The background of the entire page is a soft-focus photograph of autumn foliage. The top corners are framed by branches with vibrant yellow and orange leaves. The bottom half of the image shows a dense carpet of fallen leaves in various shades of brown, orange, and yellow, suggesting a park or wooded area in fall. The overall lighting is warm and golden, typical of late afternoon or early morning light.

SOLIDARITY
NEWS
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OCTOBER 2023 -FALL
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INSIDE

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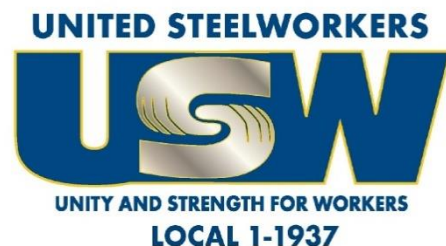
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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Brian Butler



President's Report

I want to start my report by acknowledging how lucky coastal BC has been when you see the impact that forest fires have had on communities in the interior of BC. We have had some on the coast as well, but the fires in Kelowna, Kamloops and other interior locations have been devastating to communities. It is not known how many at this time but some members of the USW Locals 1-423 (Kelowna) and 1-417 (Kamloops) have lost their homes during the fires and many were evacuated. The USW Humanity Fund, of which we are proud supporters and contributors has donated \$20,000 to the Red Cross to assist with regional evacuees.

Firefighters from all over Canada fought the fire under extreme conditions and we thank them. I want to recognize that USW Local 1-1937 members **Brother Dean Tait and Gaston Töpfer** both volunteer firefighters in Port McNeil who volunteered along with others from their Fire Hall. Brother Tait's and Töpfer exemplify a firefighter's dedication to people, not only in their own community, but to other communities as well. It is something we should all be thankful for and proud of.

I am hoping this report finds you relaxed and well after a long dry summer in Coastal BC. It has been a difficult one for many members who faced some period of layoff over the summer, especially those in the harvesting as well as the manufacturing sectors of the industry. Dry conditions and down markets have been challenging for everyone associated with the industry this year.

Members in the industry know that the forest industry can be cyclical in nature, with highs and lows. In the years leading up to 2023 we know that industry benefited from very high prices and hot markets leading to record profits.

All members regardless of the industry you work within are also aware of the impact that high inflation and climbing interest rates have had on your home budget. That loss in buying power is something we will have to address at the bargaining table.

From reports the Local Union has seen of late, we do not expect the recent down markets we are having today, to be long term in nature. With less than a year to go before our collective agreement is due for renewal, we are somewhat optimistic that current markets will not drastically affect our ability to negotiate a good contract going forward for the membership.

There is a lot of work to do prior to entering bargaining, including our internal process of compiling contract resolutions from member operations. Your Business Agents will be reaching out to you in operations they service to advise on the process for members to submit resolutions to the Local, that will give direction for improvements they wish to see negotiated in 2024. That work will start this fall.

Once contract resolutions are confirmed and received by the Local, those compiled resolutions are then forwarded to the Local Unions Delegated Wage & Contract Conference, which will be held in Nanaimo on February 22, 2024. Conference delegates will then determine which of the many expected resolutions will be forwarded to the bargaining table.

The Local Union between now and next spring will be using its sources including the USW District 3 researcher to acquire various industry reports, including those with market trends, world markets, pricing and product updates and economic data

President's Report Cont'd

for Coastal Companies. This information will be used to inform, strengthen, and support the Local Unions Bargaining Committees positions in negotiations.

As you will likely recall, labour relations with WFP and some of its contractors took a serious downturn in the last round of bargaining. In the time since February of 2020, WFP and the USW have continued to work towards improving their labour relations, especially over the past two years. It has improved to a degree, but there is still a distance to go in that regard, as there are a still number of labour relations issues that are important to our members that remain unaddressed. It is our genuine hope and desire that negotiations in 2024 provide a stable and productive foundation that allows the parties to reach mutual agreement on a new collective agreement in short order.

I continue to meet with Western Forest Products new CEO, Steven Hofer on a quarterly basis to inform one another of areas of concern and to discuss and hopefully resolve important issues impacting our members and the business. We have also used the format to further discussion on issues that the Union and Company have in common, such as the need for government to work with collaboratively with labour, industry and First Nations on needed policy and legislative changes and how labour and industry can work together to expand our relationships & reconciliation work with First Nations.

I look forward to reviewing your resolutions for a new collective agreement this fall and in chairing the delegated wage & contract conference on February 22 to solidify our negotiating agenda for next year.

Hunt Drops Lawsuit

Shortly after the two year anniversary of former District Director Steve Hunt filing a defamation lawsuit against 11 Local Union Presidents and the

USW Wood Council Chair, I am happy to report he has withdrawn the legal action. Wood Council Local Unions are now seeking to have the former Director pay our legal costs, which may have to be determined by the court if an agreement cannot be reached.

Red Chris Mine Collective Agreement

The Local is happy to announce that since our last edition of the Solidarity News we have ratified the first collective agreement for the 425 members at the Newcrest Red Chris Gold Mine which is located near Dease Lake BC. Newcrest, which is an Australian company, was recently purchased by what is now the worlds largest gold producer, Newmont Corporation which is an American based company.

The members have been extremely patient in the long run it took to get the certification out of the courts and to the bargaining table. With the contract now in hand, logistics are being worked out to ensure the members receive all of the increases and retroactive payments that they are due. The collective agreement we reached will have significant improvements both monetarily and in job security for all workers on site. It is in our estimation a very strong first collective agreement. It puts the crew as leaders in the mining industry on many levels.

One very important issue remains outstanding but has not delayed the collective agreement implementation by the interest arbitrator. That issue is the Letter of Understanding regarding the terms of Impact Benefit Co-Management Agreement between the Tahltan First Nation and the Red Chris Mine and its application to the collective agreement.

The Local Union has started to have direct discussions with Tahltan representatives with the goal of understanding each others' issues and concerns, developing a good relationship, and finding agreement on the LOU's terms.

