

# your voice



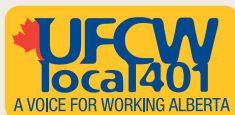
***Your Executive Board & Officer Elections Are  
Just Around The Corner!***  
*Election Rules and Details Inside*

**In 2017... Safeway Members Will Be Strong**



# your voice

United Food and Commercial Workers Canada Union, Local No. 401 - Vol. 107 - June - Dec. 2016



## Calgary

Out of town members call collect

Ph: (403) 291 1047 Fx: (403) 250 3412 #102, 2635 37 Avenue N.E. Calgary, AB T1Y 5Z6

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## Edmonton

Ph: (780) 452 0362 Fx: (780) 451 3099 14040 128 Avenue Edmonton, AB T5L 4M8

## Lethbridge

Ph: (403) 328 4245 Fx: (403) 320 9288 #104, 3305 18 Avenue N. Lethbridge, AB T1H 5S1

## Brooks

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## Fort McMurray

Ph: (780) 743 4190 Fx: (780) 743 8312 #205, 9914 Morrison Street Fort McMurray, AB T9H 4A4

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 [/ufcw401](https://twitter.com/ufcw401)

 [/ufcw401](https://facebook.com/ufcw401)

 [/ufcw\\_401](https://instagram.com/ufcw_401)

webCampus info here: [www.ufcw.ca/webcampus](http://www.ufcw.ca/webcampus)

Union Savings info here: [www.unionsavings.ca](http://www.unionsavings.ca)

## Contributors:

Douglas O'Halloran, Theresa McLaren, Christine McMeckan, Scott Payne, Cori Torres,  
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This magazine is designed, written, and printed union.

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Welcome to the June 2016 edition of *Your Voice* magazine. You'll notice that this edition is completely member-centric – meaning the many and varied workplaces and members like you who work within them are the sole focus of this edition.

Previous editions of *Your Voice* have had a mix of social justice, political, community, and member-based topics, but in the June 2016 edition it's all about you. We have the best union members in the country and it's little wonder we're so happy to brag about you!

You'll see sections in this magazine that will become regular features and we hope you enjoy them. "Your 401 Wins" is the section where we get to brag about our victories. Some may involve arbitrations, other stories will involve court battles or picket lines, but we wanted to begin sharing just some of those fabulous wins to spread the positive vibe around. After all, success is more fun when we all share in it.

"Members in the News" will regularly feature interesting stories about our fascinating members and who they are, while the "Workplace Spotlight" feature will focus on a cross-section of our various units to explore all of the workplaces represented by UFCW Local 401. We want to celebrate all of the members of our union and we hope these features, and others like them, will pique your interest.

As well, we're always on the lookout for content and would love to hear from you. Perhaps you have a story about a hobby you have or a pet project you're passionate about? Or maybe you have a recipe to share with other 401 members? Whatever you want to share, we'd love to hear from you!

### *Perhaps you'll be published!*

Just send an email to [ufcw@ufcw401.ab.ca](mailto:ufcw@ufcw401.ab.ca) and type "Your Voice Magazine" in the email subject line. It will be directed to the Communications Department for consideration. Please remember, as always, to include a phone number at which it's easiest to reach you so we can connect with you quickly to discuss your submission.

Thank you for checking out our latest edition of *Your Voice*. We hope you enjoy reading about what's going on with other 401 members all around the province.

# *Table of Contents*

<u>Table of Contents</u>	<u>1</u>
	<u>3</u> President's Message
<u>401 Members Head to the Polls!</u>	<u>4</u>
	<u>6</u> Your 401 Wins!
<u>Members Corner</u>	<u>9</u>
	<u>11</u> 401 Word Games
<u>My UFCW webCampus Education Experience: A Member Update</u>	<u>12</u>
	<u>14</u> 401 Events Calendar
<u>In 2017... We Will Be Strong</u>	<u>18</u>
	<u>21</u> Workplace Spotlight
<u>Your Voice Survey</u>	<u>25</u>



# FAIR START For kids

## All children deserve a Fair Start in life.

Early Childhood Education and Care is good for kids.

But in Alberta, kids are being left behind because of lack of access to quality regulated child care spaces.

The Fair Start Alberta campaign is committed to universal Early Childhood Education and Care.

For more information, and to be part of the solution, visit [www.FairStartAlberta.ca](http://www.FairStartAlberta.ca)



For more information,  
or to take action,  
visit [www.FairStartAlberta.ca](http://www.FairStartAlberta.ca)

Alberta  
Federation  
of Labour





You will also  
notice an  
explicit focus  
on our members  
in this edition  
of the magazine.  
After all, the  
magazine is called  
*Your Voice*.

## President's Message

UFCW Local 401 is happy to bring you the June 2016 edition of our magazine, *Your Voice*. 2016 is a big year for our union; we have a lot of important things on the go.

UFCW Local 401 is holding elections for our Executive Board in August. The Executive Board is made up of the President, Secretary Treasurer, and members from across the province who are elected to represent our membership in the decision-making process of our union.

At its core UFCW Local 401 is a democratic organization. We demonstrated that when we put opening up the contracts of members at two Safeway stores to a vote of the Calgary and Area Safeway membership. And when it comes to the overall direction of our union, it is democratically elected members whom are the ones making the decisions.

Running for the Executive Board is a big commitment. But the reward of helping to guide the direction of an exciting and effective union that meets the needs and encourages the success of its members is priceless.

More information about the Executive Board elections is available via an article from Senior Labour Relations Officer Larry Zima in this magazine. Please be sure to check it out so you have all the information you'll need to come out and cast your ballot for your new Executive Board.

Speaking of meeting the needs of our members, UFCW Local 401 has also started getting its Safeway members ready to bargain with Sobeys from a position of strength in March 2017.

You can read the article in this magazine to find out more about our *March to March* campaign, aimed at making sure Sobeys knows that our Safeway members will be ready, active, and strong in 2017. But as a first step, we're asking members to begin wearing the In 2017... I will be strong buttons Secretary Treasurer Theresa McLaren and I are distributing as we visit Safeway stores in lead up to negotiations.

Wearing the buttons immediately and on an ongoing basis will send a message to Sobeys that Safeway members are prepared for negotiations and that it is in the company's best interests to come to the bargaining table ready to negotiate a fair contract.

You will also notice an explicit focus on our members in this edition of the magazine. After all, the magazine is called *Your Voice*.

Whether you are reading the profile on Mina Guirguis, our Walking Steward for the Palace and Baccarat casinos, the amazing work that member Angela Fiddler is doing with webCampus, or learning about the work our members at Rahr Malting do to help produce some of your favourite beers – this magazine is a testament to the fact that our members really are the life blood of our union.

As always, I hope you enjoy the magazine, discover some things you didn't previously know about your union, and perhaps think of some new ways that you would like to get involved.

Douglas O'Halloran  
President, UFCW Local 401





# 401 Members Head to the Polls!

It's that time again for you to choose your UFCW Local 401 Executive Board. Every four years the Executive Board elections take place and during the summer of 2016, members from throughout the province have the opportunity to participate in the open democratic process of electing the 21 members that oversee the business of UFCW Local 401.

