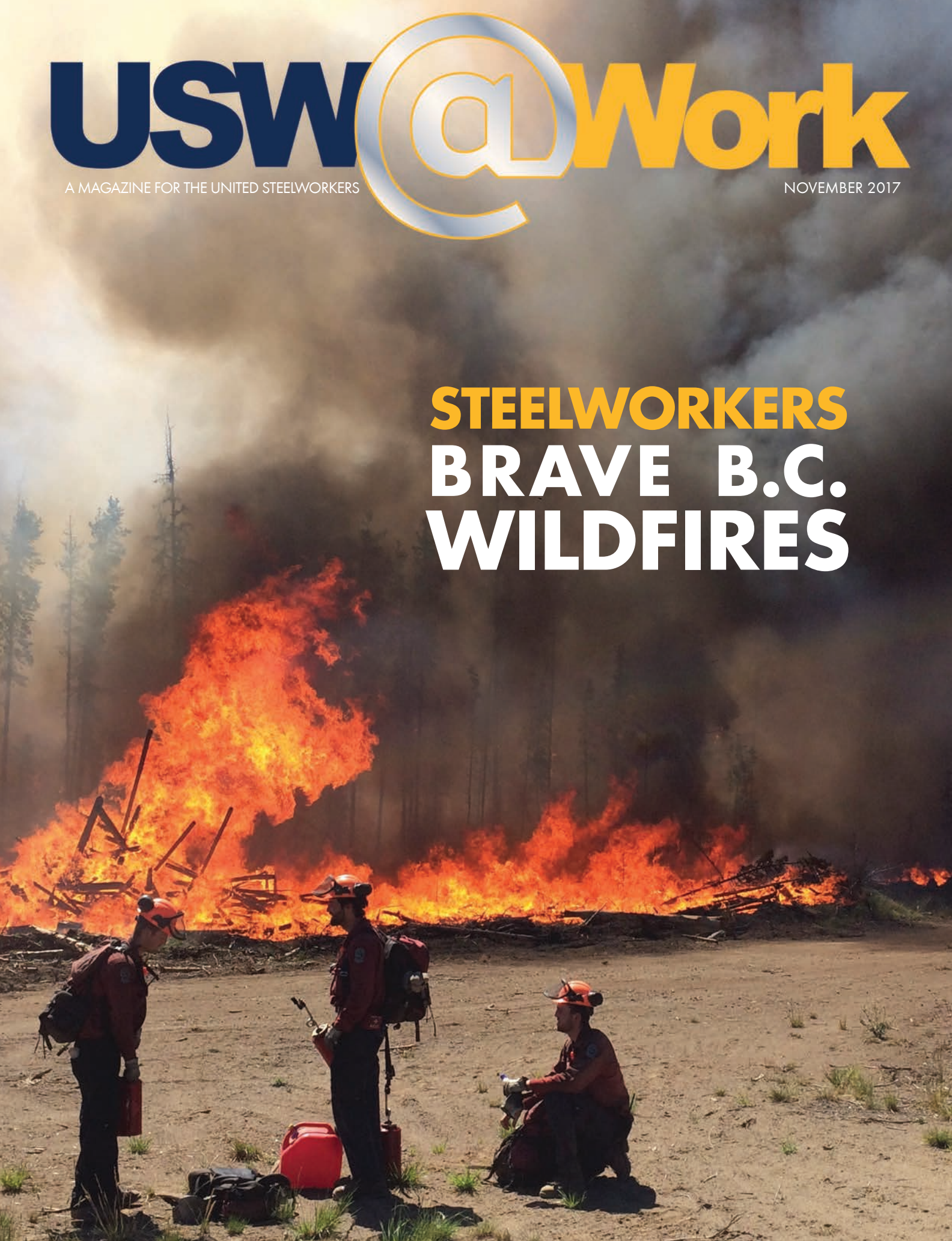


USW@Work

A MAGAZINE FOR THE UNITED STEELWORKERS

NOVEMBER 2017

STEELWORKERS BRAVE B.C. WILDFIRES



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Leo W. Gerard International President
Ken Neumann National Director for Canada
Stephen Hunt District 3 Director
Alain Croteau District 5 Director
Marty Warren District 6 Director
Stan Johnson Int'l Secretary-Treasurer
Thomas M. Conway Int'l Vice-President (Administration)
Fred Redmond Int'l Vice-President (Human Affairs)
Carol Landry Int'l Vice-President at Large
Jon Geenen Int'l Vice-President



