

The Informer

CAW  TCA
CANADA

The Voice of Local 4304
Kitchener Transit and Fleet

December 1995

Vol. 4 Issue 5

Make sure Maxi-brake is applied

We hold our regular meeting every month, and after each meeting we are able to move forward, and make our jobs just a little bit easier. The minutes of each meeting is posted for your inspection at the garage. Management is always ready to listen to our ideas, because like us, they too would like to see transit operate as efficiently as possible.

The latest accomplishment, is having the back wall at the Transportation Center torn down and rebuilt. We are still working on changing route 9 inbound to University, (Hazel, left Hickory, right King, right University), and route 7 inbound on Columbia, (Columbia, right Regina, right

University, Left King). One major problem is trying to convince Waterloo City Council that these changes will make our jobs easier.

We talked to the Kitchener planning department, to try and have them remove the obstacles they left in our bus stops on King Street. These include, benches, trees posts, garbage cans, bicycle racks. As of this day, they have not finished the job. We also asked for a "no right turn on red light" sign to be erected on Gaukel Street.

We, as professional drivers, have had many preventable accidents lately. Of these, the three run away buses were the most damaging to our reputation. We were very lucky that no one was killed. I am sure that there were other incidents like this, but the operator was able to stop the bus with the back door switch. We can no longer rely on the back door switch if we forget to apply the Maxi brake before leaving the bus.

All of the new buses are equipped with a sensitive edge back door. In order for this safety

device to function, the designers decided that it would be unsafe to have the back brakes apply when the back door switch was used. In my opinion they are **wrong**, because to me, it is a safety device. When you are out of your bus and closing the doors, your hand is still on a braking device.

So **please** make sure, before you leave your seat for any reason, that you apply the Maxi brake. When parking the bus, always apply the Maxi brake and turn your wheels into the curb,

(Continued on page 2)

**Support the
December 11
General Strike
in London**

see page 8 for details

In this issue:

Committee Reports
Travel Tips
In My Opinion
Poetry
Library Update
Bus Stop Trivia
Christmas Light Tours
Giving Tom the Slip
Workers' Compensation
Reform - Bill 15
Government to Slash WC

(Continued from page 1)

and put the gear selector in neutral. This must be done because the new buses have almost twice as much power as the old ones, and they can be driven with the brakes on. **Do not** rely on the safety buzzer that is designed to warn you if the bus is in gear and the Maxi is not used. Any electric eye can defeat itself. You can actually step over the beam, or the transmission can show that it is not in gear, while it actually is in gear.

Laszlo Bori

Condolences

The Executive and membership wish to extend our deepest sympathy to the following members who have suffered the loss of loved ones:

Dave Havell (Mother-in-law)
Orville Visneskie (Mother-in-law)

Uniform Committee

At our last meeting, with Leslie Banson, Ray Miller, Steve Caven, Lois Yandt and Linda Lyon, we managed to come to a decision about ties. Our goal was to have the City agree to let our operators go without wearing a tie all year round. To achieve this, we had to give up the polo shirts. After next summer polo shirts will not be worn, we will all have to wear proper shirts.

Any operator who doesn't want to wear a tie must wear the appropriate uniform. Spring/Fall jacket, or a winter coat, short or long sleeve shirt with a sweater or a cardigan. If wearing a long sleeve shirt only, than a tie must be worn. If wearing the blazer with any combination of shirts, a tie must be worn.

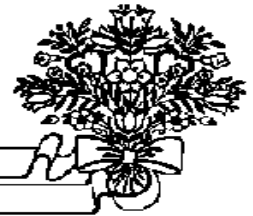
Laszlo Bori

New Members

Maureen Ancio
Jaqueline Eng
Maarit Isolehto
Kathy Klein
Yves Lepage
Gordon Roth
Steve Wilcox
Welcome!

