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**NORTHSTAR PROTESTS ESCALATE**

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# uniforum



Unifor retirees participate in the Labour Day parade in Port Elgin, ON

## Retirees stay active

The role of retirees in Unifor is growing, with new Retired Workers Chapters formed or in the works across Canada, Unifor's annual Retired Workers Council heard.

"Let's keep growing this," Council Chair Les McDonald said in his report to the council. "My hope is to see new chapters formed across the country."

Council was held the week of Labour Day and included marching in the Port Elgin Labour Day parade. The parade was coordinated with the Grey Bruce Labour Council, and included the Power Workers Union, teacher's unions, the SEIU and other unions and community groups. All were invited to the Family Education Centre for a post-parade barbeque.

"We really want this to be a community event," said Barb Dolan, Retired Workers Director.

It was a busy week for those attending the council, which opened the night

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## Unifor celebrates workers' power

To celebrate the power of workers Unifor members participated in exciting community events with their union family on Labour Day.

In Toronto, Bob Orr, National Secretary-Treasurer, and Naureen Rizvi, Ontario Regional

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## Labour rights top of the agenda at NAFTA

Unifor strongly advocated for labour rights during round two of North American Free Trade Agreement renegotiations in Mexico City and brought workers issues to the forefront.

"Our union forced discussion of labour rights with the NAFTA negotiating teams and their respective governments,

with international media, and with Mexican workers," said National President Jerry Dias. "We have made it clear that Unifor will oppose any deal that allows multi-national corporations to continue to pay workers poverty wages."

Dias led a Unifor delegation that included Quebec Director Renaud Gagné and the Directors of

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## Navistar celebration carries pension message

After eight years of struggle and repeated court challenges, retirees from the Chatham Navistar plant marked their ultimate victories for pensions and severances with a family barbeque on August 26.

"This is a celebration, but it's also a message that if you mess with pensions, you are in for a fight," said National President Jerry Dias.

Locals 35 and 127 fought for severance and pension entitlements for 700 Navistar workers. The company refused to pay severance required under Ontario law until an arbitrated decision awarded the outstanding payments. An earlier court decision awarded pension entitlements.

To learn more visit [unifor.org/navistar](http://unifor.org/navistar).



**Uniforum** is published by Unifor, Canada's largest union in the private sector.

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## Unifor steps up fight for Northstar retirees

During the first week of September Unifor brought the call for Northstar Aerospace to fully fund the pension plan to the company's doorsteps, with two actions over the course of two days.

After the union held an occupation at the Milton plant in August, the company has taken aggressive action towards Unifor and members of Local 112. Three workers were terminated, three others suspended, and Northstar has attempted to restrict workers ability to access their elected union representatives. It has also erected two seven-foot fences around the plant and installed 24-hour security guards.

"There are no fences and no security firms big enough



to keep us from fighting for justice for these workers," National President Jerry Dias told more than 200 people at an afternoon rally on September 7.

As further evidence of Northstar's attempt to bully and suppress dissent, the President of the Ontario Federation of Labour Chris Buckley received a letter from lawyers warning him about speaking at the rally.

The rally took place one day after a demonstration outside Northstar's private equity firm, Wynnchurch Capital

in the heart of the Toronto's Financial District.

As a profitable company, Northstar can easily afford to top up the pension to prevent a 24 per cent cut, which amounts to a monthly reduction of \$211 for retirees, but it is choosing not to do so.

Ontario Regional Director Naureen Rizvi who MC'ed the rally pledged Unifor's continued support for Northstar workers and retirees. "We are all with you. This fight is not over. It's just starting," Rizvi said.

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Director, led hundreds of members and labour leaders in the parade.

"We fight for fair trade policies that don't leave workers behind," said Orr. "We come together to recognize the contribution that we have all made and look forward to what lies ahead."

Events across the country echoed the call for good jobs, fair trade, ending hate, and strengthening public services, as the Canadian Labour Congress' campaign for universal drug coverage for all Canadians was launched.

At the Unifor event in Surrey, BC, Premier John Horgan recommitted to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour in



Marchers proudly carry the Unifor banner in the Toronto Labour Day Parade

the province. Western Regional Director Joie Warnock joined members and families to march in Regina, Saskatchewan, while Atlantic Regional Director Lana Payne joined celebrations in Nakawick, New Brunswick. As members nationwide celebrated the community that is created through

Unifor.

In Toronto, Rizvi summed up, "Every year we talk about our victories and our commitment to the fight. I can't wait until next year when we're able to say again that we won."

View Labour Day photos at [Facebook.com/UniforCanada](https://www.facebook.com/UniforCanada)

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before Labour Day and concluded the Friday after. Resolutions passed included support for a national pharmacare program, stronger pensions, and the push for trade deals that put working people first.

