



## *Dear Members...*

Summer has finally arrived. It's time to celebrate and enjoy the sun shining down on our beautiful West Coast. We are all hoping for fantastic weather, but so often we focus on being productive and achieving targets, and forget to enjoy life, let's be encouraged to take the time to enjoy our surroundings, enjoy the ocean breeze and make the most out of this beautiful season.

### GUILD STAFFING

Our Branch has faced a challenge due to an abundance of number of activities at a time when we have been operating short-staffed, but with the dedication and effort of our current staff, especially Robert Samson, we have been able to manage and efficiently meet our members' needs.

Al Kane has been on sick leave for the past three months, but we are happy to report of his health improvement and are very optimistic for a prompt and full recovery.

Also, Edd Langelier remains on medical leave; we admire his enthusiasm and optimism, which we believe is a plus factor in his health recovery. Edd is currently contributing with us to deal with some aspects of negotiations whenever possible.

### FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

We continue monitoring all expenditures with due care and prudently administering all financial aspects of the Branch, and are pleased to report that we are current with all financial obligations and expect to report a healthy result for the fiscal year 2012.

### NEGOTIATIONS, GRIEVANCES AND WCB APPEALS

We would like to recognize the effort and support of our Members volunteering on the different Negotiating Committees, your assistance and dedication is very much appreciated.

#### **DH Timber**

Several controversial practices were brought to the Guild's attention which resulted in a road map being drawn up with the help of our members and DH Timber management that leads us to believe that going forward there will be a much more harmonious relationship.

#### **International Forest Products**

Copies of the already ratified collective agreements will be finalized and distributed in the near future.

## **Northern Transportation Co. Ltd.**

Copies of the already ratified collective agreements are in the final stage of being updated and we expect to have it finalized and distributed in the month of July.

## **Government Ship Officers**

The Guild National Office has recently reported that the research and preparation of the Guild submissions and arguments are well underway, an arbitration panel has been appointed and the arbitration is scheduled to be heard on December 20th and 21st, 2012 in Ottawa.

Nanoose Bay Shift Schedule – Our Guild members would like to continue with the compressed work week and although it may have minimal value to have a compressed week to the head office (Esquimalt) it's not the same at Nanoose Bay. The significant value to the customers at Nanoose Bay originated the request to adopt the compressed work week in order to enhance service to meet their requirements. This issue is important to the Guild and our members and our National Office is currently raising the issue with the Federal Treasury Board to see if we can come up with something acceptable to all the parties involved.



## **Island Tug and Barge**

The Guild is mid way through a dismissal arbitration.

## **Lafarge**

It has been verified by several Guild Masters at Lafarge and Seaspan that they have been using Ledcor to pull Lafarge barges under the pretext that no Guild vessels have been available.

Guild companies were contacted; some verifying they were not available while others claiming they were not contacted. Lafarge claims that it is working on a business plan that will result in reciprocal work going to Guild members at Lafarge from Ledcor. We will arrange for an informational meeting in the near future with our members to discuss this matter amongst other issues.

## **Pacific /FMW**

The Guild used the Federal mediation services to reach a tentative agreement that is before the membership for ratification, ballots should be submitted to the Guild no later than 10AM on July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

## **Seaspan Marine**

The seniority changes and challenges are in the final stages of production, 27 challenges representing approximately 10% of the total membership at Seaspan were received; 8 of those challenges were denied, leaving the option under our By-Laws (20.03) to appeal to the Executive Board. Letters to members whose challenges were denied will be sent explaining the reasons and avenues of appeal.

Seaspan has moved vessels into Kitimat and Powell River in an attempt to acquire work. The Guild is in the process of tailoring 2 letters of understanding allowing procurement of work away from non-Guild companies without undermining the Collective Agreement.

There is a massive realignment in the fleet which is the result of changes to schedules, introduction of pager vessels in Vancouver Harbour and the issue of a new seniority list which should be published by the time of this mailing.

