

THE SENTINEL -

STANDING WATCH FOR OUR MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

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If you find mistakes in this publication - please remember that they are there for a reason. We try to publish something for everyone, and some people are always looking for mistakes!

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Throughout the month of June, elections were held in Units across our Local. In addition, members were afforded an opportunity to cast their ballots for the offices of President and Vice President.

There were a total of 3443 ballots mailed out for the provincial vote. Of these, the Local received 503 back. This translates into a participation level of approximately 14.6%.

We would like to thank everyone who showed us their commitment to democracy by supporting the candidate of their choice.

At this time, we would also like to welcome those who were successful in their bid for office and thank all of the other candidates for their



interest and desire to become more active in our Union.

This year's voting has resulted in many changes - at both the Local and Unit levels. Among the new faces on the Executive Board are:

Vice President - Eldon Wallis (City of Orillia)

Treasurer - Angela James (Hydro One Brampton) and;

Stef Doliszny (Utilities King-

ston) - **Region 6**

Those returning to the table include:

President - Jim Millar (Hydro Ottawa)

Recording Secretary - Nancy Tata (EnWin Utilities)

Ed Lamb (Burlington Hydro)- **Region 1**

Dave Morris (Orillia Power)- **Region 2**

Hans Van Manen (Veridian Corp.)- **Region 3**

Bill Miller (Waterloo North Hydro)- **Region 4**

Linda Georgiu (Windsor Regional Hospital)- **Region 7**

John Thornton (Hamilton Hydro)- **Region 8** and;

Don Boyd (Novatronics Canada)- **Region 9**

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Did you know?

- ...that Local Union 636 celebrated eighty years of service this past February or;
- ...that Local 636 represents more than 3600 members in 54 Units or;
- ...that Local 636 is one of the few Unions that pays its' Unit Officers and;
- ...that honorarium payments for these Officers

exceeds \$45,000 annually or;

- ...that our jurisdiction includes workplaces in utilities, manufacturing, alarms and signals, healthcare, transit and municipalities or;
- ...that our Business Representatives are responsible for the negotiation, interpretation and administration of 87 individual Collective Agree-

ments or;

- ...that 27 of these contracts were successfully renegotiated in 2002
- ...that the majority of our members are between the ages of 41 and 50 or;
- ...that the average cost for an arbitration case is \$5000/day or;
- ...that arbitration costs for this fiscal year totalled more than \$85,000.

A BILL OF RIGHTS FOR MEMBERS

As a member in good standing with **LOCAL UNION 636, I.B.E.W.** you have the right...

To enjoy all the benefits, privileges and entitlements afforded by the I.B.E.W. Constitution and Local Union 636 Bylaws, Policies and Procedures and;

To representation that is fair, honest and objective when dealing with your employer and;

To attend and fully participate in meetings and other activities or events of our Local Union and;

To nominate and/or be nominated and elect the Officers of Local Union 636 at the Unit level, Regionally and Provincially through a fair and democratic process and;

To be informed on the financial activities of the Local Union with full disclosure on the receipts and expenses incurred and;

To participate in the collective bargaining process and approve the contract between Local 636 and your employer and;

To be treated at all times with dignity and respect without fear of discrimination, harassment or inequity and;

To freely express your views, opinions and constructive criticisms and;

To receive regular reports from the Business Manager/Financial Secretary; your area Business Representative; the Local Union Executive Board and; your Unit Officers that detail the ongoing activities affecting you and others in the labour movement and;

To challenge the actions of your employer - without threat of reprisal – whenever your rights (as conferred by the contract and/or legislation) have been violated.

MEMBERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

As a member in good standing with **LOCAL UNION 636, I.B.E.W.** you have the responsibility...

To build solidarity and promote harmonious relationships within our Union and discourage factional bickering in the workplace and;

To conform to and abide by the Constitution and Laws of the I.B.E.W. and Local 636 and;

To support the growth of our Union through the organization of unorganized workers and;

To uphold the principles outlined by the 'Statement of Commitment to my Brothers and Sisters' and;

To get to know the IBEW and Local 636 - understanding our history, structure, mission and role within the labour community will help you understand where we have been and, where we are going and;

To attend and actively participate in all Union meetings and exercise your democratic voting rights and;

To defend your Union against harmful rumours, subversive shop talk or malicious gossip and;

To maintain open lines of communication with the Unit Chairperson, Stewards, Officers, other members and the Area Business Representative and;

To promote union building activities and support the actions of our Union and the labour movement - including political action and;

To promote and support the 'Union Label' - buying products that have been produced by Union members is not only a guarantee of high quality and good craftsmanship but also strengthens Unionism.



