



G S U N e w s

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SWP bargaining off to early start

Agreement renewal bargaining between GSU and Saskatchewan Wheat Pool (SWP) covering the Operations/Maintenance and Offices bargaining units got off to an early start in mid-December.



Top: SWP Ops bargaining committee. (L-r), Rick Eisnor, Rod Peterson, Hugh Wagner. (Front row), Brian Suer, Carolyn Illerbrun, Donna Driediger. Absent from picture - Dwayne Nakrayko.



Bottom: SWP Offices bargaining committee. (L-r) George Tillie, Matthew Dreher, Ken Kupchyk. Absent from picture - Bargaining spokesperson Hugh Wagner and staff rep Donna Driediger.

Operations/Maintenance bargaining began on December 15 with the presentation of GSU's bargaining proposals. Offices bargaining started December 16 with the presentation of the union proposals.

"GSU suggested a single bargaining table for the two units, but SWP management prefers separate tables despite the considerable overlap of contract provisions and benefit plans," said GSU General Secretary Hugh Wagner.

hundreds of ideas and resolutions submitted by union members. Following are highlights of the proposals presented to SWP management at the first round of bargaining meetings. A full copy of (Continued on page 3.)

Proposal Highlights

GSU's elected officers, representing the two bargaining units, met on October 14 and 15 to develop a comprehensive set of bargaining proposals from the



Members vote to continue Defense Fund dues

GSU held the annual meetings of its Locals in November and December.

Members discussed a variety of issues including GSU Defense Fund dues, Steward Training, GSU's 70th anniversary and agreement renewal bargaining that is on the agenda for many members.

Although the final tally has not been compiled, it appears the (Continued on page 4.)



GSU's annual meetings were held throughout Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. (L-r) GSU Local 8.8 (AgPro) members Duane Koch, Dale Newsome, Frank Schlageter, and Ryan Sutherland attend the Crossfield meeting..

Getting ready to bargain in Unit 5 (AgPro-Moose Jaw) - page 3.

Calendar of events

Write this down!


- **GSU agreement renewal bargaining with Sask. Wheat Pool:**
 - Operations/maintenance bargaining - January 13, 26, 27
 - Offices bargaining - January 11 Feb. 2 and 3 (tentative)
- **GSU Policy Convention -** March 3, 4 and 5 - Manitou Beach.
- **SFL/CLC Spring School -** May 7 to 12, 2006. Athabasca Hall - University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon.



Happy New Year!

GSU News

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-  **GSU-made!**
Sent to press Dec. 21, 2005

Labour's world

Janitors' Wal-Mart suit moves forward

A U.S. federal judge ruled that a group of undocumented immigrants can move ahead with their lawsuit against Wal-Mart for making them work up to 70 hours a week without overtime and locking them in stores so they couldn't leave until a manager unlocked the doors. At least 170 workers are involved in the case. The workers were employed as janitors in 21 states.

Although a few worked directly for Wal-Mart, the court found that most were employed by outside contractors but Wal-Mart could reasonably be considered a joint employer.

The suit was originally filed in November 2003. Wal-Mart said that the suit should be thrown out because, as undocumented workers, the janitors were ineligible for protection under the U.S. Fair Labor Standards Act. The judge rejected that view. *UCS/CALM*

Child labourers rescued

Over 100 Children working in a factory in Delhi, India were rescued in a massive joint operation by police and social workers in October.

Global March Against Child Labour reported the boys, ages between 8 and 14, were found working in dingy, cramped rooms with no light or ventilation.

According to the Press Trust of India news agency, the children were forced to work up to 16 hours a day.

One 12-year-old boy told reporters he was being paid a little more than two dollars a week for 12 hours of work each day.

A Delhi lawyer involved in the case said the whole factory was illegal, and the children were essentially slaves.

According to Oxfam, India has the largest number of children working under the age of 15 in the world.

Estimates put the figure at 100 million children. While international agencies are pressuring the Indian government to crack down, there is little chance the owner of the factory, who managed to escape, will be prosecuted when caught.

Local 1285 News/CAW/CALM



Sick? Stay home

If you've got a union contract then you probably have paid sick leave, and that is a good thing during the cold and flu season.

Too many of us show up at work when we should stay at home in bed. Workplace experts say "presenteeism" or showing up for work when you're sick, can limit productivity more than absenteeism does.

A U.S. survey shows that, in 2005, 48 per cent of employers report a problem with presenteeism, up from 39 per cent in 2004. So don't feel guilty—stay home until you're feeling better, especially when you have a cough and fever. If you have a fever, you must wait for 24 hours after your temperature has returned to normal before you go back to work to avoid infecting co-workers. *USC/CALM*



A Moment of Mindless Trivia

"Denise pushed us out of the bathroom and Rudy doesn't have all of the shampoo rinsed out of her hair. If she goes blind can we get a dog?"

Do you know the name of the popular sitcom where we heard this quote? Get your answer to the Union office by January 20 and you could win a prize.

Bob Zimmer is our latest Mindless Trivia winner. Bob knew the Regal Beagle was the local pub frequented by Three's Company Jack, Janet, and Crissy.

Unit 5 members set bargaining priorities

Members working at the AgPro Moose Jaw terminal elevator have begun the process of setting their bargaining proposals and electing their bargaining committee.

