



the THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
TELECOMMUNICATIONS WORKERS UNION

Transmitter



TWU members rally to support postal workers in Canada Post dispute.

TWU OFFICES

Hotline:
1.888.986.3971

BRITISH COLUMBIA Burnaby Head Office

5261 Lane Street
Burnaby, BC V5H 4A6
PHONE: 604-437-8601
FAX: 604-435-7760

Kelowna

#102-1456 St. Paul St.
Kelowna, BC V1Y 2E6
PHONE: 250-860-5025
FAX: 250-860-6737

Prince George

#100-2700 Queensway St.
Prince George, BC V2L 1N2
PHONE: 250-960-2220
FAX: 250-563-2379
TOLL-FREE FAX: 1-888-700-9318

ALBERTA

Calgary

#255-525 28 Street, S.E.
Calgary, AB T2A 6W9
PHONE: 403-237-6990
FAX: 403-802-2381

Edmonton

#1296 -10665 Jasper Ave.
Edmonton, AB T5J 3S9
PHONE: 780-444-6945
FAX: 780-488-6911

ONTARIO

Scarborough

#205-1085 Bellamy Rd N.
Scarborough, ON M1H 3C7
PHONE: 416-506-9723
FAX: 416-506-9722

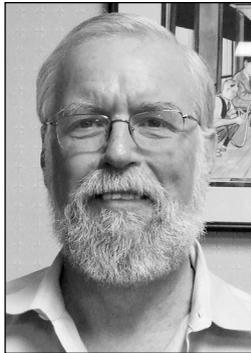
QUEBEC

Westmount

#850-4060 Ste. Catherine St. W.
Westmount, QC H3Z 2Z3
PHONE: 514-788-8811
FAX: 514-788-8813

TW PENSION/BENEFITS

#303-4603 Kingsway
Burnaby, BC V5H 4M4
PENSION: 604-430-1317
BENEFITS: 604-430-3300
FAX: 604-430-5395
WEBSITE: www.twplans.com



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

2009 finds the TWU strong and looking forward with enthusiasm. There were challenges and successes in 2008 and we expect 2009 to hold

more of both. As always, the economy and changes in the telecommunications industry will affect us all.

You will find many articles in this issue explaining the challenges that face us. We are not alone in facing those challenges and solidarity will help us overcome them.

As we continue to build our internal strength, we are also making stronger connections with the labour movement on provincial, national and international fronts.

As many of you are aware, our union has just been through an Open Period which Canadian Labour law provides in all collective agreements. In the case of our TELUS bargaining unit, that period ended in November.

Last summer and fall the Membership Outreach Program contacted members throughout the country. The program had success in encouraging many individuals who were not TWU-STT members to join with us.

I say thank you and well done to all of those who participated in the program.

The goal of membership outreach was, and is, to return to our roots and commit to a strategy that rests on increasing our solidarity and power through membership

communication, education and involvement.

Communication, education and involvement will be the keys to our future success.

We are currently negotiating new collective agreements with Shaw Cable Abbotsford and Tigre Tel.

At the time of writing, we are beginning negotiations with COPE 15 which represents clerical staff employed by the union.

All of us are working toward a successful round of bargaining with TELUS in 2010. We will be prepared.

Our focus for 2009 will be on education and preparation.

There are many members who have never before experienced the collective bargaining process within the TWU. We will use the time we have in 2009 to explain the bargaining process that is outlined in our constitution and to make sure that it is understood.

We will also be listening to members' needs and priorities. More detailed plans for education and consultation will be coming soon.

Planning is well underway for our 2009 convention in Montreal. For the first time, proceedings will be translated into both official languages.

The convention will be larger this year reflecting an increase in membership and, for the first time, delegates of Local R55, the first TWU-STT retirees' local, will attend.

I encourage you to step up and get involved in your union. Together we will succeed.

GEORGE DOUBT, PRESIDENT

THE TRANSMITTER THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TWU

TWU President:
GEORGE DOUBT

Vice-Presidents:
BETTY CARRASCO
JOHN CARPENTER

Secretary-Treasurer:
SHERRYL ANDERSON

www.twu-canada.ca
editor@twu-canada.ca
PN: 40022297

Return undeliverables to:
TWU Circulation
5261 Lane Street
Burnaby, BC V5H 4A6



TABLE OFFICERS ATTEND CEP CONVENTION IN MONTREAL

TWU President George Doubt, Secretary-Treasurer Sherryl Anderson along with Vice-Presidents Betty Carrasco and John Carpenter accepted an invitation from the Communications, Energy & Paperworkers Union of Canada (CEP) to attend their 2008 National Convention in Montreal, October 26th to 30th. The CEP represents workers in the same businesses as does the TWU and we have many issues in common.

"It was an interesting opportunity to see how another union works for its members," said President Doubt.

There were approximately 1,200 delegates at the convention dealing with constitutional issues, national and regional leadership elections and issues of national importance. Their energy

policy was thoroughly debated before being endorsed by the delegates.

The economy and the current state of the manufacturing industry were particularly pressing issues in the minds of all who attended.

The delegates took time on Tuesday of convention to go to the Petro-Canada facility where members of CEP Local 175 have been locked out for a year. In support of Local 175, the CEP has called for a national boycott of Petro-Canada. The Canadian Labour Congress Executive Council has endorsed the boycott and the TWU supports our Brothers and Sisters in the CEP in their struggle for a fair collective agreement.

TWU Solidarity Committee prepares for bargaining

THE TWU SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE has been given a long-term and broad mandate in order to assist Executive Council and the future Bargaining Committee in achieving our members' goals and objectives. It's no secret that working people have fallen further and further behind in recent years in terms of decent wages and benefits, and many of us struggle to achieve an acceptable balance between work and family.

In order to address these issues, our union must develop long-term strategies that will protect jobs and, at the same time, ensure that our members remain viable and relevant.

No matter what the plan or strategy is, we know that nothing can be achieved without our membership's participation, activism and determination. Therefore, the Solidarity Committee recognizes the need for constant communication and feedback with our membership and with other communities that share our interests.

With that goal in mind, the TWU Solidarity Committee has made, and continues to make, recommendations both to Executive Council and TWU Conventions.

While many of these recommendations have been adopted – other issues are still under consideration and the Solidarity Committee looks

forward to issuing their report to the next policy convention.

