



Spring 2024 Edition

Canadian Union of Postal Workers Winnipeg  
Local 856

## EYEOPENER





**cupwosttp**

**Winnipeg local**

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*Today, we recognize we are all on Treaty One Territory and would like to further recognize this is the ancestral grounds of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota and Dene peoples and homeland of the Métis Nation. We respect the treaties that were made on these territories. We acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past and we dedicate ourselves to move forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.*



# PRESIDENT

Sean Tugby

## The importance of Solidarity

The definition of solidarity is “*unity or agreement of feeling or action, especially among individuals with a common interest; mutual support within a group.*” I think its fare too say all members in CUPW have a common interest in a good contract, that would include a generous pay raise, improvements to out benefits and stronger language in our collective agreement. But how do we as a collective get that?

I’ve been to all the floors and the responses range “from that’s the unions job “to “what’s the point?” to just not knowing, So I thought id help by sharing some ideas. I know you’ve probably heard this a million times, but it can’t be said enough, “WE ARE ALL THE UNION”. Working as a collective is power, plain, and simple, 12 people shouting from an office on Sherbrook is not going to be that voice heard everywhere, but the 1611 voices of the Winnipeg local, now we are cooking with gas.

How do we unite a work floor, or in this case many work floors? We cover 41 smaller offices in southern Manitoba, 5 large delivery depots. The WMPP hosting three shifts, and three retail outlets. The best way is through education, an educated, engaged work floor is a dangerous work floor. The Winnipeg local has made initiatives to bring fight back courses to the local, these are courses designed to bring organizing skills to all those that want it. These principles will give us a common interest and goal to work towards,

The corporation has been playing a giant game of divide and conquer, from taking from one group and pointing to the other, to trying to delete positions to making and undeliverable work methods. In addition to paying RSMC’s a wage that makes it difficult to even pay for gas in their own vehicles. The fact that they pay the MAM’s (plant maintenance) far under the industry standard. The whole time this is happening we are scrambling to fight to maintain what we already have and not getting what we deserve,

SO how do we get what we deserve? Well, we need to unite, we need to do our jobs as they are meant to be done, if we can’t finish, we can’t Finnish then we can’t Finnish. By following the authorized line of travel, by taking our breaks and lunch, by not doing extra work and making a broken system work we are only emboldening them.

We need to look past our group. Section, wave, and shift and start thinking about us as CUPW and not a fractured group. I’ve seen many slogans over the years, from “bold and defiant not weak and compliant”, to “an injury to one is a injury to all”, to” id rather die on my feet then live on my knees “ they all get at the same thing, we need to focus on what’s important, we are not falling for distractions, we need to think about things like, is this a plot to make me lose focus? When getting messages that take us away from that task.

In the coming weeks and months you will find a lot of educations coming to the local, you will see solidarity building events like social’s, BBQ’s and draws, the reason is we want you to know each other, when you know each other you personalize each other, we see how cuts would effect each other, we befriend and support each other and we not only are more willing to support each others struggles, because after all, you hurt one of my brothers sisters or comrades, you are messing with the whole family.

Let’s show them why Winnipeg has the badass reputation that it has, Sol Sol Sol



# Vice President

**Organizing Committee:** The exceptional dedication and hard work shown by our local organizing committee in preparing our members for the possibility of a strike are impressive. Their commitment has been instrumental in ensuring that our members are well-prepared, informed, and united during this time.

Apart from providing essential information, the organizing committee has actively engaged with our members by attentively listening to their concerns and needs. They have encouraged open discussions, welcomed questions, and embraced feedback with a responsive and inclusive approach. This has fostered a strong sense of solidarity and unity among our members, making everyone feel valued and supported.

I am grateful for the tireless efforts of our organizing committee in readying us for a potential strike. Together, we will continue to work hard towards our shared goals, striving to make a positive impact for all.

The meeting with prairie locals, hosted by Winnipeg local five weeks ago, was a valuable experience for all participants. It allowed us to connect with other locals, gaining insight into our current organizing efforts. The chance to compare work, share ideas, and learn from each other proved highly beneficial.

During the meeting, we collectively took action by drafting and sending a letter of support to our negotiators. This letter stands as a strong demonstration of solidarity and unity among the prairie locals, showcasing our support for our negotiators and our commitment to achieving shared goals.

By expressing our collective support through the letter, we send a powerful message to our negotiators, reinforcing the strength of our unified voice and showing that we stand together in advocating for our common interests and aspirations.

This collaborative effort boosts morale and strengthens our position as we navigate negotiations. It underscores our dedication and resolves to secure favorable outcomes for our members, solidifying our commitment to the cause.

Looking ahead, we must continue to nurture and strengthen the connections established with other locals. By maintaining open lines of communication and sharing experiences, we can further enhance our union's efforts and learn from one another.

Overall, the meeting with prairie locals was a significant milestone in our journey, enabling us to forge meaningful connections, exchange ideas, and take collective action through the letter of support. Leveraging these connections and ongoing collaboration will empower us to drive positive change and achieve our shared objectives.

Lastly, please remember to check the notices and updates on your union board and website for the latest information on negotiations. [Bulletin 12-Bargaining Update-2024-02-28-EN.pdf \(cupw.ca\)](#)

*"The strongest bond of human sympathy outside the family relation should be one uniting working people of all nations and tongues and kindreds." – Eugene V. Debs*

## Mel Myers Conference

I was fortunate enough to participate in Mel Myers' conference for two days, and it was an utterly delightful experience. During the conference, I selected four topics to attend, all of which were beneficial for my portfolio in my capacity as a vice president. Some of the topics that piqued my interest were precious.



**Strike Action:** The session was presented by Susan Dawes from Myers LLP and Kyle Ross, the President of MGEU.

The agenda of the session covers various topics related to strike action. The first section discusses the preconditions for striking, emphasizing the importance of a strike vote and the need for reasonable notice and opportunity for a secret ballot. They also mention the requirement of an Essential Services Agreement if applicable.

The session then moves on to planning for strike action. It emphasizes the importance of laying the groundwork early on and conducting member outreach and communication to build support for the bargaining committee. It highlights the need for a plan to get the vote in favor of strike action and to maintain support for the strike once it commences. Obtaining personal contact information such as phone and email is also mentioned as crucial for effective communication.