In Memoriam

Vince
Hartleib



Contributors

Helping out with this issue were:

Ted Bate
Warren Bell
Wayne Bell
Jim Charters
Rosemarie Bergmann
Laszlo Bori
Ricki Germann
Linda Lyon
Paul Mennie
Connelly Nolan
Tom Williams

Policy Statement

The Informer is a publication of CAW Local 4304 and is intended to educate and inform the members. The views expressed are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the CAW or Local 4304. The newsletter committee reserves the right to edit for clarity or fact. Material of a sexist, racist or defamatory nature will not be printed.



Photo: Wayne Bell

A replica of a San Francisco streetcar.

Nashville Tennessee

Political Education Committee

Locally, Sherman Supersonic Industries Corporation of Mississauga has been awarded the contract to build a Drive-Through Bus Wash System at a total cost of \$134,000 plus G.S.T.

The Marathon Compressor Company Limited of Heidelberg has been awarded the contract to build a Compressed Natural Gas Fueling Station at a cost of \$73,000 plus G.S.T.

The new fare structure will become effective on Jan. 1, 1996, with the exception of the cash fare change which will be implemented on Feb. 1, 1996.

The Transit Division, under the directorship of Wally Beck, is being transferred to the Public Works Department reporting to the General Manager of Public Works.

Provincially, the bad news just keeps on coming. Bill 7 is now law. I don't think a lot of us understand just how much this bill will affect us.

Bill 7 will...

Repeal virtually all of the significant reforms contained in Bill 40.

Introduce sweeping alterations to the present rules governing certification and decertification.

Enact mandatory strike and ratification votes.

Entirely eliminate the right of agricultural workers, domestics and many professional groups to engage in collective bargaining, and extinguish collective bargaining rights

presently held by these employees.

Amend the Employment Standards Act to eliminate successorship protection for employees in the contract service sector, and reduce entitlements to the Employee Wage Protection Fund.

Erode crown employees' collective bargaining rights, including successorship and related employer protection, and bar access to arbitration where meaningful collective bargaining is prevented as a result of essential service agreements.

Establish "transitional" rules for proceedings commenced under Bill 40, which in many cases will result in the retroactive application of Bill 7, and in others the termination of proceedings commenced under Bill 40 unless a final decision has been issued.

Remove the emphasis on collective bargaining in the existing purpose clause, and replace it with a purpose clause which diminished the role of trade unions.

This local is participating in the **C.A.W.'s Fight Back Campaign**. We are handing out literature outlining the government's agenda and the labour movements response to it. If we don't stand together against this government now, we might find that we are too weak to do it later.

**In Solidarity,
Tom Williams**

Health and Safety

Accident and Incident Reports:

If you have the misfortune to have to fill one of these out, it is a good idea to have the supervisor give you a copy for your own records. You may find that you remember something later that could be added to your report. It could also be used for reference in the event you want to appeal a decision at the accident review committee. Also, if a change in equipment or the work process would have prevented your accident, contact your health and safety or operators representative and go over your report with them.

Winter driving: Our schedules were set up to work under normal traffic and good road conditions. That is lost during the winter. It is a lot better to drive slower during slippery road conditions and arrive a few minutes late, than to get in an accident and spend an hour waiting for the police and filling out reports.

If a part of your route becomes too icy to navigate safely, contact your supervisor and ask for alternate routing until the area is sanded. With government cuts in spending, you may find it will take longer for the roads to be attended to during the stormy weather.

Radio Earphones: It has been brought to my attention that some

(Continued on page 4)

In My Opinion

What a wondrous place it is to behold. In this world, full-grown people can feed themselves on 90 dollars a month and jobs are so plentiful that, all an unemployed person has to do, is, walk down any main street, of any city in this province and take his or her pick from all the "Help Wanted" signs in the stores!

In this world, it will be impossible to injure your back on the job or sustain a stress related injury. Companies will be so enlightened and caring about their employees well-being, joint Health and Safety committees will no longer be needed.