**Your Executive Board is made up of a President, Secretary-Treasurer, Recording Secretary, and 18 general Vice Presidents.**

To be eligible to run for a position on the Executive Board you must have been an active member with Local 401 for a period of one year from July 2016 as defined by the Constitution and the Local Union Bylaws;

*"Receipt by the Local Union of the current dues and the required initiation or reinstatement fee, or any installment established by the Local Union for payment of such fee, is required for an eligible individual to become an active member. Continued payment of dues, and, if applicable, any remaining installments of the required initiation or reinstatement fee, is required to maintain active membership."*

The President, Secretary-Treasurer, and Recording Secretary are nominated by petition - a process that requires signatures of 2% of the average membership that the Local had from June of 2015 to May of 2016 (at the time of writing this article that number had not yet been determined). **Petitions are available from any Local 401 union office in the province and must be returned no later than July 22, 2016.**

The remaining 18 Vice Presidents are elected into positions that represent different geographical areas of the province: Northern Alberta, Edmonton and Area, Central Alberta, Calgary and Area, Southern Alberta, and South Eastern Alberta.

The Union Election Committee will be travelling the province from July 11th to 18th holding nomination meetings where eligible members can be nominated to sit as Vice Presidents within their geographical region. For example, an Edmonton and Area seat must be nominated at the Edmonton meeting, whereas a Northern Alberta seat can be nominated in any location within that area's description. You do not have to be in attendance at the meeting to be nominated as you can have another member nominate you or you can nominate yourself. Once you have been nominated, a form must be filled out and returned to confirm that you wish to seek election. The

Election Committee then reviews the nomination for eligibility.

Voting is scheduled to be held throughout the province starting on August 8th and continuing to, and including, August 16th in the same areas the nomination meetings are held. Unlike the nomination process, members can vote at any meeting in the province when the vote is open. **Members must attend in person at a location in order to vote - there are no advance polls or absentee balloting.**

Additional information on the elections will be on our webpage at: **[gounion.ca](http://gounion.ca)** and posted on your workplace union bulletin boards, including the number of signatures needed for the petitions and other eligibility requirements.

Please see the next page for the list of dates and locations for the 2016 elections.

**If you have any questions on the elections please do not hesitate to contact myself at the Edmonton union office at: 780.452.0362, or for those outside Edmonton, please call toll free at: 1.800.252.7975.**

**Larry Zima,  
Senior Labour Relations Officer  
Election Chairperson**

<b>Athabasca Bog</b> <b>Location:</b> Days Inn 2805 48th Ave <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Thursday, July 14 ⇨ 6:30 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Sunday, August 14 ⇨ 2 PM to 7 PM	<b>Civeo Conklin</b> <b>Location:</b> on site- see Union board <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Monday, July 18 ⇨ 11 AM & 4 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Monday, August 15 ⇨ 12 PM to 5 PM	<b>Grande Prairie</b> <b>Location:</b> Holiday Inn Express 10226 117 Ave <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Monday, July 11 ⇨ 11 AM & 6 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Monday, August 8 ⇨ 11 AM to 6 PM
<b>Banff</b> <b>Location:</b> Banff Ptarmigan Inn 337 Banff Ave <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Wednesday, July 13 ⇨ 11 AM & 6 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Wednesday, August 10 ⇨ 11 AM to 6 PM	<b>Civeo Kaybob</b> <b>Location:</b> on site- see Union board <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> not applicable <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Friday, August 12 ⇨ 10 AM to 3 PM	<b>Hinton</b> <b>Location:</b> Holiday Inn 393 Gregg Avenue <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Thursday, July 14 ⇨ 11 AM & 6 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Thursday, August 11 ⇨ 11 AM to 6 PM
<b>Brooks</b> <b>Location:</b> UFCW 401 Office 631A Sutherland Drive East <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Thursday, July 14 ⇨ 11 AM & 6 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Thursday, August 11 ⇨ 11 AM to 6 PM	<b>Civeo MacKay</b> <b>Location:</b> on site- see Union board <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Monday, July 11 ⇨ 11 AM & 4 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Monday, August 8 ⇨ 12 PM to 5 PM	<b>Lethbridge</b> <b>Location:</b> UFCW 401 Office #104, 3305 18 Avenue N <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Wednesday, July 13 ⇨ 11 AM & 6 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Wednesday, August 10 ⇨ 11 AM to 6 PM
<b>Calgary</b> <b>Location:</b> Glenmore Inn 2720 Glenmore Trail SE <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Monday, July 11 ⇨ 11 AM & 6 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Monday, August 8 ⇨ 11 AM to 6 PM	<b>Civeo Pebble Beach</b> <b>Location:</b> on site- see Union board <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Thursday, July 14 ⇨ 11 AM & 4 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Friday, August 12 ⇨ 12 PM to 5 PM	<b>Lloydminster</b> <b>Location:</b> Holiday Inn 5612 44 St <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Tuesday, July 12 ⇨ 11 AM & 6 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Wednesday, August 10 ⇨ 11 AM to 6 PM
<b>Camrose</b> <b>Location:</b> Ramada Inn 4702 73 Street <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Wednesday, July 13 ⇨ 11 AM & 6 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Thursday, August 11 ⇨ 11 AM to 6 PM	<b>Civeo Wapasu Creek West</b> <b>Location:</b> on site- see Union board <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Thursday, July 14 ⇨ 1 PM & 6 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Thursday, August 11 ⇨ 11 AM to 6 PM	<b>Medicine Hat</b> <b>Location:</b> Holiday Inn Express 9 Strachan Bay S <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Monday, July 11 ⇨ 11 AM & 6 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Monday, August 8 ⇨ 11 AM to 6 PM
<b>Canmore</b> <b>Location:</b> Holiday Inn 1 Silvertip Trail <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Tuesday, July 12 ⇨ 11 AM & 6 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Tuesday, August 9 ⇨ 11 AM to 6 PM	<b>Civeo Wapasu Creek Main</b> <b>Location:</b> on site- see Union board <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Friday, July 15 ⇨ 11 AM & 6 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Saturday, August 13 ⇨ 11 AM to 6 PM	<b>Red Deer</b> <b>Location:</b> Red Deer Lodge 4311 49 Ave <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Thursday, July 14 ⇨ 11 AM & 6 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Tuesday, August 16 ⇨ 11 AM to 6 PM
<b>Civeo Athabasca</b> <b>Location:</b> on site- see Union board <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Tuesday, July 12 ⇨ 1 PM & 6 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Tuesday, August 9 ⇨ 12 PM to 5 PM	<b>Edmonton</b> <b>Location:</b> UFCW 401 Office 14040 128 Avenue <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Monday, July 11 ⇨ 11 AM & 6 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Tuesday, August 9 ⇨ 11 AM to 6 PM	<b>Taber</b> <b>Location:</b> Heritage Inn 4830 46 Ave <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Tuesday, July 12 ⇨ 11 AM & 6 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Tuesday, August 9 ⇨ 11 AM to 6 PM
<b>Civeo Beaver River Executive</b> <b>Location:</b> on site- see Union board <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Tuesday, July 12 ⇨ 11 AM & 4 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Wednesday, August 10 ⇨ 11 AM to 6 PM	<b>Fort McMurray</b> <b>Location:</b> UFCW 401 Office 205 - 9914 Morrison Street <b>Nomination Date &amp; Time:</b> Wednesday, July 13 ⇨ 11 AM & 6 PM <b>Vote Date &amp; Time:</b> Monday, August 15 ⇨ 11 AM to 6 PM	 <b>Locations may be adjusted.</b> <b>Please check website for</b> <b>current information: <a href="http://gounion.ca">gounion.ca</a></b>



## *Superstore Workers Fight Back And Win Big!*

*Written by Christine McMeekan, Senior Communications & Education Representative*

As is often the case where Union Contracts, or Collective Agreements, are concerned, unions and employers sometimes don't see eye-to-eye on some of the finer points regarding interpretation of the rights contained within it. This fact will come as no surprise to the thousands of 401 members who work at Superstore.

