

# YOUR

U N I O N

**Local 480**



**Trail, B. C.**

February 2019

VOL. 47 No. 1

## LOCAL 480'S - 2018 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Once again, Local 480 will be sponsoring Scholarships and Bursaries to our local senior high schools. The information outlining the requirements to apply for one of these scholarships has been sent to the area high schools (JL Crowe Secondary, Stanley Humphries Secondary, Salmo Secondary, and the Kootenay Alternate Learning Centre.)

If you have a son/daughter who will be graduating this year and plans to further their education, please talk to them about applying for one of these awards. These scholarships will be presented at local graduations ceremonies to area students who meet the criteria.

To qualify, the student must write an essay of 500 to 1000 words on "*What has been the role of the Union movement in the West Kootenay's, and in particular, Trail?*" We shall evaluate those essays on content, accuracy of information, form and grammatical correctness.

Essays must be submitted to either the School's Counsellor, or Local 480, no later than Friday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019.

### **LOCAL 480 MEMBERSHIP MEETING 3:45 P.M. THURS. February 21/2019**

**Agenda to include:**

- ◆ Budget

# We are Online and Live!



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

You can also find us at: [USWLOCAL480.com](http://USWLOCAL480.com)

- Grievance Chair and Reps for your area
- Safety Chair, Coordinators and Reps for your area
- Benefits-Forms, Booklets and contact information
- Local 480 Merchandise- Items are proudly Union made
- Past and present newsletters

## 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

## Quote of the Day

The labor movement was the principal force that transformed misery and despair into hope and progress.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

@unions4workers

/unions4workers

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# President's Report

Brian Onyschak, President

## Forced Vacations Successfully Avoided



Since the last newsletter we have been busy as usual down at the hall. A few weeks back Teck announced that Linde would be having an unscheduled shut-down. With the Linde plant going down that meant that the other operations would not be able to run either so the company didn't know if they had work for these employees during the shutdown. The Company was suggesting that employees may be forced to take vacation during this shut-down. This did not sit well with the Union executive or the members, after all these same employees were forced to take vacation in 2018 during the maintenance shutdown.

We approached the company and told them that we thought that there was enough meaningful work to keep everyone busy during this time. The shutdown was only going to be for ten days or so. We had numerous discussions with the Company and they told us if we could identify meaningful work they would consider keeping everyone working. We met with a number of employees and asked them to come up with a list of work that they thought could be done during this time. We also asked the superintendent Chris Mclean if he would meet with the crews to hear their ideas and concerns. I am happy to report when all was

said and done we managed to find work for every full time employee who wanted to work.

This was accomplished by everyone putting their heads together to find solutions to this issue. I would like to thank the membership for their contribution in identifying the work and to management for listening to their employees. It goes to show that if we put our differences aside and work together we can get things accomplished. This may not always be the case but this time it worked.

In Solidarity,  
Brian

### Local 480 History

Unionism is alive and well 75 years after the first independent union was formed at Cominco. Yes we have been a unionized workforce for that long. We weren't always Steelworkers though. The first real Union at Teck Operations (Cominco back in those days) was Mine Mill.

This union won the rights to represent the smelter workers after a long hard fight. The fight wasn't only with the Company but also with some of the workers who were leary of joining a Union. Back in those days a lot of the Union leaders were part of the Communist party and that did not sit well with some of the workers.

The company also put up quite the fight to keep the Union out of the smelter. The Company had established a so called Employee Co-operative which was supposed to protect the workers' rights when there were issues. The problem with this group was that the people on this committee were hand-picked by the company and controlled by the Company.

This committee ran for a number of years but they were nothing more than pawns to keep the workers in line while promising them that their rights would be protected. These Company Unions were quite popular in the day and it wasn't only Cominco that employed this tactic. As time went by though more and more workers

recognized this and banded together to establish a real Union which would be there to protect their workers' rights without interference by the Company. Even the governments of the time recognized this and outlawed the so called Company Unions. Finally the employees at the smelter had someone to protect their rights without being controlled by the Company.