The Red Chris collective agreement can be found on our website at www.usw1-1937.ca



Chief John Jack, Huu-ay-aht First Nation, Steven Hofer, WFP CEO, Premier David Eby, Chief Dallas Smith, President of Nanwakolas Council, Brian Butler, President USW Local 1-1937

President's Report Cont'd

Meetings with Forest Minister Bruce Rolston and Premier David Eby

In the past month I have attended four meetings with government. Two with the Wood Council where we meet with Minister Rolston and Premier Eby over areas of concern for both the Coastal and Interior Forest Industry and the next two meetings were with the same government officials, but as part of a joint effort by Labour, Industry and First Nations to seek standing with and support from government for common concerns we all have as stakeholders in the coastal forest industry.

While wood markets are weak at this time as seen by significant layoffs in both the coastal and

interior industries, there remains significant concern over negative impacts certain government forest policies are having on the industry, First Nations and ultimately our members and their communities.

We are seeking to get recognition from government that collectively we all need to be pulling on the rope in the same direction if we are going to ensure short-term and long-term stability and growth in our industry.

We have asked government to:

- ***Include labour, industry, and First Nations at the table as a significant partner in all phases of policy or legislative changes affecting Coastal BC.***

USW Tour of WFP Chemainus Sawmill



From left to right -Jordan Green, CSD Plant Committee, Nolan Paquette, Business Agent, Dominic Lemiux, USW District 5 Director, Scott Lunny, USW District 3 Director, Mike Duhra, Assistant USW District 3 Director, Brian Butler, President USW Local 1-1937, Hermender Kailley, Sec. Treasurer, BC Federation of Labour

- ***Ensure the Working Forest is stabilized and protected to attract investment.***
 - ***Recognize that skilled USW workers can play an important role in Value-Added product creation when investment into our existing manufacturing sites are made.***
 - ***Recognize and advance new approaches to land use planning with First Nations through the Integrated Resource Management Planning (IRMP) model, including ensuring the funding is in place for First Nations to participate fully.***
 - ***Change the harvest permitting process from being controlled by District Managers to being achieved through an IRMP process, allowing for a consistent fibre supply.***
- ***Protect forest workers by legislating successorship rights for workers prior to any further tenure transfers and undercut distributions are made.***

If these issues are addressed in a meaningful way through collaboration between government, industry, First Nations and labour, it would go a long way to create the certainty necessary to allow for the kind of investment, equipment and training the coastal industry needs to be successful in the short and long term.

To date our meetings with government on these matters have been positive but much more work needs to be done to ensure we are on the right path in protecting our members rights. In the past First Nations, industry and our Union have tried working in our own silos without much success. I am very hopeful that by working together to achieve the many common interests we share with First Nations, industry and government, everyone will benefit.

In Solidarity Brother Brian Butler

MAINLAND REPORT

By 1st Vice-President, Rick Nelson



The last remaining sawmill between Prince Rupert and Houston BC has announced that it has gone into bankruptcy receivership as of September 20th through an application and order by the Supreme Court of British Columbia.

The mill located in Terrace BC has had a long history in the Terrace area, going back to 1979 when the IWA certified the operation owned by West Fraser Mills. During that time, West Fraser ran the sawmill, planer mill and whole log chipper for many years.

After a lengthy strike in 2007, West Fraser chose to not run the sawmill and planer mill, citing high operational costs and not being able to be profitable as reasons for the curtailment. They did continue to run the whole log chipper, supplying chips to their pulp mill in Kitimat. After 24 months of the mill not running, a permanent partial closure under the Collective Agreement was triggered and a large number of the employees were entitled to severance pay.

The chipper continued to operate until the Pulp mill in Kitimat, owned by Euro Can announced a closure on January 31, 2010, after operating for over 40 years, which was another huge blow to the communities of Terrace and Kitimat. With the pulp mill closing, West Fraser's whole log chipper was soon to go down, triggering another group of employees being severed off as a result of losing their jobs. All that remained on the site was a dormant mill and 10 senior USW employees retained for security purposes.

In 2011, the site was purchased by Skeena Sawmills, a subsidiary company owned by an offshore company called Roc Holdings. After months of negotiations, Skeena Sawmills and the USW agreed to a new Collective Agreement, which was the catalyst for the mill opening in 2012. Since then, the mill has faced numerous challenges, continually working to upgrade the old mill while trying to maintain a profit in difficult markets and high costs of operating in the region. After 11 years, the struggle seems to have been too much to overcome, and the decision to shut down was made, leaving the remaining 75 employees

on the seniority list out of a job. The Union has been able to negotiate recall rights for employees who chose to maintain their seniority for recall rights, with the other option being to accept termination and apply for severance pay through the Wage Earners Protection Plan, a federal program that helps mitigate the losses of workers whose employers' files for bankruptcy. Although many employees will not get all that they are owed under the terms of the Collective Agreement, at least they will have access to a portion of their severance pay.

At the writing of this article, it is still unclear how many of the members will elect to maintain seniority for recall rights should someone choose to buy the mill to continue operating it, but the remainder will accept termination and apply for WEPP and move on.

The USW are in discussions with a number of government ministries to conduct a coordinated response for the workers, which will include at some point a town hall meeting for workers to come and access a number of programs that are available through local and provincial programs. A date for that meeting is still in the works by the various groups, and as soon as a time and place has been determined, we will get that information out to all of the members who wish to attend.

It is a sad day for the community, these have been good paying jobs and benefits for the members of the community, a long mainstay for Terrace over the years, and will be sadly missed. Hopefully there will be some interest out there to continue on the legacy of the forest industry and manufacturing in the region, here's keeping fingers crossed.

In Solidarity - Brother Rick Nelson



SOUTH ISLAND LOGGING REPORT

By Richard Arnason, 2nd Vice-President



REDCHRIS MINE

As of April 24, 2023 Local 1-1937 was able to conclude the Collective Agreement for Red Chris Mine. There are still two outstanding issues that are proceeding through the Interest Arbitration process for the Interest Arbitrator to determine which are contracting out language and the Tahltan Impact Benefit Agreement. With this first collective agreement finally in place, we are working closely with the company to assure their payroll system transitions over correctly from a salaried pay system, to a biweekly payroll system. We hope to have this done quickly as possible so that members are paid correctly and provided with a detailed pay statement for review to ensure they are not missing any pay they are entitled to. The company's payroll system has been a challenge to say the least, which has caused a lot of frustration for the Red Chris members. While the union has no control over the company's payroll system, we are working hard to ensure members receive the increases, premiums and retro back to April 24, 2023 they are entitled to.