While the following projects are certainly not an exhaustive list of the committee's work (much of it being confidential in nature), here are a few initiatives that have received Executive Council support:

- Membership Outreach Program
- Collective Agreement Issues Survey
- Membership Viewpoint Survey
- Why Union? (online educational materials for new union members and Rand employees)

The following recommendations are currently under consideration:

- Bargaining Preparation – 2009 and 2010 town-hall membership meetings as well as training sessions for local executives and other activists
- Hiring professional consultants to prepare and assist with bargaining
- Construction and implantation of Workplace Steering Committees

- Setting up local tactical and solidarity committees
- Public and Political Support Initiatives for Bargaining

CONTACT US!

The Solidarity Committee wants to hear from you – the members. If you have an ideas, thoughts or suggestions you would like to share, please contact:

• **Michael Thompson**
Business Agent
phone: 604.437.8601
e-mail: michael.thompson@twu-canada.ca

• **Bobby Schneider**
Business Agent
phone: 780.444.6945
e-mail: bobby.schneider@twu-canada.ca

Your input is always valued and appreciated!

A TAXING PROJECT

The Canada Revenue Agency's (CRA) re-assessment of BC members' expenses received under the "Board and Lodging" provisions in the TWU/TELUS Collective Agreement has finally concluded. Since 2004, our members have been going through re-assessments for tax years 2000 onward; the most recent being tax years 2003 and 2004. In 2003 there were 780 members who were re-assessed \$727,868 with \$206,986 being successfully appealed, 2004 saw 605 members being re-assessed \$512,813 with \$115,821 being successfully appealed. Approximately 400 members filed appeals in each of these tax years.

This has been a cooperative effort from the onset between TELUS and the TWU. "Without the resource support provided by the company, these appeals would have been extremely difficult to file," says Business Agent Michael Thompson, who has been in charge of these appeals since fall 2006. TELUS provided Maureen Cassidy to support this process and she has been an invaluable resource during these appeals.

"Maureen would compile the voluminous expense and time sheet records required for the appeals," explains Thompson, "in addition to being someone who I could call at any time to clarify issues for our members who were being re-assessed. Maureen has truly been a pleasure to work with throughout this process."

Thompson also gives recognition to CRA appeals officers Carol Audley, Gerald Knott, and Tara Farrell. "They were extremely professional and helpful during this process," he says.

The joint project between the company and the union is coming to an end as the CRA has decided not to pursue further tax years. Part of the reason for this is that the CRA feels our members are compliant with their guidelines as the language around expenses has changed with the new contract.



Business Agent Michael Thompson and Maureen Cassidy.

Preparing for 2009 TWU convention

TWU NATIONAL Secretary-Treasurer Sherryl Anderson advises that TWU National President George Doubt has determined that the 2009 Annual Convention will be held in Montreal. The convention will be March 2-6, 2009 at the Delta Montreal at 475 President Kennedy Ave.

There will be approximately 118 delegates in attendance as well as 22 elected officers, committee members, guests and up to eight TWU office staff.

This will be the first TWU convention held in the province of Quebec, or for that matter in Central/Eastern Canada. The TWU will have translators on site which will allow both French and English speaking delegates to participate in convention through simultaneous translation in their language of choice. This is another first for a TWU convention.

There is intense planning and coordinating in preparation for each convention, which has already begun for the 2009 convention. Convention committees will be meeting in December and January to review resolutions received from the locals for policy or Constitution changes.

The committees are tasked with discussing, debating and coming to a conclusion with a recommendation of concurrence or



TWU Secretary-Treasurer Sherryl Anderson prepares for 2009 TWU convention.

non-concurrence on all resolutions. Convention delegates will make the final determination whether they agree with the recommendation of the committee by a simple majority vote.

The annual convention is not only a decision-making body. It is also an opportunity to learn more about the labour movement through invited guests and presentations. We have had some extraordinary guest speakers at past conventions. We have often supported our fellow brothers and sisters on their picket lines with a show of solidarity from the delegates and officers through rallies during Convention week.

Once again, we will be making every effort to improve upon past conventions through new concepts in making convention a valuable and worthwhile event for the delegates and officers.

We are proud to be TWU.



YouTube contest results

The winner of the first TWU YouTube challenge was Cece Fuentes from Local 213 in Calgary. Pictured is Cece at her office receiving her cheque for \$1000 from Vice-President John Carpenter and Business Agent Ivana Niblett.

Cece learned about the contest after she first signed her membership and started receiving *The Transmitter*. Cece, being an avid YouTuber, instantly took up to the challenge, devoting her breaks and lunch hours to creating her video. Working at Telus is Cece's first exposure to a Union environment and this experience has got her excited about the TWU.

We congratulate Cece and all of the TWU members that assisted in her prize-winning video and look forward to their future involvement with the TWU. Other prize winners were Julie Lingley from Local 1 in Vancouver who took second place, and Czar Loquia from Local 10 in Vancouver who was awarded third place. They received \$500 and \$250 respectively for their efforts.

See the prize-winning videos at www.youtube.com/twustt.

BC FEDERATION OF LABOUR CONVENTION

Organizing to win!

THE TWU SENT a delegation of 31 members to the 2008 BC federation of Labour Convention held in Vancouver from November 23rd to 28th. More than 1,000 delegates at the convention debated and voted on a full range of issues important to working people including; bar-

gaining rights, minimum wages, the environment, and the economy.

There was also a conference for young delegates on November 23rd whose purpose is to encourage the involvement of young workers in the union movement. There were about 100 young delegates at this

conference which is an increase in participation from 30 the previous year.

The Stephen Harper government released its economic plan on November 27th. The plan included removing the right to strike from federal public sector workers and imposing limits on wage increases up to 2011.

The delegates to the convention reacted to the news by unanimously adopting a resolution calling for a coalition of opposition parties to form a government.



Business Agent Dave DiMaria (left) and President George Doubt (second from right) met with Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) Chairperson Elmer Labog and retired TWU member Francisco Tejero (far right) regarding issues in the Philippines. The KMU is a central labour body in the Philippines.



Delegates Nancy McCurragh – Local 51 and Liz Fletcher – Local 50.

Local 201 news: "We throw this torch. Be yours to hold it high."

There was much to celebrate on September 25, 2008 at the TWU Local 201 meeting in Medicine Hat, Alberta.