The establishment of various committees is discussed, including a strike coordinating committee, a financial committee for managing strike pay and raising funds, and a public relations committee. The book also touches upon the importance of a strike/picket protocol, which addresses issues such as payments for benefits, outstanding wages or vacation pay, and rules for picketing.

The implications of strike action are explored, including the termination of the collective agreement and potential unfair labor practices by employers. They also highlighted specific sections of the Labor Relations Act that protect employees during strike action, such as disciplinary action for refusing to perform work of striking employees and denial of pensions or benefits.

They provided definitions of a "strike" and a "lockout" as per the Labor Relations Act. It emphasizes that strikes are not limited to a complete cessation of work but can include various activities aimed at compelling the employer to agree to terms or conditions of employment. Examples of different types of strikes are provided, including rotating strikes, work-to-rule campaigns, and slowdowns.

The concept of a "strategic strike" is discussed, highlighting its advantages such as being less predictable for employers and reducing income loss for union members. They also mention that public support for strikers may be enhanced in certain situations.

The psychological aspects of picket lines are explored, including the evolution of picket line morale and the importance of effective communication with employers and the media. The role of picket captains is also discussed, emphasizing their role as liaisons between the strike coordinator and picketers.

They provided information on the process of applying to the Manitoba Labour Board (MLB) to terminate a strike or lockout. It outlines the requirements for applying, including a minimum of 60 days on strike or lockout and at least 30 days of assistance from a conciliator or mediator. In this session they also mentioned that the MLB can order the termination of a strike or lockout and that either the MLB or an arbitrator can settle the collective agreement.

The process of ending a strike is further explored, focusing on return to work agreements. In the session they explain the reinstatement rights for employees after a strike, including provisions in the collective agreement or an agreement between the employer and the bargaining agent. It also highlights the flexibility to negotiate additional provisions beyond what is provided in the Labor Relations Act.

This was among the most beneficial sessions I have ever attended.

**Social Media Update:** In this session the main topic discusses the topic of off-duty conduct and social media in relation to employment and disciplinary actions. It explains that while employers generally have no authority over what employees do outside of working hours, there are instances where an employee's behavior outside of the workplace can affect their work or the employer's business interests, potentially leading to disciplinary action. The session references the leading case of Millhaven Fibres Ltd. v. Oil, Chemical & Atomic Workers Int'l Union, which established the test for when employers can discipline employees for off-duty conduct. In this case, an employee was discharged after harassing a coworker who crossed picket lines during a strike. The arbitrator in the case determined that the employee's behavior, though occurring off-duty, directly related to their employment and justified discipline.



The topic also discusses the factors that arbitrators consider when determining whether discipline for off-duty conduct is justified. These factors include harm to the employer's reputation or product, the employee's inability to perform their duties satisfactorily, the reluctance of other employees to work with the employee, serious breaches of the Criminal Code, and interference with the employer's ability to manage and direct their workforce efficiently.

It further highlights several cases where off-duty social media use led to disciplinary action. These cases include instances where a teacher made negative comments about their principal on Facebook, a registered nurse criticized the care received by her grandfather in a care facility on social media, an employee shared sensitive training materials with a media outlet, and a college employee posted offensive content about a political figure on Twitter.

In each of these cases, the employees faced disciplinary action for their off-duty social media use, demonstrating the potential consequences of such behavior. The book emphasizes that employees should be aware that their social media posts, even if made privately to friends, can eventually reach their employers and may result in disciplinary action. It advises employees to assume that any comments or posts made on social media can be seen by their employers, even if they later delete them.

Overall, the session provides an overview of the legal principles and case studies surrounding off-duty conduct and social media use in the workplace. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the potential impact of social media posts on employment relationships and the need for employees to exercise caution and professionalism in their online activities.



**Personal:** This season has dragged on endlessly for me personally. When your health is in jeopardy and you realize that this is your new normal, it's a bitter pill to swallow. I downplayed the symptoms, perhaps out of fear of facing the truth. I carried on with my daily routine, pretending everything was fine, but deep down, I knew something was off. It's only when we confront the reality of our situation that we can truly accept it. Last year, I received a diagnosis and underwent treatment for an illness, I was on medical leave for about 6 weeks.

Watching people argue over insignificant things, betray others for personal gain, or needlessly complicate situations for their own entertainment, makes me ponder if they think about their legacy. Do they ever contemplate how they wish to be remembered? It's astonishing that some individuals never give it a second thought. These reflections often come to mind when I witness unkindness in others.

Dear friends and colleagues, I encourage you to reflect on and prioritize your overall well-being - mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Please remember that life can change in an instant, so let's take care of ourselves [today](#) for a brighter [tomorrow](#). And be kind.

I will be on leave for medical treatment overseas and I trust that my colleagues will efficiently handle the work in my absence. I have faith and optimism that I will return healthier and stronger after completing my treatment.

In Solidarity

Mahdia Hasan

Vice President

## RSMC Chief Shop Steward

Work to live, don't live to work. Keeping that in mind, below are leave entitlements that apply to temporary workers at CPC.

After you have completed three consecutive months of continuous employment with Canada Post under 206.6 of the Canada labour code you are entitled to **3 paid** personal days and **2 unpaid** personal days. This applies to all temps/casuals/on-call you, yes you, LCs, PO4s, MSCs, OCREs etc.

Leave codes Urban CUPW 9810 paid, 9815 unpaid.

Leave codes RSMC CUPW 810 paid, 815 unpaid.

Under Bill C-3 as of December 1, 2022, all temp LCs, PO4s, MSCs, OCREs after completing 30 days of continuous employment with Canada Post are entitled to **3 paid sick days**. **You accumulate 1 sick day each month of continuous employment until you reach 10.** They carry over to the following year, but you cannot use more than 10 in one calendar year.

Leave codes Urban CUPW 9052

Leave codes RSMC CUPW 702

For all of these leaves you as a temp need to have an assignment. An assignment can be one day, 5 days, 20+ days or a yearlong. Using an unpaid leave day after accepting a one-day assignment may seem unnecessary, however this will not be counted against you regarding attendance. For example, if you accept an assignment at 8:00 am and at 9:00 am your child's school calls and you need to go pick them up and take them to a hospital, you are able to use a paid or unpaid personal day.

Indigenous workers under the Canada Labour code with at least three consecutive months of continuous employment are entitled to **five days of unpaid** leave each calendar year to participate in hunting, fishing, or harvesting.

