

# YOU **UNION** JR

**Local 480**



**Trail, B. C.**

November 2017

VOL. 45 No. 5

## IWL Food Drive

Its that time of year again when Trail Operations employees can make the season brighter for those less fortunate. Inspiring Wellness and Learning will be holding their annual food drive beginning December 1st and running until noon on December 15th. We will deliver the collected food to the Salvation Army Food Bank on the afternoon of the 15th. Look for all the nicely wrapped boxes at the entrances to the change rooms as well as the Local 480 Hall, the Trail Ops Building and the Trail Admin building.

Last year the donations were down a bit so lets fill those boxes and help us donate a "ton of food" to the local food bank.



## **LOCAL 480**

### **MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**3:45 P.M. THURS. November 16/2017**

#### **Agenda to include:**

- ◆ Annual Christmas Extended Care Dinner
- ◆ Benefits Coordinator Posting
- ◆ Christmas Open House

# We are Online and Live!



[www.facebook.com/usw480](http://www.facebook.com/usw480)

You can also find us at: [uswlocal480](http://uswlocal480)—UnityisStrength

## YOUR UNION

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The editors reserve the right to edit any or all material submitted



“Your Union” is a member of the United Steelworkers Press Association and abides by the constitution of the organization

Check our website for Local 480 merchandise!  
 All items are proudly union made!

## Quote of the Day

There are folks out there who say, ‘it doesn’t impact me, I’m not a union guy, I’m not a teacher, I’m not a civil servant.’

Let me tell you how it *does* matter to you.

Wages are going down in this country for *everybody*.

When you destroy UNIONS there will be no standard at all, nobody left to negotiate decent jobs for the middle class.

U.S. Senator  
 Bernie Sanders (I-VT)

unions4workers LIVE BETTER. WORK UNION.

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# President's Report

Armindo deMedieros, President



## Presidents Meeting, and Other Union Issues

Brothers and Sisters,

The past couple of weeks have been very busy as we've had a lot going on.

In September, I along with your Vice President, Brian Onyschak, attended the District 3 President's meeting in Burnaby, and also took part in a Law Conference on Worker's Rights and New Arbitration Cases, which was put on by Victory Square Law Firm.

In attendance at the Presidents meeting were 27 President's from different USW locals throughout BC. Some of the topics discussed were the Steelworkers International Elections where the slate of Leo Girard for International President, Ken Newmann for Canadian National Director, and Steve Hunt for District 3 Director, were endorsed. Local 480 supported all three candidates and since then all three were elected by acclamation. Congrats to all 3.

Other items for discussion on the agenda were the BC Wildfires, where \$100,000.00 was donated through the Steelworkers Humanity Fund to help battle the fires. Another hot top-

ic was the proposed legislative changes prohibiting Union to contribute to Political Parties. In the last Provincial Elections, the Steelworkers contributed ¾ million dollars to the NDP.

Other discussions also took place regarding the child-care and renters rebate which have yet to be legislated and did not show up in the latest government budget presentations. Let's see if they keep their election promises.

Another issue worth mentioning is the Hecla Miner's strike. Our Brothers and Sisters of USW Local 5114 have been on strike since March 2017 fighting to keep vacation allotments, recall rights, and Healthcare changes. At present, they still walk the picket lines and there doesn't look like there will be a settlement in the near future. We have been in close contact with our American Brothers and Sisters of Local 5114 and as Christmas fast approaches us, were hoping we'll be able to do something for them.

Members of USW, Local 5114 at Hecla's Lucky Friday Mine in Mullan, Idaho, supply

Lead and Zinc concentrate to the Smelter here.

On the local scene, grievances are building up and terminations are at the top of the list. We have also finalized some lingering issues from bargaining, finalized proof reading all the language and updates to the SunLife Benefit Booklet. The new 2017 – 2022 Collective Agreement is at the printers getting done up and hopefully before the end of this year we will have copies at the Union Hall.

Again I must say that we as a bargaining committee were very pleased with the membership turnout, both for the Strike Vote and the Ratification Vote. It gave us, as a committee, a sense as to where this membership stood and to the Company that we had your support.

The process of Collective Bargaining is always a challenge and changes from year to year. Whether you voted for or against, in the end this contract was good for the Membership. It is always nice to get more in wages, but we should also realize that the benefits gained are big gains to our lives. I under-

*Continued on next page*

stand some were disappointed, unfortunately as a Union we are not always able to please everyone.

