

# 9346 News

February, 2009

Vol. 9, Issue 1

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## President's Report

Sisters and Brothers, the downturn in the global economy has significantly reduced the price for commodities and the price for Met. Coal for the coming year are still being negotiated.

Elkview has budgeted for 4.8 million tonnes of clean coal for 2009 from its original forecast of 6 million. This could potentially change once the price is settled on.

At the last Labour/ Management meeting in January, the Company had provided the Union with two schedules for 2009 based on a 20% reduction on production. The first schedule was based on blocks of vacation shutdowns over designated months. This schedule was straight forward and fell within the scope of our collective agreement.

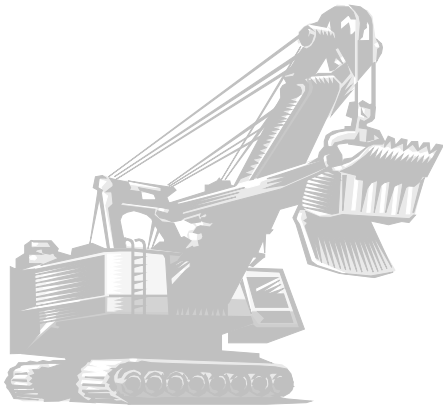
The second option would spread the time over a period of a year, referred to as Blue Days (Murphy Days) designated stats and shutdowns. The second option required an amendment to our collective agreement with a letter of understanding.

Your Local Union Executive discussed both schedules and decided on the first option based on the fact that it fell within the scope of our collective agreement and it would be easy to police.

Some of our members questioned the Executives decision and signed a petition asking for the opportunity to vote on which schedule to go with. A motion was brought to the Membership Meeting in January and the issue was discussed at length. We held a property wide vote the last week of January. The results of the vote is as follows:

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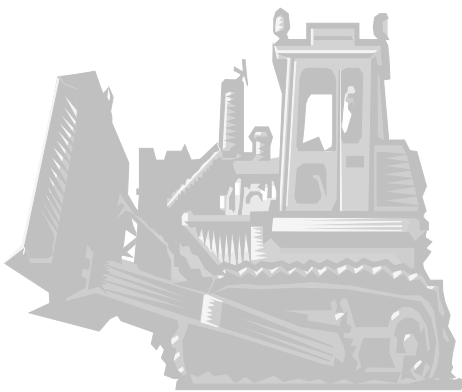


## NOTICES BY EMAIL.

**Anyone who would like to get newsletters, meeting dates, and notices emailed to you, please forward your e-mail address to:**

**[admin@usw9346.ca](mailto:admin@usw9346.ca)**

**Our current list of e-mail addresses is old and we will be creating a new distribution list.**



*President's Report (Continued from page 1)*

Out of 691 members, 550 voted and 60.5% chose to stay with the current CBA and go with the Vacation Shutdown Schedule.

THIS WAS A GREAT EXERCISE IN DEMOCRACY.

There was an Arbitration on February 6, 2009 in Fernie regarding Stat Holiday pay for Special Assignments. This was an outstanding language issue that the Union decided to take the Company on. Again it dealt with letters of understanding outside the CBA that we got rid of during the last set of negotiations. Vince Ready heard the case and will be making a decision shortly.

We had many discussions with the Company last year in regards to benefits for our members who choose to work past age 65. If there are any of our members considering working past 65, then they should contact Human Resources at Elkview Coal to see all the benefits you will be entitled

to as the package has been modified.

Your Local did not file a discrimination grievance as USW Local 7884 at Fording River had filed a grievance already dealing with this matter. They alleged the Company was discriminating against workers over the age of 65 and we were awaiting that outcome. Their grievance was resolved and the Company will be paying certain benefits outlined at Fording River to those working past 65. Our benefit package should now be similar to what Fording River is offering their employees which are as follows:

MSP premiums paid, CPP, WCB, Short Term Disability, Extended Health Coverage, Dental. Specific details will be released to us that the next Labour/ Management meeting.

It is unfortunate that there are a number of misguided

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*President's Report (Continued from page 2)*

individuals out there who like to stand back and throw "bricks" at the Local Union. We try to do what is best for this membership without bastardizing your collective agreement. I say you should put your energies to good use!! A reminder to some of our members who feel the Local Union doesn't do an adequate job representing them - Nominations for Executive Office will start in March, so I hope you will step up to the plate.

Nominations will open for election of Officers on March 1, 2009 and close at the Membership meeting on March 17, 2009 at 7:00pm at the Union Hall. Elections will be held in April.