The Canada Labour Code entitles employees who are victims of family violence up to **10 days of leave** each calendar year. Workers with at least three consecutive months of continuous employment, **the first five days will be paid.**

For something a little different in a CUPW Eye Opener, from the pen of Susan Margles Chief People and Safety Officer of Canada Post:

"Extended bereavement leave (NEW updated September 2021) – Under new legislation, all employees are entitled to up to **10 days** of extended bereavement leave when an immediate family member dies or when the person for whom the employee is caring while on compassionate care leave/leave related to critical care dies. The leave can be taken in **one or two periods** starting on the day the death occurs and ending six weeks after the last of the days on which any funeral, burial or memorial service of the deceased occurs. **For employees with at least three consecutive months of continuous employment, the first three days will be paid.**"

Leave codes Urban CUPW 9190 paid, 9410 unpaid.

Leave codes RSMC CUPW 753 paid, 815 unpaid.

Ms. Margles is updating us all on the recent changes to the Canada Labour Code, Part III Division VII Section 210. To be clear, for temps this is an update to the 2019 changes to the labour code that brought you 3 paid days and 2 unpaid days. It also allows the flexibility to take your bereavement leave in two parts.

If you run into any issues with bereavement leave, or any of the other leaves above contact your Local office (204-942-6323) or email your supervisor (emails available on Intrapost on the organizational chart) and the office of our Chief People and Safety Officer directly at: [susan.margles@canadapost.postescanada.ca](mailto:susan.margles@canadapost.postescanada.ca)

Your physical, spiritual, and mental health, your family and loved ones are important and we only get so much time to take care of ourselves and the ones we love. Know your rights, work together, and rely on each other.

Warmest of regards,  
Patrick Clare  
Moray Depot, Shop steward

## **Your Article 10 Substantive rights:**

Back in 2021 our region received a poor decision at arbitration from arbitrator Jones pertaining to our substantive rights under article 10. Ms. Jones had ruled that despite the grievor having not received the 24-hour notice which was mailed to an old address, that he had waived his rights when approached by management and verbally told of the meeting, to which the grievor refused to attend. The Union had this decision judicially reviewed and the Court of Kings Bench of Alberta (Canadian Union of Postal Workers v. Canada Post Corporation) who stated Arbitrator Jones was unreasonable in her ruling saying if the employee has not received a notice then employer can not proceed unilaterally, and having the right to defend yourself is part of natural justice. This is a formal decision – meaning it is precedent setting and can be relied on in the future and a great win for the Union.

So just what exactly is a substantive right? These are provisions in our collective agreement which are mandatory not directory. A substantive right is something that every member is entitled to. They are absolute, are of such fundamental importance, and can not be taken away.

Below are some of the most important substantive rights we have in our Collective Agreement. They are found in Article 10 which addresses discipline, suspension and discharge.

### **10.01 Just Cause and Burden of Proof**

- (a) No disciplinary measure in the form of a notice of discipline, suspension or discharge or in any other form shall be imposed on any employee without just, reasonable and sufficient cause and without his or her receiving beforehand or at the same time a written notice showing the grounds on which a disciplinary measure is imposed.
- (b) In any arbitration relating to a disciplinary measure, the burden of proof shall rest with the Corporation and such proof shall be confined to the grounds mentioned in the notice referred to in paragraph (a) above.

### **10.02 Personal File**

- (a) The Corporation agrees that there shall be only one personal file for each employee and that no report relating to the employee's conduct or performance may be used against him or her in the grievance procedure nor at arbitration unless such report is part of the said file.
- (b) **(b)** No report may be placed in the file or constitute a part thereof unless a copy of the said report is sent to the employee within ten (10) calendar days after the date of the employee's alleged infraction, or to the attention of the Corporation, or of the Corporation's alleged source of dissatisfaction with him or her.
- (c) Any unfavourable report concerning an employee and any report concerning an infraction shall be withdrawn from the file after a period of twelve (12) months from the date of the alleged infraction.
- (d) A verbal reprimand shall not be considered as a disciplinary measure and shall not be reported in the personal file of the employee.

### **10.03 Access to Personal File**

Upon written request from an employee, he or she and/or his or her Union representative shall have access to his or her official personal file in the presence of an authorized representative of the Corporation. The file should be made available within twenty-four (24) hours following the day of the written request, providing such file is available locally and, in all cases, within five (5) calendar days after the request. Where an employee's file is available for review and/or examination, reports as described in paragraph 10.02(c) are to be removed prior to such review and/or examination.



## 10.04 Interviews

- (a) The Corporation agrees to notify an employee twenty-four (24) hours in advance of any interview of a disciplinary nature or related to his or her attendance record and to indicate:
- (i) his or her right to be accompanied by a Union representative as specified in clause 10.06;
  - (ii) the purpose of the meeting, including whether it involves the employee's personal file;
  - (iii) that if the employee's personal file is to be considered during the interview, the employee and/or his or her Union representative, the latter with the employee's permission, shall, before the meeting, have access to this file in accordance with clause 10.03.
- (b) The employee has the right to refuse to participate or to continue to participate in such interview unless he or she has received the notice hereinabove provided for.
- (c) If the employee fails to appear at the interview and does not explain his or her inability to do so, the Corporation shall proceed unilaterally.

## 10.06 Right to Representation

- (a) An employee summoned for an interview shall have the right, if he or she so requests, to be accompanied by a Union representative so that the latter may participate in good faith to the discussion and contribute to the clarification of the situation.
- (b) An employee's resignation for any reason will not be accepted until the shop steward is advised.

These are just a few of your substantive rights, but they are some of the most important ones in our contract. If you have questions about these or any other rights, terms, or conditions set out in the Collective Agreement give me a call at the office and I would be happy to try to answer them for you.

I can't stress how important it is for you to read your Collective Agreement. You won't know when your rights are being violated if you don't know what they are.

In solidarity,

Cheryllyn Saramaga-Martai  
Grievance Officer  
[204-942-6323 ext. 3](tel:204-942-6323)



# Secretary Treasurer

Greetings Brothers, Sisters, and Comrades!

It has been a privilege to serve you as the Local Secretary-Treasurer these past three years. I am truly thankful to the Lord for this extraordinary blessing.