There is much more to this story and how the Steelworkers came to represent these workers and there is a book about to be published called the Smelter Wars written by local historian Ron Verzuh. If you are interested in the history of Local 480 watch for this book in the coming months.



# Grievance Committee Report

Jesse Nicoll, Grievance Chairman

## Union Representation is Your Right

Hello Brother and Sisters,

There has been an increase of cases being brought to the attention of the grievance committee that some of our members have not been offered or turned down union representation. Some of the situations involve members being told that there is no available stewards due to the time of day or that the discipline is minor and there is no need to involve a steward. Ask for a Steward if the company does not offer you one. Management should offer a steward as per the language in article 2.01 of the collective agreement. A shop steward will be reasonably available during the day. Minor matters can always be dealt with when all parties are available. If the matter is urgent or it is an emergency I or another union representative will be there.

One of the most important rights we have afforded to us in our collective agreement is the right to union representation during investigation meetings which may lead to discipline and when discipline is issued (Article 2). Under the collective agreement management has the right to discipline for just

and sufficient cause. It is the job of the Grievance Committee to make sure that the issue is properly investigated, all of the mitigating circumstances have been identified and that if management feels that discipline is warranted we will make sure it is not excessive. Our Grievance Committee has a great proven track record of getting reductions in discipline or getting the matter dropped entirely. We will handle your issues with discretion while we advocate for your rights.

**Please call a Chief Steward or myself before deciding to go into a management review or any kind of interaction with management that could result in discipline.**

A quick update on the Grievance Committee,

We have received tentative arbitration dates from the company for the availability of their legal counsel and we will be booking an arbitrator ASAP. My hope is to have two done this spring. Our legal counsel is currently working on a couple of issues for us and I should have their legal opinions shortly.

There were two drug and alcohol tests done in the last two months. One for a vehicle collision and another for equipment damage. I was present for both circumstances and made sure that the company did the proper investigations and the circumstances met the requirements to allow the drug and alcohol test. Both of the results came back negative.

Forced vacation has resurfaced again. Our members in the lead refinery were once again going to be effected due to the unplanned shutdown of the Linde plant. Brian Onyschak and I toured the area and listened to all of the concerns and suggestions. As of today not one of our members are going to be forced to take vacation, management has found other work of value for them while the plant is down.

I'm proud to say they stuck together in solidarity and effectively protested this injustice to management.

**Solidarity Works !!!!**

In solidarity,  
Jesse Nicoll

<b>Jesse Nicoll</b> Chairman		368-9131
<b>Ryan Greenaway - Chief</b>	<b>Lead South:</b> Kivcet, Slag, Drossing, Feed Prep, Mtce.	364-4526
<b>Travis Storvold - Chief</b>	<b>Lead North:</b> Refinery, Silver & Alloy, Copper Products, Bricklayers, Mtce.	364-7217
<b>James Niblow - Chief</b>	<b>Property Support</b> Utilities, Fire Dept., Equip. Depot, Heavy Equipment, Mtce.	364-4944
<b>Steve Limbert - Chief</b>	<b>E &amp; M</b> Electrolytic, Melting	364-4093
<b>Mike Brace - Co-Chief</b> <b>Mark Blackwell - Co-Chief</b>	<b>Old Zinc:</b> Oxide, Roasters, Cadmium, Airco, Sulphide Leaching, Leadburners, Indium/Germanium, Pressure Leach, Mtce.	364-4632 364-7210
<b>Ryan Johnson - Chief</b>	<b>Shops/Projects</b> Steel Fab, Machine Shop, Warehouse, Janitors, Mtce.	364-4624
<b>Curtis Siminoff - Chief</b>	<b>Warfield:</b> Phosphate, Instrument Shop, Plastic/Rubber, Sulphate, Mtce.	364-4771

**\*In case of emergency please call the Local 480 Union Hall @ (250) 368-9131.**



## Benefits Co-ordinator Report

Jeff Schuepfer, Benefits Co-ordinator

### Claiming Services Under Our Benefit Plan

Brothers and sisters,

There are a range of fees most practitioners in each province typically charge for on certain services or procedures. To keep these charges for the particular service at reasonable rates insurance companies (Sun Life) use reasonable and customary fees on the basis for pricing their benefit plans and paying claims.

