

# YOU **UNION** JOYR

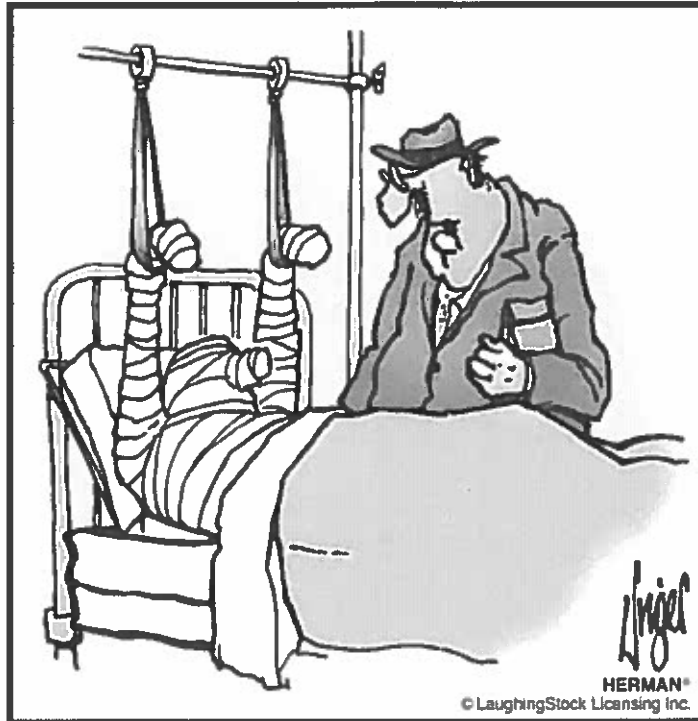
**Local 480**

UNITED STEELWORKERS  
**USW**  
UNITY AND STRENGTH FOR WORKERS

**Trail, B. C.**

December 2015

VOL. 43 No. 6



“You’re looking a lot better today, Ralph.”  
WCB is going to start you on light duty Monday.

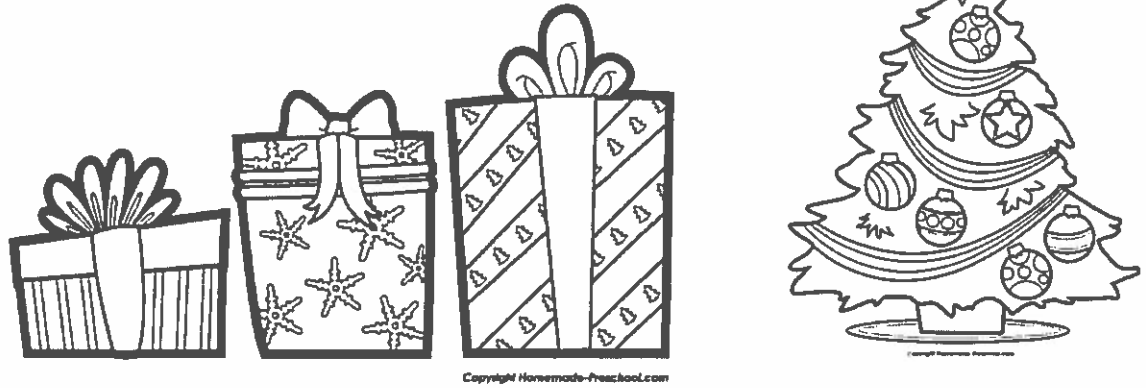
**LOCAL 480**  
**MEMBERSHIP MEETING**  
**3:45 P.M. THURS. December 17/2015**  
**480 STEELWORKER HALL**

Agenda to include:

- ◆ End of year business

The Financial Committee would like to wish our membership a safe and Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Norm Murdoch, Chris Walker, Graham Wilson, Joe Wellman, and Jeff Schuepfer.



