

InsideOut

**Canadian Union of Postal Workers
Edmonton Local**

**September-October
2010**



Front Yards In Bloom August 12. CUPW President Bev Ray addresses nominees and guests at the award ceremony held at City Hall.

From the Editor InsideOut



Welcome to the September-October issue of InsideOut! The more observant among you will have noticed an unfamiliar photo on this page. My name's Doug Frechette and I'm an RSMC out of Wetaskiwin. I'm a fairly new member of the InsideOut committee, and am pleased to be warming the Editor's chair whilst Karen enjoys some much-needed holiday time.

I'm hoping all our members have enjoyed the beautiful summer weather, and are feeling refreshed and rejuvenated. On the horizon we've got several contracts soon to be negotiated, we must be ready to stand up for what's right and protect the rights and benefits enjoyed by all our members. It's imperative that we all pull together for the benefit of all, and not give the employer any opportunity to "divide and conquer".

There is one other important item I'd like to draw your attention to. With the change in the calendar, we also need to remember that school is back in session. This means lots of children running to and fro, and not necessarily paying attention to their surroundings. Take an extra minute and double check around your vehicle, especially during the ever-busy 8-9 AM and 3-4 PM blocks. Small children in particular can be easy to miss darting out from between vehicles, and with due care these potential problems can be avoided.

Have a great month, be safe, and enjoy the weather!

Thanks to Doug Frechette for his editing of the September issue while I was on vacation. We ended up merging the September and October issues into one and again Doug was a great help.
Karen Kennedy, Editor

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From Your President.....Sister Bev Ray



Canadian Union of Postal Workers

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 16, 2010

NEWS RELEASE

Canada Post Cutting Services by Stealth

As Canada Post moves to modernize its operations with millions of dollars of new investments, the Crown Corporation is quietly introducing a series of service cuts, the post office's largest union says.

"Weekend mail clearance and retail services are under attack, as well as the recently publicized reduction in Street Letter Boxes," says CUPW Edmonton President Bev Ray. "They are hoping that no-one will speak out as these services are cut back or eliminated."

Eighty-six of the red mail boxes were recently eliminated across Edmonton, although one was reinstated following pressure from Strathearn Community League members. However, more boxes are sprouting signs warning they are slated for elimination Sept. 24, said Ray. "Where will it stop?" she asks. "Seniors, people with disabilities and everyone are being hit by this cut."

Canada Post claims that its rules call for letter boxes to be maintained at or near health-care facilities and seniors' residences. However, as Ray points out, a two-week audit carried out by Canada Post did not include a needs-assessment of communities based on services to seniors, persons with disabilities or businesses. The audit was only to determine volumes, with no consideration for maintaining public postal services to residents in any of the communities hit.

"The union is concerned about any reductions in services and jobs, and we encourage the public to contact Edmonton-Strathcona Member of Parliament Linda Duncan to express their own concerns," says Ray.

Canada Post has also quietly but steadily been reducing week-end service over the past year. Weekend drivers collect the mail from Retail Postal Outlets and Street Letter Boxes, but their numbers have been reduced to two for the entire city, through attrition, says Ray. "This means that most mail deposited in a Postal Outlet or red box after 5 p.m. Friday remains untouched until as late as 5 p.m. Monday, causing delays of mail and security risks."

Finally, the hours of service of Corporate Retail Outlets are under review, and the union is warning that reductions in evening and weekend hours are imminent at South Edmonton and Sherwood Park outlets.

For more information contact: Bev Ray, President at 780-423-9000

Cope#458



MSC Darlene Goodhope retired in August 2010. Pictured on her last day with co-worker Lorraine Newton, on her left, and MSC's Archie Swart and Carolann Owen on her right. Congratulations Darlene! For many years Darlene helped organize the Sandtrap Open for the Local.



Bev Ray makes the retirement presentation to Jerry Anderson at Depot 9. Jerry gave a rousing speech encouraging everyone to stick together and fight for their rights in the approaching negotiations. Congratulations on your retirement Jerry!

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES.....

ARE YOU READY?

The time has come for the Urban Collective Agreement negotiations. Our National Executive Board has put forward a total of **99 demands** for our approval as members of the Union.

These demands cover **all groups of employees** whether we are inside or outside employees, maintenance, mechanics or retail employees. The union is demanding better wages and benefits; improved health and safety; service expansion and job creation; better staffing and work schedules; improved work methods; job security; union recognition and representation. These demands cover full time, part time and temporary workers. The Union demands world-class Postal Service to ensure that Canada Post delivers high-quality services to all Canadians, not just the top 100 businesses. But Canada Post has made it no secret that they want to increase profits by having fewer workers work longer and harder.

I am not against the profits but the question is **How to spend the profits?**

Why We Ask For More?

Some supervisors, managers, directors and up to the CEO of Canada Post are using scare tactics that "We are in business...the economy is Bad so many workers are losing Jobs". Remember my words: They will try to divide us by putting a Carrot on a Stick.

We have not forgotten the Truth: over the last decade we (the workers) have made billions of dollars of profit for them. We are not a burden on taxpayers, we are not losing money like some other companies, but **where has that profit money gone? When will it be our time to have a fair share of that profit and when can Canadians see better services or expansion of services?**

We have to let our boss (the so called 'team leader') know that Canada Post is not a private business. Canada Post is a Public Service.