Top priorities for negotiations are wages and benefits. Members are anxious to repair the damage done by years of belt tightening and helping SWP recover from management decisions.

Improvements to benefit plans and pay adjustments to bring trades wages closer to realistic levels will be top priorities.

The current Collective Agreement expires on March 31, 2006. The Committee plans to begin bargaining early in an effort to speed things up.

The bargaining package will be distributed to members once finalized.

GSU's Unit 5 members are tired of being asked to tighten their belts. They're ready to bargain.



Early start for SWP Bargaining

(Continued from page 1.)

each set of proposals can be read and/or downloaded on the GSU web site.

GSU proposes:

- Three year agreements effective February 1, 2006, which provide across-the-board general wage increases for all employees equal to the consumer price index (CPI) increase plus 3 per cent in the first year and CPI plus 2 per cent in each of the second and third years.
- Special salary/wage rate adjustments to a variety of job classifications in the Operations/Maintenance Agreement (including CSR's and AAR's) and the addition of two "longer service" steps to all classifications in the Offices agreement.
- Substantial improvements to health and dental benefit plans coverage plus a capping of employees' share of the premiums.
- Strengthening of seniority rights.
- Improvements to working conditions to address workload, performance standards and balancing family/work responsibilities.

- Improvements to leave of absence and vacation provisions.
 - Establishment of clear 8 hour day, 40 hour work week standards in the Operations/Maintenance Agreement by eliminating averaging.
 - Joint union/company initiatives to address workplace recruitment, diversity, succession planning and employee retention.
- "GSU's bargaining proposals to SWP reflect the pent-up demand of union members following years of cutbacks and uncertainty," Wagner said. "The members and the elected officers have adopted an ambitious bargaining agenda. Now the challenge is to turn proposals into causes for member action and bargaining results."

GSU's Operations/Maintenance bargaining committee comprises Rod Peterson, Rick Eisnor, Brian Suer, Carolyn Illerbrun, Dwayne Nakrayko, with Hugh Wagner serving as bargaining spokesperson assisted by Staff Rep Donna Driediger.

GSU's Offices bargaining committee comprises George Tillie, Ken Kupchyk, Matthew Dreher, with Hugh Wagner serving as bargaining spokesperson assisted by Donna Driediger.

Regular bargaining updates will be provided by email, the GSU web page, GSU News, and membership meetings.

Upcoming SWP bargaining dates

- **Operations/Maintenance**
January 13, 26 & 27.
- **Offices**
January 11, (Feb. 2 & 3, tentative).

On December 14, GSU bargaining committee members spent their lunch hour braving a winter storm to support striking RWDSU members on the Sobeys picketline in Regina.

Please support the picketline. Don't shop at Sobeys in Saskatoon or Regina until they reach a deal with their employees.



(L-r with GSU signs only) Rick Eisnor, Brian Suer, Carolyn Illerbrun.

Unit 1.2 members to vote on tentative settlement

After consulting Unit 1.2 members on December 7, GSU's bargaining committee negotiated a tentative settlement on December 21.



Agreement renewal bargaining between GSU and the owners of the Western Producer, GVIC Communications Inc. (GVIC), resulted in a tentative agreement when talks resumed on December 21.

Wage increases were the main issue throughout the bargaining process.

Talks adjourned on November 25 after management presented monetary proposals purported to be as high as the employer was willing to contemplate. GSU's bargaining committee replied that union members would have to be consulted as the employer's proposed general

wage increases were below the targets set by the union members.

A well attended membership meeting was held on December 7 where a full report on the bargaining was presented by the GSU committee and a response to management's proposals was authorized by union members.

GSU members are well aware of the healthy profits being made at the newspaper by GVIC and they questioned the employer's resistance to giving fair recognition to the employees' contribution.

"In spite of the hard work of our executive and staff, this tentative

agreement falls short of member expectations," said Local President Michael Raine. "It does finally achieve increases to rates at or near inflation, it includes a revenue sharing bonus plan, and provides significant flat-rate increases that will provide the greatest benefit to those members at the lower wage scales."

Specific details of the settlement will be released once they have been distributed to the members.

GSU's bargaining committee at Western Producer Publications comprises Michael Raine, Laurie Michalycia, and GSU Staff Rep Dale Markling.

AgPro - Saskatoon



Unit 4 serves notice to bargain

GSU has served notice to bargain on AgPro Grain covering the Saskatoon Terminal Elevator. Union members are planning to assemble proposals and elect a bargaining committee early in the new year.

It is anticipated that wage increases, benefits improvements, and changes to some collective agreement language will be the main priorities identified by GSU members working at the Saskatoon Terminal. A policy grievance over scheduling procedures was put on hold with the intention of resolving the issue during agreement renewal bargaining.

Best Wishes for health, happiness, and prosperity in 2006 from the officers and the staff of Grain Services Union.

Please note that the Regina and Saskatoon union offices will be closed on Monday, January 2, 2006.



Defense Fund dues to continue for 2006 (continued from Page 1.)

proposal to continue Defense Fund dues for another year will carry handily.

Celebrating GSU's 70th anniversary in 2006 was also discussed at most Local meetings. The union has come

a long way in 70 years and continues to make a major contribution to bettering the lives of working people. In the New Year let's celebrate GSU through participation and organizing!