Progressive labour legislation, such as Bill 40, will be redundant, since employers in this world, wouldn't think of using scabs during strikes or doing other regressive things like eliminating the Employee Wage Protection Program, or doing

away with the right to refuse unsafe work.

I could go on and on, but you get the point. No matter what our Social Services minister says, no one can eat nutritiously for 90 dollars a month and companies aren't begging people to come in and work.

Employees will still



sustain back injuries and stress related injuries. They just won't be able to collect from the Workers Compensation Board for such injuries. Joint Health and Safety will still be needed, but, unless the employer sees fit, they won't exist.

Everything this government has done or is planning to do has benefited the affluent segment of society at the expense of those who can least afford it. So far, Mike Harris has maintained his popularity by hitting those on social assistance. Since many Ontarians look down on these people, they are easy targets. But make no mistake. Those on welfare are not the only targets, just the first. Organized labour is next on the agenda along with health care and education. These are areas which will have an impact on all of us.

I'll close with a quote from the venerable Charlie Farquarson, on the economic theory of the Mike Harris reformers, "If you give a horse enough oats, the sparrows will get some,... if they hang around long enough."

**Respectfully submitted,
Tom Williams**

(Continued from page 3)

operators are wearing "hearing aids" during baseball and hockey season. This could limit your hearing enough that you might not hear someone in an emergency situation. This is an unsafe work practice and the supervisors have every right to discipline an operator wearing one of these while driving.

Government Cuts: The Ontario government is planning to make large cuts to health and safety training and workplace monitoring. With the speed and secrecy that they are dismantling legislation you may not be aware

of the rights you have already lost. Money spent on making a worker more comfortable at work is not a luxury. It will contribute to a better quality of work and lower rates of absenteeism, sickness and industrial injury.

If you want the quality of your working conditions to be maintained let your member of parliament know you don't want to see any reductions in this area.

Some of our members don't think that the Union is doing very much on their behalf. But at the rate the Harris government is cancelling labour laws, they may find out what it is like not to have any protection at

all. The city is only willing to work with a minimum government standard, and some of the supervisors are already working on the assumption that the Union Health & Safety is no longer in force. Our generation could be the first one in a long time to find out, under what conditions our grand-parents had to work.

Please take some time and complain to your member of parliament.

Jim Charters

Workers Compensation

- 1) Brothers Mike Smith, Charlie Straeten, Reg Gingras and Brad Mills, would appreciate at least a phone call from our membership. These people need their morals boosted when they are off sick. Department #2 also has brothers Owen Burt and John Heber.
- 2) Brother George Byers has returned to work in Department #2 on transitional work program after Carpal Tunnel surgery was done to his wrist.
- 3) Thanks to the membership

and our National Office for sending me on the Level 4 Reinstatement Course. I found it very informative and will be able to pass on the knowledge to our members.

- 4) Brother Ted Bate has been registered for a Level 1, 2 course for Workers' Compensation. This is the last week of November in Guelph at the Steelworker's Hall. We must have members trained to carry on in a position. Ted as well can help with the work load and initial paper work. The Executive has made this recommendation and we would ask that his lost wages be covered by the Local.
- 5) There is a CLC National

Workers Compensation Conference being held in Halifax in January of 1996. This is being put on by the CLC National Office and would like a delegate from each Local to attend. The rooms are \$85.00 a day and the dates are January 25-28, 1996. Thursday - Sunday, registration is \$150.00. The conference is being held in Atlantic Canada since it is there that the corporate WCB agenda is being implemented first.

Paul Mennie
Benefits Committee
Comp. Representative

School Excuse Notes

The following is a collection of "actual excuse notes from parents (including spelling)" from the Office of Educational Assessment at the University of Washington.

