

# The Communicator

## Plant Chairperson's Report

Revised Plant Chairperson's report from the November 19, 2006 Unit Meeting.

### Rumours

With not much change in order conditions, rumours continue to flare of more down weeks or the loss of the third shift. Presently, there are no more scheduled down weeks for the balance of this calendar year. The three down weeks in the first quarter of 2007 may still change; *the last week in January and the two weeks beginning with the week of the March break*. Field inventories are still high and a large number of our cars are parked without a dealer destination (approximately 15,000).

Following previous down weeks, we did see field inventories drop and they are expected to drop furthermore after the recent November 20<sup>th</sup> layoff. Note, down weeks can change at a moments notice; they can increase, rescheduled or cancel. We have not had any discussions with the Company regarding the loss of the third shift, although we have asked the question and we were told that there are no plans to eliminate it. Our goal, as a Union is to maintain the third shift for as long as we are building cars. With the Plant already working on tooling for the Dodge Challenger this could be the volume that we need to get us through to the next major changeover. There are also rumors that the Chrysler Imperial may be coming to our Plant - stay tuned.

### Indefinite Layoff's

We continue to experience indefinite layoffs due to productivity. The Company scrolled through 39 members this past week to layoff 29 people, because 10 of them were off roll. This brings the Plants total indefinite layoff number to 182. *Please note, vulnerable junior employees are advised to cash out the remaining balance of their P.A.A.'s now. In the event of a layoff such employees will not be able to access their P.A.A.'s without being penalized by E.I.* We made it through 2005's productivity period without a single indefinite layoff; unfortunately our situation is not the same

this year. Anybody that has been in the auto business for an extended period of time will have experienced layoffs in one form or another due to the volatile nature of the industry.

What we have bargained as a Union to help our members is the 110 day language. The language protects direct labour jobs from continuous agonizing scrutiny. Associated with the language we have a Time Study Rep to make sure that you can do your job within work standards, an Ergonomic Rep to make sure your job is within ergonomic guidelines and Health and Safety Reps to ensure that all jobs are performed in a safe manner. We have also bargained numerous benefits for those experiencing layoffs. Laid-off employees also have the ability to work as a TPT when their benefits are exhausted, including five year recall rights or their seniority; whichever is greater. I know that this is no consolation for anybody getting laid-off but we always strive to make things better through each round of collective bargaining.

### Aging Product lines

What happens as a product line gets older the Company reduces the cost of building the product so that they can pass this onto the consumer in the form of a discount or an attractive incentive package to maintain sales. Where do they realize these savings? By reducing Labour costs and by squeezing their suppliers. As a product line ages the cost of engineering is also drastically reduced. We launched the LX line of cars in January of 2004 and we are already experiencing the downside of an aging product line. With today's vicious competitiveness in the auto industry, product lines age quickly and there's no corporate loyalty toward employees. They continue to strive by performing more work with fewer workers. At the end of the day, when products are built mainly by automation, who will be left to afford them? If the corporation had their way we would be working for peanuts, no benefits, sub-standard working conditions and no layoff/recall rights.

### **Sub Fund**

There are still lots of questions on the status of the sub fund. Currently the sub fund is broke. What this means is that anyone with less than five years of service will not qualify for sub benefits once the Advanced Credit Account reaches \$43,700,000. *The Advanced Credit Account is where the money comes from once the sub fund is broke.* Currently this account is at \$35,200,000 and they are still paying sub benefits to those with less than five years of service and will continue to pay until the last week in January. Anybody with five or more years of service will be guaranteed sub because once the Advanced Credit Account is exhausted they draw from the Special Contingency fund. Also, *not that it makes a difference:* deduction rates are one credit for each week of benefits collected regardless of your years of service.

The question was raised, “where did all of our funds go after the sub fund was recently topped up in 2005 bargaining?” Windsor Assembly who has a membership of approximately 6,000 employees experienced seven down weeks since bargaining plus they have approximately 600 members on indefinite layoff. The Etobicoke Casting Plant has also experienced down time as we have had two down weeks and we have 182 on indefinite layoff. There is on going discussions from the National Union level to try and top up the fund. Our position is that as long as you have sub credits you should qualify for sub benefits regardless of your years of service. We will keep you informed of the outcome.

### **Auto Insurance payout**

As of December 1, 2006 Green Shield will start processing cheques for those who purchased a DaimlerChrysler vehicle through the e-bonus program. The \$1,000.00 that you are entitled will be taxed at approximately 30% as per Revenue Canada guidelines and will be paid directly to you and you do not have to join the CAW insurance plan to get this money. They will start processing the ones who purchased immediately after the 2005 bargaining first. They did make a commitment that they **will try** and have all outstanding payments processed before Christmas. Currently if you call Green Shield they will tell you to call DaimlerChrysler HR or your Union rep to see if your name is on the list as they do not have one. The list is being compiled and is not expected to be completed before December 1, 2006. At that time all three parties are expected to

have a copy. You do not have to apply to get your name on the list as all purchases through the e-bonus program are processed through DaimlerChrysler Headquarters.