Seaspan wishes to introduce pager tugs into Vancouver Harbour to remain competitive and as such there have been several meetings and a Committee has been struck to contain any perceived weakening of the Collective Agreement. It should be noted:

- ⇒ It is on a trial basis until December 2012.
- ⇒ There will be regular meetings of the Committee to address any shortcomings and safety issues.
- ⇒ It is not the intention to allow pagers to bleed into the entire fleet and undermine hard fought gains in the Collective Agreement.
- ⇒ There will be a 90 day cancellation clause.

Pension deductions: Arbitration was narrowly avoided in a recent dispute when the grievor was made whole and a process was developed whereby when a member goes off on WI he will be notified by Seaspan and Coughlin's that he has 12 weeks to provide notification that they want pension matching by the Company. This initiative will be made clear to all Guild members when the final draft is approved.

### **SMIT Marine**

Prince Rupert, Minette Bay mariners have joined our family and we all welcome them aboard, they had their first opportunity to take part in a ratification vote that was passed shortly after their arrival this Spring.

### **SMIT Harbour Towage Vancouver**

Negotiations will begin after Westminster Towage is completed in the very near future. It was SMIT's request to deal with Westminster Towage first due to manpower issues.

### **SMIT Harbour Towage Westminster**

The negotiations are proceeding very well with the only remaining sizable proposal being scheduling which when resolved will result in greatly improved lifestyles for our members.

### **Western Pacific Marine Ltd. (Lasquiti Island)**

We are in the initial process of negotiations.



### [PENSION, BENEFIT AND WELFARE](#)

In our previous newsletter we informed you of the appointment of Al Kane as a Pension Plan Trustee, but due to his illness and inability to act as such, and in accordance to the By-Laws (Article 9), Zulema Sanabria, Secretary Treasurer of the WB, stepped in as a Plan Trustee, for the Guild to have a quorum during challenging times of decisions and changes within the Plan.

We also mentioned in our previous newsletter that **we have Trustee positions to fill (on the Pension Plan and Health and Welfare Plan)**. We want to emphasize the importance of having a complete body of Trustees to consider the view of the Guild within these Plans; therefore **we encourage our members interested in standing for these positions to submit their expression of interest to the CMSG-WB for consideration as soon as possible, in accordance with the By-Laws (9.02, 9.03, 9.04 and 9.05)**.



◆ Robert Samson, Health Benefit Trustee, reports: As you have no doubt been made aware thru the media, Health Benefit Plans are under financial assault; I am pleased to say that our plan, although not immune to these pressures, is slowly gaining a firmer foundation.

We did manage to maintain our plan thru hard bargaining with Pacific/FMW and are under no illusion of what bargaining with Seaspan will bring next year. Having said that, the Trustees are looking at different proposals that will provide cost savings going forward and permit the plan to remain viable.



In closing I would like to remind the membership that the benefits plan is not an insurance policy but a pool of funds for the good of all.

◆ Zulema Sanabria, Pension Plan Trustee, reports: Many of you received a Bulletin Update on the Pension Plan recently; we have received members' acknowledgements, some admitting satisfaction and others displeasure due to the changes that are underway and the time frame for these changes. We are aware that changes are not always easy and some things are easier said than done.

The Trustees have been concentrated on the challenges of making the transition and acting with due-care. We were aiming for a sooner date of change but crucial information from the parties involved was presented and it was then determined that the transition could not be completed before the end of the year.

Another concern is that only one, of the five Trustees, is a member of the Pension Plan "with his money in the plan" and the other four Trustees are making investment decisions "that will not affect their financial well being in retirement"; please be informed that each of the Trustees owe fiduciary duties and can only act in the best of interest of each of the beneficiaries (You, the Member). Our objective is to minimize the effects of the current financial down-turn on the Plan looking forward to a positive recovery.

### **A Note from the Editor:**

Thanks to all of you who provide us positive feedbacks and words of encouragement. We appreciate your continued support and look forward to put a face to a name. Safe Sailing to All!

  
Zulema Sanabria  
Secretary Treasurer

### **Fall 2012 Western Branch Meetings:**

**October 24 - Nanaimo and Victoria Membership**

**October 25 - Executive Board**

**October 26 - Vancouver Membership**



*Something to ponder: "Nothing is so intolerable to man as being fully at rest, without a passion, without business, without entertainment, without care"*

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