



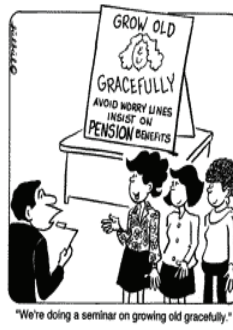
USW
Local 4120
 Room 451
 University Centre
 University of
 Guelph
 Phone: 519-824-4120 x58911
 Fax: 519-767-6660

Bargaining

Bargaining Committee Elections

Nominations for the Bargaining Committee for the 2011 round of negotiations took place in January 2010. The Executive Committee appointed Wendy Morley, President and Liz Cherry, Vice-President and Alan Miller, Financial Officer to the Committee.

Nine members were nominated and had the opportunity to make a presentation at the Membership meeting on 27 January. An election was held on 24 February. Members cast their votes for who they wanted to have represent them at the bargaining table. See page nine for the members elected. A bargaining survey subcommittee has been struck and the first part of the survey has been circulated. It is important that you complete the surveys to ensure that your voice is taken into consideration at the bargaining table.



Pension Training

In preparation for the upcoming negotiations in May 2011, the Bargaining Committee underwent training on pensions on 2 June. Alex McKinnon from the USW National Office's Research Department delivered the training. As pensions are an issue for all bargaining groups on-campus, Local 4120 extended an invitation to representatives of other Bargaining Groups and representatives from PSA, Exempt, and Police

Inside this issue:

Bargaining	1
Contract Action Team (CAT)	1
President's Report	2 & 3
Public Sector Compensation Freeze	4 & 5
National Policy Conference	6
University Sector Forum Workshop	7
SOAR	8
Meet your Bargaining Committee	9
District 6 Policy Conference	10&11
Sears Canada Lockout	12

Contract Action Team (CAT)



Are you interested in becoming a member of the Contract Action Team (CAT) ?

Please contact the office at x58911 or email: admin@uswa4120.ca

President's Report

There is an old saying -- "may you live in interesting times". This saying is often viewed as a curse that will bring about upheaval. But sometimes difficult times are the most interesting and in the end, can be quite rewarding. They challenge us and occasionally they can even bring out the best in us. The times we are living in are certainly interesting and we can expect them to be for some time yet.

As you are likely aware, the provincial government has implemented a compensation freeze on the non-unionized workers in the broader public sector, including universities. They have drafted a policy asking the unionized workers to willingly accept a similar freeze when they bargain, although it has not been legislated.

This freeze for university employees will have no effect on the provincial coffers or debt so, the logic behind the government's policy is unclear. Our union has been working closely with the Ontario Federation of Labour and other unions to try to determine what the government really wants to achieve and to propose alternatives that would not have the same negative impact on the workers.

At the same time the Ontario government is asking us to accept a compensation freeze, they are also proposing to amend the *Pension Benefits Act* to provide universities with pension solvency relief, by temporarily exempting them from regular solvency expectations.

According to pension regulations, at least once every three years, pension plans in Ontario are required to file an actuarial valuation of the plan with the Financial Service Commission. Two types of valuation are required: a "going concern valuation" which assumes



that the plan will continue to operate well into the future; and a "solvency valuation" which is a valuation of the liabilities under the plan should the sponsor go out of "business" and the plan be wound up. If the valuation reveals an unfunded liability, the plan sponsor must make additional payments into the plan. Under current rules, the sponsor must pay down a solvency unfunded liability over 5 years.

The pension relief the government is planning for university pensions will be provided in two stages. The first stage will provide universities with a three year temporary relief period. Universities that are eligible to participate and that request it will be given 6 months extension to report their valuations. They must then submit a plan to the Ministry of Finance outlining how they will restructure their pension plans and if their plan is acceptable to the pension regulators, the university will be granted a three year window in which they would fund on a going concern basis (which could be no less than the interest payments on the solvency deficit). During this three year window, the employer would have to share the plan with the various bargaining groups, and then negotiate the changes. Pension Plans that demonstrated sufficient steps to sustainability

according to the government's proposed metrics would be allowed to enter stage two. The second stage will be a 10 year extended amortization period for existing solvency deficiencies. During both phases, there would be limits on contribution holidays and any benefit improvements would have to be pre-funded. At the end of stage two, plans that did not meet the obligations would fall back under the present solvency funding rules of 5 year funding.