- * My son is under a doctor's care and should not take P.E. today. Please excuse him.
- * Please excuse Lisa for being absent. She was sick and I had her shot.
- * Dear School: Please excuse John being absent on Jan. 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, and also 33.
- * Please excuse Gloria from Jim today. She is administrating.
- * Please excuse Roland from P. E. for a few days. Yesterday he fell out of a tree and misplaced his hip.
- * John has been absent because he had two teeth taken out of his face.
- * Carlos was absent yesterday because he was playing football.

He was hurt in the growing part.

- * Megan could not come to school today because she has been bothered by very close veins.
- * Please excuse Ray Friday from school. He has very loose vowels.
- * Please excuse Tommy for being absent yesterday. He had diarrhea and his boots leak.
- * Irving was absent yesterday because he missed his bust.
- * Please excuse Jimmy for being. It was his father's fault.
- * Please excuse Jennifer for missing school yesterday. We forgot to get the Sunday paper off the porch, and when we found it Monday, we thought it was Sunday.
- * Sally won't be in school a week from Friday. We have to attend her funeral.
- * My daughter was absent yesterday because she was tired.

She spent a weekend with the Marines.

- * Please excuse Jason for being absent yesterday. He had a cold and could not breed well.
- * Please excuse Mary for being absent yesterday. She was in bed with gramps.
- * Gloria was absent yesterday as she was having a gangover.
- * Please excuse Burma, she has been sick and under the doctor.
- * Maryann was absent December 11-16, because she had a fever, sore throat, headache and upset stomach. Her sister was also sick, fever and sore throat, her brother had a low grade fever and ached all over. I wasn't the best either, sore throat and fever. There must be something going around, her father even got hot last night.

Workers's Compensation Reform - Bill 15

The Conservatives promised in their election campaign to make changes to the compensation system which they claim is "on the brink of a financial crisis." If the system is truly in financial difficulty, then it is partly due to the government not enforcing the collection of **\$430 million of outstanding assessments and penalties** from employers and the **\$200 million of rebates** annually handed back to the employers in this province by the WCB for supposedly providing safer workplaces. However, this has not stopped the Harris government from driving a rules agenda - to cut and slash at the expense of workers benefits.

On Wednesday, November 1, 1995, the Minister of Labour introduced Bill 15, the first of a two-stage initiative intended to completely overhaul the compensation system. The first stage involves a legislative package that will:

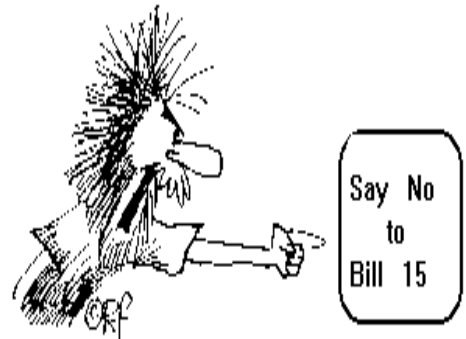
1. establish a multi-stakeholder board of directors
2. increase financial accountability
3. conduct "value-for-money" audits to ensure the WCB programs are efficient, effective and financially sound
4. strengthen anti-fraud provisions and eliminate other abuses in the system.

This Bill does nothing for injured workers. It makes any injured worker a potential criminal.

Some of the proposed changes are:

1. Any person who does not inform the Board "of a material change" in connection with his/her entitlement to benefits within 10 days is guilty of an "offence". Workers will be treated as criminals for not having a working knowledge of the compensation system.
2. If a person is convicted of an offence the following penalty could apply:
 - a. if an individual, he/she is liable to a **fine not exceeding \$25,000 or to imprisonment not exceeding 6 months or to both**
 - b. If the person is not an individual, that person is liable to a fine not exceeding \$100,000.
3. **An overpayment is a debt due and owing to the Board at the time the overpayment is made.** The Board may deduct from money payable by the Board to a person and their survivors, all or part of a debt due AND the Board may pursue such other remedies as it considers appropriate to recover the debt due.
4. The Board of Directors will now include a minimum of three and a maximum of seven members who are representative of workers, employers and such others as the Lieutenant Governor in Council considers appropriate. This will replace the equal representation of workers and employers on the past Board.