The Union will begin negotiations in October 2010 and our guiding principles will be: **Respect, Equality and Share the Benefits of New Technology**. Not only have we made huge profits over the years, now Canada Post is hoping that they will **save an additional \$ 250 million every year** by just reducing payroll. The Canadian public and we (the workers) must share in these profits.

On September 9th and 23rd the Union held the Edmonton VOTES on our demands. All votes in offices outside of Edmonton are to be completed by the end of September. It is very important that we Vote 'YES' and let management know that we deserve more not less. We deserve more job opportunities, better working conditions, higher wages and increases in our Benefit Plans.

A Strong YES Vote will send a message to the employer that we are united and their 'Divide & Rule' tactic will not work.

This is the year for a Fair Share for us.

The Struggle Continues

Raj Sharma

Vice President

CUPW Edmonton Local

VOTE YES FOR OUR DEMANDS

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES.....

CUPW Urban Negotiator Appointed From Edmonton

Congratulations to **Asma Burney** who has been appointed as one of only four National negotiators for the Urban contract. Her experience as a **worker on the workforce** at the EMPP on shift 2, as Chief Shop Steward and Steward, her work in the Grievance Department and at arbitration, and in the area of Human Rights, as well as her determination, dedication and sound judgement make Asma perfect for this challenging task. We stand behind you, Asma, and wish you well!

SOLIDARITY - And That Means YOU!

As we enter negotiations for the Urban contract we need worker solidarity now more than ever. Our members feel anger and frustration from staffing shortages, forced overtime, poor treatment, and many other issues at work **caused by management**. The employer will try to focus this anger at the union, in order to weaken the resolve of the membership to achieve our demands. Don't fall for this.

Solidarity means that we, as workers, as stewards, as union activists **unite to achieve our goals**. Everybody can come up with some reason or the other why the union isn't perfect - of course it isn't. But with **the solidarity and determination of our members**, we have achieved good collective agreements with job security, decent wages and benefits in the past and we can do this again. Your participation is needed.

Check the Equal Opportunity for Overtime Lists

The Equal Opportunity for Overtime lists should be posted for viewing in the workplace. Check them often, as errors can be made. If bypasses or errors have occurred point them out to management right away with a shop steward present. If payments and corrections aren't made - file a grievance within the time limits.

Ratification Meetings -Why a Meeting?

In order to vote on the Program of Demands for the upcoming Urban contract negotiations, members had to attend a union meeting. Why? Attendance is required by the National Union Constitution in order to clarify issues and hear opinions. For example, some letter carriers thought that the reduction of forced overtime was not a strong demand. At the ratification meetings, it was explained by Gord Fischer, CUPW Director, Prairie Region, that several demands (numbers 56,57,80,99) are aimed at reducing forced overtime. Those who attended a meeting got the explanations and were able to make an 'informed vote'.

Seminar about the Work of the Grievance Department

Would you like to learn more about how the grievance department works? An informal 2 hour discussion will take place on Saturday October 2 from 10 am to noon in the union office for members interested in understanding more about the work that is done in the grievance department. If you plan to attend, call me at 780-423-9000 ext 224 and leave your name and return phone number.

Shredding Grievance files

We have local policies regarding the shredding of **settled** grievances. After 12 years, we can shred the back-up information in the grievance file and keep the grievance submission form and the settlement document. After 25 years, we can shred these documents.

Carol Read, Grievance Officer, CUPW Edmonton

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES.....

Health and Safety Representative Election Process Has Begun

The Canadian Union of Postal Workers is in the process of electing Health and Safety representatives across the country. The elections are being held in 179 offices with fewer than 20 employees where CUPW and CPAA (Canadian Postal Assistants Association) members work.

The CUPW Regional Offices will be responsible for co-ordinating the election process.

The representative elected in each office will be available to guide and assist CUPW members with the health and safety issues they face in the workplace.

(with thanks to Serge Champoux, National Union Representative, Health and Safety)



CUPW Edmonton Local
General Membership Meeting
Central Lions Senior Citizen Recreation Centre
11113 - 113 Street
October 3, 2010
12:00 - 2:00 pm

Agenda

Elections

AFL Annual winter School	2 Members	Jan 2010
Local By-laws Committee	2 Alternates	
Local Organizing Committee	7 Members	
Local Environment Committee	2 Members	
Local Social Committee	2 Members	
Local Woman's Committee	2 Members	
Local Election Committee	1 Alternate	
Local Good & Welfare	1 Member	
Local Education Committee	1 Member	

- * Human Rights Conference up to 4 Members (subject to the motion)
- * (only if the motion passes)

In the event that a member nominated is not present at the time of election, he/she must have indicated, in writing, their willingness to stand for election.

Notices of Motion

Executive Motion:

That the local send up to four members to the Canadian Labour Congress "Rise Up Human Rights Conference" in December 2010, apply for 7.59 funding, cost not to exceed \$5000.00. Focus will be to have aboriginal participants and also focus on disability.

Motion by Andrew Gillespie :

That the local organizes a picket at the home of Contractor Reynolds Dias, co-ordinated with a press release.

Sue Wilson, Secretary Treasurer

News from the Local Human Rights Committee.....

On behalf of the Local Human Rights & International Solidarity Committee I would like to thank all our members who bought 50/50 tickets to support The Pakistan Flood victims. A special thank you to Sister Carla Fiddler and Brother Ajay Sharma for making this possible in a very short time. We collected \$1484.00. The winner for the draw was Sister Connie Kavelanko from Direct Marketing shift 2 who has decided to give a portion of her winnings back to the fund. Thanks Connie! The deposited amount will be matched by the Government who had set the deadline for September 12. However, this deadline has now been extended by three more weeks and we are planning to sell another round of 50/50 tickets.

