

Canadian Union of Postal Workers Edmonton Local

July - August 2010



Pride Parade June 12th CUPW Float-Builders : Ajay, Bev, Darcy, Ajay, Kaylee, Claudia, Rod, Trish, Vanessa, Sue, Karen, Cori, Asma, Ciara, Erin (missing from photo: Greg, Samantha, John, Glen)

From the Editor InsideOut

Your next InsideOut will be coming to you in September, prepared by a volunteer from the InsideOut committee, Doug Frechette. Doug helped a lot with this issue and has a great set of photos from Wetaskiwin Post Office on page 8. Thanks Doug! There has been a lot happening: the Pride Parade, pre-negotiation Regional conference, retirements, Aboriginal Day and barbeques at the plant, Moya's visit and protests on May 12, planning for the Equinox women's conference in September, a new budget was adopted for the local, committees have been meeting...and so much more!



Pension questions abound. Think carefully about this important decision and do not be pressured into leaving by rumours. That is one way to fight attrition...don't retire! But some members have been misled by postings that seem to say benefits are disappearing at the end of December. This is true for the 'management and exempt' employees, not for CUPW members. Our collective agreement is in place until January 31st, 2011 but it is extended while we are in negotiations. Article 43.02 says the agreement remains in 'full force and effect until the signing of a new collective agreement or until the requirements of section 89 (1) of the Canada Labour Code have been met'. Section 89 (1) of the Code contains requirements for what must occur between the employer and the Union before there can be a strike or a lock out.

Benefits renew on January 1st, 2011 with a new 4 year period commencing for the Vision and Hearing Plan and for the Extended Health Care eye care provisions. And don't forget that the Vision and Hearing Care Plan is NOT a post-retirement benefit...make sure to get your benefits before you retire!

Front Yards in Bloom is in full swing...and the local Union is delighted to be a partner this year. That means we are really encouraging all letter carriers, mail service couriers and the Rural and Suburban Mail Carriers to nominate! This is your 'work area' and a great way to show some appreciation for the beautiful environment you work in! It is because of door to door delivery and the valuable service that we provide in the community, that we are so well-suited to being active partners in this community program. Join in...nominate some yards today....but this does not exclude any postal worker...any member of the Edmonton community can nominate.

Solidarity, Karen Kennedy

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or The Editor, InsideOut 11001 107 Street Edmonton Alberta T5H 2Z6

From Your President.....Sister Bev Ray

Negotiations 2011-Where do we go from

here? The process for developing the list of demands for 2011 negotiations is well under way. Thirty delegates from the Edmonton Local were involved in the Regional Conference held in Edmonton during the week of June $19^{th} - 21^{st}$, 2010. This conference brought 137 union activists together from Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Northwest Territories.

At the conference 324 resolutions were debated. From the 324 resolutions, (61 from our local), 154 resolutions were passed to forward to the National Union.

So, you may wonder what happens next? During July the eight National Directors, National President and National Grievance Officer will meet to set the list of demands from the resolutions that were put forward from all 8 regions, which then goes to the National Executive Board. These demands will be distributed across the country and ratification votes scheduled from August 21st to September 26th. This is only the beginning of our preparation for Negotiations 2011.

We already know that Canada Post will use the global economy and declining mail volumes as rationale for their interest in attacking our pensions, benefits, wages and working conditions. These negotiations will also be a challenge to make gains for the technological changes we face. So, going into collective bargaining will require everyone to consciously work together to achieve a strong collective agreement.

J.C. Parrot stated it quite clearly in his book "My Union my Life" when he said "Without a militant approach, postal workers wouldn't have succeeded in winning the working conditions and collective agreement they enjoy today. Our major breakthroughs, our gains for minority groups, our job security provisions – these were only made possible by our militant determination to fight and so change things for the better". I ask you to think long and hard about what these words meant and do mean. In order for our negotiators to negotiate a strong collective agreement, they will need each and every one of us as postal workers to give them our unwavering support! It is time once again for CUPW to be the leader in fighting for fair working conditions and protecting that which was fought hard to achieve. There is no option to accept anything less! The only option is to fight for what we have achieved and to now push the envelope once again and raise the bar to improve working conditions for working people.

According to our collective agreement 29.02 ... "the corporation agrees to <u>eliminate</u> all injustices to or adverse affects on employees... When technological changes affect our work,



workers should benefit from technological change. I can remember as a little kid wondering what it would be like in the year 2000. Maybe I spent too much time watching the cartoon the "Jetsons"! They lived in a futuristic utopia in the year 2062 of elaborate robotic contraptions, aliens, holograms, and whimsical inventions, where robots did the work, the dog could speak in rough dog voice and the Dad George worked 9 hours a week!

