

GMM President's Report

February 11, 2020

Maple Leaf Brandon Bargaining

On December 2, 2019, UFCW Local 832 members working at the Maple Leaf Plant in Brandon voted 65% to reject a tentative agreement reached between the Company and the Union's bargaining committee. In an effort to prevent a labour dispute, the Company and the Union met on January 10th to address the concerns raised by our members. The parties were able to reach a modified tentative agreement that was ratified on January 12th by 89% of the members at the meeting.

The new contract includes language improvements for the health unit and an expansion of the respectful workplace policy as well as wage increases, a \$1.14 million pension conversion payment, \$500,000 in job reclassifications and improvements to boot allowances and premiums. The contract will expire on December 31, 2024.

Hylife Neepawa Bargaining

Bargaining for our 1,400 members working at Hylife Foods and Freezerco in Neepawa is coming down to the crunch as Secretary Bea Bruske and the bargaining committee are in the final stages of negotiations.

The committees meet for what should be the final 4 days from February 18th to the 21st at the UFCW Office in Brandon.

Winnipeg Labour Council

Last fall your Executive Board voted to unanimously support Melissa Dvorak in her bid to become the new President of the Winnipeg Labour Council. At the November Council meeting, Melissa was elected to the President position for a three year term ending December 31, 2022.

Sungro Update

Following a tough round of bargaining that included getting a very strong strike vote from our members working at Sungro in Elma and Ramsay, a tentative agreement was reached between the parties on January 30, 2020. The final documentation is in the process of being proofed and signed and a ratification vote will be scheduled once that's done.

Retail Crime Conference

I attended the well-publicized one-day conference on Retail Crime in Winnipeg that included representatives from retail employers, government, police, security companies, indigenous groups and the Retail Councils of both Manitoba and Canada.

The meeting took place on January 31, 2020 and was a brainstorming session looking for new and innovative ways to address the rampant crime problem in Manitoba's retail sector. A full report will be released to the public once completed.

UNIFOR action against Co-op

After a 6 month strike at Saskatoon Co-op last winter, Federated Co-op and their subsidiary companies are at it again – this time at the refinery in Regina where UNIFOR members work. Co-op has locked those workers out for almost 3 months now in an apparent effort to get them to agree to have their pension plan gutted.

Local action to support these workers has included picketing fuel distribution centres and leafletting Red River Co-op parking lots. While the strike action is affecting some UFCW Local 832 members working at the Co-op Gas Bar in St. Vital, their contract is up this year along with the Red River Co-op retail stores and if the Company continues their ongoing fight with unions then these negotiations could prove to be very difficult.

UFCW Youth Internship Program (YIP)

The next session of the YIP will be hosted by Local 832 at our Training Centre in Winnipeg from July 20th to the 25th. If you are under 30, a UFCW Local 832 member and interested in learning more please contact Geoff Bergen at 204 786-5055 or Geoff.bergen@ufcw832.com.

New Executive Board Member

On January 24th, 2020 Charlene Desjarlais was elected to fill one of the vacant positions on our Executive Board. We have 17 spots on our board but 4 of them were left vacant after the healthcare votes in 2019.

Charlene is a very active member at Vista Park Lodge who has facilitated many courses at our Training Centre in Winnipeg and is currently on the bargaining committee in her workplace. The board will be reviewing the other vacancies at our next meeting in March.

Heather Grant-Jury

After more than 4 years, the trial for Heather Grant-Jury ended on January 30th, 2020 where she was sentenced to 15 months in jail for Fraud over \$5,000. UFCW can now put this unfortunate matter behind us and get on with the business of fighting for working Manitobans which we do so well.

As reported by
Jeff Traeger
President
UFCW Local 832