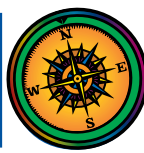


DIRECTIONS



Bulletin from the Director, UFCW Canada • Vol. I No. 17 • December 14, 2001 • ISSN 1496-9009

Real Canadian organizing success

UFCW Canada Local 401 has applied to represent more than 200 additional Real Canadian workers in Camrose AB. The application includes 200 workers at Real Canadian Superstore, and another eight worker at Real Canadian Liquorstore.

More: Don Crisall, UFCW Canada Local 401, Edmonton

First contract at Birds Hills IGA

UFCW Canada Local 832 members at Birds Hills IGA near Winnipeg have a union contract, following the imposition of a first agreement by the province's labour board. The one-year agreement provides the 85 members with hourly increases ranging from 50¢ to \$4.00. For the first time, workers will receive premiums for working on Sundays, evenings and nights, and in higher job or supervisory classifications. Part-timers no longer have to work 15 of the 30 previous days to qualify for a statutory holiday, will now be eligible for paid sick leave after one year's service, and can increase hours based on seniority. The agreement also included vacation improvements, job protection with a no-contracting-out clause, and the elimination of split shifts. There will be a guaranteed minimum 14 full-time positions, and at least one weekend off per month for full-timers.

More: Don Keith, UFCW Canada Local 832, www.ufcw832.mb.ca

Amity Goodwill win improved offer

Workers at Amity Goodwill locations in Hamilton, Brantford, Waterdown, and Stoney Creek ON ratified a new agreement in November that provides wage increases of 6% over three years. The members of UFCW Canada Local 175 also won language to cover upcoming restructuring at the charity stores, recognizing seniority and providing for superior severance packages or job transfers if the restructuring results in job losses. The new agreement is substantially improved over an earlier proposal voted down in September after a board-ordered vote.

More: Bob Linton, Kevin Shimmin, UFCW Canada Local 175, www.ufcw175.com

Credit union workers ratify

UFCW Canada Local 1977 members at the United Employees Credit Union locations in Toronto and Mississauga have ratified a new three-year agreement. The six bank workers

Tackling a giant

Make no mistake about it – there is a giant in our midst. Sobeys Inc. is the second-largest food-distribution company in Canada, and highly-ranked amongst the major players in North America.

That in itself isn't necessarily a bad thing. Loblaw Companies is an even bigger player in the retail food business. But Sobeys continues to grow, expand, and take over its competition while managing to keep its workforce largely non-union (except in Québec, where Sobeys-owned IGA stores are chiefly unionized). Such a large non-union employer hurts those workers who don't have a union on their side ... and it hurts our own members.

We cannot afford to be complacent in the face of non-union competition. How many times have we sat across the table from an employer in bargaining, facing the spectre of a non-union employer in the same marketplace? It is hard to win for our members what is being withheld from workers without union representation.

Recently, UFCW Canada locals have been successful in organizing workers in several Sobeys-operated locations.

- In Nova Scotia, UFCW Canada Local 864 has applied to represent workers in a Sobeys-owned Lawtons Drugs warehouse, with labour board hearings scheduled next week.
- In Ontario, UFCW Canada Local 175 has added 55 workers at a Price Chopper store to its membership in the chain, and continues to fight on behalf of hundreds of Sobeys employees at a major distribution centre in Whitby.
- In Manitoba, UFCW Canada Local 832 continues to organize Price Chopper stores as the chain enters that province, and win new contracts for members there.
- In Alberta, UFCW Canada Local 401 has won collective agreements for Sobeys workers in warehouses in Edmonton and Grande Prairie, and is ready to add to its membership that now includes four of the more than 40 IGA stores in the province.

These are just some of the achievements on the part of UFCW Canada in the face of the anti-union stance of this employer. As strong as these breakthroughs are, however, they represent just a small start in what will be a long and difficult battle with an anti-union giant. The national office, along with local unions across the country, is committed to this effort, on behalf of all UFCW Canada members, and we will see it through to a successful end.

In solidarity,

Michael J. Fraser
Director, UFCW Canada

won an 8% wage increase over the term of the contract, retroactive to July 1. A health-and-safety committee has also been established to address various issues at the branches.

More: Rob Armbruster, UFCW Canada Local 1977

Maxi & Cie improvements

A new agreement is in place for 193 members of UFCW Canada Local 500R in

Montréal, with substantial improvements. Wages will increase by 2% in each of the first two years, and subsequently by 1.5% per year. Assistant managers will receive a \$1.00-per-hour premium, and the employer will increase contributions to the dental and pension plans to increase benefit levels.

Meanwhile, members of UFCW Canada Local 486 at Maxi & Cie stores in Hull and Gatineau QC have voted to extend the cur-

rent collective agreement for an additional year due to anticipated major store renovations and possible store format changes. The 260 members affected will receive an immediate 2% wage increase retroactive to June 1, along with a lump sum of 10¢-per-hour from June 1 to November 25, and an additional 10¢-per-hour contribution to the pension plan after November 25.