When we go to claim our paramedical services/ medical services and equipment under our benefit plan please remember Sun Life has a list of reasonable and customary amounts that can be charged in the province of British Columbia. If the service rendered is over and above Sun Life's reasonable and customary amount it is the responsibility of the member to cover that cost. To find out what Sun Life's reasonable and customary fees for paramedical/medical services and equipment are under our benefits plan, call Sun Life customer service at 1-800-361-6212.

Under our benefit plan, Sun Life will cover 80% of the costs after you pay the deductible (\$25.00).

The following are the amounts for our paramedical services:

**Acupuncturist:** max of \$100 per person in a benefit year.

**Chiropractor and Naturopaths combined,** \$300 per person up to a max of \$750 per family in a benefit year.

**Massage therapist:** no calendar year maximum.

**Physiotherapist:** no calendar year maximum.

**Podiatrist:** no calendar year maximum.

**Psychologist:** testing included or social workers, up to a max of \$100 per person in a benefit year.

As for the medical services and equipment, I suggest you send an estimate or pre-authorization to Sun Life before you make a purchase. Sun Life will get confirmation back to you by giving a break down on a claim statement. Once you have confirmation from Sun Life you will know how much of the cost you will be responsible for before you incur the expense.

In addition, for dental care Sun Life recommends sending in an estimate before work is done for any major treatment or

procedure that will cost more than \$500.

To all our members who have not yet claimed their carry over amount from the last benefit year (June 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 – May 31<sup>st</sup> 2018) of their Healthy Lifestyle Account, you must make a purchase of at least the carry over amount prior to June 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 or the remaining funds of that carry over will be lost.

Also, Sun Life must receive claims for the eligible expenses incurred in the benefit year no later than 90 days after the end of the benefit year during which the eligible expense incurred. So claims for the carry over amount must be in no later than August 29<sup>th</sup> of 2019. Personally, once the funds are available, use those funds so you are not in a situation of possibly losing them.

#### PENSION INFORMATION:

Lately I have received calls on part of our pension plan regarding a service adjustment. The demographics of the membership have drastically changed and for some members 30 years service at age 58 is unattainable. Here are two examples of

pension adjustments for those not meeting age 58 and 30 year service.

The service adjustment is for example, a member opts to retire at age 62 with 27 years service. The member has met the age 58 requirement but not the 30 year service requirement. The member's pension will be adjusted 0.5% for every month to the 30 year requirement. If say the member is 30 months away from 30 years and retires at 62,  $(65-62) \times 12 \times 0.5\% = 18\%$  or 30 months  $\times 0.5\%$  adjustment for every month = 15% adjustment, (whichever is smaller) so a 15% service adjustment service to your pension.

An age adjustment example: the member is age 64 with 27 years service. Again for example, the member has 30 months to reach 30 years service. The member has met the age but not the service but because the difference is closer to age 65, the service will not come into play. The adjustment would be  $(65-64) \times 12 \times .5\% = 6\%$  or 30 months  $\times .5\% = 15\%$  this member would have an adjustment of 6% (lesser of the two). This is an age adjustment not a service adjustment to your pension.

Members are qualified for unreduced pension at age 65, no matter how many years of service they have.

The numbers our members need to remember are:  
Earliest reduced pension - 20 years service at age 55.  
Earliest Unreduced pension - 30 years service at age 58.  
Eligible for post retirement benefits 20 years service or age 65.

If unsure on any of your benefits, need assistance with Sun Life claims, injured at work, or pension questions you can email myself at [benefits1@usw480.com](mailto:benefits1@usw480.com) or call the Union Hall at 250-368-9131 and ask for Jeff.

In Solidarity,  
Brother Schuepf.

