

WINTER 2017

Marty's Message

Comrades!

In the last few months alone, USW locals in District 6 have achieved collective bargaining successes that will improve and protect good working conditions and living standards for thousands upon thousands of Steelworkers families.

Through collective bargaining we create better jobs for our members, improve living standards for our families and build better futures for our children.

The remarkable fact that these contracts are often achieved under extremely challenging circumstances – stemming from a political and corporate agenda intent on undermining unions and collective bargaining rights – cannot be overstated. USW members working in virtually every sector of the economy are confronting these daunting challenges with innovative, strategic and constructive approaches to negotiating new agreements.

We may not always win historic victories, but we always stand up and fight for the best contract possible. And in many cases we do indeed achieve impressive gains and make breakthroughs that inevitably set new standards

Taking Pride in our **BARGAINING ACHIEVEMENTS**

that benefit all workers. Key recent examples include our union's successes in negotiating new contract language on domestic violence leave and workplace mental health policies.

Steelworkers know that through collective bargaining, more than anything else, we create better jobs for our members, improve living standards for our families and build better futures for our children. We also know that our collective bargaining achievements ultimately raise the bar for all workers and help build stronger communities.

I cannot say enough to express my appreciation and admiration of our rank-and-file Steelworkers activists, local bargaining committees and USW servicing representatives whose solidarity, hard work and determination continue to build on our union's unparalleled record of collective bargaining achievements.

I also want to recognize the USW members and activists who are stepping up to get involved on our renewed District 6 Political Action Committee. I am overwhelmed by the quality and quantity of activist resumes we received from members after we issued a call for applications to join the committee in September.

We plan to establish the committee by the end of the year and I am excited to work with this new group to

Continued on page 10

Through solidarity and determined bargaining with employers, Steelworkers are negotiating improved working and living standards in virtually all sectors of the economy. Following are highlights of some of our most-recent USW District 6 bargaining successes.

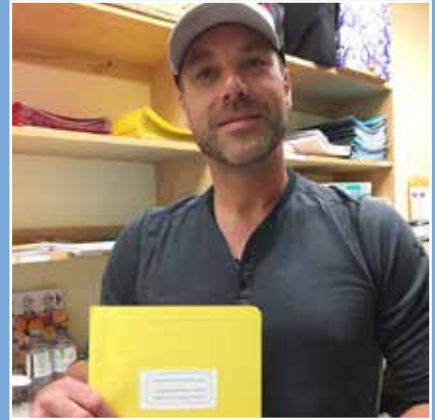
Marty Wam



Lumber Workers Approve Three-Year Deal

Local 1-2010 members at Wanson Lumber in Thunder Bay unanimously endorsed a new three-year agreement that provides total wage increases of 4.75% as well as improvements to pensions, vision care and bereavement language.

Jason Lacko, USW Local 1-2010 Business Representative and Recording Secretary, displays the codified, duly executed three-year collective agreement with Wanson Lumber.



Engine Repair Workers Make Numerous Improvements

Wage increases of 7.5% over three years are among numerous gains achieved by Local 9042 members at Cummins Eastern Canada operations in Mississauga, Ont. Workers at the engine repair, service and distribution facility will receive significant increases in allowances for everything from tools, safety clothing and lunch payments, as well as improved benefits, vacation entitlement, sick leave, pension provisions, profit sharing, stock purchases and contract language.



Legal Clinic Employees Obtain DV Language, Enhance SUB Plan

Members of Local 8748, Unit 12, employed at the Algoma Community Legal Clinic in Sault Ste. Marie, ratified a three-year deal that includes new domestic violence leave language as well as an enhanced Employment Insurance Supplemental Unemployment Benefit Plan. The new contract also improves union security language and overtime provisions.



Wage Gains Highlight Deal for Mattress Makers

Local 3950-62 members at Marshall Ventilated Mattress Co. in Toronto reached a four-year deal that will provide total wage increases of 10.75% over the term. The contract also provides benefits improvements including increases in vision care, eye exam payments and life insurance, annual increases in safety shoe allowances, improved contract language on job postings and transfers and a cost-of-living bonus.



