

# YOUR UNION

**Local 480**



**Trail, B. C.**

September 2017

VOL. 45 No. 4

## International Elections

Nominations for International Executive will be held on September 21st, 2017 at the Local 480's monthly meeting.

Polling will be held on November 21st, 2017 from 6:30 am- 7:00 pm at the Local 480 Hall, if needed.



**DAMN UNION THUGS!**

If it weren't for them, these kids wouldn't have been out of a job!

Politifake.org

**LOCAL 480**

**MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**3:45 P.M. THURS. September 21/2017**

**Agenda to include:**

- ◆ Summer Update
- ◆ International Executive Nominations

# 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

### EDITORIAL STAFF

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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 were a couple of things that bothered him, like he wouldn't take the stage unless the American flag was flying, and he wouldn't tolerate a show unless the crew running it were

**UNIONIZED.**

Johnny Jameson  
Tour manager for Johnny Cash

**unions4workers** LIVE BETTER. WORK UNION.

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# President's Report

Armindo deMedieros, President

## Thank You for Your Support During Bargaining



First off I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank the Membership for their understanding and support throughout the 2017 round of negotiations. I know that most of the Membership appreciates that the Bargaining Committee puts their lives on hold and of the time and stress that we go through. Thanks to all of those who tried to get a hold of me over the last few months for their patience and understanding. I would also like to thank the Membership for their involvement when needed, resulting in a very high strike vote and ratification vote. That, Brothers and Sisters, sends a strong message for down the road.

This summer has been very hot, not only weather wise, but also under the collar. Bargaining 2017 is over, new contract agreed to and for some, the signing bonus has been spent on a new toy or put away for a rainy day. Personally I'm not a big fan of the signing bonuses and would have rather seen the money put on pensions and wages, which were our two main priorities, yet the Company was content on bumping up the signing bonus to a point where we had no choice but to

accept and recommend the Mediators recommendation.

Although the Company decided to play hardball with us this round of bargaining, your Bargaining Committee believes it achieved a good solid agreement that we could live with. Even though I'm somewhat happy where we ended up at, I'm disappointed in the way we progressed though the bargaining process. The process of collective bargaining is always a challenge and involves different strategies, but personal attacks on certain members of the bargaining committee don't sit well with me.

I thought we had a better working relationship than what I saw at the bargaining table. Through their actions and accusations, I believe our relationship has taken a big step backwards which will make things going forward a bit harder to deal with.

We as a Union have worked hard to maintain a good working relationship and get involved in Company incentives, I don't think we will be so eager to jump into bed with them now. My hope for the future is that the next round of bargaining in 2022, both sides find a different method and ap-

proach to the bargaining process so that they don't have to go through what happened this time around.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge Local 9705 Bargaining Committee for their valuable opinions, District 3 Staff Rep., Dean Lott for his knowledge, patience and guidance, the National Office's Jeff Richardson, for his time away from his family and his knowledge on costs. Also, Jay Walters and the whole CAT Committee for their readiness and being there when needed.

Last but not least, thank you to Jim Hill, Norm Murdoch, and Mike Brace and their committee for arranging voting and meetings when needed, great job to all of you! And to Jo-Lynne Bignell, our Administrative Assistant, for her endless patience with me and being there when needed. If I've missed anyone I apologize, but your efforts didn't go unnoticed and played an important part.

In solidarity,  
President Armindo



## Vice President's Report

Brian Onyschak, Vice President

# Solidarity Works!

With this being the first newspaper since the conclusion of bargaining, I thought I would give my opinion on this set of negotiations.

I have been a member of this local since 1979 and have never been more proud of our Membership. For many of you this was your first set of negotiations. For a majority of others, this was the first time you have had to deal with a strike vote. You passed with flying colors. Thank you.

The support you gave us was remarkable. You stood by your committee from the beginning. Without this show of solidarity, we would not have been able to negotiate the contract we achieved.

