



UNITED STEELWORKERS
USW
MÉTALLOS
Local 1-2010

The UNION ECHO

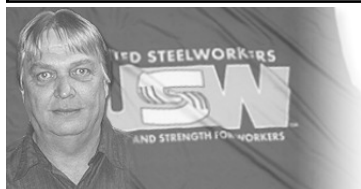
**Serving the workers of Northern
and North-western Ontario**



Volume 13 Issue 2

Unity and strenght for workers

Winter 2011



MIXED BAG OF GOOD & BAD NEWS AS WE END A HORRENDOUS YEAR FOR WORKERS. LUMBERYARDS SIGN NEW AGREEMENT WHILE MILLS & WOODLANDS STILL STRUGGLING.

BUCHANAN GROUP:

Atikokan Forest Products was auctioned off for scrap and is being dismantled. This despite qualified buyers expressing interest in purchasing and running the mill. There was hope for a restart; those hopes were dashed by the competitive wood allocation process that gave the wood supply to others. No jobs for Atikokan Sawmill, no wood for McKenzie mill in Hudson, no wood for Dubreuilville. Thank you Mr. McGuinty and Mr. Gravelle, thanks to your flawed process, you've made life miserable in these communities and others.

ABITIBI-BOWATER:

The recently merged Abitibi and Bowater have just announced their new name: Resolute Forest Products. We can hope that the name change

will cause an improved approach to labour relations. It is more likely though, that they will continue dragging us through OLRB and arbitration hearings as they continue to challenge our jurisdiction to represent those involved in harvesting, processing and delivery operations on their limits and worksites to the company's mills.

Changing your name cannot allow you to walk away from your contractual obligations. We presently have an ongoing OLRB hearing and three arbitrations scheduled, with more to come, as we continue to dispute their lack of respect for workers and their Union.

The only good news from this company is their recent announcement of a major upgrade and investment at their Ignace Sawmill that has been closed since 2007. Plans have been put in place for an energy system kiln dryer and planers

to be added to this mill to make it a stand alone operation instead of relying on the planer and kilns at the Thunder Bay sawmill. We will be having discussions for the renewal of the Collective agreement and resumption of the operations prior to the scheduled start up date of late 2013.

NIIGAANI ENTERPRISES:

We have met on several occasions recently attempting to reach terms of settlement for the renewal of the collective agreement without success. This unique Native owned company operating out of Gull Bay and contracting for Abi-Bow (Resolute) has been struggling. They are presently reviewing their operations. In spite of this we will continue to work to achieve a fair and reasonable settlement to advance the wages and working conditions for these members.

LUMBERYARDS:

We ratified new 3 year agreements expiring February 28, 2014 with North American Lumber, Wanson Lumber and Biltrite Home Building Centre in Thunder Bay on June 20. The agreements have improvements in the safety subsidy, wages increase 30 cents each year as well as a 40 cent adjustment to the yard foreman classification there were also improvements to the weekly indemnity and pension plans. The agreements were ratified by the members of the individual groups by percentages ranging from 66% to 90%.

I take this opportunity to wish all a happy holiday season with good health and prosperity in the New Year.

In Unity there is strength;
Bruce Frost



THE WSIB AND YOU

What are the entitlement criteria for noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL)?

The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) will accept entitlement for NIHL if:
-You have continuous exposure to 90 decibels (dB) of noise on the "A" scale for 8 hours per day for a minimum of 5 years, or the equivalent. For example, exposure to 92 dB for 6 hours a day for 5 years, or to 92 dB for 8 hours per day for 2.5

NOISE- INDUCED HEARING LOSS AND TINNITUS; ENTITLEMENTS AND DEFINITIONS (on or after January 2nd, 1990)

years would be both considered equivalent to exposure to 90 dB for 8 hours a day for 5 years.

AND -You have a pattern of hearing loss consistent with noise-induced hearing loss

If you have noise-induced hearing loss averaging at least 22.5 dB in each ear in the 4 speech frequencies, you will be entitled to health care and rehabilitation benefits.

