



Carpenters Union Local 1985 Newsletter

produced quarterly by union members and printed in a unionized shop

Fall 2003



Business Manager Bob Todd

Business Managers Report

Several days have passed since the NDP's re-election in Saskatchewan by a very narrow majority. As I reported to you during the campaign, the NDP report card falls short of the mark on several critical construction issues. But at least we don't expect to be legislated out of existence along with our collective agreements and certification orders, which is what many of us anticipated would have happened to us if the Sask Party were elected.

Although since the election the media is already reporting that the unions will all have their wish lists out looking for pay back for support in the election, I believe there are several outstanding issues of importance to the Carpenters and the rest of the Building Trades for that matter. For example, there continues to be no requirement to pay overtime in the north under Labour Standards with the excuse that cottage industries could not survive. Well then, give them a variance of hours permit the way the government hands them out to contractors in the south. Why should companies like Cameco and Cogema be allowed to build mines, make millions of dollars, and pay only straight time for overtime? This has

been a major issue when the trades have attempted to get project agreements for major northern development. Furthermore, the law is archaic and discriminates against northern residents.

Lack of enforcement of existing Labour Standards regarding overtime in the south is another issue. Over the past couple of years our organizers have talked to many Carpenters who do not receive time and one half for overtime. Labour Standards will not enforce its own Act unless the employee themselves complain and then will only investigate on behalf of that individual, not the entire crew. If you have already guessed that very few will complain, you are right. This certainly gives noncompliant contractors a bidding advantage, and it appears even when they get caught, Labour Standards lets them go when they promise to comply on a go forward basis. It was even suggested to us by a Labour Standards officer that contractors could compensate for paying overtime by further lowering Carpenters wages! Labour Standards approach to enforcement is not even legislated or regulated. It is only policy, a policy we remember that was introduced by the Grant Devine government and jealously perpetuated by the NDP in order to avoid confrontations with unscrupulous employers.

Then there is the issue of spinoff companies and the amendments to the Construction Industry Labour Relations Act in 2000 that did away with the so called grandfathering provision regarding spinoffs. The Carpenters, along with several other trades, filed an application with the Labour Relations Board immediately after the amendments were passed in the summer of 2000. Remember also that these were amendments that we lobbied to obtain for eight years since 1992 following broken

promises by the NDP. It took until January 2003 and a great deal of money to conclude phase 1 of the Graham hearings that dealt only with successorship of Graham's new company and abandonment, an issue raised by Graham. We finally received a decision from the Labour Relations Board the day before the election. The Board ruled that the new Graham is a successor to the old one, but that the unions had abandoned their rights! The decision is incredible and outrageous. It renders the whole purpose of the 2000 amendments and the eight years of lobbying to the NDP to fulfill broken promises empty and meaningless. Furthermore the Trade Union Act does not even contemplate abandonment, which in our opinion is tantamount to allowing the employer to decertify its Union obligations.

In conjunction with spinoffs, there is only one effective way to force compliance with the law and that is a meaningful tendering policy for government work. When we received the 2000 amendments to the Act the NDP took back the Crown Construction Tendering Agreement (CCTA) but promised to replace it with an overall tendering policy. Over three years later that has not happened and the NDP continue to award government contracts to non union spinoff companies. Companies that at one point and time we organized fair and square.

The coming months will tell the tale as to whether the NDP will finally show the political will to fulfill broken promises and excuses. If they don't, we have only succeeded in re-electing the lesser of the two evils. That will be very disappointing to many of our members who have as much right to ownership of the NDP as those who are now sitting in the legislature.

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Solid Footings

A solid foundation means stability and solidarity for all members

Organizing is the number one priority of our Union. We must organize new contractors on a regular basis just to keep our market share on an even par. The construction industry is always changing. Contractors come and go, form new joint ventures, get bought out, and sometimes cynically just change their names and avoid their union contracts. It is a constant battle just to keep up.

The Carpenters Union has been relatively successful since General President McCarron was elected on a program of dedicating every available resource to organizing. Decades of declining membership were turned around and the UBC is now growing again. Tough decisions were made. Priorities were changed. Empty suits used to swanning around on business class flights were retired and organizers were hired and trained. It would be nice to say that progress was immediate and dramatic. In fact, progress has been modest and incremental.

