

The Communicator

Plant Chairperson's Report

With respect to what may be my last report as your plant Chairperson, I would like to congratulate Ardis Snow who is the first nominee in the history of our plant to attain the Plant Chairperson position through acclamation. It is important that Ardis has the full support of the Union Leadership and Membership. Moving forward, we will all be faced with a challenging future, difficult decisions and tough obstacles, but that is not unusual for our in-plant leadership and we've always managed to re-surface as a group. I was fortunate to have an amazing amount of support over my five and a half year tenure as Chairperson, and I expect Ardis will experience the same. There is nothing like having solid support when facing the company and having to take a tough stand.

Ardis will take office upon completion of the current elections. The nomination notice was posted for his vacant "B-shift" District Rep for all interested leadership and members to apply. Elections are dated for February 12, 2007 when all nominations are expected to be complete. The Elections are also delayed as a result of several down weeks in the schedule for January. In accordance to our previous by-law, we were expected to run an election after each round of nominations as the only time a resignation occurred was if you were elected. Under the new by-law once you submit your nomination you are considered as resigned. The following is an excerpt of the new by-law that we passed last June,

"If a member holding an elected/appointed position within any Unit, the Local/National full-time position, or any part-time appointed position, the term of which has not expired, desires to become a candidate for a full-time elected position in the respective unit or Local Union, such member will be considered as resigned at the time of submitting/accepting his/her nomination. Clarification, this by-law excludes delegates to Conferences/Conventions, Standing Committees

Chairpersons, elected Bargaining Committees and part-time local Executive positions."

Correspondingly, I am now technically resigned from my post as your Chairperson because I have submitted my name in for the 1st Vice President position. Likewise, Ardis was also considered resigned from his "B-Shift" district rep position for the short period leading up to his acclamation. The resignation becomes effective from the moment of installation, the same as an executive officer under our local by-laws and CAW Constitution. This new logical approach saves our Local a substantial amount of money, by reducing the number of elections. It is also a quick and efficient way of restructuring our Union leadership at a particularly crucial time. It places a lot more pressure on those who decide to move forward because there is a lot more to lose by resigning. In theory this filters through only those who are confident to step forward.

Layoffs/Sub fund

As of the week of December 18th, 2006 we will have 251 employees on indefinite layoff. With the restrictive state of our current sub fund the affected laid-off employees and those who are still employed with less than five years of seniority may or may not be able to collect sub for the tentative down weeks in January. January's coverage will depend entirely on the **rate of withdrawal** from both Brampton and Windsor assembly. There is currently only \$5 million remaining in the Advanced Credit Account, and as this money tapers off to zero somewhere in the month of January, those with less than five years will not be eligible for sub. *We have 669 employees with less than five years service.*

The rate of sub withdrawal is different for Brampton and Windsor assembly. For each full layoff week, our plant absorbs approximately \$1.6 million from the sub fund while Windsor who has a much larger membership withdraws approximately \$2.2 million. The monies are paid back into the fund at a rate of 76 cents for each straight-time

hour worked, 82 cents for each time-and-half hour worked and 88 cents for each double-time hour worked. These rates increase at 2 cents per hour each year. With the number of down weeks in Windsor, *including Etobicoke*, the fund has been ravaged and the rate of withdrawal is unsustainable. For those with five or more years of service there is currently no reason for concern since it is guaranteed. After the Sub Fund and the Advanced Credit Account reaches zero there are three other accounts that are drawn from; the IMP fund, the VTEP account and the Guaranteed Benefit Account. **There are still ongoing discussions with the corporation with regards to replenishing the Sub Fund and assisting all members from current and future layoffs. Currently the Company is taking the position that they are not obligated under contractual language and will not top up the fund, we will keep you informed .**

There are two tentative down weeks in the schedule for the month of January which include the weeks of January 22 and the week of January 29, 2007. The schedule has changed several times, previously there was one week in January, which went to three weeks and now back to two weeks with one week moved to the week of February 19, 2007. The Company currently has a sales promotion on for our vehicles; *no payments for three months*. They're hoping sales will increase enough to cancel one or all of the down weeks. Historically around Christmas time sales are typically slower, since the consumer is usually spending money on the holiday season. This explains the sales promotion strategy; holiday shoppers do not have to pay their new-car-purchase payment until March or April, smart!

Auto Insurance

Green Shield has started mailing out the auto insurance rebate cheques on December 7th, 2006 to all who qualify under the e-bonus program. This includes anyone who purchased a new auto after the programs inception date; *2005 bargaining*. There have been a number of glitches and setbacks. Finalizing a complete list of qualifiers was one of them. *Reminder: You do not have to apply to get your rebate; the names are submitted automatically with the purchase of your new vehicle; in accordance to the e-bonus program.* If you qualify and do not get your cheque within the next week, please contact your representative so that we can put in an inquiry.

