



USW LOCAL 9346 Your monthly news & updates

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Visit our Website

We have re-vamped our website. Please check it out!! Find out who your Executive, Shop Stewards and Safety Reps are, find your benefits booklet and Sunlife forms, read past newsletters, find out meeting dates, and more!!

Upcoming Events

General Membership Meeting - Our next scheduled meeting is on Tuesday, February 21, 2023 at 5:30pm at the Union Hall located at 111 Centennial Square, Sparwood. If you would prefer to join this meeting virtually, please email admin@usw9346.ca to get a link.

Safety Rep Meeting - February 27, 2023 at 4:30pm at the Union Hall

Shop Steward Meeting - March 27, 2023 at 4:30pm at the Union Hall



Union Assistance Plan - Beneficiary Cards

The Union Assistance Plan is a program run out of our United Steelworkers District 3. If you belong to this program, a benefit of \$2500 is paid out to your beneficiary immediately upon your death. If you see \$0.70 coming off your paycheck once a month called Union Dues USW Assist Vol. then you belong to this program. (If you do not belong and want to sign up, please come see Sarah at the Union Hall.) You will have also signed a yellow beneficiary card and we keep these at the Union Hall.

A lot of our members forget about this benefit and forget to keep their beneficiary cards current. We can only pay out to the beneficiary listed on your beneficiary card. If your life situations change over the years, please make sure you are also coming in to the Union Hall to update your beneficiary cards.



Retirees

CONGRATULATIONS to all of our Retiree's in 2022!!!

Pictured right is Doug Ramsey from Coal Mountain. Doug was a gasfitter and retired from CMO in July 2022.

Below Left - Len Hanrahan - Len retired as a Millwright at the Plant on August 4, 2022.

Below Middle - Jerry Pinksen. Jerry retired as an Equipment Operator on November 1, 2022

Below Right - Ray Banga Sr. Ray retired as a Dozer/Grader Operator on December 6, 2022.



Len Hanrahan



Jerry Pinksen



Ray Banga Sr.

Messages from your Local Union Executive

President's Message

Postings and Apprenticeships

Back in September of 2022 a plant labourer posting went up and upon closing date there were only 3 people who applied on the position. The Company came to the Union to ask if they could hire off the street for the remainder of the open positions and the Union did not see an issue with this. Fast forward 4 months and we find out the Company is planning on bring in 3 more people off the street to fill plant labourer jobs without posting them first when the CBA clearly states that all vacancies must be posted. When the Union brought this up at Labour Management on Tuesday, the Company immediately started to back track and started throwing around an offer of putting out some apprenticeships in trade for these 3 plant labourer jobs?

One might think Wow that's great since we haven't seen anything close to the apprenticeship numbers promised by the company pre Covid and typically they will hire 3rd or 4th year apprentices off the streets long before they give one out to the members because it's easier and quicker.

Now we all know how the Company likes to spin the narrative and they will probably try to make it sound like the Union somehow has stopped some members from getting an apprenticeship. As usual this is completely untrue. The Union unfortunately, has nothing to do with when an apprenticeship will be given out and that's not due to the lack of asking, but we do have control on how the posting of jobs is supposed to be done to ensure that our members have the ability to move into new positions on the mine site.

One should ask why is the Company so willing to trade apprenticeships for some entry level labourer positions or who are they hiring for these positions?

I was pleased to see the Plant Labourer posting for all crews go up on Tuesday. Hopefully we will also be having an apprentice selection committee meeting as well in the near future!

Changes at the Union Hall

As the New Year rolls in we have had some changes here at the Union Hall that everyone should know about.

With the passing of Brother Cook last month, Dave Puszkar from the plant will be filling the Grievance Chair role.

Julia McKay will be leaving us temporarily to work in her new role for the International Union as the Indigenous Engagement Coordinator for the Western Provinces. In her absence Frank Roesger out of the Operations dept. will be taking over the Safety Chair position.

Our Office Administrator & WOS Co-Chair Sarah Thompson will be taking on the role of WCB Chair as well.

We also welcome back Nick Howard to our Executive committee as a Guide and thank Tylor Laberge for his time in this role.

As always, we are looking for members to step up as Shop Stewards and Safety Reps and we are looking for more Women of Steel. Please let me or the Committee Chair's know if you are interested in one of these roles.

Our General Membership Meetings are still held on the third Tuesday of every month at 5:30 pm feel free to stop in or join in online.

A New Year always brings new challenges and we are hoping to see more apprenticeships offered to our members and less first years being hired off the streets. It is nice to see the majority of the contractors removed from operations now. We need to push to have the contractors removed from the plant and have more of our people hired to do those jobs. Its always cheaper to have your own employees do the work than pay huge \$\$ to contractors.