Your Local Union will be hosting a two day level II Shop Steward School in Sparwood on March 4 and 5. If anyone out there is interested, please phone the Union Hall.

I would like to thank all the Shop Stewards and Safety Reps for all your hard work especially the chairs, Mark Milley, Troy Cook and Ewan Gordon. THANKS!!

In Solidarity,  
Christopher Nand  
President

## Isn't it Ironic

Peter Rosner

The recent vote on shift scheduling and the previous petition by our members has caused me to reflect a lot about where we are going as a union. I know for a lot of our members they felt they were exercising their rights and holding a vote on the issue was the right thing to do and I can accept that. Unfortunately there are others who used this as an opportunity to discredit this local once again. The fact is that a portion of our membership never seem to be satisfied with the way we run this local. Their issues are not only with the executive but the United Steelworkers union in general. They either dislike unions or are trying to hang on to the glory days of the past. I find this very ironic as I have supported this union and our local presidents for the past eight years. Now I will digress

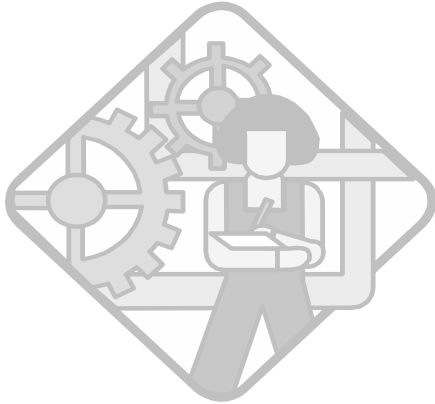
a bit and you will get a more clear understanding of where I am coming from. I have been employed primarily in the mining industry for the past thirty years. Most of those years the bargaining unit were represented by the United Mine Workers Of America. I held positions within that union so I am well aware of what they did for their membership. In those early years we considered the USWA an inferior union, we did not recognize them as a power for labour or a force at union schools. At the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention of the United Mine Workers in September of 1990 the delegates from district 18 of Western Canada would not stand up to recognize the international president of the USWA. He was a guest

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## GRIEVANCE REPORT

Troy Cook



SHOP STEWARD  
MEETING  
February 27, 2009  
at 4:30pm at the  
Union Hall

- 07/07 - Special Assignment pay for a stat holiday - Awaiting the Arbitrator's decision
- 32/07 - Unjust Termination - Arbitration Postponed
- 04/08 - Duty to Accommodate - in abeyance.
- 06/08 - Improper Job Posting - at the third stage level. Discussions continue.
- 19/08 - Unjust Discipline - in abeyance
- 23/08 - Unjust Discipline - denied at third stage
- 26/08 - Pay Classification - in abeyance
- 27/08 - Unjust Termination - Going to arbitration. Waiting for dates.
- 32/08 - Harassment - received second stage response.
- 37/08 - Missed hours - waiting for third stage response.
- 38/08 - Improper Job Posting - resolved to the satisfaction of the Union.
- 39/08 - Denied Posting - denied at second stage
- 40/08 - Unjust Discipline - denied at first stage
- 41/08 - Unjust Discipline - received second stage response.
- 42/08 - Unreported Dangerous Occurrence - received third stage response.
- 43/08 - Improper Job Posting - received third stage response.
- 44/08 - Unjust Discipline - received first stage response
- 45/08 - Unjust Discipline - received second stage response.
- 47/08 - Not paid overtime after crew transfer - received second stage response.
- 48/08 - Unjust Discipline - in abeyance until 23/08 is resolved.
- 49/08 - Unjust Termination - Arbitration dates set for April 1 and 2, 2009

*(Continued on page 5)*

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50/08 - Apprentice Training Hours - received third stage response

## GREIVANCES FOR 2009...

01/09 - Not Used

02/09 - Unjust Discipline - denied at first stage

03/09 - Policy and Procedures for traffic control - resolved to the satisfaction of the Union

04/09 - Unjust Discipline - received first stage response

05/09 - Not Used

06/09 - Special Assignment working while Full Time employee on temporary layoff - waiting for third stage response

07/09 - Improper Distribution of Overtime - waiting first stage meeting

08/09 - Senior people laid off while junior employees worked - waiting for third stage response

09/09 - Improper layoff (more than 8 calendar days) - waiting for third stage response.

10/09 - No paperwork yet

11/09 -Employee sent home and not compensated two hours for coming in to work - waiting for first stage meeting.

