



Bermuda Public Services Union

FEEDBACK

"Onward and Upward Together!"

January 2012



Bro. Kevin Grant
BPSU President

Greetings Brothers and Sisters and Happy New Year,

Many of you may be contemplating if it will indeed be a "happy new year". However, I believe that although there may be a number of external factors that will have an impact on this upcoming year, as a union we must be prepared to collectively use effective resources and engage in meaningful dialogue in order to deal with the challenges that 2012 will bring.

As members of this great organization, we all at one point and time will be involved in conflict. In order to deal with this we use methods of conflict resolution. Some examples of conflict resolution that the BPSU engages in are grievance procedures, JCC meetings, collective bargaining, negotiations, mediation and arbitration. What we must consider as members and officers of BPSU are the factors that determine the effectiveness of the conflict resolution process.

The effectiveness of the conflict resolution process relies on a number of factors that may be considered positive or negative. Whether or not the disputing parties decide to engage or avoid each other will certainly set the tone for how the process is to take place. The desire for the disputing parties to collaborate, accommodate, and communicate with each other is imperative to the effectiveness of conflict resolution. Presentation and communication skills must be of a high degree as this will allow the parties to work towards a quick resolution. Having self-confidence is an important factor as well. One needs to feel confident in what they say and that the opposing party will take them seriously. Also to be considered are the expectations and the underlying interests of the parties involved because realizing what your opponent is after allows for the appropriate mode of collaboration to be conducted. Being able to determine the correct mode for the conflict will mean that the correct approach will be made by the parties involved during the negotiations, and this impact should be more positive than negative.

"Onward and Upward Together"

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Greetings,

On behalf of the Public Relations Committee, we hope your holiday season was a pleasant distraction from the day-to-day activities of the work environment. As we look back on 2011, we are proud to say we accomplished our goal of keeping the membership more informed as part of the mandate of our Executive.

However, going forward in 2012, we know there is still work to be done. We are committed to providing added information to assist in helping you to navigate the predicted trying times ahead. We will continue to supply information on the Collective Bargaining Agreements. Based on reports that members are not apt in this area. As members you must realize that this is your work bible.

We also want to encourage more of you to submit articles as this is your publication. Your ideas are welcomed. In fact, they are necessary for the growth of our Union.

You often hear me say, "knowledge is power", it is a motto I believe will sustain us all as we prepare for another difficult year ahead. We will do our best to give you the knowledge you need to maintain your power.

Peace

Sis. Linda Mienzer
Chairperson
PR Committee



Happy New Year to ALL

I predict that 2012 will be a very difficult year for labour relations in Bermuda. Employers are still suffering financial hardship from the economic recession causing them to try to make their operations more efficient. This, more times than less, prompts employers to make adjustments to their human resources which can consist

of layoffs, redundancies, shorter working hours or pay freezes.

The Union fully understands the economic conditions employers face. However, employers must understand that the Union's aim is to keep workers employed. We understand that an employer's mandate is different from ours, which means that adequate dialogue is needed between the two parties. Most times labour disputes arise not because of what employers do, but how they do it.

If employers come to the table with 'wishy-washy' bargaining tactics, stubborn and hell bent on doing things their way, then they can expect resistance at the table. The time for games are over, employers need to begin to work with unions so that we can get out of this mess together. We understand that economic stability for the country and its businesses provide a better work environment for all employees, and that is what we will strive for. Employers who have chosen to work with the union have been able to find creative ways to avoid redundancies, while cutting cost within their organizations.

Employees also need to understand that the time for large wage increases and extra benefits are over for now. History reflects that those days will come back again. However, we should show unity, as it is very difficult being unemployed in these times. If we can weather this storm, then the rain will bring sun.

I hope that 2012 is filled with less labour disputes and more dialogue.

In Solidarity,

Bro Jason Hayward
1st Vice President BPSU



I am 65, now what!!!

If you plan to retire from the Civil Service this year then you must read Section 22 (2) of the Public Service Superannuation Act 1981.

Government employees may be allowed to remain in Government employment beyond the mandatory retirement age of 65 years.