Wheel Fabricators Negotiate Mental Health, DV Provisions

Members of Local 1-1000, Unit 28, at OTR Wheel Engineering in Sault Ste. Marie, secured new, progressive language on workplace mental health issues and a domestic violence policy. The workers, who manufacture and repair wheels for industrial and agricultural vehicles, also negotiated total wage increases of 6% over three years, new vision care coverage and a new job class that will allow employees to upgrade their skills and earn higher wages.



Nuclear Lab Workers Address Privatization Challenges

More than 500 members of Local 1568 at Canadian Nuclear Laboratories in Chalk River, Ont., reached a new agreement that strengthens contract language and introduces a new pension plan to address issues created by the privatization of the former AECL facility. The two-year contract includes total wage increases of 3% and introduces provisions recognizing the impact of domestic violence and mental health issues on the workplace.



Wage, Job Security Gains for Pulp Mill Employees

Local 665 members at the NBSK pulp mill in Terrace Bay, Ont., strengthened job security and recall rights while improving wages, benefits and pensions in a five-year contract. The deal includes an immediate \$1/hour increase to all wage rates, a \$1 increase to the trades/ticketed rate next spring and an overall wage increase of 8% to all rates over the term. The contract calls for benefits premiums to be paid 100% by the employer, a 1.5% pension increase and improvements for temporary employees.



14% Pay Hikes for Refractory Workers

Members of Local 8748, Unit 6 at Mintech Canada Inc. in Sault Ste. Marie ratified a five-year deal that will provide total wage hikes of 14%. Workers at the refractory plant, who produce heat-resistant coatings for use in the steel-making industry, also achieved improvements in vision care, vacation language and new provisions on workplace mental health.



Improved Pensions, Benefits, Wages and DV Language for Gold Miners

Local 7580 members at gold mine Goldcorp in Timmins, Ont., ratified a three-year agreement in October that improves pensions, benefits and wages and introduces new language on domestic violence leave. The 280 workers will see pension benefits increase by more than 8% over the term – to \$66 per month, per year of service – with the qualifying age for a full pension reduced to 62. Total wage increases will amount to 6%, with several benefits improvements including an increase in the parental leave top-up to \$225 per week. The contract strengthens language on recall/seniority rights and training related to technological change.



Real Improvements and No Concessions at U of T

The solidarity of members of the largest USW local in District 6 resulted in significant contract improvements for University of Toronto employees and a rejection of the austerity and concession agenda prevalent in Ontario's public sector.

Local 1998, representing 4,300 administrative and technical employees at U of T, engaged and mobilized its members throughout a challenging and lengthy bargaining process. Members voted 94% in favour of strike action if necessary – a strong mandate that led to a three-year agreement.

The concession-free agreement, which will be in effect until June 30, 2020, improves wages, job security, working conditions and contract language. Total wage increases of 6.5% include a salary adjustment of 0.7% this year as an offset to an increase in employee pension contributions.

The contract improves health and education benefits, re-establishes an early-retirement bridge benefit, enhances severance packages and strengthens job security with gains made in the rights, options and re-employment opportunities for employees facing organizational change. ■

End Pension Theft

Rallying cry to change bankruptcy laws

Hamilton Steelworkers are on the move to change the federal bankruptcy laws that have cost so many hard-working families so very much.

About 150 Steelworkers and supporters joined MP Scott Duvall (NDP Hamilton Mountain) at the Hamilton Steel Hall in September when he announced a campaign to "End Pension Theft."

Duvall, the NDP's pensions critic and former president of USW Local 5328, will be introducing legislation

aimed at protecting workers' pensions and benefits, and forcing companies to provide owed wages and severance as well as pensions and benefits to workers before paying secured creditors such as banks and financial institutions in bankruptcy proceedings.

"It is morally wrong for companies to be allowed to get out of their obligations to loyal, hard-working employees," Duvall said. "Companies like U.S. Steel have used bankruptcy

protection laws to manipulate debt and rob retirees of funds that are essentially deferred wages, set aside over years of hard work."

Duvall noted that federal laws like the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA) allow companies to avoid paying land taxes. Workers and retirees do not get that kind of relief.

