



# THE VIEW

FROM

# Local 2

Volume 4, Issue 1

April 2007

## McMaster University

SEIU Local 2 BGPWU recently held a 30 hour Level 1 Health & Safety Training Course for our McMaster University members. The training took place on campus during two weekends in March.

One of the participants, Physical Plant Union Steward, Vicki Bilechuk, said, **"We have never enjoyed so much Union support since joining SEIU Local 2 Brewery, General, and Professional Workers Union"**.

Pictured receiving their course certificates from Secretary-Treasurer Ted Mansell (centre



back) are from left to right: Joanna Rodziewicz, Vicki Bilechuck, Denise Cochrane, Paul Duffy, Barbara Kemmers, and Dave Stevens

## Labatts London New CA Struggle

Bucking a wage-freeze trend set by Labatt in an agreement it reached with the UFCW for its' Halifax plant a new five year agreement was reached for the Operating Engineers unit at the Labatt Brewery in London, Ontario.

Cam Nelson, Local 2 Union President and the lead negotiator for the Union, stated that the Halifax agreement made winning any increases at all extremely difficult. Pointing out how important it was for Brewery Workers to break the pattern of substituting performance based bonuses for wage increases

Wages were increased by \$1.79/hour over the life of the agreement bringing the shift engineer rate to \$36.88/hour. Employees will also receive bonuses of up to 3% each year if Company-set targets are met. The formula for calculating pension was also improved by 4% and small improvements made to vision care and life insurance. Nelson thanked the

bargaining committee (Drew Jolliffe and Walter Procknow) for making the tough decisions that made getting to an agreement with wage increases possible and the membership which ratified the agreement unanimously.

## Robin's Foods Inc.

On July 16, 2004, Afton Food Group Ltd. (Robin's foods Inc.) commenced restructuring proceedings under the Companies Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA) and the courts consequently ordered a **"Stay of Proceedings"** which restricted the Union's ability to proceed with the (14) outstanding grievances which included: Work of the Bargaining

Unit, Harassment/Discrimination, Unjust Discharge(s) one of which included the Chief Steward, Job Posting, and many more.

On February 28, 2005, a further court order placed Afton Food Group Inc. and Robin's Foods Inc. into receivership pursuant to the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act and further restricted the Union's ability to proceed with the grievances until such time that there may be a Sale of Business.

On June 6, 2006 the courts approved the Sale of Business of Afton Food Group Ltd. to Spin World Diner Inc. Despite the new Employer's refusal to recognize the outstanding grievances, the Union was successful, with the assistance of Legal Counsel, Bruce Price, in forcing Spin World Diner Inc. to recognize the grievances. Ultimately, an amicable resolution was obtained for all outstanding grievances.

Said Business Agent, Jeff Rooney, **"It took nearly 2 ½ years of persistence and determination to bring justice to the grievors, but SEIU Local 2 never backed off this historic fight for our members at Robins Foods."**

## BRANCH LOCAL 528

### Woodbine Entertainment Coordinated Bargaining Breakthrough

The first ever collective agreements between Local 2 and the Woodbine Entertainment Group was reached and ratified by a more than 85% vote in January.

The agreement reached after 10 straight days of negotiations concluding with a 24-hour marathon provided for a number of benefit improvements and language changes but was highlighted by annual increases of 2.7% and a 40% improvement to the pension contribution rate for the security bargaining unit.

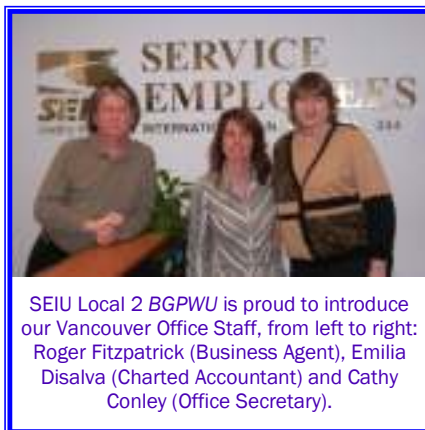
Even though these were negotiations for three separate bargaining units they were negotiated together, giving the bargaining committees the chance to work together to achieve the monetary agreement.