(continues page 4...)

(President's message cont...)

Of course kids have the ability to have very pure ideals of the way things should be in the future. This is 2010 only 52 years away from the idealized utopia projected by a kids cartoon and we are yet to see a substantial benefit from technological change. Negotiations 2011 is the time to push for greater change! I ask you to think now not only about what is the union doing for you, but What Can You do for the Union? The Union is YOU!

Month of Action

May quickly became the Month of Action. With the May 12th "Let's Stick Together" campaign CUPW members across this country participated in various events. Photos were collected and are now posted on the National Website. In Edmonton, Whitemud South did an amazing job for May 12th. At the EMPP they had "Red Shirt" day and other depots had organized meetings bringing workers together. Right on the heels of this we also had another impromptu day of action when Moya Greene came to town. A quick rally was organized and protesters showed up at the EMPP to show support to Union Representatives meeting with Moya. The power of workers is evident when in less than 24 hours, this Rally came together.

So now by the time this edition of the Inside Out is published the June 30th Day of Action will have





come and gone. Aptly named "Modern Post – Powered by People" and I can hardly wait to participate and hear what the workers will do.

Aboriginal Day

I also want to remind everyone that June 21st was National Aboriginal Day. The Edmonton Local organized barbeques for our members at the EMPP to celebrate National Aboriginal Day. The regional conference marked this event with Guest Speakers from Amnesty International and Lubicon Lake Nation sharing the story of the Lubicon Cree. Lubicon Lake Nation has been embattled with the Alberta and Federal government for over 100 years starting with being bypassed by treaty commissioners in 1899. For the past 25 years the Lubicon Cree have been forced to defend their lands and traditions from cultural genocide because

the Alberta Government has granted multinational corporations such as Daishowa rights to clear cut forests, and oil companies rights to lay 500,000 km of pipeline through the territory. For more information on how you can help visit www.lubiconlakenation.com or www.amnesty.ca/lubicon

We cannot ignore the ongoing injustices and as a trade union we must involve ourselves in these struggles.

In solidarity, Bev Ray, President

(photos by Vimal of Moya protest rally at EMPP)

This month, Mike reviews the proper procedure for reporting Health and Safety issues, and comments on Moya's upcoming departure.

Note from the Health & Safety Officer...

Well summer is upon us so I am assuming the last thing members are doing is reading this article! I hope everyone enjoys the warm weather while it lasts. I'd like to refresh how to go about reporting H&S issues that you have in your workplace. This also includes on your route for carriers and MSC's.

If you are experiencing a H&S problem/hazard you should be first discussing it with the employer. Remember, you have a right to a shop steward when doing this and we always recommend that you bring in a shop steward when speaking with the boss. If you get no resolve from your employer, bring the issue up with a member of your workplace H&S committee (make sure you bring it up with a member of the committee who represents the workers). If your problem needs to be rectified immediately and the employer chooses not to fix the problem, please contact the union office. You also have the right to refuse dangerous work if you think that it will put yourself or someone else at risk of injury.

If your complaint goes to your H&S committee to deal with, please read the minutes to see what is going on with your issue. Sometimes the issues get dealt with at your H&S committee meetings but unfortunately all too often management doesn't deal with them in this forum. When management doesn't deal with the issues at the local level, the committees can send the issues to the regional level. This process can be lengthy which is why you shouldn't wait for this process if your problem needs to be resolved immediately.

The minutes for your local meeting are posted on the H&S board in your workplace along with the names of the committee members. Read the minutes and get to know who your worker representatives are.

So Moya is gone... good riddance! Though I have mixed feelings about this; yes I am happy that she is not our Canada Post President anymore but like the wise words of The Who "meet the new boss, same as the old boss". So even though I am taking a moment to enjoy the departure of the person who has been trying to tear apart our public post office, I am not detracting from the fact that it's the system in place we need to fight more so then the individual.

To end on something light, I found some generic office slang I thought members might find humorous:

Adminisphere – The rarefied organizational layers above the rank and file that makes decisions that are often profoundly inappropriate or irrelevant.

Assmosis – The process by which some people seem to absorb success and advancement by kissing up to the boss rather than working hard.

Solidarity, Mike Painchaud H&S Officer



Grievance Filing Policy of the Edmonton Local

1. In order for a grievance to be filed, the "Internal Grievance Investigation Form" and all relevant documents must be received by the Local's Grievance Department within fifteen working days from the date the employee first became aware of the actions or circumstances giving rise to the grievance. The employee on behalf of whom the grievance is to be filed is responsible for ensuring the above conditions are met.