The committee will be asking you the members to sign a petition to the House of Commons calling on Parliament to ensure that the Native Women's Association of Canada receives sufficient funding to continue the work of protecting Aboriginal women under its "Sisters in Spirit" initiative. At least 520 Aboriginal women have gone missing or been murdered since the '70s.

There is going to be a conference put on by the Canadian Labour Congress, Rise Up! for your Rights, from December 8-11 in Ottawa. The executive has passed a motion that Aboriginal members and members with disabilities will be given preference. Aboriginal members and members representing equity issues for persons with disabilities will be given priority. At least 4 members will be sent from our local. Anyone who is interested should give their name to Brother Larry Dionne, Education officer. I would encourage you to apply.

Finally here is an update on the initiative launched by the AFL HRIS committee to build a skating rink for the children of Lubicon Cree in Little Buffalo. Our Local had invited guests from the Lubicon Cree Nation during our Regional Conference and we collected more than a \$1000.00 in 50/50 tickets towards their rink. This is a huge undertaking costing a lot of funds, but the work has started on the rink, the rebar has been put in and the next step is to get the cement. This idea came from the school children who have very little or nothing to do after school. This initiative was undertaken with Amnesty International who has been doing a lot of work with the Lubicon to restore their land rights. Any ideas for fund raising will be welcome, you may do this by contacting (780)850-6462.

In Solidarity



Talking to Supervisors About Overtime

Many employees know nothing about their overtime rights, yet they are very simple. First, some overtime basics. There are no provisions in the collective agreement for the employer to not pay you for overtime. Any time this occurs, you should file a grievance.

You should always do your job safely. You are entitled to a half hour lunch break and two 10 minute coffee breaks.

The employer has two forms that they use for overtime. One is a form that the supervisor is supposed to fill out when you inform them that overtime might be required. The second is a form that you are supposed to fill out after you finish or the next day. Arbitrators have ruled that you do have to notify the supervisor if overtime is required and fill out the form.

When filling out the form or talking to a supervisor about overtime it is important that you put on the form what you believe caused the overtime. We have received many reports where supervisors attempt to control what the employee puts on the form by saying that something is not a reason for overtime. If the supervisor knew the reason for overtime, then why did they ask you to fill out the form? Their calculation of required overtime has been, to say the least, extremely questionable in some cases.

Here is a list of the most common things that you get very little or no time value for. Anytime they occur and overtime is put in, you should list them as a reason for overtime.

1. Waiting because there are no cabs available either at the Depot or on Route (if you are structured to travel with another carrier there may be time value for waiting until the other carrier is to be ready).
2. Waiting for relay bags at a relay box.
3. Waiting for late dispatch of PCI's that are not there at the normal time.
4. You get only two minutes a day to read the order book and other official communications. Any thing above that is a reason for overtime (ex: Thursday meetings over 10 minutes).
5. Dead-walking back to a relay box because you could not carry all the mail on the scheduled pick.
6. If your route is over 480 minutes (8 hours).
7. Delivery of your own relay bags on a foot route.
8. Being a new employee or new on the route is a reason for overtime. All time values are based on an experienced carrier who is familiar with the route.

Obviously high volumes of addressed mail, parcels, and personal contact items (PCI's) are another reason for overtime. This again is a problem for carriers who are unfamiliar with

the route because they have no idea of what is normal on the route.

Householders are a legitimate reason for overtime. The union has at least two letters from the Corporation acknowledging this and stating that if overtime is required it will be paid, if the current rules for delivery of householders (HH) in the office are being followed. This basically means that you have to follow the 1/3 a day concept or it is up to you to explain to the supervisor why that did not result in more overtime than following the 1/3 a day.

An example would be if you came back on Tuesday and sorted in your HH on a walk with a low percentage of coverage. On Wednesday you got normal mail volume and pulled all the HH for the color of the day and only where you had mail for the rest of the route. You technically delivered more HH than required. The next day the cab driver forgets you out there and you put in ½ hour overtime listing waiting for cab and delivery of HH because you had to go to an extra point of call (POC) for the one third. The extra HH that you delivered did not take any extra time because you were going to those calls anyway.

Preparation for HH: There is some time value on most routes for preparation of HH. Any time beyond that is a reason for overtime. This includes time spent preparing HH for the next day. HH are actually supposed to be prepared the previous day before departure for your PM. That is why they are supposed to be distributed by noon. If you come back to the Depot and find that there are too many HHs for you to prepare for the next day and get your

bags out on time then inform the supervisor that you require overtime to prepare them.

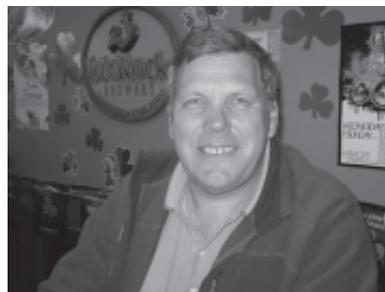
If they don't authorize it then you prepare them the next day and if you don't get your bags out on time then you may end up working even more overtime because you delivered your own relay bags, but the employer cannot then claim that the overtime was not authorized the next day because if they had authorized you to do the overtime the day before then it would have cost them less. You may also want to file a separate grievance because the employer is not allowing you to do your walk the way it was intended.

