

Communicator



From the President Mike Davidson

Bargaining, campaigns and political action in the spotlight

It gives me great pleasure to bring greetings to all Local 500 members in this reactivated edition of the Communicator. In keeping with our commitment to improve communications, this new look of our newsletter will be produced three times annually. We have also been using email technology to provide you with union news and updates. Already, over one thousand members are registered and I would encourage each of you to sign-up through our website for this service.

Our Local faces many challenges ahead of us. Our work to defend public services will continue in this final year of our four-year "Positively Public" fight-back campaign. One of our main goals is to educate the public about the value of public services. We are doing this through a number of advertising initiatives such as radio, television, bus and billboards. In addition, we placed advertisements in the community papers and other publications. Information pamphlets were also distributed to the public regarding the importance of our City golf courses, libraries, park police, Assiniboine Park and water and sewer services.

As a result of our efforts, we were able to gain public support and hold the line on a number of privatization and contracting out initiatives. However, despite these accomplishments, we lost some key positions in the Park Police and Library Services.

I would like to thank and commend the Park Police and Library members who worked hard on behalf of the membership to defend these important services.

During the past year, the Local attended over 50 workplace meetings. At these meetings, we discuss important issues affecting your workplace and our Union. If you'd like us to visit your workplace, give the Local a call.

Within this issue of the Communicator, you will find the latest news on each of the bargaining groups represented by Local 500. Keep an eye on your workplace bulletin boards for more bargaining updates.

This October, we will have an opportunity to "elect our bosses" during the upcoming civic elections. I cannot emphasize enough how important it is for all of us to exercise our right to vote.

In closing, I want to thank all of our members, activists, executive, staff and family members who have played a positive role in our workplaces and community.

Together, we can keep our Local strong!



Local 500 Table Officers

President
Mike Davidson

1st Vice President
Brian Barron

2nd Vice President
Shane Westover

Treasurer
Glenoria Molnar

Secretary
Sallie Caufield

Warden
Cathy Williams-Stewart

Trustees

1 year
Phil Dembicki

2 year
Keith Bousquet

3 year
Dave Gaudreau

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Local 500 agreements at a glance

City of Winnipeg

The current three-year agreement between Local 500 and the City of Winnipeg expires December 31, 2010. Members received a 3% increase on pay period #1, 2010.

Preparations for upcoming bargaining with the City of Winnipeg are currently underway. Watch your workplace bulletin boards for further updates.

Canlan (Highlander Ice Sports)

The current four-year agreement will expire in 2011. Members will receive a 2% wage increase on June 26 and December 25, 2010.

Commissionaires (RCMP "D")

The current three-year agreement expires on March 31, 2011. In April 2010, members will receive a 50 cent per hour raise.

Gateway Recreation Centre

The current four-year agreement will expire in 2012. Members will receive wage increases ranging from 2.4% to 2.5% in August/September, 2010.

Historical Museum of St. James Assiniboia

Contract negotiations are in progress at the Historical Museum of St. James Assiniboia.

Kirkfield-Westwood Community Centre

The current two-year agreement expires in February, 2011.

Riverview Health Centre

The current four-year agreement expires on March 31, 2012. In each year of the agreement, members receive wage increases of 2.9%. Other highlights include improvements in mileage rate, boot and tool allowance and an education fund.

RM of East St. Paul

The three-year agreement expires December 31, 2010. Members received a 3% wage increase on January 10, 2010.

St. Boniface Museum

The current two-year agreement expires December 31, 2011. Members receive 2.5% in the first year and 2% in the second year.

Varsity View Community Centre

Contract negotiations are in progress at Varsity View Community Centre.

Winnipeg Convention Centre

The new agreement expires February 4, 2012. Members will receive wage increases of 2.5% in each year of the agreement.

Winnipeg Humane Society

A new three-year agreement was ratified at the Humane Society in February, 2010. Members will receive wage increases of 1.5% in the first year, 2% in the second and 2% in the third year of the contract. The new agreement also includes a provision for boot allowance for one classification.

Winnipeg Regional Health Authority

The current four-year agreement expires on March 31, 2012. In each year of the agreement, members receive wage increases of 2.9%.

Stewards are the key to building a strong union



Shop stewards are the eyes and ears of the union on the shop floor. They work with the members and the employer to help solve problems and make sure your contract is followed.

In order to assist our shop stewards in performing their role more effectively, Local 500 offers a Steward Orientation

and Basic Effective Stewarding Course. If you are interested in becoming a shop steward and would like to attend the next training session, contact the Local 500 office.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR
for upcoming
steward training

A Local 500 Shop Steward Orientation session will be held on **Tuesday, April 20, 2010 from 6:30 – 8:30 pm, 7th Floor, Union Centre, 275 Broadway.**

This is a brief introduction to the job of a union steward and to the structure of our Local.

Please contact the Local 500 office at 942-1001 to register.

Pension Talk

By Bob Ripley, Local 500 Special Assignments Officer

The Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Old Age Security (OAS) are the two major sources of retirement income from the Canadian government. Low income Canadians may also be entitled to the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) of OAS.