Nolan Paquette and I recently went to the Red Chris mine site from July 25 to August 2 to meet with members and answer questions. It was great to see many of the members and have conversations about their issues and concerns. We also met with the company to discuss grievances and issues that have arisen. We also set up our onsite office, posted info on the union bulletin board and had an extensive tour of the mine site.

While we have many Red Chris members interested in being shop stewards, we are still looking for more. The Collective Agreement provides for up to 20 Shop Stewards. Online training courses are being developed to get the shop stewards trained as quickly as possible.

I continue to work with others on a variety of issues including successorship rights in the forest industry, Old Growth deferrals and changes to the Labour Code and many others.

HOLYOAK

HolyOak is still in the transition phase of assuming the Starlake Woodlands Contract. While there are many rumors being spread HolyOak has been communicating with the camp chairman in an effort to dispel these rumors. The camp chairman has done a great job in dealing with the transition issues of Starlake exiting and HolyOak transitioning into the TimberWest Woodlands Contract.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING

Drug and Alcohol testing has recently taken place in a few TimberWest South Island Forest Operations which we believe is completely unfounded. Members are not being tested because of potential impairment. They are being tested for a variety of non-impairment issues simply for the sake of the companies trying to justify having their Drug and Alcohol Policies. We recently received a decision on Drug and Alcohol Policies that we will reference with Mosaic and other companies to alter and revise their policies.

A few issues at Gordon Bay have been not signing up some employees into the operation as per the Collective Agreement and not paying stats and floaters correctly. These issues have been addressed with the company and are being corrected.

SOUTH ISLAND LOGGING REPORT CONT'D

Longridge and Northview have a variety of outstanding issues and grievances that are in the process of proceeding to Arbitration to be resolved.

With advice from Vince Ready we continue to discuss and work through the remaining outstanding issues resulting from the cancellation of the Island Timberlands Cowichan Revitalization Agreement.

While most operations have continued to operate during this hot dry year we hope everyone gets some holiday time or a short summer shut down to enjoy the weather and spend time with family and friends.

In Solidarity - Brother Richard Arneson



Contact Us

[Request an Appointment](#)

Our Mission

Caring for our clients, member companies, and communities with compassion, clinical expertise, and a commitment to overall health and wellness.

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LOGGERS SPORTS 2023

This Summer our USW Local 1-1937 sponsored both the Loggers Sports in Port McNeill and Powell River.

The Women of Steel regularly attend the Loggers sports in Powell River where they not only support the Steelworker members in the forest industry but also hold raffles, face paint by donation and hold draws in order to raise funds for important causes. This year the Local 1-1937 Women of Steel raised funding to go towards the purchase of a pallet of peanut butter through the Union Protein Project. "The Union Protein project is a non-profit society started in 2006 by unions and the United way who saw a way to make a real difference in our communities. The Union Protein Project helps food banks by subsidizing shelf stable protein-based foods so food banks can save precious money and maximize their purchasing power."

peanut butter! This will be put to good use and will be distributed within the communities where Steelworkers live and work. The Women of Steel really appreciate all those who participated in these fund raisers and know that it will go toward helping many families in need.



Sister Sandra Wilson face painting

Combined with a previous fund raiser at the LADM and raffles at the Loggers sports, Steelworkers and Community members help raise enough money to purchase a whole pallet of



Seen Left to right; Vicki Miller, Gillian Tew, Wendy Goulding, Samantha Stevens



To learn more about the Union Protein Project follow the link here [What We Do | The Union Protein Project](#)



CINKANT REPORT

By Chris Cinkant, 3rd Vice-President



In this report I would like to address two issues. The first is explaining the role of Substance Abuse Professionals regarding those workplaces with Drug and Alcohol Policies.

To this article, we will focus on Cannabis. In most all Drug and Alcohol Policies, a worker who is tested with a positive reading over policy levels in a urine sample is then given an oral swab test. Should the reading exceed the imposed nanogram level above the a company imposed limit, the worker is required to see an employer paid Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) of the company's choosing.

The SAP is hired to interview an employee to gather personal information to make an assessment to establish whether the person has a substance abuse disorder. Based on the interview, the answers gleaned are used to make the determination on a disorder or not. When a disorder is found, the SAP sends a report back to the company with recommendations for treatment and timelines of unannounced drug testing upon a return to the workplace.

In almost every case a worker is assessed by the SAP, a substance abuse disorder is found and reported back to the employer where inpatient treatment (treatment center) is recommended. The report will also include unannounced testing upon a return to work. The testing in most cases is one to two tests monthly from anywhere to one year to eighteen months.

For those who feel they have a problem and want help, the above may be a benefit. Unfortunately, all other casual users of cannabis are caught in the

impossible position of choosing between expensive treatment and their employment.

I feel it is important for members to understand that the company chosen Substance Abuse Professionals are hired to **assess** an individual to determine a disorder, then in turn report back to the company where the employer will enforce any recommendations in the report.

TRAINING

The second issue I will report on is training in our manufacturing plants and Training Agreements.

Many problems that cross my desk can be attributed to lack of training that originate from deviating from training agreements.

To that end I will re-post an Article I wrote back in 2021.



TRAINING & MANNING

I touched on just some of the training shortfalls our members are seeing as significant in our last issue of the Solidarity News. There is one glaring problem area at the start. Whether manufacturing facilities are large or small, all are running with less employees than needed or at the bare minimum to run an operation. The situation leads to lack of training and poor training practices due to manning shortfalls. For example, when a new worker finally has an opportunity to train, they are not given enough hours or hands on training with an experienced qualified operator.



This same worker is then expected to train the next trainee without acquiring the minimum skills or safety knowledge needed to pass on proper essential work habits. This practice snowballs and creates safety risks and/or eventual discipline or disqualification for the inevitable mistakes. The trend continues and our members and committees must deal with the fallout.

