



ATLANTIC NEWS

YOUR PIPSC ATLANTIC REGIONAL NEWSLETTER

Fall/Winter 2017

From the Director...

Season's Greetings. It is time to reflect on the past year and have a look at our accomplishments. This newsletter highlights some of our activities in the past few months. I commend our stewards, who have gone above and beyond in assisting members with their pay issues surrounding the Phoenix system. This one issue is causing many problems for our members and causing added work and increased stress for our stewards. The Institute has recently released a Kit to assist stewards when dealing with Phoenix pay issues. Sadly, it does appear this is going to be an ongoing issue for a very long period of time. Any pay issue, no matter how small it may seem to you, should be brought to the attention of a steward or the regional office. The more we document the problems, the better we will be able to get the problems resolved.

the Regional Office until the AGM next year. Thank you to everyone in the region that donated to the Legacy Fund, it will make a difference for one of our own next year.

Heading into the 2018, some of the same challenges will be present and I am sure there will be new ones that come along. There will be new initiatives that the union will be tackling, training being a big one.

Remember that your union is always available to assist or sometimes just listen, do not hesitate to get in contact. Wishing all members health and happiness in the New Year.

*In solidarity,
Kimberley Skanes, Atlantic Regional Director*

St. John's Branch – C-27 Presentation

Branch President, Carolyn Hynes

The St. John's Branch hosted a C-27 Lunch and Learn event October 17, 2017, with guest speakers Kim Skanes, Atlantic Director, and Greg Scriver, NCR Director. Greg provided valuable information on the implications of C-27 for Canadians. The members were engaged, asking questions and providing solutions. One solution presented was to not look at cutting pension but, to increase pension contributions to ensure the plan is sustainable in the future.

The past few weeks has brought the pensions issue forward in the media with questions concerning Finance Minister's Morneau Shepell's holdings in



Kimberley Skanes receiving the Legacy Cup

The Atlantic Region has been victorious and has brought the Legacy Cup back to the Atlantic from this year's AGM. This will mean an additional scholarship to the Atlantic Region when they are awarded next year. The Cup will be on display at

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his family's pension consulting firm. While we hope these revelations along with the renewed debate about the Bill will entice the government to STOP C-27, we encourage members to keep the pressure on and bombard the PM, Finance Minister, and MP's offices with STOP C-27 post cards.

Atlantic Steward Council

The Atlantic Regional Steward Council was held October 20-21 in Halifax at the Delta Halifax. Friday afternoon's session was Representing Member's with Challenging Issues followed by the Group Breakouts.

Saturday morning sessions included new stewards with Vice President Steve Hindle and Regional Director Kim Skanes while other stewards participated in Current Case Law and Trends where Employment Relations Officers Paul Hartigan and Max Way discussed recent decisions by the Public Service Labour Relations Employment Board. Vice President Hindle addressed the stewards followed by a question and answer period. Just before lunch, Institute Scholarship Award Recipients from the Atlantic Region were recognized.

The afternoon began with a presentation from Kim Skanes, Chairperson of the National Training and Education Committee outlining the PIPSC initiative to overhaul training and education. Rounding out the Steward Council was an engaging presentation from guest speaker Zac Crouse entitled Mental Illness – Stop Being Weird About It.

Donation to Laing House

At the Atlantic Regional Steward Council, the Regional Executive sold tickets on wireless headphones. Funds raised were donated to Laing House. Laing House is a drop-in centre for youth aged 16 – 29 living with a mood disorder, psychosis

and/or anxiety disorders. Based on peer support, members can meet friends who have gone through similar experiences and support each other as they find wellness. Programming includes art, meals, education and employment support, camping, music and more. With satellite groups in Yarmouth and Sackville, Laing House is extending our reach across NS. They also offer a support group for families.



Kimberley Skanes presented a donation to Renée Spiteri, Fund Development Coordinator and Laing House member Ben

Positive Space Initiative

Tracy Mitchell (Halifax DND Branch)

In July of 2016, Base Commander Captain(N) Chris Sutherland, approved the establishment of a working group in CFB Halifax to administer and promote the Positive Space Initiative. CFB Halifax is the first CF Base to do so. The purpose of Positive Space is to enhance the work experience of all employees by creating a safer, more tolerant, and open-minded environment. The Initiative engages and trains volunteers to become Champions in the workplace who promote diversity and awareness of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and two spirit (LGBTQ2+) community.

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The working group consists of military and civilian volunteers who are committed to improving the workplace for all Halifax Defense Team members. This fledgling but enthusiastic group can already boast of several achievements. This past summer, members joined the Navy crowd with Rear-Admiral John Newton in the Halifax Pride Parade toting a Positive Space banner. In October 2016, two members traveled to Ottawa to attend a Federal Public Service interdepartmental workshop for Positive Space Trainers. The group has already begun to recruit and train Positive Space Champions. The group charter was signed on December 8th by the executive members and Senior Leadership. The charter, which was derived from the Defense Advisory Group charters, provides the group with a clearly specified purpose and mission.