If you have an average hearing

loss of 26.25 dB in both ears, or an average hearing loss of 25 dB in your better ear and 32.5 dB in your worse ear, you will be referred for a non-economic loss (NEL) assessment.

What is Tinnitus?

Tinnitus is a constant ringing or hissing in the ear that can be caused by noise exposure. WSIB will allow entitlement for tinnitus if all the following conditions are met:

-There is an accepted claim for occupational noise-induced hearing loss

-There is a clear and adequate history of two or more years of continuous and severe tinnitus
-The condition has been confirmed by a specialist with facilities for testing tinnitus.

Tinnitus is not quantifiable, so the WSIB policy is to rate it at 2% NEL award.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

COCHRANE EMPLOYEE BUYOUT UNDER WAY & A BIT OF HOPE AS NEGOTIATIONS ARE SET TO BEGIN IN THE NEW YEAR

The next twelve months will be a very busy time for the local. The majority of sawmills, woodlands and other non-traditional units are open to renew their Collective agreements. We all know the situation of the industry as we lived it for the past five years. The Local believes the worst is behind us; this doesn't mean that our entire struggles are over. We believe that the market will recover slowly and that the industry will return to better profitability. Most financial experts predict that this will happen in 2013. Let's all hope that it's sooner rather than later.

The negotiating committees have a lot of work ahead of them but I am confident that

they will be up to the task and they will get the job done. As for the idling sawmills that have seen their forest allocation taken away, let's hope that a Liberal government in a minority will have a more receptive approach to our proposals to restart those idling sawmills; we, at the Local have not yet given up on those members and communities.

As I am writing this report the members and the community of Cochrane are in the process of an employee buyout of True North Plywood plant, with major investors also involved. The results should be out shortly. If all is successful 90 jobs could restart late this year

with a potential of a second shift in the New Year.

We are also scheduled to negotiate with Resolute Forest Products, the former Abitibi Bowater Company, who has announced a 32 million investment by 2013 in the Ignace Sawmill, a mill that has been idled for the past five years. We are confident that an agreement will be reached and some of our former members will come back to work. Not to mention that a community that has been devastated by an adverse economy can now positively look forward to better times.

So as you can see it's not all bad news. Hopefully more positive news will continue

to illuminate the end of the tunnel for all of us.

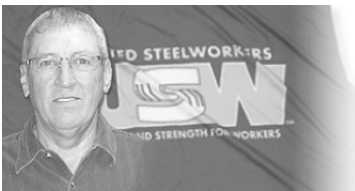
We will also be holding our Local's convention in the spring. Early in the New Year your representative will be electing members to represent your unit at the convention.

In closing I want to wish you and your family a Christmas speckled with moments of love, laughter, goodwill and may the year ahead be full of contentment and joy. Have a Merry Christmas and a happy, safe New Year.

In solidarity;
Guy Bourguoin



Season's greetings to workers across our service area, may the New Year bring jobs for all.



GOODBYE & THANK YOU ALL!!!

THIS WILL BE MY LAST REPORT AS I PREPARE FOR RETIREMENT IN APRIL 2012

Tembec - Kirkland Lake;

No further development or news for the Kirkland Lake Engineered Wood Products plant.

Eacom Timber Corporation - Timmins;

Things seem to be going fairly smoothly at Eacom in Timmins for the time being. Not unlike most of our sawmill and woodlands operations, the renewal of their Collective Agreement was up August 31st of this year. As of writing this article we are still waiting to hear from the company spokesperson to set some

dates and get negotiations under way.

Tembec - Chapleau;

The Chapleau sawmill seems to be doing just fine as we have not heard about a shutdown, contrary to Cochrane and Hearst. Let's hope that they will not have to stop because of market conditions.

As for the Chapleau Co-Generation plant, it is smooth sailing for the time being. We had a membership meeting to gather demands for the upcoming negotiations as their agreement ends at the same time

as that of the sawmill.

