



James Ball holds the Pan-FEESP banner while Rick Bisailon tests the efficiency of the vent holes on a very windy May Day protest at Victoria Square. Special thanks to Stephane Russ and Jürgen Mueller for help in making the placards.

# CUSS words

vol.2 no.1 fall 1997



Concordia  
University  
Union of  
Support Staff  
Technical Sector - CSN

## Newsletter

### IN THIS ISSUE

- words from the prez
- words from the 2nd vp
- words from the editors
- info santé
- the casual tech's blues
- the old and the new
- salaries of Quebec rectors
- in memoriam

### EDITORS

- Judith Cezar, design
- François Cloutier, studio arts
  - Elaine Denis, studio arts
  - Andrzej Krysztofowicz, design
- editors of this issue

### CONTACT

andkry@vax2  
or VA - 227-4

when possible please send  
contributions in the form  
of articles in text format and graph-  
ics in TIFF or EPS format

## Words from the Prez

### On the Issue of Pension

The CSN is continuing research on 34 years of pension records. We want to know exactly where we stand before approaching the employer with a demand to negotiate.

Over the summer the 4 unions will try to meet with our advisors and lay out our strategies for September. We will coordinate our mobilisation efforts with the other unions where we can.

We hope to work closer with them in the areas of grievance, health and safety and on the pension issue.

Let's not lose sight of our first and most immediate concern: our own collective agreement remains unsigned.

On these and other issues we should all be prepared for an increase in activity over the fall. Our mobilisation committee will be trying to get more of you out for general assemblies and other activities.

Richard Bisailon

## Words from the 2nd VP

### On Inter-union Council

CUSS-TS sends two representatives to Inter-Union Council. One of these is the union's President who sits ex-officio, the other rep is elected to the position by a vote of the General Assembly.

Your second VP is at present the elected rep. Inter-Union Council is made up of seven unions representing 80% of university staff. Member unions agree to respect and abide by the council's social charter which outlines its goals, values and operating procedure.

Central to the philosophy of the Inter-Union Council are its belief in shared responsibility for the functioning

of the council, its belief in the value of an ongoing exchange of ideas and information between member unions, and its belief in the importance of the solidarity and concerted action that may grow out of these discussions.

This past year we met at least monthly. Inter-Union Council organized (with the cooperation of the Vice-Rector, Institutional Relations, Marcel Danis) a series of meetings with various university officers to address union concerns.

Meetings were held with, among others, Larry English, the University's chief financial planner, Jack Lightstone, Vice-Rector, Research, Christopher Jackson, Dean of Fine Arts. We also met with Mr. Danis in October and in June with Dr. Lowy to review the year.

continued on page 2

# Words from the Editors

Dear CUUSS Words readers!

It is with immense pleasure that we are bringing to you the fall edition of the revived Technicians Union Newsletter CUUSS Words.

You may remember reading CUUSS Words a while back when Neil Schwartzman's single-handed efforts produced four informative and amusing issues. Not being as brave as Neil, there are now four of us. Check out the photo below to see what a good looking bunch we are. We hope to serve you a menu of information and entertainment and produce an issue each season of every year. The every year part will be the most challenging.

We want CUUSS Words to mirror our Union well, that it be a source of information and a forum for all members.

Please flood us with your two cents worth, send us contributions in the form of articles, photos, poems or caricatures.

If you don't, we will have to make it all up, and it will not be your newsletter but rather, the ramblings of four desperate editors.

The newsletter policy was passed at last spring's general assembly so most of you are aware of what follows, but we thought it good to include it in the first issue anyway.

## CUUSS words POLICY

The newsletter is designed for and open to all members of the bargaining unit. It contains articles in both English and French as well as bilingual articles. Naturally, articles should never contain defamatory remarks about the employer or any other person. Personal attacks, settling of accounts, racism or sexism will not be tolerated in the CUUSS-TCN newsletter and articles covering issues on a constructive angle will be privileged. This said, our pages are open to all personal articles, comments or opinions on the above mentioned conditions.

