

## Remembering Our President

Brothers & Sisters of Local 480

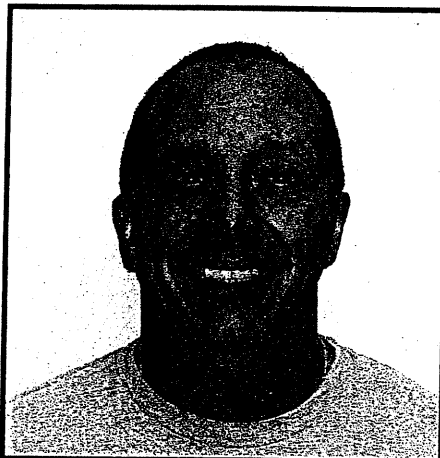
As most of you are aware we have lost our President Brian Onyschak to his fight with cancer on February 9th. I'd like to say a few words to honor my friend and mentor.

Brian and I have known each other since I was in diapers, but we really got to know each other well in 2007 when he asked me to be a Chief Shop Steward. He spent years teaching me everything he could about our contract language, labour law and the labour movement as a whole.

I served on two Bargaining Committees with Brian and that's where you saw him at his finest. He literally helped build our contract into what it is to-

day. I spent the last couple of years with Brian full time at the Union hall.

We would start most days with a coffee and strategy session. We very rarely disagreed with each other and al-



*Brian Onyschak 1958 — 2020*

ways thought along the same page. I wish I could have more time to have those meetings and pick his brain, his knowledge was invaluable. He was my mentor and I think that meant a lot to both of us.

I've been blown away with the number of people that have reached out after hearing of his passing. People from all over North America have either called or emailed to send their condolences. He was well known as a leader in the labour movement. We should all be thankful that he was so dedicated to Local 480.

I want you all to know that I take over the role as your President with a very heavy heart. Brian was a long time friend to me, and I will fill this role to the best of my ability and I will honor his legacy as a union leader as much as I can. I will take this time to remember you and I will miss you, my friend.

*"Say not in grief 'he is no more' but in thankfulness that he was."*

In Solidarity,  
Chris Walker

**LOCAL 480**  
**MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**  
**3:45 & 5:30 P.M.**  
**THURS. FEBRUARY 20/2020**  
**480 STEELWORKER HALL**

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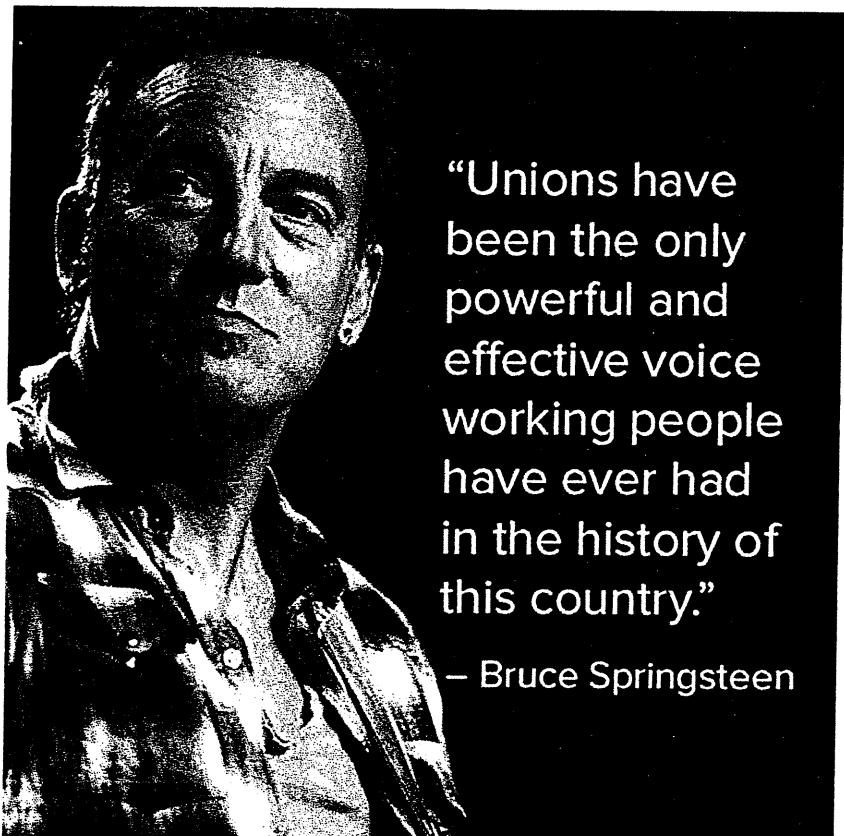
The editors reserve the right to edit any or all material submitted



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Check our website for Local 480 merchandise! Items may be purchased at the hall. All items are proudly union made!

