



The UNION ECHO

Serving the workers of Northern
and North-western Ontario



Volume 12 Issue 1

Unity and strenght for workers

Fall 2010

HISTORICAL MERGER BETWEEN LOCALS 1-2995 AND 1-2693; Brother Guy Bourgouin, president of the newly formed Local 1-2010 comments on a radical move to ensure the future of unionism in Norther-Ontario.

The merger brought two local unions together that will, as in the great past of the founding locals, do great things for the brothers and

speaking. The new local spans from Sudbury to the Manitoba border, covering all of Northern Ontario in fact. This will give us the

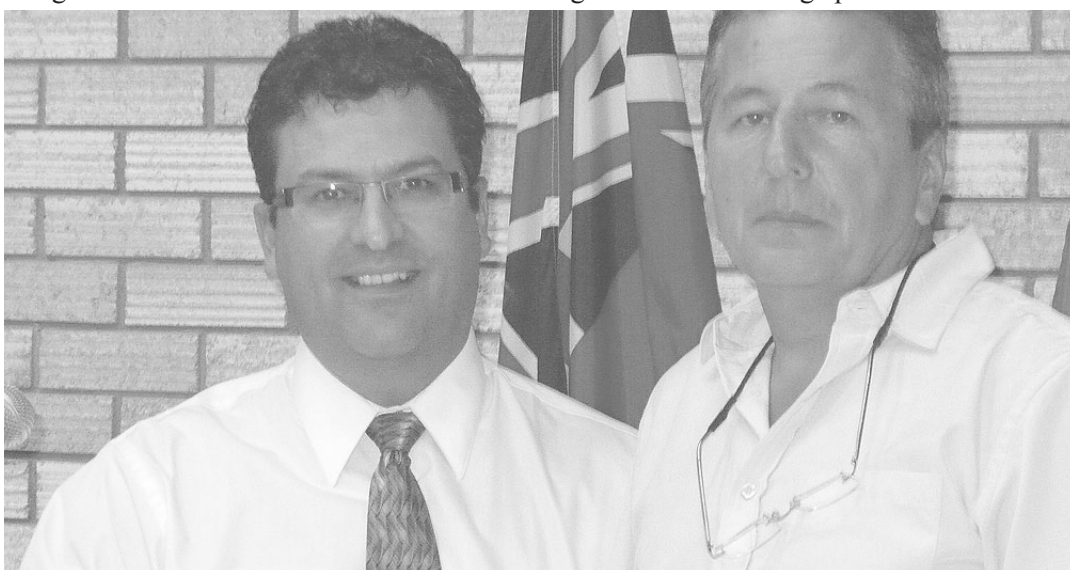
The leadership of this new local is dedicated to increasing the level involvement of all of its members and providing space within the new

merged local so that everyone can advance issues that are important in their workplace. This merger constitutes a renewed pledge by the leadership to continue its historic commitment to the regional labour movement and to transform the promises of democracy into a real and universal application of the basic human rights and liberties that will fulfill everyone's aspiration to a better life.

In closing, please accept my best wishes for the holiday season. Have a great time with family and friends and may the New Year bring us all health and prosperity.



In solidarity;
Guy Bourgouin



Brothers Guy Bourgouin and Joe Hanlon, past presidents of Locals 1-2995 and 1-2693 congratulate each other on a job well done at the Local 1-2010 founding convention that took place in Hearst in June.

sisters of the newly formed Local 1-2010.

The officers recognize that the merging of our locals constitutes a dramatic demonstration of labour solidarity at a time when employers in our areas have only one agenda and that is a race to the bottom. The solidarity demonstrated by the membership in the process of this merger is our most effective weapon against the forces that seek to reduce our hard earned benefits and working conditions.

Under this new merger we have become one of the largest amalgamated local unions geographically

strength to assure a more effective continuity of our historic mission of defending the workers' rights while maintaining the high level of service that the membership deserves.

In this joining, people, talent, money and other resources will be committed to organize and bargain effectively in the various industries in which both locals have always been predominant.

