



The Conciliator

UNIFOR Local594 | Canada

204 Hodsman Road, Regina, SK.
www.unifor594.com

• EXECUTIVE

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Amy Wisniewski (17)

Daryl Watch (18)

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Your Voice

This October 19th all registered Canadian voters have the opportunity to have their voices heard in the Federal Election. And if the early poll results are any indication, your vote this year will have more significance than ever before.

While I would very much like to use this space to instruct you exactly how to vote, I will not. As a union we will not tell you in which direction you should cast your vote, we will only implore you to go to your designated polling station and cast your vote on election day.

The Conservatives, Liberals and NDP are embroiled in a very close race, with a new frontrunner emerging with every new poll. In order to effectively cast your vote on October 19th, take a second to educate yourself on the candidates in your riding and the platforms of their respective parties. Most of our members fall into one of three ridings: Regina-Lewvan, Regina-Wascana, and Regina-Qu'Appelle.

As a union member the outcome of the election affects you differently than the average Canadian citizen. Each political party has a different view on labour unions and how to govern them. As we have seen at the provincial level, the Conservatives are not labour friendly and have imposed many restrictions on unions since they have come in to power. Federally, the Conservatives and Liberals co-sponsored bill C-51 which severely hinders free speech, the right to protest, and privacy rights, all things held dear by the Labour Movement. The Federal Conservatives, under Stephen Harper, have also brought the highly unconstitutional bill C-377 in to law. This new law places heavy burdens on union financial reporting, and holds unions to higher degree of transparency than any other tax paying entity.

The policies of one party may suit your personal situation just fine, but in turn that same party's stance on labour issues may have negative effects on your life as a union member. And vice-versa. Each party has its pros and cons, it is just a matter of educating yourself before election day on the issues and where they stand.

Our National has set up a website www.uniforvotes.ca that has loads of information regarding the election. There are several other websites which outline and compare each platform in handy side by side charts and pretty graphics.

So please go out and vote on October 19th, your future depends on it!

Jim Milton, Unifor 594 Political Action Organizer

"Your vote this year will have more significance than ever before."



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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

John Cheeseman

Pipefitters:

Wayne Globisch

Mechanics:

Derek Kups

Stores:

Brenda Curtis

Electrical:

Les Bonkowski

Jason Kelly

Instrumentation:

Jaret McCloy

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

PDD Office:

Susanne Carpenter

PDD Loading:

Dean Warnke

Bargaining Blurb

Just a quick update on bargaining preparations for the upcoming contract talks with the Company as our collective agreement expires on January 31, 2016.

The Bargaining Committee would first like to thank everyone who filled out their bargaining surveys and submitted proposals for the committee to consider as they develop the package they will present to the Company in December. The Committee is currently reviewing all proposals and has several meeting dates set as they work towards putting together the best solution for our members.

Also, at our September General Meeting the membership passed two motions pertaining to upcoming negotiations. First, the membership voted in favor of joining the National Energy Bargaining Program. This allows us to join in solidarity with other Unifor brothers and sisters from all over Canada in the Energy Sector and bargain as one on several key issues, mainly wage increases and contract length. The second motion passed allows for a separate deduction from each pay cheque of our members and put towards the Supplemental Strike Fund. This extra pool of funds provides greater leverage for the Energy Sector at negotiation time.

With surveys and proposals in hand, and direction from the membership the Bargaining Committee can ramp up their efforts to build a package that is fair and reasonable and best represents the needs of the membership as a whole.

In Solidarity, The Bargaining Committee

Shutdown Shaker

The Unifor Social Committee is holding a get together at the Union Hall on **October 16th** to celebrate the end (?) of the Fall Turnaround!

There will be smokies on the grill and drinks in the fridge!

Doors open at 5:30pm so be sure to stop in for refreshments and a few laughs.

Also be sure to mark **December 4th** on your calendars as the date of the Unifor Christmas Party, held this year at the Italian Club. More details to come...




(The above may or may not be a picture of Local President Kevin Bittman minding the grill at the last shutdown shaker.)