# We are Online and Live!



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

You can also find us at [www.uswlocal480.com](http://www.uswlocal480.com)

## 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

## Quote of the Day

We stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers who are on strike, locked out or laid off. We must stick together to fight so many fights no one else will.  
 One day longer. One day stronger.

# #SOLIDARITY

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# President's Report

Armindo deMedeiros, President

## Year End Update



This being the last paper of the year, I would like to end it off on a light note. This year, I will call it the year of "terminations." We started 2015 with a couple of our members being terminated and ended the year with a couple of staff members also seeing their services terminated or a nicer way of putting it "let go."

I'm sure on the minds of some of you is the threat of being laid off due to the announced cutbacks by Teck earlier on. Although I cannot 100% guarantee that no one from Local 480 will be laid off, talks with Teck management suggest that cut backs to Local 480 members will take place through attrition. Presently there are approximately 40 members signed up for retirement in 2016 and usually a few more will sign up throughout the year. That to me should cover our share of the cutbacks. Now, do I think all these retirement vacancies will be refilled with new hires, probably NOT. Past experience tells me it is easier to replace trades with contract workers than it is to replace operators.

Local 480's membership is at the lowest it's ever been. In my opinion, in order to run the plants "safely," I believe

they have to keep the number of operators up. In conversations with HR, there are NO plans to offer an Early Retirement Package.

Regarding Special Assignments, they will be treated as they have in the past. Special Assignments are usually hired for a specific length of time, usually up to 3 or 6 months, then let go at the end of that time frame or rehired for another assignment period. At present, it is our understanding some will be let go for Christmas holidays then brought back in the new year. I say humbug to that.

We will continue meeting with the Company regularly and keep you updated as things progress in 2016. One of our main concerns is how many of the retiring members will be replaced in order for all of us to work safely.

In the coming year, Your Union will try getting into the 21<sup>st</sup> century by improving on the ways we communicate with the Membership.

Upgrades to our Facebook page are in progress, as Jay Walters has taken on the task of administrating the page and is doing a fantastic job keeping it updated regularly.

Sara Boutin is also doing a great job administrating the Women of Steel Facebook page.

Our 480 website can be reached by logging on to [uswlocal480.com](http://uswlocal480.com). Dave Dahl has taken on the tasks of updating this site and doing a great job with the updates.

I also would like to thank Leigh Creegan for the work he has done in changing the look of our newspaper, which has been met with good reviews from the membership. If anyone has anything they would like to see added to any of these communication tools contact your Union Hall with your suggestions.

In closing, I would like to thank Local 480 Executive for the work they do in managing the office's daily tasks and assisting with our members' needs.

With that being said, I would like to wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a happy and safe New Years.

Hope to see you at this years' Open House on December 18<sup>th</sup>.

In solidarity,  
Armindo deMedeiros



## Vice President's Report

Brian Onyschak, Vice President

### The Role of a Vice President

I took on this position last election in order to work closer with your President and the Executive.

The Vice President is also one of the local union table officers. The table officer committee consists of the President, Vice President, Financial Secretary, Treasurer and Recording Secretary.

We meet as required to discuss issues relating to the day to day operations of the Hall.

We also discuss issues such as changes to our by-laws or policies. We then bring forth these recommendations to the executive to be debated.

Once the Executive has the opportunity for debate, we bring these recommendations forward to the membership. It is at the membership meetings where you get the opportunity to discuss and debate any recommendation brought forth by your executive. Once the issue is fully debated it is voted on by the

membership present at the meeting.

As I mentioned earlier, becoming your Vice President allows me the opportunity to assist the President in the discharge of his duties and during his absence, perform the duties of the President.

I look forward to growing in this role in order to become even more effective representing you the membership with whatever issues you may have.

#### 2015 Retirees

We would like to congratulate the graduating class of 2015!

For many after 35 - 40 years of service, it was time to hang up the old work boots and move on to greener pastures and enjoy the benefits of retirement.

