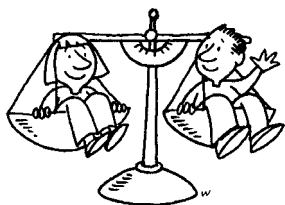
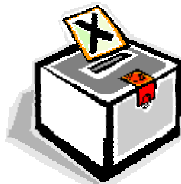


Committee Election List



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Steward Candidates



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Bluetooth Debate



Pg. 6

All Fired Up... To Serve

By Maurice Levesque

I would like to thank the members of CAW Local 4304 for letting me serve on the **H&S Committee** for the last six years. I enjoy the challenges of making GRT a safer work place. We now have an extra spot for another conventional operator from the North to join the committee.



I hope that the members will vote to let me continue my work on the committee. I feel as though the job has only just begun with much more yet to be done. I would be happy to serve with either Rick Lonergan or Scott Desjardins, both of whom are running for the committee.

I am running for Chief Steward and Accident Review. I was a steward for a term a few years ago, and learned the ropes of how

(See Maurice on page 3)

Help build a "Dream Team of Stewards"

By David J. Driver

A look around shows that Grand River Transit is falling apart; promised services are not being delivered, and customers are losing their jobs from being late so often. Buses are not to blame for this, they are inanimate objects, a combination of bolts, rivets, grease and oil; the cause of this situation is mismanagement.



Along with unreliable service, the other cause and effect situation is increased unionism. A strong and solid union is the effect, and old school management in the 21st century is the cause.

On June 20, we elect our committees that will become not

(See David on page 3)

William Wirtz for Scheduling

Fellow brothers and sisters of CAW Local 4304, please allow me to introduce myself. My name is William Wirtz, and I have been a bus operator with



(See Wil on page 3)

Vote For Klaus Biemann To Continue To Represent Your Interests Within The Scheduling Committee

I have held this position for five years. My primary goal is to do my best to represent every operator's interests from the most junior groups to the most senior

(See Klaus on page 5)

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Bereavements:

Corina Godson
 Deb Elliot
 Jen Adams
 Shelly Taylor



Fruit Baskets:

(Some donated to charity in lieu)

Cliff Van Dincten
 Doug Allin
 Elizabeth Allen
 Jacky Eng
 Janet Rothwell
 Jim Charters
 Krista Gebhardt

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The Informer

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Attend your Union meetings: June 20, 2007
2 meetings: (11:00 am & 7:30 pm)
 (3rd Wed., monthly)

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 and fact. Material of a sexist, racist or defamatory nature will not be printed.

(Maurice from page 1)

the executive fights for its members. I have spent a lot of time in a lot of meetings with Harold, Ted and Rick, watching and learning how they get results for our members.

I have always stood behind our executive, and now I would like to stand beside them, fighting for our members. I believe I already have the confidence of this executive as they have assigned me chief steward-like tasks, such as Accident Appeal, and at the end of the last contract, I was made Chief Strike Captain, ready to mobilize pickets, if necessary. Vote to give me the opportunity.

I would also like the opportunity to serve on the **Accident Review committee**. I have had accidents here, and know the stress that being in a collision causes, and how great it feels to have someone on your side. I have been the alternate on the committee this past term, and have fought to see that all our members are exonerated. Vote for me for Accident Review because **I hate to lose...even one case!!**

**(David from page 1)**

only the eyes and ears of the executive, but oftentimes, your first defence. I seek your support in becoming your Chief Steward. Let me offer you an example: Due to frequent failures on our emergency response system (panic button) and supervisors having an excessive response time, on May 31, 2007 the Ministry of Labour opined that allowing an operator to use a Bluetooth device as a secondary safety precaution is permissible.

Here are only some of the reasons why you should **elect me as Chief Steward** for the Kitchener Service Area:

Open support from 3 of the 4 (so far) steward candidates
 Scott Desjardins
 Kelly Hearty
 Monica Menner

My arguments are objectively founded using logic and reason

Not afraid to speak up regardless of whose ego I bruise

Prepared to work with management to avoid unnecessary conflict (i.e. I told them they would lose the Bluetooth issue, they just refused to listen)

I document everything in order to show that most grievances are caused by a couple of over-zealous supervisors

On June 20, vote David Driver for Chief Steward and help to build a "Dream Team of Stewards." For more information visit my website at www.daviddriver.ca.

(Wil from page 1)

Grand River Transit for 9 years. In this time, I have had an active role in the Union and have held many positions including: trustee, steward, operations committee co-chair as well as being your current scheduling committee co-chair.

I ask for your support this election to **re-elect me to the Scheduling Committee** for another three-year term and allow me the privilege to continue to represent my fellow operators. In the past three years, we as the Scheduling committee have managed to reduce the percentage of split shifts and also made double weekends a much sooner reality than it has ever been. Some operators with as little as 5 years seniority have realized the benefit of having double weekends off, whereas this would have taken up to 20 years before. We have also managed to make numerous improvements in running times on many routes, including route 12, and starting this summer, route 8 as well.

Let experience count this election day.

I appreciate your support!

NOTE:

There will be no Union meetings or Informer during the summer.

Monica Menner for Union Steward

What is a Union Steward? A Union Steward is an advisor, investigator, problem



solver, advocate, resource, employee, union member and link between members and leaders of the union. A good union steward must wear many hats.

