

# **GMM PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**February 8, 2022**

## **LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

In November, our staff and Executive Board participated in a smudging ceremony where 5 plaques were blessed by elder Eric Flett, a retired UFCW Executive Board member. The plaques are part of our Local's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation and they are currently hanging at all 5 UFCW offices and Training Centres in Winnipeg, Brandon and Neepawa. The acknowledgment will be read at the beginning of all of our major meetings and events and the plaques read as follows:

**AS LONG AS THE SUN SHINES, THE GRASS GROWS AND THE RIVER FLOWS.**

**UFCW Local 832 acknowledges that we are gathered and work each day on ancestral lands, the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation. Our offices are located on Treaty 1 and 2 Territory and our work extends into Treaties 3, 4 and 5.**

**We recognize the injustices done to the Indigenous peoples of this land and are committed to supporting and collaborating with Indigenous communities in a spirit of truth and reconciliation.**

## **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

On January 20<sup>th</sup> your new Executive Board was sworn in at the first meeting of the 4-year term of office that started January 1<sup>st</sup> and ends December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025. In our 2021 elections two incumbents were not re-elected – Tom Biebrich and Laura Cote – and I want to recognize their service to UFCW members on our board and thank them for their commitment and dedication during their term of office.

2 new Executive Vice Presidents were elected at the end of October last year and I want to welcome Deb Stewart from the Manitoba Nurses Union where we represent their Union Representatives.

Jen Sikora from IBEW was also elected, but since October has taken a position at a different workplace and is no longer a UFCW member and therefore not eligible to be on the board. The Executive Board will discuss her replacement at the March meeting.

## **SOBEYS NEGOTIATIONS**

Sobeys negotiations for the Safeway and FreshCo banners began on December 2<sup>nd</sup> last year and we have met with the employer a total of 6 times since then. We are slowly working our way through the non-monetary proposals before opening talks on wages, benefits and premiums. We have 7 days scheduled in February and 11 in March leading right up to the expiry date on March 19<sup>th</sup>.

We have created a sub-committee of UFCW activists from Safeway stores and they are currently working on getting our email addresses for our 2,300 members updated as that's the primary method of communication due to Covid.

To see your bargaining committee members, sub-committee members and to get the latest updates on negotiations go to our website at [ufcw832.com](http://ufcw832.com).

## **MAPLE LEAF**

In late September, Maple Leaf opened up their 3<sup>rd</sup> plant in Manitoba and this one is located on Paquin Road in the St. Boniface industrial park. Getting the plant in full production has been delayed several times since then due to an inability to hire the large number of employees needed to get the plant up and running.

The ham and bacon plant on Lagimodiere also underwent a significant expansion to their bacon operations and our members there will now make pre-cooked bacon in addition to the many other products they already make. When the new bacon plant is fully operational, there will be close to 2,000 UFCW members working there.

Maple Leaf announced a Mandatory Vaccination Policy last December that will take effect March 31, 2022. The policy states that anyone who is not vaccinated by that date or is not exempt from vaccination will be put on an unpaid leave starting April 1, 2022. We are still in discussion with the Company as we want to see our members have the option of regular testing instead of taking unpaid leave.

## **ORGANIZING**

Late last year we were successful in organizing the 4 Quality Control members at Sungro where we already represent the production workers.

In January we successfully organized 58 security guards at Neptune Security and have completed the contract which is very similar to the UFCW contract Neptune has with UFCW in Ontario.

I would like to welcome all of these new members to UFCW, the largest private sector union in Manitoba.

## **MFL CONVENTION**

Due to Covid concerns, the difficult decision was made to cancel the convention scheduled to take place in Brandon this spring. The Convention will now be virtual and will be reduced to 2 days, May 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>.

## **STRIKE PAY**

UFCW's International Office reimburses \$100 per week of the \$200 strike pay we provide members during a strike or lock out. The International increased that reimbursement to \$250 per week in December of 2021 and our Executive Board also voted to increase strike pay by the same amount.

Local 832 members will now receive \$350 per week when locked out or on strike and remember that amount is not subject to tax by Canadian law. This amount will go a long way to helping our members at a difficult time.

## **UNION 101 WEBINAR**

If you're a new member, don't miss our welcome webinar coming March 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7 pm and hosted by our Training Centre.

Members who stay on the webinar for the entire hour will receive a welcome gift card from the local for shopping at a UFCW represented grocery store.

**As reported by:**

**Jeff Traeger  
President  
UFCW Local 832**