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WHEELER FOLLOWS HER LETTER WITH A SONG

Last week I featured a letter written by local business owner Laura Wheeler. The engagement with that letter, according to my site analytics and metrics, was nothing short of impressive, with people from all over the place reading it and then sharing it.

I've also seen feedback from Facebook that indicates the letter not only reached a large audience, but at the same time generated many positive comments as feedback. The fact that the letter was posted to the OPSEU Local 472 Facebook page also gave it some traction online, and again, nothing but positive commentary.

From what I understand, Laura doesn't have a dog in this fight directly, in that she doesn't have a preferred team that she cheers for with respect to management or the union. Her audience, as she shared with me, are the families that are significantly affected by a work stoppage going on fourteen weeks, or at least so I think because I've simply lost count.

Laura provided a work opportunity for one of the clients of *Community Living Renfrew County South*. They had a good thing going before the strike changed everything. The client, who had thrived under her supervision prior to the labour dispute, began to show regression as her routine was upset by the strike, to be followed by significant regression as the strike dragged on.



Sadly, that client is no longer under the workplace supervision of Laura Wheeler. Disrupted routines have led to the client being distraught, causing work routines to be disrupted as well. Disrupted to the point where Wheeler had to make the difficult decision to step away from the work placement for this client, a decision involving considerable heartbreak, both for Wheeler and the client's family.

Just one example of the significant collateral damage this whole silly exercise has brought about.

Once drawn into the situation through her letter, it appears Wheeler is intent on advocating for client and client families in any way that she can, and recently she demonstrated that commitment by digging into her creative side and releasing a song entitled **"Who Speaks For Us?"**

The song is an emotional representation of the situation clients and their families are facing, have faced, and likely will continue to face as the calendar changes over to autumn and more weeks are added to a labour dispute that a lot of people, well-meaning and smart people, feel there was no need for in the first place.

And so while management and the union go through the textbook approach of posturing and counter-posturing, clients face days that are totally different from the days they once had

when they had their regular workers around. And these new days are dark ones, lonely ones, isolated ones.

And the families despair while bright minds on either side fancy themselves as chess masters in the high art of labour dispute strategy. To the point that, for either side, prolonging the strike might just be a sound strategic position to take. But for clients and their families, what might be sound strategy for others only traps their adult children in the darkness of despair.

Late last week, Laura Wheeler pushed her creativity forward to advance another line of communication regarding the impact of the work stoppage, this time in the form of a song.

Songs, of course, have the ability to energize, to entertain, to tell stories, and all the rest of it. But more than anything else, they tell the same story, and describe the same plight, in a format that tends to be more emotional than just the written word. People read stories constructed of words. But they absolutely absorb those same stories if they're presented in music, and an emotional response is generated that mere writing can't really compete with.

There's no doubt about the fact that a certain degree of artificial intelligence was involved in the creation of the song. Otherwise, Wheeler would be a recording artist on the road to superstardom. But the thing about Ai is that it's dependant upon the text inputs you provide. So a quality piece of output is directly linked to a quality effort at input.

Garbage in - garbage out, as the saying goes. I guess we can sort of flip that on it's head and go ahead and say that *quality in - quality out* also works as a half-decent saying. In other words, your finished product is directly related to what you put into the Ai cruncher.

Laura Wheeler is deeply concerned over the effect this strike has had on a vulnerable population. She's not here to take sides, but rather she's here to cast light on the plight of the innocents who have had their lives turned upside down. She's also a clarion call for the dangers that long work stoppages can have on the long-fought for, and hard- fought for gains clients have made, only to witness first-hand the degradation of client wellness.

I'm not as creative as Laura Wheeler is. In fact, I had no idea that you could just walk in and create your own song, never-mind one that resonates so well.

But the song is deeply relevant. And its definitely worth having a listen to.

To Laura Wheeler, there are a lot of folks out there that are hurting.

And they're worth fighting for.

<https://suno.com/s/o4druN9knP8NGGIM>