*unions and employers sometimes don't see eye-to-eye on some of the finer points*

Over the years, one of the major areas of concern we face is employers messing around with scheduling language. Superstore is not unlike many employers when it comes to staffing its stores – they want maximum flexibility. The workers, of course, have their needs

as well and they are also looking for flexible work schedules in order to meet the needs of their family and other responsibilities in their personal lives. As you can well imagine, it can be very tricky to find that balance between the operational needs of the employer and personal needs of employees.

Several years ago, your union's Superstore negotiating committee pursued an issue that was a persistent problem for part-time workers in Superstores across the province. Referred to as the "4 Hour Gap", this Collective Agreement provision ensures, "available anytime employees will be scheduled a minimum of four (4) hours more than restricted employees on a weekly basis."

In other words, available weekly hours are pushed to the top of the schedule to ensure that those with more seniority and who make themselves "available anytime" are guaranteed to get more hours than those who place restrictions on their schedules. This was negotiated in part because the employer had a long history of pushing hours down the schedule to employees whose

rates of pay were at or near the lower rates of pay, effectively starving the more senior "expensive" employees of hours. In some instances, the practice forced some very frustrated workers to quit.

After this protection was negotiated; however, it was a full-time job monitoring hundreds of schedules throughout the province. On a weekly basis Union Representatives and Shop Stewards alike were finding violations where restricted employees were getting the same amount of hours as available anytime employees – and in some cases more hours.

Not happy to stand idly by while the employer ran roughshod over our members' rights, the union pursued the matter and ultimately the parties agreed to mediation efforts in order to resolve the ongoing violations, which were costing many of our members hundreds of dollars in lost hours.

With the assistance of a mediator, the parties settled on a protocol going forward that allowed both the employer and the union to track more easily what was happening. Forms



# 4 Hour Gap *available anytime employees will be scheduled a minimum of four hours more than restricted employees on a weekly basis.*

were developed in order to note each violation. Once the employer's Labour Relations Department got the form, they would speak with the appropriate store manager and/or department supervisor to get the details. When a violation was deemed to have occurred, the parties then tallied up the total hours for each affected member and those members would be compensated for all missing hours.

Along with this new system of tracking, for example, from January 1st, 2015 to about February 1st 2016, through this process we were able to get just over \$9500 back in to the pockets of the affected members. Add this to the thousands of dollars in wins for our members from other grievances relating to scheduling concerns, your union always has an eye on your schedules.

Another notable win for Superstore's 401 members involved addressing issues with the "guarantee of hours" provisions.

Superstore Collective Agreements have language that guarantees most part-time available anytime employees get a minimum number of hours per week. It's based on a somewhat complex formula that determines how many people get a guarantee of hours. The guaranteed hours are to be construed as a minimum (20, 24, and 28 hours per week depending on seniority) and ensure length of service and availability to work the many different shifts are recognized, entitling those workers to the lion's share of the available hours.

As is often the case, the employer looked for ways to water down the rights to hours contained in the Contract. The employer argued that any employee who was on a leave of absence (maternity leave for example) would essentially take their guarantee of hours with them.

An example would look like this:

Sally is a long-term, senior employee who is entitled to a 28 hour guarantee per week. Sally begins her maternity leave and is expected to be absent for 1 year. The employer argues that Sally "owns" her guarantee of hours and that the guarantee cannot therefore stay within the store to be used by the next senior available anytime employee. Instead, no one gets that 28 hour guarantee until Sally returns to reclaim it, or ceases her employment, at which point the 28 hour guarantee would then go to the next employee and so on down the line.

*Don't delay!  
There are time  
limits on your  
ability to file a  
grievance and  
pursue an issue.*

Naturally UFCW 401 objected. After all, what is the point of having rights in the Collective Agreement that pushed hours to the most senior available anytime employees if there are long stretches of time where employees are not entitled to the appropriate hours due to various leaves of absences.

The union grieved and proceeded to arbitration, which is essentially a "labour court". A government appointed arbitrator was assigned to hear both sides' arguments. The arbitrator sided with the union and its members, citing that the guarantee

of hours formula was developed to ensure those who were actually working would benefit from the assignment of a certain number of hours per week.

Employers will always try to find ways to make contract language work to their best advantage. That is not surprising. It's also not surprising that your union, UFCW 401, will be there fighting to level the playing field every time an employer tries to take a benefit you have fought hard to obtain away or undermine its usefulness.

However, if you hear of something going on in your workplace that sounds unfair or suspicious, it is critical that you call your Union Representative or pull your Shop Steward aside and talk about the issue.

Don't delay! There are time limits on your ability to file a grievance and pursue an issue. So you don't want to miss out on an opportunity because you waited too long to address it.

There could be a chance to win some money that you've been denied if the company is found to have violated your rights under your Union Contract. But you can only win if you call us. UFCW 401 will investigate your concerns, and with your help we may be able to fix a problem that may also affect many of your co-workers.

*Don't be shy.  
Call us if something  
doesn't seem quite  
right. We want  
to hear from you!*



# Alberta's NDP Caucus

- Supporting families in times of hardship with new supports and better access to training and education
- Continuing to invest in Alberta's infrastructure through the Capital Plan
- Diversifying the energy industry and markets by putting a price on carbon and working to get the best value for Alberta's natural resources
- Supporting Alberta businesses with new tax credits to encourage access to capital and a tax cut for small businesses

# Alberta's NDP Caucus

**Let's Move Alberta Forward**

# Members CORNER

Written by Christine McMeekan,  
Senior Communications &  
Education Representative

## Members Helping Members

Over the last several years, UFCW Local 401 negotiators have been pressing for greater union representation, as well as access to all that the union has to offer our nearly 30,000 members across the province. Anyone who has contacted their Union Representative knows that calls are returned quickly, and even if there is a little bit of “phone tag”, efforts are made to connect as soon as possible. This can be challenging given the busy work lives of members and Reps alike, not to mention the many commitments associated with finding time for family.

All of this can make accessing your Union Rep a little more difficult at times. Due to these challenges, there has been a heavy focus on finding ways to improve access to the union for our members. Simultaneously, we have been making efforts to also create pathways for members to connect with one another and assist each other when there are questions or concerns.

Enter the relatively new concept of the “Walking Steward”. What is a Walking Steward?

A Walking Steward is a member of the union who is dedicated full-time to assisting members at a particular workplace on a wide range of matters. Sometimes people have questions or concerns about their schedules. It could be a problem with a supervisor or manager. Or perhaps someone wasn’t paid correctly on his or her paycheque. There are a range of issues that crop up everyday in our workplaces and the Walking Stewards are there to assist you with them. A Walking Steward doesn’t replace your full-time Union Representative, but rather supports them.

First introduced into Local 401 culture back in 2012 via several of our camps up north, walking stewards are becoming more commonplace in our worksites through negotiated settlements with several employers.

The latest group of 401 members to negotiate a full-time Walking Steward are the workers at the Palace and Baccarat casinos who negotiated the position into their Contract just last September.

What’s more, while this onsite advocate works solely in the interests of the union members in each casino, the position is paid by the employer! Through negotiations, the rate of pay is bargained between the parties and is 100% employer funded. This is also the case in our camps up north and at Lakeside Packers. And while the cost of wages and benefits are borne by the employer, they cannot influence or interfere with the duties and activities of Walking Stewards.

Our newest Walking Steward, working on behalf of Palace and Baccarat employees, is 29 year old Mina Guirguis.

Mina Guirguis,  
UFCW 401 Walking Steward





“I am very much enjoying this job and have met a lot of fantastic and smart people in the process,”

In April of 2011, Mina graduated from the University of Alberta with a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering. Coming from a very large Egyptian family that includes his mother and father and 2 younger siblings, some of Mina's hobbies include basketball and football (both playing and watching), as well as any social events where interaction with new people can occur.