Earlier this month, Jeff Schuepfer, your Benefits Coordinator, organized an Estate Planning session here at the Hall through Financial Advisors. The turnout for this was poor and I'd like to thank all those that did make time to come down to the Hall and sit in on the presentation.

Much of what we do today is to improve our future financial position. As with anything, we can get better results by following a plan. That is why both Estate Planning and Financial Planning are important to your well-being and important for those who want a better tomorrow for our families. Hopefully next time Jeff organizes a similar presentation, we all support him by turning out.

In closing, I remind everyone of two great events coming up, December 7<sup>th</sup> will be our Annual Christmas Extended Care Dinner and December 9<sup>th</sup>, our Kids Christmas Party. Volunteers are needed for both events, please call the Hall and sign up.

In solidarity  
President deMedeiros

## JEWELRY BOX RAFFLE

DRAW DATE: Wednesday, Dec 20<sup>th</sup>

@ the LOCAL 480 HALL

COST: \$2.00 each or 3 for \$5.00



**ALL PROCEEDS GO TO: THE GORDY STEEP  
SICK CHILDREN'S MEMORIAL FUND**

*JEWELRY BOX KINDLY MADE AND DONATED BY CHUCK MACKLON*

# Benefits Co-ordinator Report

Jeff Schuepfer, Benefits Co-ordinator

## Taking Advantage of Your Union Benefits

### SETTING UP YOUR SUN LIFE ACCOUNT/ONLINE CLAIMS

Brothers and sisters,

Since the ratification and signing of our new collective agreement there have been changes to our benefit plan that includes filing online claims. I have had a number of members making an appointment to come down to my office and go through the procedure so to understand on how to file an online claim. What I am finding out is that certain members are not even set up to file an online claim as you need an ID number (given to you from Sun Life) and to set up a password. Once this is done not only can you file an online claim you can view your personal and your dependants information including recent claims for benefits, amount you are reimbursed, your benefit coverage, print your drug card etc.

If you are not set up to do online claims or you are set up but do not know to submit a claim what I recommend is for the member to call the Union Hall (250-368-9131) and talk to myself Jeff Schuepfer, the Benefits Coordinator and we can set up an appointment to get you set up and or run through the process of submitting an online claim.

### HEALTHY LIFESTYLE ACCOUNT

On October 27<sup>th</sup> the Company sent out an email regarding

Sun Life and the Healthy Lifestyle Account. It appears Sun Life was having technical issues with showing the balance of our member's Healthy Lifestyle Account. On November 2<sup>nd</sup> the issue was resolved and you are now able to view the balance of your Healthy Lifestyle Account. To do this sign into the Sun Life website (ID number and your password) click "sign in". Once there, you will notice the words Benefit Centre on the right hand side of the page, click on that and you will be able to view the balance of your Healthy Lifestyle Account (will appear as Personal Spending Account). Because the \$300 is a taxable benefit you will have to pay taxes, again from the item purchased and will be able to view the amount of tax paid on your future bi-weekly paystub. Thank the government for being taxed twice!!!!

Another issue with the Healthy Lifestyle Account that needs to be resolved is that Sun Life does not have the Healthy Lifestyle Account form online and I have been told it will not be online till sometime in December. In the meantime the Healthy Lifetime Account forms are at the Union Hall, in payroll and on the Tadanet under Departments & Groups > Benefit Plans > Healthy Lifestyles Account ( Personal Spending Account ) > Filled Claim form.



In addition, the Healthy Lifestyle Account has a different policy number from our extended health, dental and vision care. This means that if you currently do not have direct deposit set up but now want direct deposit into your financial account you must set that banking information under each policy number. The Healthy Lifestyle policy number # 151049 and our extended health policy # 150039. Remember the Healthy Lifestyle benefit runs annually from June 1<sup>st</sup> – May 31<sup>st</sup>. Again, if any member needs assistance to set this up please call me at the Union Hall to make an appointment.

### ESTATE SEMINARS

On Thursday, October 27<sup>th</sup> I ran two free estate planning seminars (3:30pm and 6:00pm) facilitated by John Merlo and Holly Pender-Love. Topics and handouts included Writing your Will, Power of Attorney, Executors and Estate Planning. I am looking at running another seminar on this topic in the New Year. If any Local 480, 9705 members along with their partner are interested in attending another seminar please let me know by calling me at the Union Hall at 250-368-9131 or emailing me at benefits1@usw480.com.