If you are interested in learning more about how your route is evaluated then please visit the Route Measurement Section of the local web site at

<http://www.cupwedm.net/lcrms>

The union also puts on 1 and 3 day courses in Route Measurement Courses from time to time so please contact the union office if you are interested @ 780-423-9000 The next course is Wednesday, September 22.

Brian Blair
Route Verification Officer
CUPW Edmonton



RSMC Once Again Suffer at the Heavy Hands of the Employer

Once again the employer shows complete disregard for the RSMCs collective agreement. Beginning in the Delton depot in Edmonton, the employer has started “realigning” the RSMCs routes. This process is ongoing, and will eventually cover all of Alberta. Ostensibly, this is being pursued in order to bring all routes below the Canada Post mandated eight hour maximum. The effects, however, are much further reaching, and are in direct contravention of the RSMC collective agreement.

Of the many breaches of our Agreement, the most flagrant violation is the disbanding of several occupied routes. This was accomplished by assigning the work to smaller routes, regardless of the feelings of the holder of the shorter route. Further, a number of routes were reassigned to other depots, forcing the current route holder to either move, or bid on a different “realigned” route.

These actions are in direct violation of both Article 11 and Article 12 of our collective agreement. In addition, the new eight hour long routes are in contravention of Canada’s Labour Code. On any shift longer than six hours, the employee is entitled to a break of not less than one half hour. If the RSMC routes are designed to be eight hours in length, how can a break be scheduled without once again breaching Canada Post’s self-stated eight hour maximum?

When this issue is examined closer, the real motivation of the employer is revealed. Delton depot was one of a number of depots in the Edmonton Local who came to a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the employer in 2007. This was at the height of the RSMC staffing shortages, and in the MOA the employer agreed to pay the RSMCs in select depots a wage of \$19/hour.

Under this new “realignment”, the employer wishes to nullify the MOA and return to paying the RSMCs at Delton Depot according to the Collective Agreement. It is clear that the issue is not routes being over eight hours, instead it is a thinly veiled attempt to roll back wage gains made through the grievance process.

We need the RSMCs to stand together and show the employer that underhanded tactics will not be tolerated! Plan to attend the next RSMC meeting October 16th from 10 AM to 12 PM at the Union office. Topics discussed will be the Delton situation, our ongoing reopener, the Modern Post and other RSMC issues.

Sue Wilson, Secretary-Treasurer (RSMC)

Based on information from the National Transition Committee for RSMCs.



Report from the General Meeting....September 12th, 2010

Executive Vacancy: elected as the Chief Shop Steward Rural and Suburban Mail Carriers: Brother Doug Frechette (Wetaskiwin Office).

Notice of Motion: that the Edmonton Local allocate up to \$5000 from Special Projects for the Local Organizing Committee to host a speaking event with JC Parrot in October. **Carried**

Notice of Motion: that the Edmonton Local By-Law Committee be booked off up to one week to go through the local By-Laws and make additions, deletions and working changes, also to add local policies as an attachment to the local By-laws. To go to the Edmonton Executive Committee to make recommendations and all changes to be placed on the agenda of the September GMM for adoption. The local Bylaws sometimes conflict with each other and our policies are not clear and not included in our by-laws. Monies to come from special projects not to exceed \$8,000.

Defeated

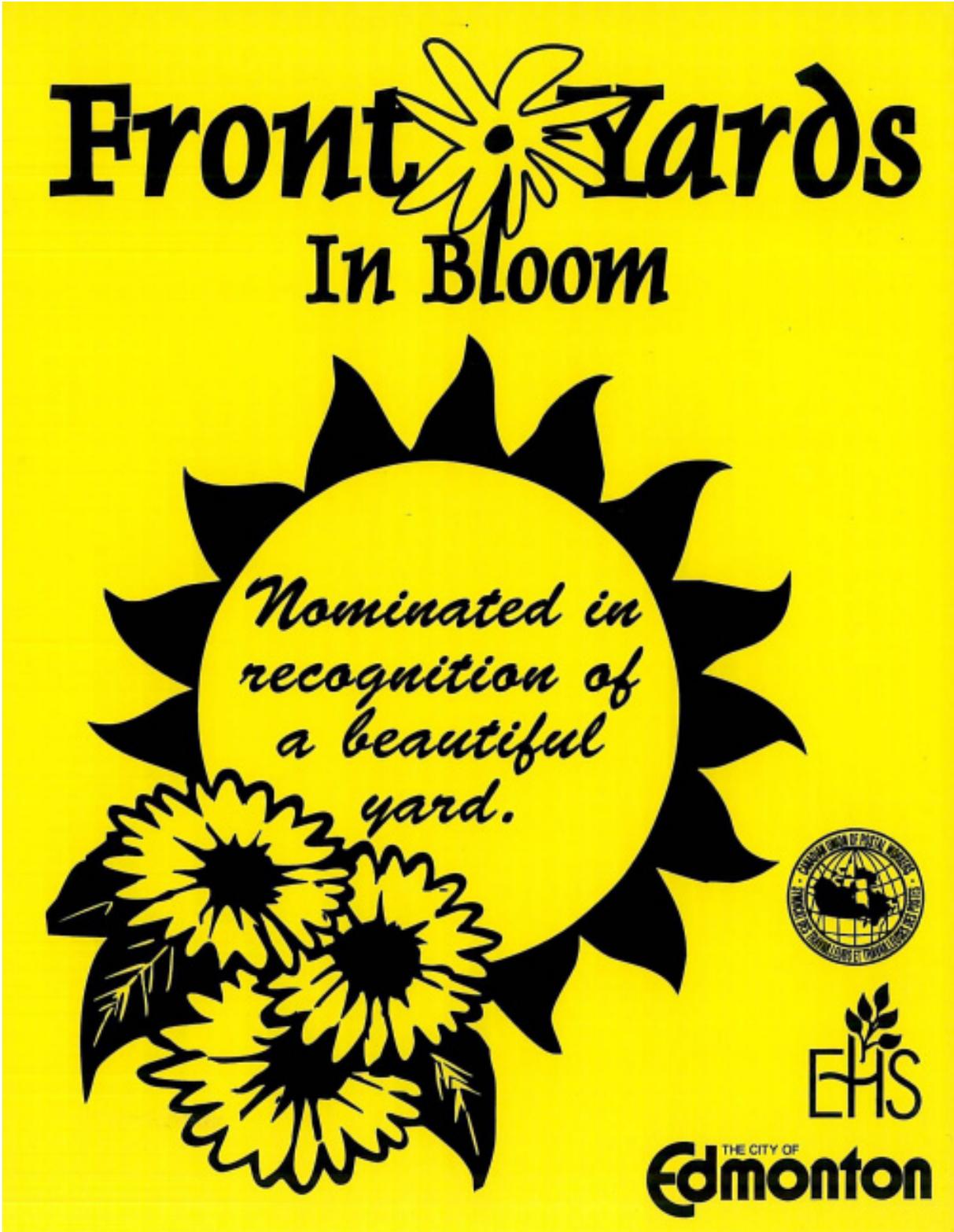
Elections:

Elected to the By-Laws Committee: Andrew Gillespie

Elected to the Organizing Committee: Cori Longo, Mary Chua, Brian Mottershead



Doug Frechette is sworn in at the September General Meeting as an Executive Officer of the Edmonton Local by President, Bev Ray.



FRONT YARDS IN BLOOM

This year the Edmonton Local of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers became a partner with the Front Yards in Bloom.

On August 12th, 2010 the 40 finalists were announced at a City Hall ceremony. Sister Bev Ray, as president of the local CUPW, was invited to say a few words and present awards to the finalists and award winners. This is an excerpt of the speech at City hall:

“On behalf of the Canadian Union Of Postal Workers, I would like to thank everyone for this honour of being part of the Front Yards in Bloom. As Postal Workers we have been involved for many years submitting nominations to the Front Yards in Bloom. However, this year is the first year our union has taken a more

active role. Some of you might wonder why a union would take an interest in Front Yards in Bloom. Our work environment is the greater Edmonton community...and means a great deal to us as postal workers. While most people are away from their homes at work, our work bring us into your communities and your yards.

...Our involvement with Front Yards in Bloom is a way that postal workers can acknowledge the pride, love and hard work the people that live in our work environment put into their yards. With a short summer season, postal workers relish the time we spend in your communities engaging in conversations with customers, contributing to the fabric that makes up your communities and, on occasion, stopping to smell the roses. The Canadian Union of Postal Workers is excited to continue our relationship with the Front Yards in Bloom and maybe next year we can encourage every postal worker to submit at least one nomination...



Stacey Fredericks (Delton Depot) and Donna McCarthy (Depot 3) submitted winning nominations for the 3rd and 1st place respectively.

The Local union volunteers Carol Legg, Sue Wilson, Carol Read, Randy Kennedy, Jerry Woods and Bev Ray were part of a much larger group of volunteers with the Edmonton Horticultural Society and the City of

Edmonton. Signs were placed on nominated yards by volunteers. Volunteer judging took place to narrow the finalists down to the top 40. Superb photo presentations on the screen during the awards made it possible for

everyone there to admire the lovely yards that had been nominated.

Thanks to the letter carriers, drivers and postal workers who nominated yards. It was heart-warming to see the connections that exist with the members of the community that we deliver to everyday. And we should add that the satisfaction of putting in a nomination for a front yard that you know someone has worked very hard to perfect, is small compared to what it means to be nominated. And volunteering to place signs of those nominated was a great experience...you get to challenge your address skills AND marvel at the variety of yards...if you are lucky you may even get to meet a nominee! Volunteer now for next year by contacting the Union Office....become part of this rewarding community project that reminds the public that we are there, on the street, connecting community.

Karen Kennedy



“Don’t worry, it’s not discipline”

For the past while members sitting through attendance interviews will have heard management telling them that the whole attendance management program at CPC is “non-disciplinary”. DON’T BE FOOLED, IT IS! Why they say that is because in front of an arbitrator after they fire you, they call an article 10.10 dismissal non culpable, meaning it’s not necessarily your fault you are getting fired, but you are still getting fired.

So all this “it’s not disciplinary” stuff is just a legal weasel way of trying to fool you into thinking you don’t have to bring a shop steward with you, or file a grievance if they put a letter on your file for attendance. They want to convince you that they are not trying to threaten your job. They are. It’s very important to take a shop steward with you to these interviews even if you just want them to take notes; they are your witness if there is any question as to what was said. Also many shop stewards have a lot of experience in these things, so use that to help you. It is also important to grieve if they put a letter on your file for attendance. If the boss is trying to build a “non-disciplinary” case to fire you those grievances can help protect your job.