The new officers of Local 1-2010 elected at the founding convention are:

President:	Guy Bourgouin,	Kapuskasing
1st Vice-President:	Réal Vachon,	Hearst
2nd Vice-President:	Jacques Jean,	Kapuskasing
3rd Vice-President:	Bruce Frost,	Thunder Bay
Financial Secretary:	Roland Laurin,	Kapuskasing
Recording Secretary:	Eric Carroll,	Kapuskasing
Warden:	Léo Levasseur,	Hearst
Conductor:	Roger Gauthier,	Kirkland Lake
Board Members:		
Zone 1:	Robert Elliot,	Hudson
Zone 2:	John Krahn,	Ignace
Zone 3:	Kirk Haggart,	Longlac
	Gary Pearson,	White River
Zone 4:	Robert Bouvier,	Hearst
	Marcel Rodrigue,	Hearst
Zone 5:	Rémi St-Martin,	Chapleau
	Roger Béland,	Gogama
Trustees:	Denis McCarthy,	Atikokan
	Daniel Jirovec,	Cochrane
	Daniel Touchette,	Cochrane
	Réjeanne Beger,	Hearst

BROTHER JOE HANLON, PRESIDENT OF FORMER LOCAL 1-2693 SPEAKS ON EVENTS LEADING TO THE LOCAL'S MERGER.

The last few years have been an enormous struggle for a lot of our members, their families and the communities that they live in. It has also been a struggle for our former Local 1-2693, that is the main reason we merged with Local 1-2995 to form one Local. Unfortunately we had to lay-off four Business Representatives; Nathalie Belair, Bert Poulin, Jean-Paul Carrier and Mike Mantha. We also downsized our offices and office staff, laying off Trudy Tough and working under the E.I work share program. We reduced the size of our Thunder Bay office and closed our Geraldton, Dubreuilville and Espanola offices. Our Executive dealt with a lot of tough issues to assist our Local to remain afloat through these difficult times while maintaining service to the members.

Unfortunately we have seen thousands of members receive lay-off notices in many of our operations such as;

Sawmills; Nakina Forest Products, White River Forest Products, McKenzie Forest Products, Atikokan Forest Products, Dubreuil Forest,

Woodlands Operations; Dubreuil Forest, Domtar-White River Woodlands, Abitibi Forest Products, JF Tompson, Atway Transport, Black River Logging, Columbia, Domtar-Espanola, Caraman and Longlac Wood Industry,

Plywood/Wafer; Longlac Wood Industry - plywood, Longlac Wood Industry - wafer and Columbia Plywood

Reman plants; Solidwood Products

Some of these operations will never open again and the ones that do may look a lot different. Throughout the last number of years our local worked with some employers to allow them to survive, such as Abitibi-Bowater. Our members at these operations took concessions to assist the company to get out of bankruptcy protection. However as of preparing this report they are still in CCAA but our members have continued to work throughout the process. The members at our Gogama sawmill agreed to put some monetary items in their Collective agreement off until the end of the agreement to allow the company to continue to operate. The members at McKenzie Forest Products also took concessions which allowed them to work additional hours in order to attain more hours to extend their EI. This has also allowed McKenzie Forest Products on May 31st to restart the mill on one shift. Unfortunately lumber prices dropped and our dollar went up causing the operation to shut down once again. Domtar-White River sawmill and woodlands members also took concessions in order for White River Forest Products, a company made up of the

Community, First Nations and Business to buy the operation. Domtar was going to tear the mill down. Even though financial backing is approved this operation has not restarted as of yet because they are still awaiting approval from the Ontario Power Authority for a co-gen. The members from Longlac Wood Industry have taken concessions that have not helped but there are some talks taking place to try and create new opportunities.

It has not been all bad news; we have negotiated improvements in working conditions, wage and benefit increases in a number of operations such as Wajax, North American Mill Yards, Nor-Shore, Centre De Santé, Canadian Blood Services, and our three Thunder Bay lumberyards - North American, Wanson Lumber and Biltrite Home Building Centre.

Neenah Forest Products;

Our members on January 30, 2006 chose to withdraw their labour from Neenah Paper, Inc. We made this difficult decision because Neenah implemented new working conditions on them such as the right to contract out their jobs, 6.4% wage roll back, changes to their pension, their health care benefits, seniority, and took away the grievance procedure also. At that time no one was predicting the recession that was about to come to Ontario, Canada and the world. These members

fought the fight in order for our members in the other woodlands operations to attain increases. These members and their families walked the picket line for 3 years and 3 months. We are proud of those that walked the picket line standing up against an employer who had no intentions to negotiate and forced them to take dire actions. These members are what our Local 1-2693 was about and what we will be about as a new, stronger and more united Local, Local 1-2010.

