

Mine Mill Health & Safety Committees



Local 598/CAW Newsletter

Issued by Mine Mill Local 598/CAW

April 18th, 2007

Any opinions or views expressed in this publication are those of the contributor and are not necessarily the opinions or views of Local 598, the CAW or the Newsletter Committee and neither Local 598, the CAW nor the Newsletter Committee accepts responsibility for them

Thayer/Lindsley J.H.S.C. Report

By: Ray Romain, Co-Chair

Well, another contract settled this time without a strike. We did not get all we hoped for but we did get more than Inco. With that out of the way, we can now focus on the next three years.

At T/L we are doing great in safety with 244 days without a lost time. We did have 22 days with medical aids and also 15 first aids. All in all, we must stay focused to achieve our goal in returning home safe to our waiting families after a day at work.

Many issues have been resolved with some being resolved as we speak. Some are ongoing, showing signs that things are getting better. Yes, it takes time for some issues, but we are working at resolving them in a timely fashion. Some may just take longer than others because of the scope of work needed.

One thing I've noticed is how many of us have a cold and how long it is taking to get rid of it. Possibly we do not take the necessary rest required and time off to cure it. This results in going to work, infecting someone else and then catching it all over again.

Money, rewards for perfect attendance are rewarding at the moment you receive it, but is it worth the cost. A healthy work place is not just safety, but having a healthy environment. A spreading virus is not healthy and can affect anyone in a different way.

We all have different tolerances and some infections may result in serious health issues. So think of others and yourself by using the means necessary to cure yourself before spreading viruses to others.

N.B. This Raymond Romain is not the wanted one.

Smelter Report

By: Dwight Harper, Full-Time Co-Chair

Although Mine Mill took the lead when it came to establishing a day to remember workers who have paid the ultimate sacrifice to earn a living, our June 20th, the International day of recognition is April 28th.

As each year passes, workers from all over the globe come together to mourn those who have past and to ignite the passion often buried within activists, to look within themselves and their workplaces to see how well or how poorly we are doing.

I can state unequivocally that we are winning some of the small battles, but losing the war. In this province

over the last several years, the fatality rate has hovered at about one worker per day (about 300 plus), dying as a direct result of his or her work. In 2006 that number has ballooned to over 500 (statistics released from WSIB). We are headed in the wrong direction and as the recognition of fatalities relating to occupation exposure increases, so too will the death toll.

So, how do we change what's happening? Well for the baby-boomers like myself, it's likely too late and only the maker knows if I will be one of the statistics. We didn't have the knowledge and protection that is afforded workers today. We are a long way from where we need to be.

Collectively, we (government, employers, workers, activists and the public) have the power and even the responsibility to make effective changes. Unfortunately, the fighting back spirit created at these days of mourning, whether it's April 28th or June 20th is short lived.

There are only a handful of activists who live and breathe that passion year round. They need our support and alliance if we are truly going to see change. We need to align ourselves as one, rather than small factions, if we ever dream of being successful.

Central Services Report - Off to a Good Start

By: Guy Sonier

Well, I cannot believe that we are in the month of April already. It seems like just a few weeks ago we were in January. But like they say, the older you get, the faster time seems to go by.

Here at Central Service, things are quiet and we have gone 934 days without lost time, so our Committee is proud of this. As I said, we are already in the month of April and that means the nice weather is just around the corner and with this nice weather everyone is thinking: Summer fun; camping; sitting at the pool or beach; vacations; boating; four wheeling; building projects, ECT, ECT.

I would just like to say one thing. With the rising thoughts of these activities comes the rising potential for accidents. Try to clear your thoughts before you start doing your work.

**WORK SAFE FOR YOU
FOR YOUR FAMILY
FOR YOUR FRIENDS
FOR YOUR HOBBIES
FOR YOUR DREAMS**

We all know that all the sunshine in the world is not much fun when your back or your shoulder or any part of your body is killing you with pain. Please Brothers and Sisters, before you do something that you know is not right or you know that the equipment is not safe, the ventilation is not good and your gut feeling is not to take that chance, then **DON'T! Stop and correct.**

The Company has given us that right. Use it if you have to because after you are hurt, you are the one who suffers. If by any chance you need to report an unsafe situation, follow the IRS and contact your supervisor. If at anytime you feel intimidated or it is not going anywhere after you gave your boss enough time to get back to you, then you can discuss it with your JHS member. Quality of life is being healthy and to me, that's number one.

