



The UNION ECHO

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



Volume 14 Issue 1

Unity and Strenth for workers

Winter 2012



GOOD NEWS FOR COCHRANE TRUE NORTH HARDWOOD PLYWOOD PLANT UP AND RUNNING AGAIN

Cochrane;

Finally some good news for our members in Cochrane: the True North Hardwood Plywood plant had their official grand opening on August 13th. Since then the plant has been operating on a one shift schedule. With orders coming in and employees anxious to get back at work, all we are now waiting for is for round wood to be coming in the yard on a more constant basis.

Also in Cochrane, the members at the Tembec sawmill have ratified a new 6 year Collective Agreement at 94%. This new agreement includes wage increases of 1% in 2013, 1.5% in 2014, 2% in 2015 and 2016, and a \$1,000.00 signing bonus. Also included in the agreement are increases to the tool allowance, the safety boot allowance, the bridging supplement, and the dental care plan, just to name a few.

As for our members at the Three Nation Logging operation out of Cochrane, membership meetings are scheduled to take place to get the demands from the membership for the upcoming

negotiations. Their Collective Agreement expired on November 30 of this year.

Kapuskasing;

As for our members at Spruce Falls, we finally were able to finish negotiations. These negotiations had been ongoing since December 2008. After dealing with all Local issues and coming at an impasse with the Company for the Main Collective Agreement, the Company handed to the Union a last offer to bring to the membership. Our Woodlands and Office Workers there accepted at 57% and 58% respectfully the Company's offer. In this new 5 year agreement, the members get wage increases of 1% in 2015 and 1.5% in 2016.

Opasatika;

In Opasatika we are still waiting for dates to negotiate for both the woodlands operations and the truckers operations. Also in Opasatika, our members at La Maison Arc-En-Ciel have ratified a new 3 year Collective Agreement at 63%. This new agreement offers a new pension plan, increases in boot allowance, and wage

increases of 50 cents per year for each year of the Collective Agreement.

Sudbury;

Ongoing negotiations are taking place and hopefully by the time this report is out we will have a new agreement there for our members that work for the Canadian Blood Services in Sudbury.

Timmins;

The members at the EACOM sawmill ratified a new 5 year agreement with the possibility of a 3 year extension to the agreement should the Company invest a certain amount of dollars over and above what the insurance Company was paying out because of the damage the fire left last summer. If this investment is made, it will make the Timmins mill the most high tech mill that EACOM owns. The negotiating committee was facing hard decisions to be made. With a sawmill burnt down and the lumber industry still in difficult times, the Company was looking for a long term agreement and flexibility. We were able to get increases on tool allowance, safety boot

allowance, severance pay allowance, vision care, dental care, and wage increases of 1% in 2012 and 2013, 1.5% in 2014 and 2015, and a \$500.00 signing bonus, plus the possibility of getting higher wage increases should the mill reach certain production targets. And this is just to name a few. The members ratified this new agreement only at 53%.

Chapleau;

We are ready for upcoming negotiations for both the Tembec sawmill and the Cogen. Their Collective Agreement expired in August and we are looking at dates to sit down with the Company to try to get a new Collective Agreement for our members there in Chapleau.

At this time, I would also like to wish everyone a Merry X-Mas and a Happy New Year and may the New Year bring us hope and prosperity.

In Solidarity,
Eric Carroll

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!

From the Executive Board
and Staff of your Local



PRESIDENT'S CORNER NEW EXECUTIVE BOARD AND FOREST INDUSTRY IMPROVING

Some of you may have noticed that it's been awhile since members have seen a newsletter. We do apologize for this as the local had to change editors and the programs had to be transferred to the local. The new editor will be Melanie Aubin, our secretary at the Local. Since the last issue, a lot has happened in the Local.

We had our first local 1-2010 convention held in Hearst on April 19th and 20th. All positions were up for election and new board members were elected. On your behalf I want to thank the executive board for accepting to represent the membership in their region and look forward to building a stronger and more vibrant Local that the membership can be proud of.

We have also started negotiations for different sectors and have set a pattern for the sawmill industries with Tembec Cochrane. With this sector we can say that the worst of the industry is behind us, as you will read in the representative report.

We are still in the process of trying to set a pattern with the woodland sector; hopefully this will be set before the New Year.

We were also successful in re-starting TrueNorth Plywood in Cochrane. It was a hard and lengthy process but it was all worth the efforts. I want to thank, on your behalf, brother Eric Carroll and brother Girard Lamothe for going over the call of duty for the membership of True North.