Three long-serving members retired and two new officers were elected to serve the local.

Present to enjoy the festivities along with Local 201 members were former servicing Business Agent, Vice-President John Carpenter, Business Agents Ivana Niblett and Delores Pilsl and the local's current Business Agent, Betty Lockhurst.

Congratulations and well wishes were given to the three retiring members; Bob Seleski – 35 years seniority and a long-time Local Secretary-Treasurer, Rod Thurlow – 33 years and former Councillor, and Lloyd Anhorn – 33 years, who has held various positions over the years with the TWU. "They will all be missed at the work place," says Betty Lockhurst, "but these exemplary leaders plan to mentor and support their local and its' new executive."

Elected by acclamation that evening were Vice-President Gerald Morris and Secretary-Treasurer Steve White.



Back row: John Carpenter, Rod Thurlow, Bob Seleski and Delores Pilsl. Front row: Ivana Niblett, Lloyd Anhorn and Betty Lockhurst.

The "Vines Process": finalizing the scope of the TELUS bargaining unit

IN JULY 2008, the TWU received a long awaited decision from the Canada Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) that affected the scope of the TWU's bargaining certificate with TELUS. Since the merger between BC TEL and TELUS in Alberta, the Union has not had its bargaining certificate finalized. The delay in getting this decision has caused the union difficulties when it came to protecting our members' work.

The CIRB was asked to provide guidance and direction on a number of outstanding issues between the parties. In particular, the board was asked to determine the scope of the TWU's certificate.

The board determined that the scope of the bargaining unit is all employees that were encompassed by the TWU scope clause in the previous collective agreement, including field sales and telemarketing. Subject to any oversight due to lack of information, the bargaining unit description is final.

The CIRB also ruled that any new positions created by TELUS will be in scope unless there was agreement to exclude them or the Board determined they are not in scope.

Although this was a positive and welcome decision, this issue is still ongoing.

A process for determining which out-of-scope positions should be in the bargaining unit is underway. This process, called the "Second Vines Process" by the Board, is similar to what took place when the former Clearnet employees were swept into the bargaining unit. It was then known as the Vines Process. The name refers to the person appointed by the Board to oversee the process and assist the parties, John Vines.

At its most basic, the process can be described as reviewing TELUS provided lists of non-bargaining unit employees with their names, and other information, and deter-

mining who is performing work that should rightfully be in the bargaining unit. The determination will be in consultation with members in the workplace who are familiar with particular job functions.

The review of positions is expected to take many months as we discuss and research thousands of employees.

At the time of writing, the TWU has had preliminary conference meetings with John Vines, the company and legal counsel to lay the groundwork for proceeding.

We expect to receive the required lists in early December, after which time face-to-face meetings will take place where the detailed review process will begin in earnest.

Historic moments for TWU retirees

THERE WERE NUMEROUS history-making moments in 2008 for TWU retirees.

It all started at the March 2008 TWU Convention where a number of constitutional amendments were debated and passed that would allow retired members the opportunity to form an officially recognized local. That series of constitutional amendments still needed to be taken out for a vote of the membership-at-large for ratification.

During the May and June timeframe, members across the country had the opportunity to vote on the changes.

When the ballots were counted on July 8, 2008, it was announced that the membership had ratified by 88% the changes required to allow retiree locals. For the first time, TWU retirees could seek a local charter.

On September 16, 2008 the Executive Council voted to charter the first local for retirees. The charter request came from over 300 retirees in British Columbia. It was given the designation Local R55.

TWU President George Doubt

said, "Retired members have been working for this for a long time. Retired members have a wealth of wisdom and experience to contribute and we welcome Local R55 aboard."

The new local wasted no time in getting organized.

The inaugural meeting of Local R55 was scheduled for three weeks later, on October 8, 2008. It was held in the TWU's Burnaby office. There were 47 people in attendance, with retirees coming from all over British Columbia.

The Local passed By-Laws and elected its first Executive Committee. Elected were Alec Telfer as President, Bob Ashton as Vice-President and Dianne Miller as Secretary-Treasurer. Brothers Telfer and Ashton join Don Stang as convention Delegates.

To join TWU Local R55, or to get more information, contact Dianne Miller at (250) 751-1351 or email d&emilpan@telus.net.

Video highlights of the founding meeting of Local R55 can be viewed on the TWU's YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/twustt.

On October 14, 59.1% of eligible voters cast ballots in the Canadian federal election, breaking the previous record low turnout of just under 61% in 2004.

Once again, the first past-the-post voting system skewed results in favour of some parties while harming others. The Conservatives received 37.6% of the popular vote but gained 46.4% of the seats in Parliament, while the Bloc received 10% of the popular vote but got 16.2% of the seats. The Green Party was the most severely affected, attaining 6.8% of the popular vote, without achieving a seat.

The NDP received 18.2% of the vote but only got 12% of the seats, while the Liberals were only marginally affected.

Since the 2006 federal election, new legislation has been passed to prevent the practice of buying influence with candidates and parties. The new federal election law prohibits unions and corporations from donating funds to federal campaigns, although individuals can still contribute to a maximum of \$1,100 per year.

What this means is that campaigns are mainly financed by the public. Each party now receives \$1.75 per year for every vote that they received in the most recent election.

As a result of the new legislation, all campaigns rely more heavily than ever on volunteers. During the recent election, the NDP was able to increase their number of seats from 30 to 37. This includes the first ever NDP MP in Newfoundland and Labrador. Clearly, labour volunteers make a difference.

The TWU Political Action Committee would like to thank all members who volunteered in their local areas and encourage everyone to continue to be involved in the political process.

Whatever reason you have for participating, whatever way you can participate, it will make a difference.

Your Political Action Committee



Local R55 inaugural meeting was well attended.

LETTER OF APPRECIATION

November 1, 2008

Dear Secret Buddies, my name is Sandra Larson. I am the teacher who you have so generously sponsored the past 3 years.

I would like to give a huge thanks to each of you for your incredible generosity and kindness towards the students in my classes. The gifts, goodies and parties that you provided were much appreciated.