Unfortunately, the metrics the government has set out for pension restructuring plans that would be eligible for solvency relief simply shifts the cost of maintaining the pension plan to the workers rather than ensuring sustainability, as they have claimed to be the purpose.

The metric for acceptable sustainability plans is

- Has the proportion of the normal cost of benefits paid by the employer decreased?
- Has the 50/50 normal cost sharing between employees and the employer been adopted?
- Have a combination of reductions in future benefits costs and increases in member contributions achieved a reduction in the cost to the employer commensurate with the average shortfall in either the solvency or going concern basis (whichever shortfall is greater) over a multi-year period?
- Has the plan converted to joint-sponsorship for future service?
- Has the plan converted to defined contribution benefits for future service?

President's Report (Continued)

Plans would be required to achieve A &(B or C) or D or E.

This plan, like the compensation freeze, is not legislated. Both wages and pensions are negotiated in collective bargaining. And like the compensation freeze, there are alternatives that could strengthen the sustainability of our pension plan without a negative impact on our members.

These are interesting times for our local, with many challenges coming our way. The Steelworkers research department has been working closely with our local and with Local 1998 at the University of Toronto to help us prepare for the challenges ahead.

Local News

Long Term Disability (LTD)

In 2006, a member who had multiple problems applied for but was denied long term disability. An appeal was filed, without success. In consultations between the union, the member and the member's doctor, it was decided assessment by a specialist could be helpful to the case. A report supporting the disability was sent from the specialist to Sun Life, to no avail.

At that point, the union began discussing the case and putting pressure on the university to intervene with Sun Life on our member's behalf.



The member continued to be unable to work, a point to which her doctor attested and with which the university concurred, however, they were hesitant to “interfere” with Sun Life’s decision making. The level of disability continued to increase and the university claimed that even if the member’s doctor deemed her fit to work, the university would not accept it because she was simply “too disabled” to be able to function on the job. We filed a grievance and continued to push the university in this very frustrating and sad case.

After several years and multiple medical reports and discussions we had with Sun Life and the university, the LTD claim was finally allowed in August of this year and is retroactive to the date sick leave expired.

WSIB - Occupational Disease

Occupational diseases often develop over many months or years, depending on the intensity and circumstances of exposure.

Occupational diseases are often overlooked or misdiagnosed but are more common than is generally realized.

During a discussion a little over a year ago with a member who had worked in Crop Science for many years and who was on LTD, some information was shared that made us wonder if his disease could be related to his work. Occupational disease cases are very difficult to prove so, with the assistance of the union and our referral, our member was assessed by an occupational health clinic. They determined the type of cancer he had developed was from his exposure to various chemical compounds in the workplace and was work related. A WSIB claim was filed and was successful. While this is good news for his family, unfortunately, our member passed away before WSIB made their decision. As a result of the successful WSIB claim, the family will receive compensation and survivor benefits.

Bargaining News from other Universities

University of Toronto. On October 12, 2010, Arbitrator Martin Teplitsky released his decision in the interest arbitration between the UoT and the Faculty Association. Despite the Ontario Governments attempt to impose a two year 0% -0% mandate on public sector contracts, the arbitrator awarded a two year salary increase that is not less than 2.25%.

CAW Local 195 members at the **University of Windsor** ratified a new collective agreement. President Gerry Farnham reports the agreement has no concessions and increases which include lump sum payments in the first and second year and a three per cent wage increase in the third year with improvements to benefits and language.

USW Update for University of Guelph Staff

Public-Sector Compensation Freeze

By Erin Weir, United Steelworkers' Research Department, Canadian National Office

Is Your Compensation Frozen?

The last provincial budget (March 25, 2010) proposed a two-year compensation freeze for Ontario's broader public sector. This proposal is not limited to employees of the provincial government. The broader public sector also encompasses institutions that receive provincial funding, including the University of Guelph.

However, the legislation (Bill 16) enacted by the Ontario government freezes compensation only for employees outside of bargaining units.

"Because you are a member of the United Steelworkers union (USW), your compensation was not frozen"

Employees with collective representation are exempt from this legislation. Because you are a member of the United Steelworkers union (USW), your compensation was not frozen.

Indeed, your wages increased by 3% on May 1, 2010, as negotiated in our collective agreement with the U of G.

What Does the Government Want?