So don’t let them fool you, demand the rights we have fought so hard for over the years. And when some supervisor says “this is not disciplinary” exchange a smile with your shop steward because you know the truth and you are not going to be fooled.

An injury to one is an injury to all.

Darcy Griffiths, Chief Shop Steward – Bulk, EMPP

EDMONTON POSTAL TRANSFORMATION PLANS ALTERED BY WORKERS' VOICE

On July 29th, 2010 the Edmonton CUPW representatives were invited to attend a National consultation on Postal Transformation. At this meeting information was provided to the union regarding the renovation plans for the EMPP in order to increase the size to provide for space required for the new technology (MLOCR's/cubi-scan., etc.). SPECIFICALLY, we were told THE PRIORITY WAS THE NECESSITY of moving CITY PARCELS AND THE PARCEL HUB OUT OF THE EMPP on October 4th.

What has transpired since this date is a flurry of meetings with CPC representatives and the local Union.

- Plans to delete all of City Parcels Day Shift and move those positions to Shift 1 were halted.
- MSC restructure implementation for September 22, 2010 delayed.
- Delivery Services forced to review all MSC routes and make adjustments to reflect the new work locations.
- Union observers (Todd Brooks, Dave Stratichuk, Joe Capoluppo , Ray Fitzgerald and Carol Leighton) were directly involved in the work of Delivery Services to correct the restructure to reflect the reality. As a result we have gained 2 new F/T MSC positions, 3 P/T MSC positions converted to Full time and an additional P/T MSC position added.
- 2 vacant F/T PDSL positions are being filled, including backfilling TSOS assignments
- 5 new P/T Priority assignments created.
- Parking permits provided to Shift 1 and 3 employees forced to work at Depot 11
- Parking stalls added to the Fleet for all MSC Trucks, employee vehicles

CPC has already provided 29.03(a) notice to CUPW. However, what they have failed to provide is any 29.03(b) notice for Edmonton. The Union's position is that this in fact is associated with the Postal Transformation Plan and therefore ARTICLE 29 does apply. We are not finished arguing over specific issues so stay posted. Without the hard work of Greg McMaster, Ajay Sharma, Darcy Griffiths and countless members from PDSL (Shift 1 & 2), and the MSC Hub who attended consultations and fought to ensure that the worker's voice was heard and listened to, we could have been facing a greater negative impact.

Bev Ray

President, Edmonton Local

Union Education Program report

Jullie French

I was asked to write about my four week Union Education Program (UEP) around three months ago. It's the day before my due date and only now am I putting something on paper. As I was thinking about it on my walk this week, I came to the conclusion that I'm still processing what I learned there, hence my difficulty in writing the article.

I wasn't exactly sure what I was signing up for, but a number of people urged me to apply, so I did. I figured it would be a more intense version of the typical union classes regularly offered; collective agreement, route measurement, know your rights, filing grievances, etc, only more in depth. Even when I arrived, the facilitators were very vague on what the week and weeks to follow would entail. I'm not going to lie, I was a little freaked out when they told me EVERY morning we all get together to sing Solidarity Forever in "the Pit", and I wasn't too fond of people I had never met calling me Sister. Even though I'm a union activist, I'm not a fan of singing union songs or referring to strangers as brother or sister.

What we learned in the classroom and in our "textbooks" is nothing that any socially conscious person doesn't already know. Week One was centered around Capitalism. Michael Moores "Capitalism: A Love Story" is a good movie to watch if you want a general idea about its effects. Returning home from Week One, I kept thinking that society would be a better place if everyone could take this course.

Week Two focused on minority groups, mainstream and margins. We learned how to identify, recognize and sympathize with minorities. I never thought about myself as being in the margin or that we can all identify as a minority at some point in our life.

Week Three dealt with globalization. I was always taught globalization was a good thing, this week opened my eyes to the benefits and more importantly, the downfalls.

Week Four was presenting group projects that we had worked on throughout the three previous weeks (that ranged from presentations on Aboriginal issues in Canada to bottled water) as well as a mock convention.

I found most of what I learned happened outside the classroom. Whether it be how to deal with attendance interviews in new creative ways, (over a beer), or being an ear for someone going through personal issues back home. At the end of the four weeks I looked forward to the morning sing-a-long, and calling people brother and sister seemed more than appropriate. I formed life-long friendships during those four weeks and keep in better contact with my UEP buddies than my actual family.

One of the most important things I took away from the course: question everything. Question what the media reports, question the employer, question the union. I learned that the members are what truly determine the direction of the union. I learned that postal workers from across Canada are all dealing with the same issues, that a few people can make big things happen, to ask for help and rely on allies. I also learned to be PROUD of being a laborer, something I was always taught to be ashamed of prior to attending UEP.

I want to thank everyone that made it possible for me to attend. My family, friends, our local and last but certainly not least everyone who took call/forceback on my route!

Union activists are human rights activists!



THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES.....

Rural Ramblings

Doug Frechette, Chief Shop Steward RSMCs

Greetings from the office of the RSMC Chief Shop Steward! I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce myself and give a bit of my background. I'm an RSMC based in Wetaskiwin and I've got four years under my belt on a variety of routes. I've been a shop steward in our depot for about a year, and with the encouragement of my illustrious predecessor Peggy Maxwell, I've been taking a larger role in other areas including the InsideOut newsletter.

