

# YOUR

U N I O N

Local 480



Trail, B. C.

April 2025

VOL.53 No.2



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# 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 organization

Come check out our Local 480 merchandise!  
Items may be purchased at the hall. All items  
are proudly union made!



**LOCAL 480  
MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
April 17, 2025 3:45 PM  
480 STEELWORKER HALL**

- Mental Health/Addiction Workshops
- International Convention Resolutions

# President's Report

Chris Walker, President

## Putting Your Hand Up for Help

Hello Everyone,

Over the past few years while in this position, I've become increasingly aware of the rise in addiction issues among our membership. While we all know these challenges exist, we may not always realize that some of our own brothers and sisters are struggling with addiction right beside us every day.

Admitting you have a problem is incredibly difficult, and seeking help can feel even harder. As a union, we have a responsibility to support one another. If you need someone to talk to—whether it's for yourself, a co-worker, a family mem-

ber, or anyone else—please know that we are here to listen and connect you with the resources you need.

Many of us have helped members through difficult times and have access to multiple support resources. Additionally, we are collaborating with Teck and the Trail Community Action Team to provide informative sessions led by counselors and experts in the field.

### Upcoming Support Sessions:

#### On-Site at Work

- **April 22 & 23:** 1:30 – 2:30 PM



- **April 25:** 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM

#### Evening Session at Local 480 Hall –

- **April 24:** 6:30 – 8:00 PM

We understand that attending a session at work may not be comfortable for everyone, so we are also offering the evening session at the Union Hall. If you or someone you know could benefit from these resources, I encourage you to attend.

## Acknowledging the Hard Work Behind Our

Over the past few years, I've spoken a lot about our trades, the need for pay increases, and the importance of addressing the fact that the CWS system had failed them for decades. While we fought for our tradespeople, we also secured significant increases for our operators. In fact, over the last three years, our CWS committee has achieved more pay increases for operators than at any other time in our union's history.

This includes, but is not limited to, Feed Prep, Lead Refinery, Lead Alloy, Ammonia,

Gas Plant, Janitorial, and IGP. Additionally, the committee is actively working on increases for Messer, GLAP, Property Services Trucking, Sulphide, Silver, and several other areas.

This progress wouldn't have been possible without the dedication of our CWS representatives—Taylor Troubridge, Tyler Bell, and Mark Blackwell. These three have put in countless hours advocating for our members, often balancing their full-time jobs on-site with CWS responsibilities. When they can't get booked off, they continue the

work at home, using their own time to ensure progress is made. Their commitment deserves recognition—they fight for you and always put the membership first in discussions with the company.

Although we rarely acknowledge the company's role, in this case, credit is due. Tara Macdonald took over the CWS position for the company a few years ago, and since then, she has worked alongside our committee to address long-overlooked job evaluations.

*(Continued on page 4)*

(Continued from page 3)

While we don't always agree with her assessments, the effort put in to move things forward cannot be ignored.

So, to Taylor, Tyler, Mark, and Tara—thank you. Your hard work and dedication to CWS are truly appreciated.

I'd also like to mention the upcoming Brian Onyschak Memorial Crib Tournament.

This is a great event we host at the hall in memory of our late brother Brian. There will be food, drinks, door prizes, and of course, prizes for the winners. We'll also be holding a raffle during the event to help raise funds for the Gordy Steep Sick Children's Fund, an important cause that continues to support families in need.

**Date:** April 17  
**Time:** 5:30 PM  
**Location:** Local 480 Union Hall

Come out for a fun evening, good company, and a chance to support a great cause. Hope to see you there!

**Next Membership Meeting:**  
 April 17 | 3:45 PM If you're available, I hope you can join us. Your support and participation matter.

In solidarity,  
 Chris Walker

## LOCAL 480 - 2025 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

To qualify for a Local 480 scholarship or bursary, the student must write an essay of 500 to 1000 words on *“What impact has Local 480 had in the community, workplace safety or workers' rights? Also, if any, what role has Local 480 played in your family or families that you know?”*

Each essay will be evaluated on content, accuracy of information, form, and grammatical correctness. The scholarships are worth \$500.00, and bursaries are worth \$250.00 and are based on the following evaluating components:

- ▶ demonstrated academic ability
- ▶ need.