While the Ontario government has not legislated a compensation freeze for unionized workers, it is asking unions in the broader public sector to voluntarily negotiate two-year freezes as existing collective agreements expire. Since USW's collective agreement with the U of G expires on April 30, 2011, a two-year freeze would prevent monetary improvements until May 1, 2013.

Despite some initial confusion, the government has clarified that it is not trying to freeze normal progression through existing pay grids. Under the government's proposal, U of G staff would continue to receive step increases until they reach the top of the grid.

With the exception of step increases, the proposed freeze would apply to wages, the pension plan, other benefits and paid time off. Under this framework, the union could

negotiate a wage increase only by sacrificing benefits or vacation of an equivalent value. The union could improve benefits or vacation only by reducing wages.

Can the Government Enforce a Freeze?

University employees do not bargain with the provincial government, but with university administrators. To pressure administrators to negotiate a freeze, the government has threatened to not provide funding for any compensation increases beyond existing collective agreements.

However, it is unclear how this threat could be carried out. Provincial transfers to universities are not based on compensation costs. U of G receives a block grant based on the number of students enrolled plus some additional funding for specific research and capital projects. There is no envelope of provincial money for U of G staff compensation that could be frozen.

Public-Sector Compensation Freeze (continued)

Can the U of G Afford Improvements?

In any case, provincial operating grants to the U of G have already been flat for several years. However, these grants account for only half of the U of G's operating budget.

The other half comes from revenue sources that are growing: tuition fees, endowment funds, etc. Even if provincial transfers do not increase, the U of G can use other revenues to improve staff compensation.

Pay Freeze or Pay Cut?

The government is proposing a compensation freeze while it and the U of G administration are also suggesting higher employee contributions to the pension plan. If wages remain constant but pension contributions rise, your take-home pay would fall. The Ontario Ministry of Finance states, "It is not appropriate to increase compensation to offset an increase in the rate of employee contributions to the cost of pension or group benefits."

With the HST being charged on more consumer purchases, Ontario's annual inflation rate rose to 2.9% in July 2010. Your 3% annual wage increase was just enough to keep pace with rising prices. Frozen wages would mean a pay cut, relative to inflation.

Are You Already Overpaid?

The Ontario government argues that public-sector workers should accept a freeze because they have previously enjoyed excessive pay increases. In fact, since the last recession in the early 1990s, wages in Ontario's public sector have lagged behind both private-sector wages and inflation.

In recent years, public employees began to catch up. The government focuses on these last few years to claim that wages are rising faster in the public sector than in the private sector.

Public-sector pay increases did not cause the current recession or the provincial deficit. On the contrary, over the past three decades, wages and salaries in Ontario's broader public sector have steadily decreased from over 50 percent to below 40 percent of total provincial spending.

Where is the Money Going?

The government is slashing the provincial corporate income tax rate from 14 to 10 percent. Ontario's Ministry of Finance projects that this cut will reduce annual revenues by \$2.4 billion.

The government also recently gave up \$1.6 billion per year by eliminating the provincial corporate capital tax and will give businesses \$4.5 billion per year of input tax credits through the HST. By comparison, total provincial funding to the U of G is just \$0.3 billion per year.

A compensation freeze in conjunction with deep corporate tax cuts will not address the budget deficit or support public services. The money taken away from public-sector workers will be given to profitable corporations. In fact, discretionary corporate tax breaks will reduce provincial revenues by far more than a compensation freeze could conceivably reduce provincial expenditures.

Cancelling some of these tax breaks would remove the supposed financial need for the freeze.

What is Your Union Doing?

USW will propose compensation improvements and conduct normal collective bargaining with the U of G when our current agreement expires next year. We will not agree to a compensation freeze in advance, as the Ontario government has requested.

USW will propose compensation improvements and conduct normal collective bargaining with the U of G when our current agreement expires next year.

However, the union is always willing to engage with the government. In particular, we would welcome the opportunity to propose fiscal alternatives that would save more money than a compensation freeze.

The government began consulting with some unions about the proposed compensation freeze on August 9 and scheduled consultations with us starting on August 30. However, the government delayed our consultations until October 6.

USW will continue working with other unions through the Ontario Federation of Labour as well as with faculty and student associations through the Ontario University Coalition. These alliances are helping to keep us informed about the government's consultation process and coordinate responses to the government's position.

