



RAIL REVIEW



Contract Negotiation Edition



Local 2004's Bargaining Committee — Grant Colli, Michel Lacroix, Paul Wright, Pierre Jacques, and Rod Tompkins

Fall 2011

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The Rail Review is dedicated to the memory of Brother Shaun Chapko 1971—2006

President's Message



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

This is an update to advise you of our progress in collective bargaining with CN and our goal to provide you with a new agreement. The bargaining committee also wishes to thank those members who responded to our survey. It has proved to be a fantastic aid to assist us in determining what issues are important to you.

We met with the Company, for the first session, in Montreal on September 27 & 28, 2011. It was agreed

by both parties to approach this round of bargaining using the Interest Base Negotiation formula. This technique of bargaining focuses on issues not personalities. It involves our interests not positions. Our goal is to have a contract where both parties can win and at the end of the day works best for the workers. The men and women who make CN work!

We have given the company our list of needed improvements and identified concerns that require discussion to reach a resolve. We have scheduled our meetings as follows: October 25 & 26 in Montreal,

November 9 & 10 in Calgary, and November 29 to December 2 in Montreal. Our intention is to open discussions on workers concerns; this is to see if a resolve can be reached.

Thank you for your patience and continuing support of your bargaining team.

Paul Wright
President USW Local 2004.



International Convention



The International Convention was truly a great success. Over 3,000 elected USW local union leaders from across North America represented their 850,000 members at the International Convention from August 15th to August 18th at the MGM Grand Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. It was the perfect opportunity to meet other brothers and sisters, listen to interesting speeches, and form friendships and alliances with brothers and sisters in Canada, the United States, and many other countries. Canadian-born International President Leo Gerard kicked things off with a moving speech that explained the convention theme “Stand Up and Fight Back”. The 4-day event was also peppered with speeches from many politicians, including Nancy Pelosi, senators, politicians, journalists, authors, actors, a quick address from Barrack Obama, and AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka.

The theme of Day 2 revolved around international solidarity. There were also presentations from international guests, such as Artur Henrique dos Santos, who got a standing ovation when he spoke about how multinational corporations needed to respect workers and the communities in which they lived. Another standing ovation occurred after the United Steelworkers and Los Mineros signed an enhanced alliance agreement. Los Mineros is Mexico’s oppressed national union of mine and metal workers. Former USW International President Lynn Williams also spoke about the history and importance of Steelworkers standing up and fighting back.

Even though the convention was mostly US-centric, there was also some Canadian content. There was a tribute to Jack Layton, and Ken Georgetti of the Canadian Labour Congress also addressed the crowd.

The United Steelworkers also hosted a Convention Benefit Concert to assist our members in Canada and the US with relief from the disasters.

The convention closed on Day 4 with the presentation of USW’s Wellstone Award to actor and social activist Danny Glover and broadcast commentator Ed Shultz.

The most important moment in the conference for Local 2004 was when voting members passed a resolution that would finally recognize both Locals 1976 and 2004 as national locals in the USW Constitution. It was the only constitutional amendment that was adopted during the convention and it received a standing ovation once it was passed.

For more information about the International Convention, please visit <http://www.usw.org/convention>.

Article 8 - Western Region

The Prairies and Mountain Regions have been under a Company-initiated workforce reorganization following an Article 8 issued by the Company back in 2010. This reorganization affects track services and track maintenance employees. This re org differs in some respects with ones in the past. This time, the company would be hiring. Yes, weekends of Saturday/Sunday were lost, other jobs changed titles and jobs disappeared in some locations. Despite all of this, the Company respected the terms of the Collective Agreement. The overall change with all of its disruption to the membership will mean an increase in members and all members will now hold a permanent job title. We sincerely thank all members who contacted this office to make sure the mistakes from past Article 8s were not repeated and to avoid any deals outside of the collective agreement. This information was greatly appreciated.

It was expected to have been completed and take effect by August 19, 2011. This was not the case. The new forecasted date is September 16, 2011. This, along with all the other issues that arose during that time period, adds to the difficulty in acceptance. The unknown and anticipation awaiting the results of the change were undoubtedly very stressful. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you, the members, for your patience and understanding throughout this stressful, difficult change. If you have any questions about this Article 8, please contact the office of the respective Chief Steward.

In solidarity,

Grant Colli & Pierre Jacques, Chief Stewards for Prairies and Mountain Regions

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Bargaining

As most of you already know, the deadline to reach an agreement with the Company is December 31st, 2011 at 11:59:59 pm. The union hopes that it will not boil down to the last minute, and the bargaining committee is going to do everything in its power to come out stronger than ever.

Since the last set of negotiations, the bargaining committee has taken on a different look. The chief negotiator is now Richard Pagé. He is a staff rep for District 5, as well as for Local 1976, USW's other amalgamated national local. He has been a pioneer in servicing locals in the transportation industry and has been instrumental in past negotiations with many other locals. Staff reps Nathalie Lapointe from District 5 (as well as former President of Local 1976) and Mike Piché from the National Office are joining the team to offer their professional advice throughout the bargaining period.

Another valuable asset to our team is Jorge Garcia-Orgales. At our last set of negotiations, his research provided background information on the company, statistics, and he

provided us with a monetary value to the items that were presented at the bargaining table. This time around, he has been assigned to perform the same tasks. He has already provided a wealth of information to the other members of the bargaining team and he will continue to do so for the duration of our negotiations.