I would like to thank the former president, Matthew Aitken for showing me the ropes when I first came to the office. He was generous with his knowledge and guidance.

I would also like to thank the former vice president, Cameron Fortier, who has always been very kind and supportive to me. From generously sharing the wealth of his collective agreement and Local bylaw knowledge to giving his time whenever I or the Local needs help, Cam continues to model humility - a rare quality - and solidarity like no other.

I would be remiss not to thank Cheryllynn Saramaga-Martai for making me feel welcome when I first started the job, as well as for printing and handing out my bio leaflets prior to the fall 2021 election when I was unable to.

I am truly grateful to all of you who have encouraged me along the way with your kind words and friendly gestures. Being in a political office, having political acumen is of paramount importance. In this aspect, I unfortunately, still have a lot to learn. However, I really did enjoy the work of the office and am truly grateful for the opportunities the union has given me – opportunities to learn, to be inspired, to meet so many union activists across the country, and to grow. Perhaps the journey of the last three years can best be described as a sine/cosine function on a graph. My experience has continually oscillated between highs and lows. There was never a dull moment. The only constant was the roller coaster ride. It is time I take a break to give my poor brain some rest.

I thank all my nominators for their nominations.

I am confident that Brother Roman McColl will carry out the work of the Secretary-Treasurer well. He is an experienced shop steward, as many of you know; he is also organized and has a financial background.

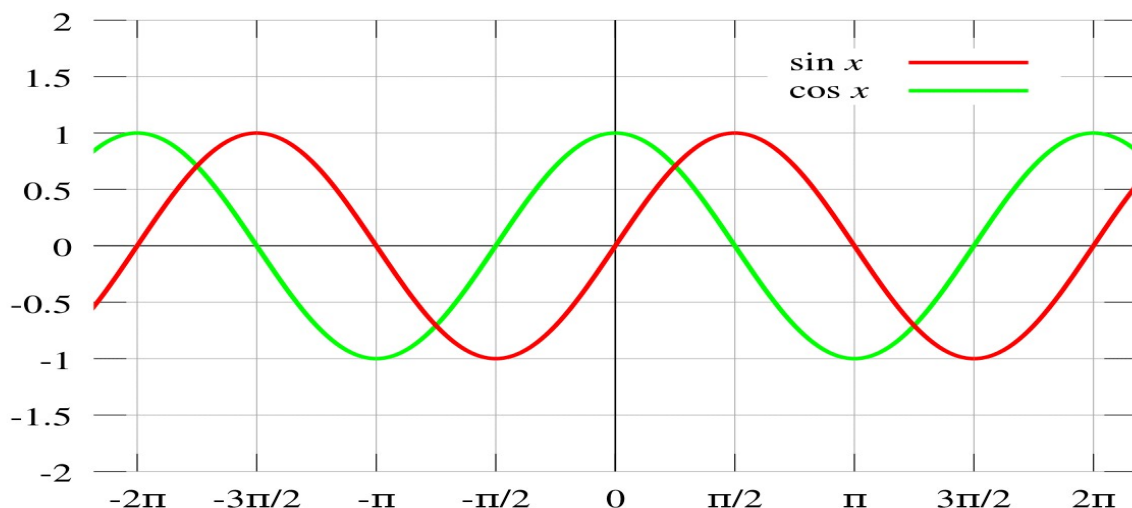
Please be kind to him.

As for me, I will continue my journey wherever the Lord leads me.

Have a splendid springtime, everyone!

With love and gratitude,

Journey/Ha Yen Jiwa



## From the Desk of the Health and Safety Officer

Hey 856 looks like I'll be in the health and safety chair for another term. After elections on March 9<sup>th</sup>, the members at the meeting got to see their new executive for the next two years. There were a few changes and some new additions. I want to thank Tyler Nielsen, Ha Yen Jiwa, Elise Marie, and Patrick Clare for their amazing contributions, and look forward to working with the new officers of the Local.

Congratulations to Chris Desjardins (Chief Steward External), Denise Schmidt (Education Officer), and Roman McColl (Secretary Treasurer).

As I embark on the next term, I reflect on my past three years serving you, the fine members of 856. The rollercoaster ride as Health and Safety Officer still makes me nauseous. I began this role at the height of the pandemic where policies and practices were changing almost daily. Just when I thought my feet were under me...the carpet was pulled out sending me back several steps. By the time I found my groove, my personal health took a turn with a cancer diagnosis in early 2023. I missed a lot of last year due to many medical appointments, an out of province surgery, and of course my recovery.



Well, I'm back! It's a new year, and a new me! Things are well and moving in the right direction! Thank you to those who sent me messages of encouragement and support, it truly meant a lot!

I don't know if it's because I am doing a good job as your Health and Safety Officer and that's why no one wanted to run against me... or are members aware of the heavy workload this portfolio entails?! Regardless, I appreciate all of you and look forward to my time ahead working with committees and advocating for members health and safety.

Moving forward I will tailor my Eyeopener articles to assist members navigating STDP, and WCB. If I can keep that information landing in your hands, it may just help you out one day. Stay tuned for tips and tricks to stay organized when dealing with third party insurance companies.

We are standing at the bottom of a very steep hill my friends. With expired collective agreements, SSD, dynamic routing, automation, this list seems to be getting longer and longer. We are in for a fight, and we must prepare ourselves in every way we can. Be safe, and be there for each other!

**An injury to one is an injury to all!**

Always in Solidarity,  
**Reggie Taman**

# CUPW Local 856

## Eye Opener Spring 2024 Edition

### Chief Shop Steward External

Greetings and Salutations, my fellow 856ers. It is with mixed feelings that I write this seasonal report. A fair bit has happened over the last few months, both in terms of what occurs within my purview, and in terms of my place within the structure of our Local.

Let's start with what's new in the Wonderful World of Stewarding. As many of you may have noticed, the tail end of February saw an increased union presence on our work floors. The primary reason for this was to facilitate the election of our 2024/2025 Depot Shop Stewards. Over the past few years, as many of you may well have noticed, the number of active stewards had dwindled. Not so this year. Our numbers have exploded, nearly quadrupling our ranks from just last year. As a steward, and as the Executive (formerly) in charge of recruitment, training, and all things stewarding, I could not be happier with, or prouder of, our new and returning stewards. Thank you all for stepping up to be the front line in defending all of our rights from the employer.