USW Canadian Leaders: **Marty Warren, Ken Neumann, Alain Croteau, Stephen Hunt**

Editor and Department Head: **Bob Gallagher**
Contributing Editors: **David Cantatore, Clairandree Cauchy, Kim Hume, Frank Linhares, Daniel Mallette, Karina Midence, Denis St. Pierre, Pat Van Horne, Brad West**
Designer: **Lesley Stodart**

Direct inquiries and articles for
USW@Work to: United Steelworkers
Communications and Political Action Department
info@usw.ca



On the cover: Controlled burn, Aug. 1, 2017. This summer, B.C. experienced the largest wildfires on record.

Photo: BC Wildfire Service

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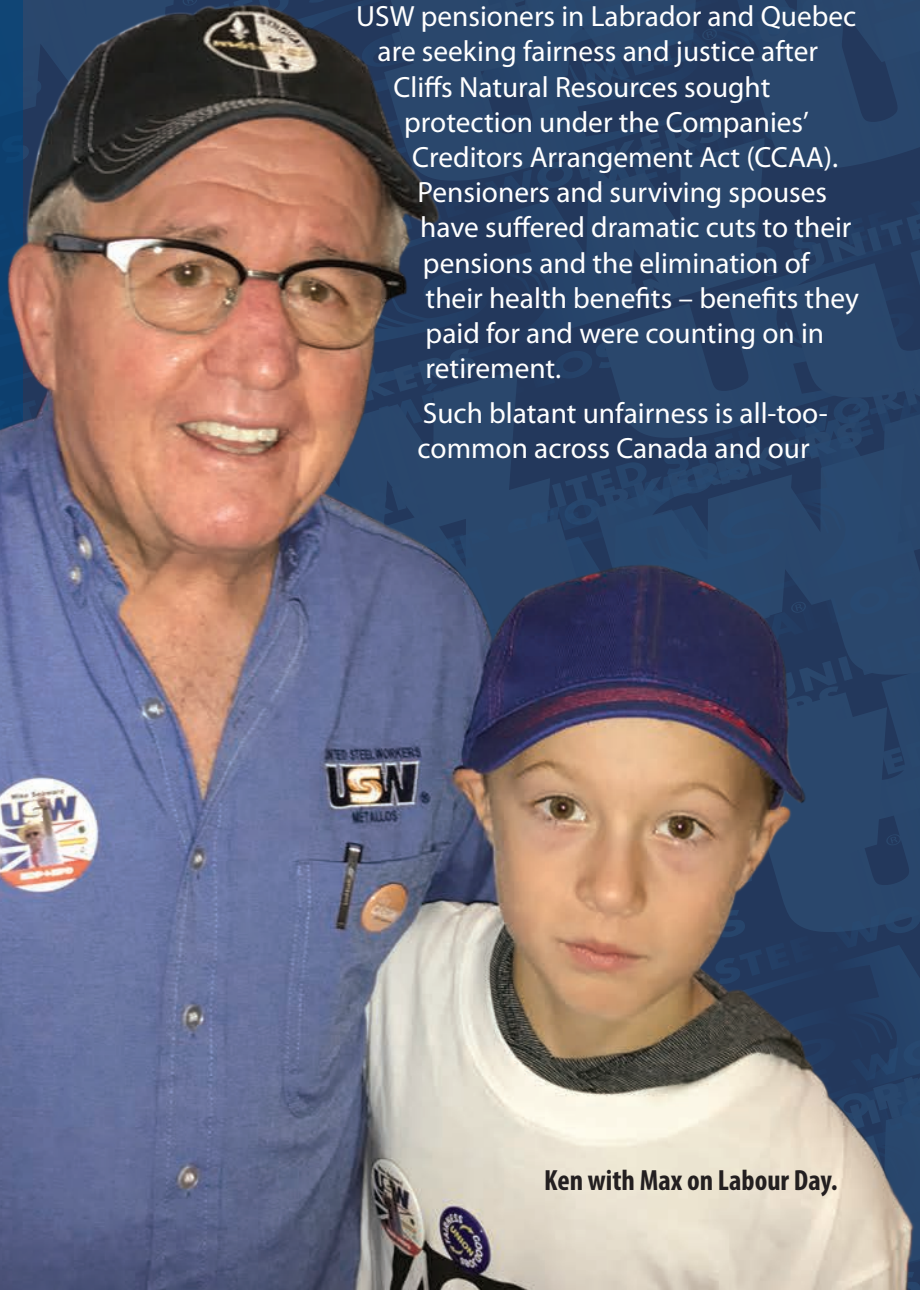
JUST