Most training agreements have allowances for the training of back-up operators who are fully trained and available to replace qualified incumbents (*trainers*) when needed. Unfortunately, the number of back-ups is minimal at best or nonexistent (due to lack of training) creating a roadblock for qualified operators to be freed up as trainers. In the past, companies had call boards where the call list workers could be called upon when there were absences to cover the trainee level entry position vacated. Then the qualified back-up would in turn free up an experienced operator to fully instruct a member, one on one, with an appropriate amount of time to completely train a worker up to a safe qualification standard. This safe standard



of training cannot be met without adequate manning levels.

I see I have referred to this training in manufacturing as a problem. It is much greater than that, a "*training crisis*" better befits the present conditions in most all of our worksites.

The condition is obvious and a frustration to our membership. The questions are "why won't employers properly man up their facilities and train now while lumber prices are at extreme record highs" and if not now, when?

We can only assume that hands are tied at a certain level of management, or the problem is being ignored at the highest levels.

No wonder workers fear for the future of a once vibrant and stable Industry.

In Solidarity

Brother Chris Cinkant



GET IN TOUCH

PLAN OFFICE HOURS—Monday to Friday 8:00am – 4:30pm

GENERAL INQUIRIES

Suite 2100, 3777 Kingsway

Burnaby BC V5H 3Z7

Canada

T 604.433.6310

TF 1.800.663.4384

F 604.433.0518

PENSION INQUIRIES

T 604.433.5862

TF 1.800.913.0022

pension@iwafibp.ca





PORT ALBERNI REPORT

By Glen Cheetham, 4th Vice-President



On Going Situation With WFP APD

I will start with the ongoing situation with WFP and its Alberni Pacific Division with the potential sale of the property and mill. There are still no concrete answers to what is happening there, I can say that WFP is continuing in talks with potential buyers, but nothing is for sure. There are many rumors flying around the valley but until an announcement is made, they are just rumors. We hoped to hear of an announcement by the end of August, but that time came and went. It's now October and the 50 plus employees still left on the seniority list deserve some answers on the direction of the site as they have waited patiently long enough. These members all have decisions to make for their futures.

With the hot dry summer we have had and the Cameron lake bluffs fire it has made it challenging for employees that have to travel in and out of the Alberni's for work on the other side. The original complete highway closure along with the now Monday – Friday closure with only a small window of opportunity to get through has made for some even longer days than usual.

As of this writing it has been announced that Duke Point Sawmill will be taking a two-week shutdown at the beginning of August for market conditions we are told, during this two-week curtailment they will operate the planer on a 3 x 8 shift so that will have a lesser effect as far as layoffs go.

The San Group continues to run on a fairly steady basis with fibre being a continuous struggle which seems to be the common theme everywhere.

There have been some changes at the mill as the manager A.J. Gale has left the company to takeover as

the manager at WFP's Chemainus Division, we will wait to see who will takeover as the new manager of the operation. We had a fairly good working relationship with A.J. so hopefully whoever takes over will continue in the right direction.

We were able to hold our annual golf tournament at Alberni Golf Club on June 9th this year, it was the first one since 2019 so it was a bit of a struggle getting it going but in the end, it turned out. We ended up with 60 golfers, but we did lose 14 out of town golfers due to the Cameron Lake fire and the closure of the highway. The weather was great, everyone got a prize, fun was had by all, and everyone wants it to continue next year.

As people are taking vacations and enjoying some well-deserved time off with the nice weather the grievance front has slowed a little, but there is always work to be done there.

I am going to close here, and I hope everyone gets to enjoy some time with family and friends for the remainder of the season.

Stay Safe

In Solidarity

Glen Cheetham





THE PALMER REPORT

By **Dusty Palmer, Financial Secretary**



Hopefully everyone had a good break over summer and enjoyed time with family and friends. Fall seems to be a busier time for the membership, and we are ready for it.

LTD Plan for the Forest Industry Members (From the plan website: iwafibp.ca)

The IWA Forest Industry Long Term Disability Plan & Rehabilitation Services was established in 1982 by an agreement between the International Woodworkers of America and forest industry employers.

The plan provides monthly income benefits, ancillary benefits (MSP, extended health and dental coverage) and rehabilitation services to members who are unable to work due to a long-term illness or injury. Every attempt is made to rehabilitate members to support a safe and successful return to work.

Eligible members receive benefits after being disabled for six months and continue to receive benefits until they are no longer disabled, return to work or reach retirement age.

The LTD plan is jointly funded by members and participating employers. Currently, over 400 employers participate in the plan and submit contributions on behalf of 12,000 members. The plan is self-funded, which means that payments are made directly from the LTD Trust Fund and are not covered by an insurance company.

*Some Local 1-1937 members are not a part of the forest industry plan and have separate LTD plans and booklets of reference. Check with your Business Agent if you have any questions.

Benefits to the membership:

- Provides monthly payments, maximum gross payment of 2750.00 (less offsets and tax)
- Extended health and dental
- Covers illness and injury on and off the job for the members of the plan

- Rehabilitation services during both STD and LTD
- IWA pension credits (150 hours per month)
- Life insurance through the H & W plan

I encourage you, the members to view the IWA Forest Industry Pension and LTD plan website to get familiar with what is available and provided to you regarding your pension and Long-Term Disability if you become disabled or injured.

There is an online program called Member Connect. The program is the new member portal created to provide members with a convenient and secure way to access their pension information and communicate with the plan office. You can generate a pension estimate based on your current credited service combined with your estimated future service. You can also:

- add, remove or revise a beneficiary
- view your complete work history and see how it relates to your pension
- go over your credited service earned with each employer and
- review your funded, unfunded, and excess hours

Your Member Connect account will provide a convenient and secure way to send messages and documents to the Plan Office. By signing up, you will also be able to view and update your contact information and view your pension entitlement and beneficiary information.

If you have had a change in your beneficiary, please reach out to the plan and update your information so it accurately reflects your current situation. You should also contact the Local and update that beneficiary card as well. If you were to pass away, the name remaining on your beneficiary card is legally who will receive your insurance or pension income.

