



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)

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2017 Unifor Executive Elections

At the May General Meeting nominations will be accepted for the following elected positions:

GROUP 1 – (One Year Term)

President, Maintenance Vice-President, Administration Vice-President, Sergeant-at-Arms, Chief Shop Steward, and Information Officer.

GROUP 2 – (Two Year Term)

Negotiating Chairperson, Process Vice-President, PDD Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Secretary Treasurer, and Guide.

Trustee (3 Year Term) Trustee (2 Year Term)

Please be advised, as per our Local Union By-Laws, revised in 2015, the nomination and election process has changed.

As per the Local Union By-Laws (12.05.01), you are no longer required to have a nominator to be an eligible candidate for election. *“Any union member in good standing may nominate him or herself or others for an elected position, in person or writing. If the candidate cannot attend the nomination meeting, a nominator must present the candidate’s signed acceptance letter at the nomination meeting.”*

Nominations for the above positions **will only be accepted in-person, by Nominee or Nominator**, at the **May 23rd** General Meeting.

Currently there are Shop Steward vacancies in: PDD Dispatch, PDD Warehouse, and Information Technology. If anyone interested in being a Shop Steward, in these three areas or a different department, they should also make their intentions known at the nomination meeting in the same process as the above executive positions.

In the event an election is to run it will be held **June 5th - 9th from 5:30am – 7:00am** by the north entrance to the canteen. An Elections Officer will be at the RBO canteen on **June 7th @ 12:00pm** to solicit those votes as well.

Ballots will be counted **June 9th @ 7:15AM** at the Union Hall.

If you have any questions about Executive Positions or the Nomination Process, please contact chiefshopsteward@unifor594.com.

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Section IA:

Nathan Kraemer

Section IB:

Charles Britner

Section II:

Chad Gettle

Section III:

Curtis Baht

Section IV:

Avery Riche

Section V:

Chad Thompson

Building Maintenance:

Gary Gruell

MRP:

Derek Empringham & Ryan Morgan

Pipefitters:

Shaun Jenkins & Karl Dahle

Mechanics:

Derek Kups & Pete Thorsen

Stores:

Brenda Curtis & Joe Selinger

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:

Matt Wason & Jason Molnar

Insulators:

Luke McGeough

PDD Office:

(vacant)

PDD Loading:

David Limacher

Packing & Blending, Warehouse:

Dean Warnke

Administration:

Amy Wisniewski

2017 Accommodation Law Conference

As members of the Accommodation Committee, Denise Hersikorn and myself, Sharlene Stanley attended the 2017 Accommodation Law Conference held in Saskatoon on March 22-23.

The conference began with reviewing the year's top accommodation cases. These covered a variety of subjects ranging from understanding the need for self-help prior to asking/receiving accommodation, individual assessment versus blanket statements for accommodating, and preferred accommodation versus reasonable accommodation (what is required by law). From these varied topics, a few key components for successful accommodations became apparent.

Accommodation must have three equal partners – the worker seeking accommodation, management and the union. All three must be involved from the beginning and in each consecutive step. Accommodation policies must offer individual assessments that do not offend human rights principles. Individual assessment is required versus blanket statements that try to address “possible” circumstances and the needs of the employee. The employer must respond in a way that demonstrates a compassionate understanding of the need to remove barriers in the workplace. Although companies are not bound by law to train employees in new accommodation roles, they are required to act reasonably by providing a specific period of time to allow the employee to become familiar with a new position.

Many of the arbitration cases reviewed at the conference had a common theme – addiction. Some may think that the employees should be held accountable to self-report when an addiction interferes with life especially in the workplace. But because denial is common with addictions to alcohol or substances, the employer is equally responsible to investigate when addiction is suspected. Onus is on the employee to acknowledge the addiction, request help and to participate in treatment. This is reminiscent of the old lawyer adage “a drunk can be fired but an alcoholic cannot”. Relapses are “hallmark” with addiction cases, they must be expected and therefore extreme caution should be used when signing last chance agreements.

Family status accommodation illustrates the evolving nature of the duty to accommodate. Daycare may come at a higher cost or not be available for those working evenings or weekends. Elder care may pose the same issues. These circumstances must be addressed with attention to “undue hardship” for both the company and the employee. Yet caution for understanding that these needs must be different from the majority of workers.