Articles must be signed, and remain the responsibility of their authors and those signing them. The only articles endorsed by the union are official articles produced by a union decision-making body. The newsletter committee may ask for revisions to any contentious article. Should the case arise, nobody other than the person signing an article has the right to make changes to it, unless arrangements have been made by the parties. In extreme cases, the newsletter reserves the right to add a notice to any article expressing its total or partial disagreement with the contents.

Meant first and foremost as a political tool, the newsletter is, however, open to the greatest possible variety of topics.

Those who would like technical assistance can have a first draft edited. This implies however, that the original draft may be significantly altered in order to make our newsletter as accessible and pleasant to read as possible.

Finally, feedback from the readership in the form of letters to the editors is welcomed and encouraged.

Central to all these discussions were the question of job security, the need to settle and sign collective agreements, the need for adequate and appropriate representation of staff on the university's decision making bodies both at the departmental and the university-wide level, the need to improve conflict resolution practices within the university, and a host of other questions that flow from these core issues.

We are obviously far from satisfied with the results produced by these discussions. The university continues to be managed at small local levels that can and do undermine, evade and otherwise overturn agreements and resolutions arrived at with senior administration. Conflicts still drag on and on, collective agreements remain unsigned, changes in university structures and manpower continue to be made without genuine and effective consultation with those directly affected and their union representatives. Nevertheless, there have been some bright moments. At our meeting with Dr. Lowy much of all this was aired and assurances were given that people would be appointed and empowered to resolve at least some of these outstanding questions.

Inter-Union Council itself continues to meet and I believe we will see the council have recourse to other kinds of activities in order to promote its agenda. The recent successful Pan-FEESP meetings, which dealt with job security and with irregularities within the management and disbursement of the pension plan's surplus funds, are a result, at least in part, of the good inter-union working relations developed around the council table, where representatives of all Concordia's FEESP unions sit.

François-Xavier, Elaine, Judith and Anilze



Cuuss Words editors getting united at CUSS to produce the Union Newsletter. Jean Claude Gagnier, instructor and service worker is sitting in the center.

Zav Levinson





Demetre Kolokotronis demonstrates his unique style with the cue while Danielle Carter cleans up the table at the Union's spring pool party at Sharx. Danielle, who organized the event with Max DiBionto, entertained the tequila-soaked-hard core-partyers till the wee hours with her smooth signing.

## Info Santé par François-Xavier Cloutier

**Problèmes de Santé-Sécurité ou de conditions dangereuses?**  
**Appelez nous en français or in English!**

François-Xavier Cloutier : 4617, Michel Pelletier : 4651

1- Accidenté-e-s du travail. La loi vous reconnaît le droit à l'assistance du syndicat. Il est fortement recommandé de faire vérifier par le syndicat tout document avant de le signer. N'hésitez pas à communiquer avec nous, le plus tôt possible après un accident et ce chaque fois que vous recevez toute correspondance de la C.S.S.T. ou de l'employeur concernant votre lésion.

2- Besoin d'info sur a) retrait préventif (femme enceinte) démarche à suivre  
 b) réaffectation

3- Information sur les lois

- a) Loi sur les accidents du travail et les maladies professionnelles L.R.Q., chap. A-3.001 (août 95). Projet de loi no 74 (déc. 96).
- b) Loi sur la santé et la sécurité du travail L.R.Q., chap S-2.1. (mars 97)
- c) Règlement sur la qualité du milieu de travail S-2.1 r. 15 (juil. 92)
- d) Projet de loi no.79 Loi instituant la commission des lésions professionnelles et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives.

La CSN et la CSST disposent de centres de documentations, visitez leurs sites Internet pour plus d'information:

<http://www.csn.qc.ca> or <http://www.csst.qc.ca>

**Travailler pour gagner sa vie, pas pour la perdre...**

## The Casual Technician's Blues

by Elaine Denis

Last fall, a temporary technician worked 11 weeks before receiving a paycheck from the University. After nine weeks of trying to make ends meet without a salary, the staff member inquired about an advance. She was insistent enough that Human Resources finally gave her an advance which included a substantial deduction in income tax. **The Canada Labour Code stipulates that employees must receive wages to which they are entitled within 30 days of being entitled to the wages.**

The same technician, also had to wait two months before even receiving a letter confirming her employment with the University, a letter which included the statement "this appointment may be terminated on two weeks notice".