Congratulations to the following:

Doug Bell  
Calvin Benson  
Donald Berriault  
Mario Borsato  
Greg Bouma  
Ronny Caputo  
Doral Closson  
Jim Crawford  
Roy Crockett  
Larry Curlew  
Bob Donaldson  
Randy DeBiasio  
Bryan DeFerro  
Tom Ehl  
Harry Gandha  
Robert Girard  
Terry Grose  
Ed Halagaza  
Chris Haynes

Glen Hodge  
Rob Honeyman  
Randy Huston  
Dan Infanti  
Fred Jenner  
Leo Leavitt  
Harold Lecluse  
Gerald Lee  
Derrick Leduc  
Jay Lingard  
Chris Manson  
James Maximick  
Terry McKimmie  
Robert Messer  
Kelly Moore  
Marvin Morey  
Dave Munn  
Ray Nelson  
Linus Pakula

Gerald Pengelly  
Dale Plamondon  
Ron Richtsfeld  
Raymond Rieberger  
Julie Rodgers  
Kevin Rusnell  
Ken Schroeder  
David Shannon  
Tim Smart  
John Snuggs  
Earl Tjader  
Patrick Tremblay  
Sylvano Turco  
Kenneth Varga  
Lowell Verdon  
Chris Vlanich  
Allan Venier  
Ed Wilcox  
Bon Yaseniuk

## Benefits Co-ordinator Report

Jeff Schuepfer, Benefits Co-ordinator



### Physician Fired for Standing up Against Insurance Board

. Brothers and Sisters,

This being the last Union paper of 2015 I want to wish all of our members a safe, enjoyable holiday season and all the best in the coming New Year.

I would like to share an article about a Hamilton area physician who is suing the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (what WCB is in B.C.) and her former employer for \$3.2 million, claiming she was fired when she wouldn't deliver a medical opinion that suited the WSIB.

The physician is alleging in her statement of claim that she was terminated after WSIB repeatedly demanded that her employer Vaughan based Workplace Health and Cost Solutions, change the medical opinion she authored on a hospital worker who was claiming benefits after suffering head injuries while trying to restrain a patient.

The physician had concluded in late 2014 that the worker's emotional issues could be related to this workplace accident, according to the statement of claim. Within two weeks of delivering her opinion, she alleges the WSIB requested clarification.

After further review, which included speaking with the worker's family doctor, the physician says, she reached the same result in her medical opinion, but the WSIB continued to resist her conclusion.

The statement alleges the defendants WSIB and WHCS tried to force the physician to participate in a fraud upon the public.

In a desperate effort to reduce claims paid out, WSIB and WHCS have been conspiring to deny legitimate claims in a shocking display of arrogance and corruption. They pressured the physician over a period of months to reverse her medical opinion on a

high-cost case. When refused, she was fired.

None of the allegations has been proven in court. The WSIB and WHCS have not yet filed statements of defense, but both have denied any wrongdoing. The WSIB and WHCS lawyers have stated "the claims the physician has made about improper conduct are without merit".

This might be one case where someone stood up to their values but I have no doubt that WCB and corporations will try anything to deny the injured worker a claim for benefits. In plain English, workers compensation will spend hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars to deny a claim rather than paying out a much reduced amount of money on a claim to the injured worker.

In solidarity,  
Jeff

Brothers and Sisters,

Do you know who your beneficiary(s) are if anything were to happen to you? A quick reminder to all, **please make sure you have your choice of beneficiary(s) on both cards.** Call the Union Hall at 250-368-9131 and talk to Jo-Lynne to double check on the Union death benefit card. Call Gay Ganzini in payroll at 250-364-4984 to check on life insurance and the Group RRSP. Remember if you pass away, it is who you have as your beneficiary(s) on the back of these cards to where the funds **WILL BE** directed to. If the person(s) listed as the beneficiary are deceased at the time of the member's death the funds go to the member's estate and will be heavily taxed before being designated to.

