

your voice

United Food and Commercial Workers Canada Union, Local No. 401 - Vol. 101 - Sept.-Dec. 2013



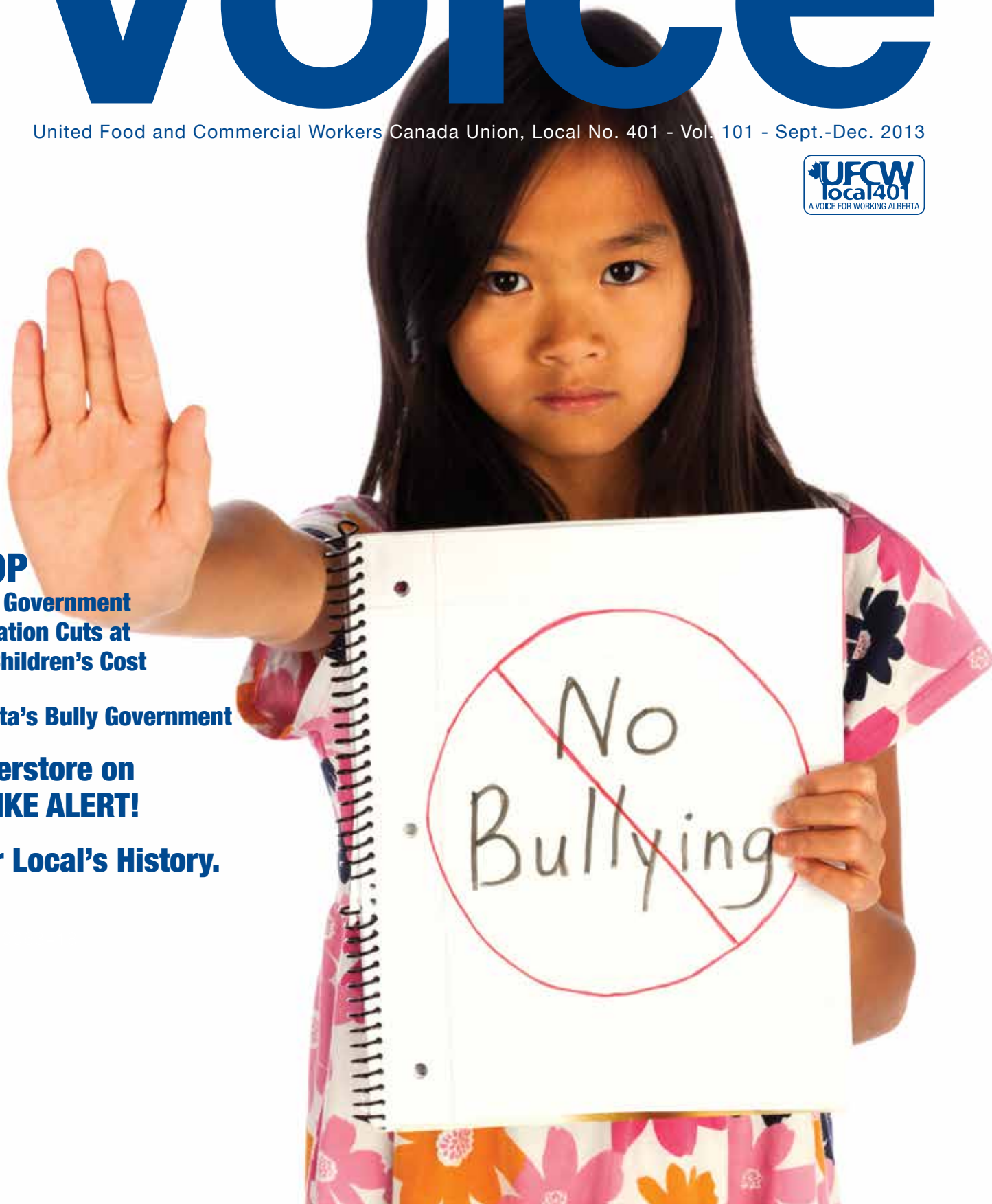
STOP

**Bully Government
Education Cuts at
Our Children's Cost**

Alberta's Bully Government

**Superstore on
STRIKE ALERT!**

Your Local's History.



your voice

United Food and Commercial Workers Canada Union, Local No. 401 - Vol. 101 - Sept.-Dec. 2013



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This quarterly magazine is designed, written, and printed union.

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UFCW Local 401 would like to welcome you to our 1st edition of *Your Voice*, a publication you can look forward to receiving 3 times a year. The purpose of this magazine is not only to engage our membership in the activities of the union, but also to inform the members on the wide range of issues we take on. We're an active union that is constantly seeking to improve the lives of all who belong to Local 401 and as a result, raise living standards for all Albertans. After all, unions don't just benefit those who pay dues. Being part of the labour movement means working together to improve the lives of all workers.

Be sure to keep in touch with us on our Facebook and Twitter pages and visit our website to keep up to date on developing news. All are listed on the contact page to the left.

We thank you for reading this and future editions of *Your Voice* and look forward to any comments on, or suggestions for, future articles. This is your union and we want to ensure that each issue of *Your Voice* reflects your priorities and interests, making sure you are best-informed membership in the country.

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Alberta's



Government

A word from your President, Douglas O'Halloran

Recently, I have had the opportunity to reflect on our current Conservative government and I'm left with one resounding thought: this government is without a shadow of a doubt a bully. Looking back at the government's decisions since the last provincial election, I see a series of bully tactics that leave a sour taste in my mouth.

Whether considering their mismanagement of homecare workers in Alberta, their mistreatment of Alberta's prison guards, or their continued abuse of the province's agricultural workers, this government's actions – or lack thereof – demonstrate a complete disregard for the needs of average Albertans. Ours is a government that clearly only cares about one thing: themselves and the corporations who got them elected.

Homecare workers in Alberta have long sought a fair and reasonable contract. By "fair" and "reasonable", I mean only a contract that would allow them to enjoy some comfort at home and would enable them to come back to work with less personal stress weighing them down. Is that really so much to ask? I don't think so.

And yet, when homecare workers wanted to exercise their right to achieve such a contract, our bully government's reaction was to enlist the services of the Disputes Inquiry Board. By involving the Board, the government essentially stripped dedicated

Extendicare workers of their ability to bargain with their employer. Without a fair hearing of their concerns, homecare workers were required to take roll backs in wages, sick time and vacation time. Did the quality of care being offered to patients by these workers even register for our government? It seems unlikely. But a bully rarely worries about what state you'll be in after they finish stealing your lunch money.

If we look at the Edmonton Remand Centre walkout, we see a management company and a government that again placed money before the safety of some of this province's most important workers. For months, Remand Centre Security Guards had been advocating for a number of health and safety changes in their workplace. However, these requests continued to fall on deaf ears.

When our bully government did intervene, it vilified the Guards in an attempt to make them public enemy number one with Albertans, rather than taking their concerns seriously and working with the Guards' union to address them. How dare these workers request a safer work environment at an already dangerous workplace!

Rather than being outraged that the Guards were consistently being placed in harm's way, Alberta's bully government was instead outraged that their indifference to the situation had been revealed.

**“ ...when will the
...when will the bullying
bullying stop so you
stop so you can start
can start working with
working with Albertans
Albertans instead of
instead of against them?”
against them?”**

And the government's actions since the Guards have returned to work show no better standards. Instead of living up its promises, the government is imposing sanctions and fines against the Guards, threatening to withhold their union dues, and even terminating some Guards to set an example.

Once again, we see a bully seeking retribution rather than resolution.

Finally, one particular group of workers this government has taken advantage of for years is Alberta's agricultural workers. Even following the many deaths we have seen in this line of work, our government has remained on the side of profits over people and does nothing to address these tragedies. In fact, while this industry is considered the most dangerous in the province, the government continues to exclude agricultural workers from simple rights like occupational health and safety and Alberta's employment standards.

It is the classic move of a bully to treat his or her victims as lesser

people, undeserving of the basic courtesies of dignity and respect. True to form, this is exactly how Alberta's government continues to treat agricultural workers – they are good enough to work but not good enough have the basic rights afforded to so many others in this province.



When looking at the actions of the Alberta government, I feel a deep embarrassment. This is not my government. And as they continue to relentlessly and consistently bully and attack those for whom they were elected to work, I am confident in saying that they do not represent the majority of Albertans.