Retirement Packages

So far we have had about thirty six employees sign up for the retirement package offer; the deadline was December 12, 2006. We were hoping to have enough packages to accommodate anyone under the 30 and out criteria who wanted to retire. Currently we only have 27 with an additional 9 jobs in dispute (jobs that were eliminated due to automation). We did try and get the job vacancies posted prior to the Christmas holidays, since the retirements are effective December 31, 2006. Management was not able to provide the job "req's" in a timely manner so the jobs will not be posted until the New Year. Under our job posting language anybody can bid for these vacancies regardless of their successful bid placements in the past six months.

On behalf of myself and the full in-plant Union leadership, I would like to wish everyone and their families a very safe and enjoyable Christmas Holiday and a happy and prosperous New Year.

In Solidarity
Leon Rideout

W.S.I.B.

Brothers & Sisters,
With the new privacy laws that have been enacted, it is necessary for WSIB (Workplace Safety & Insurance Board) to have written authorization which allows us to represent you. Even if you sign your form 6 stating the name of your union, and you allow the union to represent you, this allows only verbal communication between the WSIB and ourselves, *hence the reason we have asked to have the authorization form run in the communicator.*

Those of you who are computer literate will be able to print a copy as required, and fax or mail it in to us, signed and dated. For the Sisters and Brothers who are not computer savvy, keep the copy of the form in the event that you may need it. Having a copy of the authorization form on-line will enable those who do not live close to print a copy & sign an authorization form if they require assistance with their WSIB claim(s).

**In solidarity,
Annelle Leblanc & Rab McLarnon**

Please refer to the last page of this publication for the written authorization form
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Understanding Our Benefits

Benefits Coverage during a Leave of Absence (LOA)

It is important for our members to know and understand the breakdown of benefits when they request and are granted a Leave of Absence (LOA).

Group insurance and health benefit coverage provided by the Company remains in force until the end of the month following the month in which the leave began, except for dental which stops at the end of the month in which the leave began. For example, if someone takes a LOA January 1st, their dental coverage breaks down at the end of January and their other benefits would breakdown at the end of February.

If a member is going to be on a LOA for longer than two months, they can continue their life insurance and health benefit coverage for up to 12 months by providing full payment of the required premiums. The 2006 premium rates are as follows:

Single coverage (including dental): \$149.96/month
Single coverage (without dental): \$113.26/month
Family coverage (including dental): \$362.23/month
Family coverage (without dental): \$273.60/month
<i>Company paid basic group life insurance: \$0.50 per \$1000 plus 8% tax</i>

Members should check with the Benefits Office for up-to-date premiums before they write a cheque. If someone wants to continue company paid basic group life insurance, members should contact Benefitslink at 1-877-854-5465 to verify their "life amount". For example, if your life amount was \$75,500. you would pay $\$0.50 \times 75.5 = \37.75 plus 8% tax.

Cheques should be made payable to "DaimlerChrysler Canada Inc." Payments should be dated for the 1st of the month for every month that requires extra coverage. Members should drop off cheques at the Benefits office before the LOA begins. We will send the payments to the appropriate person.

Group life insurance and health benefits are reinstated the first day of the month following your return to work. For example, if you return to work on January 22nd, your benefits will start up again on February 1st.

IMPORTANT TO KNOW: Sick & Accident (S&A) insurance coverage breaks down at the end of the month following the month in which the LOA began. There is no provision to continue this coverage beyond that period. **If you are on an LOA longer than this, you will not be eligible for S&A coverage. You need to return to active employment for S&A coverage to be reinstated.**

**In Solidarity,
Art Black, Gary Bertasson & LisaContini**

Some Quick Facts

- The Local 1285 Web site is www.cawlocal.ca/1285. click on "labour links" to link to the CAW Auto Insurance Site, or EI Filing instructions, or In-Plant Job Postings.
- The Social Club Christmas Dance will be held on Saturday, November 18th.
- The Grand Opening of Phase 2 of the Local 1285 Union Hall will be on February 7th, 2007 from 11:00 am until 4:00 pm. All are welcome to attend this important event.
- Both Local and Unit elections are scheduled for February 12th, with a Run-off date of February 26th.



Skilled Trades workers From Brampton Assembly Plant that volunteered to help Hurricane Katrina victims are honoured at the last General Membership Meeting.



National Staff Representative, Paulo Ribeiro, is presented with a plaque in recognition of his years as a Union Rep in Local 1285.

