

## **Presidents Report   E-Board Meeting   December 2018**

The local is running smoothly and our finances are in order.

We are entering the festive season and the end of another busy year. Many new faces have joined our local , Unifor 723m welcome all our new Sisters and Brothers.

This is a time of year for joy and festivities, but on a sombre note, please take a moment to remember those who have lost family members, friends, and co-workers this year.

Lets also take a moment to think of those who's employment was terminated due to restructuring layoffs.

I would also like to take a moment to remind everyone about the Unifor Harassment policy , if you haven't read it please do. Remember, we should be all anti-harassment ambassadors in and out of the workplace.

The Children's party was a huge success again this year, sadly I wasn't able to attend due to the CRTC hearings in Ottawa. A special Thanks to all the members and volunteers who make this one of the biggest highlights of the year.

Your Bell Unit is still negotiating a new contract, please see the Bell VP report for more info. I am optimistic for a memorandum of agreement by years end or very early 2019.

The Rogers Collective agreement is now at the printers and should be available for distribution in the following weeks.

Please welcome new Bell Unit Steward Ronda Benjamin to our local. Ronda will be the point person for our members in Agincourt.

The Unifor lobby efforts were a huge success Bell Steward Kat Leonard and myself were invited to the Unifor Ottawa Lobby week in Noember. We were there to engage in open dialogue with our elected Federal Members of Parliament and policymakers in the hopes of finding a practical solution to saving local news.

Together with representatives across Canada we lobbied 85 MP's, including the Finance department, Chief of Liberal Platform Development, and Heritage committee. Together we had 77 meetings in 3.5 days.

The result from this lobby effort was an announcement last month from the liberal government implementing some of our asks.

The following communication is from our National Media Director , and local representative , Howard Law:

***Brothers and Sisters,***

***By now you have no doubt heard about the crowning success in our three-year campaign to #savelocalnews. The details of the estimated \$595 million federal aid package for news organizations are listed below.***

***The Libs took three of our five pre-budget requests and implemented them. First, there will be a labour tax credit for legitimate news organizations to provide original reporting. Second, the tax code will be changed to allow non-profit news organizations (including "non profit wings" of for-profit newspapers, like the Star's Atkinson Foundation) to issue tax receipts to donors. Third, there will be a temporary 15% digital subscription tax credit. Altogether it's worth \$595 million over five years according to the government's numbers.***

***There's lots of work left to do (not the least of which is to ensure that the \$595 is properly administered).***

***Alas, the two pre-budget recommendations Unifor made to help local television did not make the cut. The top priority was #closethe loophole, an update to the tax code to stop favouring the Silicon Valley giants siphoning away our digital advertising revenues.***

***The other recommendation was that government "top up" the declining Independent Local TV News Fund, as it already has done for the national film fund, CMF.***

***Nevertheless in my opinion our glass is half full. We have done a lot for newspapers (there is no silver bullet of course), and now there is more work to do on media issues in the run up to the federal election. More on that later!***

***We should all bask in the victory together. We discovered that political action gets results. We must not rest on our laurels, we must keep the momentum.***

***As a final point, it seems our success in #savelocalnews presents an opportunity for right-wing politicians to keep up their attack on journalists by attacking Unifor. May I recommend my latest blog as a two-minute read:***

***<https://www.uniformedia.ca/single-post/2018/11/23/Take-this-Media-Bias-Quiz>***

Your local will continue to work with and support the National Media Action Plan (MAP) Committee in our collective effort to Save Local News.

Howard Law and I were in Ottawa last month to appear at the CRTC Public Hearings on applications for a National , Multilingual, television service. There are 8 applicants for this 9(1)H ( mandatory distribution) licence , currently held by Rogers' OMNI , Bell is among the new applicants for this special Licence . Unifor is asking the CRTC to enforce very strict conditions of licence on this 9(1)h undertaking. The key points from our intervention centered around fair wages and no contracting out of work, i.e., all production should be produced in-house by our members. Quality Journalism and programming is essential to our democracy and should not be watered down or outsourced to the lowest bidder.

We expect the CRTC decision to be announced sometime in mid 2019.

Your local sent 5 elected representatives from the general membership, one observer and your president to the Unifor Ontario council in Late November. Please see attached reports for more information.

Your Local 723m Trustees and New stewards have now completed all necessary training. Trustees will be submitting reports to the membership after their first local audit in the new year.

We have a few members telling us that Unifor is sending too many emails. Please note that not all the email is sent from your local , some is from the National Union. I would urge you to read all communication as it is all pertinent to our collective voice.

Lastly, I would like to wish each and every one of you a very Happy Holiday season and Best Wishes for next year, Please be safe !

**Please see the VP, Treasurer, and committee reports for more detailed Local 723m information.**

**A reminder to check our local website for News and updates . [unifor723m.org](http://unifor723m.org), follow us on Twitter @unifor723m**

**It is also of importance to monitor the Media Action Plan, [mediaactionplan.ca](http://mediaactionplan.ca), follow on Twitter, @MAP\_ Canada**

**In Solidarity , Angelo Contarin**