Speaking of the employer, those of you in our Southwest and Northeast Letter Carrier Depots have no doubt noticed a new tool in their arsenal. Courtesy of the corporation's Industrial Relations and Human Resources departments, the supervisors and superintendents of the aforementioned depots have rolled out a new suspension form. One that doesn't require a 24, or any investigation or conscious thought, apparently. A supervisor/superintendent notices an alleged infraction, predominantly vehicle related like an unsecured vehicle at the compound and suspends the route holder. No investigation, no chance for the member to defend themselves, no chance for any sort of due process. And all in the name of lessening the supervisors' workload . . . Apparently, it takes too much effort and time to actually investigate and conduct the 24s in case they're accusing the wrong person, so the corporation streamlined the process, so they don't have to do much of anything. They simply check a box next to the alleged infraction, put a name, the day's date, the date of the suspension, and they're done. Couldn't be easier!

The timing of the release of the corporation's new toy is coincidental, I'm sure, as it has come out while we enter negotiations for our new contracts (both Urban and RSMC). This seems to be par for the course for the corporation, given the tone they've been trying to set with our negotiators. Between crying poor (while increasing the number of superintendents and supervisors across the country AND rolling out a new fleet of needlessly large and expensive new stepvans nationwide) and trying to attack many of the basic rights in our collective agreement, our CUPW negotiators need our support. Those of you who have signed up for our local and national newsletters are already aware of the demands put forth by both sides. For those of you who haven't had the opportunity to, the current state of negotiations is available on our website as well as via the QR codes on your Union boards.

As for my place within the structure of our Local, as some of you may be aware, at our most recent GMM on March 9<sup>th</sup>, I was elected to be our Local's new Secretary-Treasurer, following in the footsteps of sister Ha Yen (Journey) Jiwa. Though she laughs at me every time I mention it, she is leaving some big shoes for me to fill, and I would like to thank her for her service to the Local, and for helping to show me the ropes in my new office. I would also encourage all of you to thank her for the years she dedicated to our

Local. I look forward to this new chapter in my time serving the Local, to enhancing my knowledge, and to helping to secure a stronger future for us all.

And with that, dear readers, I bid you adieu until next time. As always, I encourage you all to look out for yourselves and one another. Work safely, even if you have to slow down and bring product back. If/When you do bring product back, please ensure you're communicating with your supervisor. Whenever there's any hazard or something out of the ordinary that affects your ability to do your job in a safe and timely manner, communicate with your LJHSC, your stewards, and your supervisors. And, as always, don't forget to bring a steward.

Roman McColl  
Sec-Tres Elect



**KEEP CALM  
AND  
TALK TO YOUR SHOP STEWARD**



## **Negotiate Don't Legislate!**

As we know, in 2018 the government set aside one of our constitutional rights and legislated us back to work. The Union has filed a constitutional challenge on this and is trying to show how CPC lied (by saying there were 100s of thousands of trailers of mail waiting to be unloaded when most of them were empty). Because of CPC's lies the government was humiliated in their actions. This is not a guarantee that they will not impose back to work legislation in the future, but it does make it more difficult. We need to mobilize. And keep a Conservative government out. A change in government could be devastating to us! The Conservative government is not our friend. A strike with Pier Poilievre would be worse than it was with Harper.

Negotiations have begun and at this point, the parties have just begun talking. The Union has provided their list of demands to CPC and the Employer has begun telling the Union what they want or more accurately what they want to take away.

Canada Post is asking for rollbacks such as the elimination of pre-retirement and the 6th week of annual for new hires, deletion of our wash-up time, as well as changes to overtime pay so that anything after 10 hours will be paid at time and a half and not double time. But most concerning, the corporation wants to re-invent the whole letter carrier delivery system, plus they also have plans to introduce robotics which will eliminate group 1 work.

We need to stand together and tell Canada Post that this is unacceptable! The more engaged you are, the more the employer take us seriously. Negotiations are also psychological, and the employer will be watching to see if the membership is engaged.

We need to show that we support our negotiating committee and that we support each other. Wear a button or t-shirt, put a sticker on your belongings and participate in Union activities. We are not prepared to take concession bargaining. We deserve fair wages and good work environment. We need to raise the wages and the benefits for all workers in Canada, not bring ourselves down to their level.

Lastly, I want to remind you to **start putting money aside now** for when we are on strike. This is probably going to be the toughest round of negotiations any of us have faced in our careers. We need to be ready to hold the line.

If you have any questions about anything in my report or any other questions about a grievance you have filed or would like to file, please feel to contact me.

In solidarity,

Cheryllyn Saramaga-Martai  
Grievance Officer  
204-942-6323 ext. 3  
grievance@cupwwpg.ca



## (New) Chief Shop Steward External

Hello everyone, my name is Chris Desjardins. As you all just read, Roman is now the new secretary treasurer of local 856. I would like to thank Roman for the dedication he has to the membership as the chief external steward. I look forward to working with the new stewards that he has helped recruit. For those of you that don't know me I have been a letter carrier for almost 18 years. I started out working as a temp, mainly out of 266 graham avenue (when it was a letter carrier depot and the Winnipeg plant) and out of Church Depot. I have been around for many of the changes that Canada Post keeps imposing and its always the same, they need to cut costs, and they will spend a dollar to save a dime. It has often been on the backs of the letter carriers, the front-line workers, the ones that the public see and interact with. The boss never seems to see it that way and continues to undervalue our work and the value that good customer service brings. Not only that, but they also continue to chop routes and show disregard for the work that we do. I have only been in my new role for a week now, much of that time was spent going through some routes out of Church depot and the grievances for missing time values. Many of which the carriers were told were fixed and were being paid for but only received lip service and a supervisor's signature in the edit book saying it was fixed and was not. Or a part time route built over 6 hours and seemingly only entitled to a 20-minute lunch break not a 30 minute one. They also don't get a wash up time or time to go anywhere for that break either. As SSD is rammed through Winnipeg and the rest of the county it is important to remember to ask questions, get that direction from your supervisor, work safely, and remember your rights, like the right to complain, your rights to an -hour day and the right to meet with a shop steward.