## Quote of the Day



“Unions have been the only powerful and effective voice working people have ever had in the history of this country.”

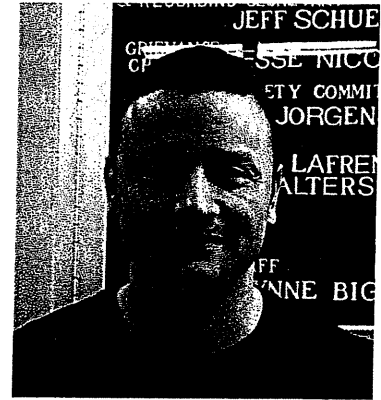
– Bruce Springsteen

### What's Inside:

Forced Vacation Policy Grievance	Page 5
RRSP Plan Name Change	Page 6
Timely Incident Reporting	Page 9

# Vice President's Report

Chris Walker, Vice President



## Looking Forward

Hello brothers & sisters of Local 480,

On December 19th I took over the Vice Presidents' position, and since that date, I have been serving as your acting President. I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve our local and will do my best to uphold the standard that Local 480 has set through the union movement all these years.

I'm lucky enough that I have very strong leadership in our department, that I can lean on while I adjust to my new role. Jeff, Jesse, Kyle, Norm, Nylan, Jay and Jo-Lynne have made things a little easier as we've had a very busy January.

We've had disciplines, bullying and harassment allegations, as well as, several members in the Lead refinery being told the day before their shift that they were being forced to take a vacation day.

On top of all that, word is spreading that they are moving the major shutdown in 2022 to the spring instead of the fall. Our contract expires June 1st, 2022, the concern I've received from some members is that maybe they are moving the shutdown because they are preparing for a potential labor dispute.

To me, it doesn't make a lot of sense for a Company to

spend multi-million dollars on a major shutdown, then directly after setting themselves up for a dispute and leave their operation sitting idle. It would make more sense to come out of the major shutdown and get the place running at full capacity so that Teck Trail can start turning profits.

One of the main reasons why I wanted to sit in this role is to be as prepared as possible for 2022 bargaining. From very early after we settled our agreement in 2017 I've begun to prepare for this next round of negotiations. I'll be the last 480 member from the 2012 bargaining team and I'm trying to do things to keep the relationships that were built in the past stable and strong. I recognize that many of our newer members didn't understand what was happening when we bargained in 2017. I've been looking at ideas for better communication and knowledge so everyone has a better understanding of the bargaining process.

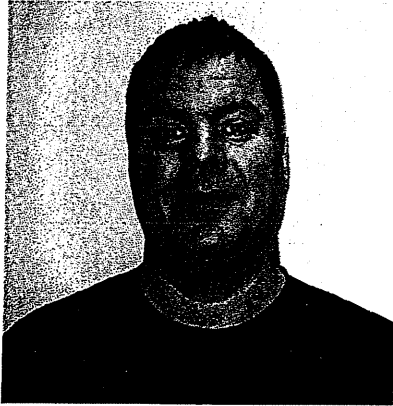
We need to go into bargaining without fear, instead go into it united with a strong local. We will be prepared and ready to work and reach a fair settlement.

I'd like to talk about an issue around contracting out. Specifically supplemental car-

penter work in maintenance support. We are constantly told how we need to 'tighten our belts' and be conscientious about how money is spent. Yet we have had a contractor with our crew for months that has on many occasions had no work scheduled for him. No meaningful work, why on earth would you be paying? Some of us care about making Teck Trail successful, but things like this just don't make sense and hurt every one of us. I'm personally sick of it and I know the majority of the crew is as well. We are trying to work with management to find a way to change these wasteful practices.