### **Wage progression**

We have had numerous issues with employees who attained their 78 weeks of service on the wage progression scale but did not receive their rates respectively. *Payments were held up due to continuous job cuts in the Windsor salary bargaining unit.* After much discussion with HR and Windsor Payroll this week, the Company has made a commitment to concentrate on the retro pay adjustments and process them for payment following the down week. We requested payment in the form of a cheque but this would have a direct impact on your EI benefits since payments would be processed on the down week. If you do not receive your adjustment on your next pay cheque, please notify your Union Rep and we will have a manual cheque cut for you. This will not affect your E.I. after you return to work.

### **Packages**

On Tuesday November 21, 2006 we had two information sessions for those who qualified under the “30 and out” criteria for retirement incentives package. We had two senior managers from the Windsor Pension Department administer the presentation and answer all pending questions. For those who are eligible, the deadline to accept or decline is December 12, 2006. We currently have a total of 27 packages and we are still disputing a couple of job reductions that could potentially add to the package count if proven to be part of the job-loss-through-automation group. If all packages are not exhausted within the “30 and out” category, the next step is to offer anyone with 28.1 years of service an opportunity to take a layoff and grow into a full 30 and out pension. The only drawback to a “grow-in” is all sub benefits that you collect during the grow-in phase will come out of your \$70,000.00 retirement incentive; dollar for dollar.

### **Plant/Local Elections**

As you may have already heard, Paulo Ribeiro the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of our Local was appointed to a Staff Rep job by our National President Buzz Hargrove. I would like to wish him all the best in his new position as it was great working with him as Plant Chairperson; he will be missed by all at the

Local and Plant. This brings the position of 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President open for election. I have submitted my name for this position. Under a new Local by-law that we passed in June of this past year, I am obligated to automatically resign from my current position as your Plant Chairperson. Accordingly, we will have other Leadership submit their names for Chairperson which will cascade into further movement within the rank and file. This does not restrict the Membership from running. Positions will be open to everyone who submits their names for nomination. Existing Leadership candidates will remain in their current positions until the elections are completed. It is very important that everyone participate and exercise their right to vote on Election Day. This will be a very critical election for the upper levels of Leadership including both the Local Office and Assembly Plant.

In Solidarity,  
Leon Rideout

## Keeping You Posted

### Job Postings...

Bid sheets are to be used for bidding on jobs, please ensure that all information is filled in legibly, sign and drop bid sheet in bid drum. I am presently trying to get some new bid boxes installed at each Job Posting Station.

Postings normally get posted on Thursday's and removed on Tuesdays at 11AM.

**BASE**.....new stock has arrived, hats, jackets, t-shirts and other great stocking stuffers. This will be the only order received before the holidays, so shop early!!!

As per the company, PQX will not be utilized in the BASE; new hours will need to be set in order to maintain Job Postings.

**BASE HOURS**.....will be posted once determined.

Janice Wallace  
Job Posting Rep  
Angela Donnelly  
Alternate Rep

# W.S.I.B.

### Membership under attack again

Once again the membership of this plant is being subjected to an intrusive invasion of privacy by those in charge of looking at WSIB claims for DaimlerChrysler.

It was brought to our attention that the WSIB/Manulife office in the plant is sending out a questionnaire to those on WSIB.

The letter states:

“We are currently reviewing your WSIB claim. Please complete the following statements and return it to the DaimlerChrysler WSIB office when updating your restrictions with the plant doctor. Please answer all questions in detail”

MANY of the answers to the questions are already on any Functional Ability Forms (FAF) that you have previously filled out and handed in to their office. The FAF is a form which is a proper WSIB form. This questionnaire is not a Board (Workplace Safety and Insurance Board) form, and a number of the questions asked are your own business. They have also included a rather strange question “Are you a smoker?” then “If yes, how many per day?”

What has that to do with a WSIB claim?

Your smoking or not smoking is your own business. The CAW/WSIB office finds this form an invasion of your privacy, and suggests that anyone receiving these forms either ignore them or mail them back (blank) to DaimlerChrysler’s WSIB office with no return address and no stamp either. Maybe their WSIB office have time for these mail outs, but it certainly is not a requirement for the injured workers to complete them.

Once again, there was not even a courtesy conversation between the company reps and your CAW WSIB Reps. concerning this form. I guess they may have anticipated our opinion of their form.

