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Insulators Union Local 118

Winter 2009

Year in review

Eleven and a half months have expired since my return to Local 118's office. It has been a bit of a whirl wind for the staff and the officers. We took on many changes and tried to review as many policies and practices as possible.

I would like to offer my appreciation to the members and the contractors for their patience and understanding as I renewed my relationship. The biggest challenge for me as the Business Manager remains to be finding the time to get out of the office or away from meetings and getting into the workplace. Though I had planned to do two province wide tours and meet in the regions twice, it just didn't happen. We will try to do better next year, but that will be dependent on how the negotiations unravel.

Some of the biggest issues that were achieved were the introduction of E-Banking, debit and credit cards for dues payment, breakout of wage increases for May 1st, grievances filed against employers late with their remittances, organizing campaigns like the Olympic Village, media presentations and marketing plans, anti-decertification campaign with Aarc-West, union dues reductions, review of by-laws and an Officer education plan.

Several new contractors have also come our way during the year and agreements had to be negotiated or structured towards their type of work. It has been encouraging to hear from contractors from across the country requesting information about our workforce and availability of a collective agreement if they are successful with their bids.

Saskatchewan has been very generous in providing employment opportunities to those able to travel. Alberta, though generous in the work has not been as accessible as Saskatchewan. Alberta certainly has felt the effect from the economic downturn and reduction in crude oil prices.

Christmas Message

The Christmas Season is upon us and many are starting to panic about the season. We hope that you take the time away from work to enjoy the season festivities.

On behalf of the Officers, Members and Staff we offer the best of Season's Wishes to you, your family and all of your friends.

Negotiations

Our Standard Collective Agreement expires April 30th 2010 and the Bargaining Council of B.C. Building Trade Unions (BCBCBTU) have been meeting all year to discuss ways to proceed with bargaining. The Building Trades don't want to see a repeat of the last round of bargaining any more then we do. I have already put them on notice if they can't get it

done, we will do it ourselves and move to break away from that structure.

Enclosed is a proposal survey for your completion. It is important that you provide your concerns and ideas about this for bargaining. It is your collective agreement and it impacts you the greatest. Please think about this seriously, don't include unrealistic proposals like 10% per year and

30 minutes for coffee. Those types of proposals only cloud the seriousness of the ones received. If there are issues of importance like dispatch and names hire, make sure you tell your committee how important it is and what you're prepared to do to support a change.

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Christmas Hours are as follows:

December	24th	9:00 to 12:00 Noon
December	25th	Closed
December	26th	Closed
December	31st	9:00 to 12:00 Noon
January	1st	Closed

Enclosures

- Local 118 By-laws
- 2010 Officers List
- Negotiations Proposal Sheet
- Union Dues Receipts

proud of the work we do

Union Dues

Monthly union dues have been decreased. Union initiation fees have been reduced.

The membership adopted the By-Law Committees recommendations to lower both the monthly union dues and the initiation fees. The monthly dues have been reduced from \$30 per to \$25 per month and the Initiation Fee's have been reduced from \$500 for Mechanics to \$200 and \$250 for Apprentices to \$100.

The rationale is that if we truly want to represent those who apply insulation in our jurisdiction, then we need to be attractive. \$500 to join our union is not an attractive price when few understand the value. Most are already working in the trade and when told that to become a union member the costs is \$500, they just look at us as if we are nuts. The local union makes no money off this transaction and it makes no sense to continue with the perception it takes big dollars to become an insulator.

The monthly dues reduction really comes after an assessment of our dues structure. The \$5 increase voted in several years ago doesn't really generate what was wanted to support some staff training initiatives. The increase only impacted on those who afford it the least, the unemployed and therefore it was recommended to return it to what it was, \$25 per month.

Both of these changes are effective January 1, 2010.

Retirees Luncheon

Local 118 held its 5th Annual Retirees Luncheon on December 2nd at the Sheraton Guildford Hotel in Surrey. There were 20 retired members in attendance. They brought their spouses to visit with old friends and see faces that they haven't seen for some time.

Some of the new inductees are Wayne Laxton and Tony Ceraldi.