This is just the beginning. In April of 1996, the Harris government is expected to bring in major changes to the compensation system led by Elizabeth Witmer, Minister of Labour and Cam Jackson, Minister Without Portfolio for Workers'



Compensation. These changes to the system will negatively affect injured workers. Some of the changes expected are:

1. **a three day unpaid waiting period for compensation benefits after being injured on the job**
2. **the reduction in benefits by 5% or more**
3. **the review of lifetime pensions awarded before 1990**
4. **the reduction to future economic loss (FEL) awards by 15% to 40% for injuries after 1990**
5. **the elimination of compensation for certain injuries such as back and repetitive strains, chronic pain and stress.**

Any of these recent legislative changes and proposed cuts that are expected in the spring of 1996 do not help injured workers.

They will hurt injured workers.

To fight back, you can:

1. Call or visit your MPP's office and tell your MPP how these changes will affect your life. To find out who your MPP is please call 1-800-668-2727
2. Write to:
Elizabeth Witmer,
Minister of Labour
400 University Ave, 14th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1T7
3. **Attend a demonstration at the WCB head office, 200 Front Street West on Thursday December 7, 1995 at 12 noon. All injured construction workers are encouraged to attend.**

The rights of workers in this province are under attack from Premier Harris and his government. The new labour law (Bill 7) and the proposed changes to the Compensation Act (Bill 15) will seriously affect our working conditions as well as our ability to collect compensation benefits. Now is the time to take action and tell this insensitive, business minded government that we do not support their proposed changes to the compensation system.

WE DO NOT AND CANNOT SUPPORT THE FURTHER EROSION OF INJURED WORKER'S LIVING STANDARDS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE EMPLOYERS.

Library Update

The following is the latest additions to our library.

#082* Shifts duration of work and accident risk of bus drivers
The Netherlands Institute for Preventive Health Care
Health and Safety
#083* Absenteeism In the Ontario Transit Industry
Report for OUTA Centre for Transit Improvement
Laurence Kelly - Kingston
#084* Fatal Injuries to Workers
U.S. 80-89
Center for Disease Control and Prevention CDC
National Profile
#085* Fatal Injuries to Workers
U.S. State
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention CDC
State Profiles
#086 Orion V Operating Manual
Ontario Bus Industries Inc.
#087* Ergonomics
Workers Health & Safety Centre
Amalgamated Transit Union
Level Program
#088* Occupational
Musculoskeletal Injuries
1991 Conference Summary
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
#089* Ergonomic Evaluation of Kitchener-Waterloo Transit
Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers Inc.
#090* Ergonomics in the Work Environment
A Manual for Workers
CAW
#091* Workplace Use of Back Belts
US. Department of Health and

Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
#092* Regulating Hazardous Substances
Canadian Labour Congress
National Policy Position
September 1993
#093* Resources for Worker Well-being
Workplace Health and Safety Agency
#094 Detroit Diesel Series 50 Operator's Guide for 94 Flyer
Detroit Diesel
#095* Ergonomic MUCTC
Feasibility study on the ergonomic aspects of the bus operator's station at the Montreal Urban Community Transit Commission
Jan. 21, 1987
#096* Ergonomic Study by CUTA
Ergonomic Study of the Bus Driver's Workstation
Review of the Literature for The Canadian Urban Transit Association
April 1990
#097* Ergonomic Evaluation of Kitchener-Waterloo Transit
Prepared by
Helen McRobbie
Student Ergonomist
Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Worker Inc.
August 31, 1993
V103 Recaro CL-1 First Generation
This is is the old style Recaro seat, it is not the one that is installed in KT Buses

Wayne Bell

Labour Council

Larry Bastista, president of the Waterloo Regional Labour Council, publicly apologized to Local 4304 for once again not including us in the labour review list, as a donator to the annual Labour Day Picnic. A letter of apology is to follow.