USW's recent conference in Vancouver on health, safety, environment and human rights was titled Justice 2017 – a fitting theme that captures the motivation behind so much of our union's work.

Bargaining a collective agreement. Fighting a grievance. Joining a committee. The goal of achieving fairness, dignity and respect is at the heart of these union endeavours: justice.

USW pensioners in Labrador and Quebec are seeking fairness and justice after Cliffs Natural Resources sought protection under the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA). Pensioners and surviving spouses have suffered dramatic cuts to their pensions and the elimination of their health benefits – benefits they paid for and were counting on in retirement.

Such blatant unfairness is all-too-common across Canada and our



Ken with Max on Labour Day.

ICE

union is fighting hard to fix our laws to bring justice for workers, pensioners and their families.

That's why Steelworker MP Scott Duvall and the NDP have launched a campaign to End Pension Theft including a private member's bill to put workers first in cases of corporate restructuring and bankruptcy.

We need justice for workers in our trade deals. USW is speaking out on NAFTA and softwood lumber negotiations to protect workers, democracy and the environment.

Our union is taking action on issues of importance to Aboriginal Steelworkers and Aboriginal communities. USW supports the report and recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Our union is committed to meaningful reconciliation, not just talking about it. Through our union we can work for justice for Aboriginal workers and communities.

Justice motivates our response when communities are hit by natural disasters, as we've seen this summer with devastating hurricanes in the U.S. and the Caribbean, wildfires in B.C. and mudslides in Sierra Leone. Our union comes together in these situations – volunteers assist directly with food and shelter, and our Steelworkers Humanity Fund donates to relief agencies working on the ground.

We know that when we use our solidarity to work for justice, we will win. USW Local 6486 members at the CEZinc refinery in Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, Que., standing together against demands for pension concessions, are gaining support from workers and unions from around the world.

Our union gives us the structure and the tools for coming together to work for justice. I encourage you to look to your union when unfairness needs to be addressed. It won't always be easy and it won't necessarily happen as quickly as we would like, but it will be worth the effort.

As we continue our struggle against inequality and unfairness, I take inspiration from you – our members – and the work you are doing for each other for justice every day.

In solidarity,



Ken Neumann
National Director

New B.C. Government!

NDP ends Liberal reign

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NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh

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Good Riddance!

Uber's threat to leave Quebec

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Photo: Province of British Columbia

B.C. ELECTS NDP GOVERNMENT

British Columbia has a new provincial government, putting an end to 16 years of rule by the anti-union, right-wing BC Liberal party. Following a close election result that saw no party obtain enough electoral seats to claim a majority government, the province was on pins and needles as negotiations played out between the two major parties and the three-member BC Green party. Ultimately, the BC NDP came to an agreement with the Greens and John Horgan was sworn in as British Columbia's 36th Premier on July 18.

The United Steelworkers played a pivotal role in electing New Democrat MLAs across the province. The union launched an unprecedented campaign to mobilize Steelworkers, bring forward issues important to union families and encourage strong voter turnout on election day.

"We knew that our members could not afford four more years of a government that was selling out our jobs and selling our province," says District 3 Director Stephen Hunt. "It was time for a government on our side, and thanks to the incredible efforts of Steelworkers all over B.C., we got one."

The USW is well positioned to work closely with the new government to deliver on the issues that matter to Steelworkers. In fact, there are a number of USW members who have taken up key posts in the newly announced Executive Council. Long-time USW member Harry Bains has been appointed as the Minister of Labour, while Katrine Conroy has been handed the job

of Minister of Children and Family Development. In addition to these ministers, the USW maintains strong relationships with a large number of cabinet ministers, MLAs and key staff.

With a BC NDP government, we are at the table. We are bringing forward the perspective of our members and are actually being heard.