Even though society is discussing Mental Health issues more openly than in the past, it can be a significant and emotional decision for an employee to disclose a mental health condition. This is a particular area where employers must take into consideration the employee's privacy. Mental health conditions that have not been recognized in the past are now being recognized. Although this panel of lawyers did not entirely accept the new disorder, Oppositional Defiance Disorder, it was recently argued at arbitration.

“Accommodation must have three equal partners—the worker seeking accommodation, management and the union.”

2017 Accommodation Law Conference

Similar to using addictions as an excuse for misconduct, there needs to be proof that the mental health condition caused the employee to act in such a way that he/she had loss control. This demonstrates that dealing with mental health issues are complex. Human Resources' personnel and managers must be trained to avoid stigmas, stereotypes and misconceptions about mental health conditions.

As the legalization of marijuana in Canada comes closer, there are many questions about marijuana in the workplace. The Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation issued its report in December 2016. Among the findings pertinent to the workplace were:

- Cannabis impairs psychomotor skills and judgement.
- While cannabis use clearly diminishes driving skills, it is more complex to study cannabis-impaired driving than alcohol-impaired driving.
- There no currently accepted standard for blood levels of THC (tetrahydrocannabinol – the mind altering element found in cannabis) to accurately measure impairment.
- Unlike alcohol, THC can remain in the brain and the body of chronic, heavy users for prolonged periods of time. However, these chronic users may not show any obvious signs of impairment even with significant THC concentrations in their blood. Conversely, infrequent users with the same or lower THC concentrations may demonstrate more significant impairment.
- An employee impaired as a result of cannabis use presents a workplace danger, particularly in safety-sensitive industries.

The conference presenters predict a lot of arbitration cases dealing with marijuana use in the next few years. They also noted that due to the fact that marijuana does not have a DIN (drug identification number), it is not recognized by insurance providers.

We covered many topics at this conference. Each time that I attend a union sponsored conference, I realize that there is so much to learn about accommodation, the law and supporting my sisters and brothers with their accommodation needs. I would like to thank Unifor 594 for providing this learning opportunity.

Sharlene Stanley, Accommodation Committee

Habitat For Humanity

Volunteers Needed!

Several of Maintenance Department members have organized a Group Build opportunity with Habitat for Humanity on June 16th, 2017. We are looking for up to 14 volunteers to come out and help this great organization provide housing for those in need.

No skills or experience necessary! Anyone can volunteer.

This is a great opportunity to give back to the community, and as a union it is our goal to do everything we can to increase the quality of life for our members and our neighbors!

If you are interested in lending a hand or want more information contact Curtis Bullivant at curt_6@hotmail.com

Thank You

As we near the election period for our local, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank the membership for allowing me the privilege of serving as the Negotiating Chairman for the past three rounds of bargaining. The glorious state that we all strive for called Retirement is getting closer for me, and now is the proper time to step back and allow the next generation of Union activists to take up the reins and lead us into the next round of bargaining.

Every action the Company is taking makes it appear that the next round will be just as difficult as the last one. I want to thank each of you for the words of support and encouragement that you offered to myself and the entire committee as we worked through the bargaining process. They helped make a difficult and stressful time more manageable, and were greatly appreciated. I am confident that you will offer the next executive the same encouragement and support as they continue to work to protect our Collective Agreement, and defend the rights of a membership that are being attacked by an uncaring and out of touch Refinery Leadership Team. No employee seems to be spared from attacks these days, as many of the Management employees will tell you (at least they would if they didn't fear retaliation from upper management).

To those management employees reading this newsletter (and we know you do), I strongly urge you to consider forming a Union and fighting to protect yourselves. By standing together, you can stand up for yourselves and fight back against the continued cutbacks you have been forced to absorb. While you would not be able to join our Local, there is nothing stopping you from forming your own Local. Think about it!

Once again, thank you for your encouragement and support, as well as for allowing me to represent you in the different capacities I have held for most of my nearly 36 years. It has been my honour to serve this membership.

Dan Josephson, Negotiating Chairperson

Last Laugh



“The Buckingham interviews take an interesting turn”

Staying Connected

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