Essays must either be delivered to the Local 480 Hall (addressed to Jo-Lynne) or emailed to [jo-lynn@usw480.com](mailto:jo-lynn@usw480.com), no later than, Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

The scholarship/bursary will be made available to each successful candidate who will be furthering their education through post-secondary education. You will be required to provide a receipt from the institution of your choice showing that tuition fees have been paid prior to collecting your scholarship. In order to ensure that we have all signatures required to issue your cheque, it would be greatly appreciated if you would please phone our office at 250 368-9131 to make arrangements for your scholarship.

We sincerely hope the scholarship/bursary will be of assistance in the pursuit of a chosen career and wish each student the very best of luck.

# Grievance Committee Report

Jesse Nicoll, Grievance Chair

## Understanding and Accessing Your Collective Agreement

Hello Brothers, Sisters and fellow Steelworkers,

In this article I'm going to focus on understanding and accessing our Collective Bargaining Agreement. Our current agreement expires May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2027. The intent here is to help educate some of the new members, along with our members who are interested in learning a little more. My belief is that an educated membership is a strong membership.

### What is a collective agreement?

A collective agreement is a legal contract negotiated, agreed to, and signed by an employer and a union. It defines the working conditions. It sets out the rights and responsibilities of the employer and of the worker.

**Why is it important to have a collective agreement?** The reasons are many, but here are a few.

- The collective agreement recognizes the union as the workers representatives.
- Gives us the right to a collective voice.
- They are a critical step towards workplace justice.
- Shift power from the employer to the workers.

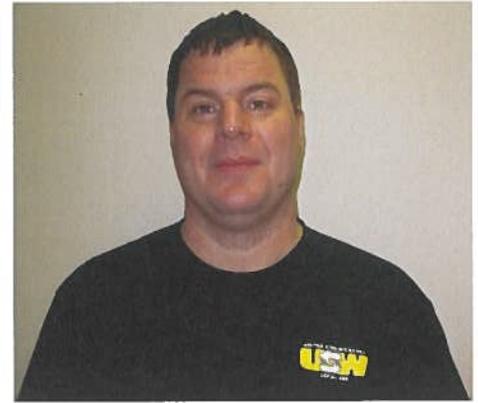
Next let's focus on understanding our current agreement,

the first page of the agreement is the best starting point when a question or issue arises. The index lists the different Articles, the title of the Article and the page number to turn to. Also listed are the various addendums, schedules and appendixes. The first few Articles are key clauses that you would find in many collective agreements. Union recognition, scope (who's covered by the agreement), anti-discrimination and management rights. The rest of the contract is more specific to our worksite and bargaining unit. Letters of Understanding and Agreements are also legal contracts between the employer and Local 480. They are generally negotiated outside of the bargaining process but are reviewed during contract negotiations.

It is very important to read the collective agreement as a whole.

There may be relevant sections throughout the agreement. An answer to your question may be contained within a specific Article but may be more clearly defined in a Letter of Understanding.

Let's use your transfer rights as an example. Looking at the index in the agreement you can see that Article 11 covers transfers as well as seniority, which is also important in how transfers work. You might also want to understand what jobs are covered in the seniority unit/plant. That would be in schedule "A" job class list start-



ing on page 199. The job list covers all the areas, plants and trades, and lets us know what seniority unit number it is in; also, it gives a list of jobs and the classification given to each one. We might also want to see what each job pays in any year of the contract. This can be found using the index on page 197 Schedule "A" wage scale. Another question may be how is the job classification established? Again, using the index, we would find Article 14 wages and salaries on page 35. You might want to learn about a recognized shift that may be in place in any given plant or trade you might be interested in transferring to. You would find this in Article 13, hours of work and work week. It's very important to consider the meaning of the words used in the agreement. Sometimes words or phrases are specifically defined in the agreement and when they are not, use their plain and ordinary meaning as defined in a dictionary.

Also review the issue with a shop steward or the appropriate department at the union hall. We can help with where to look in the collective agreement as well as whether there have been any grievances or arbitrations that would have an effect on how the collective agreement would apply.