Before becoming the UFCW Walking Steward for the casinos, Mina worked at Canada Bread Bakery – Maple Leaf Foods. This was the first time, he says, that he worked in an environment completely run on heavy-duty machinery.

Mina stayed with Canada Bread for seven years, starting out as a part-time student learning the job and working weekends to get himself through school. The company appreciated his strong work ethic and offered him a temporary/part-time lead-hand position on the floor, which he fulfilled for approximately two years.

During this time, Mina was approached by his union, BCTGM (Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union), and asked to consider becoming a Shop Steward. He accepted the position and took on all manner of workplace issues

that were brought his way. Very pleased with his dedication to pursuing issues on behalf of his co-workers, the union asked him to step up and become one of four Chief Shop Stewards within the bakery. Staying in this role for about 1.5 years, Mina also sat on the bargaining committee and successfully assisted in negotiating two separate Collective Agreements during his seven years with the company.

Hired as a Security Guard at the Baccarat Casino in December of 2011, Mina eventually found his way back into union advocacy work. Initially the Baccarat's Security Guards were not part of UFCW 401. However, the interest from that department in joining the union was growing, and in the summer of 2015 they joined the union and Mina became an official member of the union's negotiating committee.

When asked how he would define his role as the Walking Steward for the casinos, Mina is thoughtful about the many complexities he and his co-workers face within the gaming industry. He is quick to point out that there was a lot to learn: how to talk to the members in the environment they're in, learning to approach problems and solutions in a strategic and professional manner, and

encouraging the members not to be afraid of asking questions of himself or their immediate supervisors and managers. Every conversation is as unique as the individuals themselves according to Mina.

“This role definitely has had a lot of challenges,” says Mina, admitting that there are some very long days. But having started the position in early January of this year, he says the personal and professional payoffs have far outweighed any challenges. With both casinos facing major changes in the coming months (massive renovations at the Palace and a move to a brand new casino in the Katz downtown complex for the Baccarat employees) the work has been unending. In spite of it all, Mina is very happy in his new role.

“I am very much enjoying this job and have met a lot of fantastic and smart people in the process,” Mina reports.

We at UFCW 401 could not be more proud of our growing body of walking stewards and we welcome our newest to the fold.

Mina's history as an advocate for workers is impressive to say the least and we thank you, Mina, for your hard work and dedication to our fabulous gaming members!

## Word Scramble

Unscramble below to find four informative labour terms.

polecrawk      gohslip tt

niklwag      tadsrew

ticxeevue      robda

ruyo      ditsroyila

**What is a co-operative?**  
Co-operatives (or co-ops) are made up of people who are both the workers and the owners of the organization. The people who make up the co-operative decide together how to control and operate the co-op in a way in which everyone contributes and benefits from the profits. The owners of the co-operative are also the people who use its services.

There are many different types of co-ops, they can range anywhere from retail organizations to agricultural groups, credit unions, and child-care. What these groups all have in common is the shared beliefs of their members.

The co-op movement as we know it today was started in England in 1844 when the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers Society was established. This was a group of workers (shoemakers, tailors, engineers) who came together to form a food co-op. What was special about this group is that they also wrote down a shared set of principles dedicated to community involvement and support that we still use today as a guide in the modern co-op movement.

When people come together in a co-operative, they are saying they will work towards the same financial, social, and community needs to make sure everyone succeeds together. Co-operatives usually have outreach programs to help empower members of the local community with a focus on education and cultural support.

## Labour Movement Word Search

Search for words by reading forward, backward, up, down, and diagonally but always in a straight line. Using the word list on the right, circle as you find them and then cross them out in the list.

Q K G C L B G M O H U D B Y L A W S X M Y M S J R  
M M P R O T E C T C U O R K A R B I T R A T I O N  
I J G I W M G N I T O L L A B B L D I D D O Y W I  
W Z V B B M M S H W V N L X O I F E R N P G W X V  
S O L E L Q N I Y S N O T T U B R E G J N J N E Z  
R E R U S A E R T Y R A T E R C E S U O H E R A W  
O S G K N J E C I T A R C O M E D V I G K O I A R  
J M Y T P R D L L A E T O S O M D N I W Y J V G R  
R P S S G L X R A D S E P N V N U S H T Z Z B G S  
T L E T X V A S U W J I T G E Y J H S B U R O R I  
C E E T S L J C Q V H O X N M I G S S N T C P I C  
A A K O I C A A E S C I H I E E P O N G R K E B K  
T F C C L T P Z R W G H C Z N M R G O E A E J X L  
S D Z Y I P I A E C G L A I T N E D I F N O C X E  
M G X O E P L O D A O C E N O Y S V T G S V L J A  
J C N B E O L T N V Q N R A G J I M A U F R W M V  
W V O I H W I D E S U Q T G F E D G N E E S P O E  
W Y S C P F A R G L B U U R A S E N I O R I T Y I  
U T S U F L T R Q U K T O O A M N Y M V S E F L D  
N S G U M I E M O M W E E L E C T I O N S H B D O  
K P F P M N R H T R W F O N U Z T V N L N O V A B  
T F L E M T P M X W G K T P V Q B Q L Y P U F O D  
L U N R B K I L H H F L O G M J W O D M S M E I W  
X O N I S A Y B Z F N X Q T R S P W S U R V E Y L  
V S M A W L T C D F H E F M G B P I U O A P U J L  
Z U D Z I F Y T I N U M M O C E D M O F Z F W A R  
B R Q M Y R F U Z O M H X S O Q H O E O L Q W I F  
P N A G T J K N Q Z D W W M J F H J P J M A E X F  
E F O L W U J O G R S O J N Z T E E A T X S H P T  
O Z X L D M C R E H T E G O T P Y B Z P B K G J L

ARBITRATION	MY UNION
BALLOTING	NOMINATIONS
BEREAVEMENT	ORGANIZING
BOYCOTTS	OUTREACH
BUTTONS	OVERTIME
BYLAWS	PETITIONS
CHANGE	PICKET
COMMITTEE	POLLS
COMMUNITY	PRESIDENT
CONFIDENTIAL	PROTECT
CONTRACT	RETAIL
DEMOCRATIC	SCHOLARSHIPS
EDUCATION	SECRETARY TREASURER
ELECTIONS	SENIORITY
EMPLOYEE	SICK LEAVE
ENGAGEMENT	SURVEY
EXECUTIVE BOARD	TOGETHER
FAMILY	TRANSFERS
GENDER EQUALITY	VOTE
HELPING	WAREHOUSE
LABOUR MOVEMENT	WORKPLACE
MEMBERS	

Last issue's answers can be found at  
[gounion.ca/your-union/your-voice-magazine](http://gounion.ca/your-union/your-voice-magazine)



Angela Fiddler,  
UFCW Local 401 member



## My UFCW webCampus Education Experience: A Member Update

**Tansi!** (*Hello in Cree language*)

Let me introduce myself. I am Angela Fiddler. I've been a member of UFCW Local 401 for 5 years. I've been working as a housekeeper at Wapasu Creek Lodge since October 2010. I have had a lot of years to think about my job, union, and the future.

I come from the Waterhen Lake First Nation in Northern Saskatchewan. Living on and off reserve, and being a single mother of 6 children on welfare, took a toll on my family and me. I have faced many struggles in my lifetime. By the time I was hired at Wapasu Creek, and became unionized with Local 401, I was ready for change.