My name is Monica Menner and as one of the candidates for Union Steward North, I believe in solidarity and the right to a healthy and balanced work environment. I am prepared to do my best in providing fair and equal representation. Knowledge is power and my goal is to build solidarity among our membership. I hope to accomplish this goal through the communication of issues affecting our workplace, awareness of contractual rights and creative problem solving strategies.

I have executed easier access to Regional policy, offered public education through Public Service Announcements and have been known to demonstrate excellent research skills. **Please remember me for Union Steward and Scheduling on Election Day.**

If you have any questions, or concerns you may reach me at (519) 497-9015, or

mennerm@rogers.com.

Vote for Russ Davis for Union Steward!

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Russ Davis, and I have been a driver here for 11.5 years.

I fought for and got free parking at Waterloo Square for Route 5 drivers. I fought for a different solution other than a squeegee for the 23 series vehicles. (By the way, the windows get so dirty because of a defect in the vehicle.)

And, I have been personally fighting management and WSIB since 2000 in regards to an accident at work. I am a person who will stand up for what I believe is right.

Any of the candidates would be a good choice, but I believe those who know me are confident that I would be a firm but fair Union Steward. Thank you!

Russ Davis,
Operator 208

Scott Desjardins for Union Steward

There are three steward positions available here in the North Service Area. Four people are running, and I am proud to say that any one of us would be an excellent choice. So why should you vote for Scott Desjardins?



I have served on a Communication Committee in a previous, non-union job. I was a representative of my department and voted in by my peers. I communicated employee concerns to management and vice versa. I spoke on my fellow employees' behalf in non-disciplinary matters.

I wish to work with the management and the Union here at GRT to create a better working environment for my co-workers and myself. **We need strong advocates to fight for our rights.** Management does not intimidate me, as those of you who know me can attest, but I do wish to forge a working relationship with them from Eric Gillespie down.

I am a tireless crusader who will pursue an issue until there is a satisfactory resolution.

I will be accessible when you need me.

I am a fast learner, willing to undertake ongoing training to enhance my ability to serve my brothers and sisters.

I am a strong debater and a good writer.

If you have any questions or concerns, I can be reached at (519) 497-9772, or scottdesjardins@rogers.com.

On Election Day, please vote for Scott Desjardins for Union Steward.

(Klaus from page 1)

ones.
Often, this is a thankless job. However, I've always remained determined to pursue and do what this position requires me to do: to work with every operator in an unbiased fashion in order to produce working groups that are flexible and fair to everyone. I hope to be able to continue to represent everyone's interests for the next few years.

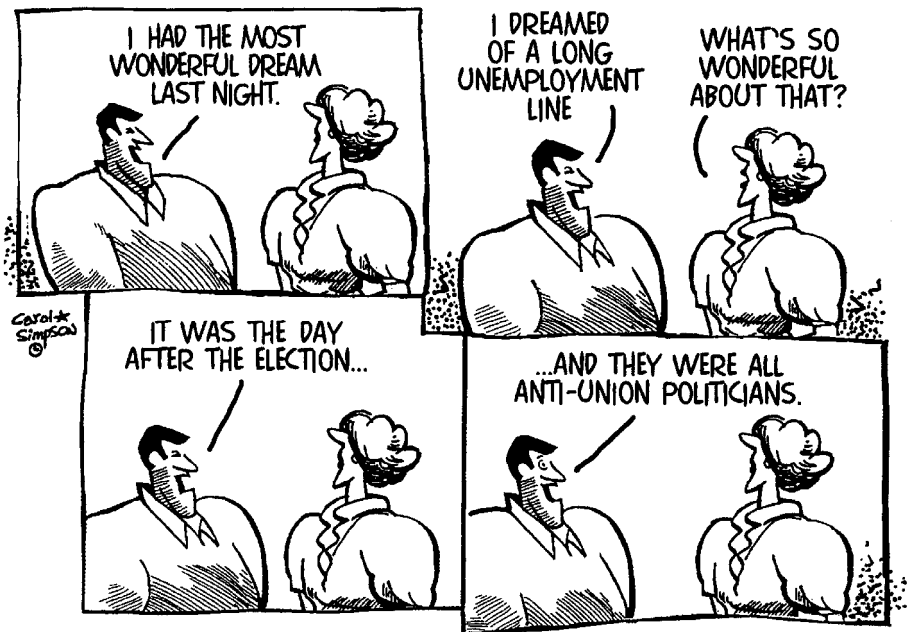


VOTE KLAUS BIEMANN AS YOUR POLITICAL EDUCATION REPRESENTATIVE

I have been your Political Education representative since May 1999. Over the past eight years, I've written numerous articles in The Informer and The Record on topics that have ranged from your rights within the workplace to Transit issues and how it affects us as employees.

I have been vocal over the exploitation of the workforce by corporations, such as the use of part-time labour to avoid payment of benefits.

**Stay informed in
our contract year.
Vote for Klaus.**



Zeke for South Scheduling

By Zeke Baker

As most of you know, I am seeking **RE-ELECTION** for the **SCHEDULING COMMITTEE**. I have currently held this position in two different terms, the first being for the first few years that we became part of the GRT family, and then the past three years.