In Solidarity,  
Brother Schuepfer.

LOCAL'S 480 & 9705  
CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

Once again, Local's 480 & 9705 will be hosting a children's Christmas party. There will be food & refreshments provided, entertainment, and a visit from Santa to hand out gifts to everyone that has registered and under the age of 12!

AGES 0 - 12 yrs  
SAT., DEC. 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
COMINCO GYM



**\*\* Please register, by emailing your children's names, ages, & your Union (480/9705) to Jo-Lynne at [jo-lynn@usw480.com](mailto:jo-lynn@usw480.com) no later than, December 1<sup>st</sup> \*\***

LOCAL'S  
480 & 9705  
OPEN HOUSE

Friday, December 15<sup>th</sup>  
3:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Please come and join us at the Union  
Hall for snacks & refreshments

*Everyone is welcome!*

*Non-perishable food items  
are appreciated...*





## Health & Safety Committee

Steve Como, Safety Chairman

### Winter Has Arrived

Winter has arrived which is great for skiers and snowmobiler's, not so great for traveling, walking, or shoveling the white stuff.

Severe winter conditions make it near impossible to keep up with road conditions and sidewalks.

Our crews, both property wide, as well as, plant specific work very hard to try to keep up with winter conditions to provide a safe access. I ask that we check to make sure we have sand and salt readily available for the icy areas around our plants.

Also make sure we have the proper foot wear and please watch your footing. Travel on routes that have been plowed and sanded. Don't leave a trap

by not addressing a potential slipping hazard. Report all problem areas to your supervisor and follow up to ensure these areas have been addressed. If these hazards are not addresses in a timely fashion please contact us at the Hall.

Here are some tips to avoid slips during the winter months:

- Walk slowly and carefully and wear good winter boots, also remember anti-slip devices are available through the warehouse.
- Be prepared for ice formation after melting occurs.

- Use extra caution when getting in or out of vehicles, a lot of our slips on the Property occur in the parking lots between vehicles.
- Avoid carrying items, keeping hands empty so arms are free for stabilization.

Although we can't change the weather, we can use extra caution to stay safe during the winter months.

In solidarity  
Steve

**SAFETY FIRST!**





## Safety Co-ordinators

Kyle Jorgensen & Chris Vaughan



### Protect Our Workers in A Lead Hazard Environment

Over the last month, your local 480 safety department has been part of a Hazard Risk Assessment in Lead Products. Management in this area, which encompasses Lead North and South, Silver, Alloy, Copper Products, as well as ETP and the new GWTP, has decided that as of Quarter 1 2018 Full face respirators will be mandatory in almost all of these areas with the exception of ETP, GWTP and Copper Products. One of the first statements made in our very first sit down was "This IS happening, we just want you here to address any concerns you may have"

Now first things first, your union safety department is 100 percent on board with lowering blood lead levels of each of our members. We believe that with the help of our workers, more education on keeping your lead levels low, and continuous improvements in these plants we can achieve lower numbers without making every employee in these areas wear a full face respirator for 10 to 12 hours a day. Our concern is that this move is a bit drastic considering that we are already on our way to achieving lower blood lead numbers in these areas, and that with more engineering and

money spent in some problem areas we can continue to see these numbers decline. Remember, in the hierarchy of controls, PPE is the last line of defense. Maybe the addition of a service crew to address the cleanliness (or lack thereof) in the plants would be a good starting point.

With any major change that affects our workers we study and go through all of the inherent hazards associated with a PPE change. Our biggest concern with this drastic move is that it may introduce many other hazards to our workers everyday tasks. In Lead North, our workers already work in a very hot and humid cell house for 6 months out of the year. Some of the hazards that already exist are things like interaction with mobile equipment such as forklifts and overhead cranes (which also introduce an overhead hazard, along with pinch points and dropped objects). That being said, ten to twelve hours a day in one of these introduces quite a few new hazards, fogging up to the point that visibility is poor being one of the largest. Heat exhaustion is another issue, maybe not this time of year but come spring it will rear its ugly head, not to mention the hot 35-40

plus degree days in July and August are a very real concern.