Lastly, I'd like to congratulate Steve Como on a well-deserved retirement. Steve was a Safety Rep for many years with us, and for any of you that had a chance to know him, he is a great person. If you ever get a chance to see him, you should thank him. He truly did care about the safety and health of all of us, and he always fought hard to protect those rights for us, as he famously says *safety never sleeps!* So thanks Steve, and all the best in your retirement.

In Solidarity,  
Chris Walker



## Grievance Committee Report

Jesse Nicoll, Chairman

### We Will Miss Our Friend, Mentor And Colleague

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

The Grievance committee and I would like to recognize the passing of our President and Union Brother Brian Onyschak.

We offer our condolences to his family, friends and all of the people that Brian has helped over the years as a Union

Rep, Grievance Chair, and President of our Local.

Brian put a tremendous amount of effort and passion into his work and had the respect of his counter-parts in the Company.

I worked with Brian closely over the last year and a

half and have a deep admiration for his skill and tenacity in which he represented all of us.

We commit to continue with the same passion and drive Brian had and we will dearly miss our friend, mentor and colleague.

### New Additional Form Of Drug & Alcohol Testing Still Falls Short Of Proving Impairment

The first subject I would like to speak about is the update that was put out by the Company on an additional form of drug testing that is being introduced. The introduction of oral fluid testing (mouth swab) is in theory a step in the right direction to move from drug metabolite detection (past use) and narrow the window of detection for recent drug use.

Initially when we first heard rumors of a new policy being developed for the Teck Union locals, one of the concerns was an extra level of intrusion into your privacy. Also because the express test technology was not reliable enough it would mean people being tested would be suspended pending the results, which

could be up to two weeks. The way the Company is implementing the test is that they will only swab test if you fail a urine collection test or the results are inconclusive.

We have been advised by the Company that there will be no change in the policy as it already contemplates other testing measures in the language. I

want to be clear that this new test still falls short of proving impairment and that the Union still has a right to grieve any application of this test and any discipline/termination associated with the results. Please feel free to call me with any questions about our position on the current policy and grievance filed against it.



## Excessive Discipline Grievance Settled Before Arby

We had an arbitration booked for February 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> with Arbitrator, Chris Sullivan. The arbitration was for excessive discipline for three of our members. A lot of time and effort was put in to resolving this

issue and we finally reached a settlement that both parties could agree to without going to arbitration. Regardless of how strong either party thinks their argument is there is always a level of risk taking something to arbitra-

tion and losing. That being said, some issues need to be arbitrated, the last arbitration over vacation adjustment was a good example.

## Policy Grievance Filed On Forced Vacation

Last year we took on a grievance on forced vacation and a violation of addendum "D" in our Collective Agreement. After opening statements, we were approached by the Arbitrator, Dave McPhillips. He acknowledged the issue but didn't think that this was the set of facts to get the resolution we were after. Upon careful review, and advice from our legal counsel we agreed to a settlement letter which we felt would help our legal argument going forward to support or rights in addendum "D". Recent management for the lead re-

finery told members that do to a shortage of lead from the smelter they would not be requiring them to work and to take vacation. Not all of the members were told to stay home, thus why I was not notified as per our letter of agreement we got out the previous arbitration.

We have filed a policy grievance again and I believe this is the case to finally get an answer on if the Company has the right to force you on vacation last minute and circumvent your rights under (but not limited to) addendum "D" of the

collective agreement. The Grievance committee is reviewing this latest policy grievance with our legal counsel and we look forward to updating you all on this issue as we proceed through the grievance procedure.

Not all of us have an abundance of vacation to use and every minute of it is precious time we have to spend away from work to enjoy activities and spend time with people we love. Vacation is a bargained for right and should not be rendered meaningless by an unreasonable use of management rights. I do want to acknowledge that the company has agreed to look at finding work to avoid future situations where our members would told to stay home. We will see if this issue can be resolved through mutual engagement, but an arbitration is very likely.

## Supplemental Worker Concerns

We have been getting a lot of calls regarding contractors being used as supplemental workers. This typically is only with trade vacancies. The Union

is currently reviewing an award from a prior arbitration on this exact issue and may be reviewing this issue with our legal counsel.

