



The UNION ECHO

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Serving the workers of Northern Ontario



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In Union find strength

Winter 2008

STRIKE PAY TO DOUBLE BY 2010 MAJOR CHANGES TO EXECUTIVE BOARD

As your representatives should have reported to you by now, the International office has increased the strike fund from \$100 to \$200 per week by 2010 and with these changes passed at the last International Convention a dues increase had to be made. Your Local opted not to increase the membership dues and to pay the increase to the international from the Local Supplementary Strike fund. We were allowed to do this as the increase where related to the strike fund only. However, the Local could only apply this to the old I.W.A units

that were on the former I.W.A dues structure. To be fair to the newer unit organized under the U.S.W structure the local decided to stop their portion that these members were paying in the Supplementary Strike Fund. This is fair for all our membership and our Supplementary Strike Fund will continue to be sustainable.

Your Executive recognizes the hard time and the sacrifices our membership has done in order to maintain their employment and this is why we your Local Executive have opted for these

changes.

Also a few changes happened at the Executive Board level Brother Bruno Payant who was Second Vice-President took his pension and Brother Jacques Jean was appointed which left a vacant position as Financial Secretary and Brother Roland Laurin was appointed. We also had to appoint Brother Eric Carroll as Recording Secretary since Brother Etienne Gagnon has quite his employment at Abitibi to work for Ontario Hydro.



Guy Bourgouin, President

you and your family a beautiful holiday season filled with the warmth of friends and loved ones, and with the promise of a happy and prosperous new year.

In solidarity;
Guy Bourgouin



In closing I want to wish



Eric Carroll

COCHRANE & KAP LIMPING ALONG BUT NORBORD PLYWOOD HIT HARDEST IN WEAK MARKET

Cochrane
As reported in last summer's Echo, the Tembec Sawmill and Planing mill in Cochrane started their operations in late March to early April of this year with expectations that it would close again in June. Fortunately, they are still open this probably due to good production, a minimum of down time and good team work between management and the

membership. They are currently schedule to shut down at the end of November of this year, but hopefully market demand will increase now that the Canadian dollar is coming down.

Not such good news for our members working at the Norbord Plywood plant, also in Cochrane. The membership at Norbord had agreed back in June of this year to go on a work sharing program with Service Canada and Norbord fol-

lowing weak wood orders mostly on account of the housing market downturn in the United States. At first the intention was to work 3, 4 days a week and get compensated by UI for the remaining 1, or 2 days. Unfortunately, wood orders have been weaker than expected and our members are only working 1 or 2 days a week. A meeting was held on November 7th where the membership decided unanimously that it would be best to stay on the work sharing program

during these hard times and hope that the industry turns around in our favor sooner than later.

Kapuskasung

The Spruce Falls Woodlands employees have finally been called back to work since Mid-November after being on a lay-off for a while, some since last April. Since that time, many of our members have retired or quit to go work elsewhere. We wish them all the best.

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K-LAKE PLANT DOWN INDEFENITELY

OPERATIONS STRUGGLING THROUGH THE TOUGH TIMES

Kirkland Lake;

The Finger Jointing plant has been closed indefinitely and all severance pay monies have been put in trust for all employees that have been on lay-off for more than 35 weeks with no date of recall as of yet. There is one employee remaining that works 20 to 25 hours a week when they receive dressed lumber that has to be loaded on railroad cars.

Timmins;

Sadly there are no changes to be reported for the Tembec-Timmins operations. As for Domtar-Timmins, the sawmill and planer are still running on two shifts.

Chapleau;

Tembec-Chapleau and the Co-Gen power plant are both doing fine according to the latest news. Let's hope that they will keep it

up into the New Year.

Abitibi-Bowater;

As a result of having to cut cost and produce some cash flow the employees of Abitibi-Bowater were laid off for two weeks with the exception of a few delimeter operators and mechanics. The Company sold some of its surplus logs to Tembec-Cochrane and operations seem to be back to normal for this time of year.



Roland Laurin

I would like to wish all members a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year in these difficult times. Let's celebrate with friends and family and hope for brighter futures.