Some of the students in my classes lead very difficult lives. They live in poverty and often go without many of the things my own children have taken for granted. I once had a student who was thrilled when he got to ride in a car to the doctor's office. His family either walked or took the bus everywhere. On another occasion, I had a boy excited with birthday presents that had been purchased from a gumball machine. He showed the whole class his little parachute man and his plastic ring. Many of the children wear only second hand clothing and very poor quality foot wear. One little guy always asks me if the field trips, hot lunches or special events cost any money. He regularly tells me, "My mom is poor. I can't order anything, because we have no money."

Of course, not all of the children at our school live with this level of poverty or need. Some come from happy stable homes, where they are well provided for and are given lots of quality care. However, very few students at Ron Brent get new clothing, go on regular vacations, or have a family vehicle.

Your gifts make a real difference in each of the children's lives. They love to get brand new toys, goodies and have parties. Many wonder all year about who their secret buddies could be and why their buddies care about them so much. It is very special to see how children who have very little, appreciate whatever they are given.

So, once again I thank you from myself and all of the children whose lives you have touched these last three years.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Sandra Larson
Grade 2/3 Teacher
Ron Brent Elementary School

Prince George operators and "Secret Buddies" mission of care

THE TWU TAKES GREAT pride in acknowledging our community-minded members such as the Operators in Prince George.

Every day, all across Canada, TWU members are making a difference in their communities by volunteering and giving their time, income and compassion to charities, churches, sports associations, political and social action groups and educational events.

This issue's spotlight features the operators in Prince George, BC, who, for the past three years have "adopted" an entire classroom of kids to give them a boost and bring them some much-needed caring and support.

"The operators have pulled together

wonderfully these past years for the grade 2/3 class of the Ron Brent Elementary School," says Frances Gook, Local 18 Vice-President. "This class has many disadvantaged children."

The operators use a "secret buddy" system to provide the students with parties and food, Christmas gifts, birthday presents, Halloween treats, and other items. Frances, and the other operators involved in the project, challenge other TWU locals to get involved and adopt classes in areas where children may be deprived of things most of us just take for granted.

Although it is recognized that every act of caring and compassion reaps its own rewards, the TWU wants to formally say how much we appreciate what our members do, day in and day out, to brighten the lives of others. Your actions uphold a great labour truism, "What we desire for ourselves ... We wish for all."

"TWU members are making a difference in their communities"



Not only Telecommunications jobs are being lost overseas.



Czar Loquia, Judi Ritchey, Local 10, and Perry Pasqualetto, Local 7, calling BC members.

Membership Outreach Program a success

EARLIER THIS YEAR, THE TWU EXECUTIVE COUNCIL launched an extensive Membership Outreach program across the country. In late spring, member-activists received training in the Outreach program, and in August a countrywide member-calling program was initiated.

TWU Business Agents overseeing this endeavour by region are: Quebec – Paolo Rehel and Isabelle Miller, Ontario – Tricia Watt, Edmonton – Alyson Williams, Calgary – Ivana Niblett, BC Interior – Lee Riggs, BC North- Robin Arndt, and Lower Mainland – Michael Thompson. In addition to these members of Executive Council, Quebec Outreach Coordinator, Veronique Allard, has worked tirelessly to get Rand employees signed up in Quebec.

There were challenges in some areas with booking members off work to assist in the calling program, due mostly to the program launch in the mid-summer vacation period. As an alternative, member-activists were encouraged to assist in calling during off-shift and weekend hours.

The sheer number of calls to be completed, combined with the difficulty of booking members off the job, was a hurdle for Burnaby and Edmonton in particular. However, Prince George and Kelowna members, under the guidance of Business Agents Robin Arndt and

Lee Riggs, assisted with those calls. Robin Arndt says she is proud of the way the members in the North assisted in the calling program. “We completed our area fairly quickly,” she says, “and when other areas requested help, our members stepped up to the plate. They truly went above and beyond to ensure the success of this program.” Lee Riggs expressed similar comments about the members in Kelowna.

Michael Thompson echoed Robin and Lee’s comments, “If it were not for the Interior and the North assisting us in our calling, we would not have been successful in meeting the time frame we set for ourselves.”

The feedback from members has been extremely positive from one end of the country to the other. A common report from callers was that once members became aware of the program they were “waiting for their call.”

The union feels this has been a valuable and worthwhile endeavour; one that will be considered again as the TWU builds momentum towards bargaining in 2010.



Martin Cabral, Local 602, Montreal.



Theresa Gaj, Local 213, Calgary.



Back row, left to right: Bert Malfir, Jim Budnaryk, Harvey Simpson, Keith McBrartney, Rick Fleming, Kevin. Front row: Mando Decarrio, Van Gitzel, Harvey Bartz, Gary Wallace, Gene Campbell, Colin Campbell Nealing, Bob Satterthwaite.

Local 8 news: Harold Reid memorial fishing derby

The 23rd Annual Harold Reid Memorial Fishing Derby was held earlier this year at Roche Lake, just outside of Kamloops, B.C. The event was sponsored by TWU Local 8. This year's derby winner was Jim Budnaryk, a retired member from CUPE 900 in Kamloops, who landed a rainbow trout just over 3 lbs. About 20 members were in attendance.

"Everyone had a great time even though the weather was a little rainy," reports Rick Fleming, "We're hoping next year's numbers will rise again."

The derby is open to all union members. To be added to the group's e-mail list contact:

- Rick Fleming at nicole.rick@telus.net
- Bob Satterthwaite at robert_satterthwaite@telus.net

2008 UNI Global conference

TWU PRESIDENT GEORGE DOUBT attended the UNI Global Union World Executive Board meeting held at UNI's Nyon, Switzerland head office on November 11 and 12, 2008. The conference was preceded by a meeting of the UNI Private Equity Group on November 10. A summary report has already been sent to affiliates. Many issues of direct interest to the members of the TWU-STT were addressed.

A special session was organized under the name 'Freedom from Fear' to highlight UNI Global Union's work to promote and protect trade union rights. Four presentations took place on different situations in Colombia, Zimbabwe and the Philippines, as well as on the initiative to improve the safety of media workers who find themselves in the line of fire.

The Executive agreed on follow up action with respect to the Philippines as follows:

- UNI to send a further mission to the Philippines to meet with Gloria Arroyo, the Philippine President, to present our findings on the extent of the victimization and murder of trade union members.
- UNI will also protest against the

anti-union practices of the official agency dealing with migrant workers, which has introduced a contractual condition prohibiting union membership.