## Shop Steward Level 1 & 2 Schools

We will be putting on a Shop Steward Course Level one and two this spring. Please notify me through email or call me at the hall if you are interested. We are always are looking for new Stewards and providing

training opportunities for those that join our ranks.

The language in the Collective Agreement can be difficult to interpret for those of you that aren't familiar with it.

Please call me with any questions, attend membership meetings or contact me to let me know what you would like to hear about in my grievance articles.

In Solidarity,  
Jesse Nicoll.



## Benefits Co-ordinator Report

Jeff Schuepfer, Benefits Co-ordinator

### Dealing With Sun Life Misinformation

Brothers and Sisters,

Last month I received calls from disgruntled members regarding Sun Life.

What is occurring is that when a member calls into Sun Life to find out a certain level of coverage information (mainly vision care) they have under the plan and they are receiving misleading information from that representative. This is totally unacceptable!!!!

When a member calls in to Sun Life the Rep will ask for the contract number or while calling a message will state: for quicker service please provide the contract number (150039) along with your employee number. Once you have a Sun Life representative on the line the member should be receiving the correct information for the particular benefit in question.

There is no excuse because the USW Local 480 plan is right in front of the Sun Life rep on their computer screen. If members are uncertain of their coverage our benefit booklet is online under benefits on our webpage at [uswlocal480.com](http://uswlocal480.com). If you do call Sun Life and are being misled on our coverage email me at [benefits1@usw480.com](mailto:benefits1@usw480.com) or call the Union Hall at 250-368-9131.

### RRSP Plan Name Changed To Canada Life

As of January 1<sup>st</sup> 2020, Great-West Life, London Life and Canada Life will now be known as Canada Life Assurance Company (Canada Life). You will start seeing the Canada Life name from now on. When you sign into your GRS Access

for information on your Group RRSP you will now notice the name change to Canada Life.

If you make contributions through online banking or pre-authorized contributions, those will switch to Canada Life automatically. There is nothing

you need to do while the transition to Canada Life is taking place. For more information you can visit the [canadalife.com](http://canadalife.com) welcome website. This year's deadline for contributing to an RRSP for the 2019 tax year is March 2nd 2020.

### Provincial NDP Eliminates MSP Premiums

As of January 1<sup>st</sup> 2020, MSP premiums were eliminated. British Columbian residents are no longer charged MSP premiums. Our members' premiums were paid for by the Company but required our current members and our pensioners to claim the total annual premium

amounts on your income tax as MSP premiums were a taxable benefit. This will no longer be the case after the 2019 income tax year.

British Columbians are responsible though for maintaining their account with Health Insurance of B.C. If you have

an address change, family status change, or immigration documentation you must notify HIBC immediately. You can visit the Managing Your MSP Account or if just an address change it can be made at Address Change BC.

## Waiting On Proposed Changes To WCB System

Just a quick update on an article I did in the June 2019 Union paper on the five demands the USW put forth for change to the current WCB system. We are

expecting the provincial government to release information on the proposed changes. Hopefully the government releases these changes soon so as to table some

new legislation by this spring so future workers injured or workers affected by occupational disease are compensated accordingly.

## Company Uses Two Very Different Practices When Accommodating Workers With Limitations

Just recently we had an unfortunate event as one of our members hurt themselves at work. The member did everything right by going to first aid, letting their supervisor know, due to the injury, making an appointment that day to see their physician and by calling WorkSafeBC to report the incident.

I have always said, "I never want to see anyone hurt at work and vision the day we as 480 members can achieve one year, the first of many goals, without a loss time accident.

Once a workplace injury does happen on the property (depending on the severity of the injury) the member will be offered light duties by the Company. What exactly are the duties to be performed? Amazingly job duties have appeared within minutes of hearing of the accident to accommodate the injured member. Am I frustrated that light duties are offered? No! if the members' physician

believes that light duties ( the duties to be performed should be known to the worker and physician ) are suited for a back to work recovery and to eventually achieve full duties, then amen to that.