In Solidarity,

Troy Cook

Grievance Chairman

## SAFETY REP MEETING

April 1, 2009

at 4:30pm at the  
Union Hall

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## Time To Think About Wills...

Russell Ullman

Many people today do not have a Will to protect them or their loved ones. The process is actually quite simple and anyone of legal age can make one. It is extremely important to have a Will. It protects your family and your estate. People that do not have a Will sometimes leave family members behind that fight over the estate leaving it up to the courts to decide what happens with it, after the creditors receive the debts left behind.

Having a Will protects your wishes and ensures that your estate is distributed properly. Your family members should receive their intended gift and saves a lot arguments, money and the courts usually do not have to get involved.

A beneficiary, spouse or an ex-spouse, and family can apply to contest your Will so it is highly recommended not to write your own. You have many options to assist you and make your Will as you intended it to be.

### OPTIONS

A widely popular way to make a Will is through a lawyer or notary public. You will have to pay regular lawyer fees for them to help you prepare one. The lawyer or notary will have it filed with the Wills Registry Office in Victoria to help your executor, (person in charge of your estate), locate it later. You do not have to file your Will with the Registry but it is highly recommended as it proves that there is only one copy and one or more codicils and cannot be tampered with. There is a small fee around \$25-\$30 to file it and locate it later.

You can always go and pick up a Will Kit at

Staples for around \$30 or you can purchase kits online. Many people use this option and you need to get two witnesses to sign it. You must have at least two witnesses and they cannot be a beneficiary or the executor of your Will. That way no one can dispute that you were pushed into giving away a gift to someone, etc.

### QUICK NOTES:



You must provide for your family in the Will. You cannot leave out a child or spouse unless you have good reason to leave them out. Documents will need to be provided for proof or have a living person be able to back you up if that person contests your Will.

If you make your own Will be sure to be clear of what you intend in your wording and that you have provided for everyone you leave be-

hind. A good website for information is [www.canadawills.com](http://www.canadawills.com). It also has as Will you can complete and print off.

So it is time to start thinking about your Will and how you are going to make yours. You can always go back and make changes to it; called a codicil. You can make up to three codicils before they recommend making a new Will. Get out there and make sure your estate and wishes are carried out the way you want!!!!

In Solidarity,  
Russell Ullman  
Outside Guard

# 9346 News

## NOTICE

### **OPENING NOMINATIONS FOR LOCAL 9346 EXECUTIVE OFFICE MARCH 1, 2009**

**For those interested in seeking election to Local Union Office, Nominations will be accepted for the following positions:**

<b>President</b>	<b>Positions (1)</b>
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Positions (1)</b>
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	<b>Positions (1)</b>
<b>Financial Secretary</b>	<b>Positions (1)</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Positions (1)</b>
<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Positions (3)</b>
<b>Guide</b>	<b>Positions (1)</b>
<b>Inside Guard</b>	<b>Positions (1)</b>
<b>Outside Guard</b>	<b>Positions (1)</b>
<b>Grievance Comm. Chair/WCB Chair</b>	<b>Positions (1)</b>
<b>JOHE&amp;S Comm. Chair</b>	<b>Positions (1)</b>

### **NOMINATIONS CLOSE AT THE MEMBERSHIP MEETING MARCH 17, 2009.**

Nominations dropped off at the Union Hall must clearly state your name, who you are nominating and for what position. Nomination forms can be obtained from the Union Hall.

Nominations close at the Membership Meeting of March 17, 2009. If you are unable to attend the March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, to accept your nomination, a letter of acceptance must be in the hands of the Recording Secretary, Horst Gandner – Plant Electrician, before the March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. Tellers will then determine who is eligible to run in the election following guidelines set out in the constitution.