Diversity and inclusion are essential for building a modern and high-performing workforce. While much progress has been made with diversity and inclusion in the federal public service, the primary focus has been on the four employment equity groups. Members of the LGBTQ2+ community face specific and unique challenges in the workplace where heteronormative attitudes and thinking continue to exist. The Positive Space Initiative fulfills a need for a community that has for many years been overlooked and gone unnoticed and the members of the CFB Halifax Positive Space Initiative are proud to lead the way in DND.

The Positive Space Champion Training is open to all DND personnel. I have taken it myself and recommend it to all DND Stewards. Anyone interested in it should send an email to: P-HFXPSSC@INTER.MIL.CA.

Awards to Atlantic Region Activists

During the Friday night banquet at the Atlantic Steward Council the Region recognized several activists who have contributed greatly to the Atlantic Region and to the Institute as a whole. We are fortunate in Atlantic to have strong, hardworking activists fighting for better conditions for our members.



Steward Service Pins were awarded to a number of stewards. The Training and Education Committee has created this award to highlight the number of years stewards have given to the Institute. The pins are awarded in five (5) year increments.

Kimberley Skanes and Carolyn Hynes present a 25 Year Pin to Steward Duncan Fraser

This year Fay Cormier was recognized as Steward of the Year. An Institute steward for five years, Fay is a Medical Adjudicator (MA) with ESDC. Changes in management/work load/and staff over the years have resulted in increased challenges among the MAs. Fay has responded to all issues in a professional and confidential manner. Fay is actively involved and listens to complaints from members. Ensuring she has the necessary information required for the grievance process is paramount. Many issues have been resolved with Fay's ethical and competent approach. Fay is knowledgeable in all aspects of the collective agreement, PIPSC activities, and is involved in the SH Group as well as the Halifax Branch.

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Kimberley Skanes and Steward of the Year Fay Cormier

Scott McConaghy is the recipient of an Institute Service Award. Scott's involvement extends from his Branch, Region, Sub Group, Group to the National Level. A steward for over 20 years, a long time member of the Regional Executive, Bylaws and Policies Committee and Chair of the Elections Committee. Scott has served as parliamentarian as well as the Chair of the PIPSC AGM. Scott's easy going manner, encouraging and supportive demeanour and ability to bring his experience and wisdom to address PIPSC issues, make him a deserving recipient of the award.

Patrick Kinnear is a humanitarian and unionist. He is a man who stands by his principles and provides wise and caring leadership in the roles he lends his time to. PIPSC has been most fortunate to be the recipient of his passion, time and talents. The Institute has awarded retired member Pat Kinnear the Life Membership Award. Pat has always risen to the top of any group he serves. This speaks to his organizational abilities and his ability to collaborate and get along with others. Pat's good nature and gentle spirit make it a pleasure to work with him. Pat respects PIPSC as an organization, its members, elected officials and staff. His longstanding involvement in PIPSC activities is indicative of an individual who places service above self. In view of his continuous and distinguished contribution to PIPSC, Patrick is a worthy recipient of the Life Membership Award.



Life Membership Award winner Patrick Kinnear with Regional Director Kimberley Skanes



PIPSC Service Award winner Scott McConaghy and Kimberley Skanes

Fall Training

The Atlantic Region hosted two training events this fall. The first was Basic Steward Training held September 21-23 in Moncton, NB at the Delta Beauséjour. Nineteen new stewards were trained and now are the eyes and ears of the Institute in their offices. The second was a first ever training event specifically designed for the New Brunswick Groups. The NB Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) training was held in Moncton at the Delta Beauséjour.

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The Atlantic Regional Executive thanks all participants at both training sessions as well as the Atlantic Regional office staff who prepared and facilitated the training.



New Brunswick OHS Training Participants

Lunch and Learn What Your Union Can Do For You?

The SH, CS, and AV (newly formed) Sub Groups hosted a Family Skating engagement event on Monday, November 13. We had approximately 100 participants, our largest engagement event to date. Coincidentally, as this event was held on the Remembrance Day holiday and The International Day of Kindness. Participants were encouraged to wear something RED or don a Poppy in memory of those who served and died in the armed forces. As this day provided us with a reason to focus on kindness and to pay it forward, we asked that families please bring gently used clothing or new personal care items to donate to the Women's Centre.

We enjoyed skating, face painting, and a few snacks while learning what PIPSC can do for our members. The children even got involved in our quiz and as one child answered when asked, "What are 10 things PIPSC does for you?" He responded, "You invite us to fun events."



Bonnie O'Rourke, Steve Dillon, Carolyn Hynes and Lucille Shears

PIPSC 98th AGM

The 98th annual PIPSC Annual General Meeting, the supreme governing body of the Institute was held at the Hilton Lac Leamy, November 17-18, 2017.

The night prior to the start of the AGM, the Atlantic Region delegates attended a meeting to review the AGM resolutions and the position of the Atlantic Regional Executive on each one.

The AGM, co-chaired by our very own Marilyn Best, began Friday morning with guest speaker Alex Himelfarb, former clerk of the Privy Council who noted the contributions public servants make for the common good. President Debi Daviau gave the President's address and took questions from the delegates. We ended the morning and began the afternoon with the Steward of the Year presentations. Starting on Friday afternoon debate began on the 70 plus resolutions submitted to the AGM. On Saturday the debating of the resolutions continued until the motion for adjournment in the evening.

Overall, it was an eventful and interesting AGM.

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