Communication between workers could be another added hazard. While currently if you remove your half face respirator to talk with a fellow worker you are exposing yourself to the contaminants in the plant, you are still protected by your hardhat and safety glasses. With a full face respirator, you no longer have adequate protection from your hardhat or safety glasses. Is this something that we want to gamble with considering we have had many foreign bodies in the eyes in this business area? Management in this area has a lot of faith in the speaking diaphragm to stop this issue but we are not yet sold on it and many of our members that have tried them still remove their PPE to communicate.

If you would like further information about this issue, it is HRA 02135. It affects everyone in these areas and if you have any additional concerns that aren't already addressed please address your managers and make sure they get added. Take your time and be safe!

In Solidarity,  
Kyle and Chris



## Grievance Committee Report

Brian Onyschak, Chairman

### Grievance Committee: Working Hard for Our Membership

In my last article, I mentioned that the Company has terminated two of our members and that we grieved them both.

One member approached us and asked if we would explore a settlement option that would allow him to resign and move on with his life. I am happy to report that we managed to reach an agreement that everyone could accept.

On the other termination we have been busy working with our Legal Department to determine whether we had a chance at succeeding at arbitration. After gathering all the information, we believe strongly that the termination was without merit. We presented some new evidence to the Company to try to reach a settlement and as of the writing of this article we have not heard back from them. If the Company does not agree to our proposal we will be booking dates for arbitration as soon as possible.

Recently we had a member drug tested post incident under the Company Policy. Before the Company is allowed to test, they are supposed to follow the rules of their own policy.

The first thing the Company is supposed to do is remove the worker from the job and not allow them to perform any work until the investigation is complete. They are also supposed to have the worker monitored by a staff person at all times. The Company neglected to follow either of these rules, yet they still insisted on testing our member.

Getting tested for drugs or alcohol is considered one of the most invasive procedures Companies are allowed to do. You would think that they would make sure that all the rules are followed before subjecting anyone to having to provide your bodily fluid's.

One of the reasons they are supposed to remove you from the job and not allow you to perform any other work is SAFETY. If the Company is concerned that you may be under the influence, how can they justify allowing the employee to perform any work.

There should be no EXCUSE or REASON.

I am happy to report that in the circumstance above, the test came back negative. In my opinion though that still doesn't

absolve the Company for allowing this to happen.

A couple of weeks ago I was asked to attend a meeting with Bob White, Superintendent in the Melting Plant. At this meeting we were informed that the Company is seriously considering cancelling the Operator Development Letter. We discussed the issues with the letter and the Company stated that they cannot keep up with the training as outlined in the letter.

They informed us that they discussed this issue amongst themselves and the end result was to cancel the letter. They will have to give us 60 days written notice as per the requirements if they follow through with their decision.

If the Company ultimately decides to serve notice we will make sure that the CBA is followed in regards to seniority, job placement, rate protection and so on

We have a number of Operator Development Letters currently in effect. Unfortunately most of them are outdated and need to be rewritten. In the last set of negotiations the parties

*(Continued on page 11)*

# Entertainment Report

Armindo deMedieros, President

## Christmas Extended Care Dinner

Christmas is just around the corner and once again, Local 480 is planning its Annual Christmas Extended Care Dinner for the residents of our area residential Extended Care Homes. This year the dinner will be held on December 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm at the Trail Memorial Centre.

Everyone agrees this is one of the years more enjoyable event that your Union puts on. Like all other events, this re-

quires the assistance of many volunteers. This involves assisting residents off the buses and walking them to their tables in the gym and then back to the buses at the end of the evening.

We are very fortunate that once again, the City of Trail has generously waived some of the fees for this event. As usual, the Woman's Auxiliary of the Royal Canadian Legion, Trail



Branch will be catering their fabulous full course turkey dinner.

If you are able to lend a hand, please contact myself or Jo-Lynne at the Union Hall. Your assistance would be greatly appreciated and you will be glad you came, you will also get to enjoy the dinner!

In solidarity,  
President Armindo

*(Continued from page 10)*

agreed to meet and decide what letters need to be addressed with a commitment to have this done by June 2018.

Last month I had asked if any Stewards were interested in attending a Shop Steward School this fall. I had only one Steward show interest so far.

I understand that some Shop Stewards do not believe they are being utilized. As a committee we have discussed this at length. There is only so much work to spread around but we have committed to try to involve all of you more. If you want to get more active give me a call or email and I will pass it on to the Chief Steward in your area.