I bring experience to this committee that no other nominees possess. I feel that I have represented employees fairly, and have done my best to better the working hours here. I have worked hard to satisfy as many members as I could.

I wish everyone could be happy with what has been accomplished by this committee, but that is not always a reality. Most people do not realize that this committee doesn't *make* the crews, but, in fact, takes what is presented, and tries to tweak them to make them better.

This committee also deals with issues such as time points, running times, etc.

Some people say that being on several committees spreads you

(See Zeke on page 6)

(Zeke from page 5)

too thin, but my experience has proven itself true. When you're on various committees such as **OPERATIONS** and **SCHEDULING**, they tend to overlap each other. By being involved with both of these committees, I have been able to immediately question something when I'm being told two different things. If I hadn't been on the two committees, management would have been able to slip stuff under the carpet.

I am looking for your **SUPPORT** on **JUNE 13th** or **JUNE 20th**.

PLEASE MARK YOUR BALLOT WITH AN "X" BESIDE ZEKE BAKER. Vote for a tried, honest representative, and a voice that will definitely be heard.

Zeke

Your voice
Working hard to be heard



Cell Phones, PED's and GRT's new *Abscess:* Bluetooth Technology

By *Monica Menner*

What is a 'Bluetooth' anyway? A Bluetooth is a small wireless electronic device that fits over your ear and is linked with your cell phone, allowing you to answer calls, place calls, and function freely and discreetly. *"Bluetooth technology eliminates the need for numerous and inconvenient cable attachments for connecting fixed computers, mobile phones, mobile computers, handheld devices, digital cameras and even a new breed of digital appliances."* (i) Nissan Canada now offers Bluetooth Technology on select 2007 models as one answer to the problem of driver distraction caused by cell phone use.

You may have noticed that distracted driving is the political buzz word of the day. Bus 2328 has a wrap on it asking people, 'Do you deserve The Glare?' Public perception seems to suggest that the leading cause of distracted driving is cell phone use, however, certain studies indicate otherwise. One such study, *The Role of Driver Distraction in Traffic Crashes* (May 2001) found that almost 30% of distraction-related

crashes involving over 32,000 vehicles from 1995 to 1999 were accredited to outside influences - people, objects or events. This publication states that 3,520 of these accidents were caused by adjusting a radio, CD player, or other controls. A further 3,520 were attributed to vehicle occupants, and only 480 were due to cell phone use. (ii)

On the face of the Region's Cell Phone & Personal Electronic Device (PED) Policy, the Region states: *"Safety is the primary responsibility while operating a public transit vehicle and the added distraction caused by using these personal devices diverts attention away from work-related responsibilities."* I ask, What steps have been taken to reduce the **greater** threat of distraction by multitasking and the public? In fact, considering all the problems GRT is experiencing in terms of driver safety - equipment safety, and road safety - who is the Region kidding here? It's obvious that public perception has long been the driver, and safety is riding in the back.

The Region's Cell Phone & PED Policy appears to be nothing more than an instrument of isolation, with alarming possibilities. Our current Regional Bus Operator Incident Response Procedures and supports for driver safety have time and again proven to be ineffective. There are no formal training or practice drills, and silent alarms are only fully tested at the six-month safety inspection renewal. The assessment of personal risk or threat is left to an

(See *Bluetooth* on page 7)

(Bluetooth from page 6)

overworked supervisor who may be the only one on duty, or on the other side of the city. A quick response time cannot be guaranteed.

Cell phones have become a type of fail-safe utilized by drivers to ensure the safety of ourselves and our families. Why isn't the Region resolving some of the bigger safety issues, instead of attempting to eliminate the mechanisms our drivers are using to pick up the ball where upper management dropped it? **The Ontario Ministry of Transportation states that having a cell phone in your vehicle for personal safety or for reporting a crime or a collision can be an important safety aid for drivers and passengers.** (iii)

When will the Region embrace new technology and put the safety and professionalism of their drivers above public perception? A report sponsored by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration states: *"Until we have a better understanding of the nature and magnitude of any safety related problem, rather than restricting access, the goal should be to make in-vehicle information systems, including wireless communication, as compatible with safe driving as the state-of-the-art allows."* (iv)

Market research suggests *"The support for Bluetooth is not limited to companies developing Bluetooth-enabled products only. Bluetooth applications can have far reaching impacts on many*

other industries as well." (v) In my humble opinion, every road supervisor, Union executive and driver should be equipped with Bluetooth technology as an added precaution for safety.

The bottom line is, we are trained to operate a large vehicle in an extremely distracting atmosphere, and if it's the Region's position that personal electronic devices are a safety issue, then it's time for them to remove all bus radios, ban all public cell phones from buses, and ensure that policies, procedures and equipment actually work.

(i) http://www.mobileinfo.com/Bluetooth/what_is.htm

(ii) <http://www.safety-council.org/info/traffic/distract.html>

(iii) <http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/topics/cellular.htm>

(iv) <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/research/wireless/>

(v) <http://www.mobileinfo.com/Bluetooth/index.htm>



Monica wearing her Bluetooth Headset

Fare Efficiency

By Jim Charters

Fare efficiency may seem like an odd statement, considering we have 15-page booklets outlining the different ways of paying a fare. Our fare structure seems to be politically based, so I will only discuss how the present structure could be handled more efficiently.

