

The Sentinel

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UUP—ONEONTA

October 2004



"If you give me a fish, you have fed me for a day. If you teach me to fish, then you have fed me until the river is contaminated or the shoreline seized for development. But if you teach me how to organize, then whatever the challenge I can join together with my peers and we will fashion our own solution."
-Anonymous

Labor Day and Workload: Symbolism and Substance

by Bill Simons, Chapter President



Solidarity

Over three hundred people celebrated Labor Day with UUP Oneonta on September 6, 2004. World War II veteran Ira Dubins and SUNY Board of Trustee member Stephanie Gross, separated by more than six decades but united by a common commitment to social justice, joined faculty, professionals, sisters and brothers from other unions, students, and members of the greater Oneonta community in Labor Day observance. By his presence, statewide UUP Vice President for Academics Fred Floss linked Oneonta to campuses across the State of New York, and the participation of SUNY Oneonta Student Association President Evan Rakowski reminds us to keep faith with generation yet to come. Look at the photographs of the day: This was the largest and most significant labor demonstration ever held on the SUNY Oneonta campus, and it is just a beginning.



President Simons and Evan Rakowski, SA President

Events of this magnitude do not simply happen. Recognition and thanks properly go to Dr. Loraine Tyler, UUP's Director of Special Events. It was Loraine's leader-

ship that raised the large UUP tent on Labor Day. And from this tent on the campus quad came food and drink, the music of the labor movement, colorful posters and banners, and expressions of solidarity. Loraine's generosity with her time and talent is much appreciated.

Not only was it an occasion of good fellowship, UUP Oneonta's Labor Day celebration also announced our union's bipartisan campaign, allied with the Student Association, to register voters at the College at Oneonta and on campuses across the SUNY system. Moreover, our Labor Day celebration honored the working women and men of America. It recognized their contributions, struggles, and aspirations.

The September issue of *The Sentinel* featured a photograph of Bill Scheuerman, Statewide UUP President, holding a banner, emblazoned with the words "**Honor Workers: Observe Labor Day.**" Many who attended UUP Oneonta's Labor Day celebration questioned whether holding classes on Labor Day either honored workers or constituted a proper observance of the day. One of these voices belongs to Dr. Donald R. Hill, SUNY Oneonta Professor of Anthology.



From left: Ralph Watkins, Don Hill, Bill Simons, Edward "Bo" Whaley

Don Hill asks, "Why do we work on a nationally approved holiday, glorified in speech by Republicans, Democrats, Greens, and other political parties? It is considered by our state and national leaders as a legitimate day of rest, a day to reflect on labor organizations and the work ethic, but not apparently by our local administration. What gives?"

Labor Day and Workload (continued)

The complete text of Don Hill's communication, printed with his permission, follows this article.



Bill Simons and Fred Floss, State UUP VP for Academics

Don Hill is not alone. Over the past year, UUP Oneonta has consistently asserted in Labor-Management Meetings that holding classes on Labor Day is not appropriate. Please read UUP Secretary Rob Compton's minutes of the most recent Labor-Management discussion on

this issue on pages 6 and 7.

UUP salutes the achievements of President Alan B. Donovan; they are numerous and significant. Under President Donovan, substantial renovation and expansion of the physical infrastructure has enriched the campus, and, after years of state budgets that diminished programs throughout the SUNY system, he provided the framework for attracting the talented, young faculty and professionals who now grace our campus. President Donovan is a gentleman, possessed of exceptional social skills. The practice of holding classes on Labor Day did not begin under the current administration, but UUP is hopeful that, given our collaboration on so many other issues, labor and management can now successfully address concerns about Labor Day observance.

Observance of Labor Day has symbolic and substantive import. With observance of Labor Day will come meaningful dialogue about workload. At its core, Labor Day is about work conditions. Observance of Labor Day provides prologue to meaningful discussion about workload. On the following page, note the complete text of a communication on workload by Dr. John H. Relethford, SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor, Department of Anthropology, printed with his permission. As John Relethford observes, "One of the most serious problems at SUCO regarding faculty workload is that different faculty have different teaching loads depending on when they were hired...However, these are issues that can be explored given a commitment to equity in workload."