Once the opportunity arose for employment, I was able to pay my bills, feed my 6 children, and break my family free from the destructive poverty that many First Nations live in. While working at Wapasu, I have had the opportunity to experience different work roles and learn new skills; my time working with Civeo is just one example of this. Not only was a financial barrier broken, I began to be more physically fit, spiritually awakened, and emotionally stronger. And now, here I am.

Let me tell you, making positive changes in your life takes an honest effort and doesn't come overnight. I have worked hard on changes within myself as well as those improvements I've made at the workplace. It's an on going process and a continuous cycle that produces positive results in the end.

This is where education has its place. Without education, we cannot make positive changes as effectively as we would like to in our lives. Education is a buffalo to my People and this means education will be everything for us: our rock, and our way to break

through barriers. By learning new ideas and skills, you are becoming an educated person. With this education, you are able to make beneficial changes for yourself, your family, and your community.

The Elders and Leaders of my People say now is the time. This is our time, and time for Indigenous Peoples to rise up within society. I want to be a warrior in the labour movement, and continue to push doors open for my People so we can all eventually break free from the residential school cycle and poverty my people face today in Canada.

I know education is the key and that is why I am happy my union offers online education courses that I can take before or after work hours. This online training, known as webCampus, is offered by UFCW Canada and is free of charge for all UFCW Canada members, their family, and friends. I am currently enrolled in webCampus courses and I plan to update my job and life skills with this education. In the future, I am looking forward to taking even more online courses offered and supported by our union in order to obtain a Certificate from UFCW Canada as a Human Rights Advocate.

A mother of 6, Co-Chair of the Wapasu First Nation, and a Metis & Inuit Committee member at the camp, it will take some time management and commitment from me to achieve this growth in my education, and I am willing to make that commitment. Our union cares about us and encourages us to better ourselves. It takes you and me to take that step. If I can do it, you can also.

**Looking forward to a successful 2016!**

**Ekosi!** (*The end or that's all in Cree language*)  
Angela Fiddler



## Cree Translation:

**Tansi!** (Hello in Cree language)

Ahāw, Ki-ka-nakiskamohtinawāw niya. Angela Fiddler nisiyihkāson. Ni-kikapison UFCW Local 401 niyanan askiy êkwa. Wāskahikana nikanācitan Wapasu Creek Lodge aspin ochi October 2010. Mihcēt tānitahtw-āskiy nitayan itah kamitonataman ochi nitatoskawin, ochi kawiytapisomakihk, ekwa ochi ati-nikān.

Nitohcîn Waterhen Sākahikanihk nēhiyawaskiwin kîwêtinohk. Ni-kî-wîkin askiy-kanih mîna ôtênah, êkwa e-peyak ohpikihakihk niya nikawimaw nikotwasihk awasisak e-pimachihawasoyan pamihikowin. Mitonih ni-tayimihonan nitawasimisak ekwa niya. Maka nitatoskayikawin Wapasu Creek, ekwa ni-wiytapisomāwak Local 401, êkota ni-kwayācihtā nikwêskin nipimatisowin.

Mayaw e-pitakohpayik ita katoskeyan, ni-kaskiyan katipahaman ni-masinahikewina, mena kasamakihk nikotwasihk nitawasimisak, nipikonan anima kitimākisiwin ka-kitimāhikocik iynewak misiwe. Katoskeyan anihta Wapasu, ni-mikosin miceht atoskewina eka nitatikiskayitan micet kayisihtotaman kiykwayih; ispih kawitatoskamak Civeo matoni miywasin. Namoyah pokoh nisoniyawacisk kamisaham, maka mitoni nitatih miyo-mahcihon niyawih, nimowimosciwewinih, ekwa ni-masikowih mamitonacikanihk. Ekwa oma ota kayayan.

Ka-wiytaminawa, ka-nitoskamih ka-miywasihk pimatisowin pohko ka-kociyahk kihcihtwāwi ekwa namoyah meskocipayin kiykway semak. Mitoni ka-kamayimoh ka-masitah kameskociwapinikah mamitonacikanihk itah katoskahk. Kakamayimoh tahto kisikaw täpwêwakêyiht kakîspinatamason.

Ekota anima kiskeyitamowin kanikanastak. Môy êkā êtokwê kiskeyitamowin, namoya kakiy masiyihtan miyo-pimatisiwin kwayasisih. **Kiskinohamatowin anima eyitahkiytahk tapiskoci Paskwaw Mostos** kitiminawak ewikoci anima kiskeyitamawin ka-sohakeyatak: tapiskocik asini kayitakisot katipahit. Kiskeyitamowina kakiskeytamek ekwiko anima e-ati kiskeyitamian.

Ka kiskinohamokosiyan, kitati-kispinatamason mihcet kiykway ka-miywasihk mena ki-tayisinimak, ekwa kiwicisanahk.

Keteyiyak ekwa onikaniwak itwewak ekosanima ekwa. Ekosi anima ekwa iyiniwak kawaniskatotakih miyo-pimatisiwin ekwa atoskewin. Okicitaskwew e-nohte pimicisaham kamasitayan atoskewin, kayisih wiycihakihk nici-ayisinimak ekosi kahkiyaw kayisi-wanikisicik anima kihci wîki okimanah kaki kiskinohamakosicik ekwa kitimakisiwin ka-kikiskakoyak miswe ota aksiy.

Nikiskeyitan kiskinohamatowin e-nikanastak ewikoci kamiwayitaman ka-witapisomakihk oka ka-astacik waskotepicikanihk ekosi pokwawiyak kakiy wawiyicisow kakiskinahamoksit. Ekwikoma ka-iyisikatakik **webCampus**, kamakicik UFCW Canada ekwa moya katipayikacik UFCW Canada members, otayisinimiwaw, ekwa wicawakaniwawa. Mekwac oma ekota nikiskinohamason webCampus ekota awasima ni-kakiskatamowin ohci nitatoskewin. Ota kanikaniwa, awasima niwiy otinan itah kawiycikoyan kotakah kiskatamowina ita kakispinamasoyan masinahikan ohci UFCW Canada ka itakoyan (**Human Rights Advocate**) kamasitayan kwayask kayisipaminit iynew ochi pimatisiwin.

Okawimaw nikotwasik e-otawasimisit, e-nikanapit Wapasu Nēhiyanah, ekwa apitawikosisan ekwa Inu iskonikanihk e-witapisomat itah katoskat, mitonih ka-nakateyitaman tansi kayisih apacitayan kisikaw oma kakwayisih masihtayan kotak kiskinohamatowin. Oki kawiytapisomakik mitoni ni-wicikwak and kakamayimoyan nitikwak. **Kiyah piko ekwa niya ka-masihtayak. Kispin niya ekakitayan, kista mina ka-kiytotan.**

Wahiyaw nisihkanawapin kayisih miyo-payihk 2016!  
**Ekosi!**  
Angela Fiddler

UFCW Canada members & members of their family can register for webCampus online here or by calling toll-free 1.866.865.0202 where webCampus staff is available to help members through the online registration process step-by-step. More information on webCampus is also available by emailing [webCampusadmin@ufcw.ca](mailto:webCampusadmin@ufcw.ca).