In solidarity;
Roland Laurin



THE WSIB AND YOU

First Level (the Board's Adjudicator Level)

These are the initial Board decisions made in your claim. Adjudicators and caseworkers make these decisions. There are different types of Adjudicators, such as Claim Adjudicators, Future Economic Loss (FEL) Adjudicators, Rem p l o y m e n t Adjudicators, and Heath Care Benefits Adjudicators. The board does not have Decision Review Specialist any longer. If you have an old decision by a Review Specialist, It is the same as a first-level decision.

Second Level (the Board's Appeals Branch)

If you appeal a first-level decision, the Board's Appeals Branch decides your appeal. These second-level decisions are made by Appeals Resolution Officers. In the past, these decisions were made by Appeals Officers, Hearing Officers, Re-instatement Officers, Mediation Officers, or an Appeal Board.

Third Level (the Appeals Tribunal)

If you appeal a second-

YOUR RIGHTS TO APPEAL

level Board decision, the Appeal Tribunal decides your appeal. This is the final level of appeal. Decision-makers at the Appeal Tribunal are not employees of the Board. But the recent changes in the law say that if there is a board policy that applies to your appeal, the Appeal Tribunal must follow that policy.

At each of these 3 levels, the Board or the Appeals Tribunal may try to settle an appeal with "mediation". A mediator tries to get everyone involved to come to a settlement so that there is no appeal

hearing. You do not have to agree to mediation at all. If you try mediation, but you are not happy with the settlement being offered, you do not have to agree to it. Instead, you can have your rights to worker's compensation decided at an appeal hearing.

Brother Guy Bourgoquin is our WSIB advocate. Please call him for any questions about your claim.



Guy Bourgoquin



The executive board and staff of your Local wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.



MILLS FEELING THE BRUNT OF THE RECESSION

BUT BETTER NEWS FOR HORNEPAYNE SCHOOL BOARD WORKERS

Olav Haavaldsrud;

On September 24th, the members at Olav Haavaldsrud Timber were asked to express themselves on a secret ballot vote in regards to a company proposal asking them to give wage concessions of \$2.00/hour for the next 24 months, this amount to be reimbursed to the employees if the company's finances improve. Again, this concession on the part of the employees at Olav Haavaldsrud is directly related to the global economic crisis that we are all witnessing today.

The company has been facing an uncertain future on account of the fire that burned down the sawmill a few years ago, followed by the downturn in the U.S. lumber market. This has put them in financial difficulty, forcing them to ask for the help of their employees. The period could be shortened if the Company's financial situation improves; the Union's auditors will review the company's books three times a year, and as soon as it is determined that the cash flow is good enough for the company to reimburse the employees, the company will do so at a rate of

10% of the amount owing per quarter. The company recognizes the efforts being made by the employees through these very difficult times.

Hornepayne Roman Catholic School Board; Separate

We have just finalized a successful round of negotiations with this employer. The parties first met on September 30th to exchanges demands. We met once again October 29th and 30th where we reached a satisfactory agreement. This new agreement is for four years ending on August 31st, 2012, with a 3% wage increase each year and a wage adjustment of \$1.50 per hour for the school secretary. The new Family Day holiday was introduced. We also added another floating holiday, bringing the total to 4 while increasing sick leave from 12 to 20 days per year. A new leave of 4 days per school year in case of illness in the immediate family was obtained and eye exams will be covered at 100% every 2 years. This new agreement was ratified at 100% by the members on November 19th.

Lecours Lumber;

Members at Lecours Lumber sawmill were laid off for a two weeks period and have restarted operations on October 27th. The operations at Lecours are still down to only 1 shift and we have no indication as to when or if the second shift will be called back.

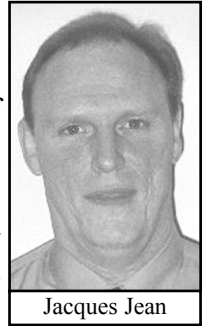
Tembec-Hearst sawmill;

The Company was supposed to be reopening the third shift in late summer to early fall but they recently announced that they would not be recalling the workers anytime soon. This again put some of our members' future back in question as they do not know whether they are going to be getting back to work for Tembec and their U.I. benefits have all but run out.

Columbia Forest Products;

The Company has laid-off several employees since September. Over 65 of our members have found themselves without work and this for an unspecified period. We hope they will be recalled as soon as possible, but again their recall is dependent on the recovery of the U.S. economy and the housing market.

