

## Small Union Dues Increase

Throughout the past years, your union has been very successful in maintaining the lowest union dues in the industry and we plan to keep it that way. 90% of the membership have not had a union dues increase since 1999, while some date back to 1997--and even 1996.

In an effort to increase member training and unit servicing, coupled with rising costs and per capita increases all while maintaining reasonable union dues, a small increase is required.

For the most part, union dues will be increased \$0.40 per week, and in rare cases, slightly more.

I thank you for your understanding in the matter. The Officers and Staff look forward to serving you for years to come.

Yours fraternally,

**Derik J. McArthur**  
President  
Northern Joint Council



I got a part-time job at Independent Grocer last year. I work hard, but it's okay; the union contract is pretty good. I've got decent wages, a benefit plan, and Independent Grocer has to schedule my work hours around my university classes.

I'm young and I like to look a certain way. After I was hired, I wore my nose piercing to work and no one seemed to mind. Customers were cool with it. My supervisor just wanted me to be on time and to do my job. I did. No problems. But things changed. All of a sudden, doing my job wasn't enough. One day the boss told me to "take that thing out" or I'd be fired. I couldn't believe it.

At first, I felt like quitting, but I need my job. I gave in and took out my piercing, so I wouldn't be "insubordinate." But now I've found a way to fight back!

At work, I wear my hair the way they tell me to. I wear my Independent Grocer uniform. But I believe that I should have the right to be an individual and have my own look--at least in some small way. My union agrees with me. We have filed a grievance.

My union rep says we have a shot at winning, but he can't say for sure. I also know that the process will take a long time. But, win or lose, I'm glad someone sees my point of view. I'm glad someone is there to fight for me.

I don't know what Independent Grocer's problem is. This is my one little thing. Why can't they just give me a break?

**AND GUESS WHAT?  
WE WON!!**

**QUOTE  
OF THE MONTH!**

"with all their faults, trade unions have done more for humanity than any other organization of workers that ever existed. They have done more for decency, for honesty, for education, for the betterment of the race, for the developing of character in men, than any other association of workers."

~Clarence Darrow  
Famous lawyer & defender of the underdog and fighter for civil rights

## INTERNET SITES

### OF INTEREST

#### CANADIAN WEBSITES

[www.rwdsu.ca](http://www.rwdsu.ca)

[www.unionsavings.ca](http://www.unionsavings.ca)

#### INTERNATIONAL WEBSITES

[www.rwdsu.org](http://www.rwdsu.org)

[www.unionplus.org](http://www.unionplus.org)  
(some benefits for Canadians)

**What to say if management asks questions that could lead to discipline.**

"If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I request that my union representative, officer or steward be present at the meeting. Without representation, I choose not to answer any questions or have any discussions."

Fill in name of Steward \_\_\_\_\_

**UNION YES**

(please retain for your records)



Northern Joint Council

**RWDSU**

Retail, Wholesale & Department Store Union

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A PUBLICATION FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE NORTHERN JOINT COUNCIL

# RWDSU

Northern Joint Council

RETAIL, WHOLESALE AND DEPARTMENT STORE UNION  
UFCW, Canadian Labour Congress



## President's message

The topic of Unions can be a very heated discussion in a workplace, at home or in a social setting. Some people are of the opinion that unions are not needed. Others argue that unions were necessary, but have outlived their usefulness and were only good in the old days. I guess those people think that today, unlike 100 years ago, improvements that workers fought for through collective bargaining, rallying, and picketing are now a "given." Such union victories are the eight-hour day, the weekend, occupational health and safety, pensions, unemployment insurance, health care, public education, and job security, to name a few. If we look at the situation we live in today, all these "givens" are in jeopardy.

People are working longer hours or worse, can't find enough work. More and more people are forced to work two and three jobs just to make ends meet. Working longer hours and more days during the week leads to higher rates of workplace injury or death. Pensions are being lost due to companies' misuse of pension funds and pension investments. The government is making employment insurance more difficult to get. Our public health care system is under constant attack and job security is becoming non-existent. We can just look at the Telus strike where Telus shipped jobs to the Phillipines and India.

### Some facts to consider:

The Canadian Labour Congress' 2005 Report Card called "Is Your Work Working for You?" shows that the number of people who think they will lose their job in the next couple of years has jumped to 30% and 18% of workers say that their income does not meet their basic needs.

That means that 1 out of 5 people you see on the street are having to choose between essential items such as food or rent. Sounds to me like the old days are back with a vengeance!