Last I'll add a brief bit of history for context. Local 480 in Trail was first established as a un-

ionized workforce in 1938 with the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers. From 1967 to present we have been a United Steelworkers union. The collective agreement we have today was built over that time through workers standing in solidarity, and successively bargain-

ing each contract over the years to improve the rights and working conditions for Local 480. It's important to recognize that these improvements have come through some difficult times over the years because of strike action. These strikes took place for the workers at the time, but also to

protect and improve the collective agreements for generations that followed. Local 480 is broadly recognized as a strong unionized workforce.

In Solidarity,  
Jesse Nicoll

## Local 480 Summer Student Employment 2025

USW, Local 480 is offering an enthusiastic individual an opportunity to work in a Union based summer student work program.

### LOCATION:

Trail Labour Centre  
910 Portland St.  
Trail, BC

### HOURS OF WORK:

30 hrs/wk.  
Up to 10 weeks  
Rate: \$33.86/hr.

### START DATE:

TBD

### JOB SUMMARY:

- Summer educational and training internship.
- Learn about Unions.
- Learn about Union elected positions and responsibilities.
- Accompany the Local 480 Safety Department with onsite tours and inspections.
- Scan and build digital files.
- Train on building repair & maintenance.
- Basic yard care/building maintenance.
- Subject to educational schedule.

### QUALIFICATIONS:

- Grade 12 education diploma/ GED. (education will be verified)
- Enrolled in post-secondary education. (will be verified)
- Valid Class 7 driver's license.
- Ability to work in a safe and efficient manner.
- Positive attitude and self-starter.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills.
- Knowledge of power operated hand tools, equipment, and instruments.

### APPLICATIONS:

**Must include proof of post-secondary acceptance.**

**Will be accepting applications up to 4:00pm on Friday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025.**

**Applications to be emailed to [jo-lynn@usw480.com](mailto:jo-lynn@usw480.com)**

*Local 480 would like to thank all applicants for their interest and will only be replying to those selected for an interview.*

# Benefits Co-ordinator Report

Leigh Creegan, Benefits Co-ordinator

## Accommodation Process

To the member of Local 480,

I hope everyone's been able to enjoy some of this nice spring weather. A reminder that the new benefit year for your healthy lifestyle account will begin on June 1<sup>st</sup>. I would also like to mention our mental health benefit, which is \$2500.00 per year per dependent. If seeking mental health support is something you have been asking yourself about, I highly suggest you take advantage of the benefits available to maintain and promote your mental health. If you need any resources or have questions on where to start, give me a call (250-368-9131) or email (benefits1@usw480.com) and I'd gladly help point you in the right direction.

WCB has been on a roll with denying or cutting members off benefits. We've got six claims being appealed at the Review Division. We did have one decision from the Review Division be referred back to the Board for more information and follow up to be adjudicated again. I'll continue to update the membership on the status of these claims as they come in.

I want to take a moment to talk about accommodations and how they work. It is a very broad subject and can vary from case to case. Accommodations start when a worker has a medical condition that puts a restriction(s), set in place by a doctor or medical professional, on the work the worker can perform. Then the focus is on the job and plant you are currently working. If modifications to the job can be made to accommodate the worker then great, the modifications are made and the worker continues in the role. If the job can't be modified to fit the restrictions, then other work is looked at in the plant and if the worker can perform those identified duties. If nothing in the home plant can be accommodated, then jobs outside that area are looked at. The Company has an obligation to look for work up to the point of undue hardship. Undue hardship is the limit of an employer's obligation to accommodate an employee with a disability. An employer must explore all reasonable possibilities to accommodate a worker and must prove they have followed a process and an explanation to claim undue hardship. An undue hardship is unique to each accommodation situation. Accommoda-



tions are not instant and can take time. Just know your Union fights very hard for accommodations and if we could make them happen instantly we would; however, in some instances they take a bit of time depending on the restrictions. If we come to a disagreement with the Company on an accommodation, we will use the grievance procedure to settle the matter.

Keep your beneficiary information up to date. Also, if your address has changed call down to the Hall (250-268-9131) and let Jo-Lynne know. Be sure to report all injuries and start a claim with WCB (1-888-967-5377). Keep me up to date on your work/injury status. It is always easier to get me involved from the beginning of the process.