Equity

Congratulations Brampton Assembly

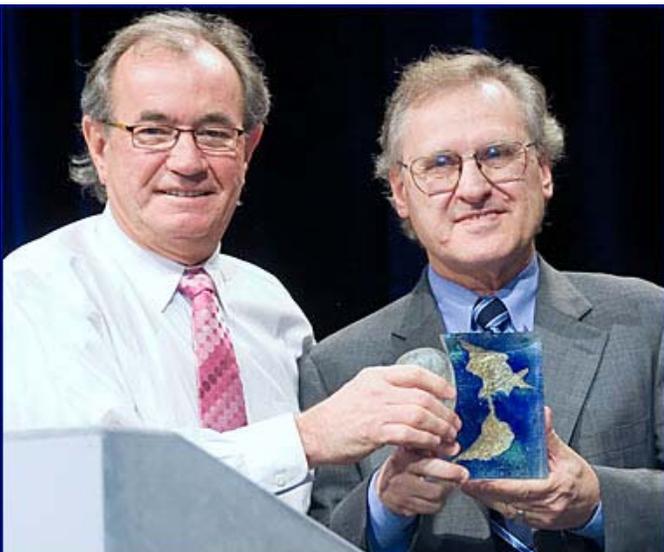
The 2007 Dodge Magnum has been named the most wanted Wagon by Edmonds.com editors. The most wanted winners provide class, leading performance, quality, style and value. These are the vehicles that Edmonds editorial team would like to see in their driveways. It has been said that the Dodge Magnum can't be beat for pleasure and practicality. This is the third time that the Magnum has won this prestigious award.

Way to go everyone and keep up the good work! *If only management would recognize our achievements and accomplishments...*

Human Rights News

- December 10th was International Human Rights Day and Canada's 25th anniversary for ratifying *the elimination of all forms of discrimination against all peoples act*. (UN Convention 1981).

Social justice activist Stephen Lewis makes his mark at the Canadian Auto Workers 'CAW Council' meeting in Toronto. Friday, December 8th



Human rights and social justice activist Stephen Lewis accepts the CAW's 2006 Nelson Mandela human rights award from CAW president Buzz Hargrove.

Simple ways to stop seasonal stress

Are you hosting out of town guests, navigating through packed shopping malls and attending numerous social events? ...Feeling frazzled? You're not alone. As a matter of fact, the holidays are sometimes more work than regular work alone. So it is important to remember how to keep your cool. Here are some simple tips for alleviating the holiday madness:

Write down your priorities—Accomplish the most important things first and don't fret the small stuff.

Stick to a budget—Set a reasonable spending limit and stick with it. This will eliminate your anxiety in the New Year when the bills come rolling in.

Don't over-indulge—Eat and drink in moderation, your expanding waistline may lead to later regret and depression.

Do something for yourself—Take the time to exercise or relax and read a book. Lay low and maintain control, you will need to recharge your batteries for next year. (*Stay well mentally and physically*) An injury to one is an injury to all, united we stand divided we fall.

Remember who benefits when members harass one another? Inappropriate behavior invites disciplinary action and lately most of the company issued disciplines have resulted in time-off **without pay**. Get the message here! There's no mercy regardless of who you are. Do not give this company the opportunity to use you as an example or to be used as a part of their bargaining process. This will only benefit the company in future negotiations and give them leverage. Let's try to forgive and forget our brothers and sisters who have done us wrong in the past for whatever reasons.

Most important of all, remember... **Harassment Free Is The Only Way To Be!**

**Seasons Greetings,
Mike Allen & Liz Taylor**

Women's Advocate

What a year it has been! It certainly has been busier than last year. This year as my second year in this position has been more beneficial in respect that I now know what to expect. I can look ahead to the different annual festivities such as the International Women's Day March, Take Back the Night event, etcetera, that occur each year and I have a better idea of how to approach them and what is expected.

I sat on the Peel Region Planning Committee and actively participated in the Take Back the Night that was held at Gage Park in Brampton. As the Toronto West Women's Network Co-Chair, I booked a table for the event to provide information on the CAW and what they have done to assist women and other minorities. Participating on the Planning Committee allowed me to network with many different women that actually work at some of the different organizations where I send some of the members that come into my office for support and referrals. This networking has already assisted me in my position as I was able to get donations from an organization for the children that participated in the Take the Kids to Work Day. As the saying goes, it's who you know not what you know... The Community Relations Representatives that I worked together with on the TBTN planning committee are also the same people that I would get many of my resources (flyers, booklets, give aways, ect.) from to assist the people that come into my office. With the company allowing me to participate in endeavours such as this, it may also allow me to get members in to see support people (i.e. Counselors) sooner than normal as I may be known by the representative from that organization.