But the UBC is making progress! Other unions are not. This week, as this edition of the Journal is being written, Canadian unions are meeting in Ottawa to discuss really drastic problems. In 1980 nearly 40% of Canadian workers were union members. Today the figure is barely 30%. In the United States less than 20% of workers are organized. Most unions have lost the initiative. Some seem to be in a death spiral. What has gone wrong?

One problem is that union members rely too much on their hired staff to do everything for them. In its early days the UBC was an all volunteer organization. Every member was a part-time organizer. In a sense it is ironic that the UBC has reorganized and established a state of the art training centre in Las Vegas, and the best trained corps of organizers in the construction industry, only to find that the grassroots membership has been lulled to sleep.

Trade unions have had their ups and

downs over the past century. There have been decades of adversity. But there have also been periods of exuberant growth.

In the 1920's unions emerged from obscurity and organized the mining, steel, motor and construction industries. In the 1950's and 1960's union growth was explosive. But since the recession of the early 1980's unions have been taking it on the chin.

The best minds in the Canadian labour movement are currently meeting and reflecting on what went right in the 1960's and what went wrong in the 1990's. Organizing involves a struggle for the hearts and minds of unorganized workers. In periods of growth this battle was taken on by all union members. It was a kind of cultural war fought in lunchrooms, bars and over dinner tables. And union members did not shy away from arguing the union case. "Unions offer better wages, benefits, conditions and dignity," said the union members. And unorganized workers were convinced one at a time.

Today unions seem to be the victims of their own success. Staff is better trained and better directed than before. Carbon copy paper and Gestetner machines have been replaced with E-mail and google searches. At the top, the union is more focused and professional than before. But these advantages are cancelled out when the rank and file members get complacent. If members slag their own union, or remain silent when others mouth off on anti-union tirades, the battle for hearts and minds will be lost. No matter how good our staff is, we will always be defined by the zeal of our membership.

Is this issue important? Yes! Try to imagine a Saskatchewan with no effective Carpenters Union. This is a movie we saw in the 1980's and don't want to see again. Imagine paying for all of your dental bills, your kid's glasses, imagine having no pension. Imagine a big wage

cut and no grievance procedure to right wrongs.

To keep our union strong into the future we must encourage the volunteerism that marked our past. Take an interest in your union. Speak up when you hear your union being unfairly criticized. Phone an organizer when you have useful information about a non union contractor. These are dangerous and uncertain times and evil will triumph if good men do nothing.

A Labour Minute



Al King lights up

Al King was a big, rugged guy who had a long and magnificent career as a union rep with Mine Mill and Smelter Workers and later Steelworkers.

He was once sent up into the mountains near Princeton, B.C. to organize some open pit miners.

Al King had plenty of experience organizing underground miners but wasn't sure the same approach would work at an open pit.

Someone advised him - "Just take a case of beer. The boys will do the rest."

When he got to the mine site he was directed to a bunkhouse, where he found a group of young miners smoking marijuana.

Al's refreshments and the miners' home-made cigarettes were shared all around and King signed everybody up with the union.

But someone got wind of the incident and reported Al to the union's head office.

The union headquarters called Al to give him what for, for smoking dope on the job.

Al King's response is a classic. He said, "Look, I'm an organizer, if it meant I could bring some new workers into the union I'd smoke dried pig shit!"

Then he hung up, and heard no more about his organizing tactics.

Labour Minutes recount the history of working people and take just a minute to read.
-Lillian-Boy

ORGANIZING UPDATE

So far in 2003 our organizing efforts have resulted in six new contractors being certified by the Labour Relations Board. Tower Scaffolding Inc., Drivers Industrial Installations Ltd., Interpro Technical Services Ltd., Alstom Canada Inc., Gesteco Technical Services Inc., and VA Tech Escher Wyss Canada Inc., have joined the UBC's family of unionized contractors.

Our next targets will be chosen from the following list: Wright Western, Westridge, Wolfe, VCM, Procon, RNF, Carmont, Big Sky, A-1 Access, Hipperson and Remai. Our organizers are compiling information and making jobsite and home visits.