Our fare boxes were originally designed for high-floor buses, and worked well for both driver and passenger in this environment. The problems started when these same fare boxes were installed in low-floor buses, mounted mid position between the driver and the passengers. Trying to monitor the fare box display at this odd angle with corrective lens and input information requires a lot of bending and twisting on the part of the driver. Shorter passengers may also have problems reaching up to deposit their fares.

The fare box manufacturer (GFI) has a remote driver control unit that would allow the fare box to be mounted on the floor away from the driver and in the correct position for easy passenger access. This remote control unit also has the ability to control many other functions, such as the destination sign, and fare box transfer dispenser. Replacing several control units mounted in various locations with a single control unit mounted in an easy-to-reach and monitor location lets the driver concentrate on his/her

primary task, driving the bus safely.

Our fare boxes are the basic model, and worked for our system at the time of purchase, but our transfer and fare system has grown increasingly complicated over the last few years. The addition of the *optional transfer dispenser and validator* would eliminate the need for various transfers that are tossed at the end of the day. It would also give a more consistent and fair ride time for all passengers by eliminating driver judgment and letting the fare box make the decision. If the optional card reader was installed on the fare box, then management could sell any type of pass they wanted and let the card reader monitor these passes. These card readers can also identify stolen passes, etc., if the information is downloaded when the fare box is emptied at the end of the day.

Another benefit of the passengers stopping at the fare box and manually doing something might help eliminate the crowding and stampeding of people two and three abreast through the front door.

Most drivers would likely ask, If all this technology has been available for years, why are we working with this outdated system? There are likely several explanations for this, but the first one would be, "Why spend the money if the drivers will work with this awkward system, and there are no real glaring problems?"

I see postings about drivers not inputting enough information into the fare box, but no driver's complaints about the problems involved when carrying out this procedure.

Another contributing factor may be that our benefit package allows drivers with work related problems, due to poor work station design, to get treatment without claiming WSIB.

Many industries that are revenue based would have updated this system. However, until passenger revenue and work related problems are more relevant, I see no chance of these things changing in the near future.

Drivers interested in this subject should check out www.gfigenfare.com and www.rossbro.com for various driver's work station designs and fare collection systems.



What do you know about HR Policies?

By *Monica Menner*

It's your vacation. You've been planning for this time off for the past year. Finally, you can catch up on stuff around the house that you've been putting off. Or you can kick back and relax on the trip you've been planning for months. But you wake up on Day 1 of your vacation and you are sick. Blah, achy, oh-my-God-I-feel-like-I-have-the-flu-SICK! There go all your plans.

But wait...Did you know that upon written request and with medical documentation, your vacation can be transferred to sick leave within 10 days of returning to work? It's right there in the HR Policy manual, Section III/16, under *Transfer of Vacation Time*.

How many of us are aware of what the Region has to offer us?

How many of us have actually seen the HR Policy Manual?

Recently I called HR and asked for a policy manual. I was told that HR doesn't give them out to employees. I was further told that I could look up a specific policy I was interested in on our **Intranet** at the garage. I explained that there was no specific policy I was looking for, only that I wanted to know what their policies were, and that it was not practical for me to read through the whole thing at the garage. I was asked if I had gone to dispatch for a copy. I questioned why I would go to dispatch when it's an HR item? HR told me they would have to speak to Management and would get back to me.

It took me four days to finally 'borrow' a copy of the Region's policies. I think this is unacceptable. Management will not give out copies to employees because of the large number of employees and the associated costs of doing so. We are

however, free to photocopy this manual at our own cost.

I believe our membership should be able to inform themselves on the HR policies and procedures we are bound by. In my humble opinion, it is the Region of Waterloo's responsibility under the *Freedom of Information Act*, to provide their employees with their HR policies at their own time and cost.

If the Region will not or cannot supply me with a copy of their policies, how am I to be informed?

If we are to be held to the Region's policies, then should we not have the right, as an employee, to know what those policies are? If we cannot claim ignorance in the face of any action taken against us by the employer, is it not our responsibility to inform ourselves?

As a result of my requests, HR has now provided one copy for any employee who wishes to borrow it for a day or so. Although HR tries their best to update all the policy manuals, they cannot guarantee this copy will be current and up to date. The most current policies and procedures will exist on the **Intranet**. Any changes are updated there first. Employees are supposed to be able to access the Intranet from the garage or downtown terminal.

(See **HR Policies** on page 10)



Monica and her kids on vacation

(HR Policies from page 9)

However, due to computer problems, we cannot. Management is looking into having this fixed. *(Note: Intranet is only available internally from Regional properties, and is not accessible from home via the Internet)*



Please have a look at what the City of Hamilton provides.

<http://www.myhamilton.ca/myhamilton/CityandGovernment/CityServices/Careers/>

They've added a link to their site called 'my HR info'. Employees can view:

Job opportunities: View internal job postings and apply online.

My Personal Information: update and view your home address and emergency contacts.

My Benefits: View your benefits coverage, update family status and order replacement Maritime Health cards.

My Attendance: View your attendance and vacation balances.

My Pay: View your pay stub and deductions.