Chris Desjardins  
Chief Shop Steward External  
(204) 943-6323 ext 7



# Work Load Restructure Officer

## The Importance of Union Observers

This last year has been unlike any, with the number of restructures happening across the nation and SSD being steam rolled across the country. Behind every restructure there is a group of members who expend countless hours ensuring everything is accurate, up to date, done by the book, and all in a timely manner. These members that get appointed are your Union Observers. Their duties and commitment can go unnoticed at times, but I can assure you it is an integral part from start to finish of a restructure. I will take you through a walk of the different stages of the restructure process and how crucial it is to have Union Observers at each step of the way.

The early stage of a depot being restructured is the Prep and Validation phase usually taking place a few months before the scheduled volume count, if applicable. By this time everyone knows the restructure is coming up soon, and already in the background are your union observers. They will be found behind a mountain of a various forms for each route, 103s, 108s, and 038s are just the tip of the iceberg. Every route receives a closer look at, sifting through tens of thousands of pages, your observers will flag, request, and validate perceived irregularities. This is the stage where all those missing values seem to magically appear out of know where, as they need to be inputted prior to the Restructure Phase. Your union observers do their best to ensure major values are not missing and timed functions are accurate for the work you are performing. This is a very tedious, mentally taxing, and time-consuming stage but it is the building blocks and foundation for the build to come.

Next, we have Quality Review (QR) Meetings and Volume count. This next phase is quick and happens in the blink of an eye. The union observers use the platform of these QR meetings to plan finer details, discuss depot concerns, and gain clarity of certain processes being utilized. Our most recent VC saw the introduction of a PDT for the union observers to use to help audit, validate case counts, and PCI capturing on the spot. Volume count brings a lot of faces into the depot and your appointed union observers are some of them. Each group of observers brought is generally a mix experienced and those who wish to learn. During the volume count your union observers manually capture, monitor, and compare the data captured by the corporation. No volume count is perfect, and discrepancies are part of the process, which is why daily meetings (47.05's we call them) are a must but with out your union observers identifying irregularities it would be impossible. Everything manually captured gets crossed referenced on a series of forms called the 500 reports, these forms show how much manual, sequenced, parcels, packets were accounted for on each route down to the LDU. Pretty cool if you ask me, again a tedious process but essential to maintaining accurate data to be used going forth.

The build phase is by far the most emotionally draining phase during a restructure. The union appointed observers must be vigilant, invested, and leave no stones left unturned. Here is where all the validating and data capturing is put to use. The build consists of an observer dedicated to building with the RMO and creating routes while another is tasked to drive and



validate the routes on the street. Both are very important, this is our chance to object, dispute, and document any disagreements and irregularities. Knowing the depot being restructured, the ATI MOA, GEO DOT MOA, and LCRMS are a must when observing. The ATI MOA is our access to information, observers require a lot of forms, reports, and documents necessary to ensure all values are accounted for and therefore are requested and provided to the observer daily. As routes are built with one observer, the driver is provided with maps and a route activities report (RAR) which



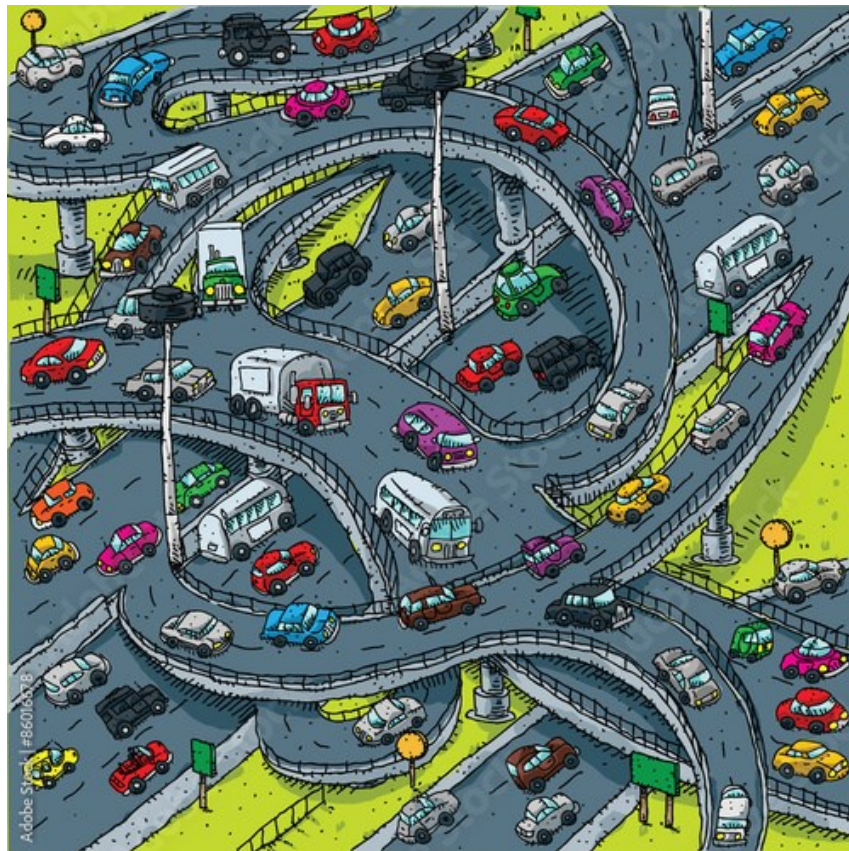
shows how the route is to be delivered, driven, and the line of travel for the LC.

The RARs provided at this time are incredibly detailed, showing exact durations for stops, loops, fixed duties, as well as arrival and departure times for everything! The driver will follow this line of travel to a tee, point out potential issues, safety concerns, street furniture locations, parking locations, and request timings as needed to travel between tasks. By the end of this phase your observers are walking away with file folders filled with maps and RARs awaiting the final stages to which a full review of the routes built will once again be under the microscope of your union appointed observers.

Upon completion of the build and creation of the purposed new routes the union is granted 15 working business days to do a final review. This observer again is faced with thousands of pages of forms and documents to review and cross reference. Your observer will compile a list of questions and further note perceived irregularities to be addressed at a final consultation. This consultation is where everything gets hashed out, details clarified, and finalized dates are set for bidding and implementation.

Observers have a passion and a desire to make that difference that can be hard to see when that mountain seems so high. Our ability to have observers present at certain phases is in jeopardy. With these new restructures condensing our depots future restructures will not allow for a similar union presence. We work in a structured world where seconds can make the difference and make or break a route. Your unions observers are not recruited; they are a special bunch who want to learn and again make that difference no matter how small it may be.