3 Nations Logging (formerly CS Enterprises)

At 3 Nations Logging "2248121 Ontario Ltd." most of the employees have worked since July 2010. As mentioned in the summer issue, we have been advised by Abitibi Bowater, now called "Resolute Forest Products", that they will be running 100% chips as of April 2012. This means that 1/3 of production made by the bargaining unit employees will be chips and 2/3 will remain as saw logs to be hauled to area sawmills. This should not impact the

membership negatively in the long term, or very little.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all members a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

This will be my last bulletin since I will be retiring at the end of April 2012.

I bid you all goodbye, it was a pleasure serving you and the Local for so many years, I am sure I will miss you and all the action a little bit.

In solidarity;
Roland Laurin





THE TOP TEN WAYS TO BE POSITIVE IN THE WORKPLACE AND LIFE

ATTITUDE IS A MAJOR FACTOR IN WORKPLACE SAFETY

There is a growing volume of research that shows staying positive is better for your health; you can cope better with stress. It's better for relationships; you keep from judging people and getting the bad habit of gossiping. It takes much more energy to be negative, always worrying, thinking of the "what ifs", the "should's". Being positive, living in the present will lighten your life and the mood of others around you.

1. Attitude is everything. It is the lens that you look through to experience your reality. Take a look at your attitude. Are you negative? Do you color everything with fear or need? How will your life change if you change your attitude?

2. Treat people with kindness and respect. Everyone that you encounter should be valued, treated with courtesy. Acknowledge that they have feelings and their own perspective on life, they may be different than yours but they are also valid.

3. Avoid comparison - whether you are looking down at the

people who have not mastered special strengths or up at people who may be more experienced or accomplished. Constantly comparing yourself keeps the focus on the other person instead of what you can do, want to do, and are good at doing. Look inside and improve from there.

4. Take responsibility for your work, actions, and life... Don't pass the puck. Don't make excuses. Take responsibility; acknowledge a mistake fix it and learn from it. Don't beat yourself up about the mistake, or hang onto past mistakes. Resolve them, own them and move forward - Today.

5. That doesn't work for me. Keep this in mind when someone offers a put down, when they cross your boundaries. Your worth comes from you; your being, your true self. They cannot change your intrinsic value unless you let them. Make it clear that what they are doing doesn't work for you, keep your boundaries and move forward.

6. Respect other people's time and boundaries. If you are having a bad day, feeling stuck, or

you are just enjoying procrastination. Make sure you don't use that as an excuse to waste other people's time or cross their boundaries. Time is the most valuable thing we have. If you feel like wasting your time that's your decision but don't waste other people's time.

7. Make a "what I have accomplished list". Too often people make huge to-do lists and then beat themselves up when they have only accomplished a few things on the list. Keep your master list of what you want to accomplish so you don't forget things that are important to you, but keep a second list you update daily. Each day, keep a specific list of all the things you did and how much time you spent on each thing. You'll know where the day went, feel good about what you did accomplish and see where you need to focus, to get what's most important to you, done.

8. Take notice of the people around you; co-workers, customers, clients, vendors, and other people you come in contact with each day. Acknowledge what they are contributing and don't take them for

granted. Thank them for buying from you, for their help, their value to the relationship, and for a job well done.

9. Enjoy the little things that happen in your day. The compliment someone gave you on the insight you shared at the staff meeting. The big smile the customer gave you when they picked up their order. By recognizing your accomplishments even if they seem small or routine, you are acknowledging a job well done.

10. Coming from a positive attitude and perspective you will feel more in control. Consider each job and interaction as your best performance, rather than just running them together as part of your day. You will see the impact you have and the value you offer. People will be attracted to this. They will notice how well you do things and they will truly value you.

Have a safe and joyfull holiday season;

Jacques Jean,
Safety director



Cochrane;
As reported in the last Union Echo, the Local has been working hard with government officials and a group of investors to try to get our members from the old True North Hardwood Plywood plant back at work. For this to happen, several things needed to happen such as getting the plant secured, a major investor, investment from both the employees and the community, wood allocation, wood orders and this just to name a few. Fortunately a lot of these needs were met. The plant was

secured, the wood allocation is still there, an investor came forward, and now we are in the process of seeing if both the employees and the community are interested in being part of the project. If everything goes as planned, we will have members back at work by November 4th to get the maintenance done and the plant ready for production. At the same time we can expect seeing round wood arriving in the yard. And we should see the plant start-up on a one shift operation by late November or early December. Wood orders

are starting to come in.