I have dealt with a few bullies over the course of my life and not all of them were confined to the schoolyard. If there is one thing

I have learned about standing up to bullies, it is that the answer to your problem lies in being what the bully will not: honest, upfront, and sincere.

So I will ask Premier Redford and the rest of her government a simple question: *when will the bullying stop so you can start working with Albertans instead of against them?*

Lethbridge2013

Our annual convention will be in Lethbridge from November 1-3.

I'd like to extend an invitation to you to come out and see the work that labour and the Alberta New Democrats can do together.



Register online today!

www.AlbertaNDP.ca

and click "Events"

for more information:

Call us at 780-474-2415 or
e-mail us at info@albertandp.ca



Building A Fairer Alberta Together.

The Alberta New Democratic Party offers a positive, labour-focused alternative to the current Conservative government in the province. Alberta has the worst labour laws in Canada. Our laws make it difficult to organize a union and make it more difficult for unions to grow. Alberta has the lowest minimum wage in the country, despite the fact it costs more for people to live here. The New Democrats have always been focused on raising those issues on behalf of Alberta families. We are committed to seeing a province with a living wage, with fair conditions for unions and union workers and better health and safety protections for Albertans in the workplace.

In the last year, we've spent time on picket lines with UNA nurses and AUPE health care aides, at the Lilydale plant in Edmonton with workers from UFCW Local 1118 and worked hard, alongside UFCW Local 401, to bring to light working conditions for employees at the XL Foods plant after last fall's E.coli crisis.

We continue to stand with Albertans with disabilities who suffered devastating cuts to their supports in the last provincial budget, to call on the government to stop their privatization of long-term care in the province, and to fight against cuts to services, including health care and education, cuts that aren't fair for the hard-working families of our province.

We appreciate the work that our sisters and brothers in labour do to raise these important issues and to work with the provincial Party to create positive political change in Alberta.

The support of affiliates like UFCW Local 401 is invaluable in allowing us to offer a strong, viable alternative to the conservative parties in the province. As the only party in Alberta that doesn't accept corporate donations, we rely on volunteers and on

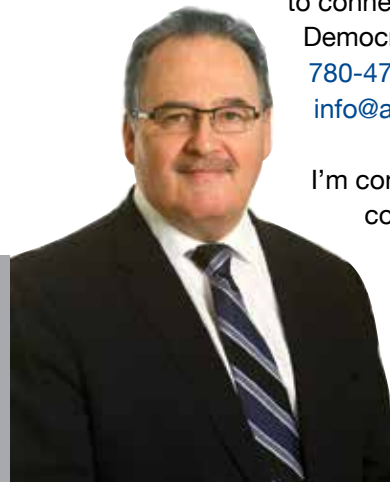
the financial support of individual Albertans and unions in order to raise the issues that matter to working Alberta families.

We appreciate the work of many individual union members contributing to the work of the Alberta New Democrats. As we've watched more and more UFCW Local 401 members become involved with the work of creating positive political change, we've become increasingly excited by the possibilities for our province. Engaging with union members, seeing them become involved in the last provincial election and ultimately becoming involved in the day-to-day work of the party is a daily encouragement. We know that the more members that are motivated to build a better, fairer Alberta, the more that we'll be able to do together.

As individual union members, I'd ask you to consider what you can do to create the positive political change that we all want to see. There are opportunities to volunteer across the province, raising awareness about the kind of province that the New Democrats and UFCW Local 401 want to see. Our annual convention will be in Lethbridge from November 1 to 3, and I'd like to extend an invitation to you to come out and see the work that labour and the Alberta New Democrats can do together.

Please consider getting in contact with us to let us know what issues are important to you, what you think the New Democrats should do to make the province a fairer place for all Albertans and to connect with other local New Democrats. [You can call us at 780-474-2415](tel:780-474-2415) or [e-mail us at info@albertandp.ca](mailto:info@albertandp.ca).

I'm confident that in the years to come, the work of the Alberta New Democrats and our union affiliates like UFCW Local 401 can work together to build a better province for all Albertans.



We continue to stand with Albertans against... the cuts that aren't fair for the hard-working families of our province.

“In our glorious fight for civil rights, we must guard against being fooled by false slogans, such as ‘right to work.’ It provides no rights and no work. Its purpose is to destroy labor unions and the freedom of collective bargaining...”

Martin Luther King Jr. 1961



Written by Christine McMeekan

In Canada currently, there are some conservative politicians who would have this crippling legislation come to your workplace. It has been named deceptively many different things in order to make it sound “warm and fuzzy”. There is a very real possibility that this anti-worker legislation will be introduced to Canada in Ontario, through Conservative Leader Tim Hudak. It is aimed at weakening the very democratic organizations who serve to improve workers’ lives and workplaces.

Those who understand the damage this law brings to workers often refer to it as “free rider” legislation. It is essentially law that makes it illegal to require workers protected under the union contract to pay dues as a condition of employment, making the payment of dues entirely optional. Workers can enjoy all the benefits of the union without having to pay for it! Put another way, if you join a health club and simply decide to stop paying your membership dues, you would not be allowed to continue to go there. It costs that club a lot of money to serve its members, to maintain or replace equipment, pay staff to work with clients, run classes and ensure the cleanliness, upkeep and safety of the facility. If people were allowed to “opt out” of paying their health club fees but continue getting all the benefits of the club, what kind of club would you be left with? It certainly wouldn’t be a club you’d want to belong to for long. The effect is the same for unions. Workers would have access to the limited resources of the underfunded union without ever having to pay their fair share. So the few who choose to pay their dues because they understand the need for a well-funded union, will be paying for any “freeloaders” to enjoy all the same benefits. Where’s the fairness in that?

Understandably, this “free-rider” or “dine and dash” legislation serves not to give workers the freedom of choice. It serves instead to undermine workers’ power to bargain collectively with their employer by cutting off funding to their advocates. It serves solely to drive

down wages, benefits and worker rights and protections because without a well-funded union, workers cannot afford to take on important battles or threaten to use their strength with employers who are actively avoiding negotiating with them – all these things cost money.

The effects are wide reaching. When unions are forced to spend valuable time constantly signing up and collecting dues from the very workers they’re still legally obligated to represent, it weakens the union’s ability to focus on the day to day issues that need attention, including bargaining improvements to collective agreements. The shift from servicing the membership and their needs to that of dues collection, as one could well image, would put an enormous strain on valuable and limited resources because of those who are allowed to refuse to pay union dues.

Also, fewer grievances can be filed on behalf of workers who are having problems in the workplace and far fewer arbitrations can be pursued.

Additionally, unions play a critical role in fighting for healthy social programs like healthcare and education; there will be little or no money for those efforts and the erosion will be felt far and wide for all citizens. And of course, we can forget about contributing to the many community activities and fundraising efforts affecting workers and their families. All of these things, which serve a vital part of a flourishing working class suffer, poverty rates climb and laws protecting all workers, not just unionized workers, become grossly eroded.

In states within the US where this legislation exists (almost ½ the states are under some form of this legislation), workers are often paid less than their counterparts in states without this devastating legislation. They also have lesser pensions or no pensions at all, weaker workplace health and safety protection, fewer healthcare benefits or none at all.

Poverty rates and underemployment rates are also noticeably higher in many of these jurisdictions. Why? When governments enact legislation that serves to underfund the only organizations that exist to improve the lives of workers and raise standards across the board, there is an inevitable erosion of the ability for workers to improve conditions and keep up with the rising cost of raising a family or running their home.

Below is a graph showing the relationship between declining union membership rates and the working class's ability to earn their fair share. Michigan's unionization rate has plummeted in the last 30 years and in December 2012, they became the 24th state to enact this anti-worker legislation. It's scary to think how much further unions in Michigan are going to decline and what that will mean to the average resident.