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## CWS Report

Brothers and Sisters,

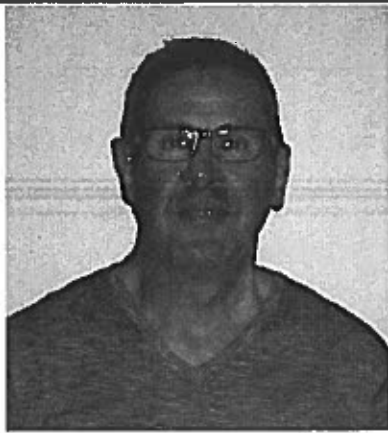
My name is Leigh Creegan, and I have just taken on the role of CWS chair from Bryan Lauzon. I would like to thank Bryan for all the work he has done and wish him luck on all his future endeavours. It was a real pleasure working with him the past few years.

For those of you who don't know what CWS is, it stands for Cooperative Wage Study. We evaluate your job upon your request to ensure your wage properly reflects the work you do. If anyone reading this is interested in getting their job evaluated send me an email, [leigh.creegan@teck.com](mailto:leigh.creegan@teck.com), and we can talk. The most important thing to remember when it come to re-examining a job is that CWS looks at the new work that has been added to the job description, not the existing responsibilities.

The CWS committee is currently looking for a third member to join along with myself and Tyler Bell. If you are interested in getting involved with your union and would be interested in joining this committee please send an email to myself or Brian Onyschak ([president@usw480.com](mailto:president@usw480.com)) by February 28th.

I look forward to serving our members in this new role and if anyone has any questions at any time please send me an email, I'd be happy to answer any and all questions.

In Solidarity,  
Leigh



# Health & Safety Committee

Steve Como, Safety Chairman

## Getting to Know Your Safety Vice Chairs

For those of you who don't know, each of the areas you work in has a Safety Vice Chair.

The Safety Vice Chairs job is to be involved in any safety issues within their area, and also work closely with the Safety Reps in their areas.

Each area Safety Chair also sit on the Joint Health and Safety committee which meets with the Company Safety Department on a monthly basis.

I would encourage all our members to get to know your area Vice Chair and keep them informed of any safety issues or concerns you may have in your area.

Between your 3 elected fulltime Safety representatives that work out of the Union Hall, and 8 area Vice Chairs, you have plenty of safety resource people to bring your safety concerns forward.

Also, important to remember when a safety concern is brought to our attention by a member, we do not use names of who brought the concern forward. The priority is to get the hazards addressed.

If you have a safety concern, please let us know as soon as possible. It doesn't help to let us know after the fact.

In solidarity,  
Steve Como

Here is a list of your Union Safety Representatives and their areas:

NAME	POSITION	AREA	WORK PHONE
<b>UNION REPS:</b>			
COMO, Steve	Chair		368-9131
JORGENSEN, Kyle	Coordinator		368-9131
LAFRENIERE, Nylan	Coordinator		368-9131
FOURNIER, Craig	Vice Chair	Lead South	364-4843
McKENZIE, Will	Vice Chair	Property Services	364-4947
BELL, Tyler	Vice Chair	Lead North	364-4198
FRAIKIN, Phil	Vice Chair	Warfield	364-4771
RODLIE, Dan R/S	Vice Chair	RA/ZPL	364-4718
ALLEN, Aiden	Vice Chair	E&M	364-4612
MORRISON, James	Vice Chair	Leaching	364-4459
ALLEGRETTO, Trevor	Chair, Local 9705	Environment	364-4382





## Safety Co-ordinators

Kyle Jorgensen & Nylan LaFreniere



## Trained and Qualified

Lately we have been made aware of some instances where workers were assigned tasks they were not trained and qualified to do. When assigned a task that is unfamiliar or requires the use of new (or new to you) equipment we should always ask questions; is there special training needed? Special licenses required? Are there other qualifications, controlled documents or VLO's that we need to have completed and understood to allow us to do the job safely? Are we comfortable and confident that we can perform the task safely? Is there any other hazard that may be overlooked?

