

LIVEWIRE

Greeting from CUPE 998 President

Greetings Sisters and Brothers,

I hope this season of renewal finds you in good health and ready to come out of hibernation to enjoy another promising Manitoba summer! With thoughts of spring cleaning on my mind I thought I'd take a few moments to look back at recent history while looking forward to the coming season.

So, what have we done for you lately? What are our success stories? It's easy to say we continue to work on many issues on behalf of our members but what does it really mean? All issues, whether large and small, individual or policy, take time to deal with and are worth the fight when member's rights and livelihoods are at risk. Over the last two years we have been actively defending our members and our work. From delivering a good new contract with no concessions in mid-2013 to engaging all possible resources in lobbying the provincial government to keep Power Smart in Hydro, we have fought to maintain what we have and to grow what we don't.

The biggest threats we currently face are brought on by what seems to be a continuous state of change in the Corporation. While this may not be the Hydro we have grown to know in the past it appears to be the new normal and navigating the many recent reorganizations alone has consumed much of our time. We have challenged the Corporation with some difficult grievances as well; filing grievances against our Employer for contracting out our work, having our members train contractors and having other jurisdictions within Hydro perform our work. Some of these are new battles brought on by change and others are long standing issues that have lain dormant for too long. They all affect our members in the long and short term and have the potential to change the landscape as we know it. Our activities in these areas have sent a clear message to the Corporation about our intent to protect our members and our work.

However, we also must remember no union thrives without an active membership and so we must continue to work at increasing involvement and capitalize on the successes in this area. The recent Recording Secretary vacancy had more candidates for a vacant officer position than I can recall from recent history. We have a renewed and reinvigorated Steward pool with fresh faces joining our team and seeking to be involved in the issues that affect them and the members around them. We continue to make training a priority for Stewards and Executives because we want the best representation possible for our members. If the last two years is any indication we are well on our way to growing member involvement and renewing interest in the union. I hope this trend continues.

Finally, I want you to know that we couldn't do what we do without your support; so thank you to everyone who takes the time to raise issues, give feedback and get involved. You are vital to our success! We have many miles to go and need to continue to show the Corporation CUPE members are united in solidarity if we are to succeed!

In Solidarity, Chris Mravinec, President, CUPE Local 998

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Meet Michelle Balina – 1st Vice President



I pride myself in being your 1st Vice President. Like any position it has challenges but at the end of the day the only thing that truly matters are our members. I strive each day to make positive changes that will reflect on our membership.

As your Communication Chair - I feel that CUPE has improved communications, kept our membership informed and up to date on all union issues, as well as quarterly communication through our newsletters, the Livewire and the Current. We are currently redesigning our website to bring you a more interactive and user friendly platform. I believe the website & the member's area has proven to be a useful method of communication to our membership.

As your Workplace Safety & Health Chair – I have worked hard over the past several years to promote Safety, Health & Wellness in the Workplace. Being able to sit on the Corporate Safety Committee, WS&H Committee #30 and the Brown Bag Lunch Committee I feel has made a difference. I am able to forward your concerns directly and I am also able to provide our members with Topics of interest in our monthly Brown Bag Lunches.

My union activism goes beyond our local. I represent our local as the Recording Secretary for CUPE Manitoba Health & Safety Committee as well as the Recording Secretary for the Manitoba Federation of Labour Safety & Environment Committee. I enjoy helping others and strive to make a difference.

I am always here to proudly serve our membership, please feel free to contact me anytime. **This is our union; Together We Stand Strong**

Committee Reports

➤ Strategic Planning Committee – Committee Chair Denis Côté

The Strategic Planning Committee also has one guest advisor (Wally Skomoroh) and the Ex Officio (Chris Mravinec). The goals of the SPC is primarily to assist the various committees with looking forward and thinking long term for the strategic strength of our Local. Another task the Committee is given is the organization of the Strategic Planning event, which is a focused one- or two-day executive planning session. This year's session had topics which included:

- The Local's Communication strategy
- Establishing and maintaining educational requirements for Executives and Stewards
- Financial Planning
- Collective agreement discussions
- Committee make-ups, tasks, and goals

This event also affords the Executive the opportunity to hold a longer-than-normal Executive Meeting and round table to flesh out all current items being dealt with in our Local. I'd like to thank all of the executives who attended this year's event for the excellent turn out.

➤ **Communications Committee – Committee Chair Michelle Balina**

New website coming soon! Release date to be announced after the May Communications meeting. The new web site will use the browser-based WordPress platform for ease of access and maintenance.

We are always trying to improve on communication to our members. If you have a suggestion or are simply not receiving proper communications, please contact Michelle Balina at 204-360-4856 or the CUPE 998 office.