I would personally like to thank each and every member that has assisted and/or supported our Local through these trying times, without your support and conviction we would not be here today, we would not be part of the history that is being made through this merger. We can now grow and be stronger in our goals to improve the working conditions, wages and benefits that our members and their families deserve. We are coming out of the dark past and moving into a brighter future.

Please accept my warmest wishes for the holiday season; may the New Year bring joy, health and prosperity along with respect and peace for all.

In solidarity,
Joe Hanlon



*Happy holidays
to all workers and
their families !*



Brother Joe Hanlon (extreme right) presiding over the swearing-in ceremony of the newly elected executive board of Local 1-2010 at the Kapuskasing offices shortly after the merger convention.



EACOM TIMBER CORP. BUYS OUT DOMTAR - ABITIBI MAY BE OUT OF BANKRUPTCY PROTECTION SOON AND TEMBEC IS STILL LIMPING ALONG IN A POOR LUMBER MARKET.

- Report of Brother Roland Laurin

Tembec-Kirkland Lake;

As per a company official the plan is to have the Finger Joint plant up and running in 2011 if the market stabilizes and there is an increased demand.

Tembec-Timmins;

Again, according to the same company official, the Timmins sawmill is still part of Tembec's future plans.

Eacom Timber Corp. Timmins;

Since July 1st, 2010 the Domtar Timmins sawmill, the Gogama stud mill and some other Domtar facilities have been bought by Eacom Timber Corporation. The acquisition of Domtar Forest Products was completed on June 30th 2010 and they currently own eight sawmills in Ontario, Saskatchewan and Quebec, one remanufacturing plant and two partnership operation. They have become major players in the Canadian lumber and logging industry. As for the

Timmins sawmill and the Gogama stud mill it's business as usual.

Tembec-Chapleau;

The Chapleau sawmill was scheduled for a shut down in October but that was averted as they were able to sell their chips and maintain a low deficit or a small profit in any given month for most of the year. As of the last news, the Chapleau operation is still one of the lowest if not the lowest cost producing mill. Keep up the good work and let's hope for the best in the future.

As for the Cogeneration plant a new Agreement of two (2) years seven (7) months from October 1, 2009 to April 30, 2012 was negotiated and voted at 70% in favour on September 21, 2010. Probation when hired was reduced from 90 to 45 days, floaters not taken will be paid and the bonus for weeks of vacation taken will increase to \$80.00. Vision care will

increase to \$210.00 and the pension plan will increase to \$105.00 to name only a few of the gains that will mostly be realized towards the last year of the agreement. As for the wage increase, an adjustment of \$1.00 was given to the senior shift engineer and \$.050 to the shift engineer plus a general wage increase of 1%, effective October 1st, 2010 and 1.5% October 1st, 2011.

Abitibi-Bowater-Iroquois Falls;

Finally a glimpse of hope for the ex Abitibi employees as they are now under a contractor for Abitibi called 2248121 Ontario Ltd. better known as CS Enterprises. These employees who, for the most part, had only worked for a couple of months in the last few years have been back at work since July 2010 and will hopefully be going until the spring of 2011. As for Abitibi itself, we should know by end of 2010 or early 2011 if they are out of bank-

ruptcy protection.

And a reminder for our members; do not forget there is assistance available out there for you and your family to help you cope with these very hard and stressful times. You only need to ask your union representative who will be more than happy to point you in the right direction.

As for the education department, not much has been happening due to all the lay offs and the financial difficulties that we are going through. We will hopefully be able to get back on track in the near future.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all members the best of Christmases possible and a Happy New Year, and may the New Year be a better one for all of us.



In solidarity,
Roland Laurin



NEW UNITS JOIN OUR RANKS FOLLOWING MERGER - SLIM PICKINGS IN DUBREUIL AND WHITE RIVER AREAS AND QUESTIONS OVER FUTURE OF HORNEPAYNE COGEN PLANT.