**– Stephen Hunt
USW District 3 Director**

The union has moved quickly following the swearing in of the new government to set up meetings with ministries that have jurisdiction over key USW industries. The ability to take the concerns and issues of Steelworkers directly to government is an important advantage of a BC NDP government.

"With a BC NDP government, we are at the table," Hunt says. "We are bringing forward the perspective of our members and are actually being heard. It's a refreshing change."

Over the next four years, the Steelworkers will be engaging with members as we identify areas to work with Premier Horgan and the BC NDP government to deliver positive change for British Columbia. ■



Steelworkers Respond to **WILDFIRES**

This summer, Steelworker Jordan Lawrence was on double-duty. A full-time Financial Secretary with USW Local 1-417 in Kamloops, he's also a volunteer firefighter in nearby Clinton.

On Fri., July 7, lightning storms ignited multiple wildfires near the communities of Ashcroft and 100 Mile House. In under two hours, the fire had spread to Cache Creek, moving quickly over grasslands. Within one week, fires were threatening the village of Clinton and the community was placed on evacuation alert.

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When the evacuation came, Jordan evacuated to Kamloops with his wife and two kids, aged two and four. Once his family was safe, Jordan returned to Clinton to help fight the wildfires and protect his community, alongside 80 firefighters including at least three other USW volunteers.

“Eyes in the Sky”

Before he became a full-time millwright at Tolko in Williams Lake, Steelworker Kingsley Cheung, USW Local 1-2017, was a ‘redshirt,’ a firefighter with the forest service in B.C.

When the wildfires broke out in July, Kingsley went to a friend’s farm an hour away to help protect their property. While there, Williams Lake was evacuated, so he stayed on for two weeks driving a CAT, putting in fire guards to prevent the fire from spreading.

Once things settled down, Kingsley was back at work at Tolko when the B.C. Wildfire Service asked for his help in a leadership role with the redshirts.

Once he’d received clearance from his employer for a 14-day commitment, Kingsley finished his 12-hour shift at Tolko and reported for duty to help fight the Plateau wildfire, the largest wildfire on record in B.C.

As a Strike Team Leader, Kingsley was in a helicopter with an overview of the fire, directing crews on the ground.

“I was the eyes in the sky to make sure crews were safe, to put in a contingency line,” he says.

It turns out the area they were protecting included his employer’s



I was the eyes in the sky to make sure crews were safe.

—Kingsley Cheung

Photo: Paul French

log supply.

“We were right in the Tolko log blocks,” says Kingsley.

They were also working alongside a First Nations crew.

“The First Nations community were a part of it,” says Kingsley. “It’s their land. The crews worked hard, right alongside the government crews.”

Kingsley appreciates Local 1-2017 having his back, protecting his Tolko job while he was away fighting wildfire.

The USW salutes our Steelworker firefighters for all they do protecting structures, communities and our natural resources from the ravages of fire.

Evacuations

He got home safely, but Paul French had to drive through an area on evacuation alert to get there. When the fires started on July 7, he was driving through 100 Mile House on his way home to Williams Lake from Kelowna.

Paul serves as 1st Vice-President of Local 1-2017 (the new local formed by the merger of locals 1-424 and

1-425), representing 3,500 workers in forestry, mining and health care.

A week later, Paul was away from home when Williams Lake was evacuated; so he spent the week working out of the USW’s Prince George office until he could get home.

When 100 Mile House was evacuated, 200 USW members were affected by the shutdown of the West Fraser sawmill and 100 Mile Home Support. Evacuees went to Kamloops, where some had to stay as long as two weeks.

Around 1,300 Steelworkers in Williams Lake and 100 Mile House were evacuated. When the alert was lifted in Williams Lake, members found a place to stay and returned to work.

Paul knows at least one member lost a home; a few more lost outbuildings and others had the fire reach right up to their doorsteps.

“Let’s Go Cook Some Burgers”

When communities were evacuated due to wildfires, many evacuees

Steelworker Volunteers

made their way to Kamloops. Kyle Wolff (Local 7619) and Marty Gibbons (Local 1-417) knew what to do: "Let's go cook some burgers," they said, recruiting USW volunteers eager to welcome and help evacuees.

A week later, the locals took the barbecue to Ashcroft where the legion was feeding first responders. With roads closed, they had to get clearance through roadblocks to get there.