➤ **Membership Committee – Committee Chair Shantelle Cnockaert**

As spring has sprung and summer is quickly at our heels we are welcoming more than 110 new and returning summer students! CUPE President Chris Mravinec and Membership Chair Shantelle Cnockaert recently welcomed over 60 summer students at orientation sessions held at 360 Portage on April 28th, and May 4th, 2015. Those students at remote destinations will receive new member packages at their location via interoffice mail. If you did not receive a new membership package or have not completed an Application for Membership Card, please contact the CUPE office at (204) 415-5114 or cupe998@shawbiz.ca.

We remind all students to keep safety in mind as they learn their new jobs. Young people are often more at risk for injury due to their inexperience.

Enjoy your summer work experience at Manitoba Hydro. Feel free to contact the union office if you have any questions or concerns.

➤ **Education Committee – Committee Chair Kelli Howell**

Scholarship Selection Committee - We are looking for volunteers to sit on the Award Selection Committee. The committee will consist of three CUPE 998 Members in good standing that will review applicant submissions and select recipients based on academic standing and a short essay. To ensure impartiality, selection committee members and their families are not eligible to apply. If interested contact Scholarship Chairperson Kelli Howell at 204 360-5077 or khowell@hydro.mb.ca or the CUPE 998 office.

Job Selections

How do “within 12 months of being qualified” and “manager’s discretion” apply?

Often, members have heard or have been told that managers have the right, or discretion, to apply the “within 12 months” rule as they deem appropriate to the job. Thankfully, that isn’t the case within our Collective Agreement (CA). Our CA says (if no qualified candidate is found) “... the Corporation shall then fill the vacancy with the most qualified internal applicant available who, at the manager’s discretion, is within 12 months of meeting the minimum requirements.” E.2.1.2 This simply means the manager needs to verify that the training can be done in the new job within a year. If he or she has a bona fide belief that the minimum requirements cannot be met in a year, they do have the discretion to not select that member.

This has been discussed with Employee Relations and our mutual understanding seems clear. If you find yourself in a situation where you believe this isn’t being applied properly, please contact your area Steward or contact the Union office.

➤ **Grievance Committee – Committee Chair Kelli Howell**

Current Grievances

- Adoptive Leave Grievance – Provincial mediation May 30th – Mediation complete, the Corporation denied our grievance. Step II scheduled for January 13, 2015, grievance denied. The grievance committee recommended that this grievance proceed to arbitration.
- Member grievance, given verbal warning and subsequent email, is disputing both and wants an apology as well. Pre-Grievance meeting held July 4th. Asked Corp. to schedule Step II, their argument is that a verbal warning is not grievable. Mediation is in process.
- Policy Grievance for having contractors in the workplace and asking our members to train them. Letter dated February 18th states there is a need for flexibility with respect to the exchange of information between employees and contractors but is not intended to place our members in the position of having to train contractors to perform job functions similar to their own. CUPE to respond - will withdraw on a without Precedent & Prejudice basis.
- IT Dept. Having contractors in the workplace and not notifying the union when the contract or loan period exceeds 30 days. Step II was heard February 19th.
- Distribution Design Dept., having contractors in the workplace and not notifying the union when the contract or loan period exceeds 30 days. Linked to Policy grievance, email from ER should suffice as resolve.
- Member assuming duties of a higher classification - directed to do so by management and then were denied the 5% for assuming those duties. Corp to schedule Step II.
- Mechanical Engineering Department – Engineers doing the work of TA's. The grievance committee met February 19th and recommendation to proceed with arbitration. Interviews with counsel are in progress.
- Core Competency – CUPE to provide ER with examples
- Grievance filed as at the end of a Cross-Jurisdictional appointment term the employee was not returned to his base position after an extension request was denied. We requested the position be posted and that was not done either. On hold until the outcome of current postings.
- Member on LTD for approximately a decade was unsure of working at 360 & 820 due to illness but needs to get back to work due to financial stress. We will file a grievance if Placement has not contacted the member. Corp. to speak with placement officer.
- Member over paid for several years, was only being paid at 95% of PG, in violation of CA, corp. wants to recoup overpayment. Pre-Grievance mtg. set for April 22nd.
- Fleet Services – IBEW served notice that they believe one of the admin. positions should be in their jurisdiction. We have our own jurisdictional review going on now.
- Customer Contact Centre – 12 hour shift & Overtime/transportation grievances– we will meet and have a look at all the shifts. Overtime/transportation grievance, this is resolved We requested in remedy that communication be sent out to all members in the area with correct information, that a cab or mileage will be paid for member either extending their shift or being called in for overtime.
- Member terminated for lying about having a sore back and then leaving for a trip to Vancouver, all the while posting the antics on social media. All attempts to contact the member have been unanswered. We will have a grievance hearing with or without the member. Will send a registered letter as a last resort to make contact with member.
- Member was previously on sick leave due to issues with allergies in some of the workplaces. Was placed in Admin. position as a grievance resolution and thought it wasn't going to work, however, the manager and supervisor have taken an active role in supporting the member so she will be successful.