- Report of Brother Jacques Jean

Since the merger between former locals 1-2693 and 1-2995 in June, I am servicing the members in the Dubreuilville, White River, Nakina, and Longlac regions. None of the plants in these areas are in operation at this time, except for a few members in the woodlands operations in White River. Almost all of our forestry operations (sawmills, woods) in the Hearst region, plus all of the above-mentioned regions where C.A. have already expired, will see their Collective Agreement expire at the end of August 2011. We will therefore be scheduling membership meetings to col-

lect demands for the renewal of their respective Collective Agreements.

Dubreuil Forest Products;

With the exception of three (3) members, no one has been working in the last few years in Dubreuilville. Many employees have asked for their severance pay but have not received it to date. Some members would like to get it and some would prefer to keep their recall rights instead, and that is why we are presently trying to reach an agreement with the employer that would satisfy each and every one of them. If we are no successful in reach-

ing a deal, our intention is then to proceed to arbitration without any delay.

White River;

There is no new development for the White River sawmill. Our last information was that the new owners do not have any plans for re-opening the sawmill before mid 2011. The woodlands are presently in operation with a few of our members working and, since the operations are set for a short period, an agreement was reached enabling the employees not returning after recall to keep their recall rights.

Olav Haavaldsrud;

On October 5th, our members have voted in favour of extending an agreement signed 2 years ago. This agreement, now applicable until April 1st, 2011, includes wage cuts of \$2.00/hr, in order to help the company survive through tough times. With the co-generation plant's construction on the back burner because of grid connection problems, this company and the Hornepayne community are facing an uncertain future. It is my view that this issue, that is now political, should be dealt with by our elected representatives as a

Continued on page 6



ABITIBI-BOWATER SETTLED GRIEVANCES REMAIN UNPAID - SOME AGREEMENTS RENEWED BUT MAJOR EMPLOYERS STILL FEELING THE BRUNT OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC SLOW-DOWN. - Report of Brother Bruce Frost

Abitibi-Bowater;

In May and June we arbitrated, mediated and finally reached a settlement on all outstanding grievances with Abitibi and Bowater; 159 Bowater and 44 Abitibi former 2693 members shared in the over 4.5 million dollar award at pro-rated values. This was a necessary step to allow Abitibi-Bowater to exit bankruptcy protection. As of this writing the courts have not yet approved the plan, so they remain under CCAA (Company Creditor Arrangement Act) protection and payments have not yet been made.

When (if) the company exits CCAA protection we will be concluding the OLRB (Ontario Labour Relation Board) hearing involving sale of business to finally discover if the Abitibi members who lost their jobs after the companies merged should instead have become employees of the merged company. The Bowater members have been working on the former Abitibi limits while the former Abitibi employees were laid-off. This hearing has been adjourned since the company

entered bankruptcy protection in April 2009.

Despite the bankruptcy protection, work has been fairly steady for the Bowater employees as well as the contractor operations under their agreement with the exception of Upsala Forest Products that closed in March upon the death of the owner. There is a severance pay grievance filed on behalf of those members.

Firesteel Contractors, Shuniah Forest Products, Renewable Forest Products, Rigato-Ward Contractors and Highstone Logging all provide services to Bowater Thunder Bay operations and have had relatively consistent employment in 2010.

Niigaani Enterprises is also a contractor for Bowater under a separate agreement that is past due for renewal, this presents a challenge that will be met.

Buchanan Group;

McKenzie Forest Products in Hudson started up in May and closed indefinitely again at the end of August. All of the

Buchanan sawmills remain closed, along with the remanufacturing operation, SolidWood Research. The issue of severance payments is grieved and is being pursued, perhaps to arbitration in the New Year if necessary.

NAMYS;

We renewed the collective agreement with North American Mill Yard Services effective October 1st. The new 5 year agreement includes wage increases of \$1.95 over the term as well as improvements to the pension plan, vacation, and an additional floater. The agreement also included a revised spare operator letter of understanding giving the company some flexibility as well as modified language on severance pay to ensure that the money is available should it be required. The members ratified the agreement by 60%.

Lumberyards;

Work has been steady at Wanson Lumber, Biltrite Home Building Centre and North American Lumber this year. These agreements are up for

renewal at the end of February 2011.