Looking forward to serving you this fall.

In Solidarity, Dusty Palmer - Financial Secretary

USW 1-1937 Group Out of Province/Country Travel Medical

Thinking of Travelling? Do you have Out of Province/Country Medical Insurance?

THEN YOU SHOULD READ THIS!

Virtually all travel plans, whether a stand alone or as part of a Group Benefits Plan, require that the individual be healthy enough to travel. This means your pre-existing health conditions must be considered “stable” for the specified period before you travel.

Individual travel plans base the length of the required stability period on the age of the traveler. For most under 60 years old, the stability requirement for pre-existing health conditions is usually 3 months, ages 60 to 70 years may require 6 months stability and over age 70 may require 12 months stability. Read the policy wordings to confirm the stability clause and how it could affect you.

Each individual Insurance Carrier or Group Benefits Plan will have “their own wordings for the definitions of STABILITY and TREATMENT. Look up this wording or ask your plan provider.

Check to see if you are covered for Travel under your Group Benefits Plan. If so, do you know what your Plan’s lifetime dollar limit is? We have seen Group Benefit Plans with lifetime limits as low as \$100,000., and some as high as \$3,000,000.

Too many Benefit Plans have very low lifetime limits. If you are relying on a separate individual Out of Province/Country plan to supplement a Group Plan, you need to be aware that you could potentially exhaust all of your group plan’s lifetime limit first. In the event of an out of country travel claim, your Group Plan lifetime benefit limit may be used up-forever.

Why would you potentially use up all your group travel coverage? It has to do with the wording of SECOND OR LAST PAYER in the event of a claim.

Most Individual travel policies have wordings making them the second or third payers, behind the Medical Services Plan of BC, and a Group Benefit policy! This is very problematic especially for Group Benefit Plans which cover out of Province/Country with lower lifetime limits.

The Good News!

If you are covered under one of USW 8945 Benefit Plans through Pacific Blue Cross administered through W.E Consulting & Benefits which has out of Province/Country Medical coverage included, and if you are concerned about your Group Plan’s lifetime limit here is what to do:

Contact W.E. Consulting & Benefits (1-855-894-8111) and purchase a Pacific Blue Cross individual out of Province/Country Medical coverage when going on a holiday. Why? That individual policy then becomes the FIRST payer. Your Group Plan would only be used if you went over the limit of the individual plan. Currently, Pacific Blue Cross is the only carrier with this feature!

All other insurance carriers who offer individual out of Province/Country Travel Medical have wordings so they are the last payer! This means your Group Benefits lifetime limit could be exhausted first!





I look after members from Victoria to Holberg, mostly Loggers, but lately, I was issued a freight company and a casino. I log in lots of highway time now. The freight company came with ready-made grievances, and they are being addressed. The loggers are constantly being bombarded by bad decisions from the major forest companies, which affects the members' bottom line, as you do not make any money sitting at home. Dyer Logging Ltd. did not go back to work until May and lucky enough WFP put them in a high-elevation logging block that gets precipitation almost every day; this allowed them to work through the dry spells when everyone else around them was shut down. It was dry; I saw alder leaves dropping in early July which is unusual. Also, the temperature in Port McNeill has warmed up considerably enough so that a guy can eat his supper on the deck in the evening and not get cold.

I have three grievance cases of contracting out, all with Western Forest Products Inc. The worst is WFP shutting down Jeune Landing while they bring in a contractor to work while the crew is at home. The contractor gets to work while the Jeune Landing crew gets sent home for the rest of 2023. All cases are heading to arbitration.

TFL 6 permits are coming in dribbles and drabs. The rumour mill is constantly cranking out rumours about the last Permits and running out of wood. We will see.

The crew from Kokish has moved on temporarily until the permit situation is addressed. They are working for Interfor; this happens from time to time.

There is not a lot of old growth being moved these days, government policies and all. We met with the Premier in July to let him know that our

membership relies on old growth for their livelihood.

The upcoming coastal Forest Industry contract talks in 2024 will start off with Wage & Contract Resolutions being sought by the Local Union in October and November, 2023. Then the delegated Wage & Contract Conference will take place on February 22, 2024, where the resolutions that will make up our bargaining proposals will be confirmed. Then the Bargaining Committee will begin its talks. Talks will begin first and foremost with WFP. Stay tuned and watch your text messages, emails and bulletin boards for Union meeting announcements and updates concerning the upcoming contract talks.

In Solidarity Brother Dan Jorgenson





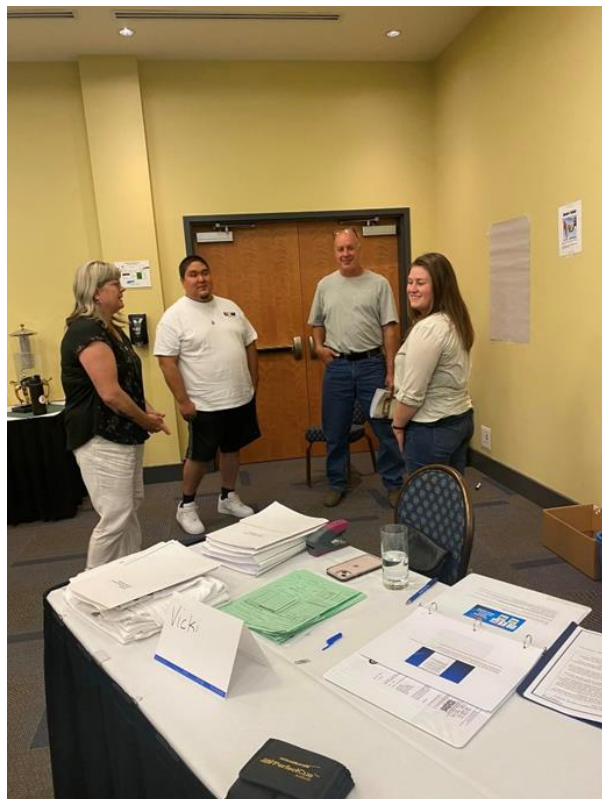
EDUCATION & OPERATIONS REPORTS

By Shelley Siemens – Warden



It has been a busy summer servicing our membership and now heading into fall I am continuing to provide important education to everyone. This year I am very excited as we welcomed new members into our union, and so I have been working very hard at updating the New Members Course module in our education department. The New members course is ready to be rolled out both in person and we now have an online access method for those members who prefer to learn about our Union through the online learning module.