I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and happy and safe New Year.

In solidarity,  
Jeff.

# LOCAL'S 480 and 9705 OPEN HOUSE



Please come and Join us for snacks & re-  
freshments

Friday, December 18<sup>th</sup> – 3:00pm~8:00pm

Everyone is Welcome!

*Non-perishable food items are appreciated.*

# *GINGERBREAD HOUSE RAFFLE*

DRAW DATE: Friday, Dec 18<sup>th</sup>  
@ the LOCAL 480 OPEN HOUSE



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

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

*GINGERBREAD HOUSE LOVINGLY MADE AND DONATED BY  
HEIDI McLACHLAN*



## Health & Safety Committee

Gord Menelaws, Safety Chairman

### Being Safe Over the Holidays

Take extra precautions when putting up those Christmas lights and decorations!

At Calgary's Foothills Medical Centre, the holiday season has already begun — in bone-crushing fashion.

The regional trauma hospital has seen five patients, so far this winter, severely injured as they tried to hang Christmas lights and then fell from ladders, porch railings and roofs.

In over a decade, the Alberta hospital treated 40 decoration-hanging victims with injuries at the top end of the severity scale, including two who eventually died, some who needed life support and a number who have ended up in care homes.

Falls in general have overtaken motor-vehicle crashes as the major source of serious injury in Canada. As automobiles and road design have become safer, the number of serious crash-related injuries has plummeted, while the aging population has brought more falls and worse consequences when people hit the ground.

People tend to be pretty nonchalant about it saying, 'Oh, I'm just putting up some Christmas lights,' but in fact, we should be thinking, 'Wow, I'm going to be two or three story's up, by myself and reaching beyond where I should, and if I fall, something serious might happen.'

Extension ladders and step ladders should be treated with the same kind of caution as any of the other power tools we use given their potential to cause harm.

People are never going to stop putting up Christmas lights, and they shouldn't, but please be sure we do it safely!

Fires are also a big hazard around the Christmas season. Remember these tips for a safe and happy holiday season.

- Keep decorations or any other flammable items at least 3 feet away from open flame and heat sources.
- Inspect all decorations to ensure they do not have any frayed or pinched

wires and discard any worn decorations.

- Ensure multiple extension cords are never strung together or are ran under rugs, carpets or furniture. And make sure those used outdoors are labeled, "for outdoor use."
- Never leave cooking equipment unattended and turn off burners if you have to leave the room.
- Never leave a space heater unattended and turn it off when you're leaving a room or going to sleep. Never let pets or children play too close to a space heater.
- Water Christmas Trees daily and discard trees when they are dry and begin to drop needles

On behalf of the Local 480 Safety Dept., we wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Safe and Happy New Year!

In Solidarity,  
Gord





## Safety Co-ordinators

Steve Como & Kyle Jorgensen

# Happy Holidays



It is December already and time for the holiday season. Usually the holiday season brings on an increased amount of driving to and from friends' and families places and other social settings. The increase in driving this time of year increases your chances of seeing slush, black ice, blowing snow, and ice and snow build up in between lanes.

It's important to check over your vehicle before heading out on long trips and be sure to include these items inside:

- Shovel
- Sand
- Road flares
- Extra warm clothing and footwear
- Blanket
- Emergency food
- Matches and a survival candle
- Road maps

- Ice scraper
- Snow brush
- Flashlight
- First aid kit

In order to best combat these winter conditions reduce speed well before a curve and turn slowly not making any jerking movements to the wheel. Entering a corner or curve too quickly may cause you to lose control of your vehicle. Be sure to leave plenty of distance between you and the vehicle ahead of you, stopping distances on ice or snow may increase from four to 10 times normal stopping distances. Turn on your headlights to be seen while driving, and in case of an emergency. Shift gears cautiously so your drive tires don't break traction.

