

FRONT LINE FLYER

Mine Mill Local 598/C.A.W

www.minemill598.com

May 16th, 2007

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President's Report

By: Rick Grylls

Trustee Election

The new trustee will be Terry McCormick. We would like to thank Grace Pommerstone for putting her name forward for the position. The Xstrata Nickel workers voted "yes" to the two motions to continue the 12-cent fund and to allow the interest of the \$1.2 million to be used for Property and Trust, as it was used before the 2000 strike.

May 30th Ottawa Bus Trip

There is going to be a bus trip to Ottawa on Wednesday, May 30th to ask the politicians to do something to stop the loss of manufacturing jobs in Canada.

If you would like to join this event, please contact the Union Office at 673-3661 Ext. 22. If we do not show the politicians this is an important issue, there will be many more Canadian jobs sent abroad and less good paying jobs for generations to come.

Xstrata Nickel Unit Chair Report

By: Richard Paquin

It has been over a month since my last newsletter and we have some new faces on the bargaining committee. Jack McGrath has decided to remove himself from the Chief Steward's position, therefore, Marcel Charron has been appointed to this post. Jack will remain as a Steward in the Mill. I would like to thank Jack for his hard work during his long term. We will miss his tenacious work getting the issues resolved. Also due to the prolonged absence of Gord Lamothe from Craig Mine, Scott Rogers has been appointed as the new Chief Steward for Craig Mine on an interim basis. Please assist these new individuals in their new positions.

Some issues have been resolved from the last newsletter but many questions still remain unanswered from the latest Collective Agreement.

On a positive note, the Company and our Stewards and Chief Stewards have been working hard at resolving the issues at the sites with the grievor and the Company. It is working well since we only have a handful of grievances since January of this year

We also recently held a vote for the membership to decide if we should continue the 12 cent strike fund. The members vote overwhelmingly to continue the strike fund.

The results show that the membership wants to continue the growth of this fund that will most likely reach close to \$2 million dollars. This will surely assist the members financially in the event we have a labour dispute in 2010.

Another issue that has become reality on April 1st, 2007 is the contractor embedded on crews. Contractors are no longer allowed to be part of a crew, under our supervision or using our tools, following our shift schedule, etc., unless they meet certain criteria established under the arbitrator's ruling. We are still working on making this transition as trouble-free as possible. This will reduce the amount of contractors on our crew.

The Company is currently hiring mine and Smelter labours and Skilled Trades people.

It is also important to know that in the fall, it will be mandatory to wear seat belts on **ALL** underground and surface mobile equipment when operating. This is being implemented Company-wide.

Here is an update on all remaining outstanding issues.

Orthotics Coverage:

- Data was presented to the Company on May 7th and we are waiting to hear from them on the next step. We feel that we proved beyond a reasonable doubt that we had coverage prior to Manulife taking over from Great West Life in January 2004.
- We would like to thank all the members that provided over 80 documents that showed the data. We are awaiting the Company response on our demand of reinstating this important benefit.

Skilled Trades Rate Review:

- Review was done on April 25th, 2007 and we are still awaiting the Company's response to our demand of a two job class increase. It surely looks like the Company does not want to give us the two job class increase. This was agreed on January 31st, 2007, so that there would be no work disruption.



- If there is no agreement, we will seek the interpretation of a third party.

Postings:

- The Company is currently placing non-posted employees from the Mine Mill Business Unit into unfilled business postings. This is preventing workers from the other business unit from applying for these unfilled jobs should they be able to do the work. It is also closing the door to our Smelter employees.
- It is against our posting process and the Company was notified that should this practice not be stopped, a Direct Difference grievance will be filed on behalf of the employees.

Training: Training by seniority; training matrix is being developed at some sites to ensure training is being done by seniority, by who normally performs the work within line of progression. This process is progressing slowly.

Benefits: Every member will very shortly receive an updated benefit and pension booklet. We are meeting the Company in mid-June on reviewing our benefit program and also on the disability management program. We will also be looking at our drug benefits.

On a closing note, I wish to offer Jerome Strickland's family our condolences on Jerome's sudden death.

If you have any questions about the last agreement or wish to communicate any issue you may have, contact your Chief Steward or this office.

Lend Me Your Ears

By: Wayne Nitchie, Recording Secretary.