In solidarity,  
Annelle Leblanc, Rab McLarnon  
CAW Area WSIB Representative  
(905) 458 - 2878

# **Understanding Our Benefits**

## **EI Benefits Update**

### Part one filing for EI;

**By now everyone should have filed on-line for the October 22, 2006 layoff under “reference code number 35150120062006DC”. If you have not filed an application for the October 22, 2006 layoff as of December 2, 2006 you will be late filing. Anyone who files after this date will be subject to denials for late filing by EI.**

**SUB pays on the honor system for 9 weeks to allow time to establish a claim. The onus is on you to file for EI. If you are denied an EI waiting period for late filing. The Company SUB department will come back after any monies paid to you from SUB fund for failure to establish a claim.**

To date 3420 members have filed on-line for the October 22, 2006 layoff. This falls below the number of members that should have filed.

Members that have not filed for the October 22, 2006 layoff must do so immediately. Failure to do so will result in loss of EI and SUB money!

### Part two reporting to EI;

**Once your application has been filed on-line EI issues you a statement by mail with a personal 4 digit access code that you require to do your report.**

**This report can be filed either by The Telephone Reporting System “Teledoc” by calling (1-800-531-7555) or by using The Internet Reporting System at “servicecanada.gc.ca”. This report must be filed within 3 weeks from that date that EI issued this report to you. Failure to file this report within 3 weeks will result in denial at EI for late reporting. Once again the Company SUB department will come back after any monies paid to you for failure to meet the EI requirements.**

Anyone who has received their 4 digit access code and has not reported to EI should do so immediately.

### Part three following your reporting periods;

**Once you have done your reporting period to EI a statement will be issued to you. Check this statement to ensure that your report is correct! Ensure you were not paid for a week you worked and are not entitled to EI benefits. Save all these**

**EI statements, should you have a problem we will require these statements to assist you. Human Resources Development Canada investigation department gets a weekly pay run from this plant and audits 100% of our claims. If the HRDC investigations department sends you an inquiry letter and you do not respond, they will issue penalties! Penalties could include fines, extended hour requirements for EI benefits, no EI benefits payable and criminal charges for acts of fraud. If EI benefits are not payable for acts of fraud you will also be disentitled to any SUB monies. If you find you have made a mistake on these statements and been paid by EI for a week you are not entitled to please come into the Benefits Office and we will assist you in correcting this.**

### Existing claim that is closed;

**Anyone that has an existing EI claim that is closed must re-file an EI application on-line to re-open their existing claim. You can use reference code #35150120062006DC until December 2, 2006. If the system does not give you the option for re-activation of your existing claim from the previous 52 weeks request it in additional information at the end of your application**

### Christmas Reporting;

**In the past there has been a lot of mistake reporting the Christmas period. You must report your Christmas Holiday paid to you as you would a 40 hour normal work week. If you work the week of Christmas add this 40 hours pay to the total gross pay for the hours that you worked this week.**

**Do not declare Christmas Bonus Monies paid to you, EI is aware of this money and will allocate it back to last period that you worked.**

**With all the Benefits issues that arise such as S/A, Pensions, Drugs, Dental etc. we need our members to handle their own EI claim as much as possible. At the start of new claims periods for layoff's it is impossible to manage the phone and the daily line ups. We do require time to resolve member's issues. Right now we cannot respond to phone mail, the calls come in faster than we can reply. Our phone is backed up 4 weeks as of today and we do not see any resolve to this problem in the immediate future.**

If you are having a problem with EI we ask that you do not leave a message on the phone right now. You are better off coming into the Benefits Office to see us and endure the lineup!

**In Solidarity,  
Art Black  
Gary Bertasson  
Lisa Contini**

## Letters

### Down Syndrome Buddy Walk

I would like to thank all of you who supported my son Kason and I in the Down syndrome Buddy Walk. I raised \$650.00. Our walk raised over \$3000.00. The mission of the National Down Syndrome Society is to benefit people with down syndrome and their families through national leadership in education, research and advocacy.

Down syndrome occurs when an individual has three, rather than two, copies of the 21st chromosome. This additional genetic material alters the course of development and causes the characteristics associated with down syndrome.

Down syndrome affects people of all ages, races and economic levels.

People with down syndrome have an increased risk for certain medical conditions such as congenital heart defects, respiratory and hearing problems, Alzheimer's disease, childhood leukemia, and thyroid conditions. All people with down syndrome experience cognitive delays. People with down syndrome attend school, find work, participate in decisions that affect them, and contribute to society.

In closing I would like to thank each and everyone who supported us and hope you will continue to do so in the future.