➤ **EROC Committee – Committee Chair Lorenzo Dufrane**

The initial “Transgender Health & Inclusion” Resolution that was submitted by the Human Rights Committee and passed during our last convention was updated this year. It has also been submitted to the National Pink Triangle committee for further review and possibly to have it adapted for CUPE National.

Another Resolution was passed to stop Energy East. I’m looking forward to speaking with the Aboriginal Council and CUPE MB to see what we are going to plan for the next year on this topic.

This summer I plan on attending more Water Wednesday rallies at the Legislature. The rallies are held by Idle No More and hosted by local activist Michael Champagne. I am also looking forward to speaking to our council to see how we are going to be involved.

Winnipeg Pride 2015 is fast approaching. Manitoba Hydro became a first-time sponsor of the event last year by a request submitted from CUPE Local 998. We are actively lobbying Manitoba Hydro to have a presence in the Pride Winnipeg parade. Pride weekends with the rally, parade, and festival happening at the forks on Sunday June 14th, 2015.

➤ **Wages & Agreements Committee – Committee Chair Denis Côté**

The Wages and Agreements committee’s tasks boil down to two basic assignments: prepare for negotiations and uphold our Collective Agreement. This means working with our members and the Corporation to ensure the agreements are maintained. Since we are at the midpoint between contracts, we are still early to discuss negotiation preparation.

At this time, we’ve been working on several issues, such as vacant position management, proper application of vacation days, and ensuring members are treated fairly when changes to work schedules occur. As always, we work closely with the Chief Steward (who is a member of the committee) to bring any violations of the Collective Agreement to the attention of the Corporation in the form of a policy grievance, as required.

If you have any questions about our Collective Agreement, please don’t hesitate to contact the W&A Committee, your steward, or the CUPE 998 office. Thank you!

➤ **Workplace Safety & Health – Committee Chair Michelle Balina**

Brown Bag Lunches

- Missed a Brown Bag Lunch, you can now view the recorded version at Employee Learning & Development Website. You will receive your 1 hour Safety Credit when you have viewed the Brown Bag Lunch Presentation in its entirety. No Fast Forwarding

Upcoming Events 2015

- MB Federation of Labour Convention, Brandon - May 28th – 31st, 2015
- Pride Week – June 5th – 14th, 2015
- National Aboriginal Day – June 21st, 2015
- Executive Nominations and Election October/November 2015
- MFL Safety & Health Conference November 17th & 18th, 2015
- CUPE National Convention, Vancouver – November 2nd – 6th, 2015
- Transgender Day of Remembrance – November 2015
- CUPE National Convention Nov 2015 Vancouver, BC
- World AIDS Day – December 1st, 2015
- Day of Remembrance, Missing /Murdered Women – December 6th, 2015

BBQ SEASON IS HERE



SWEET COLA RIBS

Sweet Cola Barbecue Sauce:

1 Tbsp vegetable oil
2 c ketchup
2 Tbsp brown sugar
1/2 Tbsp ground mustard

1 onion, finely chopped
1 can cola
1/2 Tbsp black pepper
1/2 Tbsp lemon juice

3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
1/2 Tbsp onion powder
1 Tbsp Worcestershire sauce

Dry Rub:

2 Tbsp salt
2 tsp onion powder
1 tsp black pepper

2 Tbsp brown sugar
1 tsp ground cumin
2 racks pork spare ribs (approx 3 lbs each)

2 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp chili powder

Rinse and dry ribs. Place on a clean cutting board, pull off the membrane and trim the ribs of excess fat. Liberally season both sides of the ribs with rub. Wrap ribs with plastic wrap and refrigerate 4 to 12 hours so flavors can permeate.

Combine all ingredients for barbecue sauce and simmer for 20 minutes or until sauce thickens. Set aside to cool.

Preheat grill to 250 degrees F. using hickory, charcoal or fuel source of choice. Set up your grill for indirect heat.

Place ribs, meatier side down, on the grill away from the coals. Close grill cover. Cook the pork ribs for 1 hour 15 minutes; flipping several times for even cook. *Coat ribs with Sweet Cola Barbecue Sauce and cook for another 20 minutes. *Reserve some of the sauce for dipping when the ribs are served.