"And with the stroke of a judge's pen, companies can also stop paying workers and retirees what they are owed."

Stelco's largest secured creditor while it was under CCAA protection was the parent company, U.S. Steel in the United States.

HOSPITAL BED ACTIVISM

The persistent activism of USW Local 9316 members, including hospitalized local president Glenn Nolan, has compelled the provincial government to act on safety issues at an oil refinery in Come By Chance, N.L.

"The government is finally listening to what we've been saying for a long time," said Nolan. "There's still a lot of work to do, but the government recognizes our concerns and they're responding."

In late summer, Local 9316 leaders went public with serious safety issues that had been mounting for months among members at North Atlantic Refining Limited (NARL).

Nolan and Local 9316 Vice-President Perry Feltham sounded the alarm over a pattern of safety concerns being dismissed by government officials and oil refinery management alike. They feared history was repeating itself at the refinery, where similar safety issues existed prior to a fatal explosion at the facility in 1998.

In September, Nolan and Feltham drew media attention when they embarked



I thought it was something I had to do, because we believe the union has to do everything we can to protect our members, to protect all workers.

— Glenn Nolan
President, Local Union 9316

on a 156-kilometre cycling and walking trek from Come By Chance to the provincial legislature in St. John's, where they met with government officials and pressed for action.

"Government needs to listen," Nolan said at the time. "The government's duty is to protect working people. They're shirking that duty."

The trek took its toll on Nolan, who has cystic fibrosis. He was hospitalized and required treatment for five days before being released.

The union's campaign prompted intervention by Sherry Gambin-Walsh, the provincial cabinet minister responsible for workplace health

and safety, who sent a letter to NARL management dictating steps to be taken to address safety issues.

"We've started the process, but there's a long way to go, so we will keep up the fight and keep pushing for real improvements," said Nolan, adding he didn't regret the trek that landed him in hospital.

"My wife didn't think I should do it, so I wish I hadn't put my family through that. But I thought it was something I had to do, because we believe the union has to do everything we can to protect our members, to protect all workers." ■

"The company basically paid itself and ran," said Duvall.

District 6 Director Marty Warren and USW National Director Ken Neumann joined Duvall at the launch along with representatives from supportive private and public sector unions.

This issue has become one of the most urgent needs of the labour movement and something the Liberal government is completely negligent on.

"Hamilton voted for the right guy when they elected Scott," said Warren. "The Liberal government in Ottawa claims it respects workers' rights. But no one from the government lifted a finger to put a stop to pension theft. It's time to hold their feet to the fire."

Duvall is planning on introducing the legislation as a private member's bill during this session of Parliament. If the Liberal government believes in this 'workers first' approach, they could either support Duvall's bill or make it a government bill and have it pass Parliament rapidly. Unfortunately, there is no indication they intend to do either. ■



NDP MP Scott Duvall (Hamilton Mountain) at his 2017 Canada Day picnic with constituents James and Dorene Radford, celebrating their 55th wedding anniversary on that day.

USW local president's campaign lands him in hospital, but compels government to act



Local 9316 President Glenn Nolan (second from left), enjoying the support of fellow union members before embarking on a 156-kilometre trek to the N.L. legislature to advocate for greater health and safety at the NARL oil refinery.

Sometimes it seems the way things work in the world is unfair but we feel powerless to change things. Or, we're too busy with other things – work, family, chores – you name it. Or, we don't speak up because we assume that no one is listening or will do anything about it.

Other times, a Steelworker asks another Steelworker to get involved in changing how things work, and the next thing you know (or a few years later), we get it done – and make lives better for many people.

That's why Steelworkers get involved in politics. To change things. To make things better. More fair. For workers. For everyone.

Now is an exciting time to get involved in political action with our partner in politics, the New Democratic Party (NDP).

At the federal level, we have an exciting, dynamic new leader in Jagmeet Singh. Jagmeet was chosen as the new NDP leader on Oct. 1 in a decisive vote by party members.