USW National Policy Conference

USW National Policy Conference April 27th – 29th, 2010

Delegates from Local 4120 were Liz Cherry, Judy L. Kerr and Wendy Morley.

Women of Steel and Youth delegates rose to the occasion and stepped up to the microphones to have their voices heard regarding the various resolutions that had been brought forward to the conference.



Lawrence Hay, Nancy Hutchinson, Wendy Morley & Liz Cherry attend the Rally in Toronto

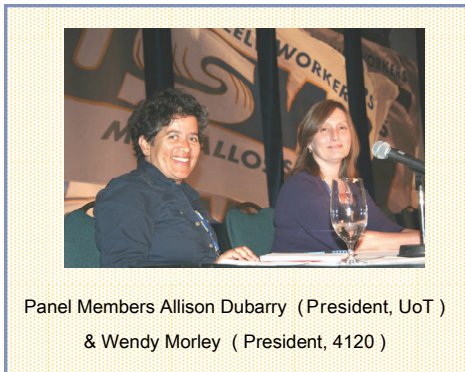
The conference, which was held in Toronto was attended by over 500 USW activists from across Canada.

Energy was in abundance as members shared information, knowledge and thoughts on the direction our Union should follow in “*Building for Tomorrows*

Jobs” which was the Conference theme. Seasoned activists, first time delegates,

areas of ; the Economic crisis, global union partnerships, Pensions, EI., health and safety, promoting equity in the workplace, green Jobs and the environment. (further information can be found on the

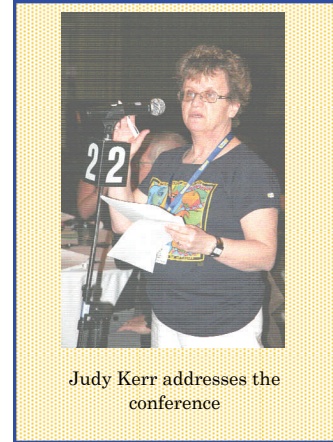
USW website at www.usw.ca) .



Panel Members Allison Dubarry (President, UoT) & Wendy Morley (President, 4120)

Past President Lynn R. Williams put pen to paper in the soon to be released memoirs, “One Day at a Time. This book is filled with the history of USW and wisdom

for the struggles of tomorrow.



Judy Kerr addresses the conference

On the 28th April, USW delegates joined over 1000 fellow unionists outside Toronto City Hall to take part in the Day of Mourning.

The conference adopted thirty-seven resolutions including the

We can be assured USW is on the move and is **Building for Tomorrows Jobs**.



“Mourn for the dead, fight for the living”

More than 20 years ago, the Canadian Labour Congress declared April 28 a National Day of Mourning for workers who have been killed, suffer disease or injury as a result of work. Every year since, unions, labour councils, families and community partners gather by the thousands to 'mourn for the dead'. What began through the efforts of Canada's labour movement is now observed in more than 100 countries.

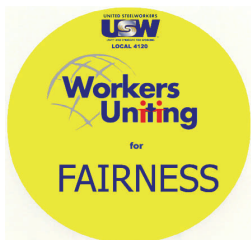
University Sector Forum Workshop

In April six members from Local 4120 attended a University Sector Forum. Also attending were representatives from United Steelworkers National office and six members from Unite (UK), USW Local 1998, University of Toronto, CUPE 1334 (UoG), and Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario. A variety of topics were discussed allowing for a comparison between North America and the United Kingdom. A lively discussion took place as participants shared their experiences and viewpoints. The following were key topics of the workshop

The Corporatization of Education

– All institutions have seen a move away from a publically funded higher education system to a private sector model. This has impacted not only the cost of obtaining a higher education but has also enabled private sector corporations through their funding to define what is researched and

ultimately what is taught. With the focus strongly on a corporate model and profit, unions are being faced with concessions at the bargaining table. It was agreed that a joint campaign in defence of publically funded and affordable education should be launched.



Keeping the Union Membership Strong

– many ideas were shared on ways in which union activists can encourage membership involvement and support.

Greening the University, Green Jobs and the Environment

– this session was particularly interesting as there was great variety in the greening programs in place. It was noted with irony, that Mark Britton, Local 4120 whose position with Physical Resources at the University of Guelph was responsible for energy conservation

had recently been cut. Mark reported “I was pleased to see the discussion on energy management and what other countries are doing and how progressive they are. It is a great benchmark on how we should be improving and where we could be with a little more work”. It was noted how the UK offers a wide variety of incentive programs for environmental greening, and many of these ideas would be easily transferable to our universities. The unions in the UK and Canada are very much committed energy savings, not only, as noted by Mark, for the environmental aspect but as a social way to connect with the non-union people and younger generations.

