

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING PRESIDENT'S REPORT

February 6, 2024

NOTRE DAME NO FRILLS

This fall there was a serious incident at the Notre Dame No Frills store when one of our members was stabbed by a shoplifter. The member spent almost two weeks in hospital and has serious injuries as a result of the attack. Grievances have been filed with Loblaw (the parent company) and with the No Frills store for failing to provide a safe workplace which is required by the Workplace Safety and Health Act for the Province of Manitoba. Because these types of violent incidents have become more common in the last year, and because theft in retail grocery is at an all time high, UFCW has arranged a meeting with Minister of Labour to discuss how government can help to make retail grocery workplaces safer.

NO FRILLS CONTRACT

Throughout the fall of 2023 and into January of 2024 our bargaining committee at No Frills has worked hard to bring home the first stand-alone collective agreement for our members working at No Frills. On January 18th, they were successful in reaching a tentative agreement with the management committee and will be conducting ratification votes from February 5-9, 2024 in the stores. Details of the tentative agreement will not be released until the ratification vote is complete.

CASHIER CAMPAIGN

In December, just two weeks before Christmas, UFCW started a public campaign to ask shoppers to think twice before using a self-checkout at their grocery store. The campaign is set to run for a year and at various times will include physical ads such as bus benches and bulletin boards, but the main platform will be online ads which have been running since December 15th. Targeted times to ramp up the campaign are designed to take place around holidays when the stores are the busiest, and our ads will be in multiple languages around cultural holidays. We're asking the public to protect good jobs in our communities by insisting on having your groceries rung up by a cashier instead of the shopper working for free for the retailer. "Self-reflect before you self-check" is our tag line and so far it is resonating well with the public as they are tired of paying ever increasing prices for their food while grocery companies make record profits.

LABOUR MANAGEMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE

As was reported widely in the media late in December, the Labour Management Review Committee – a group tasked with reviewing recommended changes to Manitoba’s Labour laws and providing a report to government – is currently reviewing single step unionization, a ban on replacement workers and a re-write of the essential services act. If these changes are eventually adopted by government, they will go a long way to re-balancing Manitoba’s Labour laws that were eroded significantly under the previous government.

SECURITY GUARD MINIMUM WAGE

10 years ago, UFCW was instrumental in lobbying government to institute a dedicated minimum wage for security guards that set the minimum rate at \$2.25 per hour above the province’s general minimum wage. One of the first things the Pallister government did when they won power in 2016 was to repeal this act despite a recommendation from the Labour Management Review Committee to keep it in place. UFCW has arranged a meeting with the Ministers of Labour and Justice in February to discuss reinstating this legislation as well as correcting a significant issue with guards getting their license renewals.

PAUL MEINEMA/SHAWN HAGGERTY

In November of 2023, UFCW Canada National President, Paul Meinema, announced his retirement after 40 years serving UFCW members across Canada in many roles. Paul was an organizer, a negotiator, a service representative, a local union president, an Executive Assistant to the National President, all before becoming the National President more than a decade ago. We wish Paul a healthy, happy and well-deserved retirement that lasts for years to come.

At the same meeting that Paul announced his retirement, Shawn Haggerty was unanimously elected as the new UFCW Canada National President by the UFCW Canada National Council. Shawn was the President of Local 175 & 633, UFCW’s largest Local with over 75,000 members in Ontario. He brings a wealth of experience to this new role and the staff of Local 832 look forward to working with Shawn and the National Office in the future.

STAFFING UPDATES

2024 is only a month old, but there have already been several staffing changes at Local 832 since we rang in the New Year.

Erin Selby, the Director of our Training Centre has accepted a position at the Assiniboine Community College and her last day was January 26th. Bonnie Burrton has been promoted to the position of Interim Director and will hold that position until at least July of 2024 when we hope to have a permanent replacement for the Training Centre Director.

Two of our full-time Union Representatives are also moving on from UFCW. Dan Leclair who represented our members in assisted living had his last day on January 22nd and Geoff Bergen who works with our industrial members has accepted a position at the CLC and will have his last day on February 23rd.

To address these vacancies, we have moved Loreto Gutierrez, who was working in organizing, into Geoff Bergen's territory and we have hired Lotte Almazar to work in Dan's previous territory.

We wish all three of our former employees all the best in their future endeavours and welcome Loreto and Lotte into their new roles at Local 832.

As reported by:
Jeff Traeger
President
UFCW Local 832