HOLDING THE LINE AT HYDRO ONE BRAMPTON

Making the decision to strike is never easy. Sometimes, smaller units find themselves questioning whether such action would even be effective. For those who may be thinking that they can't make a difference, we ask that you look to our members at Hydro One Brampton for inspiration.

Although they numbered only forty, the Office and Technical support staff banded together to take on one of Ontario's largest corporations in a fight for dignity, respect and fairness.

Their efforts were bolstered by the more than 100 outside employees (represented by the CAW) who refused to cross the picket line.

Sharing a common unity of purpose and supporting each other with unwavering solidarity, this intrepid group was able to bring production to a halt for 3 days.

Fortunately, this dispute was settled in very short order - thanks to the commitment and resolve of this brave unit. We should all be very proud



Members of Unit 22 share a smile as they prepare for duty on the picket line.

of their achievements.

This stands as a reminder to us that when ordinary members unite, they can make extraordinary things happen!

CASHING IN ON DEMUTUALIZATION

It has been just over 2 years since the demutualization of the insurance industry. Local Union 636 has been a leading advocate for the recovery of monies due to our members as a result of this directive.

As a negotiated benefit, it remains our position that all (bargaining unit) participants in such plans are entitled to 'share the wealth' with their Employers.

We are very pleased to report that settlements have already been successfully negotiated at 23 workplaces.

Policy grievances have been filed with another 33 employers. Some of these disputes have resolutions pending. Unfortunately, in many of these cases, the employer remains unwilling to discuss the matter.

To date, this issue has not been adjudicated. There have been several instances where third party intervention was anticipated. In each such case, a deal was reached that was to the satisfaction of the Union and our members.

Ultimately, we may be forced to resolve this issue at arbitration. Until then, we will continue to negotiate agreements - whenever and wherever possible.

OMERS BANKING ON INDEPENDENCE

For the past 2 years, **International Representative Peter Routliff** has been meeting with representatives from OMERS and other interested stakeholders in the plan to explore opportunities for improvement.

Among their most ambitious goal was to establish OMERS as a self governing pension plan - free from government control.

Originally, it was hoped that legislation to allow such independence would be passed prior to the summer break of the House. Now, we will have to wait until the fall to learn whether the transfer of power can proceed.

If approved, the implementation of the reorganization plan is expected to take approximately 5 years.

Should the government

choose to retain a controlling interest in the operation of the plan, any further changes and/or amendments will remain subject to its' approval.

In either case, the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency acts as the ultimate regulatory agency.



MANAGEMENT - 101

IBEW 435/CALM

Prairie wisdom says that when you discover you are riding a dead horse, the best strategy is to dismount. Post-modern management theory offers a range of far more advanced strategies.

1. Buy a stronger whip.
2. Change riders.
3. Threaten the horse with termination.
4. Appoint a committee to study the horse, applaud the committee's hard work and ignore their recommendations.
5. Visit other countries to see how others ride dead horses.
6. Lower the standards so dead horses are included in all future productivity reports.
7. Re-classify the dead horse as "living impaired," place it in a graduated return-to-work program.
8. Hire outside contractors to ride the dead horse.
9. Harness several dead horses together to increase their speed, refer to this as the "Multiplicative Equine Synergy Effect."
10. Declare that, as the dead horse does not have to be fed and is less costly, it carries lower overhead and therefore contributes substantially more to the bottom line of the economy than do some other horses. Dismiss the anger and fear faced by living horses now facing productivity-mandated death as "market driven transitory churn" and assure these horses they will be better off dead.
11. Perform a job evaluation with time and motion studies and re-write the expected performance requirements for all horses.
12. Do a productivity study to see if lighter riders would improve the dead horse's performance.
13. Promote the dead horse to a supervisory position.

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We welcome your views, comments and (constructive) criticisms. Please let us know what you think - by contacting us via fax (519 - 967 - 9224) or e-mail: patrick@ibewlocal636.com

For help with your questions on issues such as pension, our group insurance plan or labour legislation - check out these web sites:

OMERS - www.omers.com

Ministry of Labour - www.gov.on.ca

Canada Customs & Revenue - www.ccr-adrc.gc.ca

Unity Group Insurance - www.unitygrouponline.com

E&USA - www.eusa.on.ca

Canadian Labour Congress

TABLE TALK

AURORA HYDRO - It took only one (very long) day of bargaining to reach a new 3 year agreement highlighted by a 3% annual ATB wage increase; an internal equity plan that could generate a further adjustment of up to 1% of payroll in each year and; improvements to on call premiums, vacation entitlement, vision coverage, boot & clothing allowances and meal payments. Hats off to **Larry Mc Donald** and **Tracee Charity** for helping to close this deal.