We have a right to know what our employer's policies are, and we should not have to hold a special position within the organization or jump through hoops to have access to that information. Any employee requesting an HR policy manual should be given one, period. It should not matter why! **Intranet** access from the garage is unrealistic

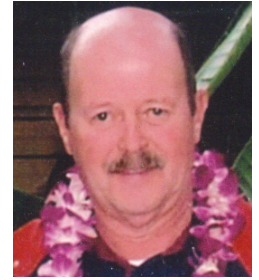
as there is one computer for how many drivers? Also, we cannot print any policies or HR forms from the garage as the Region has refused to provide us with a printer.

Many companies make their policy manual available to everyone on the Internet. **Should the Region of Waterloo not set an example of HR standards?**



Our Special Thanks....

On behalf of Don Gauvin (Donny) and his family, we wish to extend our utmost thanks to all the GRT and Regional staff.



We were overwhelmed by the generosity of those who donated their sick time to Don so that he could take the time to focus and work on recovering.

We also want to thank everyone for the outpouring of support, prayers, and well wishes. It means so much to Don and his family to experience your care and support for him.

A special heart-felt thanks goes out to PAUL LALONDE and PAUL MENNIE who went above and beyond to ensure that all was taken care of prior to Don's surgery.

Don is recovering nicely, and has started to regain some of his strength. He has maintained a positive attitude throughout, beginning with a "Thumbs Up" as he was being led to surgery.

He has a long road ahead of him, but with all the support he is receiving from everyone at GRT, we are sure that his recovery will be a little bit easier.

With our special thanks,
Don, Lil & Sue Gauvin.

Thanks from Tony Brooks

Hi to all my brothers and sisters at CAW 4304! My name is Tony Brooks. I am a driver in the North. I would like to write to all the membership and thank everybody from the bottom of my heart for their generosity.

I have been a part-time driver with GRT for four years. After trying the seasonal work with the cities of Kitchener and Waterloo, and working part-time at GRT, my family and I decided it was time to become full-time at GRT. On December 25, 2006, I became a full-time GRT transit driver.

In April 2007, I was told that I had **Lymphoma cancer**. Having only worked for the Region for four months full-time, it brought worries to me. During my career, I have worked 20 years in the auto industry, and five years with the cities and the Region. During that time, I only had four days off because of the blessing of good health. This news of Lymphoma cancer was a shock!

In May 2007, I met with a cancer team of doctors and nurses at Grand River Hospital Cancer Centre. After they consulted with my wife, we were told the bad news, and I was given a doctor's note for up to a year off work. Having only been full-time for five months, I was not eligible for Long-term Disability (LTD). We didn't need the worries at this time about whether we would



have enough money to live on.

After talking to WSIB rep for our local, Paul Lalonde, and Serge at the Region, and my

Union reps, they indicated that help might come my way. Paul phoned me shortly thereafter with something new from the Region and its employees: **There had been a donation of unused sick time.** As of the writing of this article, **Paul was able to get 17 weeks of sick time donated for me during my recovery.**

My family is so amazed with my co-workers and the Region that we had to let everybody know. I told the Cancer Centre the good news, and they thought it was very touching, and couldn't believe it.

I start chemo June 14, 2007. With the grace of God and all your prayers, I hope to see all you drivers soon. My family and I would like to thank everybody involved - drivers, Union, company, and most of all, the drivers who donated their sick time.

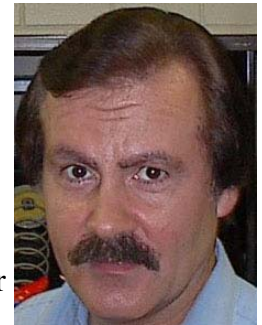
May God bless you all!



Environmental Issues

By Laszlo Bori

The hot topic for our generation is "GLOBAL WARMING." Everywhere you look, either the



Government or the news media is trying to make us believe that the end of the world is coming. We, as Canadians must do something to stop global warming. It is our duty to meet the demands of the Kyoto Protocol.

In 1997, the U.N. treaty required industrial nations to cut global warming gases by the year 2012 to 5% less than they were emitting in 1990. Will this happen? NO!!! All industrialized nations have one goal: To keep their economies going. To do that, they must produce. Production creates heat and pollutants that go into the atmosphere.

Each year the U.S. spends \$5 billion on climate research and ways to cut global warming, (just thinking about it, not doing anything about it). Yet by 2020 U.S. industry will dump 8.4 billion tons of greenhouse gases, an increase of 19%, into the atmosphere. China, Japan, India, Russia and any other 3rd World nation that has significant industrial base will not be able to meet the Kyoto requirements, or will ignore it. Therefore they will

(See *Global Warming* on page 12)

(Global Warming from page 11) continue to dump global warming gases into the atmosphere at greater levels each year.

Not to worry, Canada is here. We will be at the forefront of global atmospheric cleansing. How? By raising taxes (green tax or carbon tax) on cars, electricity, gas, oil, and travel. With the money we will build large fans to blow the bad air back to America. Then we will build large vacuum cleaners to suck in all the bad air and let out purified air. Sounds silly, doesn't it, but if our own Ontario Government admits that they have no intention of cleaning up the 25 million tons of CO2 that is pumped into the atmosphere each year by the 5 coal-fired generating plants because it would cost too much. How can we expect other, poorer Nations to clean up their air? Let's not forget that the richest

nation in the world rejected the Kyoto Accord. "The U.S. of A." The Ontario Government has a plan to shut down the generating plants but no plan to replace them. Can you say "I can't afford hydro this month because I have to buy food?" "I like living in the dark and the cold."

