



# THE CUPW VOICE LOCAL 626

Official Newsletter of the Toronto Local - Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW)

## CPC latest 4-year proposal not enough, CUPW warns

By Tom Godfrey

It has been a roller coaster ride for CUPW members and their negotiation team as last-minute talks continue to avert a strike or work disruption that could cripple the national postal system.

The union's National Executive Board (NEB) met on Oct. 4 to determine the next steps while the negotiating committee is meeting with Canada Post Corp. (CPC) to clarify a number of counter-proposals that were received from the company on October 3.

Sylvain Lapointe, CUPW Chief Negotiator, Urban Unit, said several important issues have not been addressed.

"There has been some movement on a few issues but we have a long way to go," Lapointe said in an October 3 statement. "Obviously this does not constitute a basis for settlement."

The latest CPC proposals includes a 1.5% wage increase for each year of the collective agreement, which starts on February 1, 2018.

The company proposal would maintain basic life insurance and death benefits for eligible retirees. In addition, if any employee exceeds the \$5,000 yearly in physiotherapy treatments they must provide a new prescription.

The union said Canada Post has withdrawn its rollbacks on vacation leave and pre-retirement leave for new regular employees.

The company said temporary employees or Casual workers will progress to the next pay increment when they reach 1,000 hours worked in a fiscal year.

The CPC is proposing to use additional temps during the peak period of November to January. It said temps would be used as acting part-time relief letter carriers and be assigned work prior to full-time and part-time letter carriers getting voluntary overtime.

The employer proposes to update the volumes of letter mail and Personal Contact Items (PCIs) yearly, with the update based on the Mail Volume Index and PCI index,

for parcels and packets, for the previous 12 months.

Canada Post did not propose a solution to the multiple bundle delivery method or the Mail Volume Index and Percentage of Coverage. They proposed that the Union agree to resolve certain aspects of the multiple bundle grievance, without allowing for the sortation of sequenced mail.

CPC did not propose any changes to the

pension plan. They are, however, proposing to review and "find solutions" to the

sustainability of the pension plan, short, medium and long-term, based on a CPC study.

To see all the CPC counter-proposals, go to the CUPW website at [www.cupw.ca/en/urban-cpc-counter-proposal](http://www.cupw.ca/en/urban-cpc-counter-proposal).



## RSMCs get pay hike as new contract offer nixed

Rural and suburban posties across Canada were celebrating last month after Arbitrator Maureen Flynn ordered Canada Post Corp. to pay them more as part of a long-awaited pay-equity decision.

The ruling works out to a 25% pay hike, plus some increased benefits, for a majority of the company's mostly-female rural and suburban carriers, known as RSMCs, Canada Post officials said.

Not including benefits, the pay increase amounts to as much as

\$13,000 annually, retroactive to the beginning of 2016, said Cathy Kennedy, a CUPW Pay Equity Committee Member.

Flynn issued the ruling after the two sides failed to reach an agreement through mediated talks by an Aug. 30 deadline.

The lowest-paid RSMCs earn about \$19.73 an hour. Under the ruling, that rate is increased to \$25.95, retroactive to Jan. 1, 2016.

Meanwhile, Nancy Beauchamp, chief negotiator of the RSMC

bargaining unit, said in a statement the global offer her team received from Canada Post on Oct. 3 has "a long way to go to achieve a negotiated collective agreement." A four-year RSMC contract proposal offers a 1.5% increase for each year of the collective agreement, with no job security for permanent relief employees, those with less than 10 years of continuous service and those who work less than 12 hours weekly.

# United Employees Credit Union offering loans in case of work disruption

CUPW members in the event of a strike or lockout are being offered one-time loans of up to \$5,000 by the United Employees Credit Union (UECU), which began more than 74-years ago as the former Postal Employees Credit Union.

UECU officials said no payment is required from postal workers, who are members of the credit union and qualify for the loans, until any possible labour disruption is over. Talks between CUPW negotiators and Canada Post are still underway. "Our mission is to become our members' first choice for financial services," according to an UECU brochure.

The UECU, which was formed in 1944, states that all deposits are pooled to be lent to other members who need loans and mortgages. The organization said profits are returned to members in the form of

interest on deposits and dividends, which have been paid since 1999, or to improvements to the credit union to benefit members.

"We have grown to be a full-service financial institution offering a complete line of competitively priced products and services," UECU officials said.