If you want to be understood.....listen (from the movie trailer review, Babel)

Fact: Membership Meetings

- July 2006 – no meeting scheduled due to summer activities
- August 2006 – no quorum
- September 2006 – no quorum
- October 2006 – no quorum
- November 2006 – no quorum
- February 2007 – no quorum
- March 2007 – no quorum
- April 2007 – no quorum
- May 2007 – no quorum

There are no easy answers as to why there is a complete breakdown of membership attendance at monthly union meetings.

Some are quite content with the way union affairs are run. Some don't attend because they don't like how the union affairs are run. And some, regrettably, don't have an opinion either way.

Becoming involved in union matters is at the very core of belong to a fraternity of fellow workers who are intent on not just keeping the status quo, but voicing their concerns to further the cause of workers' rights.

Commitment to the values of unionism dates back to a time when the only people who would act to confront the injustice in the workplace were union-thinking persons. One who thought about making a better place for workers to be safe, be not afraid of intimidation from supervision, uphold the articles of the collective agreement and provide for the much needed moral support in the day-to-day stresses.

"All for one and one for all"

Being of one thought, to advance the cause of solidarity of the worker, has been the mantra from the beginning – in the true spirit, "an injury to one is an injury to all".

These may be clichés, but nonetheless, are a reflection of the values that have stood the test of time, from the inception of trade unions of yesteryear to having unions in virtually all sectors of work places.

When you don't attend a union meeting, the silence is deafening. For there is no voice to put forth your opinions; no membership count to show that we are united; no show of hands to vote on a motion or debate the issue to be resolved.

Attending a union meeting puts things into perspective; getting the facts, not the rumors; getting an explanation as to the business of running a union; getting clarification on issues that are important to you, as a member, but more so to all members.

The Union must give you a reason to believe; to believe that the union is, in fact, you, the member. The sole member who belongs to a group of like-minded members who stand up for what they believe in, for the betterment of all to benefit.

Attend your next membership meeting. Come meet your friends, your co-workers and your union.



Smelter Report

By: Dwight Harper, JHSC Co-Chair

I am very cognizant of the fact that I have been away from the workplace more frequently than I would like to be and more frequently than the workers I represent would like me to be. I am busy trying to change that. But in the interim, I am confident that Raz Del Mastro and Lisa Schroer are more than capable of addressing any or all of your safety concerns in my absence.

I have heard rumblings, although not directly, that my time commitments away from the Smelter have sparked some concerns with the Smelter workers. So I thought it might be wise to let the workforce know what happens behind the scenes that requires my time. I also want to remind you that a lot of the time spent away, is my own.

Our national union is invited to have representation on a number of mining related tripartite committees and choose individuals who will best serve the national and the Local to fill those positions. I sit on just one such committee, MASHA. Normally the position requires that I attend four one day meetings per year, except in the April when the annual three day conference takes place and it was held last week.

I also hold the position of vice-president, which is nothing more than a title that normally requires minimal time commitments, one day a month to sit on the union executive board. But every three years, at collective bargaining time, all that changes, as happened this year and I was pulled off the job for the entire month of January.

As you may or may not be aware, we have been successful in showing our employer the value of having competent "in house" H&S instructors, unfortunately I was the only accredited instructor and it has consumed a lot of my time. I am elated to have just facilitated a two week instructor course and now Xstrata has four additional health and safety accredited instructors, two from P&M and two from management, who will be able to take on some of the training burden and free up some of my time.

I have and continue to turn down multiple opportunities for travel, training, conferences and additional roles on various committees that would require even more time away from the smelter, because it's important that time is spent in the workplace. That said it is also important that the community get the same opportunities as Smelter workers when it comes to knowledge and understanding of the rights when it comes to health and safety and I hope to continue to deliver that information, especially to young workers.

Thanks to my peers, I have held the position of H&S committee member and full-time for the past ten years and in all of that time I can count on one hand the number of JHSC meetings or workplace inspections I've missed, 'cause I make it a point to be here. I have attempted to make certain that all workers are never without solid representation in my absences and have gone so far as to change vacation plans to make that happen. I continue to do everything in my power to maximize my time at the Smelter and to address all health and safety concerns, big or small. I would ask anyone who believes otherwise, to come and talk to me one on one anytime rather than rumble in the background.

During the recent crew 2007 safety strategy meetings, it was suggested that the JHSC members, from both committees, wear distinctive green hardhats so that they would be readily identifiable.

