



The Conciliator

UNIFOR Local594 | Canada

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

• **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.:

Jamie Wilhelms

PDD V.P.:

Donny Stilborn

Chief Shop Steward:

Richard Exner

Information Officer:

Abe Mejia

Guide:

Terry Young

Sergeant at Arms:

Brandon Klatt

Trustees:

Daryl Schwartz (16)

Amy Wisniewski (17)

Daryl Watch (18)

Inside this issue:

Solidarity Forever	1
Solidarity Forever	2
Bargaining Update	3
Advantages of a DB	3
Last Laugh	4
Stay Connected	4

Volume 17, Issue 1

February 2017

Solidarity Forever

Sisters and Brothers, many of you perhaps do not know what to think, or are confused right now about the current state of our workplace. We are constantly told about the plight of the company and its dire financial situation, despite the fact that FCL made over 500 million dollars in 2016. It is important to remember that we are in the bargaining process and the company is trying to renegotiate what your work is worth to them, compared to the bottom line.

For this reason it is more important than ever right now to maintain our solidarity. This was demonstrated at the meeting on January 9th, during which, an overwhelming majority of the members gave a strike mandate to the bargaining committee to use if necessary. It shows that we can and will stand together and work hard for what is ours and we will not be intimidated by scare tactics. Our Union has always taken the high road with our relationship with the company. We strive to do our jobs effectively and to keep the plant running in an efficient manner to keep it profitable. We are one of the best workforces in the country, and we are not going to change that now. This is a testament to the solidarity of our union.

What do I mean by solidarity? It is the concept of supporting each other no matter what situation we are in. It is the feeling of comradery that we have in our union, which was apparent from the 400 hundred people who went to the union Christmas party. It is the cumulative result of nearly 75 years of working long hours together, seemingly endless shutdowns, fighting fires and plant emergencies together, and being part of something that is more than ourselves. It is what makes our union so strong. When I started at the plant 15 years ago I thought, what a great company, I have amazing benefits and pay. I soon realized the benefits and pay I enjoy have come from almost 75 years of our union fighting for what is right for our members. It is the result of the many union leaders who have come before us, some of which we know and many of whom we do not even know their names. There have been many battles that are long since forgotten and they were all for the betterment of the union.

“It shows that we can and will stand together and work hard for what is ours and we will not be intimidated by scare tactics.”

• SHOP STEWARDS

Section IA:

Nathan Kraemer

Section IB:

Charles Brittner

Section II:

Chad Gettle

Section III:

Curtis Baht

Section IV:

Avery Riche

Section V:

Chad Thompson

Building Maintenance:

Gary Gruell

MRP:

James Cheeseman & Ryan Morgan

Pipefitters:

Shaun Jenkins & Karl Dahle

Mechanics:

(vacant)

Stores:

Brenda Curtis

Electrical:

Les Bonkowski & Jason Kelly

Instrumentation:

Jaret McCloy & Dave Mushynsky

Inspection:

Keith Britton

Fire & Safety:

Daryl Watch

Lab:

Mike Fink & Ray Strueby

Pumpers:

Ryan Dzioba

Decokers:

Jon Javorik

Welders:

Jim Milton

Scaffolders:

Nelson Wagman

Construction:

Mike Pelzer

Boilerhouse:

(vacant)

Insulators:

Kris Atkinson & Luke McGeough

PDD Office:

Susanne Carpenter

PDD Loading:

David Limacher

Packing & Blending, Warehouse:

Dean Warnke

Administration:

Amy Wisniewski

Solidarity Forever

CCRL is not a gas station, farm agro or grocery store. It is a refinery full of dangerous areas and chemicals, high pressure vessels, complex units and high stress jobs that have taken many of us years to learn how to operate and maintain. This fact seems to be lost on some people. It's what makes us so strong. The complexity of the plant and the almost 800 union members who run it is something that gives our union an advantage over others. I have only worked here for 15 years but I feel like I have a lifetime of knowledge behind me because of those whom have come before. That is why it is more important than ever to continue to improve the working conditions of the plant for the future generations who don't even work here yet. Imagine if the previous union leaders gave into pressure about pension, or the savings plan, or seniority rights? We would be nowhere without these past victories that have long since been forgotten. There are many different departments and many different personalities in our union, but we all stand for the same principle. I still feel a sense of solidarity here even if it is so large and different than it used to be. We want to protect our benefits and protect each other so we can be productive members of society. Everyone has a different role and no one is more important than the other.

The fact that we are all different is what makes us so strong. We, as a proud union with almost 75 years of partnership with the Co-op refinery, have been through many more difficult times than this. The sign of partnership with our union and the refinery at gate two is a testament to how our relationship used to be. It is now faded and needs to be renewed. It is a true depiction of the current state of our relationship with the company, faded and worn. We have always come to help when called and always helped to fix the problems that exist in the plant. On Christmas Eve 2013, the night of the Poly explosion, we had members showing up to help without even being called in to work. Countless others have come to the call during an emergency and put their own lives at risk for the good of the plant. That shows the care and dedication our members have for our workplace.

