

# THE SNAG SHEET

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF CANADIAN  
AIRWAYS LODGE 764

Jan 2009



International Association  
of Machinists and  
Aerospace Workers  
Representing Air Transport  
Workers in  
British Columbia and the  
Yukon



## President's Message

As we enter 2009 we will almost certainly be faced with a long and protracted set of negotiations with Air Canada and AVEOS to obtain new Collective Agreements. It is paramount that we marshal all of our resources for this looming showdown if we are to have any success at regaining the things that were taken from us during CCAA.

Air Canada will go to great lengths to convince us that they are but a small poor airline teetering on the brink of extinction. High fuel costs one day, bad economy the next day, bad hair day another. But you can be sure that there will be no shortage of money to spend on lawyers and PR firms to help them reach across the negotiations table into our pockets and try to convince us that they have no choice. It will be to ensure "our" future.

We have just witnessed 4 years of Air Canada's promised future. They called it "sharing our success". We didn't much care for the way in which things were actually shared. It should have been called "Sharing our employee's success by making obscene payouts to our Executives". That seems like a more accurate description of how they share.

A Union's only tool in dealing with the employer is the unity and solidarity that they have from the rank and file members. We will be bargaining with not one but two employers in June as the AVEOS split is now entering its final stages. We must be steadfast in our resolve and support of each other regardless of which department we work in because what they take from one of us

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today, they will demand from the rest of us tomorrow.

The single biggest factor in undermining the resolve of Union members and to weaken their bargaining position is misinformation and false rumours that mysteriously appear in the workplace. These always run rampant during negotiations. Unfortunately the very nature of negotiations requires that a large portion of it be done behind closed doors until such time as a deal is reached. A vacuum of real and true information always breeds rumours and false information.

To combat this problem and to keep all of our members instantly up to date on any and all information regarding the 2009 negotiations, the AVEOS split or any other issues facing our membership this year we are asking for your help. LL764 is instituting an email program that will distribute immediate, factual and important information into your email account. We will be able to give you detailed and pertinent information as soon as we have it without you having to look anywhere else for it. You will receive the facts and not the rumours or deliberate misinformation that will certainly be available in great abundance in the workplace and on other websites.

To sign up, simply go to the LL764 website [www.iam764.ca](http://www.iam764.ca) home page. At the bottom of the right hand column there is a link "**Join IAM 764 mailing list**". Simply click on the link and input your personal email address that you wish to use. Do not use your Air Canada, MTU or United Airlines email address. We will not send any information or communications to Company email accounts and risk members being disciplined for misuse of company email.

Christopher Hiscock  
President  
Canadian Airways Lodge 764

## Remembering "Wimpy"



One of the "gifts" to the Delegates to the recently concluded Grand Convention Orlando Florida 2008 was a paperback book of the history of past International President William W. Wimpisinger. The book, titled "Wimpy", was written by Patrick S. - Halley<sup>1</sup>, a former political operative for the Democratic Party of the United States, and for some time now, the Director of Planning, Grand Lodge Conventions for the Machinists Union. Local Lodge 764 Grand Lodge Delegate Sister Laura Sharpe loaned me the book for a weekend to read.

I found the book interesting and entertaining, but poorly edited. Mistakes with spelling, and poor sentence structure stood out, and detracted from the overall readability. It appeared that the book had been rushed into print for the 2008 Convention without the benefit of a good editor. Let me try to summarize Mr. Halley's effort after some brief observations about our Union.

There are very few books on the history of the Machinists Union. The first academic attempt at a history of the IAMAW was in 1962, by Professor Mark Perlman<sup>2</sup> who documented IAM history with a broad brush on the union's democratic development, its handling of internal disputes, its stand on major labour issues, and the Union's leadership style which started with Tom Talbot, "the Grand Master Machinist" in 1888, and a succession of other leaders. The leadership title was later changed to "International President of the IAMAW".

A second attempt at a history of the IAMAW was made by Machinists IAM Journal editor Bob Rodden<sup>3</sup>. Brother Rodden, in 1984, used the published pages of the "IAM Journal" throughout the almost one hundred year history of the Union as source material to provide a sweeping view of Machinists issues. He references many original documents from the Machinists archives to illustrate the arguments of the day. Brother Rodden's history attempt is well intended, but his work falls short on objectivity when assessed by historical critics. While Brother Rodden glorified "The Fighting Machinists" in their external battles with railroad magnates and industrial bosses, critics found him somewhat

gentle to the IAM officers of the day when internal disputes were mentioned.