I would also like to thank the other members of the committee. We stood together as a

team. We debated some very tough issues but never forgot that we are all in this together. We had to make some very tough decisions and always managed to work through these without taking anything personal. I commend each and every one of you for a job well done.

To everyone else who stepped up to the plate when called upon, thank you! We could not have done this without your support and patience.

In the end we managed to achieve an agreement that we believe was the best we were going to be able to negotiate without job action.

As with every round of bargaining, the Company comes with a list of concessions they hope to achieve. As a committee we fought off a number of these concessions proposed by the

Company, from 11.4 hour shifts, which would have eliminated paid rest days, to stricter rules regarding employee movement, we said NO.

From wanting to cap all para-medical services and dispensing fees, as well as, freeze basic sick leave rates, we said NO.

There were a number of other concessionary proposals the Company hoped to achieve. As a committee we stood firm, and we said NO.

None of this would have been possible without the strength and support of the Membership. I commend all the Sisters and Brothers for staying united. You are the backbone of the Local. Thank you.

In solidarity,  
Brian

### USW Local480 Scholarship Recipients

This years' recipients for the Local 480 scholarship awards for 2017 from J.L. Crowe go to the following students:

**Kendra Waterstreet**  
**Larena Hammond-Mailey**  
**Adam MacKay**  
**Melanie Field**  
**Caitlyn Valliere**

On behalf of Local 480, congratulations to these students!! It was gratifying to see the effort put forward. (Unfortunately there were no applicants from Stanley Humphries, Salmo, or the Kootenay Alternate Learning Centre.)

# Benefits Co-ordinator Report

Jeff Schuepfer, Benefits Co-ordinator

## Additions to Benefits Plan



Brothers and sisters,

I hope everyone had a chance to enjoy some summer holiday time with family or friends over the amazing stretch of hot weather we had, albeit in the month of August the air quality was not the greatest.

As we all know this was a bargaining year for a new contract. I would like to thank Steve Greenwood for sitting in as the Benefits Coordinator during my absences.

I especially want to thank all our members for their cooperation, patience and most importantly, supporting the Bargaining Committee when called upon during the bargaining process. Standing together does work!!!

Since the ratification vote there has been progress on certain bargained increases to our benefit plan, which are retroactive to June 1<sup>st</sup> of 2017, the new additions and increases are as follows:

**1. ONLINE CLAIMS:** Excluding vision care and the Healthy Lifestyle account, online claims are now available on your computer or electronic device of choice. This will enable you to send info on what extended health benefit was provided, for yourself and or any of your dependants, and the amount

charged right away and have your coverage refunded within 1-3 business days by direct deposit into your account. **Please be aware that Sun Life can audit you for payments made to you for up to 12 months.** Keep all original receipts in a folder at home. If you do not have a computer or an electronic device you still can submit the receipt along with the extended health care form to Sun Life.

**2. HEALTHY LIFESTYLE ACCOUNT (WELLNESS ACCOUNT):** This account will hopefully be up and running by the end of the September/early October. If you have purchased an item that is eligible, keep the receipt until your account is up and running. **The calendar year for this account will run from June 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup>.** The eligible expenses for this account are listed below. In addition, bargained was a carry-over feature, so for example, if you or any of your dependants do not make a claim this year the \$300 will carry over to June 1<sup>st</sup> of 2018 and added to the \$300 for a combined amount of \$600. You can only hold onto the carry over amount for 12 months. Once you make a purchase and submit the receipt along with the Healthy Lifestyle form, Sun Life will au-

tomatically begin to use the carry over amount up first. Remember this is a taxable benefit and of course taxes will come off the amount used and members will be able to see this on your paystub. **The employee only receives the \$300.00 amount each year but claims can also be made for any of the employee's dependents.**

Eligible expenses: You can use your Wellness Account to help you pay for the following expenses:

### Fitness-related services

- fitness club memberships.
- registration fees for fitness-related programs or lessons, such as aerobic classes, yoga, dance lessons, figure skating and outdoor survival training.
- sports team memberships and registration fees.
- annual memberships, such as golf.
- court fees, green fees, ski passes, lift tickets and race registrations.