We are unlike other unions I have encountered. We are not a weak and apathetic group who want nothing more than to get what we think is owed to us. We work hard and dedicate our lives to the refinery and I feel our benefits reflect that dedication. We are a union that has been going strong for nearly 75 years and that is what sets us apart from the rest of the industry. We have a culture of hard working and dedicated people that cannot be changed because of a change of management style in the company. People who are not part of our Union do not understand our 75 years of dedication, solidarity, and care for this plant, to them it is just a job, and they will be off to the next one when a better opportunity arises. We will still be here. We are offering to help fix the problems that exist right now but our years of knowledge and experience is, at times, going unnoticed. All we can do is persevere and continue to have solidarity. These may very well be some of the hardest years any of us have seen in our relationship with the company and I doubt it will get easier but rest assured that you have a very knowledgeable and dedicated union executive working to maintain your rights every day.

In solidarity,
Jason Kelly, Electrical Shop Steward

Bargaining Update

On January 31st, 2017, your Local 594 Bargaining Committee met with CCRL representatives for our twenty-first day of negotiations. After listening to the Company's latest presentation on their position, and balancing the interests of the local with the clear direction that the membership gave us on January 9th, we have declared an impasse and have contacted the Minister of Labour to begin the mediation process. We are scheduled to meet with the Mediator on March 4th and 5th, as is the Company, to attempt to work out a fair deal through the mediation process.

Below I have copied some information from <http://www.saskatchewan.ca/business/hire-train-and-manage-employees/collective-bargaining-and-mediation/strikes-and-lockouts> to help those unfamiliar with the rules set out in the Saskatchewan Employment Act regarding bargaining, impasse, mediation, and strike/lockouts.

In Solidarity,

Dan Josephson, Negotiating Chairperson

The Saskatchewan Employment Act prohibits both strikes and lockouts during the term of a collective agreement. Prior to a strike or lockout occurring, all parties of the collective agreement must negotiate in good faith.

A strike is any of the following actions taken by employees:

- the stoppage of work or a refusal to work or to continue to work by employees acting together with a common understanding; or
- any other concerted activity on the part of employees in relation to their work that is designed to restrict or limit output or the effective delivery of services.

A lockout is one or more of the following actions taken by an employer for the purpose of compelling employees to agree to terms and conditions of employment:

- the closing of all or part of a place of employment;
- a suspension of work; or
- a refusal to continue to employ employees.

No strike or lockout can occur during the term of a collective agreement. A collective agreement remains in full force and effect upon expiry, from year to year unless otherwise negotiated.

The parties must bargain collectively and achieve either a settlement for ratification by the parties or be at impasse. The bargaining agent cannot strike until the bargaining agent has secured a strike vote among the majority of affected employees.

However, once impasse is reached, the Minister shall be notified and will appoint either a labour relations officer, special mediator or conciliation board to address the dispute.

Up to this point, neither the union nor the employer can strike or cause lockout.

Strike or lockout can only occur after 14 days have passed in one of two instances:

1. The Minister's appointee(s) (either a labour relations officer, special mediator or the chair of the conciliation board) state that no recommendation will be advanced to the Minister; or
 2. The parties have reviewed the appointee(s) recommendations and decided not to accept those recommendations.
- Once the labour relations officer, special mediator, or conciliation board has informed the Minister that the dispute has not been settled, a 14-day cooling-off period must occur before any strike or lockout can commence. No strike or lockout can occur before 48 hours' notice is provided to the other party, and promptly served upon the Minister, confirming the date and time the strike or lockout will commence.

Six Advantages of a DB Pension

For Employers and Employees, there are many advantages to keeping a Defined Benefit Pension Plan, but here are six:

- DB plans enhance the ability of employers to attract and retain qualified employees. Switching to a DC plan would limit this ability, possibly exacerbating labor shortages in key service areas by increasing employee turnover rates. Higher turnover rates, in turn, could lead to increased training costs and lower levels of productivity, possibly resulting in the need for a larger workforce.
- DB plans earn higher investment returns and pay lower investment management fees, on average, than DC plans. Switching to a DC plan would likely lower investment earnings and increase investment management costs, to the detriment of the plan participants.
- DB plans reduce the overall cost of providing lifetime retirement benefits by pooling mortality (and other) risks over a relatively large number of participants. Switching to a DC plan would require each individual to bear these risks alone, consequently requiring higher contributions than if the risks were pooled.
- DB plans provide secure retirement benefits based on a person's salary and period of service. Switching to a DC plan would likely result in lower and less secure retirement benefits for many long-term employees, who constitute more than half of the workforce.
- DB plans help sustain provincial and local economies by providing sufficient and steady retirement benefits for a significant portion of the workforce. Switching to a DC plan could slow the local economies, since a large number of retirees would likely receive lower retirement benefits.
- DB plans provide benefits that help ensure an adequate standard of living throughout retirement. Switching to a DC plan would likely result in pressure on provincial and federal governments to augment DC plan benefits and require increased financial assistance for retirees.

In Solidarity,

Pension Committee

Last Laugh



Staying Connected

Now more than ever it is important to stay connected to what is happening with your local. The Bargaining Committee strongly urges you to join Twitter and follow our account (@Unifor594) or find us on Facebook (Unifor Fiveninefour) to stay current on all the latest developments. Or sign up for email updates by sending a request to info@unifor594.com

Website. www.unifor594.com

Email. info@unifor594.com

Twitter. @Unifor594

Facebook. Unifor Fiveninefour

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