Through their charity work, the locals have connections with the Salvation Army, United Way and the Kamloops and District Food Bank. So when supplies were needed, the Steelworkers got the call to help, delivering drinking water and blankets to fire camps in Clearwater, for example.

The Loon Lake Fire Department was hardest hit with the fire hall itself burned to the ground. So the locals held a welcome home barbecue fundraiser with the United Way for 350 people, raising \$4,000 towards rebuilding.

Relief and Recovery

By late September, people were back at work and the air quality in affected communities has recovered.

For most, funds offered by the Red Cross – \$600 for the first two weeks of evacuation and \$300 on return – has been enough to make up for food and incidentals while out of their homes.

The USW and the Steelworkers Humanity Fund has contributed \$100,000 for relief and recovery efforts.

"We want to thank B.C. USW locals for responding to the crisis with on-

the-ground support for evacuees and fire responders and with the support of USW locals and SOAR chapters across Western Canada, setting aside additional emergency funds for members facing evacuation," said Stephen Hunt, USW District 3 Director.

Combining local resources and donations, Local 1-417 is distributing \$10,000 to Steelworkers in need via a confidential application process. USW Local 1-2017 is using wildfire donations to host appreciation barbecues for Tolko workers at Lakeview Lumber and Soda Creek.

Sawmills are seeing burnt wood arrive at the operations and companies will go after it in efforts to make up lost log supply. However, layoffs are anticipated in the short term.

Longer term, there's concern that the next generation of logs have suffered with the burning of the undergrowth.

A year ago, it was Steelworkers in Fort McMurray, Alta., who were returning home after wildfire, eager to rebuild.

In B.C., the sense of community runs just as deep. Resilient and resourceful, Steelworkers are pulling together.

While 30,000 livestock have vanished or been destroyed by fire, and some homes and many outbuildings have been damaged or lost in the fire, there was no loss of human life.

Kids are back in school; most are back to work; things are returning to normal. Paul, Jordan, Kingsley and Marty have only good things to say about how communities, government, the Red Cross and other charities, employers, local businesses and of course, the union, have worked together to support each other during the crisis and now in recovery.

"I think overall, we got very lucky," says Paul. ■



Kamloops Steelworkers from USW Local 7619 and USW Local 1-417 held a barbecue for B.C. wildfire evacuees and volunteers.

NDP Moves to Enshrine INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

This fall, we have the chance to strengthen human rights legislation in Canada.

NDP MP Romeo Saganash's private member's bill, C-262, would ensure that the laws of Canada are in line with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The bill comes up for second reading this fall.

Members of the USW have been active and vocal with our support for C-262, meeting with MPs to ask for support. USW National Director Ken Neumann wrote an open letter to the prime minister calling on the government to support Bill C-262.

Our union cares about this bill because, as Canadians, we want to heal relationships between Indigenous Canadians and other Canadians. And we care about this bill because our members include Indigenous people. This is a Steelworker issue.

Bill C-262 "legislates a national action plan in cooperation and collaboration with Indigenous Peoples as called for by the TRC and will provide clarity and highlight the importance of harmonizing federal laws: something that will facilitate investment and development," according to Saganash's website promoting adoption and implementation of Bill C-262.

In 2016, USW endorsed the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and its calls to action. According to the TRC, Canada must adopt and implement the declaration as the framework for reconciliation.

2017 is the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the declaration by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Yet there continues to be a gap between formal recognition of Indigenous Peoples and implementation of policies on the ground.

Saganash was involved in negotiating the UN declaration over 30 years ago. Steelworkers are lobbying for broad support for Bill C-262 to complete the circle.

It's time for action. Delay and avoidance won't cut it any longer.

How you can help support Bill C-262:

- ▶ Sign on at adoptandimplement.com.
- ▶ Meet with your local MP and ask them to support Bill C-262. Request speaking notes and other support materials by sending an email to info@usw.ca. ■

NDP MP Romeo Saganash.
Photo: Kai Lai



University Worker Solidarity Achieves Bargaining Success

Membership mobilization and solidarity led to collective bargaining success in September for one of the USW's largest locals – Steelworkers Local 1998 at the University of Toronto.

Local 1998, representing 4,300 administrative and technical employees at the country's largest university, negotiated a three-year collective agreement that improves wages, job security and working conditions.