At one of Local 2004's executive meetings, it was also decided who would be representing Local 2004. It was decided that the Chief Stewards be present at all meetings between the company and the union, as well our President. Pierre Jacques, Grant Colli, Rod Tompkins, and Michel Lacroix, from the Mountain, Prairies, Great Lakes, and St. Lawrence/Atlantic regions respectively, will make sure that our members' interests are protected. Our President, Paul Wright, will also be present to represent our local on a national level. He sits on most permanent committees, on the executive council, on the national health & safety committee, on the pension plan committee, and on other CN

boards, so he is an invaluable asset on this team.

In the event that one of the members of the bargaining committee cannot be present at one of the meetings with CN, there are 3 alternates, and they are our part-time members on our executive committee. Randy Koch is our Financial-Secretary, Blair McInnis is our Treasurer, and Ken Fraser is our Recording-Secretary.

Finally, the union has also deployed its Communication & Action Team. Led by Randy Koch, its role is to keep the members informed throughout the bargaining process. Our bargaining team is very strong and competent, and it is committed to protecting our membership's best interests. However, our strongest committee member is you, our brothers and sisters. You have proven your solidarity throughout the years, and this is no exception. We want what is best for our members throughout the country, and with over 3200 voices united as one, we will come out of this bargaining session stronger than ever!

www.2004usw.ca

USW Local 2004's website has been up and running for quite some time now. This website has a simple and user-friendly design that gives you regular updates. The goal of the website is to improve communication, and it has the potential of giving every member with a computer and internet access as much information as possible about what is happening within the local. However, we need to know what your needs are, as this website is for you, the member. What would you like to see? Are there links you would like to have access to? Is there specific information that you would like to have at your fingertips? You can send us your comments to uswlocal2004@bellnet.ca. Please send us pictures of activities at CN Railway, employees at work, equipment, and what you would like to see on the website. This will allow us to personalize the website according to your needs. Thanks to your input, we will be able to improve communication and strengthen our solidarity.

Upcoming events

- Next scheduled executive meeting: November 22-24, 2011.
- November 9-10, 2011: Scheduled bargaining meeting with CN
- November 16-18, 2011: USW District 5 Conference, Delta Sherbrooke, Sherbrooke, Quebec
- November 29 to December 2, 2011: Scheduled bargaining meeting with CN
- December 31, 2011: Deadline for Local 2004 Bargaining, Montreal, Quebec



NDP leader loses battle with cancer



Throughout his three decades of public service, the leader of the New Democratic Party dedicated his life to building a better, fairer

Canada. He was a strong supporter and friend of the United Steelworkers and will be greatly missed.

Jack's message throughout his years as NDP leader (2003-2011) was one of unbridled hope and optimism for a brighter future for Canada's working class. His beliefs have always run parallel to our union's struggles for public justice for all.

He believed in the creation of good, sustainable jobs, protecting the environment, strengthening our universal health care and improving our public education system.

Jack Layton passed away at 4:45 am on Monday, August 22nd, 2011. He was 61. He passed away peacefully at his home surrounded by family and loved ones. In Jack's last letter to Canadians, Jack wrote these inspiring words: "Love is better than anger. Hope is better than fear. Optimism is better than despair. So let us be loving, hopeful, and optimistic. And we'll change the world." He

also wrote that "we can be a better, fairer, more equal country by working together. Don't let them tell you it can't be done."

Local 2004 can relate to this message of hope and optimism during Jack's final days of battling cancer, especially during these negotiations with the Company. Let's remember throughout the next few months that by fighting intelligently and by staying optimistic and hopeful, we can get a better, fairer, more equal collective agreement by working together.

CAT Team

The role of the Communication & Action Team is to keep everyone informed and to allow communication between the bargaining committee and the members within our local throughout collective bargaining. Randy Koch has taken on the responsibility of CAT National Coordinator, and he is in charge of relaying information to the regional coordinators. The regional coordinators are as follows: Mountain Region Coordinator Dennis Martens, Prairies Region Coordinator Ken Creasy, Great Lakes Region Coordinator Rene Demers, St. Lawrence Coordinator Marc Casademont, and Atlantic Region Coordinator Blair McInnis.

The first set of information that the CAT Team would like to communicate to you via the Rail Review is the following: On September 21-22, the local's bargaining committee will be meeting to take one last look at the demands that it will present to the Company at the bargaining table. The bargaining committee had its first face-to-face meeting with the Company on September 27-28 to exchange demands. Local 2004 and CN will hold subsequent meetings to continue bargaining. The CAT Team will keep you abreast of the situation as it progresses. If you would like to receive updates on bargaining, please contact one of the regional coordinators, who will be receiving regular updates from Randy, who is in direct contact with the bargaining team. Also, when you receive information from the regional coordinators, please forward it to the other members in your work-place.

Talking Points...

Current Issues:

- There are only a few months left before our Collective Agreement expires. Thank you for returning the surveys with your wants and needs, it will guide our decision-making throughout the bargaining process. If you would like to contribute further, join our CAT team or keep in touch with your colleagues, unit chairs, and bargaining committee .
- Please update Shirl Van Dyk of any change in contact information. You can reach her at 416-483-0297 or at uswlocal2004@bellnet.ca.