Global Union, Global Organizing and Global Recognition

The Executive noted the UNI Global Union is making significant progress towards achieving the objective of 50 global agreements with leading multinational companies by the time of the 2010 Nagasaki World Congress. UNI is on the threshold of further progress, and particular efforts are called for with Tesco, Ikea and German companies such as Deutsche Telekom and Deutsche Post/DHL.

The Global Financial Crisis

Guy Ryder, General Secretary of the ITUC, introduced the global union campaign to protect jobs and promote reform of the world's financial markets.

The Executive supported the Global Unions' G20 Declaration to be presented to the G20 Summit in Washington on 15 November. It welcomed the four pillars of the declaration:

- for a co-ordinated recovery plan for the real economy;

- re-regulating the global financial markets;
- for a new international system of financial governance;
- to combat the crisis of distributive justice.

Global Labour Market

The UNI Executive was addressed by David Arkless, Senior Vice-President of Global Corporate Affairs at Manpower Inc., who made the following points:

- Outside the government sector, temporary work agencies represent the world's biggest employers.
- The global financial crisis will lead to a very difficult labour market in 2009. In the US alone, unemployment at 6.6% is at a 15-year high.
- There have been nine global economic downturns since 1950, followed by an upturn. In a downturn, it is the poor and lowest wage earners who are hardest hit.

Several Executive members drew attention to the growth of precarious work, the shifting of entire workforces to temporary agencies, the absence of written contracts, the barriers to union membership and the use of agency workers as strike breakers.

Women's Committee activities – OFL

THE OFL WOMEN'S Committee, affiliated unions, community groups and local activists work together in coalition on a number of issues. The ongoing coalition campaigns address issues such as health care, employment standards and labour reform.

Pay Equity

The pay equity campaign "Now Your Working for Free Day" marks 71% of the year, or September 17, as the day women in Ontario start working for free.

The Ontario gender wage gap is 29%, which means that women are effectively working for nothing until the end of the year. Other issues being addressed are:

- Increase minimum wage to \$10.00 per hour to address pay equity.
- Fully fund the pay equity adjustments owed to Ontario public sector such as childcare, women's shelters and children services.

Ontario women are encouraged to write to their MPP or go to the OFL website at www.ofl.ca or www.equalpaycoalition.org for more information.

Child Care

The Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care and the OFL have launched a joint campaign "It's Time for Public Child Care". The campaign focuses on the following issues:

- Support for NDP Bill 26 to ensure that new child care licenses are restricted to not-for-profit child care providers;
- Meet pay equity obligations for early childhood educators and child care workers to improve the living standards for these workers who are often underpaid and undervalued;
- Fund an affordable early learning and child care system, modeled on Quebec's \$7 per day system.

For further information on this campaign, visit these websites:

- www.ofl.ca
- www.childcareontario.org

Violence Against Women

A coalition of women and labour groups have developed an ongoing political action and public awareness campaign called "Step it Up" which identifies 10 steps of government action at all levels of governments. Some of the issues identified for government action are sexual assault, rape, sexual harassment, education and training, housing and childcare.

For more information, visit the following websites:

- www.stepitupontario.ca
- www.oaith.ca



Douglas and Lori Blackhall attend Remembrance Day ceremonies in Vancouver.

Lori Blackhall, the TWU's National Office Manager, was hired to oversee the COPE office staff across Canada, and reports to Secretary-Treasurer Sherryl Anderson. Lori was hired in December 2007 and is an integral part of the day-to-day running of the union's offices from Montreal to Burnaby.

On Remembrance Day, November 11, 2008, Lori and her father, Douglas Blackhall attended ceremonies at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #16 in Vancouver at the South Memorial Park Cenotaph.

Lori pictured here with her Dad, says she is extremely proud of her father's service to our country.

"My Dad served as a trooper in World War II from 1940-1944," she says. "He served in France, England, Holland, Germany, and Belgium. My dad survived D-Day which was June 6, 1944; however, unfortunately many of his comrades did not. He joined the army at the tender age of 18 years and served four years."

Meanwhile in Port Coquitlam, BC, Nancy McCurragh, President of TWU Local 51 also attended Remembrance Day Ceremonies. Nancy was honoured to be chosen to represent labour at the Wilson Centre Cenotaph on behalf of the New Westminster and District Labour Council. Nancy participated in the official ceremony by laying the Labour Council's wreath at the base of the Cenotaph.



Local 51 President, Nancy McCurragh, lays a wreath at the Cenotaph in Port Coquitlam on behalf of labour.



PART ONE:

A member's guide to collective bargaining

WHETHER IT'S A provincial or federal certification, the TWU constitution, policies and practices provide the TWU membership with meaningful input throughout the bargaining process, and a full voice and vote before any agreement is ratified. It all begins and ends with YOU, the membership.

Well before the union goes to the bargaining table, members provide input during local meetings where their priorities are communicated in the form of resolutions to the bargaining committee. Resolutions must be passed by the local to carry

the committee must consist of the President, a minimum of three Executive Council Officers and a minimum of six convention delegates. The bargaining committee is elected at the Policy Convention which is held in the same year as the Bargaining Convention.

TWU policy dictates that Bargaining Conventions are held in September of the year bar-

ed with the employer, all changes to the collective agreement are brought to the membership for ratification or rejection. In the event no agreement can be reached, other processes may be used such as conciliation and/or mediation. If the parties are still at an impasse, a strike or lockout may occur. Strikes are a last resort, and no strike can take place without a vote of the affected membership.

Sometimes reaching an agreement between the employer and the union involves government intervention even after a strike has occurred. In all cases, bargaining requires close communication between the membership, bargaining committee, tactical committee and union officers and is crucial to success.

"It all begins and ends with you, the membership"

forward. If you are unsure of how to write a resolution, your local executive will assist you. For certification other than TELUS, members determine the structure of their bargaining committee and the President automatically acts as chief spokesperson, although they have the authority to assign this role to another officer if needed. In these cases, the bargaining committee is elected by the certification and meetings are called as necessary to keep the membership informed and engaged throughout the bargaining process.

For the TELUS certification, resolutions are forwarded from the locals to the Bargaining convention for debate and consideration. Resolutions that are approved at the convention are put into a package by the elected Bargaining Committee and presented to the employer when face to face talks commence. Under TWU policies,

gaining commences. Federal labour laws require that we must be ready to bargain as early as July 2010.