Coordinated bargaining paid off in a good Collective Agreement said Local 2 President Cam Nelson. He thanked the entire bargaining committee for their hard work and their ability to work together that benefited all.

## BRANCH LOCAL 244 (B.C.)

### Negotiating Highlights

- **McRae's Environmental**  
Wage increases over the term of the contract 3.5% - 4.5% per year. For new drivers (which make up



SEIU Local 2 BGPWU is proud to introduce our Vancouver Office Staff, from left to right: Roger Fitzpatrick (Business Agent), Emilia Disalva (Chartered Accountant) and Cathy Conley (Office Secretary).

approx. 50% of the fleet) this contract means their wages will increase by over \$11.00/hour during the five year term of the contract. Senior Operator wages go from \$28.68 to \$33.23, Junior Operator wages go from \$22.67 to \$33.23. An expedited arbitration process was added.

- **Royal Colwood Golf Course:**  
Three year term with increases of 3%, 3% and 4%. Senior Groundskeeper from \$20.90 to \$22.39. (MSPP is 100% Employer-paid) New additions include; boot allowance, Union meetings to be on company time, harassment language, and Foreman classification with additional wage increases.

- **Green Acres Golf Course**  
Three year term with increases of 2.5%, 2.5% and 2%. Senior Groundskeeper from \$21.64 to \$22.40. New MSPP (2% and matched by Employer) as well as Health and Welfare 95% Employer-paid. Other new additions include individual paid sick days and boot allowance.

- **Nico Wynd Golf Course.**  
Two year contract: Senior Groundskeeper from \$20.86 to \$20.96, (Plus 2% increase in Employer MSPP contributions to 6%). Health and Welfare 95% Employer-paid. Individual sick days added, also boot allowance, and improved Union leave language.

## Work Outside?

Now that the spring weather is here, Groundskeepers, Landscapers, and other SEIU Local 2 BGPWU members that work outside will appreciate our "Groundskeepers Safety Guide" published by the CCOHS. Contact the Union Office for your free copy of this excellent health and safety publication.

## Organizing Update

SEIU Local 2's Justice for Janitors organizing campaign continues to build steam. Organizing victories in 2007 include:

- 500 workers at UNICCO Facility Services
- 50 workers at Ability Janitorial Services
- 10 workers at IREX cleaning

As well, the local continues to fight at the Ontario Labour Relations Board to win union recognition for 350 employees of Hurley Corporation who voted to join the union in December of last year.

To read the latest copy of **Respect**, the newsletter of the Justice for Janitors campaign visit the Local 2 website.



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## April 28<sup>th</sup> – Day of Mourning

April 28<sup>th</sup> has been officially declared by Parliament as the National Day of Mourning for workers killed and injured on the job. In each community throughout Canada, local Labour Councils conduct ceremonies commemorating those workers killed or injured on the job and recommitting ourselves to the continued fight for healthier and safer workplaces.

As an SEIU Local 2 BGPWU member, please contact your local Labour Council and make every effort to participate in the April 28<sup>th</sup> National Day of Mourning ceremony in your community

## General News

### Local 2 Thanks Its' Retired Members

Local 2 continued the important tradition of paying tribute to its' retired members at Pensioner Banquets held in Alexandria, Toronto and London. **"Our Union exists and is as strong as it is because of your efforts"**, Local Union President Cam Nelson



## Bargaining Updates

### Canadian Mist

A new five year agreement was reached and ratified at the Canadian Mist Distillers bargaining unit in Collingwood. Wages were increased by \$ 3.08/hour (13.1%) on average taking the operators rate to \$26.51/hour but the most important feature of the agreement was a 14% increase in the pension accrual for pre-1999 service and a 7.1% in the post-1999 service. Local President Cam Nelson thanked outgoing Branch Local President Jim Guzzwell and incoming Branch Local President Joe Ralph for their hard work in reaching an agreement that made such substantial improvements to the Pensions.

