional, full- and part-time—on the 29 campuses represented by UUP are standing up for equity and quality in a number of diverse ways. Some are conducting teach-ins; others are organizing letter-writing campaigns; some are using CEW as a membership-building activity. For example:

At **SUNY Albany**, the union partnered with administrators and the faculty senate for a forum entitled "Part-time and Adjunct Faculty: Roles and Perspectives."

At both **SUNY Alfred** and **SUNY Farmingdale**, a dinner and membership meeting was held for part-timers.

At **SUNY Canton**, a special meeting of the Labor/Management Part-time Concerns Committee was held to focus on the issue, and a reception was scheduled for part-timers on campus.

At **SUNY Potsdam**, Halloween was celebrated during the CEW observance, with several UUPers dressed as werewolves and wearing T-shirts around campus that proclaimed: "I am a werewolf. A werewolf is a part-time wolf and a part-time person. Part-time academic and professional employees are NOT part-

"Approximately
40% of the
faculty at
[SUNY] are
part-timers..."

& in Oneonta...

Pictured, right: J. McDermott, Part-Time Concerns Officer for UUP-Oneonta, feeding the troops during Campus Equity Week at the Part-Time Employees' Reception Station, IRC lobby, 28 October 2003. Jay is standing in front of a plaque commemorating the winners of the *Simphiwe Hlatshwayo Excellence in Teaching Award*, established in 1998—the first award given to adjunct instructors in the SUNY system.





VOTE/COPE: It's the Little Things That Count

Giving a single dollar per pay period means that you can help support candidates who have your interests in mind...

As lifelong learners and professional educators we are all familiar with the benefit a little extra effort returns. In our own academic life and in the academic lives of our students, the difference between good work and excellent work often amounts to little more than an extra few minutes of study. For our personal well-being, the difference between good health and vigorous health is often little more than a brisk walk in the morning or taking the stairs instead of the elevator. Little things can, and often do, mean a lot!

So it is with our political security as well. It doesn't take much to exert a positive influence on the political process—a political process that significantly influences the conditions of our employment, the effectiveness of our educational efforts, and the quality of the students attending Oneonta. This too requires only a little extra effort. We can take a little time to keep ourselves informed, we can talk with our fellow professionals about the issues that are important to us, we can write letters to our representatives to make our voices heard, and we can encourage our union to remain effectively engaged in the political process.

Another one of the "little things" we can all do is to support VOTE/COPE, NYSUT's political action fund, with a regular donation of just \$1.00 per pay period.

VOTE/COPE (Committee on Political Education) directs the voluntary contributions of NYSUT members from across the state and contributes to candidates and campaign committees supported by NYSUT. Endorsement and support from NYSUT is based strictly on candidates' records on public education issues and is completely non-partisan. VOTE/COPE funds are completely segregated from regular operating funds and have been used in political campaigns in every region and every election district in the state. Consequently, giving to VOTE/COPE means not only helping the greater community, but also helping ourselves.

We can achieve big victories with little gifts if each Oneonta UUP member joins with members across the state and contributes just \$1.00 per pay period. For those already contributing, please consider increasing your deduction by \$1; for those not yet contributing, please consider a voluntary contribution right now.

Contact Denis Brennan (Brennad.oneonta.edu) for more information about VOTE/COPE or to receive the forms necessary to begin regular payroll deductions.

Let's do the little things right! . . . Just \$1 per paycheck!

October 20 Labor Management Meeting Minutes

by Rob Compton, Secretary

For Management: Alan Donovan, Carol Blazina, Leif Hartmark, F. Daniel Larkin, Nancy Nash, Steven Perry

For UUP: Bill Simons, R. Compton, Keith Fitzpatrick, Fred Miller, Janet Nepkie, Norm Payne, Dennis Selzner, Rich Tyler, Ed Wesnofske

I. Media and Public Information Policy

A. UUP inquired about the memo from Carol Blazina, Assistant to the President, and the Faculty Handbook wording concerning Media and Public Information Policy

B. Management distributed memo with 9/24/03 changes

C. Management notes that the media often makes requests to the Office of External Affairs

1. stated that it is a working policy
2. stated that it is to encourage faculty participation

D. UUP noted that the "media policy" statement/point number seven (7) is problematic both in the memo and in the handbook draft

1. present wording of #7 might be interpreted as compromising other parts of media policy, particularly the assertion of academic freedom
2. requests for "clearance" raise potential questions of "terms and conditions" [See L/M Minutes, Page 7]



An Open Letter to President Alan Donovan

Dear President Donovan:

On behalf on the State University of New York community—students, academics and professional faculty—I am writing to request that you, as our campus leader, call upon the SUNY Trustees to advocate on behalf of SUNY. Simply put, it’s time for the Board of Trustees to stand up for SUNY. The problem with SUNY today, as United University Professionals has always pointed out, is that both budget requests and campus allocations are based on mechanistic formulas and **not** on the programmatic needs of individual campuses.