Provided that having regard to the conditions of the public service, the usefulness of a Civil Servant, and all other circumstances of the case, it is desirable in the public interest that the service of any Civil Servant who has attained the age of 65 to be retained, the Act gives the authority to the Secretary to the Cabinet/ Head of Civil Service to permit the officer to continue in the public service until a later age, not exceeding the age of seventy years. Further, if the Secretary to the Cabinet were to accede to the employee's request he must have a copy of a medical certificate from a medical practitioner attesting to the employee's good health.

However, Civil Servants who have recently reached the mandatory age of 65 years and requested to continue working, have run into some unexpected road blocks.

So what is driving this apparent stringent application of the law? Obviously the state of Bermuda's economy and Government's cost savings policies are at the forefront. Another reason is the concern about the possible upward mobility for current officers or hiring opportunities for unemployed Bermudians. Whatever the reason, future retirees should also prepare a backup plan in lieu of continued employment within the Civil Service.

It is worth noting that Government's approach is not widely practiced by other quasi-government agencies. It appears that there is a need to keep skilled Bermudian employees past the age of 65 as there are no clear succession plans in place.

Know Your Rights!



So if you are anticipating continuing your employment within the Civil Service past the age of 65, have your Department Head apply early; attempt to see if other Quangos could use your expertise or see if you can be employed in the private sector. Or you can just enjoy being a retired worker. Either way, early preparation is the key.

Bro. Edward Ball Jr.
General Secretary

Nadine Browne-Evans Pushá, B.A., M.Ed. Admin.



BPSU

Assistant Recording Secretary

Community Education and Development Programme Western Area Coordinator

Former Whitney Institute Middle School Teacher

Past & Present Union Experience

- Shop Steward (since 2006)
- Education Committee Member
- CPSA Education Committee Member
- CPSA Conference Observer 2011
- Former Division 7 Assistant Chairperson
- Former Future Leaders' Committee Member

Past & Present Community Involvement

- Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Social Action Chair
- The Devonshire Recreation Club, Inc., Secretary
- Former Cure Commissioner
- Former Foster Parent

"Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life, and not something you do in your spare time." Marian Wright Edleman



BPSU Future Leaders Soup Run

The BPSU Future Leaders' Committee continued their partnership with the Salvation Army by kicking off the New Year providing soup and sandwiches to those members in the community who were in need of a meal. The Futures Leaders currently have an annual six-month partnership with the Salvation Army. Members of the Committee took to the city streets on 7th January, distributing soup and sandwiches to the needy. Committee members find the experience to be very rewarding and are looking forward to the next scheduled run.

There is Value in Every Job!



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**RETIREES' COMMITTEE
LUNCHEON
WEDNESDAY, 15TH FEBRUARY
8:30 AM - 8:30 PM**

**BASIC SHOP STEWARDS'
WORKSHOP
1 - 2 MARCH**

**INTERMEDIATE SHOP
STEWARDS' WORKSHOP
29 - 30 MARCH**

**ADVANCED SHOP
STEWARDS' WORKSHOP
3 - 4 MAY**

CONGRATULATIONS!



Sis. Estlyn D. Harvey
Queen's New Year's Honors
2012 Queen's Certificate

Sis. Estlyn Harvey, Bermuda's first woman Health Inspector, was awarded for many decades of service. As Senior and then Chief Environmental Health Officer, Ms Harvey advocated important legislation for healthy workplaces. She serves on the Board of Education, and is Deputy Chair of both the Consumer Affairs Board and Age Concern Board.

Date: Saturday, 21st January 2012
Time: 2 pm - 5 pm

**BPSU's
Annual Children's
Party**

VENUE: Bermuda College

- * Food
- * DJ Pepe
- * Face Painting
- * Games
- * Fun for all Ages!
- * Surprise Guest!

CONGRATULATIONS!



Sis. Y. Johanne Talbot, CAP

Sis. Johanne Talbot recently attained the designation of Certified Administrative Professional (CAP). The Certified Administrative Professional rating is the industry recognized standard of proficiency.

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

- Sis. Linda Mienzer
- Sis. Thelma Hart JP
- Sis. Susan Hill-Davidson
- Sis. Annette Harvey
- Sis. Sonya Fox
- Sis. Jodi Simmons



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