- personal trainers, fitness consultants, lifestyle consultants and exercise physiologists.

#### **Fitness equipment**

- durable equipment such as treadmills, exercise bikes and universal gym.
- skates, roller blades, bicycles, specialized footwear, running shoes, tennis racquets, golf clubs, safety helmets, and specialized sports equipment.

#### **Health-related services**

- weight management programs (excluding food).
- smoking cessation programs and supplies.
- costs for immunizations and travel medications.
- costs for medical examinations not covered by the provincial medicare plan.
- costs related to counselling on substance abuse.
- nutrition programs and counselling.
- maternity services (prenatal classes and mid-wife services).
- services for the following paramedical specialists and alternative health

practitioners: reflexologist, iridologist, herbalist, homeopath, athletic therapist, Chinese medical practitioner, Shiatsu therapist, osteopathic practitioner, acupressurist, speech therapist, psychologist, physiotherapist, acupuncturist, massage therapist, podiatrist, chiropractor, naturopath, career coaches, audiologist, dietician, occupational therapist, optometrist, and ophthalmologist.

- stress management programs.
- cholesterol and hypertension screening.
- first aid and CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) training.
- health assessments.
- allergy tests.
- vitamins and supplements, including herbal products.
- Other alternative wellness services: Reiki, Ayurvedic medicine, touch therapy, Rolfing, and light therapy.

**3. CHIROPRACTOR AND LICENSED NATHUROPATHS:** has been increased

from \$200 to \$300 per benefit year ( Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> – Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> ) along with the maximum family amount increased from \$500 to \$750.

**4. DENTAL IMPLANTS:** increased the maximum amount from \$1800 per implant to \$2200 per implant.

**5. VISION CARE:** Member's and their dependents can now get coverage for one eye exam every two calendar years. The cost of the eye exam will be included in the \$300 benefit per two calendar years for prescription eyewear.

**6. LONG TERM DISABILITY:** Retroactive to June 1<sup>st</sup> 2017, rates will be increased by \$100 plus increases with wage increases every June 1<sup>st</sup> of the Collective Agreement.

**7. GROUP RRSP:** the Company will now contribute \$0.20 cents for each dollar up to now, 4% of your base earnings. **Members wanting to increase to a 4% RRSP contribution must email Gay Ganzini in payroll at [gay.ganzini@teck.com](mailto:gay.ganzini@teck.com). The 4% will not automatically adjust!!!!**

**8. LIFETIME MAXIMUM:** as a current member, if you are about to exhaust your 100,000 lifetime maximum for

whatever reason the Company stated ( noted in our bargaining notes ) will on a case by case basis, upon request, look at increasing that benefit amount.

If there are any issues with the above increases please call the Union Hall at 368-9131, email me at [benefits1@usw480.com](mailto:benefits1@usw480.com) or stop by the Union Hall.

Free estate planning seminars will be held on October 26<sup>th</sup> 2017 at the USW Local 480 Union Hall at 3:30pm

and again at 6:00pm for any 480 and 9705 members.

