

# Forging Ahead

Mahle Labour Adjustment Newsletter



## Plant closure is effective October 3rd, 2008

A very sad day indeed. I think that most of us realized that we probably had no future under Siemens. So there was some optimism when Mahle took over in the summer of 2007. However, those hopes were soon dashed when they announced their intention to close the plant by the end of 2008. This they told us on September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007.

We are now in a position where we have to make changes to our lives and move forward. These changes are sometimes difficult to make but none the less we must keep a positive frame of mind and move on with the rest of our lives.

At the time of writing we have planned in-plant sessions with the remaining employees to let them know what services can be provided for them at the Labour Adjustment Centre that will assist them in their time of transition. These sessions will take place on September

25<sup>th</sup>. Information sessions with the Assessment Centre have been scheduled in-plant for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of October. The sessions with the Assessment Centre were negotiated by the Committee in the Closure Agreement and will be paid for by Mahle.

There is another new provincial government



initiative which may be of interest to some of you. It is called the "Second Career Strategy". It provides assistance to workers who have been laid off for up to one year where they require training to gain employment in high demand

occupations. There are some qualifying criteria so please contact us here for more information.

As some of you will have seen this is the first edition of the newsletter which has been sent out, at least partially, by e-mail. We would like to see an increase in the number sent out by e-mail in the coming months. So please send us an e-mail to:

[mahle@labouradjustment.com](mailto:mahle@labouradjustment.com)

We will add your e-mail address to the list which will allow us to contact you more quickly. This could be for any number of reasons, an update on pensions, changes to EI or new training funding and new jobs as we become aware of them.

One final note. Please make sure to get out and make your vote count in the upcoming Federal Election on October 14<sup>th</sup>.

## Darlene Malcolm speaks out at "Boot" Rally



Over 400 workers participated in a mass rally on Monday, September 22, outside the Riding Office of Jeff Watson, MP for Essex and Conservative Party candidate in the October 14th Federal Election.

Darlene spoke frankly and passionately

about her own difficulties as a result of her plant closing. She spoke, not just for herself, but for all displaced workers in Windsor and Essex County whose lives have been thrown into turmoil. "*Our town is bleeding, we need jobs!*" she emphasized.

Her remarks were echoed by other speakers at the rally. The "boot" campaign aims at portraying the gravity of the loss of manufacturing jobs in Canada. Each boot had a small note attached, many of them written by workers who have lost their jobs.

## To all of you reading this... This is my story

Right out of High School and into a Mold Making Apprenticeship; that was the route I took. At that time it was a "can't miss opportunity". They are crying for skilled labour we were told. After ten years the bottom began to fall out on the industry and a few years later, my mold making career came to an abrupt end. I was at home asleep when my wife called at noon and told me I did not have a job anymore. I was working midnights. The announcement came at about 10:00 am. The big question was now what?

If you have never read "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People", the first habit that is discussed is: Be Proactive. I lost my job when Hallmark Tools went bankrupt. I

spent the next summer **being proactive** and looking at other opportunities. I was able to use the resources of the Hallmark Labour Adjustment Committee as well as this Composite Committee to help lead me in a new direction. I have moved into financial services; one of the fastest growing sectors along with Health Care. With the local economy struggling and people (myself included) having to make big changes to their lifestyle, smart financial planning is of the utmost importance. I was able to get involved with a Canadian company doing incredible things for middle income families. I have written and passed the Provincial exam for my Insurance and Investments License and moving forward

in my new career.

Smart financial planning does not only take into account the future, but the present as well. These lifestyle changes are happening RIGHT NOW and with little or no warning. I am letting you know that a FREE, NO OBLIGATION second opinion to help you NOW and in the future is available. Taking a few minutes to find out what options are available to you is easier to deal with than the sudden loss of employment. Believe me I know.

If you would like to find out more information about any opportunities, feel free to call me. 519-981-509

**Michael Beaduoin** Former displaced worker.

# Ask Sue: EMPLOYMENT QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

*Frequently I hear the same questions over and over. Maybe my answers will be of interest. If you have a question that you wish to see answered in this space feel free to call your Labour Adjustment Committee representative and submit your question.*

**QUESTION:** I have had frequent lay offs from my job but I still get a few weeks work here and there. Since I am fairly high on the seniority list should I consider retraining?