Those who attended are:

Wayne Bennis	John Boos	Gord Dockstader
Roy Evans	Alfonse Giordano	Bill Halls Sr.
Bill Halls Jr.	Jim Hoskins	Danny Kirk
Wayne Laxton	Wayne Morrison	Peter Partaik
Gus Post	Robert Scott	Robert Sebastian
Stan Smith	Stan Tessman	Alfred Thoms
Bodo Vajen	Paul Whitehead	

Regrets were received from Tony Ceraldi as he was attending one last International event. Long time employer representative, Ed Russell was unable to attend this year. Ed will be turning 95 years of age this year and is finding a little harder to get around and had to decline the luncheon.

Our Local Contractors, the Building Trades and Construction Labour Relations Association all attended this event to help us recognize those who built our industry.

Introduction of the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST)

Currently goods and services in BC are subject to the G.S.T (Federal) of 5% and P.S.T (Provincial) of 7%. From July 1, 2010 these taxes will be combined into one tax of 12% - the Harmonized Sales Tax or H.S.T.

There are many services provided to you as a member of the Heat & Frost Insulators. Your pension and benefit plans will become more expensive from July 1 2010. For example, the Plans currently pay GST on the fees charged by Investment Managers, Custodians and Administrators but no PST. As of July 1, 2010, HST will be payable on these same services meaning that the tax paid on these fees will increase from 5% to 12%. No additional service or benefit is provided to the Plans in return for this increased tax.

This means the cost to the union will increase significantly in the work we do.

The Union Officers and Plan Trustees have been advised that campaigns are under way to lobby against the introduction of this increased tax. The Multi-Employer Benefit Plan Council of Canada has made a

submission to the Ontario Government lobbying for pension plans to be excluded from the H.S.T in that Province.

A submission to the British Columbia Government is also anticipated.

Our WEB Site has a link to a campaign that might assist. If you would like further information regarding efforts being made to stop the application of this new tax, you can go to <http://fighthst.com>



Winning Green—The changing face of organizing

The changing face of organizing over the last 12 months has given us a significant shift in how we will organize into the future. The traditional organizing strategies which include top down, bottom up and built right campaigns will still work, but to make them more affective we are going to move the goal posts.

Climate change and the new green world we live in will only become more relevant over the next 20 years. We as insulators are at the right time and place to capitalize on something that we've been doing since the early 1900s and so reducing our carbon footprint every day we go to work is something we are all very proud of.

A new marketing campaign has been set in motion which will put us back in the driving seat "Green" Organizing is a growing trend developing in the professional organizing industry, and being the original green worker it's our belief we should sit at the front of this line.

Currently strategies are being developing that will help us achieve this goal. We have been in discussion with other professionals to craft a plan which will encompass all aspects of what we do from education, training to energy easements and customer satisfaction. We've been seeking advice from architects and engineers around LEED and other green issues concerning mechanical insulation, inspections and by-law changes, which over the coming year we expect to position ourselves with friendly government figures, city council members to implement the changes necessary to achieve our goals.

Marketing Plan Report

A brief update to the marketing plan is in order. Though we are still crafting the plan, researching the process and enlisting help from professionals we just want to let you know that the experience to date has been positive.

Those we have engaged are as excited as us with the concept. Many share the same view that this is very different from any approach they have seen in the labour movement to date.

It is hopeful that a comprehensive document and plan will be ready to present at the All Officers Meeting scheduled for January 20 2010. Once the Officers have approved the plan, then the membership will adopt the same at the membership meetings.

It will be important that the membership endorse this plan and take ownership of its contents. It will be the membership that sells this to his employer, their clients and his co-workers. Once it is complete we will post on the website.

Aarc-West update

Most, if not all know that Aarc-West Mechanical Insulation and its employees have cancelled their collective agreement and decertified from the Local Union. They are now operating as a Non-Union Firm.

The Union did an aggressive campaign to counter the belief that the union was working against the employer at the Olympic Village or with consultation when we filed a grievance due to the \$1 per wage cut. The 80 members employed at Aarc-West appear to feel that future employment with their employer being non-union was more solid than if the employer remained union.

The collective agreement was cancelled on September 22nd and the entire wage subsidy from Market recovery

Union Meetings

The survey sent in the last newsletter came back suggesting the Saturday morning meetings were no longer an interest to members. The numbers in attendance at the Regular General Membership meeting confirm this view.

