

PRESIDENTS REPORT TO THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

FEBRUARY 12, 2019

I would like to begin my first report of 2019 by wishing you all the best for a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year! Together I know we can face the challenges that lie ahead as well as taking advantage of the opportunities that are before us.

HEALTHCARE VOTES

Based on the information we have received from the special commissioner appointed by the Provincial Government to conduct rationalization votes in accordance with the *Healthcare Sector Bargaining Unit Review Act*, we believe that the votes in the various healthcare sectors will take place in 2019, most likely beginning in the spring.

We represent over 2,000 members at the St. Boniface General Hospital, the Grace Hospital, across the North in the Northern Regional Health Authority and at a variety of other locations. These members will be involved in votes that will determine whether they continue to be represented by UFCW in the future, or by another Union.

Most recently the Government passed a regulation to the *Act* that splits Community Support and Facility Support which will mean we will be involved in more votes than we originally thought. Our healthcare team is currently reviewing the impact of that regulation and are preparing for the campaign that we anticipate will soon be called.

STELLA'S

In late December, after a brief organizing drive we were certified by two votes conducted by the Manitoba Labour Board to represent the workers at the Stella's location on Osborne and a second location on Sherbrook. The workers there contacted us during the #Not My Stella's campaign and have asked us to help them deal with a variety of workplace issues by securing a first collective agreement for them.

Because of the high media profile of these negotiations, I will be personally conducting bargaining for UFCW and Roberta Hoogervorst will be the full time Union Representative assigned to Stella's.

We conducted a proposal meeting in January and have two matters in front of the Manitoba Labour Board – a request to impose an access agreement and an Unfair Labour Practise application – that will have to be resolved before bargaining can begin, but it's our hope to get to the table with the employer this month or early next.

MAPLE LEAF BARGAINING

Although the contract at Maple Leaf Brandon doesn't expire until December 31, 2019 preparations for negotiations have already begun as we have historically begun bargaining early to renew this contract.

We will be conducting a forum for our Maple Leaf members this spring and offering them a variety of ways they can get their proposal ideas to us including on our website and through our social media accounts.

DIAGEO BARGAINING

Bargaining at the Diageo plant in Gimli is well underway and our Secretary Treasurer is heading up those talks for the Union. The parties have met many times over the last two months and talks are now at the monetary stage.

The last time we renewed this agreement we had a three month strike so we are keeping a close watch on this file and hope to achieve an agreement without the need to have a second labour dispute.

LOBLAW/LLSC INITIATIVE

Many of you may be aware that UFCW sponsors the Leukemia Lymphoma Society of Canada's Light the Night Walk each fall and this year we will be working with Loblaw to raise funds to fight these terrible blood cancers. Later this spring, Loblaw customers will have the opportunity to donate at the till with proceeds going to the fundraising walk.

Mark your calendars...this year's walk takes place at the Forks September 28th at 5:30 pm. If you're interested in being a member of the UFCW 832 team, contact Erin Selby at our Training Centre in Winnipeg.

FRESHCO CONVERSIONS

The two Safeway stores that Sobeys is currently converting to their FreshCo banner have been under renovations since last October and are scheduled to be open early this spring.

The company recently announced 10 similar conversions in British Columbia and have not notified us of any further conversions here in Manitoba.

SASKATOON CO-OP

UFCW Local 1400 in Saskatoon has been on strike at the 23 locations of the Saskatoon Co-op since November 1, 2018 and it appears as though there's no end in sight. At last report the company and the Local have no talks scheduled and so the strike continues into its 4th month.

Local 832 has been regularly sending staff and activists out to Saskatoon to assist them in running their picket lines and thus far the striking workers seem to be holding up well. The main issue is a second tier of wages the company wants to introduce that would mean new hires would earn significantly less than existing employees.

ACTIVIST CONFERENCE

We will be holding our 2019 Activist Conference at the Fairmont Hotel from May 6-9 this year and preparations are underway for what should be a great event once again.

We will be tying the theme of our conference to the 100th anniversary of the Winnipeg General Strike and will be having special guest speakers and exciting events to celebrate the history of labour over the last 100 years.

Information will be going out to all of our activists including Shop Stewards and Health and Safety committee members but if you have any questions you can contact our Winnipeg Training Centre or speak to your full time Union Representative.

1919 GENERAL STRIKE 100TH ANNIVERSARY

The Manitoba Federation of Labour and all unions in Manitoba will be participating in a wide range of events in conjunction with the anniversary. There will be a Gala dinner at the RBC Convention Centre on May 15th (the actual anniversary of the beginning of the strike), a parade on May 25th sponsored by UFCW Local 832, A social at the Ukrainian Labour Temple and a concert at the Exchange District.

More details about these events can be found on our website or by contact the Manitoba Federation of Labour.

As reported by:

Jeff Traeger

President

UFCW Local 832