More: Tony Filato, UFCW Canada Local 500R; Pierre-François Boivin, UFCW Canada Local 486

Price Chopper improvements

UFCW Canada Local 832 has succeeded in gaining a board-imposed first contract for members at Price Chopper stores in Pembina and Stafford MB. The 50 members gained hourly wage increases ranging from 50¢ to \$5.25, the latter awarded to an assistant customer service manager whose annual income will increase by \$10,900. The wage scale for sales and service clerks, formerly less than \$7.00-per-hour, now rises to as high as \$11.50. Receivers will earn \$13.50-per-hour after 3,500 hours of service. There are improvements in sick leave, vacations, scheduling, and training. The contract guarantees at least 20% of the bargaining unit will be full-time positions.

More: Don Keith, UFCW Canada Local 832, www.ufcw832.mb.ca

Job protection for meat-processors

UFCW Canada Local 500R members at Proviso-Connaissance Meats in Boisbriand QC, on Montréal's north shore, have ratified a new agreement covering the transfer of Proviso meat-processing operations to Cargill Foods. The 247 members can elect to accept a job, with no loss of seniority, at a new plant in Chambly QC, another job from the Proviso job pool, or a negotiated severance payment. "This is a very acceptable offer," says UFCW Canada Local 500R President François Lauzon. "It guarantees both a job and future employment for all unionized employees."

More: Tony Filato, UFCW Canada Local 500R

UFCW Canada Staff Snapshot



Mark Dobson

Brother Dobson became active in the union as a Dominion store bakery worker in Nova Scotia. He has worked on UFCW Canada national staff and in local union positions since 1985, returning to national staff when he was appointed Assistant to the Director for the Atlantic provinces in 1999.

FACTS ON FILE:

Sobeys Inc.

- Sobeys Inc. is a 61%-owned subsidiary of Empire Company. Sobeys is the second-largest food distribution company in Canada and one of the largest in North America.
- Founded by J.W. Sobeys in 1907 as a meat delivery business in Stellarton NS, still the site of Sobeys corporate headquarters.
- The first Sobeys store outside of Atlantic Canada opened its doors in Guelph ON in 1987, followed by stores in Woodstock ON and Baie-Comeau QC.
- In 1998 Sobeys acquired Oshawa Group Ltd., transforming its foodservice division, SERCA, into what it claims is the largest foodservice operation in Canada, delivering food and other supplies to institutional customers such as universities and hospitals, as well as restaurants, hotels, and fast food chains. (At press time, Sobeys announced the sale of Serca to Sysco Corp. of Houston TX for \$440-million, as well as a "strategic alliance" with that company.)
- The takeover also added several new banners to its retailing operations. Sobeys Inc. operates 1,351 corporate and franchised stores (402 corporate, 949 franchised) under banners including: Sobeys, IGA, Garden Market IGA, IGA extra, Price Chopper, Price Check, Lofood, Needs, Green Gables, Tradition Markets, Bonichoix, Omni, Action Plus, Boni-soir, Le Dépanneur, Sertard, Voisin, Knechtel, Food Town, Foodland, and Lawtons Drugs. Subsidiaries include Big 8 Beverages, Eastern SignPrint, Downeast Video, TRA, De Blois Brothers, and Lumsden Brothers.
- Sobeys Inc. enjoyed sales of \$11.37-billion in fiscal 2001, a company record.
- By location, Sobeys retail operations in Canada are more than 94% non-union. In distribution and foodservice, almost 90% of locations are operating non-union.
- Sobeys Inc. employs more than 32,000 workers across Canada.

STRIKE & LOCKOUT REPORT

LOCAL	EMPLOYER	S/L	MEMBERS	STARTED	STATUS
175	Canada Safeway, Thunder Bay ON	S	400	October 1, 2001	Shut down
1518	Extra Foods, Prince Rupert BC	S	40	October 24, 2001	Shut down

CALENDAR (highlighted items are new or revised)

DECEMBER	24-26	Christmas holidays, UFCW Canada national offices closed
	31	New Year's Eve holiday, UFCW Canada national offices closed
JANUARY	1	New Year's Day holiday, UFCW Canada national offices closed
	14-15	UFCW Canadian Council Executive Board meeting, Delta Centre-Ville, Montréal
	24-31	UFCW Winter Executive Board meeting, Registry Resort, Naples FL
	31	UFCW International Scholarship application deadline
FEBRUARY	18	Heritage Day, UFCW Canada national offices closed
	28	Canadian Labour Congress Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) Awareness Day
MARCH	8	International Women's Day
	21	International Day Against Racism
	29	Good Friday holiday, UFCW Canada national offices closed
APRIL	1	Easter Monday holiday, UFCW Canada national offices closed
	28	Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job
MAY	20	Victoria Day holiday, UFCW Canada national offices closed
JUNE	3-7	UFCW Canadian Council convention, Westin Bayshore, Vancouver
	10-14	Canadian Labour Congress convention, Congress Centre, Vancouver
	21	UFCW Canada LRFC gala evening, Sheraton, Toronto
	22	UFCW Canada LRFC Celebrity Golf Tournament, Angus Glen, Richmond Hill ON
	23	UFCW Canada LRFC National Golf Tournament, Nottawasaga, Alliston ON
24	St-Jean-Baptiste holiday, UFCW Canada Québec office closed	
JULY	1	Canada Day holiday, UFCW Canada national offices closed
	15-16	UFCW Canada red meat, NDF, flour milling conferences, Rodd Brudenell River, Roseneath PE
AUGUST	5	Civic Holiday, UFCW Canada national offices closed
SEPTEMBER	2	Labour Day holiday, UFCW Canada national offices closed
OCTOBER	11-14	Thanksgiving holidays, UFCW Canada national offices closed

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