Throughout the bargaining process, the local mobilized members and strengthened solidarity to counter an austerity and concession agenda that has become all-too common in Ontario's public sector. Union members gave their bargaining committee a strong mandate to bring to the negotiating table, voting 94% in favour of strike action if necessary.

The three-year collective agreement, to be in effect until June 30, 2020, includes total wage increases of 6.5%, several improvements in contract language affecting key issues such as job security and enhanced provisions on severance and early retirement bridging.



"This is a concession-free agreement that makes important gains in monetary and non-monetary areas," said USW Local 1998 President Colleen Burke. "The bargaining process was very challenging, but our negotiating committee was buoyed by the tremendous support of our members throughout."

The collective agreement provides a 2.5% wage increase this year, followed by increases of 2% in each of the following two years. The wage increase this year includes a salary adjustment of 0.7%, retroactive to July 1, as an offset to an increase in employee pension contributions.

"We're pleased that we were able to negotiate this offset, so our across-the-board wage increases were not eroded by the pension contribution increase," Burke said.

The contract also improves health and education benefits, re-establishes an early-retirement bridge benefit, enhances severance packages and strengthens job security with gains made in the rights, options and re-employment opportunities for employees facing organizational change.

Continued on page 10



Thunder Bay Lumber Workers Ratify Three-Year Deal

Members of USW Local 1-2010 at Wanson Lumber in Thunder Bay, Ont., were unanimous in endorsing a new contract negotiated by their bargaining committee. The three-year agreement provides total wage increases of 4.75%, as well as improvements to pensions, vision care and bereavement language.



Highland Valley Copper Workers Stand Strong, Beat Back Concessions

With unwavering membership solidarity and community support, USW Local 7619 members at the Highland Valley Copper mine near Logan Lake, B.C., achieved new contract improvements and beat back concession demands by Teck Resources Inc.

With Teck seeking to roll back decades worth of collective bargaining gains, Local 7619 members responded with a 99.8% strike mandate vote and never wavered in their solidarity.

“Steelworkers stood together and supported the work of the bargaining committee to achieve a fair deal that respects the work done by every member at Highland Valley,” USW Local 7619 President Kyle Wolff said.

The new agreement contains no concessions and makes improvements to wages and health and safety language, as well as maintaining the copper bonus to support retirement security. It also includes progressive language that recognizes the rights of First Nations.



Excellent First Contract for Flaggers, Road Construction Workers

More than 600 new Steelworkers, working for Garda World as flaggers, road builders and truck drivers across Quebec, have achieved significant monetary gains and improvements in working conditions in their first collective agreement. The new members of Steelworkers Local 8922 ratified a three-year contract that provides wage rate harmonization to ensure all workers will attain the maximum rate, a general wage increase of \$3.35 an hour over the contract’s term, seniority language and a new health and safety committee.



Bus Factory Workers Make Gains, Rebuff Scheduling Concessions

The 400 members of Local 9599 working at bus manufacturer Micro Bird Girardin in Drummondville, Que., made numerous gains in a five-year contract while also rejecting the employer’s demands for mandatory overtime and unfair shift scheduling. The contract provides for total wage increases of 13.5%, improvements to shift premiums, sick leave, vacation pay and allowances for safety glasses and work boots.



Ilmenite Miners Improve Contract, Secure Production Commitments

USW Local 4466 members in Havre-Saint-Pierre, Que., negotiated a four-year contract extension in July that includes numerous improvements as well as new production commitments.

The contract extension, which will take effect Sept. 1, 2018, includes commitments from Rio Tinto Fer et Titane to maintain ilmenite production at the Tio Mine until August 2022. The company also committed to use more of the ore produced at the Tio Mine to supply its Sorel processing plant.

“Over the last two years the mine has operated for only 24 weeks a year and the company even threatened to close the mine in 2019, but this contract guarantees longer-term sustainability,” said Local 4466 President Steeve Arsenaault. “This will ensure long-term continuity in the community of Havre-Saint-Pierre, which is very dependent on the company’s operations.”

The new agreement will include wage increases averaging 3% per year between 2017 and 2022, as well as pensions and benefit improvements for the 230 workers. The basic benefit in the defined benefit pension plan will increase by \$2 per month per year of service and the pension supplement will increase by \$1.