Last year, SUNY did not receive the operating funds it deserved in the state budget. This year, the Trustees must submit a budget request to the Governor that accurately reflects the full needs of each campus of our great State University. The process starts with your budget request to the Trustees.

As we all know, SUNY is an excellent investment of public funds. Please ask the Trustees to support SUNY and help New York weather these tough times. Please request sufficient state funds so that the SUNY budget accurately reflects the needs of our Oneonta campus.

Sincerely,

William M. Simons

President, United University Professions, Oneonta Chapter

[Editor’s note: this letter first appeared in the Oneonta *Daily Star* on 3 November 2003]

L/M Minutes (continued from page 6)

E. UUP noted that faculty may feel that, without revision of # 7, they have to talk to media when referred by office of External Affairs

1. could lead faculty to make statements when they prefer not to
2. junior faculty particularly could be uncomfortable
3. some junior faculty have no background in media relations

F. Management stated that this was meant to encourage faculty and that training could be provided

G. Management suggested that UUP should seek to configure appropriate wording of #7

H. UUP noted that we will be back on this issue on Nov. 10

II. Workplace Environmental Issue: The Tunnel Underneath Schumacher, IRC and Netzer

A. UUP thanked the administration for its commitment to resolving this issue and for paying for timely air-quality testing

1. noted that Leif Hartmark and Tom Rathbone were particularly helpful
2. noted that the administration and UUP can work to resolve these types of issues in a partnership

B. Management gave a brief history and prognosis of the cleanup

1. Fire code led to its closing
2. The university decided upon abatement
3. pre- and post-asbestos testing scheduled
4. air-flow increased, walls painted and cleaned

a. mold killed, standing water to be monitored (even though the area cannot be made waterproof)

5. UUP and Management will share test results; UUP to publicize

C. UUP: testing should be ongoing; Management agreed to tests “on an as-needed basis”

III. College Calendar: Issue of Jewish New Year (Rosh Hashanah) and Labor Day

A. UUP noted its concern about the open house that was held on Rosh Hashanah this fall

1. It creates concern among employees, students, prospective students, alumni, and community of the Jewish faith
2. Raises generic questions about sensitivity toward the major religious holidays for those of all faiths

B. Management: scheduling was necessary due to other events, including the SAT; noted that they do not like to schedule open houses on such days

C. Management noted that coercion to work not present

D. UUP: when symbols of respect are overlooked, symbols of disrespect will linger; this is not how the college should be seen.

E. UUP reiterated that many of our students are of Jewish heritage, and that it sent the wrong message as to our strong commitment to multiculturalism.

F. Management: “point taken”

G. Labor Day issue will addressed at the next meeting.



UUP ONLINE:

<http://uupinfo.org>

The Sentinel:

<http://organizations.oneonta.edu/uup/sentinel.htm>

Executive Board Contact Info

UUP Office — 206 Human Ecology 436-2135

President (d)	Bill Simons	SIMONSWM*	436-3498 (office)
VP for Academics (d)	Ed Wesnofske	WESNOFER	432-6770 (home)
VP for Professionals (d)	Norm Payne	PAYNENE	436-3218 (o)
Secretary (alt. d)	Rob Compton	COMPTORW	436-3048 (o)
Treasurer	Rich Tyler	TYLERRF	436-3648 (o)
Grievance Officer	Paul Conway	CONWAYPG	436-3923 (o)
Benefits Officer	Mona Hughes	HUGHESML	436-2490 (o)
Membership Director (alt. d)	John Carney	CARNEYJJ	432-5360 (h)
Newsletter Editor (d)	Richie Lee	LEERE	436-2493 (o)
Part-Time Concerns	J. McDermott	MCDERMJ	436-3055 (o)
VOTE/COPE Director	Denis Brennan	BRENNAD	436-3555 (o)
Administrative Assistant	Peg Carney	ONEONTA@UUPMAIL.ORG	436-2135 (o)

Other Delegates & Alternates:

Janet Nepkie	NEPKIEJ	Tom DeMeo	DEMEOT
	436-3425 (o)		436-2188 (o)
Keith Fitzpatrick	FITZPAKB	Fred Miller	MILLEREW
	436-3507 (o)		988-9323 (h)
Joe Baldwin	BALDWIJC	Chris Bulson	BULSONCE
	436-3517 (o)		397-9345 (h)

****e-mail addresses are @oneonta.edu (d = delegate)***