We are also in the process of negotiating a new Collective agreement for the sawmill in Ignace, which has been idled for more than five years. Resolute Forest Products has announced major capital investment for this sawmill that will bring 100 members back to work. Hopefully we will report in our next issue the results of our negotiations.

As you can see things are looking brighter for our membership and in closing I would like to say: Faith makes all things possible, Hope makes all things work, Love makes all things beautiful, May you have all three for Christmas and have a safe and happy New Year.

In Solidarity;
Guy Bourguoin

The new officers of Local 1-2010 are:

President	Guy Bourguoin	Kapuskasing
1st Vice-President	Real Vachon	Hearst
2nd Vice-President	Jacques Jean	Kapuskasing
3rd Vice-President	Bruce Frost	Thunder Bay
Financial Secretary	Eric Carroll	Kapuskasing
Recording Secretary	Remi St-Martin	Chapleau
Warden	Leo Levasseur	Hearst
Conductor	Girard Lamothe	Cochrane
Board Members:		
Zone 1	Vacant as we have no units	
Zone 2	John Krahn	Ignace
	Jason Lacko	Thunder Bay
Zone 3	Gary Pearson	White River
Zone 4	Réjean Laurin	Hearst
	Marcel Rodrigue	Hearst
Zone 5	Roger Beland	Gogama
	Jean Laurin	Timmins
Trustees	Daniel Touchette	Cochrane
	Rejeanne Beger	Hearst
	Dave Lyght	Thunder Bay

GLOBAL FORESTRY SOLIDARITY FUND

SEEING THE WORKING CONDITIONS IN CHILE: AN EYE OPENING EXPERIENCE

I was fortunate to be asked to be part of a delegation that is part of the Global Forestry Solidarity fund and which traveled to Chile to meet with the Chilean forestry workers.

We participated in a Safety conference giving the delegates a Canadian flavour on safety, the importance on negotiating good safety language in collective agreements and how to reduce injuries with strong active committees.

We met with forestry workers and exchanged on how we do things in Canada. We showed them how they can learn from our negotiation experience to improve their lives and working conditions.

The minimum wage in the country is \$ 250,000 pesos (\$ 500 U.S.) per month. We visited a Company called Aruco which is a huge employer who on one site has a brand new paper mill, sawmill, particle board plant, co-generation plant and

forestry workers. The minimum rate for this company was \$ 325,000 pesos (\$ 650 U.S.) per month and the highest was \$ 800,000 pesos (\$ 1,600 U.S.) per month.

The ones who get the \$ 800,000 pesos are few and apart and are truck drivers that have to work 12 to 16 hours a day, six days a week. Our sawmill workers averages \$4,160 Canadian per month on a 8 hours a day, 5 days a week schedule. The lowest paid workers were the forestry

workers. In some cases they don't even get minimum wages. We spoke to some of the truck drivers who had newly formed a union. Their reason for joining this union was to get a 12 hours a day and a 6 day work week.

In Chile they have huge pine plantations that will take 20 years to grow into 20 inch diameter trees. Our Trees take 100 years and they don't get that big. They also grow Eucalyptus trees for the paper mill.

cont'd on page 6



ONGOING AND FINALIZED NEGOTIATIONS

CENTRAL REGION OF THE LOCAL

Negotiations have begun for all the sawmills and woodlands operations. A six (6) year tentative agreement was reached at Tembec Enterprises Inc. (Hearst sawmill) on September 25th. This 6 year agreement was ratified by the members at 78% on September 27th, and includes increases in the wages, tool allowance, boots allowance, Pension Plan, and also changes on the language in different Articles.

The parties have met to exchange documents for the Tembec woodland's Collective Agreement earlier this year and did meet on November 27th and 28th.

An agreement was reached with the Hearst Farmers Coop with the ratification of the members on October 4th, 2012 at 83%. This is a 2 year agreement with an increase in the wages of only 1% for the second year, increase in the maximum coverage for Dental Care, an increase of 1% in the Profit Sharing, and also the addition of a clothing allowance that the employees were already receiving but was not part of the Collective Agreement.

A two (2) years agreement with increases of 2% for each year of the agreement was reached at Le Nord newspaper on April 12, 2012.

Negotiations have begun with Olav

Haavalsrud Timber. The parties met on November 5th & 6th and are scheduled to meet again on December 17th, 18th, and 19th.

The Hearst & Area for Community Living negotiations for a renewal of the Collective Agreement has not begun yet since no dates have been scheduled, but this will be done shortly.

The Local has applied for conciliation in reference to the negotiations with Hearst Tri-Cept since negotiations there are not going forward. No dates to resume negotiations have been scheduled yet.