Pay Equity / Job Evaluation – this was a common problem for all institutions. The strengths and weaknesses of the different systems were discussed and a commitment to share and collaborate was made.

Building Links and Developing Common Project – all members who attended the workshop felt that future collaboration would be beneficial. As well as the campaign on public education and topics such as job evaluation/pay equity, it was agreed that technological assisted communication such as through Facebook and conference calling would allow the Workers Uniting forum to continue to work on collaborative projects.

Collaborative events, such as this workshop, are instrumental in building networks of union activists. Maintaining communication is vital as we work together to build momentum as we continue our fight, in solidarity for a fair and equitable world for working people.



Visitors from Unite (UK)

Following the workshop, Local 4120 hosted a “meet and greet” for the Unite delegation at the University of Guelph and offered a tour of the campus with visits to the Ontario Vet College and the Growth Plant Facility. A special thank you goes to Melanie Hardie and Tracy Van Raaij who acted as tour guide for our UK friends with a trip to Niagara Falls and Niagara on the Lake.





Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees by Francie Niekamp

I wasn't quite prepared to retire as early as I did, felt a bit low, then I googled 'Canadian USW retirees'. I clicked on 'SOAR: Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees' and read a message from our National Director, Ken Neuman who said, "Retirement from United Steelworkers does not mean an end to union involvement. In fact, it could actually mean a whole new beginning ...". I now recalled that USW 4120 had paid for my first year SOAR membership, so during that first long, boring winter, I learned what different SOAR chapters did. Most met once/month, however not usually during the summer and some chapters were very active politically while others were active socially. (There were also paying yet very inactive members). There appeared to be absolutely no pressure to get involved - the members decided. But I wanted to get involved - we just needed to start a chapter in Guelph - to get 10 more retirees to sign up.

Meanwhile, back on the computer, at the very bottom of 'SOAR in Action - Winter 2009', I clicked on the picture of the Parliament Building stating 'Political Action'. What I saw made me feel that I had come home.

Go ahead, click on some of the titles on the side panel - perhaps on 'Genuine Improvement to CPP is Essential, Affordable' and why were the Mexican miners being attacked? Will human rights be protected with the fast-tracking of Bill C-2, (Harper's Columbia Trade Deal)? I personally, want to speak out for unjust causes - to always strive for that ideal world, for everyone and not just for any future grandchildren. **SOAR could be my forum!**

Contributors to this issue of Steelwire

Wendy Morley, President

Liz Cherry, Vice - President

Joanne Raymond, JJEC Co-Chair

Judy L Kerr, Trustee

Melanie Hardie, Secretary

Sandy Smith, Trustee

Mark Britton, Member

Paul Anderson, Treasurer

Francie Niekamp, UoG Retiree



**If you are interested in joining
the Communications Team
Please contact the office at
x58911 or email:
admin@uswa4120.ca**

Rick Hansen Wheels in Motion

This event was held on June 14th this year at the U of G campus. The generosity of the staff at the University again exceeded the expectations of Local 4120 and we surpassed our original goal of \$1,000.00 this year and raised just over \$1,400.00

Wheels in Motion is about improving the quality of life for people with spinal cord injuries and raising awareness and inspiring those around you to make a difference.

Thanks to everyone for the generous sponsorship for this very worthy cause.



Judy Kerr takes part in the wheelchair challenge

Getting to know

Your Bargaining Committee

John Tart
Past Executive Member



Alumni Affairs
UoG since 1984

Alan Miller
Financial Officer



Physics
UoG since 1982

Melanie Hardie
Recording Secretary



Financial Services
UoG since 1976

Joanne Raymond
Co-Chair of Joint Job Evaluation Committee



Animal Care Services
UoG since 2001

If you have any concerns or comments about the next round of bargaining in 2011 please contact any of the Bargaining Committee members or the Union office at

admin@uswa4120.ca

Tracy Van Raaij
Guard



Lab Services
UoG since 1997

Liz Cherry
Vice-President



History
UoG since 2000

Mark Evans
Steward



School of Environmental Sciences
UoG since 1971

Wendy Morley
President



Library
UoG since 1989

Solidarity

NOW more than ever

USW, District 6 Conference Halifax, Nova Scotia, August 2010

Six delegates representing Local 4120 attended the District 6 Conference. Following is a joint report on the conference.