Atlantic Regional Director Lana Payne said retirees will play a key role in the political campaigns of the union, especially on files such as pharmacare and pensions in which their own life experiences will help illustrate the need for reform.

“Your voices, your stories, your activism will drive this forward,” she said.

There was also a presentation from Clara Fitzgerald, Director of

the Canadian Centre for Activity and Aging at Western University, on the importance of remaining active in retirement. It was a message many in attendance welcomed.

Jenny Ahn, Assistant to the National Secretary-Treasurer, was also on hand to address Council delegates. Ahn outlined many of the issues in which retirees can add their voices to, including trade, Indigenous issues, equity, freedom of the press, workers’ rights and more. “You get it. You know why the political work of our union is so important and I want to thank you for everything that you do,” she said.

The Council elected a new executive: Les McDonald Local 222,



Delegates at the Retired Workers Council discuss social and political action on pharmacare, fair trade deals and stronger pensions

Chair; Roger Lee Local 1451, Vice-Chair; Jean Simpson Local 1520, Secretary; and Gary Parent Local 444, Sandy Carricato Local 1090, Michel Thibault Local 698,

Brian McDonald Local 598, Dave McDonnell Local 10-B, Tony Sisti Local 1973 and Maria Pinto Local 673, Members-at-Large.

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Unifor’s Human Rights and International and Research departments.

On September 1, Dias spoke directly to thousands of Mexican workers at a labour rally.

“Donald Trump talks of building a wall. We do not need a wall, we need a bridge,” Dias told the cheering crowd. “NAFTA has hurt workers in all three countries and we must work together to right past wrongs.”

The delegation also attended the Los Mineros annual conference, where Dias called on the Mexican government to publicly state that the union’s President Napoleón Gómez Urrutia can end his exile in Canada and return home.

Safety concerns are a reality for many

Mexican labour leaders as they oppose so-called “yellow” unions that operate under corporate control, unchecked by the government.

“The legitimate labour movement is battling to wrestle back worker’s power from corporations and corporate unions, and for government enforcement of labour laws,” said Quebec Director Renaud Gagné. “The inclusion of improved labour rights in the new NAFTA will aid in that fight.”

While in Mexico Unifor also continued its role as advisor to the Canadian NAFTA negotiation team, a role it will resume during the next talks scheduled for Ottawa on September 23-27.

For more information visit [unifor.org/NAFTA](http://unifor.org/NAFTA).

## Stay informed with UniLINK

Unifor is an active and political union. From organizing to bargaining to political action, members push for change every single day. Our union is more active than ever, so we’re improving how we communicate with members.

This bi-weekly Uniforum newsletter is being discontinued and replaced with two new publications, a quarterly magazine that will be mailed directly to households and a new electronic member newsletter, with even more stories.

The hard copy print magazine, launched at Canadian Council, will continue to be known as Uniforum and takes an in-depth look at the issues

facing Unifor members in the workplace and in our communities.

To engage every member the new UniLINK e-newsletter, will provide up to date briefs on the latest Unifor news.

The transition to prioritizing email-based communication for every member means that it’s more important than ever to have up-to-date membership lists and to send those lists to the national office at [communications@unifor.org](mailto:communications@unifor.org).

To keep members informed and to receive Unifor communication tools simply subscribe online at [unifor.org/subscribe](http://unifor.org/subscribe).



**IN THIS ISSUE** Unifor demands labour rights at NAFTA renegotiations in Mexico. Members join their union family at Labour Day celebrations across the country. Northstar protests escalate to protect pensions. Unifor retirees work to expand Chapters and more in the final edition of Uniforum - the newsletter!

## Unifor solidarity pact with U.S. union

On August 29, several Unifor elected representatives travelled to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania for the 75th national convention of the United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America (UE).

At the conclusion of the convention, Unifor and UE signed a cooperation agreement to “change and renew the North American labour movement, based on shared values and commitment to aggressive struggle, equity, and political independence.”

By this Agreement, the UE and Unifor declared their solidarity and pledged a working relationship, one that is rooted in social

unionism.

“The best way to make progress for working people is to link our bargaining demands to demands for social progress,” said Jerry Dias, National President. “When we stand against racism and with women, immigrants, refugees and our LGBTQ communities we can make a difference.”

The project commits the two unions to a working relationship to reverse decades of decline in union density and to organize working people. Equity, democracy, and militancy formed the core principles of future solidarity actions.

“On both sides of the border, working people are



under attack from greedy corporations hell-bent on suppressing wages and rights at work,” said Joie Warnock, Western Regional Director, who was present at the convention. “Unifor’s 2017 Canadian Council resolved to make a better world through solidarity. Building bridges

with militant unions that share our goals is one way to make good on that commitment.”

Based in Pittsburgh, UE represents over 35,000 workers in a variety of manufacturing, public sector, and private non-profit jobs in the U.S.