The company, with the approval of the membership, has applied for a work sharing program



Jacques Jean

because they are working only 3 or 4 days a week, with a rare full week here and there. This program has since been approved for a duration of six months, starting on October 19th. We hope it will be helpful in seeing our members through these tough times.

Maison Renaissance:

The members at Maison Renaissance will have to put forward their demands shortly since their Collective Agreement is set to expire on March 31st 2009. A meeting will be schedule early in the New Year.

Please accept my best wishes for the up coming holiday season with hopes of a brighter future in the New Year.

In solidarity;
Jacques Jean



COCHRANE & KAP... from page 1

Still at Spruce Falls, both our Office Workers and our Woodlands members have been getting ready

for the upcoming negotiations which should be well on their way by the time you read this. I will be reporting the outcome in our next edition of the Echo.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and wish everyone all the best for 2009.

In Solidarity,
Eric Carroll



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WINTER DRIVING: PREPAREDNESS IS KEY TO SAFETY

Stay alert, slow down and stay in control - these are the three key elements of safe winter driving. Here are a few safety tips for those of us who have to travel to work or who will be travelling during the holiday season. Drive according to highway and weather conditions. Keep a safe distance between you and the vehicle in front of you. Avoid situations where you may have to brake suddenly on a slippery surface.

Be Prepared - Driver's Checklist

Get your vehicle winter-ready with a maintenance check-up. Don't wait for winter to have your battery, belts hoses, radiator, oil, lights, brakes, exhaust system, heater/defroster, wipers, and ignition system checked. Make sure your vehicle is mechanically ready for the rigors of winter and keep your fuel tank sufficiently full - at least half a tank is recommended. Make sure you have sufficient windshield washer fluid in the reservoir and that it is rated in the -40°C temperature range. Keep an extra jug in the vehicle.

The condition of your vehicle's tires is very important. Worn and damaged tires can hamper your ability to drive safely. Have them checked or replaced before winter begins. Remember to check tire air pressure frequently, as it decreases in cold weather. While regular or "all-season" tires, including wide and high-performance tires, may be adequate in some areas, they may not be suitable for driving in the Snow Belt regions of southern Ontario and throughout the north. If you live and drive in these areas, consider using winter tires. They improve driving safety by providing better traction, braking and handling during frost, snow, slush, and particularly under icy conditions. Installing four winter tires provides greater control and stability. Never mix tires of different tread, size and construction. If extended periods of icy conditions are the norm in your area, consider installing studded winter tires.

REMEMBER, winter tires alone do not make your car skid proof; reduce speed and stay in control.

Check weather and travel conditions before

heading out. Don't take chances if the weather is bad. Allow yourself extra time for travel, or wait until conditions improve. For provincial highway condition information, call: TRAVELLERS' ROAD INFORMATION at 1-800-268-4686. This number is also available in the blue pages of your telephone directory or on the Internet at <http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/traveller/index.html>. The Weather Network is also updated regularly with current highway conditions.

If you are travelling a long distance, plan your route ahead of time. Let someone know of your destination and expected time of arrival. Wear comfortable clothing that doesn't restrict your movement while at the wheel. Keep warm clothing for getting out of your vehicle. Clear snow and ice from all windows, lights, mirrors, and the roof. After starting your vehicle, wait for the fog to clear from the interior of the windows so you will have good visibility all around. Keep a winter survival kit in your vehicle. Having essential supplies can provide some comfort and safety for you and your passengers should you become stranded.

If you are in an area with cell phone service and have a cell phone, use it only when necessary. When you need help, pull well off the road to make or receive a call. Dialing 911 on your cell phone will connect you with the emergency services contact centre in the area. Please use 1-888-310-1122 for non-emergencies.

If you experience car trouble on an Ontario provincial highway (400, 401, etc.) we recommend that you stay in your vehicle while waiting for help to come to avoid personal injury.

Play it safe - Arrive alive!

Severe winter driving conditions may make you nervous, uncomfortable, or fearful. Stay off the road unless your trip is absolutely necessary. Proper preparation and the right skills will help you face the challenge of winter driving.

Adapted from the M.T.O. web site at:
<http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/winterdrive/winterdrive.htm>