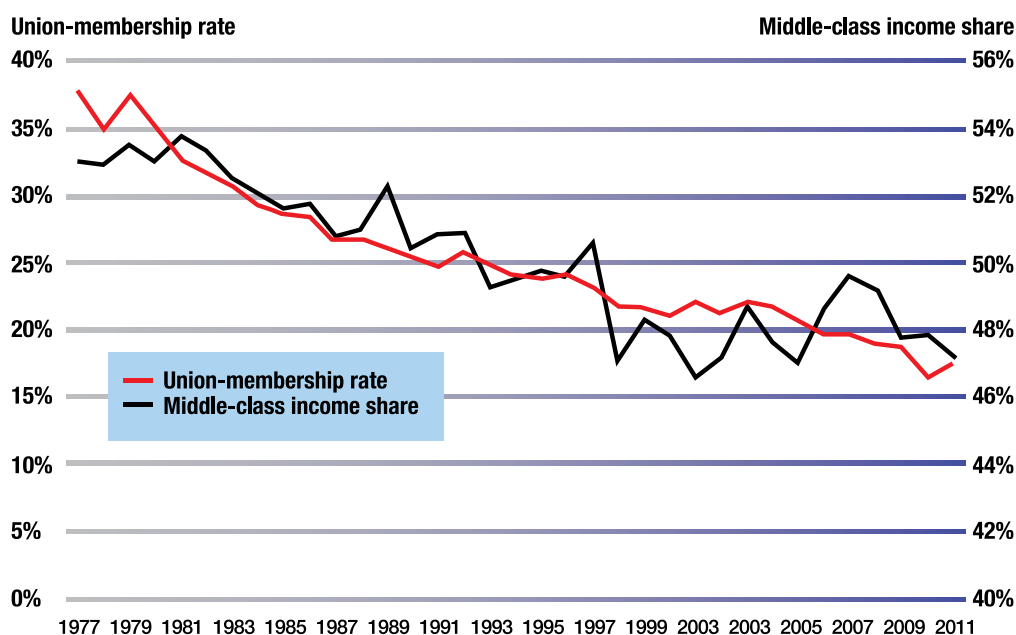
This legislation forces unions work for free. There are no other service providers who are legislated to provide services AT NO CHARGE!

The consequence of this crippling law will be that your union will be spending less time in your workplace assisting you with your issues, your problems with that supervisor, and filing grievances to hold your employer accountable. Contract enforcement becomes weakened. This is the purpose of this legislation – there is no other. This legislation is designed to make workers' voices and influence weaker, drive down wages and erode working conditions.

There is a very real possibility that this legislation will be introduced in Ontario first. And if it is, the floodgates will be opened in Alberta. Keep your eye out for it and oppose it vigorously if you want to continue building a union contract, healthy economy, and improving your workplace.

This legislation forces unions to work for free. There are no other service providers who are legislated to provide services AT NO CHARGE! Consider this anomaly. Your employer would never be able to allow you to work for free, you must be compensated for your services. But right-wing governments are telling you that your union should work for FREE! Legislation of this type is politically motivated to weaken workers... all workers.

As unions have weakened, Michigan's middle class has shrunk



Source: Michigan's union membership rate is from unionstats.com; share of income going to middle 60 percent of households is from Bureau of the Census, *American Community Survey* (Department of Commerce, 2012).



together FAIRNESS WORKS



Canadian Labour Congress

Congrès du travail du Canada

www.canadianlabour.ca



The Canadian Labour Congress: Who Are We?



The Canadian Labour Congress represents the interests of more than three million affiliated workers in every imaginable occupation from coast to coast to coast. The CLC is the umbrella organization for dozens of affiliated Canadian and international unions, as well as provincial and territorial federations of labour and regional labour councils.

We advocate on behalf of all working people in many different ways – from organizing campaigns and rallies, to lobbying federal politicians in Parliament, to speaking out in the media and to business on key issues, to representing Canada's labour movement internationally, to developing partnerships with the community and other supportive groups.

Union members across Canada share the goals of members of UFCW – what we desire for ourselves, we desire for all. Decades of hard work have made life better for all Canadians!

When workers get together and stand up for fairness, they get results. Together, working people have won

decent wages, safer workplaces, fair treatment and benefits like paid vacation time, job training, and insurance coverage for things like glasses, dental care, and medicine that keep them healthy and productive.

They didn't stop there. What they got at work, they got for everybody else by standing together and demanding more from the people they elected to boards, councils and legislatures. That's how we all got some of the things most of us take for granted today – minimum wage, statutory holidays, paid vacation time, public healthcare, public pensions, weekends, etc.

Together, working people built Canada's middle class and created a country with fairness as one of its fundamental values.

If you have any questions or comments about the CLC, please feel free to contact me, Amanda Freistadt, CLC Regional Representative for Alberta, at [780-904-0517](tel:780-904-0517) or afreistadt@clc-ctc.ca



Alberta Government Bullies Students Outside the Classroom

As we near the end of summer, there are a large number of UFCW Local 401 members who will be thinking about the return to school. The Union has members who will be returning as students, as well as members who will be preparing their children for school. Sadly, for all the preparation in which those members will engage, it is the case that Alberta's government cares little for them or what their return to classes holds in store. The shock that many Albertans have felt over this revelation is not hard to understand.



From early in her career as leader of the province's Progressive Conservative Party, Alison Redford has positioned herself as a champion of education. Redford, who substantially trailed front-runner Gary Mar early in the Party's leadership race, made a bid to gain traction in the race by pledging to restore \$107 million in funding cuts to education. It was a landmark move that proved successful for Redford. Appealing to the Party's vein of so-called "Red Tory" sentiment, Redford made inroads with enough Progressive Conservatives to emerge as the from-behind victor.



nowhere did the sting of funding cuts, land more sharply than in the province's elementary and secondary schools.

In that particular instance, Redford proved true to her word. As journalist Josh Wingrove wrote for the Globe and Mail on April 4, 2012, Redford made good on her promise 11 days into her premiership, just one-day shy of her stated ten-day goal.

So it was not without some sense of trust that Albertans took Redford's sweeping commitments during the 2012 provincial election at face value. In an effort to stem the momentum of the ultra-right-wing Wildrose Party, Redford announced funding commitments to the tune of \$2.4 billion.

Even on the provincial political stage, where millions of dollars get thrown around like so much scrap paper, the announcement was attention-getting and placed Wildrose leader Danielle Smith on the spot. Just days earlier, Smith had proposed a \$300 "energy rebate" for every Albertan. At roughly the same cost, Redford was

proposing to build 50 new schools. The outcome of the election indicated whose idea Albertans found more appealing.

But months away from 2013 fall semester, it's clear that the blush has come off Redford's rose. A string of broken promises have left Redford and her government slumping in the polls, with Redford netting a record low 26% approval rating and dragging her own Party down to a mere 29%. While the Conservative's 2013 budget failed to live up to many of their election promises, nowhere did the sting of funding cuts land more sharply than in the province's elementary and secondary schools.

Plans to provide an additional \$200 million for the implementation of full-day kindergarten were immediately scrapped. Although the funding wasn't as news worthy as the government's \$2.4 billion

commitment, the option was significant to many working families who struggle to find affordable childcare while holding down more than full-time work just to make ends meet. And while the government claims it will forge ahead with plans to build 50 new schools, the project's lack of a completion date leaves the promise largely empty for most Albertans.

In addition to its empty campaign promises, the government's 2013 budget also handed down a \$120 million cut to education funding that has left the province's schools scrambling. Rather than setting Alberta's course for "21st century learning," as promised in 2012, Redford and her Education Minister, Thomas Lukazsak (who also happens to be the Deputy Premier), are sending more than 11,000 students into classrooms without adequate funding this fall.

But students and parents aren't the only ones being pushed around by a bully Conservative government. Easily enduring the worst of the abuse are the province's teachers. According to the Alberta Teachers' Association, Redford and Lukaszuk's cuts will force approximately 400 teachers out of work this September. For a system that is already struggling to meet the needs of Alberta's burgeoning population, the loss of those teachers is a major blow.

However, this loss was hardly the last shot across Alberta teachers' collective bow by a government bent on placing rhetoric ahead of reality. In May 2013, the Conservative government imposed a legislated contract on teachers. The legislation stripped teachers of the ability to bargain and imposed an offer the government had made back in March that some teachers had rejected. The significance of this draconian move cannot be overstated.

Teachers had been bargaining with the government for two years in an effort to come up with a fair contract to



which both sides could agree. However, a three-year wage freeze and the paltry offer to "review" workloads failed to win the support of organizations like the Calgary Public School Board. Infuriated that it had not gotten its way, the government decided to make an example of teachers, circumvent the negotiation process altogether, and simply dictate what the terms of the deal would be.

As columnist David Climenhaga wrote on May 14, "Presumably if everyone had gone along with the deal as the government wanted, it would also have let the government say to other unions now or soon in negotiations with it or its agencies, like the province's civil servants and its nurses, 'see, the teachers took zero and you should too.' Alas, this argument surely loses some of its impact when you realize that the teachers *had no choice*."