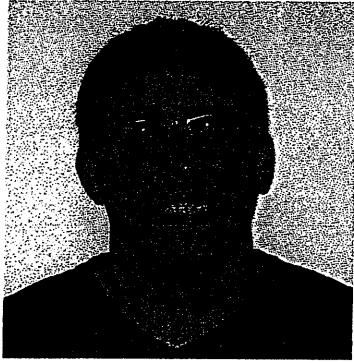
Here is what makes me go gray overnight, if job duties can be found within minutes of a workplace injury to prevent a lost time incident how come is it so difficult to find an accommodation to members who's workplace limitations which prevent them from doing the full scope of their job not available? Does the Company ask what the workplace restrictions are for an injured worker once a workplace injury occurs? No! because the Company does not know the work restrictions right away without the member being treated by a doctor.

Supervisors, follow up with your injured employee. A phone call goes a long way. Call and ask how they are doing?

What can we do to assist you in any way? Although injured we value you at work but if you are unable, we look forward to when you can return. Simple questions that make an injured employee feel wanted and respected, not left out.

As you already know our USW Local 480 president, Brian Onyschak passed away on Sunday, February 9<sup>th</sup>. I worked with Brian at the Union Hall for close to seven years. Since that first day I sat in the office as the Benefits Coordinator to Brian going off sick, most impressive to me was the six times Brian sat on bargaining committees to fight for a fair Collective Agreement for all our members. Deepest condolences go out to his partner Denise, his family and friends. R.I. P. Brother.

In Solidarity,  
Brother Schuepf.



# Health & Safety Committee

Kyle Jorgensen, Safety Chairman

## Your Safety Committee

I would like to start by welcoming Jay Walters to the position of Local 480 Safety Coordinator. Jay was elected to the position by our Executive at the December Executive meeting.

Jay was previously an operator in the Lead Refinery. Welcome Jay.

During the course of the past couple of months an issue

that has been brought up is that some of the members do not know who the Union Safety Vice Chair is in their area. Below is a list of the Union Vice Chairs and their areas:

NAME	POSITION	AREA	SHIFT
<b>UNION REPS:</b>			
JORGENSEN, Kyle	Chair		5X2
LAFRENIERE, Nylan	Coordinator		5X2
WALTERS, Jay	Coordinator		5X2
FOURNIER, Craig	Vice Chair	Lead South	QT
McKENZIE, Will	Vice Chair	Prop Services	SQ
BELL, Tyler	Vice Chair	Lead North	5x2
FRAIKIN, Phil	Vice Chair	Warfield	5x2
RODLIE, Dan	Vice Chair	Roasters	RS
ALLEN, Aiden	Vice Chair	E&M	RS
MORRISON, James (INTERIM - JOHNSON, Dean)	Vice Chair	Leaching	TR 5x2
ALLEGRETTO, Trevor	Chair, Local 9705	Environment	5X2

The Vice Chairs are Joint Health and Safety Committee members that the members can go to for help dealing with safety issues along with the supervisors.

The Vice Chairs have the ability to help out with safety issues and work directly with myself, Jay, and Nylan, as well as, Teck Safety and supervision to ensure that we do indeed correct the unsafe condition.

## Safety Rep School On March 10th & 11th

One last reminder that the Safety Rep School is March 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> at the Local 480 Hall. This is basic training for members wanting to start out in

safety. Please sign up as soon as possible as we need enough time for book off and to get the required resources. There are posters up in the plants. Please

contact myself if you are interested at [safety-chair@usw480.com](mailto:safety-chair@usw480.com).

*(Continued on next page)*





## Safety Co-ordinators

Nylan LaFreniere & Jayson Walters

# Report All Incidents In A Timely Manner



Since the beginning of the New Year we have had a concerning amount of incidents that have not been reported both from management and union, we are asking everyone to please report every mishap from minor to major, so we as a safety group

can properly investigate and rectify the issue going forward. I would like you to take a look at con doc 3837 and refer to the steps required for yourself and your manager / shift leader. If these steps are taken, a full and proper investigation can and will

be initiated with the best outcome possible for all parties involved. We have a great number of members and staff who are willing to help each other out to make our site as safe as possible. At any time, **DAY OR NIGHT** you can reach us at the hall 368-9131 and the safety team will be there for you.

## The New Guy by Jay Walters

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

Last December I was elected by the executive as Safety Coordinator, and I began working in this new role in late January. I have been working as

an operator in the Lead Refinery for almost nine years, and have been a safety rep for eight years. I first joined the Union Executive four years ago as a Guide, then eventually moved to the

*(Continued on page 10)*

I would like to welcome Jayson Walters to his new role as Safety Coordinator as we have had a shuffle with Steve's retirement and Kyle moving up to Safety Chair. We are making our way around property to introduce him to all the areas in the next few weeks.