Sometimes problems arise when working overtime shifts or working for a relief leader and an assumption is made that training and qualification has been completed, when it has not. If that is the case, we must speak up and say we are not qualified or if we see it happening with a co-worker who may not speak up, we must speak up for them and state that we are not trained and qualified or our brother or sister is not

trained and qualified and thus it is unsafe to do the work and that we will not do the work until we are trained and qualified and can do the work safely. Sometimes it may be hard for special assignments to speak up because they feel like they do not want to, "rock the boat," and just want to do what they are told and get a full-time job. That should not be used as a reason to perform a task unsafely, we must speak up if we see this happening, and if we need help our safety department is only one phone call away to assist, 368-9131. We sometimes do things with the best intentions, however doing something that we know is unsafe is just plain wrong and can lead to accidents and injury or even a Worksafe BC fine to the worker, the company or both.

Only perform tasks, or use equipment that you have the appropriate training to do so safely. This includes both applicable Trades and Operator training, which includes specific training for each job in your plant including VLO's and controlled documents. This also includes mobile equipment like

Bobcats or loaders you may use off the property. If you need training, make sure you have it!!

With the unplanned Linde shut down now upon us and the numerous members being displaced from their normal plant to fill other openings take this time to stop and do a Take 5. Although this might be a short placement the area you have been transferred too is more than likely new to you and requires your full attention to your surroundings.

Just as a friendly reminder as the days warm up and the snow melts, we still have the colder nights making it very icy in some areas. We encourage you to take full advantage of our numerous sand and salt bins at each roto-gate and around the property not leaving a hazard for the next person. As a side note the walk way between C-Lot and D-lot is still closed for pedestrian use and not maintained for the season please use the walk-way inside the gate

In Solidarity,  
Kyle and Nylan



# Financial Secretary Report

Chris Walker, Financial Secretary

## Contracting Out

Hello everyone, I hope the start of 2019 has been pleasant for you. I know for myself, as I approach almost a year into my new position I've started to feel a lot more settled in and less like I'm chasing my own tail every day. I believe we've made some good strides in our communication, with respect to contracting out. And hopefully we can continue to make improvements going forward.

I want to talk about a couple of key things happening with contracting out right now. The first thing is Water Blasting and Vactoring. We have been speaking to the company for a while, and have said that we believe that Water Blasting and Vactoring is a great place to start to look at for potential reduction of contracting out to save money. In discussions with our lawyer and the company we have decided not to file a potential grievance we had at this time, but instead to look at some sort of a case study. We don't have all the logistics of how the case

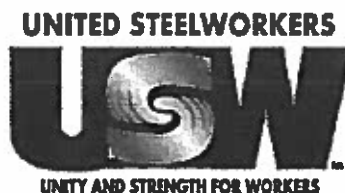
study would work, or even a full commitment from management yet but hopefully those details would be ironed out soon. The main thing we are looking for, is to utilize our members the best way possible. Again I don't know exactly how this is going to look, but the fact that we are at least having these open conversations, shows that hopefully both sides are pulling in the same direction on this issue.

The second issue standing out is structural repair work. We've come to learn that a lot of structural repair work is being contracted out when we've had members willing and able to this work. They have structural repair work meetings for plants and often times they invite Maintenance Support to attend the meetings to see if they can fit this work in. The problem then seems to be when Maintenance Support is unable to take on the work load, instead of approaching their plant trades to see if they could take on some of this work they contract it all out in