If you are a member of the Winnipeg Civic Employees' Benefits Program (WCEBP) your pension plan along with personal savings, work together with these government plans to provide a reasonable level of income in retirement.

The most common two types of pension plan funding are Defined Benefit (DB) plans and Defined Contribution (DC) plans.

Defined Benefit (DB) pension plans

Defined Benefit (DB) pension plans, provide a specified level of pension at retirement, either based on a promised dollar amount or percent of earnings. In DB pension plans, employers and employees contribute to a Pension Fund that is held in Trust to meet the obligations of the pension plan. The Fund assets are invested prudently and the Fund undergoes an actuarial valuation regularly to determine if its assets are sufficient to meet the Plan's obligations.

Defined Contribution (DC) pension plans

With Defined Contribution (DC) pension plans, the member contributes a specific amount and is responsible for investing those contributions, similar to a group RRSP. The pension benefit cannot be determined until retirement, when the value of investment returns is known.

The Winnipeg Civic Employees' Benefits Program (WCEBP)

The Winnipeg Civic Employees' Benefits Program (WCEBP) is a DB plan. That means, the pension fund is made up of equal employer and member contributions. These contributions, combined with the earnings made from investing them, make up the assets of the pension plan. As a funded plan, these assets have to be sufficient to pay the pension benefit that each member earns in a year.

Contribution rates in the WCEBP have remained the same since the mid seventies. In the past, the surpluses in the plan have been used to keep the contribution rates low. The surpluses have now been used up due to the downturn in the markets in 2008/2009.

Since January, 2009, the plan Trustees have been meeting regularly to attempt to address this situation.

In July, 2009, they made a recommendation to the unions and employers who own the plan, to increase both employer and employee pension contribution rates from the current average of 6.7% to 8%. Both the Signatory Unions and the City of Winnipeg representing the employers in the Plan agreed with the recommended increase which took effect January 1, 2010.



"Contribution rates in the WCEBP have remained the same since the mid seventies. In the past, the surpluses in the plan have been used to keep the contribution rates low."

This increase brings the combined contribution rate up to a total of 16%. This is still short of the 24% that is needed to fund the plan.

The turn around in the markets this last year has not been enough to erase the losses from 2008. We believe that further contribution increases will be necessary and are preferred to benefit reductions. The plan Trustees are working with the Civic Unions and the City of Winnipeg to come up with a remedy to address this issue.

Funding a pension plan is a long-term process based on the assumption that the plan will exist indefinitely. To that end, the WCEBP Pension Plan Board of Trustees and the Board's Investment Committee are also closely monitoring the performance of the fund. They recognize that strong investment returns are required to help meet the plan's pension obligations.

For full details of the plan, you can contact the Winnipeg Civic Employees' Benefits Program directly.

Sign up for email news

Sign up at www.cupe500.mb.ca to receive the latest email news and updates. Don't miss out!



2009 Scholarship and Bursary Winners

Mark Behrendt (Bursary), Kimberly Froese (Scholarship), (missing: Bronwyn Jerrett-Enns)



2010 Scholarship and Bursary Awards

The Les Butterworth Scholarship Fund, sponsored by the Union, is open each year to Local 500 members and their families. The scholarship is awarded on the basis of high academic achievement, while the bursaries are given for high marks and financial need. Family is defined as spouse, children, grandchildren, brother, sister, son-in-law and daughter-in-law. Also eligible are families of retired or deceased members.

Applications will be available from the Local 500 office and on our website **after April 15, 2010.**

You can call us at 942-1001 or send us an email at union@cupe500.mb.ca You may also drop by the office at 702 – 275 Broadway.

Applications are accepted until July 2, 2010.



Joint City/CUPE Scholarship Program

The City/CUPE Scholarship Program is inviting employees of the City of Winnipeg to apply for funding. You must:

- Be a member of CUPE Local 500
- Have attained and maintain CUPE seniority

Funding is for courses starting between July 1, 2010 and December 31, 2010

Application forms will be available on **April 12, 2010** and can be printed from:

<http://citynet/jc/Scholarships/scholarships.stm>
<http://www.cupe500.mb.ca>

Deadline for applications: April 30, 2010

National Day of Mourning is April 28

The Day of Mourning was based on a resolution written by CUPE's National Health and Safety Committee. The committee recommended the creation of a remembrance day for workers killed or injured on-the-job in 1984. In the same year, the Canadian Labour Congress and affiliated unions quickly adopted the day across Canada.



CUPE proposed and adopted the canary in a cage as the internationally recognized symbol for the Day of Mourning. In the 19th century, miners would take a caged canary into the mines with them. Canaries are more sensitive to airborne hazards and the absence of oxygen in the air than people. If the canaries were overcome by hazards, it was a sign to evacuate the mine, fast.

On April 28, please take time to honor those workers throughout Canada and the world for the lives lost or workers injured in workplace accidents. It is a day to reflect and remind all of us of the steps we can take to make our workplaces safe.

Moving? Change in beneficiary? Name Change? Please let us know!

In order to keep our membership database current, please keep us informed of any information changes including addresses, names and changes to your beneficiary.