**In Solidarity  
Tanya**

**Have a question, issue or concern that you want addressed? Have an announcement to be made?  
Not sure if there's any truth to the  
Rumour of the Day?**

Write it down and put it in a suggestion box, located on top of the blue kiosks/news stands or you can contact

Bill Turner, or John Fallis, CAW

Communications at:

in-plant extension 2759

out of plant (905) 458 - 2759

E-mail

[wt14@daimlerchrysler.com](mailto:wt14@daimlerchrysler.com)

# Equity

## How much is a miracle worth

A little girl went to her bedroom and pulled a glass jelly jar from its hiding place in the closet. She poured the change out on the floor and counted it carefully. Three times, even. The total had to be exactly perfect. No chance here for mistakes. Carefully placing the coins back in the jar and twisting on the cap, she slipped out the back door and made her way 6 blocks to Rexall's Drug Store with the big red Indian Chief sign above the door. She waited patiently for the pharmacist to give her some attention but he was too busy at this moment. Tess twisted her feet to make a scuffing noise. Nothing. She cleared her throat with the most disgusting sound she could muster. No good. Finally she took a quarter from her jar and banged it on the glass counter. That did it!

"And what do you want?" the pharmacist asked in an annoyed tone of voice. "I'm talking to my brother from Chicago whom I haven't seen in ages," he said without waiting for a reply to his question.

"Well, I want to talk to you about my brother," Tess answered back in the same annoyed tone. "He's really; really sick... and I want to buy a miracle." "I beg your pardon?" said the pharmacist.

"His name is Andrew and he has something bad growing inside his head and my Daddy says only a miracle can save him now. So how much does a miracle cost?"

"We don't sell miracles here, little girl. I'm sorry but I can't help you," the pharmacist said, softening a little.

"Listen, I have the money to pay for it. If it isn't enough, I will get the rest. Just tell me how much it costs."

The pharmacist's brother was a well dressed man. He stooped down and asked the little girl, "What kind of a miracle does your brother need?"

"I don't know," Tess replied with her eyes welling up. "I just know he's really sick and Mommy says he needs an operation. But my Daddy can't pay for it, so I want to use my money."

"How much do you have?" asked the man from Chicago.

"One dollar and eleven cents," Tess answered barely audibly.

"And it's all the money I have, but I can get some more if I need to."

"Well, what a coincidence," smiled the man. "A dollar and eleven cents---the exact price of a miracle for little brothers."

He took her money in one hand and with the other hand he grasped her mitten and said "Take me to where you live. I want to see your brother and meet your parents. Let's see if I have the miracle you need"

That well dressed man was Dr. Carlton Armstrong, a surgeon, specializing in neurosurgery. The operation was completed free of charge and it wasn't long until Andrew was home again and doing well.

Mom and Dad were happily talking about the chain of events that had led them to this place.

That surgery," her Mom whispered. "Was a real miracle, I wonder how much it would have cost?"

Tess smiled. She knew exactly how much a miracle cost...one dollar and eleven cents.... plus the faith of a little child.

#### Employment Equity Stats for 2006

Race = 3 Ancestry =1 Place of origin = 2 Color = 0 Ethnic Origin =1

Citizenship = 0 Creed =2 Sex =9 Sexual Orientation =1 Disability =20

Age =1 Marital Status = 0 Family Status =4 Same sex partnership =0

Records of offences =0 Personal Harassment = 64

Total Harassment complaints = 108

*Harassment free is the only way to be!*

In Solidarity,  
Mike Allen

## Women's Advocate

### Candle light vigil on Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>



Once again the women's committee and the TWWN are holding the memorial for the victim's of the Montreal massacre of 14 women at l'Ecole Polytechnique. This event is a national event to bring awareness to the violence that women suffer. These 14 women engineering students were shot by a man solely because they were women. This man actually was noted as

running through the school shouting 'you damn feminists' and then shooting these women dead; then the guy turned the gun on himself, ...*the coward!*

Imagine the fear and trauma that these women and even the bystanders went through on that fateful day.

The candlelight vigil will be held at **Gage Park** on December 6<sup>th</sup> between 6:00 pm – 8:00pm with the reception back at our local, immediately after the vigil.

Hopefully this year, you too, can come out to this vigil.

#### **White Ribbon Campaign**

The White Ribbon Campaign was started back in 1991 when a handful of men from Southern Ontario decided they had a responsibility to urge men to speak out on violence against women. They decided that men speaking out on this issue gave people a strong message that this isn't just a women's issue that we all are responsible to stop it. They decided that a White Ribbon worn the first week of December leading up to the anniversary of December 6<sup>th</sup> would be a symbol of men's opposition to men's violence against women. All of the advocates in our local do a campaign the week before December 6<sup>th</sup> where we hand out white ribbons. We urge everyone to wear a white ribbon during this week in memory of the 14 young women that were murdered and to take a stand that violence against women is not acceptable.

Violence in today's society seems to be rampant. All we need to do is pick up a newspaper to see many acts of violence that has occurred. We need to work together to stop the violence that is happening not just against women, but to all.

In case there isn't another Communicator published before the holidays; I would like to wish everyone and their families, a safe and happy holiday and all the best in the New Year.

In Solidarity,  
Phyllis Foster -Ex: 2522

/vbcope343