Labor Day: 2004



Generations united



Under the tent



"Lemonade?"



A Happening

Commentary

Labor Day

by Dr. Donald R. Hill, Professor, Department of Anthropology

I've been a teacher at SUNY Oneonta since 1978. I have enjoyed my tenure; I like our school and the people who work here and I find it a wonderful working and living environment. Before coming to Oneonta I worked at the American Museum of Natural History, Hunter College, Indiana University, San Francisco University, Goodman Heating and Air-Conditioning Factory, and about four or five other places. This is the only place where I have worked where WORK was required on LABOR DAY. I find this very, very difficult to understand. Why do we work on a nationally approved holiday, glorified in speech by Republicans, Democrats, Greens, and other political parties? It is considered by our state and national leaders as a legitimate day of rest, a day to reflect on labor organizations and the work ethic, but not apparently by our local administration. What gives? Why do they insist on returning us to the days of yore, before the Triangle Factory Fire, before the organization of the AFL, the CIO, UUP, and my favorite workers group, the IWW?

Faculty Workload

*by Dr. John H. Relethford, Distinguished Teaching Professor,
Department of Anthropology*

One of the most serious problems at SUCO regarding faculty workload is that different faculty have different teaching loads depending on when they were hired. Ever since the early 1990s, new faculty have been obligated to teach 12 contact hours in a manner that, for most, means 4 separate sections. Before this time, it was possible for faculty to fulfill the 12 contact hour load by teaching 3 courses, usually one of which was of larger enrollment. Thus, in my department, I teach 3 sections a semester and my newer colleagues teach 4 sections a semester. As such, they have a higher workload at a lower salary! I have always maintained that this is grossly unfair. The workload needs to be equalized. Since it is not possible to increase the number of sections for "older" faculty, it seems only fair to decrease the number of sections for newer faculty. There are potential problems with adjusting the course load, such as an effect on average class size and subsequent restrictions on available classroom space. However, these are issues that can be explored given a commitment to equity in workload.

October 2004						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fri	Sat
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Meeting schedule

Executive Board Meetings: on Mondays at 2PM in Human Ecology 206: October 25, November 15, and December 13

Food for Thought/Chapter Meetings: on Tuesdays at 12 noon in Le Cafe, Morris: October 19 and November 16

Pre-Labor-Management Meetings: on Mondays at 2:30 in Netzer 333A: October 4, November 8, and December 6

Labor-Management Meetings: on Mondays at 3 in the President's Conference Room, Netzer: October 4, November 8, and December 6

Post-Labor-Management Meetings: on Mondays immediately following Labor-Management Meetings, in Netzer 333A: October 4, November 8, and December 6

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Have YOU heard about VOTE/COPE?

by Sheila Serbay, VOTE/COPE Director

State employees often overlook advantages that are available to them. Do you ever consider who represents you to maintain excellent working conditions, receive competitive compensation, and promote educational effectiveness?

The UUP through **VOTE/COPE**, the political action arm of NYSUT, is our political voice.

VOTE/COPE, the Committee on Political Education, encourages voluntary contributions from NYSUT members throughout the state. Contributions are made to candidates and campaign committees endorsed and supported by NYSUT. The non-partisan support is offered to the candidate whose record, standing, and voting history are favorable to public education.

All funds collected by **VOTE/COPE** are completely separate from regular operating funds and used throughout the state.

As the newly appointed **VOTE/COPE** coordinator for our area, I urge you to consider a voluntary contribution of one (\$1) dollar per paycheck. Individually the donation would be negligible in creating an impact. Collectively, these donations give **VOTE/COPE** the political clout to benefit members.

PLEASE support **VOTE/COPE** and allow our collective voices to be heard.

Contact **SHEILA A. SERBAY** ... serbaysa@oneonta.edu or at Ext. 2062 for forms needed to begin voluntary payroll deduction.