Patrick Halley's 2008 book "Wimpy" summarizes the history of the IAM after 1970, when the political power center at the Executive Council level starts shifting from the old, southern-based, strongly conservative, railroad rooted, craft oriented attitudes of classic machinists leadership, to the more liberal, pro-active, and widely inclusive leaders from the north-central industrial manufacturing axis and mushrooming airline membership of the United States. Machinists from one state in America personified this shift and energy – Ohio!

Halley's principle focus is on a young and up and coming Ohio union leader named William W. Winpisinger. His book tells the story how "Wimpy" was mentored by powerful leaders from the Ohio State Machinists Council. These Ohio activists wrestled the chair of International President away from the conservative forces in the Machinist Union in 1977, and changed the organization's direction towards a more liberal proactive new path.

It is not the purpose of this article to summarize either the whole of Mr. Halley's book, or "Wimpy's" remarkable career until 1988. Rather, this article achieved insight from the book on how political power is alive and operative at the Executive Council level – and how one state in the United States – Ohio – now dominates this Union.

Ohio seems to have provided an ample share of leadership for the Machinists. Ohio's increasing influence at the Executive Council level, and later, over the entire Grand Lodge structure, began with General Vice-President Demore, and his successor, GVP White, from the old IAM Central Territory. Both GVP's worked closely with the very powerful and influential Secretary-Treasurer of the Ohio State Council of Machinists, Brother Phil Zannella, Sr. The senior Brother Zannella was instrumental in advancing the young William Winpisinger to a Grand Lodge Representative vacancy, influential in his ascendancy to an Executive Council position, and helpful when the vacancy came up for International President.

Wimpy clearly distinguished himself at the Grand Lodge Convention Hollywood, Florida in 1976 in front of the Delegates. IP Floyd Smith was faced with contentious motions during the Convention Proceedings and soon faltered as Chair. Before the Convention descended into chaos, GVP

Winpisinger stepped in, assumed the Chair from IP Smith, and restored order. It was not long after that event, that Brother Winpisinger was selected by the Executive Council in 1977, to replace Floyd "Red" Smith as International President. Officially, the change took place because Brother Smith had reached mandatory retirement at age sixty-five.<sup>4</sup>

Not only has Ohio provided the late IP William W. Winpisinger (1977 – 1988) to Machinists Union leadership ranks, but also retired IP George Kourpias (1988-1997), and current IP Tom Buffenbarger (1997 -) (whose father is a major figure in the Ohio Machinists), recently retired GST Don Wharton, and Phil Zannella Jr., who occupied the powerful Law Committee Chair after 2000.

Rarely is a General Vice-President elected in a Grand Lodge election. In the United States, GVP's usually retire before election time, or before their sixty-fifth birthday, allowing the Executive Council to select a replacement. This ensures that a complete Grand Lodge slate is offered for re-election. This practice has generated the "Old Boys Club" argument amongst Machinists Union dissidents, who argue that little can change at the Executive Council level when succession is so tightly controlled.

The IP succession has always been carefully orchestrated at Grand Lodge. As the current IP approaches retirement, the appointment of the Headquarters GVP is usually a good signal as to who will be the next IP of the Machinists Union. Brother Robert Michalski, former Legislative Director of the IAM, appears to be the heir apparent to IP Tom Buffenbarger, when he steps down.

There has only been one contest for the GVP position in Canada. It happened in 1978. GLR Jim Goodison ran against incumbent Canadian GVP Mike Rygus, who was then part of the Grand Lodge "slate". Goodison polled more votes in Canada than Rygus, but Rygus won the election when the more numerous American Machinists voted the Grand Lodge slate and returned Rygus. The younger Canadian IAM membership was so outraged at this outcome, that this event sparked the "Canadian Autonomy Movement" amongst Canadian Machinists in 1980.

The "Autonomy Movement" was taken over by cooler heads in 1982, and that leadership, in turn, drafted "the Canadian Amendment", debated to a roll call vote at the Seattle Grand Lodge Convention 1984, and passed on the second

day, with no debate, by the Grand Lodge Convention Delegates Atlanta 1988, to the IAM Constitution. The amendment allowed Canadian Machinists to solely elect their own GVP to the Executive Council.