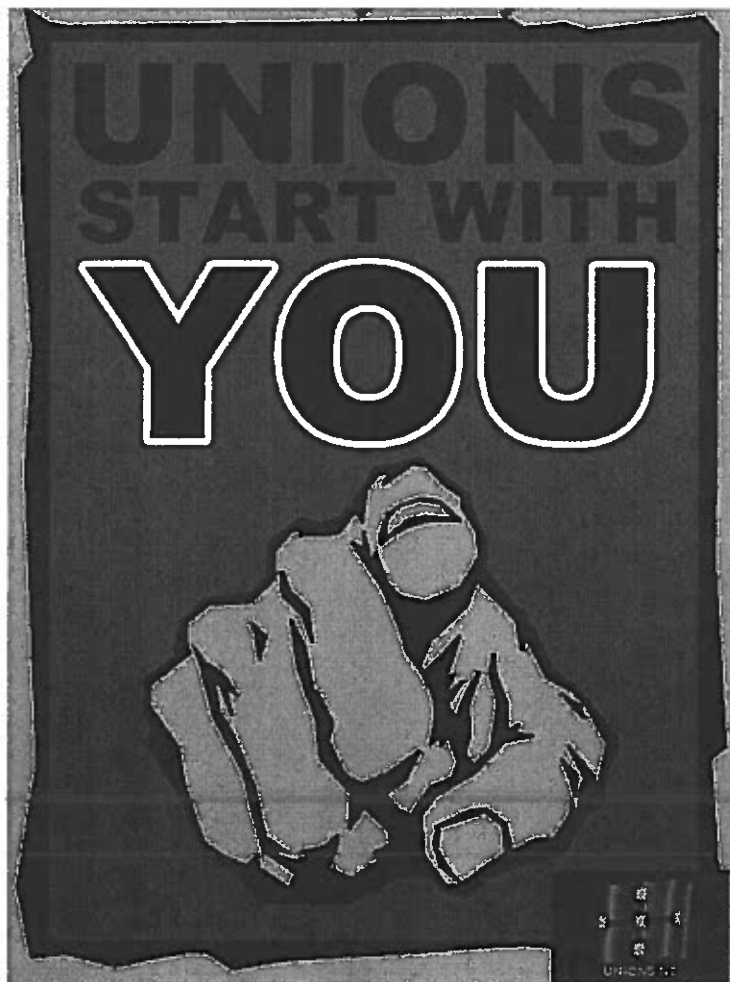
Presenters John Merlo of Money Works/Q Trade at Kootenay Savings Credit and Holly Pender-Love, a certified pre-arrangement counselor with Alternatives Funeral and Cremation will explain how easy it is to protect your loved ones, plus save you money and donate less to the government.

Planning literature such as “ Power of Attorney”, “Writing your Will”, “Being an Executor”, and “Death in the Family” handouts will be

available at the seminar. The seminars will roughly be one hour long and have the potential of saving you and your family serious financial and emotional pain. This is a highly recommended seminar and I encourage as many of our brothers and sisters to attend. If you are interested please call the Union Hall at 250-368-9131 or email myself at [benefits1@usw480.com](mailto:benefits1@usw480.com) to confirm your attendance.

If there is any interest in another seminar on taking your Commuted Value (pension) please let me know so I can set this up.

In Solidarity,  
Brother Schuepf.





## Health & Safety Committee

Steve Como, Safety Chairman

# Staying Safe

I hope everyone has had a safe and enjoyable summer. Unfortunately we have had a number of serious incidents this summer which re-enforces the fact, we shall never let our guard down when it comes to health and safety.

Two of the more serious accidents that occurred, the first being in the Silver Refinery. It had the potential to be a fatality where an Operator was lifting a pot of frozen slag to transport to a slag bin. The pot was raised to shoulder height and the Operator attempted to attach a hook for the purpose of tipping the pot at the bin. As the Operator was attaching the hook, the pot fell from the rigging hitting the Operator and pushing him to the ground. The pot contacted a second pot in the area as it fell and tipped towards the Operator. The frozen slag inside the pot spilled onto the Operator. The weight of

the slag pot was approximately 5500lbs. Luckily the Operator will be ok. An in depth ICAM investigation was held. Results of the ICAM will be forthcoming.

The second accident occurred in the Lead Refinery which resulted in a Lost Time. During the change-out of electrodes in the Cell House, a single spent anode got stuck and lifted from the cell with the rack of cathode lead. The Crane Operator stopped the lift and alerted the workers at the cell. One of the operators reached out with his hand below the anode ear at the time the anode dropped approximately one foot back into the cell, crushing the tip of the Operator's right index finger. A formal joint review of this incident will be held with recommendation to follow. As a result of these incidents, the joint safe-

ty committee will be doing summer student placement review.