2. The Local will assess the merits of a written complaint and if appropriate a grievance will be filed. The Union retains juristiction of the grievance.

3. When the Collective Agreement has been violated the local has the right to file a grievance even if the grievor refuses or declines to use the grievance procedure.

-Carol Read, Local Grievance Officer



Pre-Retirement Leave

There are always lots of questions about this leave. It is found in Article 19.13 in the Urban Operations Collective Agreement, amidst Vacation Leave (annual leave).

What is Pre-Retirement Leave? It is 6 weeks of paid leave. You can take this leave one week at a time in each vacation year. It is available to all regular employees, part time or full time. It is not available to temporary employees.

What is the Vacation Year?

The vacation year is 52 weeks starting April 1st and ending March 31st. However, the vacation year must match the vacation schedule which starts either the last Sunday in March or the first Sunday in April.

How is Pre-Retirement Leave

Scheduled? It is scheduled separate from the Vacation Leave schedule in one week blocks.

When do you have the right to Pre-Retirement Leave? We hear of members missing out on signing for their preretirement leave because Canada Post did not tell them they were now entitled to their leave. Don't let this happen to you! Know your rights! You have the right to pre-retirement leave when: -you have completed 20 years of continuous service AND you are 50 years old

OR

-you have completed **5 years** of continuous service **AND** you are **60 years** old.

Do you have to take it every year? No. The Collective Agreement says you are 'entitled to be paid' for the leave in every vacation year after you become entitled to the leave. This does not mean you must take the leave each year. It is your choice. **YES**, **you can skip years**. Remember, the timing is up to you. If you retire before you take all of your 6 weeks of leave it is not paid out to you. And you are able to take your last 2 weeks, your fifth and sixth weeks, in the **same** vacation year if you wish.

Can you change your mind? Yes, you can change your mind and cancel your leave. Canada Post should then offer it by seniority to your co-workers.

Can Canada Post take back leave you have already taken? In the vacation year you 'terminate' your employment, you must remain past your continuous service anniversary date or your birthday, whichever one was the later date that began your entitlement to the leave. Otherwise, the week of pre-retirement leave or a portion of it might be recovered. If you are taking the 5th and 6th weeks in the same vacation year and you have not 'skipped' any years, be especially careful of your dates. If Canada Post is able to recover the 5th week they can also recover the 6th if you have taken it in the same vacation year. If you have 'skipped' years (not taken it every year since you became entitled to the preretirement leave) you should not be required to pay back pre-retirement leave if you do not stay past your anniversary date.

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If the reason you 'terminate' employment is death or lay-off, there is no recovery of preretirement leave.

Do I get a lieu day for pre-retirement leave in a week with a stat holiday? No, you do not get a lieu day. But remember you do not lose that day. You are entitled to an alternate day at the end of your preretirement leave. Make sure you are taking five working days off for your week of preretirement leave!

Solidarity, Sister Karen Kennedy

A Day In The Life Of The Wetaskiwin Post Office...















...on the longest day of the year, June 21, 2010.



National Aboriginal Day Barbeques at the EMPP

The Edmonton Local held barbeques at the EMPP starting at 1:30am on June 24th, 2010, to celebrate National Aboriginal Day. Thanks to some quick organizing by Brother Larry Dionne, Sister Bev Ray, Sister Sue Wilson and her partner John, the event took place in the parking lot on 149 Street. Vegetarian Bev flipped burgers and chatted with members, after arranging with Canada Post to allow an extension of the breaks to accomodate the celebratory barbeque. Working in Edmonton this week on the Appendix JJ project, Brother Yannick Scott from the Montreal Local visited at the lunch hour and observed that it was actually St.Jean Baptiste Day, a statuatory holiday in Quebec. Shown in the photo: President, Sister Bev Ray and Brother Yannick Scott from the Montreal Local.

RegionalConferencePrairie RegionJune 18,19 and 20, 2010Brother Gord Fischer, National Director Prairie RegionSister Lynn Bue, 2nd National Vice President





THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES......



This month, Brian discusses why it is important to do your route exactly how it is set out.

Corporate Panhandlers

The union has always advised carriers to take their lunch break at the designated location, not to take their private vehicles, not to take out their own relay bags and not to start early because it encouraged the employer to increase the length of the routes. Every time the employer presents their contract demands, every time they question someone's overtime and every time they do a restructure that ends up with over assessed walks a couple months later they prove the union was right.