Unitized Manufacturing has been busy this summer but as fall is here the workforce will soon be reduced as construction slows down.

Nor Shor Ready Mix work has been steady but not as busy as some past years; their agreement expires in April of next year.

Integrated Distribution Systems LP (Wajax) signed a two year rollover agreement in March which was approved by 100% of the members. This equipment dealer has been affected by the slowdown in the forest industry.

I take this opportunity to wish you a happy holiday season; may you find joy with family and friends, and may 2011 be a year of health and prosperity for all.



In Solidarity
Bruce Frost

Merry Christmas!

COCHRANE PLYWOOD PLANT FOR SALE - SPRUCE FALLS AND OPASATIKA WOODS HAVE A GOOD RUN AND WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS FROM GOGAMA AND SUDBURY. - Report of Brother Eric Carroll



Cochrane;

Times have been challenging to say the least for our members at True North Hardwood Plywood in Cochrane. Because of poor market conditions and limited wood orders, our members have been working a week here and there for most of the year. And this after being on a work sharing program during the previous year. The company has informed the Union that the Cochrane facility is for sale and that they were not going to

put any more money into the plant. This brings a lot of uncertainty and stress to our members at True North.

However, our members at the Tembec sawmill have been back at work since late last year, and they have been able to remain in operations despite an unstable market.

Kapuskasing;

The members at Spruce Falls' woodlands operation and the

Opasatika woodlands operation have been at work for the most part of the year. This is already looking to be a more successful year work wise for our members as opposed to the previous 3 years. The Spruce Falls office workers, on the other hand, are expected to be in negotiations early in the New Year.

Likewise, our members from North Cochrane Addiction Services are sitting down as we

speak to take demands in preparation for negotiating their new Collective Agreement that is due in November 2010.

Gogama;

I take this opportunity to welcome the members from the EACOM sawmill in Gogama to our Local. This small but efficient sawmill employs approximately 35 members and they also are getting ready for

Continued on page 5



ECONOMIC SITUATION PUTS DAMPER ON SAFETY COUNCIL ACTIVITY - YOUR JOINT HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE NEEDS YOUR HELP TO MAKE YOUR WORKPLACE SAFER - Report of Brother Jacques Jean, safety director

Because of the economics, no meeting of the Local's Safety Council have been scheduled this past year, and no one was sent to the National Safety Conference, but we have the intention of scheduling a meeting early next year. With the merger, we will now have more people around the table. We will be very pleased to welcome new members to our Council and are looking forward to working with them to address your health and safety issues.

SUPPORT FOR SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEES

Joint Health and Safety Committees play an integral role in the development of a safe and healthy workplace. While the legislation gives the employer the major responsibility for safety and health in the workplace, the worker has a right to participate in the development of safe procedures and policies, in the identification of

hazards or safety and health issues within the workplace, and in making recommendations for a safer, healthier working environment. The joint health and safety committee is the vehicle established through legislation that allows for the worker and employer to work together to this end.

Our field experience, along with feedback from our membership, has indicated that some committees are not functioning as effectively as they might. In response, the National officers along with Local Presidents and Local H&S Director's across the country has strengthened its workplace health and safety committee support by delivering safety training courses to USW health and safety activists. The purpose of this training is to enhance the functioning of existing committees and to encourage participation of new committees. The National and the Locals provides support to committees in

the form of direct consultation and committee education.

The objective is to help committee members identify where the committee weaknesses are and determine what changes can be made so that they will function more effectively. Sometimes a committee requires simple changes such as how the agenda is developed or meetings are set. Other times committees may want help in developing a set of ground rules from which to operate or they may decide committee members need more training.

You may have the best trained committee in the world, but if it doesn't have the support of the workers it will never truly be effective. For the committee to function successfully, it must have the input and feedback of all workers in each worksite. These are the people who are best informed about the hazards in the workplace and are in the best position to solve the health and safety problems in

the workplace - which is the rationale for the internal responsibility system. If your committee regularly reports there are no safety or health concerns at your workplace, they are not doing their job. No workplace is perfect!

There is no doubt that your workplace joint health and safety committee presents an opportunity for workers and management to share in solving workplace safety problems.