In a stroke or pure irony, Alberta's bully government elected to call its dictatorial legislation the *Assurance for Students Act*. Meanwhile, students in Alberta are receiving their education in buildings that are crumbling from lack of upkeep, they are being squeezed into classrooms that are already overflowing and don't even

Redford and Lukazsak are sending more than 11,000 students into classrooms without adequate funding this fall.

contain a sufficient number of desks, and they have 400 fewer teachers upon which to rely for guidance.

The only assurance that students in Alberta seem to have is that their education is not in the least bit safe from the government's short sighted blundering.

The question that lingers is whether any of this could be avoided. The government's line in this regard is wholly predictable. Finance Minister Doug Horner has staked his credibility on arguments of principle saying, "I'm not in this for political gain. I'm in this to do the right thing."

A noble enough sentiment; but as Alberta Federation of Labour President Gil McGowan noted in May, the deficit and resulting cuts were entirely avoidable and of the government's own making. Citing an internal report from 2010 warning that proposed royalty cuts would have significant budgetary impacts, McGowan reminded Albertans,

"[The government has] been acting like this year's deficit came as some kind of surprise to them, and they've tried to point fingers at bitumen prices. But the deficit was predictable, and was predicted in this report to the minister. Royalty reductions

were to blame, and were blamed in this report.

Royalty rates are part of the adult conversation Albertans need to have about revenue. Let's start with looking at what royalty giveaways have already done to this province."

Instead, the government has sought to vilify any and all critics with the courage to stand up and shed light on its hypocrisy.

Sadly, those paying the highest price for this behaviour also have the fewest means of addressing it. A generation of Alberta students are saddled with a government that justifies the erosion of their education as a necessary evil and refuses to acknowledge its own guilt in manufacturing that necessity. It's a double bind of the worst variety.

It's no secret that time spent in school is full of trials and tribulations as students learn about the world around them and their place within it. This fall, Alberta students will be forced to contend with an additional hurdle. Whatever challenges they are set to encounter inside our province's classrooms will pale in comparison to the bullying they face from their own government outside of them.





UFCW Canada Supporting Member

PRIDE

in Alberta, and across Canada



UFCW National: combining our strengths for a better, fairer Canada

UFCW Canada, your national union, is the country's most courageous, groundbreaking, dynamic and inclusive not-for-profit activist organization.

Your national union is dedicated to supporting 401, and all UFCW Canada Local Unions, in building strength for the membership to gain better conditions at work for you and your coworkers, to establish higher standards in core industries for all employees, and to fight for more equality and social justice in our communities.

The national office supports Local Unions by offering a long list of services and resources to build the strengths of current activists and to develop the potential of future UFCW Canada leaders. UFCW Canada national also engages the public as voters and consumers when it comes to issues that impact society, the economy and our values as Canadians.

Through groundbreaking programs like webCampus – and the outstanding participation of 401 members – UFCW Canada has set the international standard for union education and skills development, and by offering members post-secondary scholarships that exceed \$300,000 every year, UFCW Canada is proving its unparalleled commitment to

lifelong learning and the organization's guiding principle that knowledge is power.

Your union is also the country's leading force in welcoming new members to the labour movement and encouraging employees to exercise their fundamental right to negotiate as a group for better working conditions.

Together with 401 and other Local Unions, your national union has helped more than 33,000 workers over the past five years to win their first union contract, and to improve their lives by gaining the UFCW advantage and the life-changing power of collective bargaining.

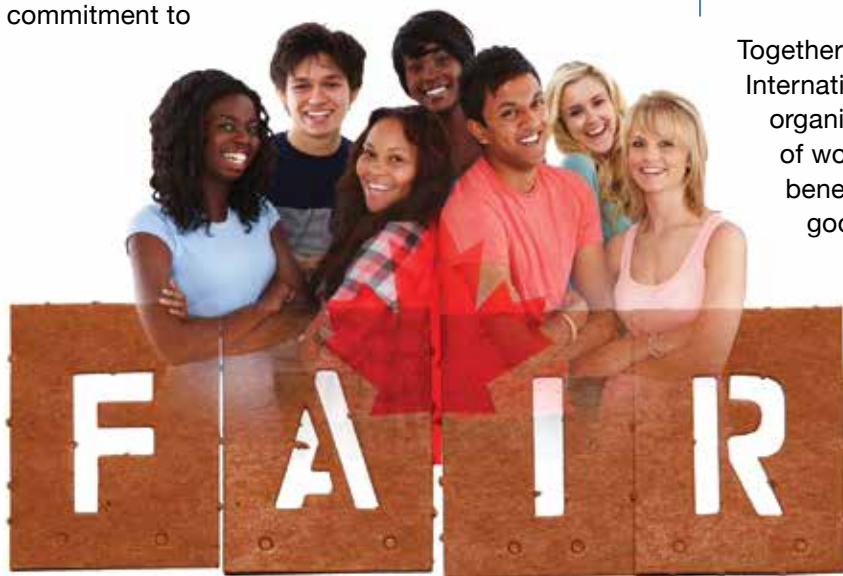
Some of those new members work for small businesses, and others work for the biggest employers in the world.

Your union has never been afraid of the big fights.

Whether it's Walmart, Target or Ultra-Conservative governments at every level of government, UFCW Canada is the first – and often only – union to make a stand for employee rights, greater equality and the dignity and respect of workers.

Together with 401, other Local Unions, and UFCW International, we are Canada's most committed organizing union because whenever a new group of workers joins the union movement, everyone benefits. Unions protect and create good jobs; good jobs build strong communities; and strong communities carry us all forward.

To find out more about UFCW Canada, webCampus, union scholarships, and how you can make a difference, please visit your national union's award-winning website www.ufcw.ca.



Improving the Lives of Working Albertans

Written by Chris O'Halloran

UFCW Local 401 has seen a great deal of success when it comes to organizing lately. In the past year alone, the Union has certified more than 1,000 new members at the Alberta Labour Relations Board

To achieve those victories, we have been active all over the province, engaging workers in a variety of industries about improving the conditions in their workplaces.

When we talk about improving conditions, many people immediately think of wage increases and benefits. But it will not surprise union members to hear that the majority of calls we receive have to do with treatment and a lack of respect in workplaces.

That was the situation facing Shoppers Drug Mart workers when they contacted the Union. The efforts in which we engaged with those workers drastically improved the treatment they receive from their employer.

At the i-Hotel in Red Deer, organizing efforts initiated by workers tired of being exploited were met with hostility by the employer and eventually resulted the unjust termination of three employees.

UFCW Local 401 has never backed down from a fight and stands by workers who seek to improve working conditions for themselves and their co-workers. So we took the employees' case to the Labour Relations Board and won a resounding victory for i-Hotel workers.

As well, UFCW Local 401 has ensured that workers in Alberta have not been misrepresented. We know from experience that so-called "unions" like the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) and Specialty and Temporary Employees Union (STEU) rarely negotiate contracts that benefit workers and tend to softball the negotiation process in ways that favour employers.

So when we heard they were trying to represent workers in our province, we informed the workers about the problems with the organizations and offered them a better alternative with UFCW. In both instances, the workers opted for the *real* union.

Finally, we have brought the union advantage to workers at Safeway Liquor Stores, Lucerne Lab Technicians who were previously excluded from the Union Contract their co-workers enjoyed, and currently have nine different sets of negotiations occurring at various camps throughout Fort McMurray!

Needless to say, it's been a busy year. We couldn't do all of this important work without the support of our members and the resources provided by their dues. By working together and continually talking about the benefits of being part of the labour movement, we are able to improve the lives of all workers in Alberta and Canada.

We look forward to another successful year working alongside you!

THANK YOU

for your support.

Bad Boss?

Over Worked?

Under Paid?

We have all been overworked, under paid and had a bad boss. When this happens workers are left with a number of options. They can quit and find another job, they can accept the treatment, or they can do something about it. Confidentially contacting the Union is the first step in doing something about your working conditions.

Statistics show the unionized workers have higher wages, better benefits and retirement plans. Your employer will never know that you have contacted the Union, let us show you the Union advantage.

1.877.468.6466

www.877gounion.ca

joinus@877gounion.ca

twitter.com/877gounion

facebook.com/877gounion.ca



401 EVENTS CALENDAR

september

Possible Superstore Strike!

