



The UNION ECHO

USWA 4-2995 UNION ADVANTAGE L'AVANTAGE SYNDICAL OPEIU 166

Serving the workers of Northern Ontario



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In Union find strength

Summer 09

DRIVE TO WORK CAMPAIGN IN OUR LOCAL RESIDENTS AND WORKERS SEND STRONG MESSAGE TO THE PREMIER



The 'Drive to Work' motorcade, an initiative of the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL), made a stop in many communities of our local to gather the stories behind the statistics, and hear what people and communities are asking from their governments to ensure their survival.

After 17 days on the road, they returned to Toronto on June 25th to share with representatives of the Ontario government the people's stories and pleas for immediate help.

We need to all work together in order to persuade all levels of govern-

ment to take action to deal with the job loss crisis and its effects on communities. As a worker, currently employed or not, please join your district labour council, local union and/or community groups to lobby for the following:

Lobby the Provincial and Local Governments to;

- Establish a Job Commissioner with a mandate to help all Ontario industries in a timely manner. This office should be able to negotiate short-term and medium-term transitional arrangements to forestall plant closures and position business to benefit

from the recovery,

- Make sure that investments in local infrastructure are made and meet your communities' needs,
- Adopt 'Buy Ontario' procurement strategies,
- Provide meaningful retraining programs to laid off workers and increased access to child-care to assist women workers who require training programs,
- Support our public services when we need them the most.

Lobby the Federal Government to;

- Reform Employment Insurance to make more unemployed Ontarians eligible for benefits,

- Increase protection for pensions in the event of bankruptcy and insolvencies.

Lobby your local politicians to;

Make a commitment to these legislative changes a condition of getting your vote in the next federal, provincial or municipal elections.

For more info on these issues, or to hear the comments of the people, please visit the website at www.drivetowork.ca.

As excerpted from various OFL sources.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

11TH CONVENTION A SUCCESS

Your local held its 11th convention on March 26th & 27th 2009 at the Howard Johnson in Timmins.

The local's executive board positions were all open for election. I want to congratulate all of the officers that were elected by acclamation for a new three year term. We will be holding local wide elections at the end of May and early June. Brother Léo Levasseur from Columbia Forest Products will be seeking re-election while Brother Lorne Stenabaugh from Tembec-Spruce Falls will oppose him for the posi-

tion of warden on the executive board. On your behalf I want to wish good luck to both candidates. We will post the results in your workplaces as soon as they become available.

We were fortunate to have National Director Ken Neumann attending our convention. He spoke on the importance of buying Canadian and gave the members an overview of the effects that the global economic crisis has on our day to day life.

We also had Brother Bob Matter, Chair of the USW Wood council who talked

about the devastation of the forest industry in British Columbia. Both Mike McCarter, President of local 1000 was also in attendance. He raffled off a leather jacket that Sister Diane Jolin won.

On your behalf I wish to thank all the participants and guests that helped make our 11th convention a success. Please ask your delegates for a complete report of the convention's proceedings.

In closing, summer vacations are just around the corner. I therefore urge you to play safe in all activities you will engage



Guy Bourgoquin, President

in. Please enjoy this time off with your family and friends, you have earned it.

In solidarity
Guy Bourgoquin,
President

SOME GOOD NEWS IN COCHRANE

RECALL DELAYED IN KAPUSKASING & OPASATIKA WOODLANDS



Eric Carroll

Cochrane
Finally, we can report some news for the members at the Tembec-Cochrane plant.

They have been back in operation since May 4th. Both the sawmill and the planing mill will be on a 2 shift operation bringing approximately 100 members back to work after a layoff that started in November of last year.

Also in Cochrane, the plywood mill once known as Norbord now operates under the name of True North Hardwood Plywood. This change of names is a result of the Norbord and Kruger merger. It appears that

this merger will bring more than just a names change as we have observed some positive moves lately. The company has hired new personnel, including some from the Kruger plant that is now closed in Longlac. All we can wish for now is that orders keep coming in. In spite of the current hard times the mill is doing relatively well which allows us to hope for the future while imagining how well they may do when the market improves.

Kapuskasing

Our members of the woodlands operations at Spruce Falls in Kapuskasing have been laid off since March and will be back for the tree planting by the time you read these lines as the planting is usually set to

begin by mid May. The harvesting operations are not expected to start up until August, all depending on lumber demands.

As for the office workers, also at Spruce Falls, they have been on lay off since April 10th and are expected to be called back to work for May 20th. They are still waiting for dates for negotiations as their Collective Agreement has expired in September 2008.

Opasatika

The Opasatika woodlands operations were also laid off in March and will probably only resume in August, at the same time as the Kapuskasing operations.

The members at La

Maison Arc-En-Ciel have agreed to a new 3 years Collective Agreement that took effect on April 1st, 2009. In this new agreement they obtained wage increases varying from 5% to 20% and increases in their work boots allowance. They are now entitled to bereavement leave when death occurs to a stepchild and they also introduced the new Family Day as a statutory holiday; this just to list a few of the gains obtained with this agreement.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a good summer and a happy vacation time off.

In Solidarity,
Eric Carroll

CLOSURES & LAY-OFFS ABOUND

CHAPLEAU & LARDER LAKE STABLE THOUGH THE ECONOMIC STORM

Tembec-Kirkland Lake

The Finger Jointing plant has been closed indefinitely and all severance pay monies have been deposited in trust for all employees that have been on lay-off for more than 35 weeks with no date of recall in sight. There are no employees doing any kind of work at the site anymore and, with all area mills running below capacity, there is no indication that the mill plant will restart anytime soon.

Tembec-Timmins

No changes are to be reported for the Timmins sawmill operations. It has now been 2 years as of the

end of February 2009 that the plant has been shut down.

