



21 NEWS/VIEWS

Membership Meeting – 2nd Tuesday of each Month
7:30 pm – Italian Club – 2148 Connaught Street

LOCAL 21 – NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER 2008

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Steve Frankiewitz

CUPE National Representative

Aina Kagis

Local 21 Website: www.21.cupe.ca

Kids Christmas Party

Brother Richard Chapman

Hello to all fellow sisters and bothers of Local 21, or should I say Season Greetings. Well despite the weather Christmas is on its way.

Once again Local 21 has booked the entire Science Center for our kids to run around and be awed by some of the displays. The event will take place on **11 December 2008 – starting at 6:00 pm sharp.**

There is no door charge this year and we just ask that you sign in at the front door. As in the past we will supply popcorn and drinks for you when you watch one of three movies. The climbing wall will also be there for those kids 10 years and older, Science Center policy and rules.

We are hoping for two new additions this year. First, is a horse drawn sleigh ride in the park (we are waiting for permission from the Wascana Center Authority). Second, we are hoping that Riffel High School Choir will be able to perform at our party. So bring the whole family out and enjoy a night out on Local 21.

Merry Christmas to you and your family from the entire Local 21 Executive

Annual Christmas Party

Brother Hugh Bigler

The annual Christmas Social will be held at the Regina Flying Clubhouse on **4 December 2008 - starting at 7:00 pm sharp.**

Regular business will be suspended, and scholarship awards will be handed out. Also, remembrance of members who past away this year as well as the retired and still active will be observed.

All you can eat pizza and salad buffet will be served. Attendance draws for gift certificates from Oscar's Fine Meats and Deli will be had. City Transit will provide **free** bus service from the Flying Club to your home.

Congratulations to: Markie Hembroff, Joseph Harvey, Kelsey Mohr, Leah Ecarnot, Daniel Lysack, and Melissa Dolff for their scholastic achievements.

Be Smart - Don't Drink and Drive

In the City

- ➔ **Union T-Shirts:** Are available for **\$5.00** each. Contact a Union representative or your Union office.
- ➔ **CBA Rights:** If your negotiated Collective Bargaining Agreement rights have been violated then contact David Jjian at **777-6908** or **550-7441** for Public Works or Danny Lainey at **537-1815** for Community & Corporate Services. Any other issues - contact your Union office at 352-8282.
- ➔ **Grievances/CTBH:** The Union has requested a committee to be heard at the city council level regarding the landfill small vehicle transfer station. The Unions position has always been to have this work brought in house which would translate into a **tax dollar \$saving\$** for the community. New arbitrations have been submitted and more have been scheduled to be heard.

Market Supplement Committee

Brother Cal Pfeifer - Chair

After almost two (2) years since the employer proposed the idea of a market supplement, we are finally coming close to finishing the initial group of positions identified by the employer during negotiations. It has been a long and often frustrating exercise, and there are areas of the process that need to be refined if we are to continue with the program.

The executive is planning to sit down with the employer after this trial group is finished to discuss a future to the program that more closely resembles what was originally agreed to at the bargaining table. As always, we will be putting the member's best interest forward.

Contracting Out – Roadways

Brother Greg Moyer – Vice President/Contract Out Chair

On contracting out, with Winter Road Maintenance around the corner, be prepared to see a great variety of contractors performing road work. Even though rental rates are substantially higher than city driven equipment. The equipment involved will be motor graders, front end loaders, tractor/semi units, tandems and skid-steers for removing snow.

Some rates are as high as **\$175.00 per hour** and guaranteed 200 hours for the season. At recent discussions the Managing Department still would not commit to having all of the city owned equipment out working and using the contractor to actually supplement or assist in an emergency situation.

➔ **The Union would appreciate any information on delays, or hired trucks not responding to job sites as required per contract obligations to the City of Regina.**

DC (Defined Contribution) Pension Plan Myths – (Second in a Series)

Brother John Gangl – Pension Committee

Myths #2: Defined Benefit plans are too expensive.

The level of employer required contributions fluctuates in a DB plan. Given the times, "real" contributions are required to be made to the DB pension fund. However, in the mid-1980s and 1990s, there was surplus; mainly because of the high rates of return on financial assets.

When the surplus appeared on the balance sheet sometimes it was used to help finance a benefit improvement for plan members. If there was some past service improvement(s) surplus was a convenient way to pay for the cost of any past service benefit improvement.

Surplus was also used to rationalize a decrease in employer contributions or under some circumstances, depending on the jurisdiction; it meant that the employer removed money from the pension fund. Sometimes these so-called contribution holidays also applied to worker contributions.

DB plans are not too expensive in times of surplus. Experience has taught us that it is important for the regulator to ensure that the employer will, over time, ensure that there is sufficient money in the pension to pay the pension obligations to the plan members. The decline in stock prices over the period from May 2000 to March 2003 resulted in many balance sheets with unfunded liabilities. This means increasing contributions. This cycle, too, at some point, will end.

It is also important to note that the same down-turn in stock prices had a devastating effect on DC members. While increasing contributions are required in DB plans the size of the pension benefit has generally remained the same.