The second lost time that occurred this summer was an Operator working outdoors exposed to ambient heat and subsequently experience heat stress symptoms. A formal investigation was held with preventive measures to prevent re-occurrence. It is very important that we take the time to do every job safely making sure we have the proper training and procedures to do the job safely. Remember it is your right to refuse any job you may think is unsafe. There is no job in operations that is so important that it may cause someone to get hurt doing it. Your family wants you home at the end of the day to enjoy the lifestyle you deserve.

In Solidarity,  
Steve Como

**SAFETY FIRST!**





## Safety Co-ordinators

Kyle Jorgensen & Chris Vaughan



# What does Qualified Mean?

Hopefully everybody has enjoyed their summer so far and were able to enjoy some time away. While summer is starting to fade, it is still quite hot out and there are smoky conditions that are trapping heat in. Just a reminder to continue to be diligent and take water breaks when necessary to avoid heat exhaustion and dehydration. The smoke has made outside work quite uncomfortable at times, especially for those with respiratory issues, so it is important to recognize when extra precautions (water breaks, prioritizing job tasks, etc) are necessary and to speak with your supervisor.

The question of “what does qualified mean” has recently been asked to the safety committee. According to Worksafe BC: *qualified* means being knowledgeable of the work, the hazards involved and the means to control the hazards, by reason

of education, training, experience or a combination thereof;

Verifiable Learner Objectives (VLO's) are the form of documentation Teck uses to capture that an employee is qualified for particular jobs or tasks. When a VLO has been fully signed off for a certain job or task, the individual is deemed qualified to perform that job or task. With that said when given or asked to do work or use equipment that is unfamiliar to you be sure to ask the questions: is there special training? Licenses? Or other qualifications such as VLO's that we need to have to allow us to do the job safely? With relief leaders and overtime shifts working for different supervisors, it is possible a supervisor could assume you are qualified and ask you to do something outside of your training. It is up to you to inform them that you are not trained and cannot accept the work. If something

were to go wrong, resulting in an injury or environment incident, you could be held accountable.

Only perform tasks, or use equipment that you have the appropriate training to do so safely. If you do not have the proper training to complete the task stop and get it before you proceed. Performing a task that you know is unsafe or that you are not trained for even one time has the potential for serious, unwanted consequences. If you feel pressured to do the task unsafely stop and talk to your supervisor and if you still cannot resolve the issue please phone the hall.

In Solidarity,  
Chris and Kyle





# Grievance Committee Report

Brian Onyschak, Chairman

## Summer Update

The summer of 2017 was hectic. We commenced negotiations in April and didn't ratify our new Collective Agreement until July 27<sup>th</sup>. During that period I was tied up with bargaining most of the days.

I had Ryan Johnson and Sean McFarlane covering the desk in my absence. I would like to thank them and the rest of the grievance committee for keeping everything in order.

During this time, the Company terminated two of our members. The Union believes these terminations were without merit so we filed grievances on our members' behalf. We are working with our Legal Dept. to gather all the evidence and set dates for arbitration. We currently have dates set in late October to get one of these before an arbitrator.

We are still in the process of gathering information and setting dates for the other one.

It is business as usual and with a younger/newer commit-

tee, training is always at the forefront of my mind.

We sent two of our more active Shop Stewards to Kimberley again this year. These two Stewards (Jesse Nichol and Mike Flux) took the Advanced Grievance Handling Course. They both stated that the courses were very informative and worthwhile.

We have also sent three other Stewards to Vancouver, September 15<sup>th</sup> to take a one day legal seminar put on by Victory Square Law Office. This seminar has always been on topic and interesting. We gain valuable insight into the latest legal challenges facing Unions in this day and age.