To every Steward on the Property if you would like updates as to what is happening in your area, please don't hesitate to contact your Chief Steward or myself at the Hall. Remember you are the eyes and ears for the Grievance Department and are a very important part of this committee.

In solidarity  
Brian



# Friday Market BBQ's



Left: Steve Como (Local 480 Safety Chair) and Mike Mozak (Local 9705 President) intensely flipping burgers!



Right: Onions sizzle away as the volunteers serve the public delicious union prepared food.



# Spooktacular Market



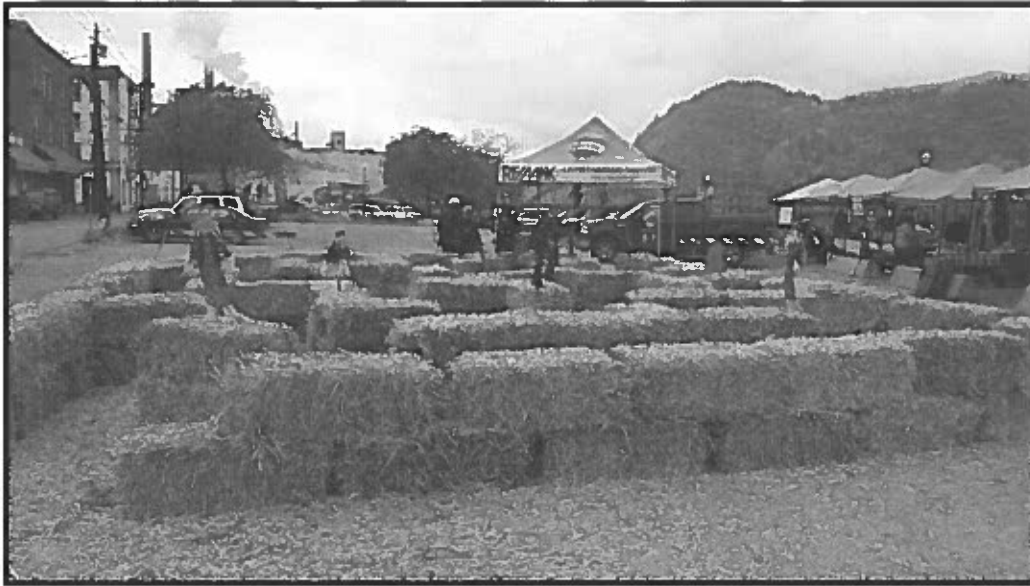
Left: The market was well attended and everyone looked great in their costumes!



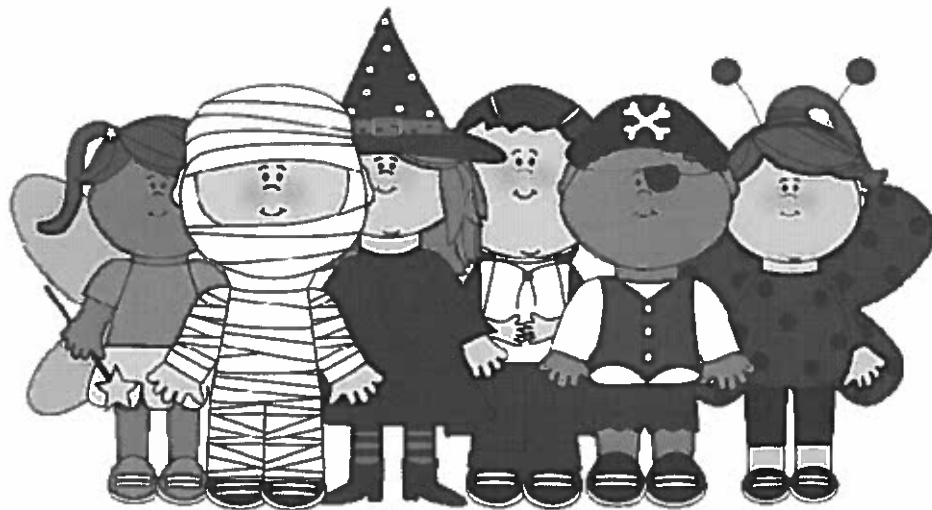
Right: Our volunteers getting things ready to keep all of our friends at the market fed and happy! Thanks to all who volunteered for the markets this year !



# Spooktacular Market Continued



Left: A straw bale maze set up for all the ghouls and ghosts to walk through and enjoy!



Right: Scooby-Doo eagerly waiting for more Scooby Snacks!