So far this year I have dealt with **39 harassment cases and 142 advocate issues.**

Sexual harassment is my biggest issue I deal with when it pertains to harassment. Since I am supposed to be involved in all sexual harassment cases as the advocate and the female CAW representative on the Employment Equity Committee, therefore this should be the scenario. Sexual harassment is **48%** of my total caseload this year up to December 1st.

With the 142 advocate issues I have dealt with this year, some only come to my office once, most come to the office two or three times regarding their issue, while a handful come to see me many times, often on a bi-weekly basis. Interestingly, many men have

come to the office looking for support on a variety of issues as well. To date, **35%** of the people that have come to see me so far this year for advocate issues have been men. Consequently, the office is quite busy and there even have been times where there is a line up!

This year the equity committee had started to do anti-harassment training with management personnel and union leadership. This is a joint union and company training program. Therefore these classes are facilitated by one company and one union Employment Equity Committee member. Caroline Poirier is usually the company representative and Mike Allen and I take turns representing the union side when teaching these classes. With the now old Preventing Harassment in the Workplace course we had 92 people attend this course this year. Since then, DaimlerChrysler along with the CAW National Employment Equity Reps., Irene Friend and Pat Cunningham have standardized the harassment course so that all DC workplaces will receive the exact same training. We have done some classes with this new course and have had 75 people go through this new training.

The breakdown of the 39 harassment cases that my office has dealt with this year is as follows:

Sexual Harassment: 19

Race: 1

Disability: 7

Age: 1

Poisoned Work Environment: 2

Personal Harassment: 8

I also had one case which was based on Confidentiality of employee information as well.

On confidentiality of information, I would like to add that supervisors shouldn't have to be reminded that employee information is not to be shared with anyone, whether it is a phone number, email regarding an employee, Dr.'s note, a person's restrictions or even that an employee is coming down to the Women's Advocate office. Supervisors should be the only one handing out paychecks as well.

On behalf of the Local 1285 Women's Committee I would like to thank everyone that participated in the drive for articles to go in our committee's annual basket donation to the women's shelters. It is such a nice feeling to help someone feel a little better about themselves and their situation, especially at Christmas time; and especially the children. Isn't that what Christmas is all about?

In closing I would like to wish everyone a happy Hanukah, a merry Christmas and a happy New Year. Have a well deserved safe and enjoyable holiday.

**In Peace and Solidarity,
Phyllis Foster Ext: 2522**

New Technology

I would like to bring the membership up to date on the state of the New Technology Production training group prior to my departure from the position of Production New Technology Training Coordinator.

I started out in this position gearing up for the 3rd shift training requirements in the Product group as well as assisting in the set up and running the temporary off site training facility on Regan Road.

The training group, both the Health and Safety Instructors and the Product Trainers worked very hard in preparing the new hires prior to launching the 3rd shift building the LX line of vehicles that we are all very proud of. Many times we had over one hundred students in class off site at one time, as well as all the training that continued in the plant.

At the same time it has been my responsibility to coordinate the Union Awareness Instructors. My duties included assisting them with technical support and coordinating/scheduling coverage for all of their requests for time off, for both personal as well as Union leave. This round of Union Awareness has been very successful with greater attendance, as well as the material presented being considerably more interesting than the previous round.

I have spent a considerable amount of time focusing on improving the quality of the vehicle through training in the Body Shop. Working with the BIW Product Trainer and upper Management has been very rewarding in respect to progress in the quality of the car leaving BIW. Management is now more interested in working together with the Product group in order to achieve better quality through training in BIW as a result of our efforts.

Currently, I am in the process of acquiring an additional Product Trainer in the Paint Department.

Management and the Union in the Paint Department have shown a genuine interest in creating this position on an “as needed basis” starting with a Reprocess Spot Repair Product Trainer. This will definitely contribute to ensuring the quality of our vehicles before they leave Paint.

All of the instructors in the training department have done an excellent job in presenting the material in a very professional manner and they should be applauded for their collective efforts.

In closing, I would like to assure the membership that I will ensure a smooth transfer of material to my successor as New Technology Training Coordinator. I also wish the successful candidate much success and will be available to assist in any way to further accomplish improvements in the New Technology Training Department.

Wishing you all the best this Christmas season

And a Healthy and Happy New Year.

**In Solidarity
Terry Browne**

You're my Inspiration

It's fascinating to find out the inspiration behind cultural milestones like these.

Clint Eastwood. “Developed his distinctive manner of speech by studying the breathy whisper of Marilyn Monroe.”