HEALTH & SAFETY

The Local's Health and Safety Council has met at the Local's Kapuskasing office on November 23, 2012. About a dozen of our Health and Safety Co-Chairs did participate. New Sisters and Brothers were present since it was the first meeting held under Local 1-2010. A new Executive was elected, ideas were exchanged, issues were brought forward, and Brother Wayne Glibbery from the Health and Safety Centre made a presentation on all the trainings the Centre is offering to workers.

In Solidarity;
Jacques Jean



Health & Safety co-chairs present at the meeting held on November 23, 2012 (from left to right: Guy Bourgouin, Robert Cassan, Jacques Jean, Guy Veilleux, Jean Laurin, Réjean Laurin, Jean-Roger Veilleux, Rémi St-Martin, Francine Lefrançois, Daniel Sauvé, Gaetan Carrier, Denyse Korpela, Gilbert Kahara, Gary Dupuis, Donald Loveday)



Presentation from Brother Wayne Glibbery of the Health & Safety Centre

ROLAND LAURIN RETIRES AFTER 19 YEARS OF SERVICE TO MEMBERSHIP



On June 1st 2012, Roland decided to retire after 19 years of service to the membership of Local 1-2010. In October 1993 Roland started working with the Local as a full time representative. He was a former woodland worker for Lévesque Lumber. Roland was always in the forefront of advancing workers' rights, wages and benefits and was then

approached to work for the Local. Roland held numerous positions on the executive board. He will be remembered for his keen financial skills which the Local benefited from with the collapse of the forest industry. But mostly he will be remembered and missed by the membership he serviced.

On behalf of the membership I

want to thank you Roland for your 19 years of service to the Local and your devotion to advance our membership's working conditions.

So enjoy your Fishing and your hunting as you have certainly deserved it.

Fraternally,
Guy Bourgouin
President

50th ANNIVERSARY OF REESOR SIDING INCIDENT

On February, 1963 during the early morning hours, 3 men were shot to death and 8 wounded in one of the bloodiest labour conflicts in Canada. This incident happened at Reesor Siding between the town of Mattice and Opasatika Ontario. The men who were shot were bush workers members of our local that were on strike against Spruce Falls Power and Paper Company.

The people responsible for the shooting were not police officers or convicts hired by the company; they were simple agricultural farmers, who believed they were protecting their livelihoods. The strike did not only involve the union and the company but also the farmers from the surrounding area, who were increasing their annual income with the sale of fiber to Spruce Falls.

The strikers were objecting that the farmers continued to bring fiber to the company evidently weakening the union and their negotiations.

The strikers began to take action to stop the wood flow from the settlers to the mill by stopping independent truck driver and unloading the trucks and unloading trains cars that were at different landings. The action of the strikers effectively stopped the farmer's wood in reaching the mill. The situation was critical because wood had to be hauled before spring thaw.

Reesor Siding was a Railroad Siding between Opasatika and Mattice and it was used by the Val Rita Coop Cutting Operation as a depot for the pulp wood and a place to load the pulp wood on the wagon

train. During the preceding weeks of the morning of February 11, the cords of woods stored at Reesor Siding had been unpile or rampaged on two occasions by the strikers. The first time this occurred; four hundred cords had been unpile and the second time, seven hundred cords. Consequently, the farmers started to guard the cords of woods.

During the night of February 10, there were six hundred cords at Reesor Siding ready to be loaded on the cars. The strikers heard about this and had full intention to go and unpile the wood. The O. P. P. had seen several vehicles full of strikers heading for Reesor Siding. Those police officers advised other police officers that were in the area of Reesor Siding. At midnight, the police arrived at Reesor Siding and advised the farmers that the strikers were coming. At approximately 12:30 a.m. between four and five hundred strikers arrived. Within a few minutes three strikers were shot and killed and eight were wounded by the farmers.

The deceased were Irène and Joseph Fortier (brothers) from Palmarolle, Québec and Fernand Drouin from St. Elzéar. Irène Fortier was thirty-four years old, was married and had two children. His brother, Joseph was twenty-five years old and was also married. Fernand Drouin was twenty-five years old and was single. The wounded were Harry Bernard, Ovila Bernard, Joseph Boly, Alex Hachey, Albert Martel, Joseph Mercier, Léo Ouimet and Daniel Tremblay. The deceased were transported to their native's town for the



funerals.

The twenty farmers were immediately arrested by the police that were there and fourteen guns had been seized. The twenty farmers were initially charged on February 11, for illegal use of firearms with the intention of wounding. Then the farmers were released on a 500,00 \$ bail each. A couple of days later the Crown Attorney laid some new charges against the farmers. They were now accused of three counts of non-capital murder. At the time if one was found guilty of non-capital murder, he was only put in jail and could not be put to death by hanging.