If you have any information about these companies or their employees please phone your nearest organizer (Barry 537-5311 or Kerry 221-8079)

We are targeting the residential sector with top-down and bottom-up approaches. The residential sector has been very busy for the past couple of years. The drywall industry is also an area of continuing focus. We have several



dozen cards signed and support is slowly building towards the "tipping point."

UNION PENSION FUNDS FLEX MUSCLES

In May, Kelvin Goebel and Kerry Westcott went to the Annual Shareholders Meetings of the Potash Corporation and Cameco. Kelvin and Kerry presented motions designed to force these corporations to expense and disclose to shareholders the true costs of the stock options granted by the Board to their top officers and managers.

The Potash Corporation and Cameco fought the UBC's motions tooth and nail. But the UBC was successful in carrying both motions. This is a victory for pension funds and shareholders because it forces the Boards of these two corporations to operate with a greater degree of transparency. This was a part of a strategy the UBC is using across Canada and the United States to get more leverage from their large portfolios of stock market investments made by the UBC's pension funds. The CBC program called "Venture" recently featured the UBC's efforts on behalf of its pension investments.

For too long unions have been passive investors. This new policy of pension fund activism is a good idea and you can expect to see more UBC initiatives of this type.



SERVICE AWARDS BANQUET

Local 1985's annual service awards banquet was held at the Delta Bessborough on Saturday October 4. Business Manager Bob Todd spoke appreciatively of the many long term members honoured that night. These members form Local 1985's organizational memory and are able ambassadors both for their union and their trade.

This year's presentees are:

50 Years

Henry Neufeldt
John Warkentin
Peter Leniuk

45 Years

None this year

40 Years

Harold Donald

35 Years

Wayne Turner
Terry Denys

30 Years

Douglas Sepke
Ralph Strunk
Manual Moreira
Mike Flaminio
Leo Lavoie
Bernie Egilsson
Art Jensen
Brian Harder

25 Years

Wayne Prokopets
Lorne Crocker
William Saam
John Bomok
Arnie Richardson
Paul Lacerte
Mike Toth



SCAFFOLDERS PREPARE FOR GREY CUP

As all Canadian football fans know, this year Regina plays host to the Grey Cup. Taylor Field only has about 30,000 seats and needs about 60,000 by November for the big game. So if you need to double the size of a football stadium in a matter of weeks, who are you going to call? The UBC! Tower Scaffolding Inc., and a few dozen members of Local 1985 added 30,000 bleacher seats in a matter of weeks. This job was done safely, on time and on budget with union carpenters. The only thing that could make this better is if our Saskatchewan Roughriders win the Grey Cup. Be advised that these new bleachers do not have electric seat warmers, so don't forget a large thermos of your favorite strong beverage!



GREY CUP 2003

November 16, Taylor Field, Regina, SK.

2nd Back Row: Clarence Cheekinew, Roman Pasqua, Brad Nillson

Back Row: Chad Thurmeier, Brian Riley, Brent Farkes, Del Turner, Jack Ducharme, Rick Karlonas, Darrell Wilson, Jeff Best, Gary Rombaut

Middle Row: Ivan Kitchemonia, Guy Theriault, Elleiry Dustyhorn, Bill Roberts, Grant Roberts, Ernee Dimen, Kelly Juhlin, Jhon Froh

Front Row: Tom Gary, Angela Roy, Dominic Wafer, Tony Bendi, Eric Barrette, Geoff Batchelar, George Scheelhaase



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IN MEMORIAM

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of four of our retired members. Peter Brandt, Wilbert Geiger, Don Bray and Henry Neufeldt were long time members of the UBC in Saskatchewan, and they were in every sense of the word, "builders". They not only built buildings, but more importantly they built families, communities of friends and they were important contributors to building a better carpenters union. They will be missed by everyone who knew them.

Peter, Wilbert, Don and Henry were fortunate to live long lives and to have had time to build valuable legacies. Ryan Mitchell was not so fortunate. Ryan, an apprentice member from Estevan who most recently worked for Systems Scaffold, died in a bike accident days short of his 20th birthday. Our thoughts and prayers extend to Ryan's family and many friends in this time of ineffable sadness.