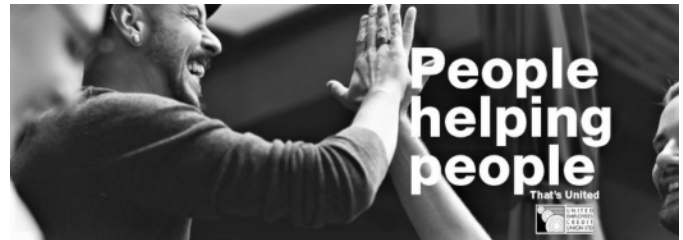
The original Postal Employees Credit Union served only Canada Post employees in the Toronto-area.

Since then it has joined with other groups to form the present credit union. It has affiliated with the federal civil servants, Brewers Retail and Warehousing, Purolator Canada, and Colgate-Palmolive Canada.

It now welcomes employees of George Weston/Loblaws Group of

Companies and the Independent Order Foresters (IOF).

Changes in the Credit Union Act allows residents in the neighbouring communities of our branches to join the credit union and use our services.



You can be a part-owner of the UECU by holding \$100 in shares. Members can use all its products, services, vote at annual meetings and can even run for a position on the Board of Directors.

More info is available by visiting the Credit Union's website at [www.unitedcu.com](http://www.unitedcu.com).

# Hurt workers urged to complete injury log

By Greg MacDonald

Many postal workers are getting hurt on the job and they risk being denied their Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) claims if their injuries are not recorded, according to the CUPW Toronto Local.

"It is crucial that you make sure that these injuries are being recorded in the injury log book," Adele Chaplain, the Local's 1st VP, said in a statement. "No matter how minor the injury ... A simple paper cut can become infected and cause numerous problems after time."

Many WSIB claims are being denied because incident dates are often not being recorded, Chaplain stated, adding that it is "impossible for your rep to provide this on (an

injured worker's) behalf to the Board."

Chaplain said injured workers who are offered modified duties but who do not return to work "have to quantify with a subjective medical" why they are unable to perform the duties that have been offered.

"You will need to prove why you are unable to do these duties," she said. "Just not returning to work saying that you are injured is not good enough."

Earlier this year CUPW asked the Auditor General of Canada to investigate what led Canada Post to fraudulently report a decrease in workplace injuries and whether these decisions led to improper bonuses being paid to senior management.

Canada Post submitted incomplete injury reports to Labour Canada for a number of years, said CUPW National President, Mike Palecek, in a statement earlier this year.

Canada Post changed the reporting of lost time injuries to provide accident frequency rather than a raw number of lost-time accidents, which directly contradicts Labour Canada's definition of disabling injuries. This led Canada Post to report a steady reduction in disabling injuries in 2011, 2012 and 2013.

More than 7 percent of full-time postal workers have suffered disabling injuries, according to a CBC News report. It also reported that disabling injuries among postal workers jumped 93 per cent in from 2013 to 2015.



\* **Happy Retirement:** Friends and co-workers are wishing a happy retirement to a well-liked Shavinder Fervaha, who is now enjoying life after 18-years of service at Gateway East.

\* Fervaha, also known by many as Auntie, was given a fond farewell after working her last shift in Regional last month. "I will miss my many friends and all the nice people at Gateway," the

ecstatic Fervaha smiled. "I am now going to do things that I always wanted to do with my life." She plans on taking it easy with her loving family and to do some travelling. "We will greatly miss her," one of her many co-workers said. "She was a very quiet person who was well-liked by everyone." Good luck Auntie from all your friends at Canada Post.

## Our 'Bird Lady' of the Toronto Local

For the past six years Wyann Ruso, the feisty CUPW Toronto Local executive administrator, has been faithfully feeding hundreds of our feathered friends, and some small animals, in a green space outside the union hall on Densley Ave.

Ruso, who has been working for the Local for 43 years, goes through about 100-pounds (45.4 kilos) of seeds monthly to feed the dozens of finches, blue jays, cardinals, doves, pigeons, gulls and other hungry critters; including Postie (inset photo), a well-liked pigeon that is one of the Local's mascots.

Postie comes from a long-line of history. Hundreds of homing pigeons were used during WW1 and WW11 to deliver important messages to our troops in the battlefield. Thirty-two such pigeons were presented with the Dickin Medal to honour the work of animals during the war.

Some battle-famed homing pigeons include "The Mocker," which flew 52 missions before he was wounded.

Another, named "Cher Ami" lost her foot and one eye, but her message got through, saving a group of Allied soldiers.



## It's your Voice

The CUPW Voice is published monthly by the Toronto Local to keep our members informed of the latest concerns and issues affecting them. *The CUPW Voice* Advisory Committee is made up of Layout Artist Greg MacDonald, Union activist Mark Brown, Secretary Treasurer Abdi Hagi Yusuf and Editor Tom Godfrey. We are always looking for new members to help with the publication. You can send Tom an e-mail with news items or tips to [tgodfrey@rogers.com](mailto:tgodfrey@rogers.com). The Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) has more than 50,000 members nationwide, with Toronto being home of its largest local.