Following the Reesor Siding incident, the Attorney General Fred Cass sent two hundred O.P.P.'s to assist the twenty-five already in Kapuskasing. Warrants for the arrest of two hundred and thirty-seven strikers had been issued. They were accused of having participated in a riot. The strikers and the leaders of Local 2995 had cooperated fully with the police. By February 15, there were one

hundred and twenty-one strikers that had given themselves to the police and they were brought to Monteith, an old camp for prisoners of war, at approximately two and one half hours from Kapuskasing (Monteith is now a Provincial Penitentiary). It was not very long that the strikers were released on bail. The union Head Office paid two hundred dollars for each striker to get them released on bail.

However, the Union was not only preoccupied with the legal problems, they still had a strike to negotiate. Immediately after the fusillade, the negotiations had been taken over by the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Mr. Leslie Rowntree. Thursday, February 14, after nineteen hours of nonstop negotiations, a solution to resolve the strike was proposed.

Friday, February 15, and Saturday, February 16, the so-called "Solution" was presented to the members of Longlac and Kapuskasing. Then the vote was taken. The offer was accepted and the workers returned to work immediately.

cont'd on page 5

Reesor... from page 4

However, this Agreement did not please everyone.

Joseph Laforce, President of Local 2995 and the executive board of LSWU had accepted the agreement simply because the Government of Ontario had threatened to legislate the bush workers back to work if they refused this solution. By accepting this solution the Union had some input in the making of the Collective Agreement by participating in the Arbitration process. If the Government was to legislate, the members back to work then the Union would not have had any participation at all. Furthermore, Joseph Laforce said that if the Ontario Government had legislated the members back to work that would create a dangerous precedent.

The strike was over, however there remained the legal proceedings for the twenty farmers who had been charged for non-capital murder and the two hundred and fifty-four strikers charged for illegal assembly. The court found

that one hundred and thirty-eight strikers were guilty and were charged two hundred dollars each. The charges were paid by the International Union.

The court proceedings for the farmers were held in October, 1963, at the Provincial District Court of Cochrane (in the town of Cochrane). After the testimonies and the evidence were presented, the seven men jury had withdrawn (deliberated) for two and one half days. The decision of the Jury was that due to lack of evidence the farmers could not be tried for murder and also must be set free without any conditions. However, Judge McRuer found that three of the farmers, were guilty of being in possession of dangerous firearms. He imposed a fine of one hundred and fifty dollars each.

This strike had a profound effect on the bush workers in the Kapuskasing region. In the following ten years after the strike, the working conditions and wages for the

bush workers were increased considerably. The strike also had the effect of creating a sense of fraternity in the town of Kapuskasing. The strike also marked the decline in the industry of farmer/bush worker or the Coop in the area. The system of co-farmers / bush workers also declined because more and more of the sons of the farmers were leaving the farms to go and work in the bush for Spruce Falls, where the wages were much better.

The death of three men at Reesor Siding was an unnecessary tragedy. Lack of effective intervention by the Government, the inflexibility of Spruce Falls and above all the lack of understanding between the strikers and the farmers has inevitably caused violence. Two groups of people, the farmers and the strikers, with the same goal (to make a decent living) and a common adversary (the management of Spruce Falls) had a serious lack of communication that led to serious repercussions.

During the strike, the Union attempted to demonstrate to the farmers that the strike would benefit them and the members. The Union offered to feed and give some firewood to those farmers who were affected by the strike. The farmers did not listen. The strikers then were forced to use certain tactics and the farmers used firearms to defend the livelihood of their families. The end result was inevitably increase tension and finally death.

Human nature is such, that when threatened, one way or the other we defend ourselves. Therefore, one could easily believe that the farmers at Reesor Siding, in the morning of February 11, 1963 were simply protecting their lives and livelihood. Having said this, are six hundred cords of pulpwood worth the lives of three men?

Excerpts of the text written by Martin Champoux



UPCOMING NEGOTIATIONS FOR RESOLUTE FOREST PRODUCTS WOODLANDS AND TWO OF OUR UNITS DOWN

Woodlands:

AbitibiBowater changed their name to Resolute Forest Products and have been working steadily for most of the year. Investments have been made at both the Thunder Bay pulp and paper mill as well as their Thunder Bay sawmill. Negotiations are also planned for the renewal of the agreement at the Ignace Sawmill in preparation for the planned expansion and restart of this operation in late 2013 or early 2014.