As for our members at the Tembec sawmill, times are still difficult and they are expected to be laid off at the end of November. They should be back at work sometime in January of next year. We are also expected to negotiate a new Collective Agreement in the near future since their Collective Agreement has expired on August 31.

Kapusksasing;
Our members at the Spruce Falls woodlands operation

have been laid off since September and are expected to be back at work in December.

Also at Spruce Falls, the Office Workers have met with the company in negotiations, in an attempt to agree on a new Collective Agreement. A lot of work has been done, but there is still a lot to be done before we can present something viable to our members. Hopefully we will have something to report on their new Collective Agreement by the time the next Union Echo comes out. **cont'd on page 4**

EMPLOYEES BUYOUT TO BE FINALIZED AT COCHRANE'S PLYWOOD MILL

NEGOTIATIONS UNDER WAY WITH OFFICE WORKERS AT SPRUCE FALLS & SUDBURY MEMBERS SETTLE AGREEMENT

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With quite a few plants and woodlands operations' Collective Agreements ending August 31st, 2011, we are gearing up for a new marathon of negotiations. All White River, Olav Haavaldsrud, the Lecours and Tembec sawmills and woodlands Collective Agreements are to be renegotiated. No dates have been set yet with any of these companies, but it is our plan to do so in the near future.

White River;
The woodlands have been in operation since the beginning of September with a few of our members working.

Olav Haavaldsrud;
With the Co-generation Plant's

**NEGOTIATION SEASON OPEN
A GLIMMER OF HOPE FOR OUR MEMBERS
AS THE NEW-YEAR PROMISSES BETTER
MARKET CONDITIONS**

construction still on the back burner because the talks with OPA are still not completed, this company's future remains uncertain. The company is currently operating on 1 shift at both sawmill and planer.

Lecours Lumber;
After being on lay off for a period of 2 weeks in October, employees at Lecours Lumber are now back to work. The members are still working on 1 shift at the sawmill and planer mill with a second shift at the debarkers. Just before going to press, we were informed that the operations would again cease for an undetermined period starting Dec 2nd for the planer and the 16th for the remainder. The company stated that they were hoping for a

market recovery early in the New Year and a resumption of normal operations.

Tembec Hearst sawmill;
Again this plant will shut down its operations for a period of 5 weeks from November 28 until the New Year according to the latest company statements.

I nevertheless wish you all a very Merry Christmas. It is important to celebrate the holiday season with friends and family and fill our souls with hope for the New Year.

In solidarity;
Jacques Jean



Eric Carroll, from page 3
Opasatika:
In Opasatika, membership meetings have been held to take demands for the upcoming negotiations that are schedule to take place sometime this year since both the Opasatika woodlands operation Collective Agreement and the Opasatika Truckers Letter of Understanding have expired in August and September of this year. We are still waiting on the company to confirm dates for negotiations.

Gogama:
At the EACOM sawmill in Gogama, a fire has destroyed most or the round wood in the yard and

fire is still present in the bark pile as we speak. The sawmill operation has been idle but members were not laid off as the Company has agreed to keep everyone at work to do fire watch on a 24/7 rotation.

Sudbury:
As for the members from the Centre de Santé in Sudbury, a new Collective Agreement was ratified on September 28. This new 3 year Agreement sees increases in pay in lieu for sick days accumulated and not taken, amount of sick days available for family emergencies, increase in the pension and in expenses, this just to name a few.

Also in Sudbury, membership meetings will be held to take demands for the upcoming negotiation that are expected to take place in the new year since their Collective Agreement is expiring on March 31st.

At this time I would like to thank everyone who has worked with us to help our members in dire straits. And I would also like to wish everyone a Merry X-Mas and a Happy New Year; may the New Year bring us hope and prosperity.

In Solidarity;
Eric Carroll