## Passings: Denise Green will be sadly missed

Friends and family are deeply saddened by the loss of Denise Green, who passed away on Sept. 25.

Denise, who had more than 30 years of service with Canada Post, worked in Packets on Shift 2. Her funeral and burial were held on Oct. 1 at St. John's Dixie Cemetery and Crematorium in Mississauga. Denise will be greatly missed.



# CUPW pays tribute to late activist Bromley Armstrong

By Tom Godfrey

Members of CUPW Toronto Local have joined other unions to pay tribute to the late human rights activist and labour leader Bromley Armstrong.

Members of the Toronto Local joined other trade unionists in a memorial service for Armstrong last month. He passed away last August 17 at the age of 92.

The former electrician arrived in Toronto from Jamaica in 1947 and dedicated most of his life to the civil rights movement and helping others as a trade unionist.

He started as a shop steward for Local 439 of the United Automobile Workers (UAW) and became a leader in the trade union movement.

He was also a member of the Toronto & York Region Labour Council, which has for 14-years been presenting the Bromley L. Armstrong Award to a recipient who shows passion for human rights.

“We are very proud to support the work and legacy of Bromley Armstrong,” said Toronto Local President Megan Whitfield. “He set a high bar for his work as a trade unionist and for civil rights.”

A small donation was made by the Local to further the work began by Armstrong.

Called the “blood and guts” ally of the working poor, Armstrong will best be remembered for taking part in the Dresden sit-ins held in the early 1950s to highlight some Ontario restaurants that refused to serve Blacks.

The owners were taken to court and the law upheld in a legal case, which was Canada's first successful test of laws making discrimination illegal. In 1954, he led a delegation to Ottawa to protest the federal government’s restrictive immigration policy that shut out Blacks and other visible minorities. In the 1950s and 60s, he took on the Toronto “rent-ins,” in which Black or mixed-race couples were refused apartments for rent by bigoted owners claiming the unit was already rented. Instead it was offered to a white couple who appeared later and were part of the tests.

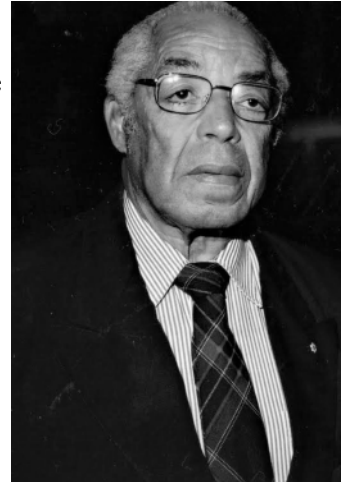
Armstrong published a weekly newspaper called *The Islander*, served as a commissioner on the Ontario Human Rights Commission,

adjudicator with the Ontario Labour Relations Board and sat on the Canadian Centre for Police Relations.

He helped to establish the Caribbean Soccer Club, the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, the Jamaican Canadian Association, the Jamaican

Canadian Credit Union, the Urban Alliance on Race Relations, the National Black Coalition of Canada and the National Council of Jamaican and Supportive Organizations in Canada.

For his services, he was awarded the Order of Distinction in Jamaica, Order of Ontario in 1992 and the Order of Canada two years later.



Activist and labour leader Bromley Armstrong

## Lack of parking at Gateway this busy season

Many workers arrive punctually at Gateway at this time of the year but may punch in late for work due to a lack of parking spots as more Casual employees are summoned to help process a huge volume of parcels as Christmas approaches.

Gateway staff often have to circle the lot searching for spots or are forced to park in illegal areas as they run into the plant to punch in. They have to return soon after to find a legal spot for their vehicles as they can be ticketed.

Canada Post officials said the tough parking situation is here to stay as a large section of a lot in the west end of the plant has been fenced off for the parking of dozens of brand new delivery vehicles.

They again this year are providing extra parking at a church across the street from Gateway, about a five-minute walk.

CUPW Toronto Local executives said they have approached Canada Post a

number of times calling for more spots but little has been done to provide more badly-needed parking at Gateway, the largest mail processing facility in the country.

### *Entrepreneurs Wanted*

Help your business grow by taking out an ad in *The CUPW Toronto Voice*. Reach thousands of your Brothers and Sisters monthly and let them know of your business for as little as \$100. Contact us today. We are the Official Voice of the CUPW Toronto Local. Send a note to [ahagiyusuf@cupw-sttp.ca](mailto:ahagiyusuf@cupw-sttp.ca).