1	Pride Parade in Calgary – Route TBA
2	Labour Day
4-6	Facing Management School Calgary – Location TBA
8	International Literacy Day
9	Superstore Town Hall Call-In – Contact Details & Time TBA
9-10	Bullying & Violence in the Workplace Training Medicine Hat – Location TBA
10	Union General Membership Meeting Athabasca 7 p.m. – Super 8 Motel 4820B Wood Heights Rd.
11-13	Finance Course Medicine Hat – Location TBA
16-20	Organizing School Edmonton – Location TBA
17-19	Advanced Shop Steward School Calgary – Location TBA
17-19	Superstore – Bargaining dates set
24-26	Advanced Shop Steward School Edmonton – Union Office 14040 – 128 Ave.
21	International Day of Peace
23-27	Buffalo Metis Catering Proposal Meetings – Location TBA
24	Union General Membership Meeting Edmonton 7 p.m. – Union Office 14040 – 128 Ave.
24	Union General Membership Meeting Lethbridge 7 p.m. – Union Office 1510 – 2nd Ave South
24-26	Aviscar Inc. – Bargaining dates set
25	Union General Membership Meeting Calgary 7 p.m. – Glenmore Inn 2720 Glenmore Tr. SE
25	Union General Membership Meeting Grande Prairie 7 p.m. – Holiday Inn Express 0226 – 117 Ave.
25	Union General Membership Meeting Hinton 7 p.m. – Holiday Inn 393 Gregg Ave.
26	Union General Membership Meeting Red Deer 7 p.m. – Red Deer Lodge 4311 – 49 Ave.
30-Oct. 2	Health & Safety Training Calgary – Location TBA



POSSIBLE SUPERSTORE STRIKE!

Read more on page 22

401 EVENTS CALENDAR

october

1	International Day of Older Persons
1	Union General Membership Meeting Camrose/Wetaskiwin 7 p.m. – Noresman Inn 6505 – 48 Ave.
1	Union General Membership Meeting Fort McMurray 7 p.m. – Union Office #205, 9914 Morrison Street
2	Union General Membership Meeting Medicine Hat 7 p.m. – Holiday Inn Express Hwy #1, 9 Strachan Bay SE
2	Union General Membership Meeting Conklin Lodge 8:15 p.m. – Contact Your Union Rep for Location
7-9	Health & Safety Training Edmonton – Union Office 14040 – 128 Ave.
8	Union General Membership Meeting Beaver River Executive Lodge 8:15 p.m. – Contact Your Union Rep for Location
8	Union General Membership Meeting Brooks 7 p.m. – Union Office 631 – A Sutherland Dr.
9	Union General Membership Meeting Canmore 7 p.m. – Canmore Legion 834 – 7 Street
9	Union General Membership Meeting Athabasca Lodge 8:15 p.m. – Contact Your Union Rep for Location
10	Union General Membership Meeting Banff 7 p.m. – Banff Legion 92 Banff Ave.
14	Thanksgiving Day
16	World Food Day
17	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
18	Person's Day
22	Union General Membership Meeting Henday Lodge 8:15 p.m. – Contact Your Union Rep for Location
22-25	Basic Shop Steward School Edmonton – Union Office 14040 – 128 Ave.
25	PTI Shop Steward Meeting – Location TBA
28-31	Basic Shop Steward School Calgary – Location TBA
23	Union General Membership Meeting Wapasu West 8:15 p.m. – Contact Your Union Rep for Location
24	Union General Membership Meeting Wapasu Main/East 8:15 p.m. – Contact Your Union Rep for Location
31	Halloween
TBA	Aramark Long Lake Camp Bargaining
TBA	PTI Buffalo Metis Catering Bargaining
TBA	Nexen Aramark Bargaining

401 EVENTS CALENDAR

november

3	Daylight Savings Time Ends
6-7	Bullying & Violence in the Workplace Training Edmonton – Union Office 14040 – 128 Ave.
11	Remembrance Day
18-19	Bullying & Violence in the Workplace Training Calgary – Location TBA
20	Universal Children's Day
20-22	Public Speaking School Calgary – Location TBA
25	International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
26	Union General Membership Meeting Lethbridge 7 p.m. – Union Office 1510 – 2nd Ave. South
26	Union General Membership Meeting Edmonton 7 p.m. – Union Office 14040 – 128 Ave.
26-28	Public Speaking School Edmonton – Union Office 14040 – 128 Ave.
27	Union General Membership Meeting Calgary 7 p.m. – Glenmore Inn 2720 Glenmore Tr. SE
27	Union General Membership Meeting Grande Prairie 7 p.m. – Holiday Inn Express 10226 – 117 Ave.
27	Union General Membership Meeting Hinton 7 p.m. – Holiday Inn 393 Gregg Ave.
28	Union General Membership Meeting Red Deer 7 p.m. – Red Deer Lodge 4311 – 49 Ave.

december

1	World AIDS Day
2	Union General Membership Meeting Fort McMurray 7 p.m. – #205, 9914 Morrison Street
3	Union General Membership Meeting Conklin Lodge 8:15 p.m. – Contact Your Union Rep for Location
3	Union General Membership Meeting Camrose/Wetaskiwin 7p.m. – Norseman Inn 6505 – 48 Ave.
3	International Day of Disabled Persons
4	Union General Membership Meeting Medicine Hat 7 p.m. – Holiday Inn Express Hwy #1, 9 Strachan Bay SE
4	Union General Membership Meeting Lloydminster 7 p.m. – Best Western Wayside Inn 5411 – 44 Street
5	Union General Membership Meeting Athabasca Lodge 8:15 p.m. – Contact Your Union Rep for Location
5	Union General Membership Meeting Beaver River Lodge 8:15 p.m. – Contact Your Union Rep for Location
6	National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women
9	Union General Membership Meeting Heday Lodge 8:15 p.m. – Contact Your Union Rep for Location
10	Union General Membership Meeting Wapasu West 8:15 p.m. – Contact Your Union Rep for Location
10	International Day for Human Rights
11	Union General Membership Meeting Wapasu East/Main 8:15 p.m. – Contact Your Union Rep for Location
18	International Migrant's Day
24	Christmas Eve
25	Christmas Day
26	Boxing Day
31	New Year's Eve

Safeway (and Other Employers) Commit to Pursue Employee Online Conduct.

Can Your Social Media Comments Get You Fired or Disciplined?

Written by Dee Mae Beler

New legal issues are emerging for employers and employees and the question is: can an employee's off-duty online conduct (i.e. posting personal status updates, photos or comments outside of work hours) lead to discipline or termination. **The answer is; yes, it most certainly can.**

The growth and popularity of social media and its ease of use and accessibility can be a useful tool to stay connected and share information quickly for individuals and organizations. The union has itself become more connected on social media sites with our Facebook and Twitter pages. These have been very useful in our organizing and negotiation efforts and keeping our members informed about rapidly changing or time sensitive issues. So what is the dark side? What should members do to protect themselves and their employment? Should they be cautious about to whom they allow access to their personal pages? **The answer again is, yes!**

Unfortunately, people wrongly believe that what they post on their personal page is private and protected speech. Too often they leave work after a tough day and comment a little too candidly on the day's events. No matter how tempted you are to use Facebook to share harsh views about your job, your employer, or coworkers' behaviours, you may be playing Russian roulette with your job.

Regardless of whether you intend for your posts to be relatively private (have your privacy settings quite high), courts and arbitrators have concluded in recent cases that posts on social media sites are easily shared and may be considered public if viewed by your "friends". Even if you think your Facebook posts are protected

by your privacy settings, courts and arbitrators are increasingly seeing it differently. Arbitrators across a host of Canadian jurisdictions are increasingly being asked to hear cases upholding employee discipline imposed following "offensive" Facebook posts employers view to be harmful to their reputation. And unfortunately, recent cases in both Ontario and here in Alberta have not provided positive outcomes for employees and their job security.

There are more and more examples of employers taking action against employees for these posts. Safeway is among the growing list of employers actively pursuing this issue. Recent conversations with Human Resource Managers of Safeway have revealed they are aware of the current trend in Canada to uphold discipline and/or dismissals of employees for social media posts. Further they have said they will hold employees accountable for writing what they perceive to be, harmful or defamatory Facebook posts. Any posts which demonstrate insubordination, harassment, breach of any known workplace policies such as confidentiality, absenteeism, respect for human dignity, safety and security concerns, or could cause harm to the reputation of the employer, could lead to those members being disciplined.