There is no question that the Earth is getting warmer. It has gone through many cycles of hot and cold as scientists will attest. The earth was in the grips of an ice age just 10,000 years ago. It has warmed up significantly since, without global industrialization and interference by man over the last 9,800 years. We only started the industrialization of the planet about 200 years ago, with most of the development in the last 60 years.

The car has been at the top of the

list for polluting the atmosphere, but no one has mentioned the thousands of planes in the air each day dumping pollutants into the upper atmosphere. One plane flying from London to India will dump 3,000 tons of CO2 into the upper atmosphere. The military, with all of their equipment, the huge manufacturing plants, the snow mobiles, the dirt bikes, the lawnmowers, the diesel powered trucks, buses, trains, ships, generators. The vast herds of cows, pigs, chickens and other livestock we need for food.

Should we worry? I don't think so. This is just a temporary glitch in the system. According to volcanologists, it is only a matter of time before we are going to experience massive volcanic eruptions which will send millions of tons of ash 35 to 40 kilometers into the atmosphere blocking out the sunlight and plunging us into another cold spell. Many of the mass extinctions of animal life, that have been documented were the result of massive volcanic activity. One such super volcano is under Yellowstone national park. It explodes every 600 to 700 thousand years. It will send enough ash into the atmosphere to block out the sunlight for 10 years. That should cool us off. Mount Vesuvius in Italy is expected to erupt at any time. The Italian Government has extensive plans for mass evacuation of about 100 square miles.

Another issue that we are not told about is solar storms. The sun

(See *Global Warming* on page 13)



(Global Warming from page 12) goes through a 10 to 12 year cycle, with 2005 as the low point. Yet in September of 2005, 10 powerful storms hit us in 3 days. Scientists believe that 2012 will be a climaxing year for solar storms. The other global warming problem is the reduction or weakening of the earth's magnetic field. It is the field that keeps solar radiation out. Geophysicists are talking about a pole shift. That is when the North and South poles shift positions, every 780,000 years. When this happens we will have zero radiation protection. Many scientists are starting to swing away from pollution as the cause for global warming and are favoring solar radiation as the cause.

As for all of the hype about new fuels; BIO DIESEL is not as clean as people say. It produces 1-1/2 times more carbon than regular diesel. Methanol is not a good buy either. It is a corrosive. It will eat through gas tanks, fuel lines, carburetors and fuel injectors. To make matters worse, you will have to use twice as much Methanol to go the same distance. To top it off, the byproduct of combustion is formaldehyde.

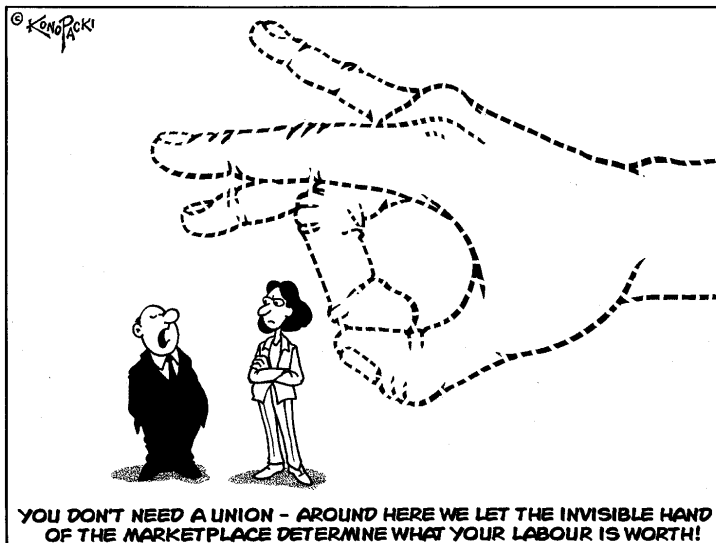
As for wind power, it is not as efficient or cost effective as we are told. Wind turbines are big, ugly

and expensive to build, erect and to maintain. They do not produce power without wind. If there is too much wind, the blades collect hundreds of pounds of bugs, which have to be removed to maintain airflow. The only solution found so far by the wind farms in California is the use of high pressure water nozzles built into the main body of the tower. Each turbine is monitored by video cameras for bug build-up and hosed down when required.

Closer to home, one individual decided to have a wind turbine erected to save on hydro. The Municipality then decided to raise his property taxes by \$3,500 a year, preventing him from recouping his investment.

Electric cars were being built around 1904, hybrids cars were built in the 50's, flying cars were available in the late 60's, and alternative fuels were available but not wanted by the oil giants until recently.

In conclusion, watch out for smoke and mirrors, propaganda and expensive quick fixes.



Organizing - Why All The Fuss?

*By John Aman,
National Director of
Organizing, CAW-Canada*



In the Labour movement, there has always been a lot of debate and discussion when it comes to organizing - its importance and the need for us to do that just that, 'organize.' A person can only guess the hectares of trees that have been mowed down to write about and evaluate this issue - it's likely enough to make most environmentalists cringe. But what exactly does 'organizing' mean and why all this talk?