On a last note, I'm sure we are all aware of the passing of our president Brian Onyschak. Brain had dedicated a good majority of his life to union activism and being a long time standing member of Local 480 in the Grievance Chair position, Vice President and to our current President.

From all of us down here at the hall, to all of our members past and present on the hill, we would like to thank you for your service and all you have done, you will be greatly missed. Rest easy my friend.

In solidarity  
Nylan LaFreniere

### *"Safety Chair Report" from previous page . . .*

By the time this comes out you will probably already know about the passing of our President, Brian Onyschak. Brian put in many years down here and will always be known as a fighter.

Having seen it first hand over the past 5 years full-time down here, as well as, sitting in on a bargaining committee with him, it was quite obvious that Brian had a passion for representing our members and upholding member's rights. Brain always did what he felt was right for the members even when it was not easy to do.

We thank Brian for everything he did down here from standing up for our members and their rights as a long-time grievance chair (having to deal with some uncomfortable situations but always protecting our members) to protecting our members and overseeing the day to day at the Hall as Vice-President and President. Brian will be missed by all and we thank him for everything he has done for each and everyone one of us. Rest In Peace Brother Onyschak.

In solidarity,  
Kyle Jorgensen

# Financial Secretary's Report

Norm Murdoch, Financial Secretary

## Our President's Record Of Service



I would like to my article with a few words about my friend and our President, Brian Onyschak and his long record of service to Local 480.

Brian started work at Cominco in 1979 in the smelter. Not long after being hired on he signed up to be a Shop Steward and soon became the Chief Shop Steward for the smelter .

He was first elected as an operator rep to the Bargaining Committee in 1989, which he followed up again in 1997.

He also served two terms as a Trustee from 1991 to 1997 and as Local 480 Empowerment Coordinator from 1994 to 1997.

In 2003 he was elected Grievance Committee Chair for

the first of his five consecutive terms. As Grievance Committee Chair he also served on four more Bargaining Committees in 2005, 2008, 2012 & 2017.

After being elected Vice President in 2015, Brian succeeded President Armindo deMedeiros following his retirement in 2018 and was re-elected President in the Executive Elections in 2018.

In addition to his work for Local 480, Brian took a temporary Staff Rep posting for District 3 in Prince George from 2012 to 2014. Over the years he also instructed Level 1 & 2 Shop Steward schools for District 3.

As Grievance Chairman, he showed compassion and un-

derstanding when dealing with people at what can be a very low point in their lives. In some instances, after a member's discharge was upheld by an arbitrator, Brian would take it harder than the member. One of his favorite sayings was "At the end of the day we must always try to do what is best for the member".

With the occasional exceptions that come when blown off course by the fickle winds of political change, it adds up to almost four decades of dedicated service to our Union.

Thank you brother for your service and friendship.  
In solidarity  
Norm

*"The New Guy" continued from page 9 . . .*

position of Trustee. Having worked in one plant my whole time on the hill, I am currently working on getting familiar with the rest of the property, and getting inducted into all the various plants and business areas. I look forward to touring all parts of the property as often as possible, and meeting the workers in all areas.

Through some recent training, I have learned there is a CSA Standard for "psychologically healthy workplaces". I am currently working to compare it to our existing policies and seeing how we stack up, and how we can improve. I

won't go into too much detail right now but I believe that if we can promote a healthy work environment, we can help prevent a lot of workplace stress incidents. Prevention is the key here just as it is with physical workplace hazards.

As you all know, we recently lost our President and friend Brian Onyschak. I am new to this full time Union hall job, but I was fortunate enough to spend some time with Brian in various capacities for the Local. He always made it very clear to me that he was available any day of the week at any time when it

came to Union business. There were many times I'd find myself texting back and forth with him outside of normal work hours regarding a post we wanted to put out on Facebook, a bargaining update to send out on text alert, or what have you. He was always there to support me and I will never forget that. The man was a fighter to the very end, and USW Local 480 meant so much to him. Rest in Peace Brother, and may we all carry on the cause with the same passion.

In Solidarity,  
Jay Walters