One duty of the JHSC's and their members is to foster good work habits and to tutor poor ones. Let's equate the "green hat" to a marked police car. As it approaches you may be speeding or not wearing your seatbelt. Without being too obvious, you quickly hit the brakes to slow down or scramble for your belt and make it appear like your wearing it. Once you pass that marked police car, you dutifully watch your rear view to see if you have been nabbed or if the cruiser is turning around. You are relieved to see that you got away with the violation, but once the threat has passed your speed soon increases or the seatbelt returns to its position beside you. So have the poor habits changed? No they haven't and the same holds true for safety violations.

JHS Committee members are not policemen or policewomen, but we are committed to tutoring poor safety habits and to achieving "Zero Harm". I don't believe that wearing distinctive green hardhats will accomplish that.

Smelter H&S audits have shown that Smelter workers know who the committee members are and how to reach them when needed. I would like to think that I'm readily identifiable even without a distinctive green hardhat, but if such is not the case I would ask that you let me know and I may reconsider my position. I welcome your feedback and ask that you speak to me directly, any of the other committee members or leave a voice message at 3991.

Central Services Report

By: Rej Berthiaume, Chief Steward

It has been just over three months since we signed the new contract. We have a few items on the table that have to be dealt with.



Remember, it takes time. Be patient and things will happen.

This week was a good example of the shortage of manpower. The Mill needed a Skilled Trades worker to do a job on #1 and #2 Thickener. With the manpower we have, we could only do one thickener. We had to bring back a worker who was at the Smelter to be able to get the work done.

Central Services should be the central location for the work that comes in that needs to be done. With the proper amount of manpower and skills, we could reduce most of the contracting out work that is being done by contractors at all of the sites. With this type of control, the Company would save money and time on the re-work we have to do after contractors do the work.

Maybe we should include iron workers for structural steel in the Trades because R.T. is taking this job because we don't have the skill to do it.

We are servicing the forklift and surface equipment. We are organizing the shops and tools that we need, for those things are moving slow.

Have a safe and enjoyable summer with your family and friends.

Thayer/Lindsley Report

By: Jan Romo, Chief Steward

At T/L we are improving the amount of contractors on site. There is still more work to be done on this issue.

An on-going problem at T/L is workers working out of their job class on a constant basis, and therefore the Company is not following the job posting procedure in the collective agreement, by not posting these job vacancies either temporary or permanently.

We have grievances going to Med/Arb and a few first and second stages.

I am still working with the Company to make a plan to identify the future training needs and give the training by following the new language in the collective agreement, considering seniority.

Summer is almost here and that means the students have started working at the sites. Take the time to help them out, teach them to follow proper working procedures and to work safe. They are our future!

Fraser Mine Report

By: Jeff Mullally, Chief Steward

While nickel is at record-breaking prices, it is great that we are able to share in these "good times" with the Company. We enjoy the security that comes with these prices and thanks to some creative bargaining years ago, share in the profits through our nickel bonus clause (32.02 of the Collective Agreement).

As we enjoy these "good times", we have to realize there will always be challenges. The Company looks for the most from the work force, to maximize profits (at these prices) and to maintain profits (when faced with lower prices). The work force looks for the most from management, to manage the work place professionally, in a just and fair manner; to plan and make the necessary decisions to ensure the long-term viability of our work place (at these prices and when faced with lower prices).

The best tool for our common goals and interest of long-term viability, job security and continued success is our Collective Agreement. The better we know, understand and uphold it, the better we know what is expected of and from each other. We have contract language to address seniority, training requirements, posting issues, etc. Everything needed to maintain a qualified, dedicated work force, able to take on opportunities and face the challenges.

The Company has been talking of a renewed working relationship with its employees and a plan to grow. I have to say that at Fraser, this seems to be the case. There does seem to be a commitment to improved communication, to identifying and resolving issues as early and effectively as possible. As a result, a lot of issues are being resolved as they arise, through dialogue, before they become major issues.

My hats off to the supervisors taking this approach – let's keep working at this. To the ones that haven't, give it a try. We all have our part to play in this Company's success.

JUNE 2007 MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13th
7:30 p.m – MINE MILL CAMPGROUNDS
B.B.Q. – 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, JUNE 14th
1:00 p.m. – 3rd Floor Board Room
Union Offices