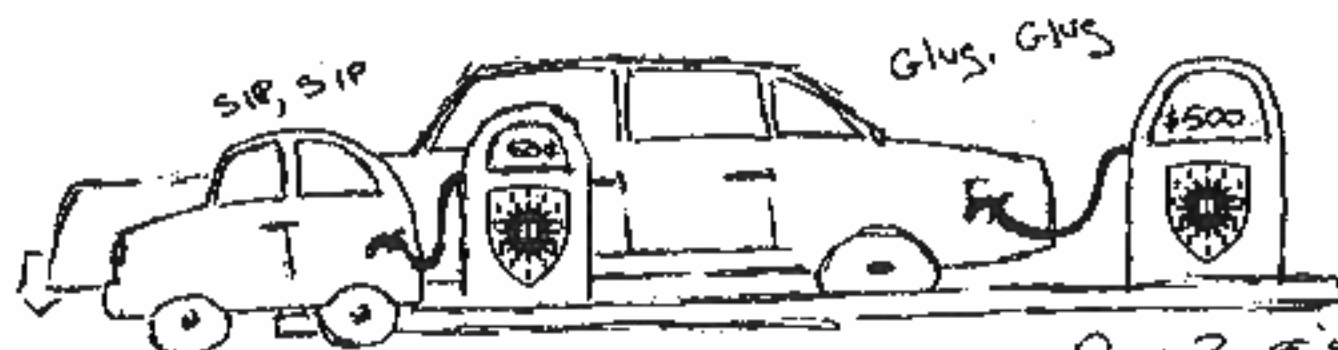
*continued on page 4*

Many temporary technicians are not new employees. They work on a seasonal basis and return year after year. Some have been around for more than eight years. The sort of treatment described above combined with precarious working

believe that they can't go up an echelon in the salary scale every June 1st because they do not acquire seniority at the same rate as full time employees do. It is true that part-time techs are entitled to the rights and advantages of the collective agreement on a pro-rated (per hours worked) basis only. However, additional pertinent education and relevant outside work experience

collective agreement protects them from discrimination for having exercised their rights. The temporary/seasonal technicians' best tools for improving their situation is to know their rights, to defend them and to work with the Union to improve the parts of the collective agreement that pertain to them.

### IF TECHNICIANS AND ADMINISTRATORS WERE AUTOMOBILES



Richard B. 97

Drawing by Richard B. 97

conditions have driven some extremely competent temporary technicians to leave Concordia.

To make matters worse, the contracts of seasonal techs frequently cover the University's calendar terms only, which saves the Employer money since the seasonals are not paid during the Christmas Holiday, a time when full-time permanent employees usually enjoy nine paid days off.

Another hurdle faced by seasonal technicians is that their salary increases are often not budgeted for at the departmental level. A frequent outcome is that departments cut the hours of work in proportion with the salary increases.

Many part-time technicians

experience can also result in a step up the salary scale. When they are not working at Concordia, part-time techs often work and/or study in their field. What they are not getting in seniority they may be making up in outside work experience or education. It is therefore important to document additional pertinent work experience and education, and to submit it for consideration before the salary scale echelon is determined, at the start of each new contract.

Casual employees may feel that lack of job security prevents them from expressing dissatisfaction with their situation but they should remember that their

### In Memoriam

Sadly we must inform all of you of the passing of

Gunars Cugurs.

Like many of us Gunars started his employment as a student and blessed us all with his wit and humour over the last 25 years. Audio Visual loses a friend and caring supporter to his coworkers. Our union will miss his support both as member, past Secretary to the Executive and Newsletter's Foreign Correspondent. Concordia loses a bit of its heart and conscience.

Crazed troll, court jester, gentle soul we'll miss you, journey well.