Every time you do any of the above the employer is profiting by this. It is very much like giving change to a panhandler. The panhandler asks you for change and even though it may irritate you, then you give them change so they go away. The panhandler sees that they have a good corner and they are there again the next time looking for more change. The employer is much the same. They increase your route or come up with a change in procedure that takes you more time, like the third a day householder issue and you try to get done at the same time so you start cutting corners and rushing. The employer looks and sees that you are still willing to cut corners and they can profit by it so, they figure they have a good corner and have been there, accepting your hand outs, for decades.

The real question here is if you did your route as it is set up, including the third a day householder deal, took all the breaks you are entitled to under the collective agreement, worked at a safe pace, stood there waiting for a cab instead of jumping in your vehicle and sent all your relay bags out with the driver then how often would you work overtime? Even if it would not frequently leave you working overtime then they are still profiting by it every time you do call back or are forced back because they only have to pay the minimum 1.75 hrs regardless of how long it took you to do the call back.

Even the carriers that have manageable routes should be doing this because the employer is still watching to see when you finish. We are headed into a difficult round of negotiations and the current schedule for the employer to start doing the restructures based on mechanical sequencing has this starting late next year in Edmonton. We can not wait until after these restructures are implemented and/or after we are on the picket line to let the employer know we are no longer willing to let them profit by cutting corners.

Brian Blair Route Verification Officer



General Meeting Report...June 6, 2010

The Budget for July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011 was Carried.

M/S/Carried As a policy all settled grievance files over 25 years old be fully shredded, this be posted in the next Inside Out and a bulletin be issued to the members when done.

Motion M/S/Carried: That the Edmonton local support BBQ for midnight shift on June 22 (for National Aboriginal Day).

Motion M/S/Carried: That the Edmonton local purchase tattoos for the negotiations up to \$1000, money to come from special projects.



Elections:

By-Laws Committee: Devinder Sunner

Area Council Delegates - 1 member Steve Cowtan Alternates to Area Council Delegates: Cathy Furtak ,Wray Hoffer , Carol Leighton, Rick Gates, Liz Johnman , Michelle Woods , Erin Semeniuk

Organizing Committee:

Roland Schmidt, Steve Cowtan, Erin Semeniuk, Gail Treleaven, Mary Chua

Environment Committee: Liz Johnman

Local Social Committee: Doug Frechette

CUPW Association: Wray Hoffer, Rick Gates

M/S/Carried As is tenth anniversary for the Women's Equinox September 24-26 2010 to request recognition from National for this event and also that they provide some funding.

Notices of Motion:

1. That the Edmonton Local allocate up to \$5000 from special projects for the Local Organizing Committee to host a speaking event with JC Parrot in October. By Roland Schmidt.

2. That the Edmonton Local By-Laws Committee be booked off up to one week to go through the local By-Laws and make additions, deletions and wording changes, also to add local policies as an attachment to the local By-Laws. To go to the Edmonton Executive Committee to make recommendations and all changes to be placed on the agenda of the September GMM for adoption. The local's By-Laws sometimes conflict with each other and our policies are not clear and not included in our By-Laws. Monies to come from special projects not to exceed \$8000. By Larry Dionne.

3. Local to purchase 5000 tattoos for negotiations, cost not to exceed \$1500, monies to come from special projects. By Karen Kennedy

Brother Darcy Griffiths was sworn as an executive officer by Sister Sue Wilson.



On behalf of the Local, Karen Kennedy presents Linda Wells with her retirement honorarium on her last day at Depot 11.

Honouring Our Retirees

Co-workers and friends organized a farewell dinner at the Golden Bird restaurant to honour **Bill Adams** as he retired in June from the Main Wickets. Shown in this group photo are some of the attendees: Wendy, Cecilia, Pat, Joanne Adams, Pauline, Betty, PoyLing, Bill Adams, Sylvanna, Chris, Peach, Elaine and Harvey. Peach 's speech described some of the more memorable moments in Bill's career at Main. Bill responded with a rousing recount of highlights for him in a variety of locations, including the West Edmonton Mall New Direction Outlet.

And he confirmed that he will definately miss the philatelic audits which he described as 'brutal'. All the best Bill and many happy years of retirement! Linda Wells began her retirement with a song in her heart. Below is her ditty inspired by Manfred Mann, which she enthusiastically belted out for her co-workers at Depot 11: There I was just a walkin down the street Sayin see ya later, you were all so nice to meet

Well I've sold some stamps, and I've had my own beat

Sayin see ya later, I just gotta move my feet

I'm so tired, (so tired) and sore (and sore) *I'm* so tired and sore, gotta head on out the door

Before I knew it I was starting at four Sayin see ya later, there's just gotta be more Getting up before birds, isn't right to the core Sayin see ya later, I'm goin out the door

Walked in snow and in rain Walked in snow and in rain, all I got was a big pain

Whoaa I knew 30 years was enough Yes I did and so I handed in the papers it wasn't that tough

Now I can sleep in nearly every single day Sayin see ya later, I'll take a cut in pay I'm gonna be happier and that's how I'm gonna stay Sayin see ya later, there's no time to delay

Well I'm done, (I'm done) It's been fun (been fun) I'm done, been fun, findin a place in the sun!