**ANSWER:** Retraining could still be a very good option for some people. Some collective agreements include a clause that allows for "Educational Leave". Still others allow for a shift preference when in school that allows you to work and go to school too. I will separate the answers for these two possibilities.

## 1. Educational Leave:

This option gives you the greatest freedom to make your retraining goals realistic and achievable. There is a big "BUT" to consider in this option. It will be very important on how your collective agreement is worded and how it is interpreted by both the union and the company. A good working relationship between your union and company can make a critical difference here. Be sure to talk to

your union representative to ensure you understand how this would affect your plans to return to school. You will need to ensure that your agreement removes the obligation to accept short recall terms to work while you are in school. As long as you feel you are able to get by financially on your Employment Insurance benefits for the duration of your course then this should work for you. You are allowed to work part time up to 19 hours per week while on an EI sponsored course (your company may not want you to work elsewhere or offer these limited hours of work themselves during this educational leave). If you are in receipt of Employment Insurance you will need to obtain approval for funding (tuition and living allowance) prior to starting your full time course. There is a referral process in place through your peer counsellors at the Community Labour Adjustment Services office or you can apply directly.

## Invest Career Counselling Centre

1410 Ouellette Ave.  
Phone: (519) 971-9698  
Windsor, ON N8X 5B2

215 Talbot St. East  
Phone: (519) 326-9657  
Leamington, ON N8H 3X5

Part time courses are not funded for tuition. It is still wise to seek a formal approval from Employment Insurance to ensure that his does not impact negatively on your benefits. This can be done by completing a "Training Course Questionnaire" from the office where you apply for Employment Insurance.

## 2. Shift Preference:

This option takes a great deal of personal discipline. I'm sure many of you will know some of your own coworkers who have done this to attend part time courses varying from short term certificate courses to on-going university education. To take a full time course while working full time is even harder.

Only you can determine if this is something you can make happen. A supportive family that understands your commitment to improving your skills is essential. Since you are working full time there is also no funding available to pay tuition unless your earnings are so low that you would qualify for an OSAP loan.

Applications can be obtained through the registrar's office at the school you expect to attend.

## Sunshine and warm weather helped raise spirits at our Community BBQ

For those of you who could not attend the BBQ. Ryan, our face painter, was going strong. If you went upstairs, the kids' had a playroom with goodie bags and toys. There was lots of food for everyone.

Service providers, Net Success and CDS, that we deal with directly in the city,

joined the event. Our Chairperson, **John Toth**, MCTU advisor, **Jim Perry**, Coordinators **Max Nimmo** and **Darlene Malcolm** Pitched in to help. As well, we were assisted by peer helpers of the CLAS and Mahle Committees. The event allowed people to see what the center has to offer, and also allowed some social



interaction with brothers and sisters who are in much the same boat as many. If you need our help do not hesitate to call us or email us so that we may serve you better.

## Union Vision Centre

### Why Pay For An Eye Exam? When you can get it for free!

With any complete pair of eyeglasses purchased there, you will receive a \$65.00 rebate for your eye exam. (Applies only to people who have to pay for their eye exams. A receipt is required)

If you arrange your eye exam with them they guarantee **100%** recovery of your cost.

See store for details or call them.

### Union Vision Centre

573 Tecumseh Rd. E., Windsor  
519-977-1164

## Petition on EI Reform

Please come in and sign this petition as it will benefit all of us. This petition is requesting Parliament to build a fairer and more balanced EI system. The reforms requested are 360 hours to qualify for entry level benefits in all areas of Canada. Benefits to be set at 60% of normal earnings based on best 12 weeks, with no allocation of severance pay and an increase in the duration of benefits to a maximum of 50 weeks. Please if you have not been to the center for a while, do come in and sign this petition, as it will soon go before the House Of Commons.

## MAHLE ADJUSTMENT COMMITTEE

### CHAIRPERSON

**John Toth**

### COORDINATOR

**Max Nimmo**

### EMPLOYMENT COUNSELOR

**Sue Kelsh**

### PEER COUNSELORS

**Bonnie Palazzolo**

**Richard Hart**

**Fred Barkhouse**

**Sara-Jane Coates**

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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