Erosion of Worker Rights

Since Confederation, unions have expanded workers' rights and forced governments and businesses to create a fairer and more equitable Canada. This role was particularly significant in the postwar period, when public sector workers began unionizing, and governments of all stripes recognized the importance of containing the extreme inequalities associated with unfettered markets. But just as the commitment to ensuring some degree of social compromise transcended political ideology, attacks against labour unions over the past three decades have been launched by the political left and right at all levels of government. It's within this larger historical context that the current attacks against our collective bargaining rights and benefits must be situated – and in which our own strategies to defend our members must be understood.

Undoing the Gains of the Past

In addition to deep austerity cuts, the Conservative government has continued the assault against working Canadians through frequent use of back-to-work legislation (e.g., Canada Post, Air Canada and CP Rail) and measures targeting public servants. These attacks have included massive job cuts (to the tune of 35,000), spending and hiring freezes, elimination of severance pay, introduction of two-tier pensions, the undermining of scientific and professional integrity, and – most egregiously – legislation transforming the entire postwar labour relations regime (C-4). Perhaps the most significant change was the removal of the right to arbitration, the cornerstone of the collective bargaining strategy pursued by professional units such as CAPE, which have traditionally avoided the conciliation/strike route. The change in the rules surrounding collective bargaining were followed – in the midst of a new round of collective bargaining – by a law (Bill C-59) giving the government unilateral decision-making over policies related to sick leave, the most contentious issue then under negotiation. First the rules were changed, then the scope of what could be bargained. While the rights to bargain collectively and to strike still exist, they are now devoid of any real substance; we have effectively returned to the pre-1967 era. The government, in effect, has decided to impose a more exploitative and mean-spirited model of labour-management relations which will only serve to encourage private-sector employers to follow suit.

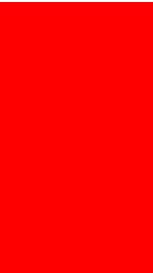


“We cannot merely hope for a government more favourable to our concerns to come to power.”

Standing Together

The scope and the pace of these developments – and the fact that attacks against Canadian workers have come from all political parties – underscore the need for labour unions in both the private and public sectors to act with a renewed sense of unity and purpose. As we approach a federal election, we cannot merely hope for a government more favourable to our concerns to come to power. We must build stronger links with other unions and we must develop our strategies with the full awareness that the stakes are not merely about defending our benefits – as important as these might be – but standing up for collective rights in Canada.

Source: Sept 15, 2015 article from The Canadian Association of Professional Employees (CAPE) based in Ottawa



“It was the labor movement that helped secure so much of what we take for granted today. The 40-hour work week, the minimum wage, family leave, health insurance, Social Security, Medicare, retirement plans. The cornerstones of the middle-class security all bear the union label.”

-Barack Obama

Unifor Around the Country

A furniture maker in the Fort Frances, Ont., area, that laid off all of its employees in August citing religious reasons, has reached a settlement with Unifor, the union representing 25 workers at the plant.

At a Thursday morning hearing with the Ontario Labour Relations Board, the company agreed that closing the plant and permanently laying off all of its employees because they chose to be represented by a trade union violated the Labour Relations Act. Gingrich Woodcraft said in an earlier statement that, as Christian business owners, their personal beliefs do not allow them freedom to work with a labour union.

As part of the settlement, the company will pay its employees 35 weeks wages at their regular hours and rate, retroactive to August 17, 2015.

Unifor national president Jerry Dias called the settlement significant, in a written release Wednesday afternoon. "I'm glad this matter has come to a swift and positive resolution," said Dias. "This decision makes it very clear that the rights of workers to join a union are paramount. And Unifor will always stand up for workers' rights," he stated.

Business for sale

Gingrich Woodcraft Inc told the board it is in negotiations to sell the business as a going concern. It said a sale was expected to take place shortly.

As part of the sale, any purchaser will be informed that Unifor is the certified bargaining agent for employees at the plant, and that the purchaser is obliged to rehire the former employees of Gingrich Woodcraft Inc. The company must also endorse the skills and abilities of its former employees to any purchaser. Gingrich Woodcraft also agreed that if any purchaser pays its workers less than their original wage, their rate of pay will be topped up to their regular rate for a period of 35 weeks.

Source: October 1, 2015 article from CBC.ca Thunder Bay

Last Laugh



Staying Connected

Website. www.unifor594.com

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Twitter. @Unifor594

Facebook. Unifor Fiveninefour

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