Having our bargaining convention in September 2010 would not be practical. Because of this, Executive Council will be bringing forward recommendations to alter or suspend its internal policies. Delegates at the 2009 Policy Convention will vote on proposed changes, along with suggested dates and timelines for convention and resolution deadlines. The membership will be notified if there are newly stipulated timeframes.

Regardless of the certification, the process for bargaining from this point forward is the same. The employer and the union meet to exchange proposals in face to face meetings. In all negotiations; the more supportive, determined and unified the bargaining unit is, the more successful the negotiations are.

When negotiations are complet-

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE BARGAINING PROCESS?

Look for Part II of "A member's guide to collective bargaining" in the next Transmitter. For more information on Constitutional requirements or TWU policies, please visit our website at www.twu-canada.ca or contact your local TWU office, found on page 2 of this issue.

TW Benefits



If you should die A survivor income benefit

UNDER TELUS DEATH BENEFITS, there is absolutely no provision for any ongoing pay to one's spouse, children, or any other beneficiary aside from a life insurance payout available, should you die during your working years.

If you're under age 55 it is unlikely your spouse or designated beneficiary would receive the value of your pension had you continued to work and retire. Therefore, anyone who has children, a spouse, or any other persons they wish to provide for in case of death before pensionable age is gaining a significant benefit if he/she joins the TW Benefit Plan.

The advantages to you under the TW Benefit Plan in regards to the "survivor income benefit" are:

- You can designate anyone to be your beneficiary.
- The person will receive 25% of your earnings each month. (Earnings are defined in the plan.)
- If the beneficiary is your spouse, the benefit will be payable for his/her whole lifetime.
- If your spouse dies before 10 years have passed, payouts will be made to that person's estate to add up to a total of 10 years of benefits.
- If the beneficiary is a child, or other person, the benefit will be payable for 10 years.
- This plan applies to both regular and temporary workers.
- You are fully covered from the first pay period after we received your contributions.
- The TW Benefit Plan is the best way for you to provide a regular monthly income for your spouse, children or other beneficiary, in case of your premature death. TELUS has absolutely no provisions which cover a regular income for a family in case of an employee's death. The Pension Plan has a Pre-Retirement Survivor Income provision once you reach pensionable age 55.
- The benefit is non-taxable.

TW BENEFIT PLAN

Benefit plan going nationwide

The Trustees of the Benefit Plan are happy to announce there will be a nationwide open enrolment offer from February 1 to April 30, 2009 to all actively employed TWU members who work for TELUS.

What does this mean to you? This means if you are not already a TW Benefit Plan member you will be eligible to enrol in the plan without the requirement of medical evidence of insurability. As a member of the plan you will be entitled to Group Life Insurance and Survivor Income Benefits in the event of your death. If you are a regular full-time or part-time employee you will also be entitled to Short Term Disability benefits that will supplement your Company Sick Benefits for up to 24 months in the event of illness or injury.

These benefits are offered to TWU members at a very reasonable cost and you cannot buy this family protection for this price privately.

There will be a package of information sent to TWU members in January. The Plan Trustees ask that all members take time to review all the material provided in the package.

If you choose not to enrol in the plan during the open enrolment period and you decide at a later date you would like to enroll, you will be required to provide medical evidence of insurability.

We encourage all members to take advantage of this great opportunity. Remember, insurance is protection for yourself and your family in the event something unforeseen happens.

Please don't leave it until it's too late.

See other articles in this issue of the Transmitter for more details on each of the provisions.

TW BENEFIT PLAN

Testimonials:

THERE I WAS, MID-THIRTIES, and a dear friend of mine was diagnosed with cancer and regrettably, she did not have the TW Benefit Plan.

She told me to apply since I was single and lived on my own. Her concern was if something happened to me, I would have the extra coverage. She knew first hand how difficult it was struggling with finances and never wanted me to experience that.

I must admit at that time I was healthy and did not think I should apply, however, she had the benefit forms mailed to me and watched me fill them out and put in the mail.

Sadly my dear friend passed away after a hard battle with cancer.

I am now 53 years and on long-term disability, not able to work due to a few health issues.

I am now very thankful my dear friend made me apply.

Joanne (Burnaby, BC)

THANK YOU PERSONALLY for your efforts to help me, but most of all I wish to reiterate my thanks to the TWBP for the financial assistance that they gave me two years ago in my most dire hour of need.

Please remain aware of the purpose that they serve the membership at the times when assistance is most vital.

The funding that they gave me when the SunLife people reneged on their duty to me was a lifesaver for both my destitute financial and emotional situations.

Sincerely,

Alan (Member in Vancouver, BC)

More about TW Benefit Plan

Group life insurance for TWU members

EVERYONE CAN BENEFIT from the TW Benefit Plan Life Insurance. Both regular and temporary employees can be covered. Here are the important advantages to you, if you join the TW Benefit Plan:

- If you are a regular employee, eligibility for coverage begins immediately after your probationary period.
- Temporary employees are eligible for coverage after nine month's service.
- The life insurance will be paid to whomever you have designated as your beneficiary.
- The life insurance is not dependent on your having children or a legal spouse.
- You have security in knowing that the plan is run by trustees who are TWU members and that through your union you have control over what benefits are developed through your contributions.
- You are offered enrolment without the requirement of medical evidence of insurability upon becoming a regular employee or a nine month temporary employee.
- You are eligible for a full life insurance payout in the case of death, from the date you join.
- The life insurance your beneficiary would receive is equivalent to your last 12 months' earnings plus \$2,000 rounded to the nearest \$1,000.
- The life insurance benefit is in addition to any life insurance your family may be eligible to receive from other sources.
- The benefit is non-taxable.

What does the plan provide for temporary employees?

Two out of three parts of the TW Benefit Plan are available to temporary employees. It is rare for temporary employees to be covered by any kind of benefit plan.

Every temporary employee who signs up for the TW Benefit Plan is immediately covered for the Group Life Insurance and the Survivor Income Benefit.

This means that, in case of death, your spouse or designated beneficiary would receive one year's salary plus \$2,000 rounded

to the nearest \$1,000. As well, your spouse for their lifetime or designated beneficiary for 10 years would receive a monthly income of 25% of your income.

To be eligible to join you must have at least nine months' seniority with the company.