In Ontario, we have a crucial provincial election in 2018. The current Liberal government, mired in corruption and scandal, is hugely unpopular. They have been a disappointment in so many ways. 2018 will be our chance to elect a truly progressive government that's on the side of workers: Andrea Horwath and the New Democrats.

Renewing the D6 Political Action Committee

To get more of our members involved in political action, District 6 is re-establishing our Political Action Committee so we can use our power for good.

We want to mobilize and engage our members in political action: during election campaigns and between elections. And we want to support the party of working people – the NDP.

We put out a call for members to apply for the D6 Political Action Committee in September and we are working through those amazing applications. The committee will be established by the end of the year. You can bet there will be lots of opportunities to get involved in the committee's activities.

Political Action Education

As part of our renewed political action, District 6 is holding a three-day political action course for

NextGen Steelworkers (age 35 and under) at the end of November in Hamilton.

This pilot project will help us develop our curriculum and materials for future political action. With the Ontario election coming in June 2018, the idea will be to tweak our NextGen course and introduce it to Steelworker activists across the province in the New Year.

So watch for these political action training opportunities and start thinking about members that your local could send to our election training in 2018. We'll give these members the skills and motivation they need to become election volunteers and campaigners.

Why Steelworkers Get Involved in Politics

The USW is politically engaged, because laws and politics have a big impact on our workplaces and our communities, and together we can be a force for positive change.



UNITED



UNITY AND

Health and safety standards, the right to refuse unsafe work and the Westray Bill are now enshrined in law thanks to the joint efforts of Steelworkers and elected members of the NDP.

Federally, we are working with the NDP on fixing our laws so that workers are protected in cases of corporate bankruptcies or restructuring.

For a Stronger, Fairer and More Progressive Ontario

We are gearing up for the Ontario election in spring 2018. Steelworkers are solid supporters of Andrea Horwath and the NDP team that will be presenting a platform for a stronger, fairer and more progressive Ontario.

Andrea has already presented policy planks we can get behind such as a universal Pharmacare program so all

Ontarians can get the medication they need, ending the privatization of Ontario Hydro and cutting hydro bills.

Kathleen Wynne and the Liberals have let us down.

Only the New Democrats will represent the interests of working people, fighting for good jobs and fair pay and benefits so workers and families can build a stable life.

Get Involved!

Make sure your local gets involved in D6 political action and Steelworkers Vote activities as part of the Ontario election in 2018. You'll have fun (we promise), meet new people and be part of a team of Steelworkers playing an important role in helping to elect strong, progressive representatives who are on our side. ■

Power for Good POLITICAL ACTION



D6 Fall School Training Sparks



The first week of November in Orillia was a great time for our District 6 Fall School. More than 100 USW members from locals throughout Ontario and Atlantic Canada took part in seminars, courses, exercises and discussions.

This second annual training school is an opportunity for members to participate in seminars and training on all aspects of trade unionism: bargaining, preparing arbitrations, promoting mental health in the workplace, communications and learning about all stages of grievances.

The week is designed to build on the education courses offered to our members and activists throughout the year. It expands the skills of our local leadership and helps train the leaders of the future.

This year's school piloted three courses that will be added to our regular District 6 education offerings:

- **USW Women's Committees: Leading Together** is designed for our sisters hoping to start up or revive a Women's Committee in their local.
- **Communications and Social Media** focuses on social media and communications fundamentals, including messaging, public speaking and linking your Women of Steel with USW activists in their local and across the country.
- **Promoting Mental Health in the Workplace** examines mental health as the crucial issue it has become in our workplaces, and the role our activists can play in educating our union.

The school also brought in guests from the USW Humanity Fund, Magdalena Diaz, Jay Watt and Jorge Garcia-Orgales who dramatically presented the impact of Indian and Colombian projects



Excitement and New Skills

District 6 schools are a great place for our members to improve their skills, learn new ideas for their locals and build their activist knowledge in a fun and supportive environment.

– Marty Warren
USW District 6 Director

Steelworkers participate in to build trade union solidarity and provide crucial development aid. But probably the most important work for the participants during the week is to network, build relationships and learn from each other. The entire school is filled with fun opportunities to share stories, mentor fellow Steelworkers and learn from the diversity of USW members. It comes to a light-hearted conclusion on the last evening at the Talent Night where members put on skits, songs and attempt stand-up comedy.