MID-ONTARIO ENERGY - At times, discussions were heated but a 2 year settlement was achieved that provides an ATB wage increase of 3% in the first year with a wage reopener offering the potential for another increase in the second year. Thanks to **Jay Watson** and **Jane Dusome** for job well done.

UTILITIES KINGSTON - Members have ratified a 3 year agreement that includes ATB wage increases of 3%, 2.5% & 3% plus hourly adjustments in the 2nd and 3rd year of 25¢ for Linepersons and Electricians and; 50¢ for Meter Techs. There were also improvements to vacation entitlement, on call premiums and health care benefits. Congratulations go out to **Stef Doliszny, Brenda Boles, Jim Thompson, Terry Miller and Kurt Clark** for their outstanding efforts at the table.

MARKHAM HYDRO - With the assistance of a Conciliation Officer, a tentative agreement was reached that has been ratified by the membership. The 2

year deal features annual ATB wage increases of 3% with COLA in the 2nd year. In addition, this contract will provide language and benefit improvements. This agreement would not have been possible without the contributions of **Al Barron, Mark Harmon, Gary McIssac and Tom Wilson** - way to go!

CONCILIATION: The Union will be turning to third party assistance in resolving the outstanding issues at: **the TOWN OF KINGSVILLE; TOWN OF HUNTSVILLE and the; DELTA GROUP.**

We thank all of our members for your continuing patience and support during these most challenging and demanding times

STATE OF THE UNION

Reflections from the desk of Business Manager/ Financial Secretary J.R. (Rick) Wacheski - As the year began, we were busy preparing to move into our new home in Mississauga. Today, it is hard to imagine a time when we were not there.

Reflecting back upon the events of the past six months, we come to appreciate where we were, where we are and where we hope to go as an organization. These are indeed exciting times for Local 636 and our members.

Our financial profile is strong. Operational expenses will increase with the phase in of OMERS premiums in 2003 and we expect costs for negotiations and arbitration over the next fiscal year to rise as well. Nevertheless, we are in a position to meet such demands without compromising service

quality.

Our membership has increased slightly and we will continue to explore all options for organizing.



A 2 year Collective Agreement was reached with our office and clerical staff that will provide them with an annual wage increase of 3% and also includes a COLA clause.

A strategic plan has been developed that will provide us with a road map to the future. For details please contact your

Business Representative.

Work is ongoing with respect to the development of educational programs aimed at raising the awareness of both members and officers. These courses will begin this fall and we encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities.

For those of you travelling the information highway, we urge you to visit our web site - it offers a wealth of news and information to keep you in touch with our Local.

Unit meetings have now been suspended for the summer, but this does not mean that Local 636 will be on vacation. We will continue to stand with our partners in the labour movements and the N.D.P. for the cause of social justice.

See you in September!

FRONT LINE REPORT

After many years of dedicated service, brothers **Brian Hand; Norm Hassall; Weldon Graham; James Brown; Claude St.Pierre and Dave Walker (Hydro Ottawa)** and Sister **June Clark (Hydro One Brampton)** have retired. We thank them for their support of Local 636 and wish them many years of health and happiness.

CITY OF BELLEVILLE UTILITIES - the employer has made an application for

recognition of a single bargaining unit in the Water Division based upon 'deemed intermingling between the existing units. We will attempt to have this application dismissed, but may find ourselves facing a representation vote if it is upheld.

GUELPH HYDRO - The Union was recently made aware that certain individuals had approached management requesting a change in their



hours of work. Members and the employer have been reminded that the union is the exclusive bargaining agent for all employees and that any proposed changes to the collective agreement must be discussed with us. Dealing directly with employees is also

LOCAL UNION DUES AND DON'TS

As part of an international Union, members sometimes think that their dues go to the U.S. This is, in fact not the case.

Our Union dues consist of two parts: the Local Union portion and the International Per Capita - that is currently \$9/ member/month.