The following are the lyrics from a song written by Eddie Carr Jr., which he has generously made available to members of this local union and in particular to the family of Don Bray for use at his funeral. There is a lovely article about Don's family on the band's website. If you would care to read it or to purchase a copy of the song, their website address is www.southernjunctionband.com

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Local 1985 members Scott McRoberts, Mike Atchison and Elleiry Dustyhorm recently took part in this year's Habitat for Humanity build on Atkinson Street in Regina, and Ron Jensen took part in the build in Saskatoon. UBC Carpenters throughout North America have long been generous in donating skilled labour and enthusiasm to Habitat's projects. Habitat relies on volunteer workers, material donations and sweat equity from recipients to build housing for low income families at a price they can afford.

To be eligible to receive a Habitat home a family must demonstrate clear need, have an annual income of

less than \$31,000 and volunteer 500 hours of their time. If the family is eligible and keeps up their end of the bargain, they will usually have a new home within 3 years. Habitat has offices in Saskatoon and Regina that will be happy to answer any questions you may have about their activities.

Scott, Mike, Elleiry and Ron deserve recognition for their selfless contribution to this year's build. And Local 1985 encourages all members to find some time to

volunteer to these very worthwhile projects that build inexpensive homes for the deserving poor.

The Carpenters Prayer

He stood at the threshold of heaven on high,
A carpenter's hammer and a saw at his side,
The clothes on his shoulders were threadbare and worn,
And his old leather apron was empty and torn.

As he entered the gates of the great ever more,
His eyes filled with tears as he looked to the door,
For there at the mansion so perfect and right,
Stood the Great Master Builder is his glorious light.

And the Lord said "You've come to my home up above,
Built on the foundation of heavenly love,
This hall of devotion is endless and wide,
And it's sheltered eternal by an unclouded sky."

The carpenter bowed to the Great Master's call,
And laid to the side his old hammer and saw,
He welled in emotion, no words he could say,
So he fell to his knees and he humbly prayed:

"Oh Great Master Builder of heaven and earth,
I'm just an old craftsman of no mortal worth,
Your beautiful mansion's so perfect and true,
What work would you have an old carpenter do?"

And the Lord said "You served me through all of your years,
Your faith has endured all the trials and tears,
You sheltered the homeless with the gifts of your trade,
And you honoured the Saviour in all that you've made."

"Now rise up before me and come take my hand,
I'll show you my promise of a glorious land,
Lay down your old apron for your labours are through,
Come home to this mansion that I've built here for you."



Training Matters



Lee Naylor
Training Coordinator

Provincial/National Apprenticeship Contest

The Provincial Apprenticeship Contest was held in Regina on July 12th and 13th at the training centre. This years project was a covered sandbox which will be donated by the training fund to Sophia House in Regina.

The winner of this years competition was Marc Bien of Regina who also represented Saskatchewan at the National Apprenticeship Contest which was held on August 29th and 30th in Charlottetown, P.E.I., Marc competed against carpenters from

across Canada, and represented our Local well although he did not place in the top 3. The winners of the National contest were as follows:

1st Place :
Brian Fewer, Local 579, Newfoundland

2nd Place:
Scott McHugh, Local 1386, N. B.

3rd Place:
Tim Nerbus, Local 343, Manitoba

There was also a drywall competition. The winners of the drywall competition were:

1st Place:
Yuri Svitak, Local 675, Toronto, Ont.

2nd Place:
Adam Dewitt, Local 18, Hamilton, Ont.

Next years National Apprenticeship Contest (2004) will be held in Saskatoon, Sk. on August 27th and 28th in the Bessborough Hotel's Terrace Garden.

Marc was also this years recipient of the Carl Crozier Award. A plaque and a \$500.00 cheque will be presented to Marc on behalf of the Crozier family.

Scaffold

Scaffolding classes for the Fall/03 started on Sept. 15th in both Regina and Saskatoon. The classes will be completed by Nov.18/03. There is also



Marc Bien - Provincial Apprenticeship Contest

a class planned for Prince Albert in November.

The next scheduled classes will start in early Jan./04 in both Saskatoon and Regina. Please keep your scaffold hours up to date. Have your employer fill out and send in a Form 6 to this office with your hours worked once every six months. The class lists for the next scaffolding classes will be compiled in mid December.