United Way in the K.W. area collected \$3 million.

London was chosen by the labour leaders for the one day strike by unionized workers. They estimate that about 60,000 workers will be off the job on December 11, 1995.

The coalition for social justice will hold a demonstration at he Kitchener public library on December 7 and 8 from 8:00 PM to 10:00 PM.

There was a debate and

One day strike In London

motion passed to support London during their one day strike. Buses will be provided for those that wish to go. We are preparing for Kitchener's turn to take a kick at the Harris Government.

Connelly Nolan

Buses being provided for those wanting to attend

LOVE

What is this thing called **LOVE**? How can anyone describe such a wonderful, warm, satisfying, inner feeling that one gets, when **LOVE** is present. **LOVE** is the most precious feeling that two people can share. Without **LOVE** there can be no happiness, there can be no life, there can be no fire to burn within ones heart.

LOVE is elusive, it hides, it runs, it plays games, it slips through your fingers. Many will never find **LOVE**, many will think that they have found **LOVE**, but only a few are able to find their one true **LOVE**. That one special person, who can build a fire in your heart, who can give you the World, who can take you to the Stars.

That one special person that can make you feel warm and wonderful inside. The one you want to be with, to share your life with, the one who will be there through good times and bad times, in sickness and in health. The one that takes so little, yet gives so much, the one that never complains, because she **LOVES** you so much.

When you look into her eyes, you can see the fires of passion burning inside. When you kiss her soft velvety lips, a gentle sigh comes from inside. When you caress her warm soft skin, she presses against your hand. When you look at her shape and form, you realize that your the luckiest man alive, to have this beauty by your side.

LAZ

“Bus Stop Trivia”



Do you know where this time table for vertically challenged passengers is located?

Answer to previous bus stop trivia question.

(a) Bus stop is located on route #4 Glasgow on the corner of Westvale Gate and Westvale Drive.

(b) Was this turn legal? The highway traffic act states that when a driver intends to turn left he/she shall approach the intersection within the left hand lane provided for traffic moving in that direction or immediately to the right of the centre line of the highway. Section 121(5)

If you were involved in an accident making this turn you would most likely be charged with making an improper left hand turn.

Jim Charters

You are invited to a remembrance service

December 6th

To commemorate the lives of 14 women
massacred in Montreal

December 6th
is Canada's National Day of Remembrance
and Action on Violence Against Women

at

**Kitchener City Hall
Wednesday, December 6,
1995**

6:30 p.m. Candlelight Ceremony
and Service in Rotunda Area

*Jointly sponsored by December 6th
Coalition and CAW - Women's Committee*

**Financial Secretary's
October Report**

Recapitulation	October
Total Cash Assets	
Previous Month	\$30,064.58
Monthly Income	9,878.67
Total	\$39,943.25
Monthly Expenses	6,832.84
Balance	33,110.41
Allocation of Assets	
Bank Statement Balance	9,272.43
Less Out Standing	797.60
Actual Bank Balance	8,474.83
Cash on Hand	338.04
Credit Union	5,176.19
Bank Mtl GIC	8,138.91
KWLC Debenture	3,000.00
National Trust GIC	3,000.00
Bank Mtl GIC	5,000.00
Total Assets	\$33,127.97
	Linda Lyon Financial Secretary

**Transit
Charitable
Committee**

For the Chili day of October, we sold 90 order of Chili. For the Chili day held on November 15, we sold 95 orders.

A wagon was donated to us by Sis. Mayne. Cliff the painter has volunteered to do all of the wood working needed to turn the wagon into a bus. All of the materials for this project have

been donated. The bus will be used to collect donations such as Pennies for People.