Each Local Union establishes its own dues structure to fi-

nance its daily operational needs. These monies are used solely by the Local to cover such costs as office expenses; salaries of officers and staff; lost time wages; grievance arbitration; negotiations; research, training and education and; appealing Workplace Safety and Insurance Board claims - to name but a few.

Changes to the dues structure are subject to approval by the

membership. The Per Capita is sent to our Washington office on our behalf and then deposited in Canada. These funds are used to provide the many services available to Local Unions and members across the country and to pay the affiliation fees to the CLC.

Union dues are 100% tax deductible and remain one of

NOTES FROM THE BLACKBOARD

At times, we are all called upon to be leaders, but have you ever wondered how effective you are in this role? To find out, ask yourself if you...

... **Make others feel important.** If you set goals that are self-centered, others will quickly lose enthusiasm for them. Focus on the strengths and contributions of others, not your own.

...**Promote a vision.** Others need a clear idea of where you are leading them, and need to

also understand why that goal is valuable to them. The job of the leader is to provide such vision.

...**Follow the Golden Rule.** Treat others the way you want to be treated.

...**Admit mistakes.** If people suspect that you are covering up your errors, they too will hide their mistakes.

...**Criticize others only in private.** Public praise encourages others to excel. Public criticism only embarrasses and

alienates everyone.

...**Stay close to the action.** You must be visible and recognizable to those you lead. For example, at work talk to people, visit other offices or work sites, ask questions and observe how things are being handled. Often, you will gain insights into your own approach and find new opportunities to motivate others.

...**Examine your failures and celebrate your successes.** These are the traits of true

❄️

"If you believe that you are too small to be effective, you have obviously never shared a bed with a mosquito"

- Author Unknown



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of Electrical Workers Local
Union 636**

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We're on the Web
Visit us at : [http://
ibewlocal636.com](http://ibewlocal636.com)

ANATOMY OF A UNION

The body of every organization is structured from four kinds of bones.

First, there are the **WISHBONES** - those who spend all their time wishing that someone else would do all the work .

Next, there are the **JAW-BONES** - those who do all the talking but little else.

Then there are the **KNUCKLEBONES** - these are the ones who knock everything that anyone else tries to do.

Fortunately, in every organization there are also the **BACK-**

BONES. Not surprisingly, these are the most important of all since they are the ones who get under the load and do all the work

- UCS Steward Update Volume 13 Number 3 (Author



Unknown)

If we look around us, we will quickly discover the 'Backbones' of Local 636.

More importantly, we must think about how others see us.

Do we spend our time wishing, talking and criticizing or do we support our Union and each other whenever and wherever we can?

Remember that even the strongest bones can be broken. However, if we all share the work, there is no load too heavy for us.

LARGE ENOUGH TO SERVE AND SMALL ENOUGH TO CARE

PLANT CLOSURE

Waterloo - It was just over a year ago that employees of **DONALD CHOI (CANADA) LIMITED** moved to their new manufacturing plant. This was an encouraging sign that better times were ahead. A new plant manager and the addition of an on site showroom added to employee confidence.

Expectations were high that this new facility would mean increased work and job security. Much to the disappointment of these members and Local 636 this was not to be the case.

Despite the outward trappings of a successful operation, sales for this company continued to decline. The recent loss of a contract with Sears proved to be a financial hurdle far too great to overcome. Consequently, the plant was slated for closure on July 26th. This left 40 full time employees and members of Local 636 out of work.

Initially, the employer had indicated that there would be no severance package for the affected employees. They argued that under the **Employment Standards Act** there was no legal obligation to compensate those who were permanently laid off. However, quick and resourceful thinking on the part of **Business Representative Harold Vance** prompted him to investigate the business practices of this firm during the six month period preceding the notice of lay off and announcement

of closure. What he discovered was that although the employer had reduced staffing levels during this time, they still met the threshold requirements under the legislation. As a result, those who qualified will receive severance pay. Discussions are ongoing to determine the final amounts to be paid.

For many, this was not the first time that they have had to deal with the harsh realities of shutdown. It never gets any easier.

Nevertheless, we hope that in some small way we have been able to ease the sting for our members.

Although they have been a part of our family only since 1997, these members have been strong supporters of Local 636.

We thank them for their dedication , bid them farewell and wish them the best of luck.

SUMMER CALENDAR

July 28th - Parents' Day

August 5th - Civic Holiday - be sure to get out and enjoy a bit of summer fun

August 12th - International Youth Day

September 2nd - Labour Day - show your