



The Conciliator

UNIFOR Local594 | Canada

204 Hodsman Road, Regina, SK.
<http://cep594.sasktelwebsite.net/>

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• EXECUTIVE

President:

Kevin Bittman

Recording Secretary:

Carla McCrie

Treasurer:

Kaleena Baulin

Negotiating Chairperson:

Dan Josephson

Maintenance V.P.:

Abe Mejia

Process V.P.:

George Brailean

Administration V.P.:

Angela Smart

PDD V.P.:

(vacant)

Chief Shop Steward:

Richard Exner

Information Officer:

Abe Mejia

Guide:

Vivian Molnar

Sergeant at Arms:

Brandon Klatt

Trustees:

Daryl Watch (15)

Daryl Schwartz (16)

Amy Wisniewski (17)

Happy New Years

As I sat down to write this article, it was hard to decide what I was going to write about with so much going on in the last few years; the past three years of incidents have taken its toll on us and our workplace. The company's apparent solution to the incidents is to turn to outside consultants rather than listening to the people that have fought the fires, worked the hours and have a vested interest in seeing an incident free workplace. Policies, procedures, acronyms and endless paperwork seems to be the solution whether it makes the work safer or not.

Too often we get into the habit of staying focused on the negatives. I would like to start the year off right by sending you a positive message. So in this article I will focus on some of the positive things that have been happening within UniFor Local 594.

Our Local has seen challenges in the past few years that we have not had to deal with in our history. We are seeing issues arise that other Unions have had to deal with, when big business and the bottom line become the consuming priority. These changes have caused our members to be very busy and the past year was just that for our Local.

I believe despite these challenging times it is also a very encouraging time when we look at the young people in our membership. We are seeing the next generation being engaged and involved with Union committees and holding positions on the Executive. As our membership grows in diversity and the demographics change, we must move with it. Out of eight filled Executive officers positions, three are held by women. In a male dominated industry, we must remember of the struggles that our sisters face working in our plant.

We have also been working hard to engage the future leaders in our local. Half of our Executive officers are under the age of 35. These leaders are changing our Local and the faces at general meetings are getting younger and younger. We need to give these young leaders the tools to succeed. Our Local has always prided itself on being able to look after ourselves. The older generation has been working hard to mentor and transfer the knowledge to the up and comers. Continuous improvement is essential. We need to listen to what our members are saying, to ensure that we keep moving forward and getting better as a local.

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• **SHOP STEWARDS**

Section IA:

Nathan Kraemer

Section IB:

Charles Brittner

Section II:

Billy Hamilton

Section III:

Curtis Baht

Section IV:

Travis Parker

Section V:

Chad Thompson

Scott Girard

Building Maintenance:

Garth Wendel

MRP:

Rob Jenkins

Ryan Fox

Pipefitters:

Wayne Globisch

Mechanics:

Derek Kups

Stores:

Brenda Curtis

Electrical:

Les Bonkowski

Jason Kelly

Instrumentation:

John Tyler

Inspection:

Keith Britton

Fire & Safety:

Daryl Watch

Administration:

Charlene Rae

Lab:

Mike Fink

Ray Strueby

Pumpers:

Ryan Dzioba

Decokers:

Jon Javorik

Welders:

Jim Milton

Scaffolders:

Nelson Wagman

Construction:

Mike Pelzer

Boilerhouse:

Ricky Nygaard

Insulators:

Kris Atkinson

Happy New Years continued....

Your Executive has been very busy. It is important to remember these people are often doing Union work or at a meeting on their own time. The change with the CRC leadership has brought us more grievances, and with more grievances our meeting workload has also gone up. With every step of every grievance there is a preparation meeting in advance of the actual meeting. That is not to mention the letters and communications we must send the company every step of the way.

Our Steward list is as full as it has ever been. Remember these people are your voice at the Executive meetings. We have been trying to do a better job of getting our stewards together more often to talk about issues that concern their individual departments. With bargaining only a year away, it is important for you to talk to your stewards and VP to ensure you are being heard. I fully expect that in the next year we will start to see more stewards at the Executive meetings giving voice to your concerns.

In 2014, we have successfully re-wrote the Local's bylaws and policies to conform with the new National UniFor Constitution. We have worked hard with the dedication of Executive Officers to have better functioning committees. A positive sign that we are succeeding is the over 260 people that attended our Union Christmas party put together by your Social Committee.

Our Strike committee has been working effectively since our last bargaining year and I expect their work and meetings will start to ramp up and get ready for bargaining in 2016.

The five member Law Committee has been meeting frequently. They have been doing research on Case Law, Labour Law, and other regulations. This committee is a very valuable asset to our Union. When we look at the recent Park Street move, we need to work with our legal counsel and our Law committee to fight and stay ahead of the company's attacks on our CBA and members.

In June, we will be having our last election before we head into an always critical time, bargaining of our next collective agreement. We will have to work hard to deal with the reality of not bargaining with a cooperative, but more of a Company that is acting like the corporations from which was the reason they formed in the first place. A Company that only cares about improving their bottom line, even if it means taking money out of your pocket.

I want to thank all of the members that have volunteered, stood up, defended rights, helped out with union work, union leave, been a great employee, co-worker, brother or sister, or just came out to a meeting to be informed. Every little thing matters and helps build the best workforce, and Union, that we are and always will be proud of.