### Ontario Nurses Association

A new three year agreement was reached and ratified for the staff of the Ontario Nurses Association for the period January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2008. The agreement provided for a number of benefit improvements – including partial reimbursement to employees for their professional fees – as well as wage increases of 3% in each year.

### Hunt Bros—Peterborough

Workers at Hunt Bros. in Peterborough recently ratified a three year collective agreement that will see wage increases of 3%, 3% and 2.9% for full-time employees and 3.5%, 3.4% and 3.3% for part-time employees. In addition, employees received a signing bonus and Christmas bonuses of \$75 and \$100 in each of the next two years. Our members also saw improvements to the bereavement leave provisions of the collective agreement, as well language requiring the employer to reimburse our members for costs associated with obtaining a doctor's certificate when requested by the employer.

**St. Vincent de Paul** in Windsor ratified a new collective agreement in January. Local 2 BGPWU negotiated an additional statutory holiday and the employer agreed to discuss any job descriptions prior to introducing them. We achieved a wage increase of 9.5 % over a 3 year agreement, with a signing bonus of \$175 for Full time employees and \$100 for Part time employees.

### Diocese of London Marriage Tribunal

The full time employees ratified a new three year agreement with a wage increase of 2% in each year of a 3 year agreement. The employer will pay for an eye exam once every 24 months. We also added a statutory holiday to be split ½ day December 24 and a ½ day December 31 to give employees the whole day off prior to Christmas and the whole day off prior to New Years. The automatic termination clause for being absent for 24 months of being on LTD was eliminated.

### Diocese of London - St. Peter's Cemetery Family Service Counselors

Ratified a new Collective Agreement in February garnering a 6% increase over 3 years and increased all bonuses to be paid.

### Hummingbird Centre

March 21, 2007 – Hummingbird Centre members ratified a 3 year contract giving them \$0.47, \$0.48, \$0.49. **They are transferring their current benefits plan into the SEIU Local 1 & 2 Benefit Trust.** Further language was reached assuring that regardless of how long the impending reconstruction project goes on, their seniority and recall rights will remain intact.

### Glendale, Highland & Resthaven Cemeteries

Following a resounding strike vote and tense contract negotiations, the SEIU Local 2 BGPWU members at Glendale, Highland, and Resthaven cemeteries are pleased to have recently ratified a new collective agreement. Highlights include 4.7% over the first 18 months, with 2.5% each year of the last 3 years. The members now enjoy a bonus for assisting funerals, increased clothing allowance, sick leave top-up, bereavement leave, overtime entitlement, and \$200 per year for prescription safety sunglasses as well as new job security language among other improvements.

### Peterborough Humane Society

SEIU Local 2 BGPWU members at the Peterborough Humane Society recently ratified a three year renewal collective agreement including: 7.7%, 4% and 4% for the Receptionist classification, 8%, 4% and 4% for the PHS's full-time Kennel Attendants, Part-time Kennel Attendants received increases ranging from 31% to 40% in the first year of the contract, followed by 4% in each of the two remaining years. Other improvements include: increased vacation, bereavement leave, new vision care coverage, 12 paid personal days / year and employer matched 5% savings plan. Great Work!

### Wesley Urban Ministries

The 90+ members of Local 2 BGPWU at Wesley Urban Ministries recently ratified a new three (3) year collective agreement featuring annual wage increases, depending on classification, ranging from 2.5% to 6.5%. Also included in the new deal are improvements to job posting language, layoff and bumping rights, 12 hours pay for statutory holidays, increased vacation carry-over, health & safety protocols, an Employee Assistance Plan, and a newly-negotiated Letter of Understanding regarding job descriptions/workload.