Finally, it is always best when you first start out, to drive

slowly and get the feel of the road. Before leaving the parking lot, tap your brakes at a slow speed to see how your vehicle reacts. It is always better to plan ahead and leave more time to get to and from destinations then to be rushed while driving

As this is the final edition of Your Union for the year we would like to thank all the membership for another successful year and wish happy holidays to all. December is a busy time of year with lots of get-togethers and celebrations as well as decorating and other activities so please remember to plan ahead and stay safe when partaking in the festivities and while putting up decorations.

In Solidarity,  
Kyle and Steve





# Grievance Committee Report

Brian Onyschak, Chairman

## November Follow-up

In last month's article, I mentioned that we sent the Company Drug/Alcohol/Medication Use Policies to our Legal Dept. for review. They have had the opportunity to review, and we will be setting up a conference call to discuss the best avenue to challenge these policies. We will keep you apprised of the developments as they occur.

During the month of November we had a member terminated for sleeping on the job. This member was already on Step IV for a variety of other employment offences. The member advised us that he would rather move on and asked if we could negotiate a severance for him instead of fighting the termination. I am happy to report that we managed to negotiate a settlement for him that he accepted.

We also had another member who was given a Step IV and a 1 run suspension for allegedly making inappropriate

comments regarding a supervisor and another member. This member has 35 years of discipline free service. Giving him the maximum discipline short of termination is harsh, in my opinion. We have filed a grievance on this member's behalf. We do not condone this type of behavior but the punishment has to fit the crime.

On a lighter note, I would like to remind everyone that our Facebook page is up and running. Jay Walters has taken on the role of keeping this up to date with the latest news and events pertaining to the local and labour in general.

We are also in the process of revamping our webpage. You can view us at [uswlocal480.com](http://uswlocal480.com). Dave Dahl has stepped up and volunteered to get this website up and running. This site will be user friendly and filled with all kinds of useful information.

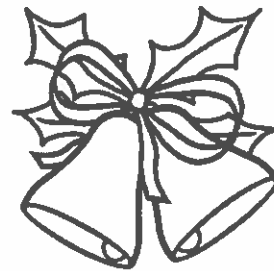
On this website, you will be able to check out the latest news from our District, Executive information, newsletters, etc.

In the future, we will be advertising Local 480 merchandise for sale. Everything from shirts to coffee mugs. **CHECK US OUT!**

I would personally like to thank Jay Walters and Dave Dahl for stepping up to the plate to make these things happen. It is obvious that social media is one of the best ways to communicate with our membership.

In closing, I would like to thank the Membership and the Grievance Committee for all the support you have given me throughout the years. I look forward to serving you to the best of my ability in 2016 and beyond.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year  
Brian Onyschak



# Entertainment Report

Armindo deMedeiros, President



## Extended Care Christmas Dinner

On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, Local 480 hosted its Annual Extended Care Christmas Dinner. This year was the largest turnout in years, as 200 Care Home Residents attended this year's dinner. Residents from local care homes were bused to the Trail Memorial Centre Gym for an evening of dining and entertainment.

Residents from Columbia View Lodge, BV Manor, Silver City Gardens, Rosewood Village, Jubilee Manor, Chateau Manor, and Poplar Ridge enjoyed a full course turkey dinner prepared by the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #11, Women's Auxiliary. Thank you ladies for the wonderful job done in preparing such a fabulous meal!

Following the dinner, the residents were treated to first class entertainment provided by St. Michaels School Choir, the Trail Pipe Band and Katie Shaw's Highland Dancers. Santa made a special appearance and handed out a tin of short bread cookie to everyone that attended to take home.

An event of this magnitude could not happen if not for the many people that volunteer their time. I would like to thank all of our members and retirees who volunteered their time to assist the residents safely off the buses, to their tables in the gym and back on the buses at the end of the evening.