Even if you think your Facebook posts are protected by your privacy settings, courts and arbitrators are increasingly seeing it differently.

Recent upheld dismissal decisions are a caution to exercise extreme care in what you post online, even if only to your "friends" on Facebook for example. This is of particular

concern when your Facebook friends include past and present co-workers, management, or members of the public who could be customers or associates of your employer. The bottom line is, it is difficult to predict who will read your comments, or in whose hands they will end up. Even if your privacy settings only allow your friends to view your page, any of them can share your comments, pictures and various other posts, so extreme caution about what you say about your employer is necessary.

So what should Employees do?
The simple solution is to not post any comments about work or coworkers or any posts that may be seen as offensive by your employer. The reality is that for many of us, posting is a daily occurrence so think twice before you post.

There are many options to limit access to your posts and heighten your privacy settings, however, employees should regularly check their status settings because Facebook updates can change those settings without your ever realizing. Consider limiting access to your activity log and timeline as well as the details in the "about you" section. Be cautious about who you "friend" and which of these people have access to your posts. Further limit who has access to tag you in photos and posts and be cautious in uploading geo-tagged photos that show your location.

While these tips may help limit the visibility of your profile and its content, **nothing online is ever totally private.** So take into consideration everything you share because you may have to defend your posts with your employer and endure unnecessary hardship and loss of income while you defend yourself along the way.

Superstore Employees Deserve A Fair Contract. And Here's Why!

Written by Christine McMeekan

Superstore employees have been engaged in a very difficult year of bargaining with their employer. The company's refusal to offer a single improvement to their contract is not only extremely discouraging but confusing as well. Galen Weston, Executive Chairman of Loblaw, has bragged recently about the company's growing success and we'd have to agree. There is a lot to brag about after all. They are expanding their business interests and diversifying their banners and products. And yet they are refusing to engage in any sort of meaningful discussion with their workers during this latest round of bargaining. Why is Galen, a man who sells himself to the Canadian consumer as "just a regular guy", doing this to the very people who make his success possible?



Loblaw is indeed enormously successful and, in fact, they are growing and branching out into numerous ventures and making improvements to their business that almost surely will guarantee its success for many years to come. We may be able to be excited about this and congratulate them on their success if it weren't for the fact that they continue to be so stingy and try to cut costs at the expense of their employees.

Consider the following facts and tell us if you think this sounds like a company who can justify being so cheap where their employees are concerned?

- Loblaw continues to be Canada's largest food retailer with sales over 30 billion dollars in 2012.
- Loblaw recently purchased Shoppers Drug Mart for 12.4 billion dollars.
- Loblaw enjoyed a December 2012 surge in share price of 24%. The company has created a multi-billion dollar REIT (Real Estate Investment Trust), utilizing its enormous real estate wealth to create enough capital to potentially buy more businesses, including some of their competitors.
- Loblaw has enjoyed incredible growth in the "Joe" brand, which, measured by sales, is known to be "the largest clothing brand and children's clothing brand in the country" with estimated sales at 1 billion dollars!
- Loblaw enjoys incredible financial rewards even operating its own bank, with President's Choice Financial.
- Loblaw, arguably distinguishes itself from many, if not all, of its competitors through things like its "control" products. These are things like "President's Choice", Blue Menu, PC Green", "PC Organics", "Teddy's Choice" and "No Name" brands, to name a few. They boast on their website, "We have one of Canada's strongest private label programs with many of the most well-known and best-loved brands."
- The combination of the availability of things like PC goods, Joe wear and on-site banking, in addition to its unique configuration, combined with things like the unique on-site presence of GoodLife Fitness centres make the company's Superstore locations highly resilient to competition.
- Loblaw recently purchased T&T Canada and opened 22 new stores, opened 12 stand-alone Joe Fresh stores, and spent several million dollars on no fewer than 78 store renovations.
- Loblaw can boast they have more than 14 million customers per week!

- Loblaw's Real Canadian Superstores generate incredible food volumes with a very large, high margin general merchandise component (non-food). Also, their so-called, "control brands" like, President's Choice are well advertised and enormously successful. Liquor stores on Superstore lots enjoy incredible customer traffic. Additionally, other Loblaw stores enjoy a presence in excellent locations province-wide, often in the very best high traffic locations.
- The company, through almost 50 non-union stores in Alberta, and through the proliferation of non-union work, even under unionized banners, enjoys an enormous competitive advantage over many. It also increasingly pursues Wal-Mart style labour relations strategies, undermining more ethical non-union companies.
- The Westons are worth billions and are Canada's second richest family. Their wealth and privilege is unimaginable, and they socialize with the family of former U.S. President, George W. Bush as well as British royalty.
- The Westons purchased the very high end, Selfridges department stores in England in 2004 for 600 million pounds (about 1 billion dollars, CDN). They own Browns in Ireland and another department store chain in the Netherlands. They are still in the bread and bakery business and recently acquired Ace Bakery for 100 million dollars. They have also now opened free standing Joe Fresh stores in Manhattan. We could go on and on.

This all leaves us to wonder; why on earth is Galen coming to his employees to further line his pockets while raiding from theirs? Loblaw has been consistently profitable in recent years, even though the environment is arguably more competitive. Profits continue to be in the millions and millions of dollars.

Profits continue to get richer in 2012, but not at the same rate as in 2011. This reduced profit in 2012 was predicted by Loblaw and expected by the company because the company spent a lot of money as part of a continuing revamp and upgrade to its I.T. and distribution systems. If you sink \$30,000 into a much-needed new kitchen in your home, it doesn't mean you made \$30,000 less that year. You've invested it into your "business" – your home.

The company has not provided a shred of evidence or data to suggest that they are unprofitable or not viable in Alberta. Loblaw has, in fact, grown in this province. Superstores were able to afford and, in fact, insisted on providing their employees with unilateral wage increases over and above the collective bargaining agreement and contrary to the law in recent years.

In a leaked Loblaw memo dated February 21, 2013, Galen tells his management that Loblaw retail sales increased to 7.3 billion dollars in the 4th quarter of 2012. He also says that the company's retail gross profit was 1.6 billion dollars, up 6 million dollars year over year and concludes by saying, "...we closed the year on plan..."

All indicators point to continued success for Loblaw in Alberta. Population is expected to continue to grow. Incomes continue to rise. The real estate market continues and will continue to have extraordinary comparative health. Analysts agree that we are witnessing a shift of power, influence, population, and wealth to western Canada that represents the biggest social-economic changes in Canada since Confederation. Loblaw should not bring an Ontario perspective to this region.

Loblaw may well yearn to expand and to grow more, but this goal should not be funded by underpaying its own workers who play an integral role in the massive profitability of the company. This approach is fraught with peril. Surely the Weston family and Loblaw would have no preference to have a Wal-Mart stigma or to create circumstances where they alienate customers and fail to attract and retain staff. We would hope that Galen understands that's not a business model that could stand the test of time.

Why on earth is
Galen coming to his
employees
to further
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WE'RE STRONGER TOGETHER



For more than 100 years, the Alberta Federation of Labour has been proud to stand with workers in our fight for fairness — from mining strikes in the early 1900s to fighting against a low-wage agenda today.

Our members work in health, energy, education, arts, manufacturing, sales, government, and trades.

We are your neighbours, your brothers, your sisters, and your friends.

www.afl.org

The Alberta Federation of Labour: Working for all Albertans

No one union alone, no matter how strong, can replicate the collective strength that comes from being part of the provincial labour federation. Just as workers are stronger together within their unions, unions are stronger within the federation.

In this province, the Alberta Federation of Labour has defended the interests of your union and your members by taking a leading role in advocating for reform of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, by pressuring the government to abandon anti-union changes to the Labour Code, and by lobbying for more in-province oil sands upgrading to create more high-paying jobs here.

"This has been a very busy – very productive year for the Federation," AFL president Gil McGowan said. "We're proud that because of our advocacy, the Federal Government got rid of the rule that allowed employers to pay Temporary

Foreign Workers 15% less than Canadian workers. There are still a lot of problems with how the government deals with Temporary Foreign Workers, and we'll continue advocating for reform of this program."

The Federation has been proud to see UFCW 401 members showing their solidarity at picket lines and rallies all over the province. A series of rallies against cuts to public services saw thousands of people head to the legislature grounds to make sure the Redford Government knew that we support well-funded education, health care and seniors care.