In closing, 2015 will be another busy year. We must continue to listen and grow as a group. We are living in pretty good times and our battles seem substantial, but it is important to remember in the history of the Labour movement, there has been a lot of people that have had to fight life and death battles, so we would only have to fight the small ones. The battles we have we must face them together. We are always stronger when we stay united. I am very proud of our membership and our workforce. It does not matter what challenge or fight is in front of us, if we confront it with morals and integrity, we will always come through with our heads held high and with our dignity.

In Solidarity, Kevin Bittman - Union President

The Hazards of Social Media

Social media is just a new medium for the same old dialogue. Social networking websites and apps, like Facebook, and Twitter among others, have woven themselves into the fabric of our modern culture. Our everyday reliance on this means of communication for news and information is tremendous resource, but it also has the potential to cause harm.

Social media can blur the lines between personal and professional life as employees, peers, and supervisors may all become connected. Problems arise when employees post comments, often for all to see, about their employers or colleagues, about their personal lives, or when work-related issues are not left at work. Social media tends to be used inappropriately for harassment, commonly referred to as ‘Cyberbullying’.

There are numerous cases of employees being suspended or terminated for social media overuse, and inappropriate and insensitive comments or tweets. The news is filled with social media embarrassments and blunders. It is not uncommon for companies to google and investigate the online activities of prospective employees during the hiring process.

It is important to remember that the internet has an infinite memory. Everything you post, tweet or comment about when online will live forever. That ‘hilarious’ off-color Facebook comment you made on your friends timeline becomes property of Facebook. Even if you think you deleted or removed the possibly inappropriate post, it will be forever archived on their servers.

It is critical that your online activity does not negatively effect your employment. The simplest thing to do is not to post or send an email when you are angry or upset. Use common sense and filter your interactions by not using inappropriate language that someone may find offensive. You should also adjust your privacy settings to include only those you trust to view your posts. It is potentially hazardous to be friends with supervisors or managers on social networking sites. It is often this connection that lands employees in hot water. Defriending, unfollowing or blocking management is not a hundred percent effective. A mutual friend may like, share or comment and allow a supervisor to gain access to your post. The most effective way to protect yourself from reprimand is to conduct yourself in a responsible manner and be smart about what you share on the internet.

The safest way to interact online is not exist online. Which is inherently impossible in todays world.

“A hazard of social networking is that people will read what you write.”

Last Laugh



“I SOLVED THE UNION PROBLEM. I MADE EVERYONE MANAGEMENT!”

Staying Connected

Our Communication Committee has options for you to stay connected to news and information regarding our local.

Website. <http://cep594.sasktelwebsite.net/>
(updated version coming soon)

Email. unifor594webmaster@sasktel.net

Twitter. @Unifor594

Facebook. Unifor Fiveninefour

General Meetings. Fourth Tuesday of every month at the Union Hall.

Canadian Labour Congress Election Preparation Conference: A Union Perspective

My name is Jason Kelly and I am an Electrical Shop Steward and a member of the newly formed Law Committee. I recently attended the Canadian Labour Congress Election Preparation Conference in Saskatoon along with two other union members.

The most important message conveyed at this event was how essential it is that, as union members, we all become informed about the upcoming federal and provincial elections. The current Conservative governments, running our province and country, are very anti-union. They have no regard for the middle class and little respect for senior citizens.

The negligent underfunding of healthcare and education is setting our country up to be a privatized disaster, much like our neighbours to the south, all in the name of corporate profit.

Furthermore, recent changes in provincial and federal law have made it more difficult for workers to form and maintain unions. When the Brad Wall Government made changes to the Trade Union Act, which included changing the name to Saskatchewan Employment Act, it included several damaging pieces of legislation to unions.

One such provision is summarized on the Canadian Bar Association website by Juliana Saxberg, as follows; Section 6-33 of the SEA introduces a requirement that, if employers and unions “are unable, after bargaining in good faith, to conclude a collective agreement”, one party “shall” notify the Minister that they “have reached an impasse.” The term “impasse” is nowhere defined. Upon receipt of such notice the Minister “shall” appoint a labour relations officer (“LRO”) (who is, by operation of s. 6-119, an employee of the Minister) or a unilaterally-appointed special mediator or conciliation board “to mediate or conciliate the dispute”. Job action is totally prohibited until fourteen days *after* the LRO, mediator or conciliation board either issues a report indicating settlement terms will not be recommended, or recommended terms of settlement have been rejected by the parties. In short, the new s.6-33 enacts significant delay and barriers to effective job action by either employers or unions. In a 2008 review of the *Canada Labour Code’s* provisions governing work stoppages, options for a similar cooling off period were rejected by all stakeholders, who saw any form of cooling off period as an impermissible limit on the right to strike that would be offensive to freedom of association as protected by s.2(d) the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

“We, as union members, must work together to make the positive change required to ensure our future remains strong and fair.”

Can you imagine our workplace without a union? That is the goal of our current government for of Saskatchewan. They are a group of business minded politicians who have no regard for the working class and their needs. We, as union members, must work together to make the positive change required to ensure our future remains strong and fair. Not just as the future relates to our workplace and us personally, but to all working men and women in Saskatchewan.

Becoming informed and knowing the issues that affect us, the middle class, is essential in making the change necessary on election day. Every vote matters and the only way our voices will be heard is if we choose to take a stand against the right-wing regime under which we currently reside. We are stronger together.

In Solidarity, Jason Kelly - UniFor 594 Law Committee

UniFor 594 Hats Have Arrived

Our UniFor Local 594 hats have arrived, and if you have not already received yours you can get one by visiting our President, Kevin Bittman in the Poly Re-build trailer, or talk to your Shop Steward. The hats were designed by Chad Gettle and he received the \$100 Co-op Gift Certificate for his winning submission.