Although the Canadian total of the IAMAW is less than eight (8%) percent of the international membership, members from Canada have exercised impact and influence far beyond their limited numbers.

The debate on constitutional change for Canadians to elect their own GVP, argued brilliantly and forcefully at the 1984 Seattle Convention, and conceded immediately by Grand Lodge forces at the 1988 Atlanta Convention, prompted the Executive Council to start paying closer attention to Machinists issues in "the Great White North".

The Grand Lodge never again allowed succession for a GVP in Canada to face an open election. GVP Val Bourgeois retired before the 1996 Grand Lodge election, and the Executive Council appointed Brother Dave Ritchie to assume the Canadian Territory. Canadian members have returned Brother Ritchie as part of the Grand Lodge slate in subsequent elections.

In part, Canadian Machinist activism, and our willingness to "play by the rules", helped bring the Grand Lodge Convention to Montreal, Canada in 1992.

Canadians argued that a Grand Lodge Convention called to order in Canada was long overdue. The last Grand Lodge Convention held in Canada was in Toronto in 1901. After much lobbying, preparation, and heavy lifting by the Canadian Machinists Conference, a second one convened in Montreal in 1992. A third one will convene in Canada again in 2012, with Toronto hosting as the Convention site. Vancouver will have to wait.

In summary, Patrick Halley's book on "Wimpy" brought back a lot of personal memories for this member about the man himself. Few people know that IP Winpisinger strongly supported the Canadian Amendment to the IAM Constitution, and that he helped the Canadian Delegation directly, and myself, indirectly, with quiet mentoring, on how to achieve our goal.

The book also documents how change is brought about in the Machinists Union. Yes, the Machinists are a democratic union, but a close reading of this book will illustrate just how

"controlled" that democracy really is. If you truly want to understand the Machinists Union and how it operates, I suggest you give the books I have referenced in this article some of your time.

1. Halley, Patrick S. "Wimpy". Kelly Press, Washington D.C. 2008, paperback, pp.683
2. Perlman, Mark. "Democracy in the Intl. Assn. of Machinists." John Wiley and Sons, New York 1962, hardcover, pp.113
3. Rodden, Robert G. "The Fighting Machinists: A Century of Struggle." Kelly Press, Washington D.C. 1984, hardcover, pp.304
4. Mandatory retirement for Executive Council members at age sixty-five became a constitutional provision in 1964. IP Roy Seimiller tried unsuccessfully to prevent this amendment to the Constitution, but failed, and served only one term as IP from 1965 – 1968.

David Varnes, ST LL764 and Chair, History Committee

## Clerical Report

3 Outstanding Grievances:

MSP still waiting for answer from Marty

Technical writer

Computer layout work for tech training

Conference call with DL 140 ( Fred Hospes) dealing with Air Canada, Aveos Memorandum Agreement

One member still on Long Term Disability

One member back from WCB

Phoned Brother Cam McDonald and received information on a WCB Claim.

Fielded many questions and phone calls about the impending AC/Aveos split

Handed out the A/C Aveos Memorandum of Agreement

Sister Fran Manhard is now a Shop Steward.

In Solidarity,

Ron McKelvie

Chief Shop Steward, 764 Clerical

**AIRPORTS / CARGO REPORT****JANUARY 14, 2009****Arbitrations**

The next scheduled meeting with Martin Teplitsky is for February 03, 2009 in YYZ. The Shop Committee will not be in attendance due to budgetary constraints by the Local Lodge.

**Cabins**

Overtime for the month of December was 204 hours.

**Cargo**

The Company has informed the Shop Committee that the telephone answering job function is being centralized in YYZ effective February 01, 2009. This will affect 8 Agents. The Shop Committee is in discussions with the Company as to how these Agents will be utilized for the remainder of the winter schedule.

The summer shift bid is forecast to take effect May 24, 2009.

**Grievances**

The Shop Committee has filed general grievances on behalf of the Membership in regards to the Company allowing Employees to exceed the 104 hour limit per quarter, Management performing Scope duties as well as The Company phoning Employees on 1 or 2 day absences and requesting Doctors notes.

