

# PRESIDENTS REPORT TO THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

FEBRUARY 7, 2017



## **PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION**

On March 20th our new provincial government tabled two bills that will have a drastic effect on UFCW members in Manitoba – Bill 28 and Bill 29.

Bill 28 takes away a union's right to bargain wage increases for members working in the public sector for the next 4 years setting them at 0%, 0%, .75% and 1%. This affects over 4,100 Local 832 members and not just in healthcare, but in all workplaces funded by the provincial government. So if you work at Winnserv, FASD, Visions of Independence, BCO, any ACL or either of our shelters, Bill 28 affects you. For those of you that work in the private sector, imagine what it would be like to go into bargaining knowing that you couldn't negotiate wages and that you were going to be getting 1.75% over the next 4 years.

Bill 29 affects our healthcare members directly and if the provincial government gets their way in the midst of closing three ER's in Winnipeg and repurposing several other hospitals, all healthcare workers will have to vote for which union they belong to and not the one they originally chose. It is a truly ugly bill that will drastically affect our healthcare system and the unions that represent those workers including ours, and the worst part is that it will likely save them very little, if any money, which is the reason they say they're doing it in the first place.

As if all that wasn't enough, they recently announced that they will be doing a review of the Workplace Safety and Health Act, and given that they voted against every improvement to that act since 1999 the changes they make will most likely not be favourable for workers.

## **SOBEYS**

Unfortunately the news for this retailer seems to keep getting worse. All three of the corporate stores where we represented workers are now closed, the Sobeys Extra store on Pembina Highway started off great but is now losing customers and hours for our members and sales at Safeway and the number of locations and members working there are at an all-time low. This is a great concern to all of us at UFCW and as we go into bargaining later this year the company just announced that they will be cutting \$500,000,000 worth of jobs in the coming months – most of those in management positions.

## **EAL FUNDING IN BRANDON**

In April we were informed that the funding we receive to offer English as an Additional Language to our workers who came to Manitoba through the Temporary Foreign Worker Program would be cut dramatically as of June 30th this year. The cuts come to our advanced program and we are currently working with the Assiniboine Community College who is also having their funding cut to lobby the Federal Government to reconsider funding the highly successful program.

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## **NDP CONVENTION**

On March 17, 18, and 19 a delegation from Local 832 attended the NDP Convention in Winnipeg. Delegates debated the rules regarding the upcoming leadership race that will culminate in a new leader being chosen this fall. If you are interested in attending the leadership convention as a UFCW delegate, contact Blake Crothers at the Winnipeg office.

## **SECURITY CONFERENCE**

Our Security Sector Conference held on February 22nd at the Training Centre was a huge success. Attendees heard from a variety of keynote speakers and there was more interest in the event than we had room for. As a result we will be holding a second one in June and if you are interested in attending contact Curt Martel at the Winnipeg office.

## **ACTIVIST CONFERENCE**

The Activist Conference held April 18-20 at the Fairmont Hotel was attended by almost 300 UFCW Shop Stewards, Health and Safety Committee members and other activists and guests. Speakers included our International Secretary Treasurer Esther Lopez and Former Premier and Ambassador to the United States Gary Doer. There were interesting and informative workshops, a meet and greet, tour and volunteer opportunities and a great musical presentation by Maria Dunn celebrating the history of the meat industry in Western Canada. But the best part of the conference was getting so many UFCW activists together to network and make new friends.

## **CLC CONVENTION**

Local 832 sent a small delegation to the CLC Convention in Toronto from May 8th to the 12th. The Convention passed Labour's priorities for the next three years and elected the Executive that will turn the resolutions into action.

## **PRIDE**

Pride season is here again and we will once again be out in force in 4 communities to support our LGBTTQ members. The Winnipeg event is June 4th, Brandon is June 17th, Steinbach is July 15th and Thompson is on a date to be announced in September.

## **WINNIPEG AND BRANDON GRADUATION DATES**

The graduation ceremony for Winnipeg graduates from our Mature Student Diploma Program will take place on June 21st at the Training Centre at 880 Portage and the ceremony for the graduates in Westman will take place in Brandon on June 24th.

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## **HABITAT BUILD**

This summer, on July 14th, Local 832 staff, executive and friends will be participating in our third build for Habitat for Humanity to help a family in need. This effort is one of many ways that we give back to our community.

## **EXECUTIVE BOARD ROAD TRIP**

Our annual Executive Board road trip will be to Gimli this year on July 20th and 21st. We will be holding a meet and greet for all UFCW members working or living in the area on the evening of the 20th at the Lakeview Inn and Suites Hotel. All members working in the area should have received an invitation, but if you didn't and would like to come out and meet your Executive Board call Laureen at the Winnipeg office.

## **YOUNG WORKERS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

The same week that we're in Gimli, The UFCW Canada Young Workers Internship Program (YIP) for the Prairie region will also be in Gimli and will be attending our evening event.

**Jeff Traeger**

President  
UFCW Local 832