See more at:

<https://gounion.ca/news/my-ufcw-webcampus-education-experience-a-member-update-by-angela-fiddler/>

# 401 EVENTS CALENDAR

## june

1	General Membership Meeting – Medicine Hat
1	General Membership Meeting – Hinton
1	General Membership Meeting – Canmore
1 – 3	Shop Steward Training – Edmonton
2	Union General Membership Meeting – Athabasca Bog
4	Pride Parade – Edmonton
4	Red Deer Light The Night Community Walk
6	Union General Membership Meeting – Beaver River Executive Lodge
7	Union General Membership Meeting – Wapasu West
8	Union General Membership Meeting – Wapasu Main
8 – 10	Shop Steward Training – Calgary
13	Union General Membership Meeting – Conklin
13 – 14	Shop Steward Upgrade Course – Edmonton
15	Union General Membership Meeting – Fort MacKay
15 – 17	Public Speaking Course – Edmonton
19	Father's Day
20	EDLC General Meeting – Edmonton
20	CDLC General Meeting – Calgary
20 – 24	Community Advocate Training – Red Deer
21	National Aboriginal Day
25	Pride Parade – Lethbridge
25	David Martin Southern Open Golf Tournament

## july

1	Canada Day
1	Praise a Postal Worker Day
7	Eid-al-Fitr
26	Union General Membership Meeting – Edmonton
27	Union General Membership Meeting – Calgary
28	Union General Membership Meeting – Lloydminster

## august

1	Civic Holiday
8	Union General Membership Meeting – Banff
9	International Day of World's Indigenous People
12	International Youth Day
25	Union General Membership Meeting – Athabasca Bog

# 401 EVENTS CALENDAR

## september

4	Pride Parade – Calgary
5	Labour Day
5	EDLC Labour Day BBQ – Edmonton
5	CDLC Labour Day BBQ – Calgary
5	Labour Day BBQ – Lethbridge
5	Labour Day BBQ – Medicine Hat
8	International Literacy Day
11	Eid-al-Adha
19	EDLC General Meeting – Edmonton
19	CDLC General Meeting – Calgary
21	International Day of Peace
27	Union General Membership Meeting – Edmonton
27	Union General Membership Meeting – Lethbridge
28	Union General Membership Meeting – Calgary
28	Union General Membership Meeting – Ft. McMurray
29	Union General Membership Meeting – Grande Prairie
29	Union General Membership Meeting – Camrose/Wetaskiwin

## october

1	International Day of Older Persons
1	Union General Membership Meeting – Kaybob Lodge
3	Union General Membership Meeting – Beaver River Executive Lodge
4	Union General Membership Meeting – Red Deer
4	Union General Membership Meeting – Wapasu West
5	Union General Membership Meeting – Wapasu Main
5	Union General Membership Meeting – Canmore
5	Union General Membership Meeting – Medicine Hat
5	Union General Membership Meeting – Hinton
10	Thanksgiving Day
11	Union General Membership Meeting – Brooks
12	Union General Membership Meeting – Fort MacKay
14	Union General Membership Meeting – Conklin
16	World Food Day
17	EDLC General Meeting – Edmonton
17	CDLC General Meeting – Calgary

Continued on page 17

Don't forget to check your union bulletin board or [w.ufcw401.ca](http://w.ufcw401.ca) for updates or changes to 401 events.



# webCampus

THE FREEDOM TO LEARN ABSOLUTELY FREE



## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Personal development is a way for people to assess their skills/qualities, and consider their goals in order to realise their potential.



## SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Exploring new opportunities without paying tuition fees allows workers the freedom to assess a new direction or interest at their own pace.



## FOOD & RETAIL

Over 200,000 members work in this sector and deserve to learn more about its essential elements.



## LABOUR STUDIES

Work determines how we spend most of our waking hours and it often defines status, economic well-being, and self-image. Labour studies examines what fairness, equity and diversity means in the workplace.



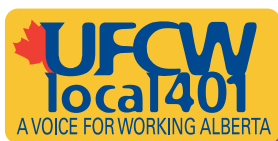
## HEALTH & SAFETY

Learning from hazard-based training gives workers the knowledge and skills to proactively identify, assess and control, if not, eliminate hazardous working conditions.



## COMPUTERS & TECHNOLOGY

Gaining or maintaining computer skills ensures workers access to information that affects their choices.



Available Certificates: Media & Communication Specialist, Human Rights Advocate, Retail Sector Specialist

**TO REGISTER:**  
**[www.ufcw.ca/webcampus](http://www.ufcw.ca/webcampus)**  
**1.866.865.0202**

# 401 EVENTS CALENDAR

## october

Continued from page 15

17	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
18	Persons Day
24	Union General Membership Meeting – Banff
30	Diwali
31	Halloween

## november

6	Daylight Savings Time Ends
11	Remembrance Day
20	Universal Children's Day
21	EDLC General Meeting – Edmonton
21	CDLC General Meeting – Calgary
25	International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

## december

1	World AIDS Day
3	International Day of Persons with Disabilities
6	National Day of Remembrance & Action on Violence Against Women
10	International Day of Human Rights
18	International Migrants Day
19	EDLC General Meeting – Edmonton
24	Christmas Eve
25	Christmas Day
26	Boxing Day
26	Kwanzaa

### Do you see something on this calendar that interests you?

Perhaps a school that's going on or one of our fabulous member driven committees that piques your interest or tickles your fancy? It is a great time to get more involved in your union, and there are numerous ways to do so. Be sure to call your Union Rep to find out more about whatever union action or event interests you, and learn how you can get involved. **Get connected and get involved!** You are a member of Alberta's most dynamic union and by becoming more involved in your union, you can make a valuable contribution to your community and help build a stronger future for all workers in the province.

Don't forget to check your union bulletin board or [w.ufcw401.ca](http://w.ufcw401.ca) for updates or changes to 401 events.

# IN 2017... We Will Be Strong

Preparations are already under way for Safeway members' next round of negotiations with Sobeys in March 2017. Though our negotiations are still many months off, UFCW 401 wants ensure that our Safeway members are ready to bargain from a place of strength.

While the outcome of 2014-2015 negotiations were positive, the sudden turnaround in February 2015 that brought negotiations to an amicable close was largely a surprise to the Bargaining Committee. To that point, bargaining had been tumultuous at best.

Safeway members will remember that the company came to the bargaining table looking for major concessions, especially around assistant and department managers' membership in the union and suppliers stocking shelves.

While Sobeys might have been forced to give up on those issues, Union President Douglas O'Halloran and Secretary Treasurer Theresa McLaren are already warning that members will need to be prepared to fight those battles again.

## The "Safeway Extra" Experiment

During the final stages of its 2013 acquisition of Canada Safeway, Sobeys decided to launch the "Champions of the Affordable Better Food Movement" (CABFM) brand. The CABFM brand is an effort to capture a chunk of the high-end grocery market in the form of "Safeway Extra" stores.

Initially Sobeys indicated it would only experiment with the "Safeway Extra" brand via new stores. But in late 2015, Sobeys came to President O'Halloran asking to experiment with revamping two existing Safeway stores in Calgary into "Safeway Extra" stores.

When President O'Halloran expressed unwillingness to experiment with the new brand unless it was done in new stores as previously indicated, Sobeys responded saying they would redirect funding for stores in Alberta elsewhere.

Written by Scott Payne, Communications & Education Representative

Consequently, President O'Halloran decided to take the question of the company's proposal directly to the members. A telephone town hall was set up to speak with Safeway members about the proposed experiment. As well, information and voting sessions were coordinated for Safeway members in Calgary to decide whether they wished to explore or reject the proposal.

"We are a democratic union," stated President O'Halloran. "And we cannot make this decision without input from the members who will be affected."

On February 22, hundreds of Safeway members attended the information sessions and cast ballots to let their union know whether they were interested in entering into discussions with Sobeys about the "Safeway Extra" stores.

The results were notable.

**Safeway Retail members voted 73% in opposition to the company's proposal. Meat and Deli members voted 89% in opposition to the proposal.**

"Look, this could have been a constructive process and it's too bad that Sobeys wasn't able to help us create a meaningful dialogue with our members," said President O'Halloran. "We firmly believe that the Safeway brand and banner are strong and valuable assets for Sobeys. We want to see the company invest in its unionized stores and we know that doing so can be a successful and profitable venture for Sobeys and our members."