## SALARIES OF QUEBEC UNIVERSITY RECTORS

Name	Title	University	Salary	Enhanced Salary*
Bernard J. Shapiro	Principal	McGill	191 000\$	264 084\$
René Simard	Rector	Montréal	168 567\$	189 068\$
Frederick Lowy	Rector	Concordia	160 000\$	236 916\$
J. M. Toulouse	Director	HEC	51 925\$	173 687\$
Michel Gervais	Rector	Laval	51 445\$	168 519\$
Pierre Reid	Rector	Sherbrooke	126 801\$	181 150\$
Janyne Hodder	Principal	Bishop's	125 000\$	130 650\$
Claude Pichette	Gen. Director	IAF	115 487\$	140 022\$
Gilbert Dionne	Interim Rector	UQAM	115 451\$	141 121\$
Jacques Plamondon	Rector	UQTR	114 431\$	139 062\$
Alain Soucy	Gen. Director	INRS	114 358\$	154 935\$
Robert I. Papineau	Gen. Director	ETS	103 219\$	158 287\$

\* includes various advantages, allocations and expenses that were reimbursed

Information taken from La Presse March 11th, 1997 issue. The article was based on figures compiled by the Federation of Quebec University Students which reviewed the financial reports of the above mentioned institutions. Frederick Lowy responded to the article by stating that it did not paint an accurate portrait of his situation because the enhanced salary figure includes his relocation expenses.

## The Old & the new

by Elaine Denis

**What improvements does the new collective agreement show over the expired-but-still-in-effect-old collective agreement?**

Thanks to our negotiating committee when the ready-for-signing-new collective agreement finally does get signed we can look forward to several improved clauses.

**Reclassification Procedure:** It will be much easier to reclassify

because one will only need to prove that his/her position is a class I position in a second stage grievance. Right now, the old contract requires that one proves there has been a modification of duties within the 30 day period preceding a first stage grievance for reclassification.

**Improved Vacations:** When the new contract is in force, technicians having accumulated 21 or more years of service will be entitled to 25 vacation days, 3 more than what they now enjoy.

**Study Leave Delays:** With the current collective agreement, technicians wishing to take a

study leave must have 4 years of service under their belt and must make the request 6 months prior to the beginning of the leave. In the future collective agreement, they will be entitled to request a leave after two years of service and the request will need to be made only 4 months ahead of time.

**Deferred Salary Leave:** This is a new clause that allows technicians to take a paid leave lasting between 6 and 12 consecutive months. The leave is financed by a reduction of salary ranging from 10% to 33% over a 2 to 5 year period.

*continued on page 6*

**Harassment:** This is also a new clause. It defines harassment, sexual and non-sexual, and states that every employee is entitled to work in a climate that is free from harassment.

**Training:** The new contract will entrench the provincial government's *Act to Foster the Development of Manpower Training* which is in force since June 95. The act makes employers direct an amount equivalent to 1% of their payroll annually to a bank for training. The new article also insures that the establishment of priorities and the management of the grants for training are discussed and agreed to by the Labour Relations Committee. As things now stand, the 1% of our payroll may very well be used to fund sabbaticals for faculty members instead of the training needed by our members.

**Improved Definitions:** A definition for seasonal employees has been added and the description of temporary employees is much more specific, stating that a temporary employee is one who

- a) occupies a temporarily vacant position or
- b) is hired to handle a temporary increase in workload or unforeseen event that is non-renewable and lasts less than 20 weeks. If the duration of work exceeds 20 weeks, the position becomes permanent (unless a

written agreement has been made with the University). The position must then be posted and the temporary incumbent automatically becomes a candidate. If not hired, the candidate is laid off and put on a recall list.

When will technicians benefit from all these improved clauses? When the employer agrees to sign the new collective agree-

ment. There shouldn't be anything preventing this since all the normative clauses have been negotiated and agreed to.

When will the employer sign?  
When technicians make it  
clear to the employer that  
the  
time has come.

## CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY UNION OF SUPPORT STAFF **TECHNICAL SECTOR-CSN**

SYNDICAT DU PERSONEL DE SOUTIEN  
DE L'UNIVERSITE CONCORDIA  
**SECTEUR TECHNIQUE-CSN**



## **TECHNICIANS NEED A CONTRACT**