"We've been proud to stand with UFCW 401 during strikes, during turmoil and during celebrations," McGowan said, noting that the work of the Federation is fuelled by the participation of members of our affiliated unions.

"Some of the most dedicated activists on our human rights committee, our young workers committee, our education committee, have been brothers and sisters from UFCW."

In the upcoming year, we're already seeing signs that pensions will be under assault, that wealthy interests will continue trying to export jobs from Alberta, and that the provincial minimum wage will need to be reviewed.

"The anti-union forces are strong, they're well-funded, and they're organized," McGowan said. "But we're also organized, we have the strength of numbers, and we have solidarity."

**"we have the strength
of numbers,
and we have SOLIDARITY!"**



Safeway Workers Strong – Sobeys Workers Strong

Written by Theresa McLaren, Secretary Treasurer

I believe what is first and foremost on the minds of all Canada Safeway members is the sale of Canada Safeway to Sobeys Inc. and exactly what that means for your future.

I want to assure you that the union has what are called “successor rights” with regard to the Collective Agreement and store locations currently serviced by UFCW Local 401. Successor rights mean, quite simply, that no matter who purchases the employer’s business, the union contract goes with the sale and the buyer must honour the contract and recognise the union who advocates for their new workers.

Chuck Mulvenna, President and CEO of Canada Safeway, in a letter to UFCW Local 401 President, Douglas O’Halloran, said that, “pending regulatory approval, ...including approval of the Competition Bureau, ...that Sobeys acknowledges and agrees that it will be the successor employer of all union employees and is committed to honoring the obligations of Canada Safeway with regard to [the] union, ...[including] employment of all union employees... in accordance with the terms of the each Collective Agreement”. He also states that Sobeys, “will recognize [the] union as the sole and exclusive bargaining agent of the union employees... and will bring the necessary applications before the Labour Relations Board regarding the transfer of certificate of representation with respect to union employees from Canada Safeway to Sobeys”. Mr. Mulvenna also assured President Douglas O’Halloran that it would be “business as usual”.

While this all sounds fine, we want you to know that your union will be taking a **strong** approach with both Canada Safeway and Sobeys on any potential issues that arise. As well, we cannot accept that we will have the same

type of negotiations we have had in the past. We will be looking to forge a new relationship with the new owner, one built on a positive foundation. However, we have never been a union that lies down when strength and persistence are needed.

We do have some history with Sobeys here in Alberta. We have, earlier this year, negotiated decent Collective Agreements with both Forest Lawn Sobeys in Calgary and the Sobeys warehouse in Edmonton.

Barring any unforeseen circumstances, we will be looking at getting the surveys out to the members and having proposal meetings for the members to submit their ideas for contract improvements for upcoming negotiations. We are shooting for having this done throughout the month of November. We will then formulate the proposals and be ready to start bargaining in January of 2014.

Under the Collective Agreement and Alberta’s Labour Code, we cannot notify the company to bargain until 120 days prior to the expiry of the Collective Agreement, which is approximately November 22nd, 2013. We will be requesting January dates in order to commence the bargaining process.

The plan is to approach bargaining as we always have, but can assure you that if we need to switch gears and take a different approach to get the best for you at the bargaining table, we will. At this



point we are unsure if we will be dealing with Canada Safeway or Sobeys officials at the bargaining table but, as was said earlier, we have a history of negotiating with both companies.

Should you wish to be considered to sit on the bargaining committee for this next set of bargaining, please submit your request in writing to your full-time Union Representative, or to my attention.

Another issue that came up after the sale of Canada Safeway to Sobeys, was the Empire Company Ltd., which owns Sobeys, announced their plan to sell 68 Safeway properties across the four western provinces in a sale-leaseback deal with its Crombie REIT (Real Estate Investment Trust). The rumours immediately followed that certain stores would be closing. When I inquired with the Senior VP of Labour Relations, Dave Pearson, if this rumour was indeed true, I was advised that this is just a rumour. He advised that the 68 stores that are moving to their REIT are simply a financial transaction and will not affect the stores. He offered this analogy; "It's like selling your house to your husband and then paying him rent". They are selling the land to create cash capital and then lease the properties back, and will remain in operation.

Interestingly, several years ago, Sobeys bought a successful full service food store chain on Vancouver Island by the name of Thrifty Foods and they still operate as Thrifty Foods to this day. Due to the successful name of Canada Safeway we are hopeful that Sobeys will see the benefit of continuing with operating the stores under the Canada Safeway name, which has built a great reputation across the country.

Information is sparse at this time but we will continue to keep you apprised of any new developments as they become available to us, via our website (www.ufcw401.ca) and our social media sites (Facebook and Twitter). In the meantime, do not hesitate to contact your Union Representative with any questions that you may have.

One thing we know for sure is that the **Canada Safeway members are strong** and recognize the importance of being **united** especially in light of upcoming negotiations. We need to be positive yet cautious, and the goal should be to continue to have the stores operate at the level customers of Canada Safeway have come to expect and appreciate.

Together, we can ensure that this company you've invested your years in, no matter the owner, continues to flourish and grow for many, many years to come.

One thing we
know for sure
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You've Come A Long Way, Baby

Written by Christine McMeekan

When one looks back on some of the challenges and achievements of UFCW Local 401, it's easy to feel a sense of pride. There have been many times Local 401 has been praised for taking on tough issues and tougher employers, sometimes so tough, other unions have come to us to ask us to take on a membership they are unable to, some of which lead to us striking for a first union contract. Without sounding too boastful, it's not unusual at labour conventions, schools or functions, where other unions are present, to hear them say some very kind things about this Local, its leadership and staff and our members.

Taking on tough issues under the backdrop of an unfriendly government has been a part of our fabric for decades but particularly in the last 15 years where this Local has seen some noteworthy battles.

While our first strike was with Canada Safeway in 1974, it was a short strike, about 4-5 days long, and was in Edmonton only.

We soon entered into an era of more aggressive employer tactics and we met the challenge head on. A few of the more prominent strikes we've had are:

- The Safeway strike in 1997, lasting 75 days, saw Safeway workers in every corner of the province hit the picket line – a massive undertaking.

- The Shaw Conference Centre strike in 2002 lasted 7 months before they won their first Collective Agreement.
- The Lakeside Packers strike in 2006, which in spite of the employer's aggressive manoeuvres at the bargaining table and on the 3-week picket line (where we lost 2 of our brothers in a tragic accident), resulted in another first Collective Agreement.
- The Palace Casino workers, who had a staff association at the time, had to strike to get their very first Union Contract. This battle took place in 2006/07, which was the longest strike in our Local's history at 305 days.

While this is not a comprehensive list of our strikes, it certainly shows some of the most epic battles we've taken on and won. All 401 members share in this pride because without each and every one of you, those who were being abused by their employer would not have had the strike fund to be able to fight back and improve their workplaces and quality of life.

But where did we start? How did it all begin? Thanks to some of our finest members and staff who have been around since nearly our union's inception, we're able to give you a little history on your union, UFCW Local 401.

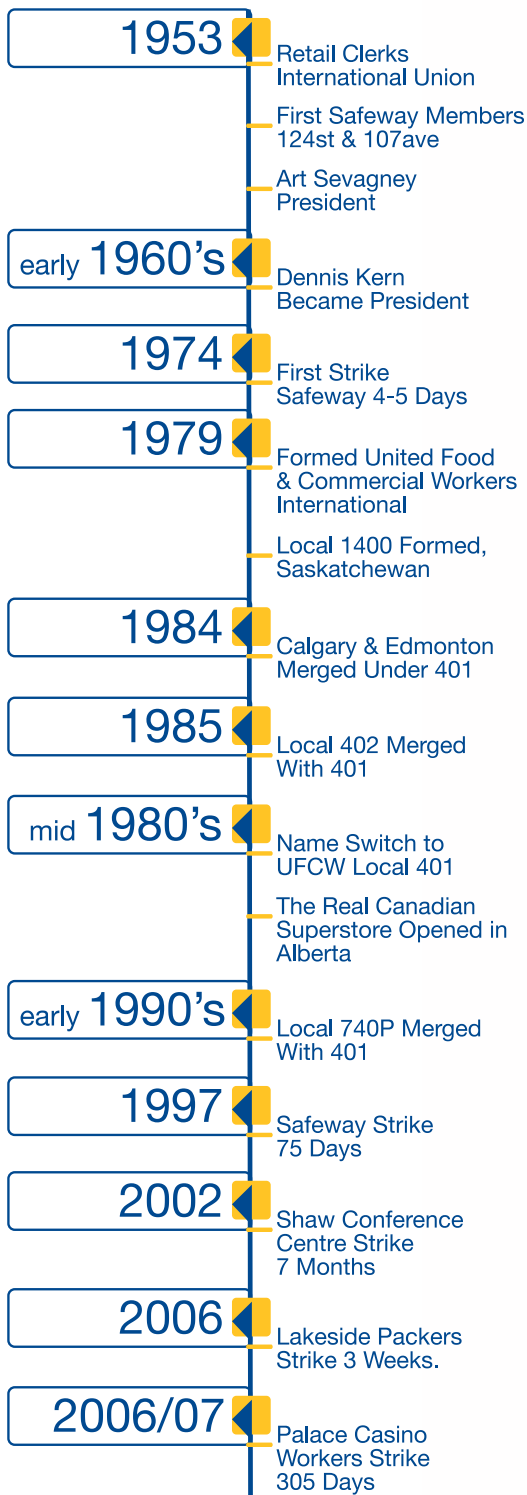
What is now UFCW Local 401 first started out in 1953 as the Retail Clerks International Association, and even back then was Canada and US based. Our Local, however, was only Edmonton based at the time.