Organizing, for the uninitiated, is the procedure in which a workplace goes from a non-union status to a unionized one. That might not sound like a significant achievement, but it has a tremendous impact on all of us. That's what all the fuss is about.

Many of us are union members today because when we were hired in our workplace, we were blessed to discover that the workplace was unionized. We had a collective agreement which enshrined our workplace rights, and we didn't have to constantly look over our shoulders,

(See Organizing on page 14)

(Organizing from page 13)

especially once the dreaded probation period was over.

For about 68 per cent of the workforce, this luxury does not apply. The unorganized live and work in a constant probation period where their treatment, working conditions and everyday lives are governed by the boss's discretion and whims.

Organizing changes all that. There are countless benefits to organizing - for the workers who join, our current workplaces, our Local and National unions, our communities and our country. We all win when we organize. It's that simple.

The benefits to workers who join are obvious – it's like night and day in many workplaces. Those of us who are union members fail to realize the lack of rights, fairness, respect and dignity in many non-union workplaces. The rights and privileges that we enjoy were not mandated or given. They were negotiated and earned through our collective struggles. And even in 'good' non-union workplaces, there are no meaningful enforcement mechanisms to uphold the rules. It's like David vs. Goliath, and unlike the original story, the little person never wins.

But once unionized, contrary to what many employers want their workers to believe, the benefits are plentiful and almost

immediate. Management must sit down, listen to workers' issues and work to reach solutions on their concerns. BBQ's and pizza days are no substitutes for a grievance procedure and a collective agreement.

The facts are also very clear when it comes to *union density*. The higher the unionization rate in any sector or industry, the better the wages, working conditions and standards across the sector. The more workplaces that unionize, the more opportunities we have to raise the standards. We can't leave that up to employers whose objectives are to decrease workplace standards in order to put more money in their pockets.

The more we organize, the greater our voice. Employers and politicians of all stripes have to listen to the collective. As we organize, we educate. As we organize, we mobilize and as we organize, we fight back. Fighting back makes a difference and that is exactly what organizing is: fighting back against the status quo and fighting back to make a difference.

When we organize we raise our living standards. Our communities and country are based on all of us contributing fairly, for the good of the whole. The work of the CAW extends beyond the workplace - we are a progressive influence on public initiatives, social programs and economic policies.

The CAW and its members have consistently demonstrated their

social commitments. Whether it is a United Way initiative, food bank drives, fundraisers for women's shelters, Tsunami or Katrina relief, picket line support, International social justice campaigns . . . we always step forward to help those less fortunate than us.

When we look around the world and see the countries with high living standards, good working conditions, full access to all levels of education, access to health care, lower crime rates, better environmental standards, they all have one thing in common. You guessed it, high levels of unionization. It is not a coincidence – unions are an important factor in the development of a just and fair society.

Unions make a difference, a big difference. Perhaps mainstream society will never give unions the accolades that we deserve, but that is not why we do what we do. We do it because it is the right thing to do. We organize because it is our obligation to help our fellow workers and to protect the quality of life of our own members.

If you are aware of anyone or any workplace that might benefit and need a union, please contact the CAW organizing department toll free: 1-877-495-6551 or e-mail: organize@caw.ca

In solidarity
John Aman
National Director of Organizing
CAW-Canada

COMMITTEES ELECTIONS:

ACCIDENT REVIEW: (2)

Laszlo Bori (Election)
Maurice Levesque (Election)
Gord Whyte (Election)
Cheryl White (Election)

CHARITY COMMITTEE: (4)

Jacky Eng (Acclaimed)
Lori Miller (Acclaimed)

CHIEF STEWARDS: (5)

Bob Simpson (N Election)
Maurice Levesque (N Election)
David Driver (N Election)
Zeke Baker (S Acclaimed)
Franz Peters (MP Acclaimed)
Jason Dargie (D2 N Election)
Phil Mayberry (D2 N Election)

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS: (5)

Kelly Hearty (N Election)
Brad Sweiger (N Election)
Cathy Dittrich (S Election)
Loui McPhail (S Election)
Peter Jantzi (MP Election)
Dot Halley (MP Election)

EDUCATION & NEWSLETTER: (4)

John A. McDonald (Acclaimed)
John MacKay (Acclaimed)
Klaus Biemann (Acclaimed)
David Driver (Acclaimed)
(Wayne Bell – Assistant)

ENVIRONMENT: (1)

Laszlo Bori (Acclaimed)

ELECTION NOTE:

There will be **four (4) different ballots** so that you may vote for the candidates within your division only. They are:

- North Conventional
- South Conventional
- Dept. 2 (North and South)

HEALTH & SAFETY: (7)

(North: 2 positions)

Bob Simpson (N Election)
Rick Lonergan (N Election)
Scott Desjardins (N Election)
Maurice Levesque (N Election)
Sue McIntyre (S Acclaimed)
John Livingstone (D2S Acclaimed)
Phil Mayberry (D2 N Election)
Jason Dargie (D2 N Election)
Dan Steinman (MP Election)
Dot Halley (MP Election)

LABOUR COUNCIL: (1)