Domtar Inc.-Timmins

As for Domtar-Timmins, all the employees were laid off since about February 9th, 2009. The maintenance crew and some employees at the planer have been called back the last week of April with the remainder of the employees starting back on May 4th.

Tembec-Chapleau

Tembec-Chapleau and the Co-Gen are amongst the few that were not seriously impacted by massive lay-off as all Tembec and

other sawmills.

Cheminis Lumber Inc.-Larder Lake

Cheminis also was not affected by the massive cut backs in the lumber industry. This is probably due to the fact that they produce custom sizes for a specialized market.

Abitibi Bowater-Iroquois Falls

As most of you probably already know, Abitibi Bowater has applied for bankruptcy protection in order to buy some time while they do some restructuring. Due to cash flow difficulties they had to curtail the harvesting

early in March. This caused the members to be laid off earlier than expected as the cold weather



Roland Laurin

persisted well into April this year which probably would have kept your brothers and sisters working longer.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all members a great summer.

In solidarity;
Roland Laurin

THE WSIB & YOU

If you had a work-related injury (on or after January 1,1998) and lost wages as a result, you are entitle to Loss of earnings benefits. This benefit is based on 85% of your net average earnings (take-home pay), up to a pre-set annual maximum. Your adjudicator will advise you of the maximum you are entitled

to, or you can check the "Workers" section of the WSIB web site, at www.wsib.on.ca. When calculating your benefits, the adjudicator considers both your ability to work and the availability of suitable work

Here are some of the things you must do to be

LOSS OF EARNINGS BENEFITS (LOE)

entitled to LOE benefits:

- Give the WSIB the information necessary to manage your claim,
- Cooperate in health care treatment as recommended by your treating health care professional,
- Cooperate in all activities that will help you achieve an early and safe

return to work,

- Cooperate in a labour Market Re-entry Plan (if required).

If you need more information on LOE please contact your representative, Guy Bourgoquin, at your local union office.

SAFETY COUNCIL CONFERENCE

NEW EXECUTIVE

The Local's Safety Council has met at the office on May 22, 2009. Many subjects were discussed by the participants, all Joint Health & Safety Committee co-chairs from all over the Local. Brother Wayne Glibbery made a presentation about the courses and training

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This newsletter is published by:

**USWA Canada
Local 1-2995**

20 Riverside Drive
Kapusksing Ont.
P5N 1A3
Tel.: (705) 335-2289
Fax: (705) 335-5428
E-mail:
uswakap@ntl.sympatico.ca
Web Site:
www.uswa2995.on.ca

Editor:

Alain A. Charlebois
charlalain@sympatico.ca

Reporter:

Louise Dionne
go20ljyv@ntl.sympatico.ca

Executive board:

President:

Guy Bourgouin

1st Vice-President:

Réal Vachon

2nd Vice-President:

Bruno Payant

Financial Secr.:

Jacques Jean

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**HARD TIMES AT LECOURS & TEMBEC
COLUMBIA SQUEAKS BY BUT FUTURE UNCERTAIN**



Jacques Jean

Hearst-Lecours Lumber

Members at Lecours Lumber sawmill have been laid off for several months now and, by the time you read these lines, they will have returned to work since June 1st. The mill will operate on a 1 shift basis as it was before the shutdown.

Tembec-Hearst Sawmill

After thirteen weeks of lay off, the company has announced that they would be in operation starting May 11th, 2009. This would have been good news for our members working at Lecours and Tembec but, in late-breaking news, Tembec has announced further lay-offs for the end of June or early July and Lecours is shutting down for

a 2 week vacation period. Hopefully, the market will recover soon so that our Brothers and Sisters may return to work at the earliest possible time.

Columbia Forest Products

The plywood plant and melamine line have managed to survive through the worst economic conditions of the last few decades but the future is still uncertain as the market is slow to recover. At the melamine plant, where the high cost of energy is eating away at profits, we have been warned that there may be reductions in operations if the market doesn't improve by mid summer. At a recent meeting with the employees the company has hinted at a possible reduction of 50% that would see 7 or 8 members with up to 33 years seniority without work.

The company is also actively seeking financial help for

a few projects that may create some permanent jobs. Let's hope that our provincial and federal governments will help the industry in time to save these plants.

Maison Renaissance

Meeting dates are still to be confirmed, but negotiations will begin shortly with the employer.

Hornepayne

The Collective Agreement at Olav Haavaldsrud will expire on August 31st, 2009. We therefore have scheduled a meeting to collect the demands from the membership, in preparation for our first encounter with the company.

Have a great summer and take full advantage of your vacation time off.

In solidarity;
Jacques Jean

**SAFETY COUNCIL
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offered by the Worker Health & Safety Centre. Sonia Gravel from the EFAP made a presentation about dealing with a co-worker that is impaired at work.

The Council held an election of its officers. Brother Gaëtan Carrier was reelected as Chairperson for the next 2 years while Brother Guy Veilleux was voted in as 1st Vice. Brother Jean-Roger Veilleux took the 2nd Vice position and



The new Safety Council executive. From left to right in the back row; Brothers Guy Veilleux, Gaëtan Carrier & Jean-Roger Veilleux. Front row; Sisters Denise Korpela & Verna L. Bergeron. Congratulations and good luck!

Sister Denyse Korpela was elected as 3rd Vice. Sister Verna L. Bergeron became the new recording Secretary.

Also elected were Brothers Rock Nadeau from Columbia Forest Products (woodland operations) and Jean Laurin from Domtar Inc. in Timmins. They will be delegated to the next Steelworkers International Health, Safety and Environment Conference that is going to be held in

Houston, Texas, from August 17-21, 2009.

In solidarity
Jacques Jean