With the woodlands we have

settled the OLRB matters and the ongoing jurisdictional grievances and are preparing for negotiations for the renewal of the collective agreement that expired on October 31, 2012. In the last 3 year agreement we gave concessions to assist the Company through the difficult times and although times are still not the best we expect to regain those concessions and move forward.

There have been additions made to the list of contractors under the Collective Agreement supplying fibre to

the Resolute Forest Products mills which has increased the amount of union wood from the companies' limits to those mills.

Niigaani Enterprises who had been contracting with RFP under a separate collective agreement on the Black Sturgeon Forest in the Gull Bay area went out of business in July leaving 35 members out of work. We are hopeful that a new contractor can be found who will reemploy these former members.

North American Mill yard

Services (NAMYS) contracts the yard work at the Resolute Sawmill; the planned 3rd shift in the mill should maintain and increase employment there.

Lumberyards:

Home Building Centre (Bilrite) closed their doors this spring entering bankruptcy, leaving our 7 members out in the cold.

Wanson Lumber and North American Lumber were both busy through the summer supplying steady employment through the year. We did have a termination at Wanson

cont'd on page 6

This newsletter is published by:

USW

Local 1-2010

20 Riverside Drive
Kapuskasing, Ont.
P5N 1A3

Tel: (705) 335-2289

Fax: (705) 335-5428

E-Mail:

uswakap@ntl.sympatic
o.ca

Executive Board

President:

Guy Bourgouin

1st Vice-President:

Réal Vachon

2nd Vice-President

Jacques Jean

3rd Vice-President:

Bruce Frost

Financial Secr.:

Eric Carroll

Recording Secr.:

Rémi St-Martin

Conductor:

Girard Lamothe

Warden:

Léo Levasseur

Executive at large:

Zone 2:

John Krahn

Jason Lacko

Zone 3:

Gary Pearson

Zone 4:

Réjean Laurin

Marcel Rodrigue

Zone 5:

Roger Beland

Jean Laurin

Trustees:

Daniel Touchette

Réjeanne Beger

Dave Lyght

UNITED STEELWORKERS
USW
MÉTALLOS
LOCAL 1-2010

USW 1-2010 UNION ADVANTAGE
L'AVANTAGE SYNDICAL OPEIU 166

Chile... from page 2

We also saw a city built in a valley by a naval port where there could be good environmental industrial development. Instead we saw two new coal generation plants built on each side of the port and two other new plants to be built beside the other polluting coal generators. Our guide showed us where he lives in the same valley and where he has to sweep off the soot off his car every morning. Imagine what two more plants will do to the people's health.

In Canada we are moving away from this polluting type of electrical energy source. In Chile the government tells the Companies to pick the site they

want to build on, as they need electricity in the north for mining; and by the way, too bad for the people and the environment. The sad part is most of these companies are Canadian.

What I came out with on the trip to Chile is that it is such a beautiful country but I saw what a neo liberal government and the quest for the mighty dollar can do to destroy a country, its people and its environment.

Like you, I had seen it on the television and read or heard about it but to see it from my own eyes and to hear it from our brothers in Chile was for me a personal eye opening experience. It is important more

than ever to continue educating our brothers in Chile and help them improve their working conditions, which will at the same time improve their lives in this global environment. We have to put an end to this race to the bottom.

When you think of it, it's a bit selfish on our part, because by helping them, we help ourselves. I want to thank the Global Forestry Solidarity Fund for giving me the chance to experience such a worthwhile life changing experience.

In Solidarity;
Guy Bourgouin



Molding plant employees on strike and seeking severance pay



Speaking at the Health & Safety conference of the CTF

Bruce Frost... from page 5

Lumber but have not been able to settle this and arbitration is pending.

Unitized Manufacturing continues to stay busy and is working with a renewed 3 year agreement ratified in July that expires April 30, 2015.

Integrated Distribution Systems LP (Wajax): This equipment dealer has struggled with the slowdown in the forestry industry. The workforce has reduced over the years to just 2 parts men and 3 heavy

equipment mechanics. We are negotiating a new agreement designed to facilitate growth of the business into several more sectors. Hopefully this will allow the business to flourish and secure these and future jobs in the years ahead.

Buchanan Group: The McKenzie sawmill in Hudson has secured an operating licence for the mill. Hopefully obstacles like wood supply and market conditions can be overcome and this operation can restart in the future.

Overall things on the Thunder Bay side of the local have improved over the past year. Here's hoping the New Year brings better economic times to the industry and Northern Ontario.

Best wishes to all for a happy holiday season, good health and prosperity for the New Year.

In Solidarity;
Bruce Frost