

GMM PRESIDENT'S REPORT

May 17, 2022

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.

MFL CONVENTION

On May 5th and 6th, a group of delegates from Local 832 participated in the Manitoba Federation of Labour Convention. The convention was supposed to be in-person in Brandon in 2021, but Covid caused that convention to be cancelled and also caused this year's rescheduled convention to be the first one ever done virtually.

At convention, delegates debated various resolutions intended to make our federation better and more modern as well as ensuring gender diversity among our leadership.

At Convention, I was re-elected as Secretary Treasurer of the MFL for my fourth term – I've been in the position since 2009 – and for this term of office, Marie Buchan (Local 832 Secretary Treasurer) and Ron Allard (my Executive Advisor) will be Vice Presidents on Executive Council.

MAPLE LEAF VACCINATION POLICY

As I reported at the last GMM, Maple Leaf has stood firm on their vaccination policy and now have 40-50 of our members off on an unpaid administrative leave due to their decision not to get vaccinated. Because the policy does not include a provision for rapid testing as an option to vaccination, we have filed grievances at all 3 Manitoba Maple Leaf plants and the arbitration is scheduled to be heard in the 3rd week of June with an award guaranteed within 30 days of the hearing.

CONTRACT REJECTIONS

Recently, we had tentative agreements at COKE and at Sysco Foods reject tentative agreements that contained solid financial improvements for our members. Following a strike vote at COKE, the employer returned to the table and a new deal was reached that will be voted on by our members. If this deal is also rejected, the bargaining committee will set a date for a strike to begin.

Sysco also returned to the bargaining table and a second deal was reached at that unit as well. Our members will have to vote that new agreement as well and if it is also rejected the committee will move forward with a strike vote.

EXECUTIVE BOARD CHANGES

I reported at our last meeting that we have a vacancy in the youth position on our Executive Board. Since then, we've had a second Vice President that lost their UFCW 832 member status and has had to resign from the board and that's Rob Jessup.

I want to thank Rob for his exemplary service to UFCW members during his time on the board. Rob was an active and creative member of our board who will be missed and we will be looking for a replacement from the Assisted Living sector in the near future.

CCWIPP

The pension plan for 9,000 of our members continues to improve since the major changes were made in 2015. The goal of the 10-year plan to bring CCWIPP back to being fully funded was to have this done by July 1, 2025 and I'm pleased to report that we are tracking ahead of that schedule.

NATIONAL RETAIL COMMITTEE

The UFCW National Retail Committee met for the first time in three years in April in Toronto. Items that were reported by committee members included:

- Local 247 in BC had reached a tentative agreement with Loblaw which was rejected by the membership by 78% on April 28. A strike vote will be taken and the Union has requested that the employer come back to the bargaining table.
- Local 1006A in Ontario is currently at the table with No Frills where they have 12,000 members.
- Local 175 in Ontario just ratified Metro by a very close margin. They have 9,500 members at Metro.

SOBEYS RATIFICATION

After 6 months of preparing and negotiating with Sobeys, we ratified a new collective agreement on April 1st. It's a very good deal that was accepted by just under 93% of our Safeway members and was the first time that we conducted a strike and ratification vote online.

As part of the deal we created a separate bargaining unit for FreshCo and our Secretary Treasurer, Marie Buchan, will be bargaining the renewal of that agreement this summer.

MINIMUM WAGE

Come October 1st, Manitoba will have the lowest minimum wage in Canada thanks to our provincial government. Coming out of Covid 19, the message being sent to low wage working Manitobans is that they're just not worth a living wage even though many of them were called heroes for their work on the front lines during the pandemic. If we want a fair minimum wage in Manitoba, we're going to have to elect a new government next year.

SERVICING INITIATIVE

Our Secretary Treasurer and myself are touring a group of units each month in 2022 and in April I toured Hylife Foods and the Safeway store in Neepawa and the McCain's plant and distribution center in Carberry. I will be touring the Maple Leaf plant in Brandon on June 8.

TRAINING CENTRE GRADUATION

After having to cancel our Adult High School graduation for two years in a row, we will be having a graduation ceremony for graduates from 2020, 2021 and 2022 at the Fairmont Hotel on June 28th at 6:00 pm.

DONATION TO UKRAINE

Finally, our Executive Board approved a \$10,000 donation to the people of Ukraine in March and our staff and board members also took up a collection to send along with our donation. Our hearts go out to the people of Ukraine and we will continue to denounce the Russian aggression and support the people of Ukraine for as long as the war lasts.

As reported by:

Jeff Traeger

President, UFCW Local 832