

# THE FREE PRESSING NEWS

OCTOBER 13, 2002 ISSUE - WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, CANADA



## DON'T FORGET BENEFITS!

Once again, it's really, really important to rush those benefit claims into the mail. You only have until October 15 to send in drug, dental, and other medical claims before the Company cuts you off.

If you don't have forms, you can download them online from Sun Life at [www.sunlife.ca/member](http://www.sunlife.ca/member). Enter your access ID and PIN. If you don't know those numbers, look at your latest claims statement.

## CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF THAT PICKET LINE?

Although all striking Free Press employees have Thanksgiving Monday off, some of you have expressed interest in picketing on the holiday.

By all means, go ahead. There's a volunteer sign-up sheet at strike headquarters. Enjoy the holiday, please refrain from hunting any turkeys in the parking lot.

## SCAB UPDATE

## EVERYBODY'S TALKING!

It's too early to break out that bottle of Baby Duck, but we have a lot of good news to share.

In short, we're back at the negotiating table.

On Friday, CEP local president-type-guy Paul McKie called up Freep majority owner Ron Stern in Vancouver and spoke for 15 minutes about ways to get talks back on track. Stern, who's always a polite dude, was very receptive to an off-the-record meeting that had nothing to do with specific bargaining proposals. (Just to make this doubly clear: We did not cut a deal, bargaining proposals were not on the table and Bill Clinton did not have sexual relations with that woman.)

The next day, the joint CEP and GCIU council bought plane tickets for CEP local rep Adolph Setek and GCIU local pres John Webster and sent our people off to Vancouver for a personal audience with Stern and negotiator guy Milton Christiansen. Also present at the meeting: CEP western regional VP Dave Coles and GCIU international rep Allan Tate.

Their session went on for several hours on Saturday afternoon. It ended with much hugging and kissing.

To our knowledge, only one regular freelancer has filed copy during the strike. We don't want to mention any names, but if you're on good terms with anyone else considering such a boneheaded move, you may want to offer them some friendly advice.



*Roasting hotdogs on the picket line -- over the burning barrel.*

### **WARM WISHES FROM HOGTOWN**

On Friday, the striking Free Press employees received these warm wishes from Katie FitzRandolph, a communications officer with the Ontario Public Service Employees Union: "As a long ago secretary, treasurer, VP (I forgot the order) and member of the organizing committee at the Freep in the early '70s, I say get the b\*\*\*\*\*s. The Freep has always been a tough employer. Congratulations on taking a stand and good luck in the struggle. Well Done."

### **REMEMBER: NEW PICKET SHIFTS ON TUESDAY**

Try to contain your excitement, but you're about to "work" new hours.

Picket shifts will be reduced from six hours each to four hours, starting on Tuesday (which begins one minute after Monday midnight.)

Again, the new shifts are as follows:

- midnight to 4 am
- 4 am to 8 am
- 8 am to noon
- noon to 4 pm
- 4 pm to 8 pm

Well, not quite, but both sides shook hands and agreed to resume bargaining Monday, Oct. 14 at 9 a.m.

### ***So what does this mean?***

Right now, nothing. The strike is still on and Thanksgiving continues to be more of a holiday than any of us expected. While the resumption of talks -- and the cordial demeanour of our owners -- have given us reason for optimism, nobody should assume they'll be back at work on Tuesday morning or any time soon.

In other words, while we have good news, don't buy that new Jaguar yet. These people may be polite, but they are tough customers. Assume the worst, and you'll never be disappointed.

### **MORE GOOD NEWS**

Weapons inspectors are on their way to Iraq.

### **SIGN, SIGN, EVERYWHERE A SIGN -- EXCEPT ON THE FREE PRESS BUILDING**

OK, now that we're back at the negotiating table, the least we could do is take it easy on the company's Ps and Rs. We've already asked you not to vandalize the Free Press sign. Now, we'd like to take it to the next level by returning any letters you may have stolen.

This plea has been brought to you by the letters I, E and P. Their eventual return will be appreciated by \_udy \_edekop, \_on \_tern and \_ob \_ilver.

- 8 pm to midnight

## **TWO THUMBS UP FROM GRAPES**

So we went to a labour dispute and a hockey game broke out.

Early Sunday morning, our little stretch of Mountain Avenue was transformed into the Trudy North Centre as those wacky guys on the midnight to 6 a.m. shift celebrated our national game. This game of street hockey was just the latest way strikers on the line have turned what could have been The World's Most Boring Pursuit -- picketing -- into something almost enjoyable.

Other morale boosters included a Saturday afternoon Trivial Pursuit game and Sunday morning's football toss.

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## **WHOA THERE! ENOUGH WITH THE RUMOURS!**

While everybody on the line has been amazing, there is a tendency for some people to get a little carried away when it comes to disseminating information. To be more blunt, there are some pretty wacky rumours and bizarre theories floating around about management moves (i.e. Saturday's scab paper scare), union policies and UFO sightings. Please be aware that negativity is infectious. If you have any questions about the state of negotiations, please ask your strike captain or yell at the nearest union rep.

## **COP REPORTER DOFFS IT**

Friendly Free Press police reporter Bruce Owen went to Saturday's Bomber Game wearing his CEP gang colours -- a strike bib with -- "Free Press -- no talks, no paper" -- scrawled into the margins.

At halftime, Owen was approached by a Winnipeg Enterprises security guard, who asked Bruce to remove his sign. Owen complied, but there is some good news: The WEC security guy was kind enough to tell him the complaint about his strike jersey came straight from his boss.

## **SOLIDARITY!**