Mayor Pat Fiacco & CBC Reporter = A Heated Exchange

At a recent media conference to announce the results of the City of Regina **Omnibus Survey (ONLY 606 CITIZENS WERE SURVEYED)**, CBC reporter John Weidlich questioned Mayor Fiacco on why the survey didn't include a question asking the citizens of Regina what they thought of the city committing \$50 to \$100 million in infrastructure for the new Intermodal Facility.

A good point - why wouldn't it be a worthwhile question to ask citizens? Mr. Weidlich continued to ask the Mayor questions pertaining to the facility. During the ongoing exchange Mayor Fiacco stated ... "For the record, John, you just gave me the finger." Mr. Weidlich responded by saying ... "you are falsely accusing me of an action which is not appropriate." (Remember the "sober up" comment of days past?).

CBC **Saskatchewan** director Nigel Simms is looking into the verbal exchange between Mayor Fiacco and CBC Radio reporter John Weidlich.

General Information & Updates

Did You Know

Listen up, waterfront-deprived Albertans. Minnesota bills itself as the "land of 10,000 lakes." As the serious fishermen among you will know, **Saskatchewan** contains an astonishing 100,000 lakes. The aptly named Deep Bay on Reindeer Lake is the deepest body of water in the province. The 220-metre-deep, near circular bay was formed more than 100 million years ago by a giant meteorite.

According to **Saskatchewan** Tourism, the northern half of the province is home to one of the largest concentrations of fly-in fishing camps in the world. In 2007, the world's largest rainbow trout was pulled from Lake Diefenbaker.

CUPE Health Workers - Contract Negotiations

CUPE Health Council - President Gordon Campbell

Three unions representing 25,000 health care providers in the province say the government's public service essential services legislation is having a harmful effect on contract negotiations. We've been at the bargaining table for 3 months but have little to show for it. The employers, represented by the **Saskatchewan** Association of Health Organizations (SAHO), are demanding major concessions at the table. The essential services legislation has given all the power to the employer. Without the potential for job action, SAHO appears to have little interest in negotiating a fair agreement. The essential services now threaten to derail contract talks, as health regions have tabled massive documents designating virtually every service provided by health providers as "essential" – from music therapy programs to library services.

CUPE Members Vote in BC

President Paul Faoro - CUPE 23

CUPE members took part in elections for municipal council, board of education and regional district representatives 15 November. More than half of the 180 CUPE-endorsed candidates were elected. More than 30 CUPE members ran for office. Close to half were elected. Across BC the average voter turnout was just over **22%**. Wells scored the highest with a **92.54%** turnout while the Bulkley-Nechaco Regional District was the lowest with **5.33%**.

Keep Ottawa City Services: CUPE

Paul Moist - CUPE National President

CUPE leaders urged the people of Ottawa to consider the high costs of privatization. The warning comes as Ottawa City Council prepares to unveil a new budget, which will likely call for deep cuts to public services and jobs. The cutbacks would open the door for contracting out of community services, leading Ottawa down a path that other municipalities across Canada have tried – and **FAILED**. It's been proven in communities across the country that privatization of services and infrastructure costs taxpayers more and delivers less.

Edmonton Sewage Plant Stays Public

Edmonton city council has postponed its decision on transferring of one of the city's main wastewater treatment plants to **EPCOR**, a city-owned utility that operates as a private corporation. The move would have taken the wastewater operations out of the direct oversight of elected officials.

CUPE 30, which represents Edmonton outside municipal workers including EPCOR staff, played an active part in the fight back through the Coalition of Edmonton Civic Unions. The Unions were in turn part of the broader Keep Drainage Edmonton coalition, which came together 3 years ago to block a bid to transfer of the city's entire sewage and drainage services. The move by council runs directly counter to a decision made 3 years ago to keep Edmonton's entire drainage system under direct public control.

The Keep Drainage Edmonton coalition was key in stopping the transfer of the city's entire drainage system to EPCOR. Council's decision was subsequently backed by its own consultant, who concluded it was in Edmonton's best interest to keep the utility in city hands.

Steelworkers Ratify Agreement

Canada Director Stephen United Steelworkers (USW) Western Hunt

A 3-year agreement, customized to each of the 3 locals at PotashCorp's Cory, Allan and Patience Lake sites, is retroactive to 1 May 2008 and raises wages by a total minimum of **18% --- 7%** in the first year and **5.5%** in each of the next 2 years. Trades and specially-skilled operators will receive higher rates. The agreement also contains a '**market supplement**' in the form of a \$5,000 lump sum upon returning to work. In each of the next 2 years, employees will receive a total of \$2,500, or \$625 per quarter. This ends a strike that began 7 August 2009.

Accommodation Tip of the Day

Arbitrators and courts have historically taken the view that imposing a medical examination upon an employee without the employee's consent is a form of assault, for which the employer must find justification either in a statute or the collective agreement.

Visit the Canadian Injured Workers' Alliance (CIWA) website: www.ciwa.ca