“The District 6 schools have proven to be a great place for our members to improve their skills, learn new ideas for their locals and build their activist knowledge in a fun and supportive environment. I’ve seen quiet, reserved local members grow into confident activists and leaders for tomorrow. I highly recommend taking advantage of these amazing training opportunities,” said Marty Warren, USW District 6 Director. ■





Continued from page 1

engage and mobilize our members to get involved in next June's Ontario election and in grassroots political action at all levels of government.

District 6
Steelworkers are

renewing our commitment to political action because we know that the governments we elect and the laws they pass directly affect all aspects of our lives – our jobs, our economy, our health and social services, our environment and the future of our communities and our country.

Steelworkers activists are continuing to work with our progressive allies to demand meaningful labour law reforms in Ontario, where the Liberal government has begun to water down proposed improvements that were inadequate in the first place.

The government recently appeared ready to acquiesce to business opposition to reforms aimed at stopping employers from paying temporary, casual and part-time workers less for doing the same work as permanent employees.

Instead of promoting the creation of stable jobs over precarious employment, the government has introduced an amendment that would preserve inequalities and allow employers to maintain unfair pay differentials.

Steelworkers support progressive labour law reforms and we will continue to advocate fiercely for meaningful changes that strengthen workers' rights and reverse growing inequality in our society.

In closing, Sisters and Brothers, I would like to acknowledge the Steelworkers locals that nominated me for re-election to the USW International Executive Board as Director of District 6. I am honoured and humbled by your support and confidence and I will continue to serve all our members with pride and to the very best of my ability.

In solidarity,

Marty Warren
USW District 6 Director

• ROUNDUP • ROU



Mountain Equipment Co-operative employees who mobilized to join the Steelworkers include Neepan Jegan (left), Lloyd Jackson (second from left) and Vijayant Saini Singh (right), shown with USW organizer Qui Van Trieu (second from right).

MEC Employees Join USW

The people who deliver the goods for Canadian retailer Mountain Equipment Co-operative have joined the Steelworkers. Approximately 100 employees at the MEC distribution centre in Brampton, Ont., officially became Steelworkers after the majority of the workers voted to join USW in a recent certification vote. The Brampton shipping and receiving facility serves Eastern Canada and is one of only two MEC distribution centres in the country. MEC is a consumers' retail co-operative that sells outdoor recreation gear and clothing exclusively to members who pay a \$5 lifetime membership. The MEC workers voted to join USW amid concerns over the employer's significant use of temp agency services rather than hiring permanent employees, as well as issues with management practices, scheduling and favouritism. The employer requested that temp agency workers be allowed to vote in the union certification process. The USW agreed and the majority voted to join the union.

"We welcome all of the MEC distribution centre employees to the Steelworkers family," said USW Ontario Director Marty Warren. "We will ensure our new members have all the support and resources they need to negotiate a collective agreement that will address their concerns and that will benefit employees, the employer and their community."

Miners' Monument Gets a Polish

Steelworkers teamed together to refresh the Miners' Memorial in Kirkland Lake, Ont. As part of a grassroots community project, USW members also tidied up the landscaping at the site with materials donated by local suppliers. A group of Steelworkers from across District 6 have been in the Northern Ontario town as a resource to workers at the local KL Gold mine interested in joining the USW. The memorial was a USW initiative in the 1990s to pay tribute to the gold miners who built the town in the 1930s and to remember those who have lost their lives in the mines.



USW 5795's Sharmin Miller and Christa Williams with Baskets of Hope.

Baskets of Hope

USW Local 5795's Baskets of Hope is now in its sixth year. Christa Williams and Sharmin Miller were inspired by their experiences attending a USW Women's Conference and started Baskets of Hope as a project for the local's Women's Committee. The drive collects items and donations from Local 5795 members and delivers baskets to those in need in Labrador City, N.L., in September and December. Women's Committee members personally deliver to a women's shelter, long-term care patients in hospital, a childcare centre and an organization assisting those new to the community. Baskets include hygiene supplies for long-term care patients, school supplies for students and Jell-O for local schools so no child goes without a snack during the day. Women's Committee members also volunteer for organizations they've connected with through the project.