I'm planning to take an active role as Chief Shop Steward. Some of you may not be aware, but the Edmonton Local covers a huge geographic area. From Lac La Biche in the North to Cadogan in the South, and from Mayerthorpe in the West to Chauvin in the East it is a large area for anyone to represent. I'm planning on being proactive in this area by holding "regional meeting" on a monthly basis. I'm looking forward to getting out to some of the more remote areas of our Local and meeting my fellow RSMCs. Watch this space for the locations, dates, and times. Hope to see you at one!

I have been fortunate to meet quite a few RSMCs, and have learned that things that concern those working in largely urban areas are quite different from those working in rural locations. Someone whose daily route is 200km of gravel understandably has different concerns than someone who only drives 20 km of paved roads. The same situation occurs for mail load, where someone who has to deliver to 900 points of call naturally has different opinions than someone who has only 250.

In spite of these differences, we must always remember that we are **ALL** RSMCs! It was solidarity that brought us to our first collective agreement in 2004 and greatly improved our working life. With our contract expiring in December 2011, we must remember the lessons of 2004 and above all else we must stick together! We cannot allow our differences become a weakness the Employer can exploit during negotiations.

In a related vein, as most know Urban Ops are also facing negotiations with their contract expiring January 31, 2011. I have heard stories of animosity between RSMCs and their Urban Ops colleagues due to differences in contracts and the circumstances under which RSMCs were made Employees of Canada Post. It is imperative to remember that we are all on the same side during the upcoming negotiations and not allow the Employer to play one group against the other. It is important to remember the old adage "a rising tide floats all boats". Gains made by Urban Ops will also result in gains made by the RSMCs. We must stick together and present a united front, and together we will all benefit.

Again, I'd like to say how happy I am to be your new representative. If you have anything you need to discuss, you can call me at 780-362-0785, or email me at postmandougie@yahoo.ca. I can't guarantee I'll have an answer at my fingertips, but I'll do my best to get back to you with an answer in the timeliest fashion possible. Take care and drive safe!





“When I was a kid, the union was us guys, what we collectively did. Nowadays, people don’t speak of the union as us. Almost everywhere, the union is it or they.”

-Fred Thompson interviewed by Studs Terkel

A co-worker the other day asked me if “the union” was going to do anything about a problem that he had. Thinking myself a clever shop steward I replied, ‘no brother what are we going to do about it’, he smiled slyly and said that he has heard that one before.

That conversation gave me a lot to think about. As a union, we say that we are a social movement when our chief characteristic seems to be inertia. We say that the union is nothing above and beyond the workers on the floor yet many of our officers are off the floor for decades at a time. At the union office we often talk about ‘the members’ as if they were not accounted for in the room by our very presence as activists in the union. It’s not just the workers who talk about the union as ‘it’ or ‘they’, the union sometimes talks about the workers like that too.

Last Spring I had the pleasure of attending the Labor Notes convention in Dearborne Michigan. I saw a way that things could be done differently. The workshops I attended were almost entirely about unconventional unions. I got to see a talk by someone from the New York Taxi Drivers alliance- this union was incredible.

They have won a 35% wage increase since they were founded, they have managed to fight for their members rights in court on several occasions and they organised a two day strike that stopped 40,000 cabs from moving in New York City. What is most incredible about this organisation is that they do not actually have any recognition from the National Labour Relations Board in the USA. That means they have no access to a grievance procedure or arbitration- everything they won was achieved by workers standing up together. They have no access to grievance or arbitration.

I also talked to some workers from the Starbucks Workers Union, a group of coffee shop workers who are organising all over the United States of America and Canada. Their main tool in fighting for better working conditions is to organise campaigns on the floor and in the community to improve their working conditions. If they have a problem they stop working and go to the boss and confront them directly. They’ve won a wage increase in New York of over 20%, they’ve turned around firings and their union is growing. I also met some workers who worked at Jimmy John’s a subway chain in the USA that recently had a group of workers declare their intention to unionise. Neither of these campaigns have any access to a grievance procedure or arbitration either- instead they use actions on the floor at work to get results.

In a lot of ways what happened with the Reynolds contractors last month reminded me of the people I talked to in Michigan. They didn't wait for someone to take care of something for them, they took action themselves and tried to use their power as workers to solve their problems. They were the union- we often use that as a slogan but what does it really mean?

These contractors struck for two days and brought Reynolds Diaz' business to a standstill- they had no grievance procedure and no access to arbitration and also very little in the way of legal protection. What they did have though was solidarity and that's powerful stuff.

The Canadian Union of Postal Workers has a long history of these kinds of actions too. We ran a hugely successful campaign to boycott the postal code- that won us much of the language around technological change we are now using to fight the Modern Post. We've had delegations to the boss turn around messed up start times at Whitemud depot, a wildcat at Delton Depot that turned around forceback for terms. Our union owes its entire existence to a nationwide unlawful strike in 1965.

Which brings us back to the slogan "You are the Union". There is clearly something that looks very new but is actually something very old in the works- some folks called it Direct Action. It can be anything from a signed petition from the workers to management demanding a change in staffing policy, to a button campaign to a wildcat strike. The worker that called me on saying 'you are the union' was right to criticise me as a union officer for saying that to him. Too often we treat it as just a slogan and our actions show it. With Modern Post well on it's way, with negotiations starting this month, it's time to mobilise ourselves, it's time to show Canada Post what it really means to be union.

Nick Driedger
Local Organizing Officer
CUPW Edmonton Local



CUPW Edmonton Local



CHRISTMAS PARTY

Hosted by the MSC's

Join us for a Yuletide supper
Live Music
Dancing

Saturday, **December 4th**, 2010

Delton Hall

Reserve Your Tickets Through the Union Office

Advocate for cycling. . .