The cost of the plan is a lot less than for regular employees: 1% of your actual earnings every pay period.

See other sections for more details on each of the provisions.

What does it cost to join the TW Benefit Plan?

The current contribution is 1.5% of gross earnings for regular employees, and 1% of gross earnings for temporary employees. The contributions are not tax deductible, but on the other hand, the benefits are not taxable either. This is very important for your family in the case of death, just as it is important for you if you should need to use the income protection part of the plan because of an illness or injury. If the plan generates surplus funds, then the Trustees will consider a reduction in the premium level, or an improvement in benefits. Yes, the plan does cost some money. But consider the cost to your family if you should become disabled or die.

TWU pension plan owns a 51% share in Concert

THE TWU WAS ONE of the founding pension plans in Concert Properties Ltd. and continues to this day to be the largest single shareholder of the company. TWU's National President George Doubt and National Secretary-Treasurer Sherryl Anderson are members on the Board of Directors of Concert Properties.

Founded on the principle of

"Concert also plays a key role as a community builder"

building high-quality affordable rental and for-sale homes, Concert also plays a key role as community builder.

While the bottom line is important in any business endeavour, our bottom line includes people. Concert sees its role as community builder as extremely important and has been and continues to be involved in a number of community projects. These projects include St. James Cottage Hospice, St. John Ambulance, BC Children's Hospital, Habitat for Humanity, Tradeworks, BCIT and Collingwood Village Neighbourhood House.

The most recent project is with

the British Columbia Professional Fire Fighters. Concert is providing the Fire Fighters with project management services to develop and manage their proposed Burn Fund Building project.

The company's team is volunteering its time and expertise to be part of this innovative development and the proposed project is a perfect fit with what Concert is as a company. Giving back to the community and caring about people is part of the fabric of Concert.

Thought to be a first in North America, the proposed state-of-the-art building will be located at 3891 Main Street in Vancouver. The multi-use building will offer support and services to burn and trauma survivors, their families and the public.

The facility will contain an interactive multimedia educational public resource component, a research facility for clinical trials in burn and wound healing and suites for burn and trauma survivors and their families.

Concert's foundation includes the strength and backing of Canadians represented by the union and management pension plans



Firefighters' Burn Fund Project

who own the company, a corporate philosophy where integrity in all dealings and community values are key along with a dedicated team of professionals.

Owned exclusively by 19 union and management pension plans, Concert is a diversified real-estate enterprise involved in developing and acquiring industrial and commercial properties, rental housing, multi-family condominium housing, resort developments and seniors' retirement communities in BC, Alberta and Ontario.

Since 1989, Concert has completed developments in excess of \$1.9 billion, created more than 16.2 million person-hours of on-site union employment and has contributed in excess of \$70.5 million in affiliated union pension, health and welfare plans.

www.ConcertProperties.com



More about TW Benefit Plan

Questions & Answers

What if I'm an older employee?

As you get older, your chances of unforeseen illness become larger. The Short Term Disability (STD) provision of the plan may be important to you. Also, if you have a spouse who would suffer financially in the case of death, you may wish to participate in the plan in order to ensure a lifetime income and adequate life insurance coverage.

What if I'm young and have no dependents?

Although you have no dependents now, that may change in just a few years. If you join now, you are automatically accepted without any special application procedures or the need for a medical. Even if you have no dependents, the guarantee for having the two years of income should you have an accident, is an important benefit. Illness and injury in the past have caused some TWU members to suffer major financial losses. The TW Benefit Plan gives you full coverage from the day you join.

What if I have a family and some children?

The financial protection for your family in case of protracted illness or in case of your death will be important to you. Should you become ill or injured, all three aspects of the plan will be significant for you; the life insurance, the guarantee of ongoing income for your spouse, your children, or any other person, and the two-year wage protection.

Can I join later?

Yes, but anyone joining later will have to submit a medical report, and may be turned down for medical reasons. Anyone joining during the open enrolment period of Feb-

ruary 1 to April 30, 2009 will be automatically accepted without the requirement of medical information.

If I am currently on sick benefits, can I join?

Yes. You can join and be eligible for Group Life Insurance and Survivor Income Benefits coverage immediately. You cannot, however, collect Short Term Disability benefits if you are already off work due to a disability. If you return to work and become disabled again, you will then be eligible to apply for STD upon your company sick benefits reducing to less than 100%.

Can I choose to belong to only certain parts of the package?

No. Members joining the plan must take the whole package. The only way the plan will be funded properly is to have the benefits combined.

What earnings are benefits based on?

For most benefits, such as calculating the Short Term Disability, or the Life Insurance, a person's "annual earnings" is your daily rate x 260.89 for full-time regular employees, or your actual earnings for the previous 12 months if less than full-time.

What definition of spouse is used?

The plan uses the same definition as the Canada Pension Plan, that is, that common-law marriages are recognized after one year. A spouse is not required to be the opposite sex.

Do I get premiums back if I quit or retire?

No, the plan is basically an insurance system. Like car insurance or

union dues, you don't get the premiums back for any reason. The premiums are used to fund the benefits of the plan.

If I have to go on sick leave, must I continue to pay premiums?

While on company benefits you still pay 1.5% of the earnings you receive. However, once the company portion of the benefits run out you do not have to pay any premiums. That is one of the benefits of the plan.

What happens if I go on maternity or child care leave?

If you are a member while you are on leave, you will be required to pay the premiums during your leave and you must make arrangements for payment with TELUS before you go on leave.

As long as you continue to pay premiums while on leave, you will remain fully covered for the Life Insurance and Survivor Income portions of the plan. The plan does not pay Short Term Disability benefits during any normal child care leave, but in most cases will pay if there are complications of an illness that is due to the pregnancy or a premature termination of pregnancy.

What happens if I go on a personal Leave of Absence?

You remain a member of the plan as you continue to pay premiums while on leave. You must make arrangements for payment with TELUS before you go on leave. While on leave of absence you are not eligible to receive Short Term Disability benefits, but you are covered for all the other parts of the plan.