Collective Bargaining Policies

After the plenary address by the District Director, the first session of the conference was a breakout session on the various collective bargaining policies of the District, such as the policies around two tier agreements and the maximum duration of collective agreements. The conference delegates were assigned to one of five groups that then reviewed the current bargaining policies to determine which policies are still effective, and which ones should be modified to better reflect the needs of the members. The groups had members from different work sectors, who had varying views of the bargaining policies so, there was some fairly lively discussion and debate. After each group discussed the policies, they developed a list of recommendations that were presented to all the delegates and to the District 6 staff. These recommendations will be considered when the District office reviews the policies and considers the need for modifications.

Steelworkers' place in a Green Economy

The panel for this session included Mike Layton, Blue Green Alliance- Canada, Dave Foster Blue Green Alliance USA and Lawrence McKay, Nova Scotia Sustainable Energy Alliance. The Blue green alliance is a national partnership of labor unions including USW, which is a founding organization and environmental organizations working to expand the number and quality of jobs in a clean energy economy. Launched in 2006 it boasts 8.5 million

members and supporters in pursuit of good jobs, a clean environment and a green economy.

Lawrence McKay discussed an interesting development on the east coast, where a Steelworker local building train cars was shut down in 2007 leaving hundreds unemployed. In March of this year an agreement was signed with Daewoo of South Korea to open a plant at this location to build wind turbines to be used along the eastern seaboard as well as the Bay of Fundy. This creates many USW unionized jobs in the Trenton area and shows the commitment of this organization to green jobs.

This is just one of many success stories shared with us at the conference. If you have any interest in any of these organizations they can be reached through their respective web sites.

Union Solidarity

Leo Gerard, International President gave the keynote address prior to the start of this session. Topics covered in his opening included the need for good jobs, foreign ownership issues in North America, Resource industry given away, HST beneficial for corporation tax breaks and non beneficial to workers, Government involvement in E.I., Wind turbines, Stimulus money in US, Renewable energy, Health Care cuts, Health and Pension bargaining issues, Economic collapse, Workers uniting and trade law.

The Union Solidarity Panel included Linda Halam-Stroud, Ontario Nurses' Association, Smokey Thomas, Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Sharleen Steward, Service Employees International Union, Rodney Shepard, Society of Energy Professionals and Rick Clark, Nova Scotia, Federation of Labour.

Manufacturing jobs are drying up. Less work means less income and less income generates poorer health. Workers fought long and hard for health care in Ontario and the government cuts to hospitals has had drastic effects on our communities. There are more than 8,000 unionized Public Sector professionals in Ontario alone. The impact of manufacturing prices has created loss of work, plant closures and outsourcing. The impacts are drastic and create a domino effect. The promise of one new reactor can create new jobs for workers who have lost their job in these drastic economic times.

Human Rights

The Human Rights session was opened by Lawrence Johnston, Chair of the District 6 Human Rights Committee and member of Local 9042 from Mississauga, Ontario. The second speaker was Terry Downey, Vice-President of the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL). Terry is an African Canadian born in Nova Scotia and was the first African-Canadian woman elected to serve an OFL executive officer. She has been a long time community activists within her west Toronto neighbourhood and was employed as a Human Rights Investigator at the Ontario Human Right Commission. Terry and Anita Bryant, Chair of District 6 Women's Committee shared with the conference their families experiences of growing up in Africkville, a community in Nova Scotia, populated almost entirely by black families from a wide selection of origins. The community and its dwellings were ordered destroyed, and residents evicted during the late 1960s to make way for a suspension bridge.

Health and Safety

The second to last session, but certainly not the least important, of the District 6 Conference in Halifax focused on Health and Safety. The session, chaired by Nancy Hutchison, Health and Safety Coordinator for District 6, began with an emotional presentation of the names of District 6 workers who have been killed on the job or died from work related illness since the last conference. This was followed by a moment of silence while we reflected on lives lost and the fact that “the struggle for health and safety is never over” (<http://www.usw.ca/program/content/949.php>).