This past May myself and Sister Vicki Miller held a Shop Steward level II course held in Nanaimo, where 20 shop stewards received their level two certification. I always enjoy participating in the level II courses as this is a great way to get feedback from our stewards and a great opportunity to learn from



Facilitator Vicki Miller (shown on the left) coaching students.

them and each other on what worked well since their last level one course. It's a good way to do a follow up with each other.

Outside of education I have been busy with servicing the members. I am currently working on negotiations with two Bargaining Committees in a couple of my operations and dealing with day to day meetings and grievances.

Short Term Disability Forms

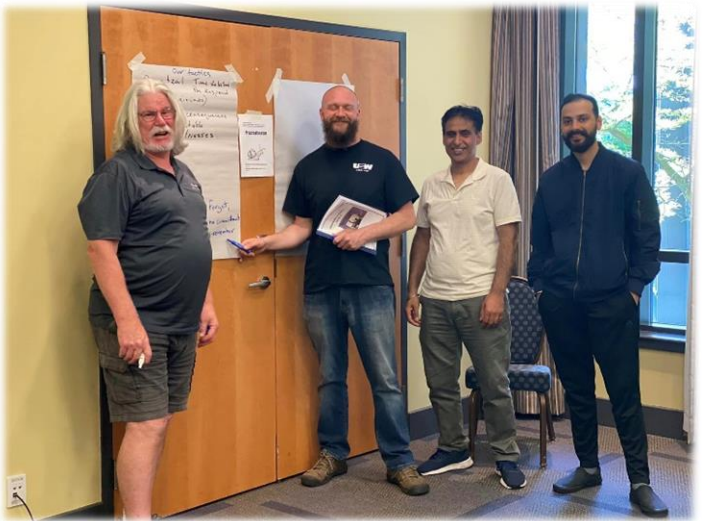
One thing that I have noticed and want all of our members to be aware of is, when you are filling out your short-term disability forms. It is a three-part form, one section is your information, the other section is the employer's information, and the last section is where the doctor puts their information about you and your injury. I have learned that by bringing your form to the employer as the last step, this allows the employer to look at all of your personal health information written onto that form and now your employer will know all of your personal health information. You do not have to take your filled out form to the employer last in fact have them fill it out first then take it to the doctor and then fill out your section and then send it in yourself.

There is no reason that you have to share your personal doctor diagnoses with your employer about a short term or long-term disability that has nothing to do with them. If you have given them a doctors note saying you are off due to illness, then you are good to go.

In Solidarity, Sister Shelley Siemens



SHOP STEWARDS LEVEL II



FEDERAL GOV'T CUTS 100'S OF AQUACULTURE JOBS AND LEAVES WORKERS IN LIMBO

Hundreds of Steelworkers along with Aquaculture industry workers hit the street on June 1st this summer where they met in front of Member of Parliament Rachel Blaney's office. It has been no secret that the Federal MP for the NDP has supported the Federal Liberals decision to close Salmon Farms.

It is unfortunate that MP Blaney has chosen this path to pressure the gov't to end hundreds of jobs lost within her own riding. The Union has reached out to MP Blaney about a jobs plan but to this date there has been no response back on what the jobs plan will be while transitioning the farms out, and it is likely because there isn't one. It makes one skeptical when they hear a gov't talk about transitioning resource-based jobs to these green new jobs that will create more work that they speak of, and then when it comes down to transitioning, they leave everyone either without a job or in complete limbo.



This is what hundreds of North Island workers are currently experiencing. In a time where the cost of living is through the roof our own gov't throws this at workers.

Looking at the economic impact of this (and hay I am not an economist,) but it doesn't take one to figure out that when workers are insecure, they don't spend. When Industry is insecure it doesn't invest. This has not only impacted hundreds of families but hundreds of local businesses and First Nations in this riding. No plan at all does not sound like a "**Just transition plan**" in my unprofessional opinion.





USW Local 1-1937 President Brian Butler shown here addressing Industry and Union Rally attendees.

Butler stated that ***“Sadly Minister Murry and her predecessor, Minister Jorden do not care about the massively negative impacts on your families, to these businesses, to Indigenous Communities, all over the Coast of BC. She only cares about votes, and that is a Shame!”***



With the now third DFO Minister in place, Minister Diane Lebovitch, we are hopeful this Minister will do the right thing and follow the science from their own ministry, but as always I am not holding my breath.

Article written by
Shelley Siemens




Special Guest Speaker James Walkus from the Gwa'sala-[']Nakwaxda'xw Nation, addresses the Rally attendees about the importance of Aquaculture to his Nation and the community.



From left to right; Nolan Paquette Local 1-1937, President Brian Butler Local 1-1937, Mike Duhra USW District 3 Assistant to the Director, Aman Chumber Local 2009, Phil Ducharme District 3 & Shelley Siemens Local 1-1937.

**STOP
CLOSING
SALMON
FARMS
IN B.C.**

LoveSalmon.ca 

Climate change, pollution and habitat loss all negatively impact wild salmon stocks – **NOT aquaculture.** Numerous recent Department of Fisheries & Oceans Canada and peer-reviewed studies concluded that **salmon farms do not have a discernable impact** on populations of wild salmon.

**TELL OTTAWA TO STOP
CLOSING B.C. SALMON FARMS:
LOVESALMON.CA**



Samantha Stevens, Nolan Paquette & Ian Rogers



October 3, 2023

MP under fire for spreading falsehoods about salmon farms

Rachel Blaney, MP for North Island–Powell River taken to task for making false assertions about BC’s salmon farming sector in letter to minister.

By Fabian Dawson
SeaWestNews

BC’s salmon farmers are cautioning Vancouver Island MP Rachel Blaney to stop misrepresenting the Federal Government’s ongoing efforts to develop a transition plan for the province’s open-net aquaculture sector.