Toni Montanti - WSO



## Education Officer (New)

Hello all!

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Denise Schmidt, I am a part-time LCA at South-West depot, and I am the new Education Officer for the local!

When I was acclaimed mere days ago, I was surprised to hear that I was to write a bit of a letter for this edition of the Eyeopener. I have spent only a few hours at the local, trying to navigate my new office and computer, and have yet to get my feet wet at an executive meeting.

That being said, I do step into this role with a bit of an agenda. I would like to use my time as Education Officer to educate as many members as I can, who would like to be educated.

I have noticed, in the past few years, there seems to be many of the same people at the different educationals I've attended. I'm not sure if it's because members aren't signing up, members are disengaged or maybe because new people who are signing up aren't getting chosen. I would like to give everyone a chance. Here's what you can do. Show up to GMMs, get to know your shop stewards, stop by the local, talk to Sean when he's visiting your workplace, check your union boards, apply. Any and all of these things help and show us you are interested. In return, I will make sure to try to get to know members who apply for educationals, if I don't know you already. If you and your co-workers see a need for a certain type of education please contact me.

I will do my best to work with you to figure out how we can make it happen. After all, You elected me. I work for you.

Denise Schmidt  
Education Officer  
[education@cupwwpg.ca](mailto:education@cupwwpg.ca)







JOE BRYKSA/WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

## Striking back

Postal workers marched through downtown Winnipeg yesterday to protest the federal government's back-to-work legislation. At the same time, MPs in Ottawa began a marathon debate to rush the bill through the House of Commons before sending it to the Senate today. It could be proclaimed law tomorrow.

## Why File A Grievance

*If you see management violating the contract it is important to file grievances. This is our opportunity to hold the employer accountable for violating our rights on the job.*

*Whenever we let the employer violate our contract without challenging them, we are weakening our contract for all members. It sends a message to the boss that we will not enforce the contract.*

*When we file grievances, we let employers know that we take the contract seriously and we will make them take it seriously, too. Sometimes, just knowing union members will enforce their rights acts as a deterrent, and management will think twice before violating the contract.*





The Winnipeg Local's Women's Committee posed for a picture with former CUPW member now current MLA for Rossmere, Tracy Schmidt at the International Women's Day pancake breakfast, hosted by the MFL Women's Committee, Winnipeg Labour Council, and the Canadian Labour Congress. Proceeds from the event were donated to Harvest Manitoba, a CUPE 2348 workplace, which helps to feed more than 90,000 Manitobans every month, the majority of whom are women and children. It is important for Labour to keep pushing to close the gender pay gap and to create a world where gender equity is the norm.



## The man, The myth, The legend



Myron May and Brett Drabot

**Brett Drabot** -.... I can't think of too many people who have inspired and dedicated themselves to this Union more than Brett Drabot. I first met Brett in the mid or late 90's when he was asked to do bar chart work on behalf of the Local. It was clear that his work ethic and commitment was second to none and very much noticed and appreciated by other members. It wasn't long after that , that Brett was elected to the position of Route Measurement Officer. His long hours, dedication and commitment to the members and his portfolio was a constant source of inspiration. With respect to dealing with the employer ,he was tenacious and unyielding : the proverbial dog on a bone. Perhaps his most redeeming qualities were his mentorship, patience and wisdom, an incredibly calming voice of reason in the many executive board meetings we attended together. It was indeed a sad day when Brett made the decision to retire but he continues to this day to help out the Winnipeg Local whenever he can. Know one deserves the title of working class hero more than Brett Drabot!! Take bow brother, you earned it and you deserve it!!

In solidarity, your brother in arms;

Myron May



## The man, The myth, The legend

Brett has been an incredible source of support and assistance to me during my time as the vice president of this local union. Whenever I found myself in a computer crisis or in need of information regarding past practices within our union, Brett was always there to lend a helping hand.

As the vice president of our local union, I am deeply grateful for Brett's unwavering support and assistance. His dedication, expertise, and willingness to lend a helping hand have significantly enhanced my ability to fulfill my duties. I am sure that many others in our union share my appreciation for the incredible impact Brett has had on our union

In Solidarity

Mahdia Hasan



Lisa Peterson, Myron May, Tyler Oswald and Brett Drabot 2019 convention

# The man, The myth, The legend

**Brett Drabot**

I've worked with Brett for some time in the realm of route measurement. Brett has been the no holds barred, direct tell me like it is from the time I knew him. His dedication to route measurement and all things union is absolutely beyond words. We first crossed when I wanted to learn about route measurement, I approached him in his office and after many attempts to sway him he handed me an LCRMS (letter carrier route measurement system) binder 3", and he said "learn this ". It was all fun, and as the months and years progressed, I was brought into consultations, and he taught me how to prep. Brett embodies the idea of working selflessly for the betterment of the membership. Even after retirement you can see him often at the local from assisting our tech needs to bouncing ideas off. Brett is the ideal example of dedication and knowledge, and for that I am proud to call him brother, Sol Sol Sol

**By Sean Tugby**

Brett Drabot

My dear friend, it is with pleasure that I write these few words to you.

Since our meeting in 2009, you took responsibility of route measurement at the Winnipeg Local. A hard worker, you have been able to face a multitude of challenges.

Since your retirement, I miss deeply your weekly phone calls. Know that I still enjoy your company even if our meetings are much further apart.

Your friend **Martin Champagne**





## The man, The myth, The legend

My dear friend Bart,

I am not sure if I should shake my finger at you and say “ look what you got me into” or hug you and say “ look what you got me into”.

It all started late in 2009, I was an inexperienced letter carrier was fumbling around Charleswood Depot as a relief LC and in came this persistent Union Rep looking for a volunteer from the Depot to help with some upcoming changes to routes in the Depot, or at least I thought that was all I was getting involved in. Little did I know that the disaster that was PT-Postal Transformation, better known in the office as PT- Pathetically Tragic, as you coined it, would be life changing for me and for the better only because I become your friend. The effects of PT of course were harsh, pathetic, challenging, frustrating and life altering for what CUPW members had known as their jobs until then. What the Corp did with little care to its effects on the workers seemed to drive you more to help those around you, support those in need, lead those who believed in you, teach those of us willing to learn and most of all to befriend those who came into your life. If I haven't said it enough, I will say it here for all to know, I am so glad you found me and I found you; true friendship and trust cannot be explained in words, it must be felt and believed.