I would like to take a few minutes to talk about a new Construction Crew at Central Services. I had the opportunity to go and visit their workplace on a JHS inspection at Craig, and again at Onaping and Fraser Mines. Ed Lowe, our Co-Chair, visited them at T/L Mine. I got to meet some of the crew that will be doing some construction work at all the sites.

It was nice to see that the quality of work the men were doing was going to reflect very positively on Central Services. This crew is new at Central Services and some employees are new hires, but everyone is experienced with the work they will be doing. I hope that all the sites welcome this new crew and help them in any way that is needed.

They are members of our UNION, just like the rest of you Brothers and Sisters, so please be good to each other; it does make coming to work a lot better. With time, this crew will have gone to all the sites many times. The Brothers and Sisters will get to know them, and things will be good.

The new crew has 31 employees and is off to a good start. They have gone 137 days (since the start of the crew in November 2006) with no Medical Aids or lost time. Keep up the good work.

So with that said, on behalf of the J.H.S.C at Central Services, I would like to welcome Jim Lundrigan's crew and I know you Brothers and Sisters are going to be a big asset to us. Now Central Services at Strathcona Shops are getting some new faces too.

We are seeing some new hires in the Electrical Shop, some in the Plate Shop and in the Mill (FINALLY)! It's nice to see these new trades' people fitting right in with the rest of the crew. We welcome all of you. We must not forget Brothers and Sisters, our Union fought hard and for a long time to get this Company to hire new people and finally it is paying off.

I leave you with this quote:

People here are hungry to work in a spirited environment. They are eager to be involved in meaningful work. They want their contribution to be valued and recognized. They want to appreciate others and be appreciated. They want very much to do a good job and find pride in their work. They want to laugh.

*-Rev. Dr. Marie Morgan, President,
Morgan Consulting Group*

Craig Mine JHSC News

By: Glenn Staskus, Full-Time Co-Chair

Well, we signed a contract and for the next three years, we can look forward to some stability in our future. The price of nickel continues at record levels and analysts say it will continue for some time. It is unfortunate that Health and Safety did not see any real improvements this collective agreement. The full-times at each site will be left to negotiate whatever time we can for Committee members with the manager on the site.

I have just returned from vacation and would like to thank the rest of the Committee for the work they did while I was away. I have been able to secure time to have the office opened in the morning so that workers have the opportunity to bring concerns forward to a member. It's not replacement, but for now at least, it's the opportunity to have the door open more often while I'm off site. I will continue to check for messages at the JHSC Office, Ext. 2009. I may also be contacted at home at 969-0732 or by cell at 698-5071.

Work continues on the changes to the Ontario Common Core that will help our sons and daughters get good paying jobs in mining, if they choose. It will also put training back in the hands of the employers, where it belongs. CVRD Inco has a re-implementation plan for a stope school at Creighton Mine. I hope that Xstrata Nickel will follow suit.

Changes to regulations have been released and are now law. The changes will be reviewed at the next JHSC meeting and with the workers. These are the first of 18 regulation changes ready since 2004 and waiting for the Ontario Government lawyers to review for the correct intent. Our money, hardly working!!

June Health and Safety month is in the works, and information will soon be available. So watch for upcoming information around the mine.

Summer months will bring the added stress of heat and a shortfall of vacation time. It still puzzles me that CVRD Inco will have shutdowns at all its' mines for vacation – shutdowns that many of our workers and their families could use for time off together.

With all the work that could be done on our mine infrastructure, you would think that this would be given some more thought. I believe that our cage is still running at half speed and I have to wonder how that will affect the availability of materials reaching its way underground and ultimately, the tons hoisted as well as track repairs, the cleaning of sumps and the opportunity to have pumps properly installed, along with many other jobs that could be done during planned stoppages.

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to wish everyone well and thank you for the work that has been done to improve what continues to be a really great safety record. I will continue to push for changes that will protect and help to ensure that we all arrive home at the end of the day, safe and healthy.



UNION