I want to take a moment to acknowledge our brother Michael Greenwood who passed away earlier this year. I didn't have the pleasure of personally knowing Michael, but I did get to hear a lot of the stories and impact he had on people. I know he will be dearly missed by friends and family.

In Solidarity,  
Leigh

Sign-up For Text Alerts by Texting 480 to 32323



# Health & Safety Committee

Kyle Jorgensen, Safety Chair

## Day of Mourning Ceremony 2025

Once again, the National Day of Mourning is almost upon us. April 28<sup>th</sup> marks the National Day of Mourning. It is a day that people all across British Columbia and the rest of Canada gather to commemorate those who have lost their lives as a result of a workplace incident or an industrial disease. It is also the time to renew our commitment to making all workplaces a safer place to earn a living.

In 2024, 146 workers in B.C. died from a workplace injury or disease according to numbers on the [dayofmourning.bc.ca](http://dayofmourning.bc.ca)

website. That is 146 workers, people, like you and I, that did not get to go home that day. This is simply senseless and unacceptable. There should never be any sort of worry that when your spouse, parent, grandparent, sibling, child or friend goes to work that they may not come back home. Nobody should ever have to go to work and fear that they may not return home the same way they went to work that day.

Local 480 will be hosting our annual Day of Mourning Ceremony, once again at the Workers Memorial Monument

on Bay Avenue here in Trail. This year, April 28<sup>th</sup> falls on a Monday. We will be leaving the Local 480 Hall at 3:45pm to march down Bay Ave to the Workers Memorial Monument at which time (4:00pm) we will begin the ceremony. All are welcome to attend. We ask that while you attend that we stay on the grassy area in front and leave the sidewalks clear for pedestrians and passers-by. See you on April 28<sup>th</sup>.

In Solidarity,  
Kyle

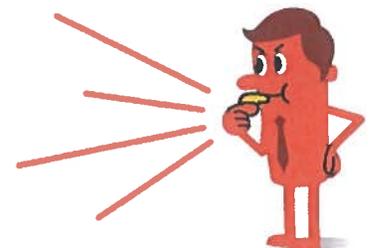
*“Mourn for the dead, Fight for the Living”*



### Important Contact information for Reporting!

Doing what's right line # 1-888-494-0274

WCB Reporting line 1-888-621-7233 or report online at:  
<https://prevruw.online.worksafebc.com/>



## Safety Co-ordinators

Dean Johnson & Jay Walters

### Your Hands Are Your Tools-Protect Them at Work



To the 480 membership,

At our site, our hands are vital to the work we do. Yet, the hazards we face daily—heavy machinery, sharp tools, chemical exposure, high temps, and moving parts—mean that hand injuries are a constant risk. We see the safety stats every month, and hands are far and away the most injured body part. Whether you're a seasoned worker or a special assignment, taking steps to protect your hands is critical for your safety.

One of the most effective ways to protect your hands is by wearing the appropriate gloves for the task at hand. Whether it's cut-resistant gloves for handling sharp materials, heat-resistant gloves for welding, or chemical-resistant gloves for handling hazardous substances, ensure you're equipped with the proper

PPE. I'm sure you've heard by now that we have new glove options available in the safety catalog, so I encourage you to have a look and decide which option is best for your task. If you are unsure of how to use the safety catalog, reach out to your supervisor or safety rep.

With that being said, and as important as the right glove is, it's even more important to keep your hands out of the bite in the first place. Hazard assessment is key to safety, so before you even start the job, take a few minutes to identify what can go wrong, and how you can prevent it. Do you have the right training for the job? Is there a better way that will keep your hands safe? Should you ask for some help? If you notice unsafe conditions—like worn-out equipment, unguarded tools, or poorly la-

beled chemicals—report them immediately to your supervisor

Distraction and fatigue can lead to accidents. Many times, we hurt ourselves when we are rushing to finish a job, short on time, or reacting to an unexpected situation. Always stay alert when operating machinery, handling tools, or working near moving equipment. Take breaks when needed to maintain focus and avoid complacency. There is no job so urgent that it's worth risking your hands.