We were reminded by Nancy Hutchison that the Health and Safety goals of the labour movement are:

- The right to know
- The right to refuse unsafe work
- The right to participate

Recently in 2009, workplace violence and harassment has come under the purview of the Ministry of Labour Health and Safety Act through Bill 168. Documentation of workplace incidents is now a part of the Incident Report Form at the University of Guelph. Employees should be aware of this legislation (<http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/topics/workplaceviolence.php>) to ensure that their rights are respected. Any concerns about Health and Safety can be addressed through your Steward and the USWA supported by our excellent advocate Nancy Hutchison.

PROTECTING OUR JOBS

Protecting our Jobs can be difficult especially with companies closing in Canada and opening factories across the border or overseas where labour and costs are cheaper. During this session of the conference we heard from guest speakers George Kean (Local 5795), Richard Bertrand (Local 6500), Chris Carlton (MP Hamilton Mountain), Marie Kelly (OFL) and via video David Miller (Mayor of Toronto). What came across loud and clear in this session is that we need to buy Canadian. Sometimes that is easier said than done. David Miller spoke of the wind turbines being built in Toronto and of the infrastructure improvements such as roads etc. We need to ensure, that as far as possible, that the goods and materials such steel that are required to do these jobs are as far as possible made in Canada by Canadians. By lobbying governments from Municipal to Federal we should insist that contracts are given to Canadian companies producing Canadian goods. Should foreign companies come in to Canada we need policies in place to make sure the goods used to assemble or make the products will be made in Canada. We need government policies that will provide companies with incentives to keep manufacturing in Canada and not move to foreign shores, especially when this involves use of this countries natural resources. We need to limit the amount of goods we import.



“For a number of years I worked at Beardmore Tannery, based in the small community of Acton in Ontario. It was the third largest Tannery in North America and had been in existence for over 100 years. In the 1980 's the government lifted the import quotas on leather coming into Canada. By 1986 Beardmore closed its doors, as they could not longer compete with the cheaper leather being imported. Generations of families worked at Beardmore for years and although the town survived it lost it's major industry”.

Melanie Hardie

Local 4120

Sears Canada Lockout!

As we prepare for our upcoming 2011 contract negotiations with the University of Guelph, we want to bring to your attention a situation facing over 450 members of USW Local 9537.

These women and men are employees of Sears Canada at its warehouse in Vaughan, Ontario. They ship products out of Sears stores across Canada from this massive logistics and warehouse centre. In early 2008, they voted by a large majority to join the USW and then bargained a successful first collective agreement.

This year they hoped to renew that collective agreement and went into bargaining with modest proposals for improvements.

Instead, Sears came to the table with demands to get much of the current contract and replace it with language that leaves employee rights subject to the whims of “company policy”. This would essentially give Sears the right to make unilateral changes at anytime to many important working conditions of warehouse workers.

On April 1, after weeks of fruitless talks, Sears locked them out of their jobs and put them on the picket line. Despite their willingness to continue negotiations, our fellow USW members were forced onto the street.

Let us support our fellow USW members

But Sears has not stopped there. After locking out its employees and then refusing to return to the bargaining table, Sears took advantage of a rarely used section of the Labour Relations Act to force a “final offer vote” on its proposed collective agreement. The members responded and voted to reject Sears’s proposed agreement. After that vote, Sears went to court to seek major restrictions on the rights of the very employees that it had forced onto picket lines in the first place. And in recent weeks, Sears has been using replacement workers to operate the warehouse. The Union has backed up our fellow Sears members with radio

ads, rallies and thousands of leaflets handed out across Ontario.

As consumers and as union members, we can play a role in helping the Sears employees. Our dollars and our voices can have an impact. So, in support of our fellow USW members, please do not shop at Sears until this lockout ends.

And to ensure that your message is heard, send an email to Dene Rogers, President and CEO of Sears Canada telling him that you and your family support the Sears workers. Just visit www.sears.ca and click on the “Contact US” line and use the email form to send Sears a clear message. For an example of a letter see below.



Example of letter to Sears, President and CEO

“I will not do my shopping at Sears unless the dispute with your unionized warehouse Associates ends. I will also discourage my family, friends and colleagues from shopping at Sears. I encourage Sears to immediately return to negotiations with the union and the Vaughan Warehouse Associates and end this lock-out”

Remember

Attempts to erode the rights of workers in the private sector will affect how we, as union members in the broader public sector, are treated.