I became involved in our Union by chance, we became friends and confidants by chance, but it has been by choice that we have remained friends and I owe my involvement and care for our Union and our members to you.

You taught me over the years what it felt like to support other workers, what it felt like to oppose the boss, what it felt like to stand up for what is right, what it felt like to win against an unjust boss and what it is like to get up each day to continue the struggle. You fought tirelessly for our Local and our members over all the years I have known you. You allowed so many to know what activism was by doing and not by preaching. Brett you have shown what it truly means to be committed to our Local. You have proven through your endless volunteerism in your recent retirement year,s that you still keep the Locals well being and struggles in your sights.

I am one of the very lucky ones who got to work so closely with you for many years while we shared office space and fought the boss over numbers, forms, restructures, consultations and many heated arguments. I am blessed to have been the fumbling inexperienced letter carrier you took under your wing to share all you knew and encourage me to grow with every opportunity I had with our Local and our Union.

Thank you for always helping me to learn. Thank you for encouraging me. Thank you for supporting me. Thank you most of all for being a true and lifelong friend.

They just don't make them like you anymore Brett.

It would not be the perfect end to my story without saying I enjoyed every opportunity to be your sandwich maker.

With much love my friend.

Lisa Peterson



## The best time to start saving money for a future strike was when we signed our last contract. The second-best time to start is today.

The Union and Canada Post have just recently begun negotiation talks but given Canada Posts demands for rollbacks and changes to our work methods it is likely at some point the parties will reach an impasse and negotiations will break down.

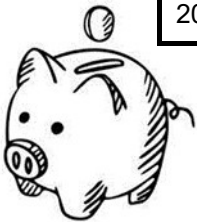
If we cannot reach a tentative agreement at the bargaining table, then the next step is to go to conciliation. Either party can apply for conciliation. Once it is requested the Minister of Labour has 15 days to appoint a conciliator.

After the conciliator is appointed, the parties take part in a conciliation process for 60 days. At the end of this 60-day period, there is a 21-day cooling-off period before the parties obtain the right to strike or lockout. Therefore, the parties acquire the right to strike or lockout at the end of the 81<sup>st</sup> day following the appointment of the conciliator by the Minister of Labour.

It is not too late to start setting aside some money to help cushion the blow for when we are on the picket line. Every penny counts! Put as much money as you can away each pay cheque. This will help you weather the storm when we are on strike.

The chart below shows you how much you will save over time if you start next pay day.

	<u>3 Months</u> (6 pay periods)	<u>6 Months</u> (13 pay periods)	<u>9 Months</u> (19 pay periods)
50\$ per paycheque	\$300	\$ 650	\$950
75\$ per paycheque	\$450	\$975	\$1,350
100\$ per paycheque	\$600	\$1,300	\$1,900
150\$ per paycheque	\$900	\$1,950	\$2,850
200\$ per paycheque	\$1,200	1,950	\$3,600





# NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING

**Friday April 26<sup>TH</sup>**

**11:00 AM: Gather at the Union Centre**

**11:30 AM: Leaders' Walk**

**Noon: Ceremony at Workers Memorial**

**Mourn the Dead, Fight for the Living.**

Manitoba   
**Federation  
of Labour**  
Fairness For Everyone

**SAFE WORKERS  
OF TOMORROW**

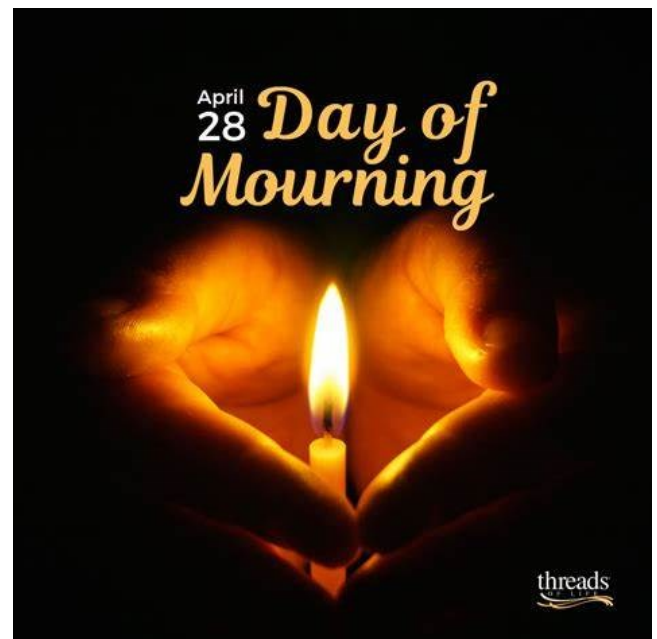
## Day of Mourning – April 26, 2024

The Day of Mourning ceremony will take place on Friday this year. It is the labour movement's most solemn day, but also a day to refocus our commitment to preventing future workplace injuries and deaths. Every year thousands of workers, friends, and families of fallen workers gather at ceremonies across Canada to recognize the National Day of Mourning for workers killed or injured on the job. It is a ceremony I hold close to my heart and try to participate in every year. Not because health and safety are my portfolio, but because in 2014 I lost my nephew Justin Taman to a workplace accident.



This year, I won't be a part of the Winnipeg march as I will be out of the province that week. So, I am reaching out to you 856, give the local a shout...pick up a CUPW flag, and take part in the march that will start at the Union Center and end at Memorial Park.

An injury to one is an injury to all! Solidarity!





**Winnipeg Local 856**  
**NOTICE of GENERAL**  
**MEMBERSHIP MEETING**  
**TO BE DETERMINED**  
Where? Bronx Park Community Center

**New Temps Looking for Corporate Apparel?**

The local office has a few boxes of clothing including shirts, pants, jackets, gators etc. If you are new and do not receive clothing credits yet please feel free to stop by the office to look through some gear.



changes to your personal contact information

If you would like to submit an article for a future issue, or you have a work-related photo you would like to share The communications committee is always looking for content and submissions. Email your suggestions, submissions, and rants to:

[vicepresident@cupwwpg.ca](mailto:vicepresident@cupwwpg.ca)

**Have you moved?**  
**Are you planning to move?**  
Contact the local union office at  
**(204) 942-6323**  
With your new/future address or any other