Food for Thought: Tuesday October 19



Food for Thought, September 21, 2004

The October *Food for Thought* / Chapter meeting will feature a program on **medical, dental, and vision benefits** on Tuesday, October 19 at 12 noon in Le Cafe, Morris. Statewide UUP Director of Member Benefits Gail Maloy and statewide UUP Manager of Member Benefits Doreen Bango will discuss programs, options, resources, and reimbursement procedures related to medical, dental, and vision benefits. The information provided will reflect the most recent changes, including those specific to the greater Oneonta community. Members of the UUP bargaining unit as well as their dependents under medical, dental, and vision plans are most cordially invited to the program. A delicious complimentary lunch will be provided.

Although *Food for Thought* has important content, it is also an occasion for respite from the workweek, relaxed collegiality, and fine dining. Join your colleagues for a convivial gathering and in expression of solidarity. *Food for Thought* is an occasion to renew old ties and to forge new ones. UUP looks forward to greeting you.

Third Air Tunnel Test: An Assessment

by Tom Horvath, Health & Safety Officer, UUP Oneonta

On August 3 Mr. John Van Raalte of the Occupational and Environmental Health Center of Eastern New York was on campus to conduct a third test on the air quality around the areas of the stream tunnels running between Netzer, IRC, and Schumacher buildings. This August test was requested by the UUP to confirm results from the follow-up test that was conducted on 27 January 2004. The original testing was conducted on 2 October 2003. We felt that the original follow-up test was done at a time that would not be easily comparable to the original testing (January is very different than October around here). An August sampling would be a better comparison. Also, summer months tend to represent a "worst possible case" scenario; molds would most likely be most problematic in warm humid summer months.

Air quality variables that were measured on all occasions included carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, relative humidity, and more importantly the amount of air-borne microbes (bacteria and fungi, i.e. mold spores).

Results from the August test were very good. They indicated that mold counts within the buildings were very low. We focused our attentions on the occupied areas adjacent to the tunnel entrances. In these areas, mold counts and other air quality variables were within the safe range. Although we will continue to be vigilant to the conditions within the tunnel and the possible effects on the surrounding occupied areas, at this time we find no reasons to be immediately concerned about the air quality in these building areas.

Labor-Management Minutes

By Rob Compton, Chapter Secretary

For UUP: Bill Simons, Rob Compton, Tom Horvath, Norm Payne, Dennis Selzner, and Ed Wesnofske

For Management: Alan Donovan, Carol Blazina, Dan Larkin, Nancy Nash, Steve Perry, and Tom Rathbone

I. Start of New Academic Year: Labor and Management welcomed each other and made a commitment to work together toward a successful year and both expressed commitment to the future of the college.

II. Budget Process and News

- A. Labor inquired about the progression of the budget and its impact on the college.
- B. Management notes that the budget for SUNY is complete and details along with the certificate of allocation was forthcoming.
 - 1. Some money was restored and other shifts made will make SUNY Oneonta's budget "good news"
 - 2. Unfortunately major statewide fiscal issues for next year and the end of the election season makes the future uncertain but we remain "cautiously optimistic".
- C. Management anticipates full funding for the allocation of the salary bill.
- D. Management stated that the Governor's line item veto of EOP would lead to a slight 5% operating cut.
- E. Management also noted that the Capital Budget calls for several enhancements including Fine Arts. Both Labor and Management agree that they will work for additional allocations.

III. Environmental Issues

- A. Labor thanked Management and in particular, Tom Rathbone, for keeping UUP informed about the College's physical plant and also expressed appreciation to Management for funding the third tunnel air quality test conducted in August 2004.
- B. Management noted that the environment in the tunnel was not as clean due to weather conditions so the tests were done when the air was potentially at its worst.
- C. Labor's Health and Safety Officer- Thomas Horvath- stated that, he too, examined the report of the air tests and concludes that the report suggests that the air passed the tests without problem. He also asks Management to forward the data from the appendix of the report, as his copy did not include them.
- D. Management agrees and Labor concurs that, for the time being, this issue is resolved.

IV. Labor Management Grants Committee

- A. Labor inquired about this year's procedures regarding grants.
- B. Management and Labor agree to create, as has been done in the past, a six-member committee with equal representation of both sides.
 - 1. Labor will pick three members and Management will do the same.
 - 2. The names will be exchanged in the future.
- C. Noting that grant funds are in route to the campus, Labor and Management agree to move as expeditiously as possible.