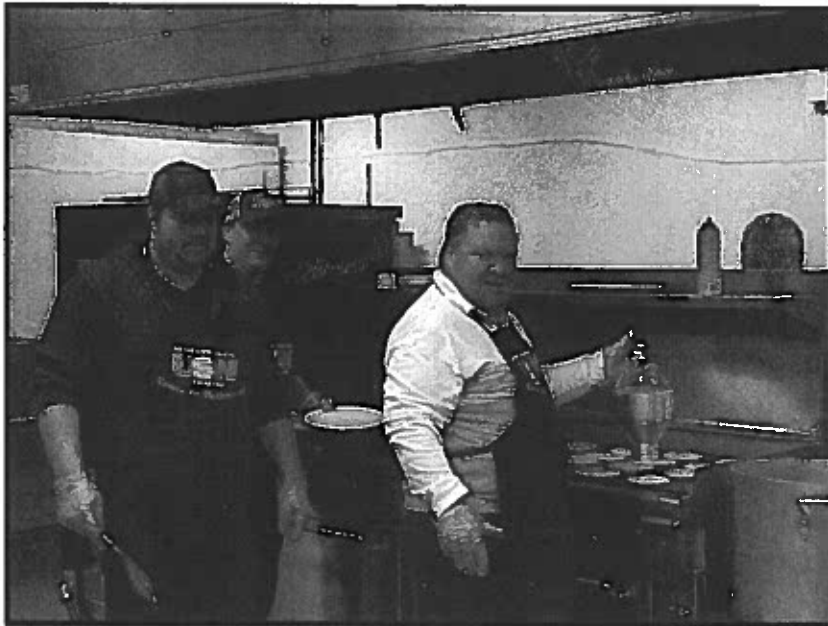
bundles. This seems to be a major deficiency in communication and very poor utilization of 480 members. We have worked with management on some ideas so this doesn't continue, hopefully it's as simple as having a plant trades involved in these initial meetings or better communication from supervision to the trades.

Thanks everyone for your time and I just want to remind you all that the 480 membership meeting is on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month at 3:45. We would love to see some of the new and old faces of our local. And it's a great way to stay on top of all issues from Grievance to Safety in all the areas of the property. Come down and check it out and stay for some refreshments after. See you there!

In solidarity,  
Chris Walker

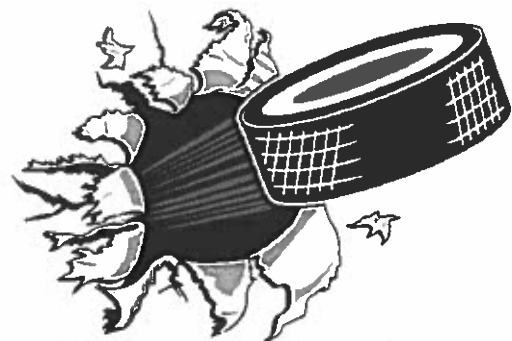


# Minor Hockey Day Pancake Breakfast



In the latest episode of the 3 stooges Local 480 Safety Coordinator Nylan LaFreniere, Local 9705 President Mike Mozak, and retired 480 member, Graham Wilson prepare the pancakes as they are spied on by retired 480 member Pat Fontaine.

Local 480 Benefits Coordinator Jeff gives his seal of approval on the breakfast being prepared for all the hungry folks!



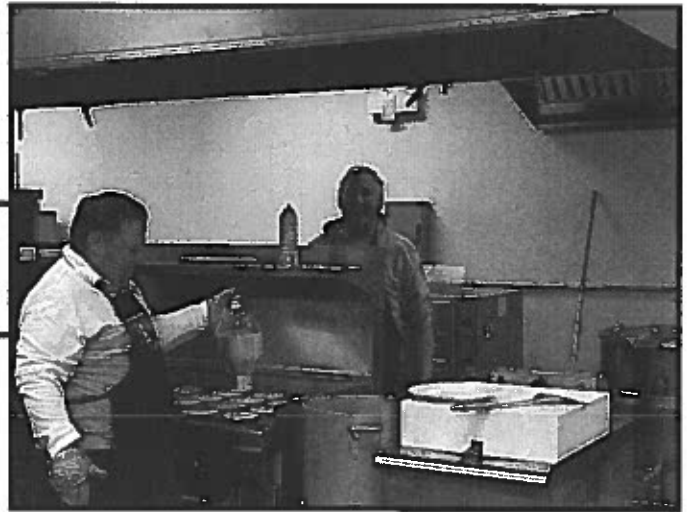
Kyle Jorgensen (local 480 Safety Coordinator) smiling nicely for the public as Chris Vaughan keeps his head down working hard as he always does.



Kyle and Chris working fast to keep the line moving and the people happy.



Graham and Pat working hard! This is the most work they've had to do since they retired!



Just a few of the Hungry mouths that showed up in support of this great event. Thank you to all who volunteered their time to help make this event possible!