We plan on holding a Level 1 and 2 Shop Steward School later this fall. If you are a Steward and would like this training send me an email at [grievance@usw480.com](mailto:grievance@usw480.com).

On another note, we are still having issues with the Security in the Silver Refinery.

A number of months ago, three of our members were disci-

plined for incidents involving the search policy in that area. During our research on this discipline, we discovered that the Company has not been following the rules set down by Arbitrator Chertkow in his decision when we challenged this policy at implementation. We presented our findings to the Company but have not heard back from them yet.

One last topic I would like to touch on again is member on member issues. I ask that if you have an issue with another member to try to deal with it between yourselves. If that fails or you are uncomfortable doing that please call your Union. Give us a chance to resolve your issues before going to Management. Remember we are Union Brothers and Sisters, and we need to support each other. I realize that sometimes that can be tough but most issues can be resolved without the heavy hand of management coming down on us.

In solidarity,  
Brian

# Entertainment Report

Armando deMedieros, President

## Another Successful Pensioner's Picnic!

On June 22<sup>nd</sup>, of this year, Local 480 hosted its annual Pensioner's Picnic. This year marked the 37<sup>th</sup> year this event has been held at the Birchbank Picnic Grounds.

Crews started early in the morning getting things prepared, and heating up the rotisserie for the barbequing of the 350 lbs of roast beef on hand. Thank you to Jeff Schuepfer and Pat Fontaine for getting things started.

A big thank you to Steve Handley, Norm Murdoch, and Kyle Jorgensen for handling the hot pans of roasted potatoes and

Mike Mozak, and Pat Zanier and 9705 for doing the kitchen duties.

Thank you to all the retirees who showed up early to cut and prepare the vegetables, and to Larry Curlew and Joe Wellman and the rest of the crew for handling the serving at the suds shack. Also, to all those who helped with the set up and take down, your efforts didn't go unnoticed.

This was the biggest turnout in recent years as retirees from Trail, Fruitvale, Castlegar, Nelson and surrounding areas

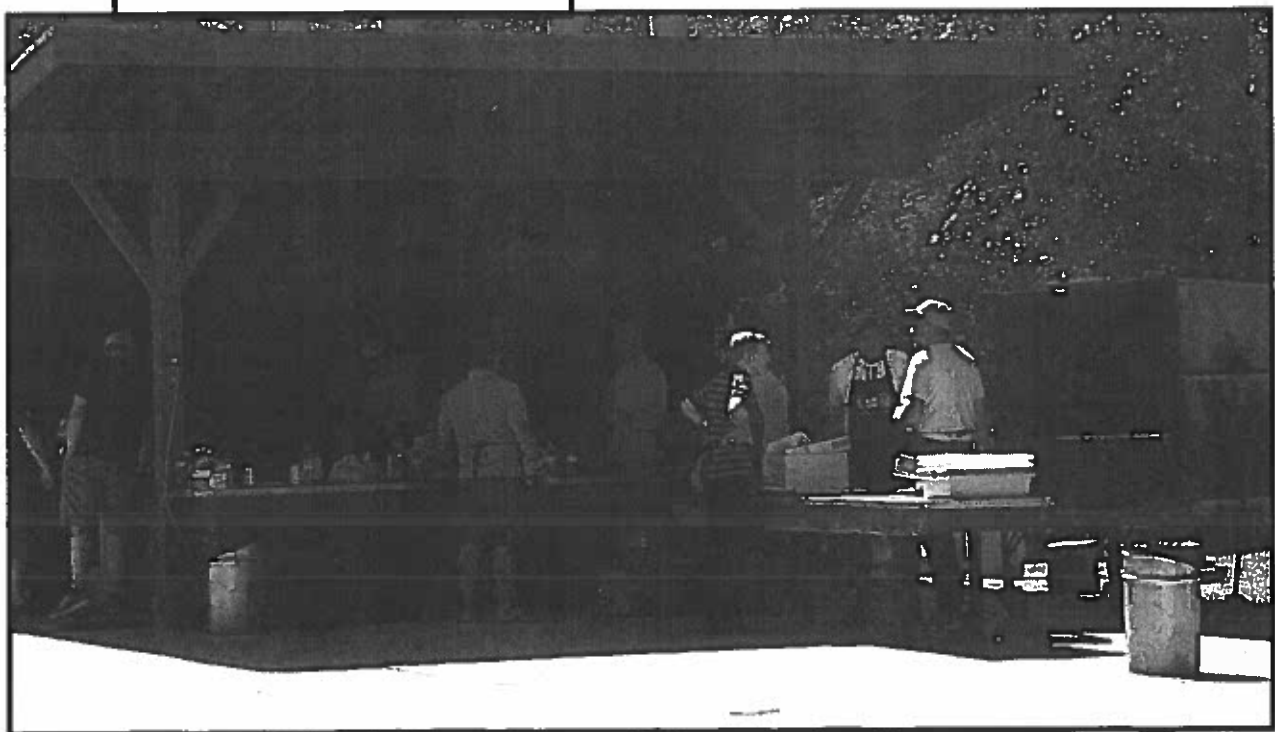
enjoyed a day of visiting old friends, playing bocce, horse-shoes or just chatting with each other.

