

Guild News—April, 2009

Dear Members:

Where to start...

To say that we have just experienced a major change in the Guild would be the understatement of the century. As most of you are aware, there have been some Staff, Executive Board & Trustee changes which are as follows:

PRESIDENT: Captain Neil MacDougall (Executive Board Position)
SECRETARY TREASURER: Brad MacTavish (Executive Board Position)
TRUSTEES—PENSION PLAN: Craig Bryant (Business Agent)
Captain Walter Moffat (Seaspan)
Captain Victor McClelland (Seaspan)
TRUSTEES—BENEFIT PLAN: Peter Massey (Business Agent)
Jerry Wernicke (Chief Engineer—Seaspan)
Brad MacTavish (Secretary Treasurer/Chief Engineer)

Due to a realignment within our office and our loss of revenue resulting from the extensive layoffs in the industry, we have eliminated the Accountant/Office Manager position. These duties are being assumed by the Secretary Treasurer in accordance with our by-laws and as was managed in the past.

It is my personal opinion that these changes will reflect positively within our industry as well as for ALL our Members and our Employers who are in agreement.

THE AUDIT

Here comes my best Charlie Brown - wishy washy - impression ... Our industry has always been fraught with rumors' and is our full intention to keep you informed with facts from this point forward.

I am sure that you are all aware of the audit that has been ongoing within our branch; it is not yet complete but it is in the final stages.

There has been a lot of concern expressed from our Membership that the results of the audit will not be addressed. I personally assure all of you that **if** anyone is found to have violated our by-laws or the code of ethics, we will be pursuing all avenues at our disposal to rectify the problems and make anyone, if involved be held fully answerable for their actions.

You will notice that I am using "if's" — remember— this is a democracy and everyone will be assumed innocent until proven beyond a doubt of any untoward actions. The Guild is requesting that you don't pre-judge anyone and cease painting everyone with the same brush. **If** there are those that are found to be guilty of abuse, they will be held accountable for their actions, but we assure that not all of those involved would be guilty of any infraction, **if** any violation is proven.

We are aware there is a petition circulating through the fleet that is making some pretty damning accusations.

We have not seen it and don't wish to. It is not authorized by this office and we are requesting that it be stopped. We are proceeding with a process and until this process is complete we ask for your patience and professionalism.

EMPLOYMENT

Our industry is in the worst condition that I have experienced in my 25 years at sea. We must work with our Employers and their customers to ensure that the non-union operators do not use this time to get a foot in the door. Your expertise and professionalism will go a long way to keeping the less safe, less skilled, and less desirable Employers from gaining a foothold.

We have not yet, and we **stress the yet**, invoked a mandatory conversion of lay days and overtime to protect jobs during these times of dire employment. We request that all of our Members do this on a voluntary basis to help those that are on the beach. We are cognizant of the fact that some of you have saved these days for specific reasons and thus our reluctance to invoke an order to convert your time. Past history has shown us that enforcing mandatory O/T conversion does little to create jobs.

PROVINCIAL ELECTION—TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2009

The Guild does not profess to have any right to tell you how to vote but we urge you to vote. Our forest industry has been devastated by foreign interests that were allowed to buy our saw mills and pulp mills and then close them down. These past Employers continue to take trees from our Tree Farm Licenses' and ship out raw logs without any value added by the people of BC. The logs that used to be barged or towed by us are now being put on foreign ships and the finished products that we used to handle are no longer being produced here. These are our natural resources and we must protect them.

Providing you are 18 years of age or older and a Canadian Citizen on or before May 12, 2009, you are eligible and have the right to vote in the upcoming Provincial Election on Tuesday, May 12, 2009. On the day of the election, the polling stations should be open between 08:00 to 20:00 hours throughout our province. To determine your eligibility to vote, your name should be listed on the permanent voters list.

For those of you who will be away at sea, and/or on vacation leave on the actual election day, **advance polls** will be scheduled so that you will be able to cast your ballot. In the event your name is not on the voters list, you should still be able to vote, however you will be required to swear an oath and present the polling station Officer with two pieces of acceptable identification.

In regards to those of you who are employed on a shift vessel basis, we remind you of your right to have **four (4) hours free and clear of your employment obligations**, without loss of pay, prior to the closing of the polls to cast your vote. Again, the polls are open from **8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.** Via separate cover we are advising all Employers that they cannot alter/amend your scheduled start/finish shift schedules to achieve the four (4) hours clear to vote requirements.

The above information is re-produced from our understanding of the process, however, we urge you to confirm these details with your local Member of Parliament's Constituency Office and/or Elections BC directly.

With respect to any questions surrounding the above, we urge you to contact Elections BC at their toll free number (1 – 800 – 661 – 8683), or visit their web site at www.elections.bc.ca. This is preferable to contacting

our office as Elections BC is the authority, not the Guild.

All Guild Members are urged to vote in the upcoming election. Every vote counts, and it is your democratic right to cast your ballot for the party of your preference.

SECRETARY TREASURER

I am honored to have accepted the position of Secretary Treasurer of the Guild—Western Branch, and I strive to make things as transparent as possible and will attempt to keep you all informed of any changes.

Due to the complete internal restructuring we are currently experiencing at the Branch Office, I am swamped right now as is the rest of the staff so please bear with us.

Moving forward let's work together to lessen the effects of the current economic down-turn for both our fellow Guild Members as well as our Employers. Yes, the Employers ... if they don't make money we don't work!

Yours truly,

WESTERN BRANCH



Brad MacTavish

Secretary Treasurer

The following are items that we no longer require. If you are interested, please contact:

Canadian Merchant Service Guild

Western Branch

#218—310 Blue Mountain Street

Coquitlam, BC

TEL: 604—939—8990

FAX: 604—939—8950