**Promos**

The Promotional Bulletin for Trainer Level 1 in YVR that closed on Dec. 26 has not been awarded as yet.

There is a Promotional Bulletin out for an Instructor GSE in YVR that closes on Feb. 02.

**Ramp**

The LSA vacation bids have been completed.

The Full Time and Part Time SA bids are ongoing, if anyone has missed a bid please call 231- 6736 and the Vacation Committee will try to accommodate you, otherwise the Company will assign what ever is left over.

Over time for the month of December was **8448** hours which equates to **56** full time jobs.

**Retirements February 01, 2009**

Joe Grasky, Station Attendant – Ramp 32 years.  
Rocky Stark, Station Attendant – Cargo 35 years.

**Shop Stewards**

The Shop Steward list for 2009 will be posted on the Union bulletin board.

Shop Stewards are reminded to take accurate notes so the Shop Committee can proceed with any type of appeal.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kevin Cox, Chair Craig Chard

**United Airlines Report**

One outstanding grievance at Step 3.

One outstanding grievance proceeding to Step 2.

The Company still has not posted any expectations with regard to their Dependability/Sick program. They continue, however, to issue the letters.

Productivity was up over the holiday period. In spite of heavy loads, unusually bad weather, equipment failures and no extra staffing allowances our members worked hard to get planes out and passengers and bags to their destinations.

Copies of the new contract are not yet available to the membership, however, as agreed, vacations are being scheduled to coincide with individual day off patterns.

In solidarity,  
Janet Andrews  
Senior Steward

## Tech-Ops Report

January 14, 2009

### Information Issues:

**Arbitration Hearings:** The next scheduled date with Chief Arbitrator Martin Teplitsky is February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009 in Toronto. The Shop Committee will not be in attendance due to the requirement of the Local Lodge Executive to reduce expenditures of the Local Lodge.

**UMCM Meeting:** The next UMCM Meeting will be held on February 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009 in Toronto. The Shop Committee will not be in attendance due to the requirement of the Local Lodge Executive to reduce expenditures of the Local Lodge.

**Air Canada/Aveos Transition:** The Shop Committee has commenced distribution of the recent Memorandum of Agreement signed between Air Canada, Aveos and the IAM & AW through local meetings with the Membership. District Lodge 140 has issued Bulletin (#004) advising the Membership regarding this document.

**Heavy Maintenance 2009 Vacations:** Local Vacation Committee Shop Stewards/Representatives have commenced the 2009 Vacation bidding process for a majority of the Category/Classifications working within the Heavy Maintenance Formation.

**LOU #4 Above Basic Selection Process:** The Membership is reminded to ensure that they have reviewed LOU #4 of the Collective Agreement prior to submitting an application to a Promotional/Vacancy Notice. Recently, several vacancies/positions have been cancelled as a result of applicants not meeting the terms of this Letter of Understanding. Any Member that has a concern is recommended to contact the Shop Committee Office (604-273-8135 or 604-270-5600) for assistance. In addition, please ensure that the Tech Ops Shop Committee receives a faxed copy of their application. The Tech Ops Shop Committee Office fax

number is (604) 273-0896.

**YVR Base Permanent Recalls:** The Company is in the process of recalling Categories 1, 13, 19, 33 and 38 mechanics within the Heavy Maintenance Formation. The Company has indicated that the recall is needed to support the third heavy maintenance production line in the YVR North Hangar. Any Member receiving recall paperwork from Air Canada/Aveos is reminded to ensure that the Tech Ops Shop Committee receives a faxed copy of their selection to accept/decline recall. The Tech Ops Shop Committee Office fax number is (604) 273-0896.

**2009 Shop Steward Nominations and Elections:** The 2009 Shop Steward Nomination process has closed. The Shop Committee welcomes all returning and new Shop Stewards and would like to thank these individuals for accepting the position of Shop Steward.

**2009 Shop Steward Packages:** The 2009 Shop Steward Packages have been sent out to all 2009 Shop Stewards. All Shop Stewards are reminded to return the Approval/Questionnaire Form to the Shop Committee Office by January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

**Tech Ops Retirements:** The Shop Committee would like to congratulate the following Members; Tom Moeller - Category 1, Chris Hale - Category 1, Rae Kwon - Category 1, Bill Jeffrey - Category 1, Norm Scott - Category 1, Bob Reynolds - Category 15, John Lenard - Category 17, Hideo Okuchi - Category 23, John Murdocco - Planner, Mike Gowan - Licensed Planner and Richard Graham - Licensed Technical Instructor who retired on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009. The Shop Committee would like to wish them a long and healthy retirement. The Shop Committee would also request the assistance of all Shop Stewards in notifying the Shop Committee of any Member considering retirement.