Ricki Germann

**Next Issue
Deadline:**

January 26, 1996



**Women's
Committee
Report**

So far we sold 15 Purple Rose Commemorative pins. Anyone interested in purchasing one please contact Sis. Germann. Sis Kruse has assembled 200 White ribbons (representing our intolerance of violence against women). They are available at the downtown terminal.

Ricki Germann

Sunday Comparisons

We have compiled a chart to indicate the number of shift categories and the number of Sunday shifts that each category works. The information used is from September 1995 sign-up.

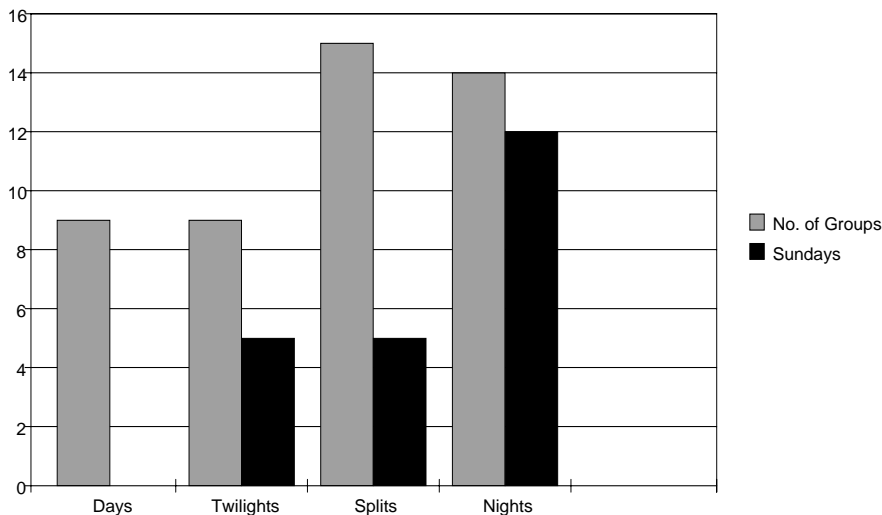
The chart clearly indicates that the night shift groups work more Sundays than any other category.

The information breakdown for categories is:

Shift	Group#	No.	Sunday	Percent
Early Day Shifts #1-#9 (Less than 10 Hour Spread)		9	0	0
Twilights #25-#32+35 (Start 8AM - 1PM)		9	5	22.73
Splits #10-#24 (Early Start Late Finish) (Over 10 Hour Spread)		15	5	22.73
Nights #33-#47 (Start after 1PM)		14	12	54.54
Totals		47	22	100.00

Spareboard is not included in these calculations

Sunday Comparison Chart



Sign-up and Scheduling Committee

Local 4304 Now Has A Picture Scanner

Our local has recently purchased computer equipment. One of the items purchased is a picture scanner. If any members have photographs, drawings or cartoons that are job or transit related, we would like to scan them and possibly use them in future publications of our newsletter.

Wayne Bell

Travel Tips

Recent changes in customs limits for returning Canadian Travellers are mainly due to free trade influences.

Limits have been raised in all three declaration periods.
 24 Hours from \$25 to \$50
 48 Hours from \$100 to \$300
 (any number of times)
 7 days from \$300 to \$500

Free trade has lowered or eliminated any duties on many goods, especially items that are not made in Canada.

Lists can be obtained free at the Canada Customs office on Duke Street.

Travel Well with Ted Bate

Just for



Laughs

Sex is the most fun you can have without laughing.

Use our easy credit plan- 100 percent down - no payments.

My father-in-law is in the insurance business. He sold me a twenty-year retirement policy - at the end of twenty years - he retires.

Submitted by:

Government to slash workers' compensation

More cuts to come

The Ontario government has promised to make changes to workers' compensation as part of their Common Sense Revolution. Some of these changes will start this Fall and others will start in the Spring of 1996.