THE ADVANTAGES OF BELONGING TO TW BENEFIT PLAN

- Pay starts the day after you stop receiving 100% of your normal wages.
- You are eligible for the same full two-year benefit regardless of seniority.
- If you are waiting for Canada Pension Plan disability pension, there can often be a wait of six months to a year or more. The TWBP ensures you are covered for this entire period, plus tops up your income once you receive benefits, to ensure you are in receipt of approximately 100% of your net income for two years.
- The plan also covers mental and nervous disorders (this is an area where TELUS often has refused to pay benefits in the past.)
- There is no lifetime limit to the number of times you may use the plan.
- If you return to work on a part-time or trial basis and unable to work full-time due to your medical evidence the plan will continue to top up your income during the two year period from your date of disability.

SHORT TERM DISABILITY

Two full years of benefit in case of illness or injury

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN if you had a disabling heart attack tomorrow? Or suffered a back injury at work, which laid you up for months at a time? Or you had a car accident which forced you to be in hospital and away from work for a year? Or had a serious sporting accident while on holidays?

Depending on your sick pay entitlement, you may soon find yourself without 100% sick pay, or be denied long term disability (LTD) benefit through the TELUS plans contained in the collective agreement, which anyone who has had a serious accident or long-lasting injury can attest to.

The TW Benefit Plan (TWBP) changes all that. Under the plan, regular employees who join are eligible for coverage that ensures they will receive benefits equal to approximately 100% of their net pay at the time they stop receiving full wages due to an injury or illness. In other words, the TWBP provides a supplement to your income if you are in receipt of WCB, company sick pay or LTD benefits and you are receiving less than 100% pay from these sources.

This two-year pay benefit is a 'wage indemnity system', and under the TWBP is called the "short term disability" benefit.

If you apply for LTD with the company and you are denied benefits but you are still disabled, you will be eligible to receive benefits from the TWBP if acceptable medical evidence is received, you appeal the denial of the LTD benefits with the company and you contact your union representative to launch a grievance for the denied benefits.

TWU members who, in the past, had injuries or illnesses either on or off the job which caused them to miss more than a few months of work, often suffered major losses in assets and income.

During the first months or years of dealing with an unexpected injury, most people have additional expenses. Many have had to use up their savings, often selling a car or property, and dig into RRSP savings.

Even those who later received disability pensions from CPP often lost for life that "cushion" of savings, which they had hoped to have

for travel, for retirement or for emergencies.

The TWBP makes all that history. Everyone who becomes a member can now be guaranteed two years of earnings, no matter what may happen.

Temporary employees are eligible to be covered under this part of the TWBP.



Retirement thanks

I have recently retired from TELUS after a 33½ year career. It has been a great pleasure to be a member of the TWU and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the TWU for the retirement gift of \$400.00, the Certificate of Honorary Life Membership and the TWU retirement pin. Thank you again,

LLOYD ANHORN
Local 201, Medicine Hat, Alberta

Thank you so much for the retirement gift of \$1000.00. It's been a privilege to be part of a great union all these 37 years. Thank you again.

DAVE BRATSETH
Local 43, Powell River, BC

I can't believe I'm retired! I waited all my life to do this and it wouldn't have been this good without the Telecommunications Workers' Union.

When I began my years at B.C. Tel, I had the basic knowledge of what a union was for, but as it turns out, didn't know a thing. I learned with the best and have made lasting friendships as well as discovered qualities within me that wants to help others as long as I live.

I thank you all from the bottom of my heart for the many years of support, companionship, fun and for helping me raise my family with a good wage and great benefits. We wouldn't have been as successful without you and I am grateful to all those who have gone before me that have fought the good fight.

I also thank you for the wonderful lifetime membership certificate, the retiree pin and of course the very generous cheque for \$1000.00. Thank you again. In Solidarity,

VIKKI DAVIS, Local 50

General thanks

I would like to thank the union for keeping the members up to date on the TWU's website, and also, it is great to see the Transmitter being produced again.

As well, the union's efforts to reach out to the membership through personal phone calls have been well received and appreciated in the workplace.

Sincerely,
SISTER PATTY KILLEEN, Local 5

Most of the time Labour Day comes and goes without much thought. I am very sorry that I'm not able to volunteer in the evenings on the phone. I've tried. I am also sorry that I'm unable to attend the union meetings. Even so, I am grateful for what you do for us every day.

Have a wonderful weekend.
ALASTAIR & POLLY HAWKINS

I would like to send an open letter to the membership regarding the Pay Equity Settlement.

I started with BC TEL in 1974 in operator services. I went on to work in clerical for more years than I care to think about. In 2005, I was one of the last people to move to Craft under the old Non-craft to Craft programme. I will be receiving a portion of the settlement of our Pay Equity complaint but it deeply concerns me. I feel I am robbing my daughter and other younger women. I feel we have taken a step back from my generation's hopes for gender equality.

I know these are strong feelings and not everyone may share them, I believe I have found a positive way to deal with my guilt regarding this money that I would like to share with you. I have discovered an organization called West Coast Leaf. On their website they explain that, "We seek to achieve women's equality

by conducting equality rights litigation, by advocating for law reform, and through public legal education."

These are words that I can identify with. I have chosen to donate the money I will personally receive from the settlement to this organization. I did a ballpark estimate and donate through the Employee Charitable Giving campaign at work so TELUS will actually be doubling it.

I would like to invite all the women of the TWU who will be receiving a portion of the settlement to consider donating a portion to this amazing organization. Think of it, if 100 of us give just \$20, it means a donation of \$2000 to a very deserving organization. Even if you are not a part of this settlement, consider a donation to this worthy organization.

Please look at their website for more info: www.westcoastleaf.org

In closing, I want to share a quote that you have probably heard before: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." Margaret Mead

Let's try to change the world together.
SHERRY FRASER, Local 1

Thank you for the \$2,500.00 contribution to the BC Federation of Labour's *Count Me In* appeal. We understand the financial pressures faced by all our affiliates and very much appreciate the generosity we find when we seek support for causes like these.

Thank you again and rest assured that your contribution will be put to good use. In solidarity,

ANGELA SHIRA, Secretary-Treasurer
BC Federation of Labour

GET YOUR TRANSMITTER BY EMAIL

It's cost effective and
better for the environment.

TO SIGN UP, EMAIL:
e-transmitter@twu-canada.ca

DOES YOUR LOCAL HAVE AN INTERESTING STORY TO SHARE?

Is anyone in your local setting an example of union values? If your local or a member of your local has an interesting story to share, please contact editor@twu-canada.com or call 604-437-8601 to discuss it for the Transmitter.