WORK SAFE TODAY ENJOY TOMMORROW

All the issues raised at the National Health and Safety meeting in May are contained in a hefty binder which should probably have a heavy sticker placed on it so one realizes there are a lot of issues on the agenda. If one were to list all the issues on this page that would easily use up a full page. Instead, here are some of the pressing issues which affect all of us at work.

Let's begin firstly with the issue of Manulife. It's <u>Your Life not Manulife!</u> In the event you are contacted by Manulife, it is important to always ask for union representation. Our members are being harassed constantly by the agents of Manulife. If you are injured, ill, or have return to work issues, the last thing one needs is to be harassed by anyone. Here's the contradiction. Commercials which involve Manulife show how they care for people. Okay reality check people, this is not happening.

Postal Dust: There it is the clock and those last few minute seem to take forever. Almost everyone's eyes move up and down and side to side to check out the time so we can all just leave. So we go wash our hands and have you experienced any of the following: dark secretions in your tissue after you blew your nose or a dry itchy throat. As we all know post offices are dusty places, with dirty, stinky mail bags, some which smell worst than your smelliest pair of rotten socks. Where does this dust come from? Well most of it is produced by the fast mechanized sorting equipment for mail. As the dust makes its journey into the air we breathe it causes the above mentioned issues. The situation in the United States is much worse than in Canada due to higher volumes and greater mechanization. Unfortunately in Canada there currently are no federal standards in regards to Postal Dust.

Violence in the Workplace: With the introduction of cramped work places and being constantly watched by our superiors, people react differently to the rude behaviors of others. If you feel you are being treated unfairly get a hold of a shop steward and discuss the issue in private. There's a news clip from Windsor, Ont. Kenneth Quaggiotto a 45 year resident of Windsor, Ont., followed his mailman with a camera and then posted videos of him on Youtube. Then onto a neighborhood mailbox posted his mailman's picture and drew swastikas on the photo. The mailman was verbally confronted by Kenneth between September 2008 and January 2009. Kenneth has been convicted of criminal harassment, fined \$500.00 and placed on probation for 2 years. All this began as an argument over a dog running free in the neighborhood. The use of violence against anyone may lead to criminal charges and even civil liability.

Regional Reports: As each Region was presenting their issues, there was a clear message and understanding that across this whole country employees rights in regards to health and safety are sometimes ignored and can cause other problems. With the modernization of the post office we face new challenges such as: appropriate containers for clearing mail, high speed mechanized machinery, rotation of duties issues. With issues ongoing and unresolved, injuries are still occurring and affecting the health of our members.

We can all do our part to work safe and use the tools necessary to do the job safely. For example if you do not have an Ergolift to work safely out of a monotainer then go find one and work safe.

Rashpal Sehmby

Prairie Representative to the CUPW National Health and Safety Committee

Upcoming Meetings and Events

June 30	- National Day of Action		
July 2	- Deadline for Early Bird golf registrations		
July 4	- General Membership meeting Noon-2pm		
July 8	- Women's Committee 6:30pm		
July 15	- Executive Committee meeting Noon		
July 15	- Organizing Committee meeting 4:30 pm		
July 20	- Environment Committee 6:30pm		
July 23	- Deadline for Golf registrations		
July 30	- EMPP Shop Steward meeting		
	8:30 AM, 1 PM, 4:30 PM		
July 31	- CUPW Sandtrap Open at Cardiff Golf Club		

August (no general meeting)

- August 19 Executive Meeting Noon
- August 19 Organizing Committee meeting 4:30pm
- August 21 Steward Appreciation Barbeque 1:00pm





CUPW Edmonton Local Women's Committee, Equinox-planning meeting: (back) Suzie, Lorraine, Michelle, Bena, Linda, Carla, (front)Samantha, Karen, Liz, Mary and Cori. (photo Norm Burns)

10th	Anniv	ersary Celebrati	on at Equinox 2010 September 24, 25, 26
		(Prize Dra General Registr Fee: \$40*	Local Registrations: August 15th aw for Early Registrations) ations Deadline: September 15th for local members\retirees \$75 * for others
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