It all started with one Safeway store on 107th avenue and 124th street, organized by Bill Carnow, a union organizer from Washington. Within the next few years the rest of the Edmonton Safeway stores were signed up for membership, there were only a few stores at the time. During this time the Calgary Safeway workers belonged to Local 397.

Within about 4-5 years, the International headquarters out of Washington changed the name of the Association, to the Retail Clerks International Union.

Art Sevagny, was the President in the Edmonton area at this time and also worked in a Safeway store, in addition to his president's duties. Soon, they hired a Business Manager, Dennis Kern in the late 50s, and in the early 60s brother Kern became President of the Edmonton Local.

Referring to ourselves as the Retail Clerks Union until June 6, 1979, the International Union merged with the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcherment of America and formed the United Food & Commercial Workers International that we know today. At that time, the Locals throughout Canada were expected to change their name to UFCW.



**And continue
to walk along
side Alberta
Workers**

However, then President of the Edmonton Local, Wayne Schimpf, had other ideas and preferred to call us the Alberta Food and Commercial Workers, Local 401 and we operated under this name for a short period of time. In the mid-80s the Local made the switch to UFCW Local 401.

At the time of the merger with the Meat Cutters in 1979, when we became UFCW, there was an industrial component to the union known as Region 18, which was the Meat side. Region 19 was the Retail side and each had separate National Directors. Eventually those separate regions merged nationally and came under the leadership of one National Director, now known as the National President.

In 1984, the Calgary and Edmonton Locals merged and became one Local under the UFCW 401 banner, gathering more strength in numbers and more bargaining power with employers. Local 402, the Co-Op Local, also merged with Local 401 around 1985 and we continued to grow. Additionally, in the early '90s Local 740P in Lethbridge merged with us as well and while some of the workplaces in Lethbridge still proudly refer to themselves as 740P/401, they are 401 members.

At this time, our jurisdiction was Alberta and Saskatchewan and serviced both provinces for about 4-5 years but in 1979, Saskatchewan formed their own Local (1400) with the assistance of 401. Though Local 1400 hired a secretary and 1 union representative, operating autonomously from Local 401, we helped them financially with setting up an office and other start up needs. They also started small, with about 500-600 members and through the years, Local 401 continued to assist them by lending staff to organize new members.

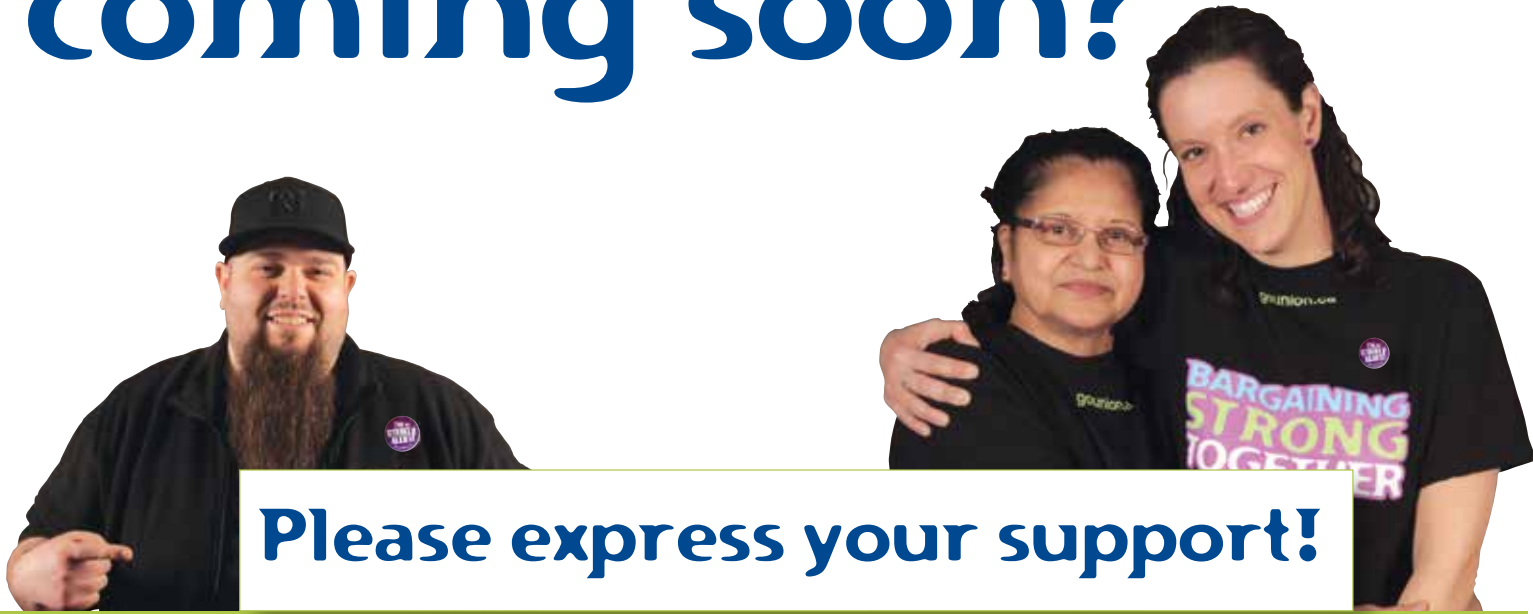
Up until the mid 80s, the major employer was Safeway, but then The Real Canadian Superstores came to town. They opened their first store on the south side in Edmonton, then another on the west end and then Castledowns in the north end. Several years later they began expanding more and more in and around the Edmonton area and eventually across the province. With that came thousands of new members, all in much need of representation.

Over the years we've continued to grow through organizing efforts and ever-expanding employers and have become a union with one of the most diverse memberships in the country, representing workers in many different sectors like, oil and gas, retail food, meat and food processing, healthcare, funeral homes, liquor stores, distilleries, bakeries, warehousing, gaming and the list goes on.

Today we look back at where we've been so that we can appreciate the long road that has brought us here today, and the accomplishments of our dedicated members, staff and officers. Over the last 60 years we've gone from just a few hundred members in Edmonton, to nearly 30,000 members across the province today. It has been an amazing journey and we look forward to being around and continuing to grow for many years to come to walk along side and fight for the good workers in Alberta who face so many challenges.

Your Local has indeed come a long way, baby.

Superstore strike coming soon?



Please express your support!

Superstore employees in Alberta are represented by The United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Local 401. In just a few short weeks, there is a real possibility we will be going on strike. Superstore's multi-billion dollar parent company, Loblaw has launched an attack on vulnerable retail workers. **We're getting ready to fight back!**



During the month of September, we celebrate Labour Day and we ask that you watch for Superstore employees who are wearing purple **Bargaining Strong Together** and **I'm on STRIKE ALERT!** buttons. Please offer your support to them. And remember, if there is a strike or lockout please show your support for Superstore and Liquorstore Employees by refusing to shop at all Loblaw retail outlets. (Superstore & Liquorstore, Extra Foods, nofrills, T&T, Holt Renfrew, YIG, Joe Fresh, Whole Sale Club)

**For more information
go to gounion.ca or
call 1.800.252.7975**