DON'T FORGET!

Support your joint health and safety committee.

We wish you a very happy holiday season, but please remember that drinking and driving don't mix.



In solidarity;
Jacques Jean

Happy New Year!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE LOCAL'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE !



Guy Bourguoin, President



Réal Vachon, 1st Vice-President



Jacques Jean, 2nd Vice-President



Bruce Frost, 3rd Vice-President



Roland Laurin, Financial Secretary



Eric Carroll, Recording Secretary



Léo Levasseur, Warden



More on page 6

COCHRANE...from page 4

upcoming negotiations. We look forward to working with these new members, brought to us by the recent merger of the Locals.

Sudbury;

I would also like to welcome the members of two new units

to our Local; first the Centre de la Santé, which is a group of four small walk-in clinics that offer various health services to the people of the Greater Sudbury area. This unit employs approximately 40 members who are currently getting ready for negotiations in the New Year.

We also welcome the members at the Canadian Blood Services, also in Sudbury. This unit hires approximately 35 members. We have just finished successful negotiations with them on the Pay Equity issue, and are looking forward to working with them.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year; may we all spend a joyful holiday season

among our loved ones.



In Solidarity,
Eric Carroll

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Denis McCarthy

UNITED STEELWORKERS
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1-2010
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HAPPY HOLIDAYS...from page 5



Roger Gauthier, Conductor



Robert Elliot, Zone 1



John Krahn, Zone 2



Kirk Haggart, Zone 3



Gary Pearson, Zone 3



Robert Bouvier, Zone 4



Marcel Rodrigue, Zone 4



Rémi St-Martin, Zone 5



Roger Béland, Zone 5

And from our trustees; Denis McCarthy, Daniel Jirovec, Daniel Touchette and Réjeanne Beger.

NEW UNITS...from page 3

matter of emergency, and that they should be working together in order to save this operation and the community.

Nakina;

This sawmill has been down for quite some time now. We did not have a chance to meet with the members there, but we are looking forward to do so in the near future. Also, with the Terrace Bay pulp mill reopening, we hope that the Nakina sawmill will re-open soon, but we have yet to receive confirmation from the company on this.

Kenogami Industries Inc.;

The former Longlac Wood Industries Inc. plants, that are now under new ownership, and presently named Kenogami Industries Inc. has not been in operation for several months, just like other plants in the region. The new owners are now looking at opening a new 'value added plant' in the former plywood building, with a possibility of re-hiring approximately 30 of our members. We are presently in discussions with the new company and trying to reach an agreement that would govern this new plant. Again, according to the new ownership, there are no plans to reopen the waferboard/plywood plants at this time, but the doors have not been totally closed on this option in the future.

Lecours Lumber;

As per our last discussions with the employer, there is going to be a shutdown yet again this year as Lecours Lumber is set to cease operations at the planer and sawmill. By the time you read this, the planer operations will have stopped as of October 29th while the sawmill will have stopped on November 12th. The target date for the reopening of both operations is set for February 28, 2011. Let's hope that the New-Year will bring an improvement in market conditions to help keep the mill running, and our members employed through the year.

Tembec-Hearst sawmill;

After a shutdown of 3 weeks, employees have now returned to work. We are hoping that the operations will continue and that our members will be working without having to go through anymore downtime.

Hearst & Area Association for Community Living;

We have scheduled days in December for negotiations. Our members Collective Agreement has expired on May 31st, 2010.

Aramark;

Our members' collective agreement will expire on December 31st, 2010. Demands have been

taken in order to put a document together in preparation for negotiations with the employer early next year.

Le Nord;

Our members Collective Agreement will expire at the end on January 2011. We will therefore meet with our members in order to take demands for the upcoming negotiations.

Columbia;

Our members at Columbia are currently limping along under a work sharing agreement. They are working 3 or 4 days a week with a reduced crew and no shift rotation due to a drastic reduction in orders and poor market conditions for over a year now. We are hoping that the market will improve shortly so that these members will not have to suffer further lay-offs when the work sharing agreement expires at the end of February, 2011.

I wish all of our members and their family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New-Year with family and friends. May the New-Year be bountiful and bring prosperity and health to us all.



In solidarity;
Jacques Jean