The Chevrolet Insignia. Billy Durant, founder of General Motors, liked the wallpaper pattern in a Paris hotel so much that he ripped off a piece and brought it back to Detroit to copy as the symbol for his new Chevrolet car.

Fat Albert. The slow-witted, good-natured cartoon character was modeled after Bill Cosby's dyslexic brother, Russell.

The Queens. In a deck of cards were originally depictions of Queen Elizabeth, wife of Henry VII of England.

Letters

Merry Christmas & Ho Ho Ho

As I stand at my workstation watching supervisors hand out another round of layoff notices to our junior Brothers and Sisters, I am reminded of a time, not too long ago, when that was me.

The year was???? Sales for the LH line of vehicles were soft at best. Days of orders had dropped drastically. The previous year we had gone through rolling layoffs plant wide. Work one week and be laid off for the next two.

Like the junior employees today, I knew that the axe was going to fall sometime soon. Even though I expected it, even though I was prepared for it, it was still a big shock.

Upon returning to work after the Christmas holidays I, and several others, were given our five month notice of permanent layoff. Our last day would be in May; the day before the Victoria long weekend.

I was one of the fortunate ones and had my permanent layoff cancelled a few weeks before it was to become effective; however, many others were not so lucky.

I remember the days leading up to my cancellation notice ...I was feeling very scared. Who would hire me? I had been out of College for 5 years. My skills weren't current. Would I, and could I, go back to school and retrain for something else.

I also remember feeling very depressed. I knew the layoffs were just a numbers thing, but I couldn't help taking it personally.

The company had their mandate to make money. When they are told to cut jobs they just count the required number of employees from the bottom of the seniority list and draw a line. Everyone below the line receives a layoff notice. Everyone above the line is safe ... for now.

For me this felt like an attack on my work ethic and me as an individual. Like I hadn't performed to expected levels. Like I hadn't done my job well enough, fast enough or correct.

I'm not ashamed to say that during this time I cried a lot and felt very alone. I had many people explain to me that it wasn't my fault. I knew this logically, but it still didn't help ease my sorrow.

In the five years since then I have certainly grown more cynical about the manufacturing industry.

There are no guarantees. I could be here for another

20 years or this place could pack up and move tomorrow.

I learned a couple of things from this whole experience that I'd like to share.

First, take advantage of the Green Shield tuition refund program. Take courses to upgrade skills, you may already have to keep them current. Take programs to learn a new trade or career. Don't wait for that rainy day. Plan ahead and be prepared. It isn't going to cost you anything, except some of your time. Always ensure that your course of interest is covered by calling Green Shield before registering or paying any fees.

Secondly, I am not going to make it easier for this company to continue to layoff our junior Brothers and Sisters. I am going to refuse any and all overtime that is offered to me. If they need that much overtime coverage, to me it is pretty obvious; they need to hire some people back. I implore you, as Union Brothers and Sisters of the Canadian Auto Workers Union Local 1285, to join me in refusing overtime. I know the extra money is nice. I know that it is the holiday season, but I also remember a phrase that goes something like this ... "It is better to give than to receive." Let's give those hours and jobs to those less senior than ourselves.

Remember, we were all "that junior employee" at one time or another.

Merry Christmas and a happy new year.

**In Solidarity,
Lindsay Winfield
Production Operator – Chassis
Computer Trainer**

**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

Attention Potential Union Awareness Participants

PRODUCTION & SKILLED TRADES

As of right now, the opportunity to attend this round of Union Awareness is in the process of winding down.

The company is suggesting that we only offer the balance of training on B shift and C shift, because the majority of those in production on A shift are complete or have had opportunity to attend (as per the companies interpretation) . Management will not go out of its way to make another opportunity available regardless of the reason for not attending in the past. If you have not attended and would like the opportunity to attend this **40 hours of training** ? We need you to contact us ASAP in order for you to be scheduled before this round of Union Awareness is complete. Please do not hesitate to call even if you have special requests or considerations in regards to attending. Car pooling issues can be taken into consideration. For Production, please contact Eva Millard at 905-451-2691 with your request to attend as soon as possible. For Skilled Trades, please call John McClafferty at 905-458-2566 or Rick Forbes at 905-458-2961.

/vbcope343



C.A.W. Area WSIB Representative

RE: _____

CLAIM # _____ **et al**

I authorize Annelle Leblanc, and Rab McLarnon, of CAW Local 1285, or any designated CAW W.S.I.B. representative from CAW Local 1285, to represent me with my W.S.I.B. Claim(s). This will be effective until changed by me in writing with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board.

Date: _____ Signature: _____