Confined Space/H2S Alive

A revised reimbursement policy for Confined Space / H2S Alive, First Aid and CPR training will take effect Jan 1/04. The Carpenters Training Trust Fund will reimburse the following amounts:

H2S Alive training will be reimbursed 100% to a maximum of \$135.00 + GST

Confined Space training will be reimbursed 100% to a maximum of \$75.00 + GST

First Aid training will be reimbursed 100% to a maximum of \$69.95 + GST

CPR training will be reimbursed 100% to a maximum of \$40.00 + GST

The onus is on the individual member to make arrangements for this training on their own or through their contractor. A memo sent out by Husky



Oil states that, over the next three years employees coming to work at the Lloydminster upgrader site will be trained in H2S Alive as well as Confined Space.

Training is available through:

The Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association

2665 - Ave. C North
Saskatoon, Sk. Ph# 652-0907 or
In Regina: 1939 - Elphinstone St.
Ph# 525-0171

Training is also available through:

Job Source Safety Services:

In Saskatoon call: 652-5627
In Regina call: 781-5627

Once training has been received please contact the training office in regards to reimbursement.

Basic Computer Training

Any members in the Saskatoon area wishing to book time on a computer for basic computer training with internet access, please contact me at the above number. We have 3 computers which are available for use, but a time and date must be booked with this office as they are also used for CSTC and R&R

training. These computers are available for computer training and not general internet surfing.

Training Reminders/General

Some members' training certificates in CSTS and R&R will be expiring soon. CSTS training must be renewed every 3 years and R&R every 5 years, please check your expiry date on your cards and make sure that your training is current. If not, please make arrangements to take this training. There have also been cases of members showing up on jobs without their cards, please carry these cards with you.

Anyone wishing to take a Rigging, Total Station or ICF formwork course please contact me at the above number, once sufficient numbers have registered, a course will be scheduled. It is difficult to pre-schedule these classes at this time of year due to scaffold classes running at both training centers. Special arrangements must be made.

Please keep your personal information up to date. If you have a change of address or phone number, please contact the union office.



Wendy

Wendy and Sue Need To Hear From You

When you are laid-off and looking for work, please phone Wendy or Sue (382-4355) and ask them to put you on the out of work list.

Also, if you are apprenticing we need proof of your trade time. Please send us a Form 6 after each job and at least once every 6 months.



Sue



LOCAL UNION ELECTIONS

Local 1985 is a democratic organization that has elections for three year terms to the Executive Committee in the manner required by the U.B.C.'s Constitution. In order to give every member the best opportunity to vote in a large province we hold balloting in four cities – Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert and Lloydminster.

Journeymen who have been in good standing for 2 years prior to the election are eligible to run for any office, and all members who have been in good standing for one year prior to the election are eligible to vote. Everything a member needs to know about elections is written in our Constitution and you can get a free copy of the Constitution at our Regina and Saskatoon offices.

As most of you know Jim Geddes decided to step down as President this year due to the demands of his job as Program Head of Woodland Campus' Carpentry Division in Prince Albert. Warren Sauder, who was previously Vice –President, was elected Local 1985's new President. Warren has been active on union executive committees going back to the days of Regina Local 1867 and recently received his 25 year service pin.

Ian Schappert of Saskatoon was elected to the vacant Vice-President position. Ian will receive his 25 years

service pin next year and has been an active foreman, job steward and promoter of the apprenticeship system.

Tony Bonokoski beat incumbent Jim Mills and is our new Recording Secretary. Tony has been a member for 17 years and is a highly respected foreman and scaffolder. Tony lives in Regina. All other incumbents were re-elected.

Local 1985's current Executive Committee:

Warren Sauder - *President*

Ian Schappert - *Vice President*

Lee Naylor - *Financial Secretary*

Bob Todd - *Business Manager/Treasurer*

Tony Bonokoski - *Recording Secretary*

Garry Brockman - *Conductor*

Richard Doege - *Warden*

Kelvin Goebel - *Assistant Business Manager/Trustee*

Joe Taylor - *Trustee*

Austin Tharp - *Trustee*

This impressive list of officers has a total of 300 years of combined membership in the UBC. Members of Local 1985 have every reason to believe that their interests and welfare will be well served by the experience and dedication of their new Executive Committee. Ian Schappert and Tony Bonokoski, as new Executive Members, will contribute fresh points of view to many of our old problems.