V. Memorandum Involving Honorarium from Human Resources Director

- A. Labor expressed concern about the wording and impact of the memorandum and stated that it has created confusion and numerous inquiries.
 - B. Management claimed that this is a directive from the State Ethics Commission and that the memo "has been sent out in the past years".
-

- C. Labor notes that greater clarification is needed.
 - 1. Does it apply to concerts?
 - 2. Directing of plays?
 - 3. Consulting?
 - 4. Lectures?
- D. Management notes that the primary concern is "conflict of interest" and that the memorandum does not state that these things cannot be done but rather there are limitations.
- E. Labor stated that we need clarification because members private time is their own. What members do on their own time is not management prerogative provided that it does not infringe upon professional obligations. Furthermore the last thing we need to do is to create an environment of fear where people call the State Ethics Commission for clarity.
- F. Management noted that the lack of clarity comes from the Commission itself and Management stated they are only communicating the language and not setting the policy. Management furthermore stated that they agree that "employees private time is their own."
- G. Management notes that the private activities of employees that do not present a conflict of interest is not a concern of the college administration.
- H. Labor and Management agree that the Director of Human Resources and other members of Management will meet with the UUP Chapter President and Labor Relations Specialist to further discuss this issue.

VI. Labor Day Observance

- A. Labor thanked President Donovan for facilitating the use of space in front of Netzer and Vice President Blazina for making the arrangements for tables and chairs.
- B. UUP displayed its Labor Day banner and noted the success of the Labor Day event
 - 1. Over 300 people attended and showed solidarity.
 - 2. People from the community dropped by and faculty from other campuses also attended.
 - 3. The event raised consciousness among our students that came by.
- C. Labor notes that this issue is critical and important not only members but also to the larger Labor Movement. Is it the heart and core of our purpose. What kind of Labor Union would not advocate strongly for Labor Day observance? We are not a paper union.
- D. Labor stated emphatically, "What can be done so we can honor Labor Day on this campus? Why are we having classes on Labor Day? This needs to be changed."
 - 1. Most New York colleges and universities have no classes on Labor Day.
 - 2. Other UUP chapters and Statewide UUP President William Scheurman support strongly our position on this issue.
- E. Management stated that the Calendar Committee voted not to support Labor Day observance.
- F. Labor reiterated their position from the last two meetings that the Calendar Committee is irrelevant. Its function is purely advisory to the President.
 - 1. UUP noted proper Labor Day observance was accomplished at a neighboring SUNY campus. That campus President charged their Calendar Committee to properly observe Labor Day.
- G. Labor stated that Labor Day will remain an important issue on the agenda and that this is an opportunity for both sides to work together constructively toward proper Labor Day observance.
- H. The dilemma began under a previous administration, but the opportunity to properly observe Labor Day exists through joint effort.

Meeting adjourned at 4:15pm


UUP-Oneonta

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Welcome Sheila Serbay: VOTE/ COPE Director

UUP Oneonta is proud to welcome Sheila Serbay as UUP Oneonta's new VOTE /COPE director. In her third year at SUCO, Sheila is an adjunct professor of Human Ecology and Psychology. She is an active participant in the College at Oneonta EOP program and the Otsego County Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association. Her teaching expertise encompasses issues dealing with women, family, aging, and drug abuse. As a former criminal investigator for narcotics and gambling in Westchester County as well as Judge in the town of Burlington, Sheila combines academic expertise with real life experience with the energy, expertise, and imagination to think outside of the box. Sheila will bring new visibility to VOTE/COPE.

UUP also thanks outgoing VOTE/COPE Director Linda Randall for her service. Linda significantly increased VOTE/COPE contributions, bringing dedication and professionalism to the position. Linda and Sheila are emblematic of the talent and commitment of UUP members.

Editor's Note:

Statements made in The Sentinel do not necessarily reflect the opinion of UUP or any of its statewide representatives. Please send ideas for stories, comments, etc. to Nancy Cannon, Editor

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