Thank you to the City of Trail, who waived the costs of

the gym and kitchen rentals for the evening. A special thank you to Mayor Mike Martin and wife Debbie, councilors Eleanor Gattafoni-Robinson, Carol Dobie, Sandy Santori, and Kevin Jolly for their assistance and kind words. A big thank you to the Trail Transit drivers who do such a great job in getting the residents to and from the dinner safely.

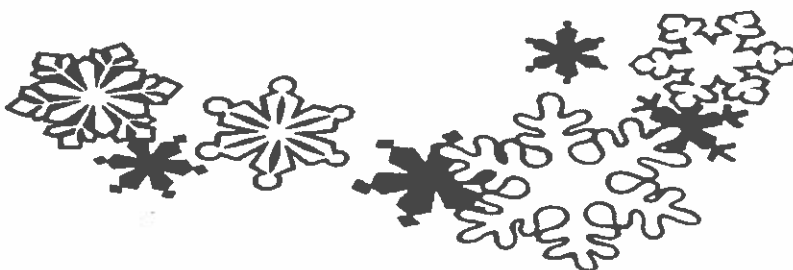
Last but not least, a big thank you to Santa (Ricco) as usual, a great job done! You certainly add a lot of enjoyment to the evening. See you at next years' dinner!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Armindo deMedeiros

All of us from the "Your Union" editorial staff would like to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Remember to be safe during this busy season.

Leigh Creegan and Norm Murdoch



Extended Care Dinner 2015

Steve Como and Kelly Moore helping residents off the buses and into the Trail Memorial Centre Gym.



The residents enjoying the Trail Pipe Band after a wonderful dinner.

The Volunteers look forward to the entertainment before loading the residents back onto the buses.





Satisfied customers listening to the St. Michael's Choir singing "Dominick the Donkey."



Santa and Mrs. Claus pose for a picture before going back to the North Pole.



A happy resident receiving a tin of butter cookies from Santa.



Derm and Dixie bartending! Leave some for the rest of us guys!



### Food Hamper Donation



Left to right: Chuck Macklon (President, 9705), Deb McIntosh (Community Harvest Food Bank), Armindo deMedeiros (President, 480) present a cheque to the Community Harvest Food Bank for \$1500.00.

## Pledge Day 2015 Steep Memorial Sick Children's Fund



\$7,000 was donated by the United Steelworkers, Local 480 to support the Gordy Steep Memorial Sick Children's Fund. Chris Walker, Treasurer (left) and Norm Murdoch, Financial Secretary (right) present the cheque to Arleen Gallo and Debbie Martin, KBRH Health Foundation Board of Directors. The Gordy Steep Sick Children's Fund assists families with expenses when they are travelling to receive advanced care for their sick children.

## The Urology Campaign



The Urology Campaign was supported with a \$500 donation from the United Steelworkers, Local 480. Lisa Pasin, director of development, and Mike Conci, Board Director KBRH Health Foundation, (far left and right) accept this contribution from USW Local 480 members Chris Walker, Treasurer, and Norm Murdoch, Financial Secretary.

## Silver City Night

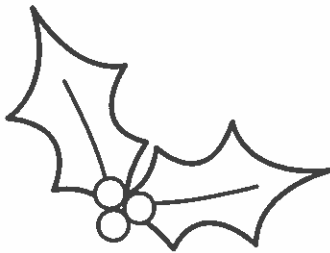


Left to Right: Steve, Gord, and Jeff at the Silver City Night celebration in downtown Trail. Local 480 collected over \$600.00 in donations for the Gordy Steep Sick Children Fund by cooking hotdogs and hot chocolate.

## LOCAL 480 HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS



December 24	7:00 – 1:00
December 25	CLOSED
December 28	CLOSED
December 31	7:00 – 3:00
January 1	CLOSED



**\*\*\*In case of emergency please call President Armindo at (250) 512-9325  
or Vice President Brian at (250) 231-3655\*\*\***