In Solidarity,

Scott Liddle
President
scottl@usw9346.ca

Safety Chair's Message

It IS Your Business

Worker Rights are a fundamental part of our safety while on the job. Yes, you have rights! These rights are embedded in the Mine's Act and our CBA.

How did they come to be? For over a century, workers have been stepping up to fight for better and safer working conditions. One such fight started in April 1974, when uranium miners at Elliot Lake in Ontario who were concerned about the prevalence of lung cancer and silicosis, started a fourteen-day wild cat strike. This prompted the Ontario government to hire James Ham to lead a commission, later referred to as The Ham Commission, tasked to look into the health and safety of these miners. What came from that was a lengthy report that highlighted the need and paved the way for legislation that provides workers with three basic rights:

1. The Right to Know – Everyone has the right to know the hazards on their work site, and in their immediate area. This includes being able to access information, and the ability to make requests for information in a simple and timely manner.
2. The Right to Participate – You have the right to participate in health and safety activities on site and have input on how your employer ensures health and safety. This can mean participating as an individual, or through a safety rep or the JOHSC.
3. The Right to Refuse – This is a very important right and should not be taken lightly. When you feel that you or a co-worker has been tasked with a job that you believe could endanger your health or safety, you need to exercise this right! Please take the time to become familiar with the language around this right found in the HSRC book (ask a supervisor if you don't have a copy), as well as, in the CBA in Article 4.

HSRC (Mine's Act) S.14 - Each manager must ensure that no employee is discriminated against in any manner, including adversely affecting any term or condition of employment, for complying with this Act, the regulations or the code.

CBA -Article 4.14 (f) - an employee will not be subject to discipline for refusing to carry out work that can be demonstrated on reasonable grounds to create an undue health or safety hazard.

As of February 1st, Frank Roesger will be assuming the role of Health and Safety Chair as I have accepted the position of Indigenous Engagement Coordinator for our District. Frank brings many years of experience and knowledge with him and is excited to take on this new position!

Thank you everyone for your support and encouragement throughout the past two years! It wasn't easy learning and navigating this role through Covid restrictions, but it was made easier with the support of all the members and Union reps!

In Solidarity,

Julia McKay
VP and H&S Chair
juliam@usw9346.ca

Interim Safety Chair's Message

Dear members,

My name is Frank Roesger and I am proud to be in my new role as occupational health and safety chair and JOHSC Co Chair for the USW 9346.

Many of you know me on D Crew in which I have been on for the past 13 years . Throughout those years I have represented workers on-site as a Safety Representative/Shop Steward & Trustee on the executive for the local. I will do my utmost best to represent all of you in my new role.

In solidarity,

Frank Roesger
Interim H&S Chair
Interim JOHSEC - Co-Chair
250-278-0224
frankr@usw9346.ca

Grievance Chair's Message

Big Shoes to Fill

Starting this year, I have stepped into the role of Grievance Chair for USW 9346. I started at Teck in 2014, like many others I started by driving haul truck. After 4 years I moved into the Maintenance Dept as a Steam Bay Attendant and after about a year there I moved down to the Plant as a Load Out Operator.

During my time at the mine I found myself bothered but how many employees, including myself were being treated in in many situations. Complaints about proper pay, bullying, inaccuracies in job postings, shortened lunch breaks...the list goes on. This lead me to take on the role of Shop Steward which I have held with pride for the last 5 years and eventually also signed up to be a Safety Rep as well.

From there, my interest in Union activity only grew as I became an outside guard for the Executive and that led to my current Recording Secretary position. From there, I learned more and more about the inner workings of our union, attended educational courses, and was able to spend time with other activists that worked at and visited the Union Hall.

Now I am taking on the task of attending several courses through the USW and District 3 to equip myself with the necessary knowledge to better serve the members and help resolve grievances and other issues between the Company and the Membership.

I am eager to join the USW team and help the membership with your concerns. I now work full time down at the Union Hall and can be reached there at 250-425-0131.

In Solidarity,

Dave Puszkar
Grievance Chair
davep@usw9346.ca

WCB Chair's Message

Big Shoes to Fill - Part 2

I also have big shoes to fill.

I am thrilled that the Local has asked me to take on the WCB Chair role full time. I will also continue working in my other roles at the Union Hall as Office Administrator and Women of Steel Co-Chair.

I am off to my second level of WCB training next week followed by a week of training on Provincial Law. I also had the benefit of working with our previous WCB Chair, Brother Cook for many years and I can say that I have learned from the best. He had taught me so much and I am happy to be able to continue this good work for the Local. I have been doing WCB appeals for the last few years and have had some great successes. I am excited to be able to continue in this capacity for the membership.

I can be reached at the Union hall at 250-425-0131 for all of your administrative and WCB needs.

In Solidarity,

Sarah Thompson
Office Admin/WCB Chair/WOS Co-Chair
admin@usw9346.ca