"Unfortunately," continued President O'Halloran, "these results demonstrate that there is a gap of trust between the company and its employees that we need to address moving forward."





### **The March to March**

The primary goal for UFCW Local 401 is to convince Sobeys that investing in their Alberta Safeway stores while maintaining a fair and equitable contract for their unionized workers is a smart and profitable business decision.

However, the union is also aware that other options might seem preferable to the company. President O'Halloran and Secretary Treasurer McLaren are both making sure that Safeway union members know Safeway is now part of a "double-breasted" company, which has traditionally been problematic for unionized workers.

**For those not familiar, a "double-breasted" company is one that operates both unionized and non-unionized stores. This means that they can sell their products at stores where employees make less money and have fewer benefits, if they so choose.**

Research shows that double-breasted companies tend to put a lot of resources into their non-union stores and starve their union stores. This is a tactic that goes hand-in-hand with aggressive negotiations. It's designed to make life as hard as possible for their unionized employees and to weaken unions so the company can do business however it sees fit.

UFCW 401 is naturally concerned that this could be a path that Sobeys will choose to follow.

With the Safeway contract expiring in March 2017, UFCW 401 is running a large, year-long campaign called the *March to March* to get Safeway members prepared for negotiations with Sobeys. Getting ready

for negotiations by being active and showing our strength is our way of telling Sobeys that it is in their best interests to treat Safeway union members fairly.

### **Your Contract – Your Strength – Your Button**

Successful negotiations are built on strength. Bargaining from a position of strength means you have the tools you need to get a fair contract.

In the first phase of the campaign, Safeway members are being asked to start wearing their "In 2017... I will be strong" buttons immediately and on an ongoing basis.

You will have seen the buttons being handed out in your store by your Senior Labour Relations Officer and Shop Stewards. If you have not yet received a button, please ask your Senior Labour Relations Officer or Shop Steward about getting one to show your solidarity.

Demonstrating our strength will help ensure we are able to be successful in negotiations with Sobeys and potentially avoid a strike.

This is a strategy that has worked well for UFCW 401 members in the past.

As Secretary Treasurer McLaren notes, "The history of our union is made up of stories about standing up against odds that no one thought we could overcome. And

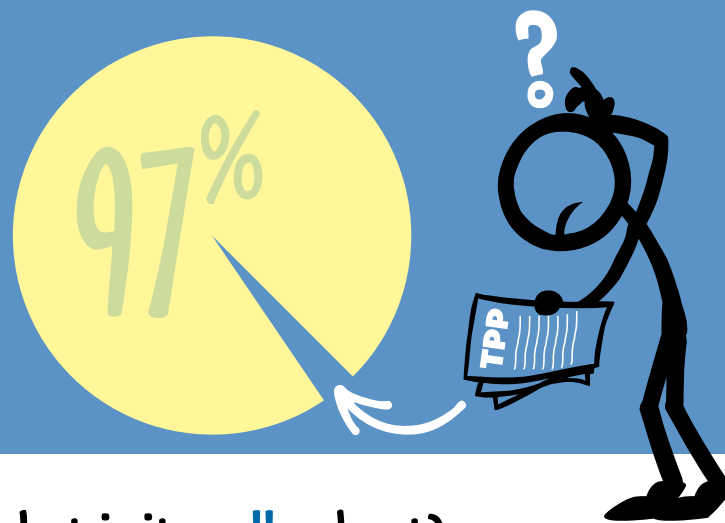
yet, every time we manage to find a way to beat the odds and achieve significant victories for our members.



There's no secret to how we manage to win those battles – it's the strength of our membership.

Local 401 members are always willing to stick together and fight for their rights. And when your membership understands that solidarity is key to bargaining from a place of strength, anything is possible."

97% of the goods Canada trades  
in the TPP zone are already duty-free.



## So, what is it **really** about?

In the last federal election, Canadians voted for “Real Change”.

So why is the government considering ratification of the Conservative-negotiated Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)?

The deal would make it nearly impossible for the Liberals to deliver on many of their election promises, including job creation, food safety, affordable prescription drugs and accelerating the shift to a greener economy to fight climate change.

Canada needs to **stop**  
the Trans-Pacific Partnership.



*Watch the video to learn more.*



# workplace

SPOTLIGHT



## **RAHR MALTING CANADA WORKERS – MAKING BEER LOVERS HAPPY SINCE 1991**



As part of UFCW 401's ongoing commitment to brag about its membership, we are introducing a new segment in *Your Voice* called "Workplace Spotlight". This new segment will highlight the many different workplaces around the province where our fabulous 401 members work.

The first workplace to be highlighted in this series is Rahr Malting Canada. I recently had the privilege of touring the plant, located east of Red Deer in the town of Alix, along with Rahr's Union Representative Sandy Harmeson.

During the 2-hour tour, I was very impressed with not only the proficiency with which workers went about their tasks, but also with how clean and efficient the facility was.

Rahr Malting is a family owned operation, which started in Minnesota and has been producing malt since 1847. There are plants across North America and they continue to expand.





The Alix plant produces approximately 140,000 metric tonnes of malt every year, supplying in the neighbourhood of 4700 customers (20% of those being overseas). Their customers range from home brewers to larger breweries like Big Rock in Calgary. Since craft beer uses three times the amount of malt as regular beer, it's not surprising that the growing popularity of craft beer has been very good for all at Rahr Malting.

There are three main processes involved in the production of barley malt: steeping (in two stages); germination; and kilning.

Steeping is done to ensure the right amount of moisture is added to the barley to get it ready for germination and takes about 48 hours. Each steeped batch, weighing 460 tonnes, helps to produce approximately three million bottles of beer!

After steeping, the barley is moved to the germination vessels where it is given fresh air in a temperature and humidity controlled environment in order to begin the germination (sprouting) process, which takes about 96 hours in total.

After germination is complete, the "Green Malt" is moved to kilns where it will take 24 hours in hot dry air to reduce the moisture and deactivate many of the enzymes that will be reactivated in the brewery it is destined for.

Equally important is the final step, which comes when customers place their malt orders. Depending on the customer's specifications, the malt is blended to meet their unique recipe needs. It is then cleaned again and shipped to the brewer in the packaging they request, which can be in bulk or bagged, in containers, railcars or trucks. Ultimately, customers get exactly what they've requested, depending on their individual needs.

Absolutely critical throughout the entire process is the constant analysis and testing of the different recipes and

their ingredients. The workers at Rahr know the moment something is "off" and can remedy it immediately in order to ensure both quality of product and avoiding waste. This is one of the many reasons customers keep coming back and why Rahr Malting has been ranked number two, out of 10 major suppliers of malt in terms of quality and service by every major brewer in Japan – a worthy distinction indeed!

There are 40 employees at the Alix location. 28 of those are members of UFCW 401. Ranging from Load Out Operators, Maintenance, and Lab Technicians, the warmth of the tight knit group at Rahr makes visitors feel very welcome. There were plenty of friendly smiling faces to be seen throughout the tour and while I'd have loved to talk to each and every one of them, sadly I was only able to steal a few of them away from their busy day.

One of the workers I spoke with was Desiree Brown (Des for short), who works in the lab. Des has been at Rahr for two years. Starting her employment in the lab

with tasks like data entry and cleaning supplies, a co-worker taking a leave of absence provided Desiree with an opportunity to move into the technician side of the lab within six months of starting her employment. Des leapt at the chance to take on a new challenge. When asked what her favourite part of the job is, Des says that she finds the chemistry side of the job fascinating. She says that within about six months she had a really good handle on the many different complexities of the job, but happily admits that there is always opportunity for learning, something she enjoys very much.