A big thank you to Walter Crockett and his band as they played good old time tunes and had people on their feet dancing. Hope to see you all next year for another great day!

In solidarity,  
President Armando



### Volunteers hard at work!



# Pensioner's Picnic



People getting ready to eat the delicious meal that was prepared by our volunteers



Cranking out some tunes for all to enjoy! Turn it up to 11 boys!



Enjoy the beautiful day and good times!



Enjoying the company and catching up with old friends



Enjoying a nice cold one on a hot day, cheers!

# Supporting Hecla Strikers– International Solidarity



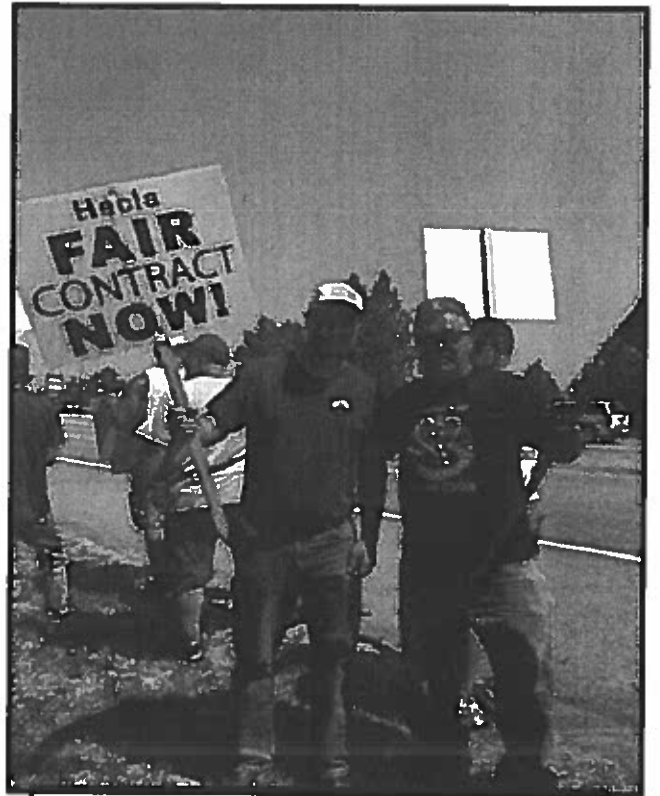
Local 480 showing support for a fair contract for our Hecla brothers and sisters



Kyle Jorgensen, Jeff Schuepfer, and Bryan Lauzon standing in solidarity!



USW holding down the line!



Local 480 President Armino deMedieros stands in solidarity with our brothers and sister on strike!