**If we ever needed a union, it's today!**

Yours in solidarity,

**DERIK J. McARTHUR**  
President, Northern Joint Council



January/February 2006

### NORTHERN JOINT COUNCIL EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Derik J. McArthur, President  
James Wright, Secretary-Treasurer  
Jeff Barry, Recorder  
Bill Palasz, Vice-President  
Ron Johnston, Vice-President  
Diane Ryan, Vice-President  
Don Clarke, Vice-President  
Wes Villneff, Vice-President  
Joy Searles, Vice-President  
Beth McVey, Vice-President  
Monty Daye, Vice-President

### NORTHERN JOINT COUNCIL LOCAL UNION PRESIDENTS

**Local 427**  
(Cochrane & Surrounding Area)  
Joy Searles, President

**Local 429**  
(Timmins & Surrounding Area)  
Murray Domenico, President

**Local 431**  
(Blind River & Elliot Lake)  
Elizabeth Anderson, President

**Local 545**  
(North Bay & Surrounding Area)  
Diane Ryan, President

**Local 579**  
(Sudbury & Surrounding Area)  
James Wright, President

**Local 582**  
(Sault Ste. Marie & Surrounding Area)  
Mary Lindstedt, President

**Local 713**  
(Cornwall & Surrounding Area)  
Monty Daye, President

**Local 715**  
(Sudbury & Surrounding Area)  
Jeff Barry, President

**Local 915**  
(Kirkland Lake & Surrounding Area)  
Wes Villneff, President

**Local 1177**  
(Manitoulin Island, North Shore & Surrounding Area)  
Derik McArthur, President

**Local 1991**  
(Muskoka Area)  
Sheila Robb, President



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# UNION DUES

Union Dues pay for:

- Professional staff to represent you
- Negotiations
- Day-to-day operations
- Legal costs
- Arbitration fund
- Scholarships
- International strike fund
- Education fund for stewards
- Organizing fund

# UNION DUES ARE

# 100% TAX DEDUCTIBLE!

# 2005 STEWARD SCHOOLS

## TIMMINS



Steward Schools were held across Ontario in order to educate Stewards on topics such as grievance procedures, health and safety matters, and the importance of organizing new members.

## SAULT-STE. MARIE



## CORNWALL



## NORTH BAY



## SUBURY #1



## SUBURY #2



## COMPARE THE TWO!

### With a Union

You have a contract in writing that spells out your employment rights, your wages, your job security, your benefits, and many other entitlements.

An employer cannot discipline or fire you without just cause, and if they do, you can, through your union, challenge their right to do so using the grievance procedure.

You, at all times, know when you will receive a wage increase and how much it will be. With a union contract, you vote along with fellow employees and approve your wage increases.

You are guaranteed holidays, personal days, and liberal vacations with pay.

You have seniority rights that count and can be enforced to give you more privileges and benefits.

### Without a Union

An employer can, from day to day, change the rules under which you work, and you have nothing to say about it.

An employer can, at their sole discretion, lay you off, discipline you and fire you, and you have no recourse.

An employer decides if you are to receive a wage increase, and how much, if any, your increase will be, and your employer decides when you will receive an increase. You simply have nothing really to say about it.

Paid holidays and vacation depend on the whim of the employer. He can change the rules anytime.

An employer can, at their whim, recognize or ignore your seniority rights and decide if your seniority counts for anything.

# RWDSU SUPPORTS C.E.P. MEMBERS

The Retail Wholesale Union helped make Christmas a little brighter for the 15 striking members of CEP Local 31X-3. Northern Joint Council President, **Derik J. McArthur**, and Local 715 President, **Jeff Barry**, presented each member with a Christmas dinner consisting of a turkey, potatoes, stuffing, pie, and a case of pop.



These municipal workers of the Northeastern Manitoulin and Islands Township have been on strike since September 29th, 2005. At the heart of the dispute are concerns over job security and contracting out.



# Scholarships!!!

## RWDSU INTERNATIONAL

### ALVIN E. HEAPS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

For all RWDSU members, their spouses or their children who will be attending a college or university are eligible to apply for a scholarship.

## Northern Joint Council Scholarships:

### Walter Kensit Scholarship

*"The Importance of Organizing Unorganized Workers."*

### Al Lachance Scholarship

*"The Importance of Local Union Administration."*

### Manfred Hoffman Scholarship

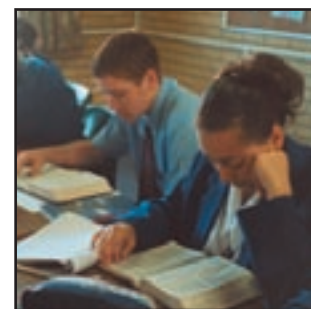
*"Why are Unions necessary in today's society?"*

### Northern Joint Council's Technology Scholarship

*"How Unions use technology to better represent its members."*

### Paul Labelle Scholarship

*"Why it is necessary for unions to be politically active."*



To be eligible for the above-noted scholarships, you must be a member, member's spouse, or member's child, who will be attending a recognized college or university. You may apply for more than one scholarship. For further information, please contact the Union Office at (705) 674-0768 or 1-800-465-1722.



PLEASE WATCH YOUR UNION BULLETIN BOARD!

## 2005 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

**TYLER LINDSTEDT**  
Walter Kensit Scholarship

**JULIE REMILLARD**  
NOJC Technology Award

**ANI PRIMEAU**  
Al Lachance Scholarship

**HEATHER BRODIE**  
Paul Labelle Scholarship

**ERIC DEMORE**  
Manfred Hoffman Scholarship

**ERIC DEMORE**  
Alvin E. Heaps Scholarship