Having grown up in Alix, Des says that she loves the atmosphere at work. People are very friendly and the small community breeds a certain amount of comfort and familiarity with many of her co-workers. "It's a very welcoming environment and a really nice place to work," she says.

Wanda Barwell, a 21 year employee, is an Operator and oversees transferring of the product for processing throughout the various stages. She sees the product through the entire system in all its stages, including cleaning of the malt and prepping product for delivery.

The job is sometimes challenging depending on any number of factors that may crop up, but Wanda enjoys this aspect very much. As with all successful businesses, the operation has changed

over the years and Wanda speaks highly of the modernization and improvements to equipment, citing the computer upgrade for tracking as a major asset.

When asked about her feelings about working at Rahr, Wanda says fondly, "It's in close proximity to home and it has a family feeling," describing the Plant as, "a community

**"IT'S A VERY WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT AND A REALLY NICE PLACE TO WORK,"**



Lab Tech Desiree Brown



Stewards Mike Andriatz (L) and Ray Clark (R) with Union Rep Sandy Harmeson

within a community.” Spending 14 out of 28 days at work for 12 hours per day, Wanda says her co-workers are more like family. She also praises her employer for their generosity with employees who need time off for various reasons, particularly where someone’s health is a concern. “They can show real compassion for their employees,” Wanda concludes.

Lastly, I had the opportunity to sit down with two of our Shop Stewards, which was another real treat. Both working in Maintenance, Mike Andriatz and Ray Clark share some similar qualities that are very important for Stewards. They each possess quick wit and readiness to laugh, and are both very approachable and easy to talk to, showing a kindness and warmth that provides comfort to those they speak with.

Mike became a Steward only six months after he was hired, four years ago. Taking care of machinery as needed, like changing out big gearboxes and drive units, he says one of the nicest things about working at Rahr is that everyone works so well together. From management to rank and file, Mike spoke warmly about those who worked at the Plant.

Mike also praised the employer for being very accommodating of him for time off when he needs to fulfill volunteer firefighter duties in his hometown of Bashaw. Mike showed real passion for his volunteer duties, and in fact is the Chief of the Bashaw Fire Department.

In his time at another unionized workplace, Mike says he didn’t see his

Union Rep at all, but this is not the case with UFCW representatives. Having taken numerous courses through the union, Mike says he’s very much enjoyed his time as a Steward with 401. But not one to plan too far ahead, Mike says he’s

learned to be flexible and go with the flow when life takes a different turn and this, in part, is a big part of his relaxed nature.

Ray Clark, a long-time Shop Steward and past union negotiating committee member, spoke as a Steward of nine years would; laid back and ready to roll with the punches. Ray came to work at Rahr 18 years ago, starting in Operations. In 2013, feeling a change would be good, he moved over into the Maintenance Department and says it was a positive move. Since he already had his electrician’s ticket, the move was seamless. Ray says that one of the best aspects to his job is the wide variety of tasks throughout his workweek.

“I like the fact that there’s something different every day – there’s not much repetition,” Ray asserts. “And things can change quickly, so you really have to know the equipment.”

When Ray isn’t working to ensure the plant equipment is running smoothly and safely, this avid Edmonton Oiler and Saskatchewan Rough Rider fan enjoys bowling in not one, but TWO bowling leagues in neighbouring Red Deer! Perhaps having a keen eye for all that intricate machinery at Rahr plays a part in having an eagle eye for all those pins at the end of the bowling lane.

My most sincere thanks to each and every member who took the time to share their stories with me, both at the plant and over the phone. It was an absolute pleasure meeting some of the fine workers at Rahr Malting Canada’s Alix plant. The operation is fascinating and the members

warm and inviting. I can see why the plant’s Union Rep, Sandy Harmeson, speaks so highly of them.

I’d like to take the opportunity to also say thanks to the Operations Director Cody Marshall who went out of his way to make me feel welcome throughout his very informative tour. His enthusiasm for his job, those he works with, and the quality product they produce matches that of the workers he oversees.

As you can see, the malt for many of your favourite beers is in great hands, thanks in large part to the fine workers at Rahr’s Alix, Alberta Malting plant. Thanks to all at Rahr. We thank you for your dedication to your work and for choosing UFCW 401 as your union. We are honoured to represent you.

## CHEERS!

**“I LIKE THE FACT THAT THERE’S SOMETHING DIFFERENT EVERY DAY – THERE’S NOT MUCH REPETITION.”**





# Your Contract, Your Strength, Your Button!

In 2017, Safeway members need to be ready, active, and strong to negotiate a fair contract.

Wear your "In 2017... I will be strong" button to send Sobeys a message: investing in Safeway is in everyone's best interests.

For more information, talk to a Local 401 representative.





# Your Voice Member Survey

As a member of Local 401 we need your input, we would like to know what you think of the *Your Voice* Magazine. If you could please fill out this 2 page survey, cutting along the dotted line to mail in or hand over to your Senior Labour Relations Officer (Union Representative) we would appreciate it very much.  
(Please print or mark clearly with a ball point pen for best results.)

## When you receive UFCW 401's *Your Voice* magazine do you:

- ☐ Read it all the way through (*either right away or over time*)
- ☐ Flip through to see if there are parts that interest you and read only those parts
- ☐ Flip through it from time to time, but don't really read anything in depth
- ☐ Place it directly into the recycling bin

## Do you think the quality of the articles in *Your Voice* is good?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

## Do you think the length of articles in the magazine are:

- ☐ Too long
- ☐ About right
- ☐ Too short

## Do you think the number of articles in the magazine are:

- ☐ Too many
- ☐ About right
- ☐ Too few

## Would you like to see more magazine content about (mark all those that apply):

- ☐ Politics
- ☐ Social justice issues (*income inequality, racism and discrimination, climate change, etc.*)
- ☐ UFCW 401 members
- ☐ UFCW 401 workplaces
- ☐ Images and picture galleries
- ☐ Games, puzzles, etc.
- ☐ Labour history/trivia
- ☐ Bargaining updates
- ☐ Messages from the union leadership
- ☐ Stories from other UFCW local unions
- ☐ General labour movement stories
- ☐ Stories about your union's activities

*Survey continued on next page (Page 26)*

**Rank your preferred way to stay up to date on news about and the activities of your union? (1 being your favourite)**

- ☐ Your Voice magazine
- ☐ UFCW 401 website (ufcw401.ca)
- ☐ Email updates
- ☐ UFCW 401 Facebook page
- ☐ UFCW 401 Twitter account
- ☐ Posters on the union board in my workplace

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**If the magazine were left in the lunchroom at your workplace, would you read it?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**Do you appreciate that your union takes the time to produce and send you a magazine twice a year?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**If your union stopped producing the magazine, would you miss it?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**Would you be interested in writing an article, submitting a poem, or something else for *Your Voice*?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**Are there things you like about UFCW 401's *Your Voice* magazine that we haven't mentioned? If so, what are they?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**What are some things you would like to see changed about UFCW 401's *Your Voice* magazine that we perhaps haven't talked about?** \_\_\_\_\_

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*Thanks for taking the time to fill out this survey. Your feedback is very important to us and helps to ensure that we are always meeting your needs!*

Cut along the dotted line and mail to #102, 2635 - 37 Ave. N.E. Calgary AB T1Y 5Z6 Labeled as YOUR VOICE SURVEY  
or hand over to your Senior Labour Relations Officer (Union Representative).