Welcome to the Steelworkers!

Workers at Shaw Resources in Belledune, N.B., voted to become members of our union in August. Our 25 new members make compressed wood pellets that are carbon neutral. Workers voted "yes" to a union to stop management unfairness and to improve wages. The new unit has already elected a bargaining committee with dates set for November. A number of the members were proud USW members from when they worked at Brunswick Mine and are looking forward to getting involved with labour council.



New Steelworkers Mike Knowles and Morris Levigne at Shaw Resources in Belledune, N.B.



Steelworkers joined a crowd of thousands at the Unity Rally Against Hate at Queen's Park in October, a counter-protest to an anticipated Toronto Nationalist rally.

Local 2020 Wins Arbitration for Member with MS

USW Local 2020 in Sudbury has won an arbitration award for a member who has multiple sclerosis and who was unfairly disciplined in a dispute related to reasonable accommodation in the workplace.

In his ruling, arbitrator Andrew Tremayne directed the employer, Bristol Machine Works, to rescind a suspension and other disciplinary action imposed on the employee. The employer was directed to provide the employee with full compensation, with interest, for wages and benefits lost while he was off work.

The facts of the case confirm the employee is a skilled and capable worker, but due to his condition, medical specialists advised he should work a steady day shift. The arbitrator agreed with the union that the employer breached its duty to accommodate the worker by temporarily returning him to an alternating shift schedule that could compromise his health.

McIntyre Powder Miners Deserve More

and their families. The McIntyre Powder Project began.

In 2016, the USW organized intake clinics to collect information from exposed miners and their families with help from Martell, the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW), the Office of the Worker Advisor (OWA), local unions and volunteers.

The clinics, held in Timmins and Sudbury, did more than collect information. Survivors, spouses and their caregivers received help opening WSIB claims and got a chance to share stories and discover they weren't alone.

The miners' plight has captured media attention with continuing coverage and investigations by CBC and *The Toronto Star*.

This work is gaining ground, but there is more to do and the injustice continues.

In August, the WSIB announced another study on the effects of exposure to McIntyre Powder.

In October, the Ontario government announced \$1 million in new funding to OHCOW to further study the links between miners forced to inhale McIntyre Powder and neurological and lung diseases developed later in life.

But existing claims for compensation won't be reconsidered. And the new funding is only half of the amount OHCOW requested.

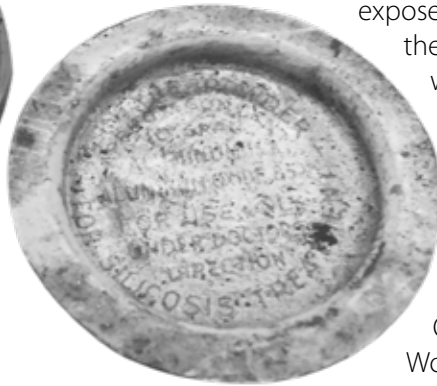
Meanwhile, McIntyre Powder victims are dying of neurological and lung diseases.

"These miners and their families need more than assessments. They deserve more. We call for compensation now," said Marty Warren, USW District 6 Director. ■

www.mcintyrepowderproject.com



A canister of McIntyre Powder (aluminum dust).



Janice Martell's father, Jim Hobbs, died last May. He was a McIntyre Powder miner and he had developed neurological problems in retirement including Parkinson's disease.

Between 1942 and 1979, employers required workers to inhale McIntyre Powder (aluminum) in mines and other industries where workers might be exposed to silica dust. The theory, eventually proved false, was that inhaling the powder would protect workers' lungs.

Martell had tried to file a claim for compensation through Ontario's Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) on behalf of her father while he was still alive, but withdrew the application once she realized his claim would be unsuccessful. But she also realized that many other miners and their families might be experiencing similar diseases from forced inhalation of the powder. Martell became an advocate on behalf of affected miners



Janice Martell and her late father Jim Hobbs, a former McIntyre Powder miner.