Blaney, the NDP MP for North Island–Powell River and her husband have been key players in the activist movement to oust salmon farmers from BC oceans, which will kill thousands of jobs.

The BC Salmon Farmers Association (BCSFA) said Blaney, in a letter to new Federal Fisheries Minister Diane Lebovillier on September 13, 2023, made several false statements.

“As our Member of Parliament, you continue to show that you do not have the best interests of the families and communities in your riding...In your letter (to the minister), you made several false statements,” said Brian Kingzett, BCSFA, Executive Director, said in a note to Blaney.

Contrary to what Blaney claims and what is being propagated by the MP’s activist allies, there is no current government mandate to remove salmon farms from the ocean, said Kingzett.

The most current language regarding the BC salmon farming Transition Plan is from the 2022 DFO Discussion Framework, which states, “The proposed vision of this open-net pen transition plan is to advance innovation and growth of sustainable aquaculture in British Columbia that progressively minimizes or

MP UNDER FIRE FOR SPREADING FALSEHOODS ABOUT SALMON FARMS CONT'D

eliminates interactions between open-net pens and wild salmon, while also taking into account social, cultural and economic objectives.” Additionally, all farms operating in BC are currently done in agreement, negotiation, or established partnerships with First Nations in whose territories we operate.

In her letter to the minister, Blaney makes several false statements, including:

- “As I am sure you are aware, the government has decided to remove fish farms from the water.”;
- “In 2020, the Liberal government said it would phase out fish farms by 2022.” And;
- “The government needs to follow through on its commitment to remove the fish farms from the water.”

Kingzett said the federal government is not committed to removing fish farms from the water and did not state it would phase out fish farms by 2022.

Further the mandate letters to the Fisheries ministers instructs them to come up with a plan to transition from open net-pen salmon farming in coastal British Columbia waters by 2025 and begin to work to introduce Canada’s first-ever Aquaculture Act.

The salmon farming sector in British Columbia is a vital part of the local economy and Canada’s Blue Economy, providing \$1.2 billion in annual economic activity and supporting nearly 7,000 jobs in coastal indigenous and non-indigenous communities.

Blaney in her recent letter urged the federal government to come up with a transition plan for the impacted workers.

“By asking for a plan to transition our workers, your letter demonstrates your personal agenda to remove salmon farms. You are asking for workers – from the communities you are supposed to represent and fight for – to lose their jobs,” said Kingzett.

“A small short-term monetary fix will not offset the long-term devastation these communities will experience if our sector is forced to move to land and leave British Columbia. Two-thirds of salmon farming employees are under 35. Many young people are attracted to the sector to stay in their home communities or set roots in rural coastal communities. If the farms are removed, they will be forced to move elsewhere, further devastating the rural coastal communities you have been entrusted to represent,” said Kingzett.

“MP Blaney, we strongly recommend you do your due diligence. Speak with the First Nations within whose territories we operate. Speak with the many supplier and service companies that rely on the salmon farming sector. Speak with the young people who will lose their jobs and their ability to remain in their hometowns.

“Without doing so, you will not understand the real human impacts of your statements. Salmon farmers are members of your constituency too,” added Kingzett.

Image – screenshot of Rachel Blaney in the House of Commons



MID ISLAND LOGGING REPORT

By Jason Cox - Conductor



I participated in the North Island Loggers Golf Tournament June 17th and 18th, held at the Seven Hills Golf course. The course is halfway between Port McNeill and Port Hardy where the road turns towards Port Alice. Our team consisted of, Andrew Johnson, Stacker operator, WFP Engelwood Division, Beaver Cove Dryland Sort and Ward Area 5 representative, Eric Moffat, Hooktender and Camp Chair, WFP Port McNeill Division, Dan Jorgenson, Business Agent, and myself. We put on an impressive showing, paring the course, playing best ball (lol) I don't think we had the other teams worried about their rankings. A big thank you to the organizers of this great event and our team. Looking forward to next year.

Operations have seen an unusually early shutdown due to the high temperatures that have come in May and have continued so far with very little precipitation. Some operations had to suspend the Falling and Yarding Phases earlier because of the fire ratings but carried on Loading and Hauling and depleting any inventory that was to roadside. Now that some rain has come some of the operations can start back with the Falling and yarding Phases to build the inventory back up while the Loading and Hauling will stay down for a couple of weeks to be able to catch up again.

I have recently received quite a few questions concerning seniority and how it works when a person is employed by a few different employers. Firstly, yes, a person can be on a couple different seniority lists at the same time. In the reduction and recall of employees the premise of first person in, last person out competency considered stands. So, for example: where an employee is laid off from Company A, (that employee will have seniority retention as per the collective agreement language), and then gets employment with Company B, that employee will start building seniority with Company B thus holding seniority with two different employers. Eventually the employee will either run out of seniority retention with one employer, or they will be called back to their original employer.



Jason Cox, Eric Moffat, Andrew Johnson

That is when the employee must declare themselves, meaning the employee must make a choice to return to their original employer or stay with their new employer. That is when the employee would be removed from one of the lists. Some other confusion has been around same owner of multiple companies. The seniority list for each company is independent of one another even though the owner is the same. Example: A junior employee laid off from Company A and hired on with Company B (of the same employer) would become senior to any other employees laid off from Company A and hired on with Company B (again, competency considered). It can seem quite confusing on the surface and always good to check the exact language of the collective agreement you work under. Any questions should be directed at any one of your camp committee members for clarification or reach out to your business agent.

Stay Safe! In Solidarity Brother Jason Cox .





SOUTH ISLAND REPORT

By Nolan Paquette – Business Agent



Hello friends,

It's that time again, so here is a quick update on how things are going.

Bargaining update,

Coastal Mountain Fuels: I would like to thank Darren Yarocki for his great work in this round of bargaining where we were successful in getting a 5-year deal with percentage increases at 10% in the first year and Consumer Price Index (CPI) with a floor of 2% and a ceiling of 7% for the remaining four years. As well as a retention allowance for those that have been with the company for 3 years, (\$0.25) 5 years, (\$0.50) and 10 years, (\$1.00) per hour on top of their hourly wage. The members were pleased with these gains and ratified the contract with a 100% in favor vote.