The By-Law Committee considered the response and based on those who provided suggestions decided to follow the memberships wishes and return to holding the monthly meetings mid-week in the early evening.

Effective January 2010 the Regular General Membership meetings will be held on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 7:00 p.m, except for July and August.

The meetings will be held at the Operating Engineers Auditorium, 4333 Ledger Avenue, Burnaby BC.

Take the Kensington or Sprout exit from the freeway. And the closest cross street off Canada Way is Sperling Avenue. Free parking is available across the street and directly north of the main building.

stopped that day was well. Any future subsidies also were cancelled. Roughly some \$500,000 of promises disappeared to this employer and the 80 members employed there. A few lay-offs have taken place as some of their jobs wind down.

We have asked the members who supported us to stay employed at Aarc-West for the time being and continue with their membership by paying their union dues. It is felt that some time should take place before we decide if this is a divorce or a temporary separation.

A little time will tell.

Apprenticeship Level Training

All Apprentices have an obligation to attend their scheduled technical training.

The Insulation Industry Apprenticeship Board has contacted all apprentice members of Insulators Heat & Frost Local 118 reminding them of their contractual obligations.

The Insulation Industry Apprenticeship Board will only excuse apprentices scheduled for their technical training who have legitimate medical excuses or emergency family matters. Any request for rescheduling requires a BCIT medical withdrawal form completed by a Physician.

Last minute withdrawals are not acceptable and apprentices will jeopardize their apprenticeship and working privileges should they decide to not attend.

It is the responsibility of every member to ensure their contact information is accurate and current with the Local Union office. Moving and correspondence not received is not acceptable. Keep in touch!

To those apprentices that this reminder does not apply we thank you for your diligence.

The following apprentices are scheduled to attend 2010 Winter/Spring classes at BCIT:

Level 1

Jan 4 to Jan 29, 2010

Charles Angel
Chris Alvarez de Araya
Boyd Heudes
Mike Holmes
David Hughes
Michael Johansen
Spencer Locke
Nick MacKay
Tim McCullagh
Wes Mitchell
Dave Moncur
John Schenk
David Simpson
Garry Spooner
Tom Fergusson Sr.

Level 2

Mar 1 to Mar 26, 2010

Ray Pachon
Andrew Seiler
Dinika Caravetta
Gary Marsh
Gregory Jurak
Hung Nguyen
Laurie Riedel
Michael Tebbs
Robert Pimental
Touyralai Attamohammad

Level 3

Mar 29 to Apr 23, 2010

Patrick Dunlevy
Errol Rodney
Tavis Turner
Christopher Low
Doug McCarthy
Matthew Bedore
Dan Laroque
Mila Clarke
Phil Jones
Lucas Page
Ronald Peacock
Chris Hollingsworth
Gerrard Lemieux

Apprenticeship Incentive Grant (AIG) – Level 1 & Level 2

The Apprenticeship Incentive Grant is a \$1,000.00 taxable cash grant available to registered apprentices once they have successfully completed their first or second year/level of a Red Seal trade. Service Canada must receive your application on or before June 30th of the calendar year following the date you passed your level training.

Training Tax Credit – Level 3 and Level 4

The Training Tax Credit of \$2,000.00 for Level 3 and \$2,500.00 for Level 4 is claimed on your personal Income Tax.

Apprenticeship Completion Grant (ACG) – Level 4

The Apprenticeship Completion Grant is a \$2,000 taxable cash grant designed to encourage apprentices registered in a designated Red Seal trade to complete their apprenticeship program and receive their certification. Apprentices will be able to apply for the ACG in July 2009 with eligibility made retroactive to January 1, 2009. Deadline to apply is June 30th of the calendar year following the date you completed and passed the Inter-Provincial Examination (IP).

Financial Assistance for BC Apprentices

Effective August 31, 2009, apprentices who are registered with the Industry Training Authority (ITA) and meet the eligibility requirement of an "insured participant" (may be eligible to receive financial support of Basic Living Expenses, Dependant Care (Childcare), Commuting Costs, Travel Costs, Tuition Costs, Living Away from Home Costs in addition to maximum EI benefits).