Wash your hands after handling chemicals and have first aid treat any cuts or scrapes promptly to prevent infection. Remember, your hands are irreplaceable. Stay safe out there!

In Solidarity,  
Jay Walters

## Field Level Risk Assessment

Local 480 members...

Over the next month or so, the FLRA program will continue to be rolled out.

If we can identify hazards before we start our tasks, we can implement controls for those hazards and make a safer workplace. The FLRA card is a tool to help us identify hazards and to help us become better hazard identifiers. This will help us to reduce incidents and injuries across site. As part of your workday and your tasks, you will be given the time to stop and complete an FLRA.

If there are any questions or hazards that cannot be controlled, discuss them with your supervisor. If there is no clear path forward, a question as to what controls are necessary, or any questions about filling out the cards, there may be more support needed.

Contact an area FLRA Champion or your Safety Department. Open communication will promote solutions, and we are here to support you and your safety. We want everyone to be safe while at work and to go home

healthy. Managing hazards and risks before, during and after our tasks will help us all to accomplish this.

Be sure to ask any questions you have during your rollout sessions. There should be an FLRA Champion present to help answer questions about the program.

As always if you need assistance with any issue or hazard, call us at the hall (250) 368-9131.

Take care out there.  
DEAN



## UNION EVENT: April 24, 2025 6:30pm to 8pm

Free event sponsored by the  
United Steelworkers, Local 480 &  
the Trail Community Action Team  
910 Portland Street, Trail

**Registration is required:**  
<https://shorturl.at/QDVtS>



# BUILDING HOPE: Mental Health & Substance Use in the Community, Workplace & Home

Men in industry are overrepresented in the number of illicit drug poisoning deaths in British Columbia. In response, the Tailgate Toolkit Project aims to educate employers and employees of BC's industrial sector about the resources available to them.

## YOU DESERVE THE RIGHT TOOLS

### SPEAKERS:

**Mika Dumont**, Project Coordinator with the Tailgate Toolkit Project, which explores the relationship between pain, mental health and substance use and provides education, training and resources to both employers and employees

**Lorna Thomas**, producer of the video series Building Hope: Substance Use in the Trades who is also co-founder of *Moms Stop the Harm*, an organization that supports families and advocates for change.

**Tailgate Toolkit Project:**  
[thetailgatetoolkit.ca](http://thetailgatetoolkit.ca)

# WE WANT YOU FOR A SAFETY REP.

## Level I – Health & Safety School (Q/S)

**June 10<sup>th</sup> & June 11<sup>th</sup>**

The deadline for signing up is May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

If you are interested in becoming a part of our Safety team, please contact Kyle at Local 480 Hall at 250.368.9131 or email to [safetychair@usw480.com](mailto:safetychair@usw480.com)

### Health & Safety Committee members:

**Colin Gurnett - Leaching**

**Matt Thomson - Roasters**

**Tyler Bell - Pb North**

**Kyle Robertson/Jeremy Whaley - Property Support**

**Jill Kinahan - Pb South**

**Mike Pisacreta - E&M**

**Phil Fraikin - TFO**

**Cam Lefurgey- Mtce Support**

**Kieran Rabbitte-Hill - Fire Hall**

**Trevor Allegretto - Office & Technical Chair**

**Kyle Jorgensen - Jay Walters - Dean Johnson - Local 480**

Local 480 is looking for Health and Safety Reps.  
to join their Health and Safety Committee.



1st, 2nd, & 3rd place prizes  
&  
door prizes.

# LOCAL 480

presents:

## 4th Annual Brian Onyschak Memorial Crib Tournament!

**COST:** \$10.00/person entry fee.

**Includes:** door prize entry ticket, 1 drink, & food

**DATE:** APRIL 17th, 2025

**LOCATION:** @ Local 480 Hall

**Happy Hour:** 5:30pm

**Start time:** 6:00pm



**Please submit team members to Jo-Lynne  
by emailing [jo-lynn@usw480.com](mailto:jo-lynn@usw480.com)  
Singles will be paired up.**

**OPEN TO ALL LOCAL 480 MEMBERS & 480 RETIREES.**