Duncan Dabbers Casino: Thanks to the bargaining committee James Marriott and Harry Judge for a now ratified new collective agreement where we have made gains in a reduction of the probationary period and elimination of an hour based pay scale. We were successful in getting a 3-year deal with increases of 7% for security, 10% general, and 15% for the floor supervisor in the first year, and 3% increases in years 2 and 3 across the board. A retention allowance was also bargained in with an increase to your hourly rate after 2,(\$0.25) 4,(\$0.50) 6,(\$0.75) 8,(\$1.00) & 10 (\$1.25) years, we are all hopeful this will help with retention. Thanks again for all the hard work and dedication from the members at the Casino. The current bargaining that I have open is CIDA Division 3 and 4, we are getting close but have hit some timing delays due to summer vacation and myself being out of town over the summer. Upcoming bargaining will be for the Cowichan Valley Regional District, CVRD at the end of the year, we will also be doing new committees for both Health and Safety and Shop Committee at the CVRD, we have a good amount of interest for both and are looking forward to getting these members trained up for their new roles.



COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT CREW PICNIC

REDCHRIS MINE

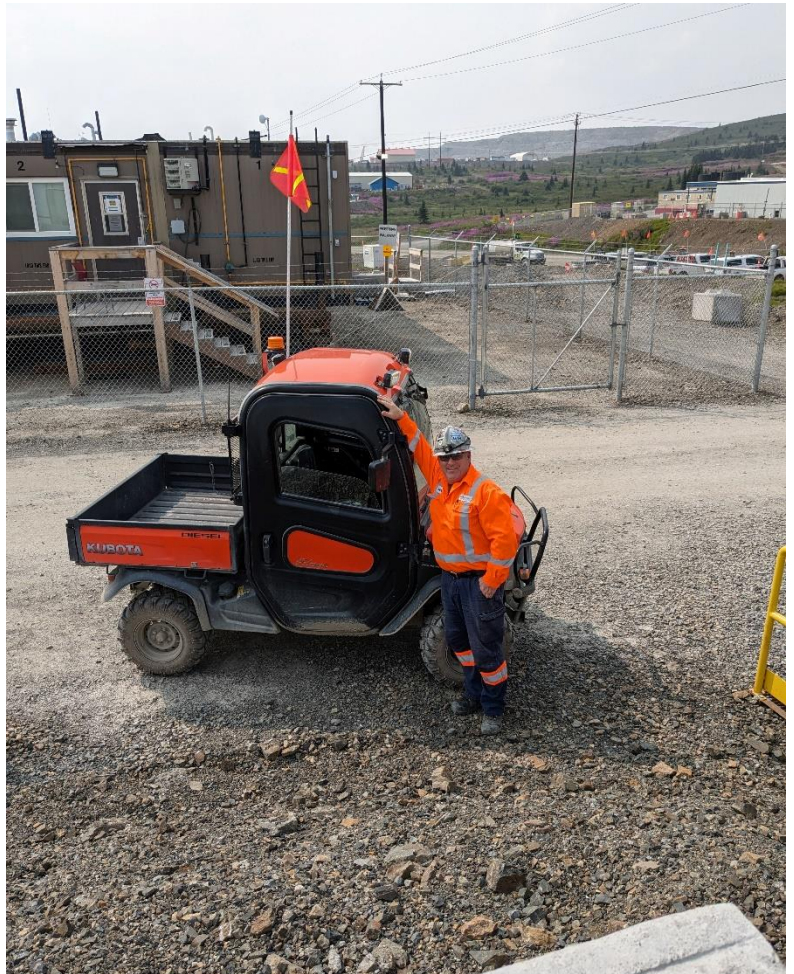
I have been on the road a fair bit in the last month with a trip up to Dease Lake to visit our members on site. Richard and I spent 9 days on site meeting with members and answering any questions they had. Pay role was a hot topic for almost everyone we spoke with, and October can't come soon enough, that's when the company's payroll system will finally be ready to run an itemized pay stub for our members. The current system is an averaging and seems to leave our members chasing pay continuously. We look forward to growing our relationship with our Red Chris members and helping them grow and become a strong effective unit in our mining sector. There is lots to do yet as this is a first contract, and we appreciate the positivity and patience we received on our visit. I will be planning my next site visit in the coming months once we have completed our steward training.



Front End Loader



Haul Truck feeding Conveyor



Donnie McNeil- Committee Member





Drills working on the next blast



Haul Trucks in Staging



Shovel Feeding Haul Truck

RED CHRIS MINE



Entrance to the block cave



Open pit mine from the viewpoint



Tribute to the Mine Ops. Crew (Bear Dogs)



Pittsburgh the Steel Capitol

I also attended Leadership Level II in Pittsburgh, in July and I was fortunate enough to attend with a great group of activists from around the world. This year's theme was strategic planning and achieving your goals. We learned new techniques to help plan and execute different campaigns to build a stronger membership within our Local's and community, follow up is key.

This year we also were fortunate to learn some history about the steel industry in Pittsburgh, we toured a few historical sites including the Carrie Blast Furnace that was used to make much of the steel that was built in America. Towering 92 feet over the Monongahela River and constructed out of 2,5" thick steel plate and lined with refractory brick, Carrie Furnace is a rare example of pre-World War II iron making technology.

I have added some photos of these impressive sites, hope you enjoy.

In Solidarity,

Nolan Paquette





CARRIE BLAST FURNACE



USW Dean Tait, USW Gaston Töpfer, Mike Bremner, Garrett Chalmers

This Summer was a whirlwind of Forest Fires and dry forest floors. Without the many brave members such as Dean Tait and Gaston Töpfer along with Fire fighters Mike Bremner, and Garrett Chalmers our province would be in complete devastation. We are so proud and so appreciative of all of the men and women who put their lives on the line to help extinguish the fires this summer. It really takes a heart of gold and nerves of steel to be faced with something so devastating.

STEELWORKERS, HEARTS OF GOLD, NERVES OF STEEL

**Thank you to all of the BC Fire
Fighters for all that you do!**