Changes have been made to workers' compensation many times. But this time is different. **The new changes will affect all injured workers**, not only people coming into the system after the changes are decided.

Privatization

The government is considering contracting out the administration of the Workers' Compensation Board and services such as vocational rehabilitation. However contracting out, or privatizing, these services will only give injured workers worse service with no accountability. If you think it's bad now, just wait. If these services are in the hands of private business, how will injured workers appeal decisions? Cheaper programs won't mean better programs.

New 3-day waiting period

Right now the employer must pay the worker's wages for the day of the accident. The WCB pays from then on. There is no waiting period. Now the government wants a 3-day unpaid waiting

period. This will encourage workers not to report their workplace injuries.

More pressure on injured workers to go back to work too soon

Every injured worker wants to go back to work as soon as possible. This promise could mean injured workers being forced back to work before they are ready. If people go back to work before they have healed, they risk getting hurt again or becoming permanently disable.

Cut benefits by 5%

Right now, benefits are based on 90% of net average earnings. The government says they will cut this to 85%. This may apply to everyone.

No more benefits for some injuries

The government wants to change the kinds of injuries covered by workers' compensation. Injuries such as stress, chronic pain, back pain, and repetitive strain may no longer be covered. At the same time there will be tougher rules about how the injury is related to work. For example, if an injured worker's disability gets worse it will be blamed on aging or other personal factors and will not be

covered.

I'm not an injured worker. How will these cuts affect me?

Government and employers have cut back on workplace health and safety. Serious injuries have gone up. Every worker is only one accident away from becoming an injured worker. If benefits are reduced, employers may pay lower premiums but taxpayers pay more to cover social assistance and health care costs for injured workers.

What you can do to fight changes to workers' compensation

Call or write your MPP's office. Tell your MPP what these changes will mean for you and for other injured workers. To find out who your MPP is call **1-800-668-2727**.

*Written and produced by
Toronto Injured Workers'
Advocacy Group, Union of
Injured Workers, Ontario
Network of Injured Workers'
Groups, and Community Legal
Education Ontario (CLEO)*

Christmas Light Tours



Photos: Terry Arndt

The annual Lights Tours for our senior citizens in Kitchener and Waterloo will start December 5 and end December 22.

The committee invites all operators to participate again this year. The dates, times and locations of the tours will be posted the week of November 27.

This year, to allow everyone an opportunity to participate, a "Sign-up" sheet will be posted at the dispatch area for you to sign.

The committee would like to thank-you in advance for your involvement in this endeavor. Your past involvement in the lights tour has made it the success it has become.

Christmas Light Tours Committee

Seasons Greetings



Giving Tom The Slip

Every so often, a transition comes over me and I become **SUPER CLEAN FREAK**. Faster than the White Tornado, more powerful than Janitor in a Drum, able to knock down Mr. Clean and put the boots to him.

One of those transitions struck me a few years ago while I was cleaning my truck. I washed it inside and out, waxed and polished the exterior, Armouralled the upholstery and dash board, and Windexed all the windows. When I was done, it sparkled, except the vinyl floor covering. It lacked luster. I

decided to put a coat of urethane over it. When I was completed I could see my reflection in it. Even when it was dry, it looked wet. It was that kind of shine. It simply gleamed. I was very proud. I needed to show it off to someone. It demanded attention.

One day Tom Gross asked if he could ride with me to the garage. Perfect, here was my opportunity to take my well deserved credit. Tom opened the passenger door and he placed one foot up on the floor of the truck. Suddenly, I heard this, "**Whoaaaaa!!**" (the urethane made the floor extremely

slippery). Had Tom not been holding onto the door, he would have been flat on his back looking up at the white billowy clouds.

All the way to the garage Tom cursed me. he was not impressed. To this day, the mere mention of urethane and Tom cringes.

Recently I was talking to Tom about how my cash bag looked dull and tired. He told me, "Why don't you just dip it into a vat of urethane."

Warren Bell