Municipal Election: Oct. 18, 2010



EBC advocacy

Edmonton Bicycle Commuters' Society is a volunteer group dedicated to promoting and facilitating cycling as sustainable transportation in Edmonton.

Seize the opportunity!

Cycling in Edmonton is on the rise!

Many people are looking for alternative, active ways to travel.

The City of Edmonton's strategic plans recognize the importance of cycling. Take, for example, the 10 year Bicycle Transportation plan. It's excellent, it just needs to be fully funded.

EBC wants more people getting out of their car and hopping on their bicycle to enjoy the fun, health, environmental and economic benefits of cycling.

Why should you prioritize cycling?

- Safety. We need dedicated bike lanes to protect cyclists and motorists.
- Cost effective. Cycling infrastructure is very cheap and the benefits far exceed the costs in the long run.
- Well-being. Cycling improves Edmontonians' quality of life and promotes healthier, happier communities
- Ease. Cycling in Edmonton is doable at least two hundred and sixty five (265) days a year.
- Freedom. More people on bikes results in reductions in motor vehicle traffic and less road maintenance requirements.
- Sustainability. Less pollution!
- Greater Good. Cycling has a number of social and economic benefits

How can you advocate for cycling?

- Fund the 10 year cycling strategy
- Complete the bike network
- Partner with ETS and LRT initiatives
- Secure citywide bikeparking and bike lockups near public transit stations
- Ensure road crossings- freeways too- accommodate bicycles and pedestrians
- Connect new neighbourhoods with pathways
- Provide cyclists with designated bike lanes on roads
- Keep sidewalks for pedestrians
- Ensure new roads and neighbourhoods have on-road markings or segregated roads on the side between sidewalks
- Ensure all areas of the city are connected to allow people to get around efficiently
- Create transportation and development plans with bicycles in mind
- Ensure city councillors partner with the province on the 40 year transportation plan



edmontonbikes.ca

A bike friendly city needs voices advocating in every neighborhood!

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES.....

CUPW Prairie Region 3 Day School

**November 19, 20 and 21, 2010
(Friday, Saturday and Sunday)**

Edmonton, Alberta

**Crowne Plaza Chateau Lacombe Hotel
10111 Bellamy Hill**

Courses:

1. **Urban Basic Shop Steward:** this course is designed for interested members who are looking at becoming shop stewards or are new shop stewards. Participants will become more familiar with the CUPW constitution and your collective agreement. The course will focus on the role of the shop steward to enforce the collective agreement, deal with the constitution and familiarize members with the struggle of CUPW.
2. **RSMC/Private Sector Basic Shop Steward:** This course is designed for RSMC and Private Sector members who are interested in becoming shop stewards or are new shop stewards. Participants will become more familiar with the CUPW Constitution and your collective agreement. The course will focus on the role of the steward to enforce the collective agreement, deal with the constitution and familiarize members with the struggle of CUPW.
3. **Local Administration Course:** Deals with responsibilities outlined in Article 9 of the CUPW Constitution. As well as focusing on finances, membership control, affiliations and consultation. The course also emphasizes working together, setting goals and improving local practices.
4. **Strike Preparation Course:** This course is for executive members, shop stewards and activists wanting training to take leadership roles in community actions and protests as well as the potential upcoming strike with CPC. It will focus on the negotiations with Canada Post and have a strike preparation component to the course.

Interested members should be made aware that all sessions of the courses are mandatory.

Registration Deadline for Locals to send in participant applications to the Regional Office is October 15, 2010.

Local Deadline is earlier...Contact your local Education officer, Brother Larry Dionne, for more information.

October Calendar of Events

- October 3...General Membership Meeting noon to 2pm
- October 6...Letter Carrier Shop Steward meetings 2 - 4pm
- October 7...Letter Carrier Shop Steward meetings 2 - 4pm
- October 13...Day of Action
- October 13...LEAF Person's Day Breakfast 7:00am
- October 13...Retirees Committee 10am
- October 15...Deadline for November Issue InsideOut noon
- October 16...RSMC Meeting 10am
- October 17, 18, 19...Basic Shop Steward Course
- October 18...Municipal Elections...Get Out And VOTE!!
- October 18...Person's Day
- October 23...JC Parrot Event "How we struggled, how we won, and how we will do it again"
- October 27...Environment Committee 6pm
- October 28...Public Lecture with Prof. George Lakoff 7:30pm to 9:30pm, Grant MacEwan, tickets from AFL \$20
- October 29...Shop Steward Meetings EMPP

October 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30

Photos: pages 1 and 15: Carol Read, page 2 top: Brenda Lekochinsky, page 2 bottom: Karen Hutzcal, page 13: Ajay Sharma, page 28: Linda Nyznyk

By choosing 100% Post Consumer Recycled fiber instead of virgin paper for this Inside Out Newsletter, the following savings to our natural resources were realized:

Trees Saved	4	Landfill lbs	227
Wood Reduced lbs	737	Net Greenhouse Emissions lbs	498
Water Reduced Gallons	2,141	Energy BTU (000)	1,466

Above information is based on use of the following products:
 2700 sheets of 23x35-50 lb. **EnviroPrint 100**
 Data research provided by Environmental Defence



A Day In The Life Of The Westlock Post Office

“the crazy hazy days of
summer”, taken August
2010 by Linda Nyznyk