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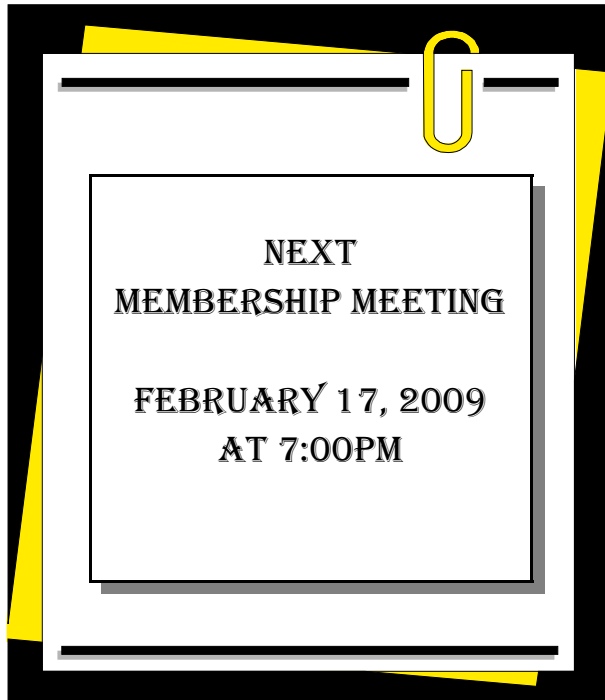
speaker there and was recognized by the majority but not us "I know this because I was there". Around this time the UMWA were experiencing some turmoil of their own. Prior to Westar shutting down there was a power struggle here between the local, district, and international. Meetings were held in Calgary and the international president of the UMWA was brought in to correct the situation. He was told by a member from Coal Mountain that he was the man in charge and he had better straighten things out or these companies were going to mop the floor with the whole works of us, little did he know how right he would be. "I know so because I was there." Much has changed since this time for unions and organized labour. The majority of the workers in this valley are now represented by the USW and they were chosen by this membership to

represent them. They were chosen by you long before I got here and I find myself in the position of defending them. I do so because I have seen what has occurred in this valley over the last thirty years and the USW have withstood the test of time. Last I seen their members who have been organized at Fording River since 1971 are now retiring with full pensions so the USW has done all right by them. The UMWA on the other hand is no longer a recognizable union in Western Canada, they have deteriorated to the point of being a chihuahua with the reputation of a pitbull. This is no disrespect to them as I know they did a lot for the workers in this valley, but this is the reality of what has occurred. I know so because when I left coal mountain their membership were trying to decertify them up there. Now after all this I have the unique position of fighting for this union here, stuck listening to some members who would turn their back on their coworkers in a heartbeat. They have all the answers but when you ask them to step forward and get involved they quickly disappear. They

are content to entertain a small audience of followers because that is their role in life. They will play it both ways and might get a staff job if they play their cards right. Unfortunately you will gladly follow them when you should be holding them accountable. There are two questions you should ask them WHAT WOULD THEY DO DIFFERENTLY? And WHY ARE THEY NOT DOING IT? The next time one of our members is bragging about the UMWA ask him if he was a cheerleader on the sidelines or did he actually represent the workers here. On a positive note we have a lot of good members we can count on to support this local, they have proved that at the last negotiations and during this recent shift schedule voting process. They are the silent majority and I thank them once again for supporting our president and this local.

In Solidarity,  
Peter Rosner  
Trustee

# 9346 News



OFFICE HOURS  
9:00 - 12:00 p.m.  
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.  
Monday - Friday

## Union Hall Contact Information

Ph: (250) 425-0131  
Fax: (250) 425-0086  
E-mail: [admin@usw9346.ca](mailto:admin@usw9346.ca)  
Website: [www.usw9346.ca](http://www.usw9346.ca)

ADDRESS:  
111 Centennial Sq.  
Box 40  
Sparwood, BC V0B 2G0

## Local Union Executive Committee Members

Christopher Nand - President  
Domenic Russomanno - Vice President  
Horst Gandner - Recording Secretary  
Samuel Samy - Financial Secretary  
Russell Primrose - Treasurer  
Peter Zazzara - Trustee  
Dave Sheets - Trustee

Peter Rosner - Trustee  
Vacant - Inside Guard  
Russell Ullman - Outside Guard  
Peter Chechotko - Guide  
Charles McCormick - OHE&S Committee Co-Chair  
Ewan Gordon - WCB Committee Chairperson  
Troy Cook - Grievance Committee Chairperson



# & PRICE COSTCO

## USW LOCAL 9346 RENEWAL & NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(Membership - Darren Wright - 111685606960)

Through USW, Local 9346, union members are eligible for Costco membership. Costco membership cards are \$45.00 + g.s.t. (\$47.25) annually and includes a free spouse card. To join you must complete the following information, attach a cheque or money order **only** (payable to Costco) for the appropriate amount. If the application is made **before March 13th** please drop it off at the Union Hall. If you miss the March 13th deadline please contact us at the Union Hall.

New  
Application

Renewal  
Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Crew: \_\_\_\_\_

Drivers Lic: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal Membership #: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Drivers Lic: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal Membership #: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: Memberships are NOT prorated. All cards expire in March of each year.**

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

CHEQUE

MONEY ORDER