Bob Simpson (Election)
Peter Jantzi (Election)

OPERATIONS: (8)

Laszlo Bori (N Acclaimed)
Wil Wirtz (N Acclaimed)
Zeke Baker (S Acclaimed)
Franz Peters (MP N Acclaimed)
Kevin Shepley (MP S Acclaimed)
Dot Halley (MP D Acclaimed)
Phil Mayberry (D2 N Election)
Jason Dargie (D2 N Election)

POLITICAL EDUCATION: (1)

Klaus Biemann (Election)
David Driver (Election)

SIGN-UP & SCHEDULING: (7)

(North: 3 positions)

Corina Godson (N Election)
Pam Martin (N Election)
Wil Wirtz (N Election)
Monica Menner (N Election)
Morgan Cassell (N Election)
Klaus Biemann (N Election)
(South: 2 positions)

John Livingstone (S Election)
Lori Miller (S Election)
Zeke Baker (S Election)
(Mobility: 2 positions)
Franz Peters (MP Election)
Kevin Shepley (MP Election)
Mike Urschel (MP Election)
Dan Steinman (MP Election)

STEWARDS: (9)

(North: 3 positions)

Kelly Hearty (N Election)
Monica Menner (N Election)
Russ Davis (N Election)
Scott Desjardins (N Election)
Andy Dillon (S Acclaimed)
Dot Halley (MP D Acclaimed)
Kevin Shepley (MP Election)
Peter Jantzi (MP Election)
Tim Benko (D2 N Acclaimed)

UNIFORMS: (6)

Corina Godson (N Election)
Kelly Hearty (N Election)
Jeanette Aubin (N Election)
Lori Miller (S Acclaimed)
John Livingstone (S Acclaimed)
Carol Jacobi (MP Acclaimed)
Mark Gaisor (D2 Acclaimed)

WELFARE & BENEFITS: (2)

Dot Halley (Election)
Jeannette Aubin (Election)
Nicole Poirier (Election)
Ricki Germann (Election)

WOMEN'S: (3)

Jacky Eng (Election)
Cheryl White (Election)
Corina Godson (Election)
Dot Halley (Election)

W.S.I.B & BENEFITS: (1)

Paul Lalonde (Appointed)

Election Stats:

The May Officer elections yielded the highest voter turnout ever with **68% of our members casting their ballots**. Let's try and break this record during the Committee elections this month. Remember that every dues paying member is allowed to vote, including part-time operators.

Talk it up and help get out the vote!

Have a Great Summer

By John McKay

Another Transit season is over, and it's the summer sign-up, and it is short. So let's take advantage of it.

First, a tip of the hat to Scott Desjardins for his efforts in working toward a possible solution regarding the wearing of Bluetooth headsets for cell phones. You will read more about this later.

A few other items on the shortlist are:

- **Protection:** You're going to need three types of protection this summer; first, of course, sun block. Please don't go outside without it. Melanoma or skin cancer and exposure to sunlight is one of the top 10 cancers that strike Canadians.

- **Next,** the Sun Life Financial

Traveling Soon card, which has your Medi-passport emergency travel assistance card. You'll take this out of the brochure and store it in your passport or other travel documents along with your GRT ID and plan number. I'm working on a story for September regarding what could happen to you if you don't have this with you in your time of need. We will be inserting the Medi-passport soon in *The Informer*, or possibly your pay stub.

- **And lastly,** your contingency fund for a strike date 2008. Have you been putting away \$20 or more a week as I suggested back in January/February? It's not too late. Please don't make any large purchases this summer so that you can continue to save for your

strike fund. We have the best negotiating team for the upcoming 2008 contract that I have ever seen put together. However, it also makes our position stronger when our rank-and-file are saving for a possible work stoppage.

As a lot of our readers are aware, some of our brothers and sisters are off on sick leave. Take a minute out of your busy summer to have a thought for them. That said, on behalf of the Newsletter Committee; including myself, John A. McDonald, Klaus Biemann, David Driver and Wayne Bell, **have a safe summer.**

We will see you in the next edition in October.

June 13th Advance Polling Stations (Committees):

Strasburg Garage: 5:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. & 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Cambridge Ainsle Terminal: 12:15 p.m. to 4:15 p.m.

NOTE: Again, with this election, in order to ensure full participation, we are running full advance polling stations. The advance poll is intended for those who will be unable to vote in the regular election on Wed., June 20th. **However, there is no restriction on who may vote in the advance poll.**

June 20th Polling Stations:

Strasburg Garage: 4:45 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (*All day, continuous coverage*)

Kitchener Transit Terminal: 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. & 3:45 to 5:00 p.m.

Cambridge Garage: 5:00 to 7:30 a.m.; 1:30 – 2:30 p.m. & 5:00 - 5:15 p.m.

Cambridge Ainsle Terminal: 2:45 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Union Meeting: CAW Offices, 5 Executive Pl.: 7:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

(*Polls close at 7:30 p.m.*)

Your Election Committee:

John A. McDonald (chair): 241-5623

Kelly Hearty: 746-8554

Hubert Kump: 744-5156

E-mail John A.: caw4304@rogers.com

Gerry Nagle: 894-9272

Paul Lalonde: 500-3553

John Livingstone: 841-2415