In Solidarity,

Joe Toth, L/L 764, Tech Ops Chair

Glenn Cooper, L/L 764, Tech Ops Member

Glenn Girard, L/L 764, Tech Ops Member

## IAM 764 Pension Report

When any member of the Pension Plan has a question or concern about their personal pension information or status the onus is on them to contact the Company. The contact email addresses and phone numbers for Eservices are [eservices@aircanada.ca](mailto:eservices@aircanada.ca) and 1-877-645-5000. They can be found on the Aeronet portal by selecting My HR>Employee Services>Canada. The contacts are the same for Hewitt Associates who administer payroll and employee benefits and for the Mercer Group who administer the Pension plans and retiree benefits.

On this same page of the portal you will see two printable pdf files that are telephone contact menus. One is for active employees and one is for retirees. They are worth printing or having up on your computer screen when you call as they are flow charts of the various "Press 1 for English" choices you will have to make before you are allowed to talk to a real person about your particular issue.

When phoning you will be prompted to input your employee ID and "Employee Services" password to verify your identity and protect the confidentiality of your information. Your "Employee Services" password is the one you use to sign into the "HR" window of the portal to view your pay stubs and records. If you don't remember it, the reset procedure is on the same page of the portal as the telephone menu files.

For personal pension issues, the process is established such that the employee must make contact with the Company and deal with any problems or concerns they have. The Pension Committee can only become involved on your behalf if you still have problems after having dealt with the Company first. It is at this point in the process that I would ask you to contact me, preferably via email, with the details of your problem if you require any help or assistance.

All telephone calls with Eservices are recorded and the recordings are kept on file for an unspecified period of time. These tapes can be retrieved and reviewed to verify what information was given to the employee. Records of emails are similarly maintained for referral. I always encourage members to keep their own copies of all pension matters as the onus is on you to provide the documentation in any dispute with the Company.

Your pension information is personal and confidential and is treated like all of your other pay and benefit information. The access to this information is highly restricted and limited as you would expect. That is why you, as the employee, must make the initial enquiries about any issues that you may have. The Company needs to ensure that all requests for information are legitimate and authorized.

The job of the Pension Committee is to help you navigate through the process of dealing with the Company and assisting you in obtaining any of your information that you request. We do that by first helping to explain the processes to you and secondly by interceding on your behalf if you encounter difficulties with the process.

Email is the most effective way to reach me. I may be contacted at [pres764@telus.net](mailto:pres764@telus.net) with any questions or concerns that you may have.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christopher Hiscock  
Chairman, LL764 Pension Committee

## EAP Report

EAP "Holiday Season" column in AVEOS Newsletter in December, 2008.

When submitting a claim for psychological counselling with Claim Secure and the EAP reimbursement plan, only Registered Social Workers, Registered Clinical Counsellors or Registered Psychologists are recognized here in British Columbia.

Wishing everyone a very Happy New Year and all the best for 2009!

In Solidarity,  
Brian Bethell  
EAP Co-ordinator  
Western Region

# Next General Meeting

**Feb 11, 2009**

**5 PM**

**7980 River Road  
Richmond, B.C.**



**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**  
**WWW.IAM764.CA**

**IN MEMORIAM**  
**BROTHERS JOE STARK AND**  
**JOHN HAPPAMAKI**

## **Local 764 Executive Board**

Chris Hiscock – President

Mike Sanghera – Vice-President

David Varnes – Secretary Treasurer

Laura Sharpe -Recording Secretary

Steve Daechsel -Trustee

Wes Sim – Trustee, Educator

Cam McDonald -Trustee

Dan Cooke – Conductor/Sentinel

Gordon Taylor – Communicator

Joe Toth - Tech-Ops Shop Chair

Kevin Cox - Airports/Cargo Shop Chair

Neil Carter – Senior Steward MTU

Janet Andrews – Senior Steward UAL

Ron McKelvie – Clerical Chief Shop Steward

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