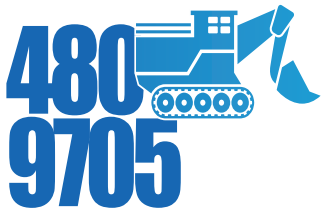
Nursing Home Workers Reach \$15 Wage Goal

Local 7065 members working at the Résidence des Bâtisseurs nursing home in Sept-Îles, Que., have ratified a five-year contract that achieves their goal of increasing wages to \$15 an hour. The new contract also shortens the time period required to reach the top of the pay scale.



Job Security, Monetary Gains for Northern Ontario Pulp Mill Workers

USW Local 665 members at the NBSK pulp mill in Terrace Bay, Ont., ratified a five-year agreement that strengthens job security and recall rights and improves wages, benefits and pensions. The contract provides an immediate \$1/hour increase to all wage rates, a \$1 increase to the trades/ticketed rate in April 2018 and an overall wage increase of 8% to all rates over the term of the agreement. Other highlights include benefits premiums paid 100% by the employer, a 1.5% pension increase and improvements for temporary employees.



Teck Trail Workers Improve Wages, Benefits, Pension

Members of USW Locals 480 and 9705 at the Teck Trail operations in British Columbia ratified a five-year collective agreement in July that improves wages, benefits and retirement provisions. The new contract, which runs until May 2022, includes an 8% wage increase over five years, a \$14,500 signing bonus, improved vision care and long-term-disability benefits, a wellness account and matching employer contributions up to 4% of base earnings for a group RRSP.



Mine Workers in Nunavik Address Contracting Out, Training Issues

Local 9449 members at Glencore's Raglan Mine in Nunavik, in northern Quebec, achieved significant monetary gains and stronger language on training and reducing contracting out. The percentage of contracted work will now be limited to 20% and will be allowed only when the recall list for union members has been exhausted. New language will provide training opportunities to miners and skilled trades workers to qualify for other positions with higher wage scales. The five-year contract provides the 575 union members with total wage increases of 13.5%, improvements to the group insurance plan, increased employer contributions to the pension plan and a \$5,000 signing bonus for each worker. ■



The USW Local 9449 bargaining committee at the Raglan Mine in Nunavik achieved significant monetary and language gains in a new five-year contract.

Quebec Steelworkers Building Solidarity at Home and Abroad

Into their ninth month on the picket line outside the CEZinc refinery in Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, Que., Steelworkers Local 6486 members continue to build solidarity at home and abroad.

USW District 5 recently launched a national Adopt-a-Striker campaign to support the 371 Steelworkers families affected by the strike that began last February.

The dispute was provoked by CEZinc's demands for concessions, in particular an attack on the workers' pension plan – even though the plan is overfunded.

Steelworkers locals across the country are encouraged to contribute to the Adopt-a-Striker campaign to support Local 6486 families.

“Steelworkers are sending a clear message to this employer that support

for our members will continue to grow,” USW District 5 Director Alain Croteau said.

The USW also is building a global campaign against resource giant Glencore – the largest shareholder of Noranda Income Fund, which operates the CEZinc refinery.

In September, a Quebec Steelworkers delegation travelled to Bogota, Colombia, to attend a meeting of representatives of Glencore workers from around the world. The USW's global campaign was endorsed by the international Glencore workers' group and IndustriALL Global Union, which represents 50 million workers in 140 countries.

“Glencore workers everywhere in the world are now aware of our conflict. With the support of our brothers and sisters, we will last that famous ‘one day longer,’” said Local 6486 activist Vincent Mercille-Barrette, a member of the USW delegation at the Bogota meeting.

“We remain open to meaningful negotiations, once the company shows it is serious and willing to seek a resolution,” added Dominic Lemieux, Assistant to the Steelworkers District 5 Director, who also attended the Colombia meeting. “We also know that when dealing with multinationals that profit from globalization, building international worker solidarity matters.” ■



Show your support

USW locals across Canada are encouraged to Adopt a Striker to support Steelworkers families affected by the nine-month strike at CEZinc.

Your local can support the campaign by making an ongoing donation for the duration of the dispute. Donations can be sent to: Local 6486, P.O. Box 26, Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, Quebec, J6S 4V5. Make cheques payable to “Les Métallurgistes Unis, Fonds de grève SL 6486.”

Local 6486 activist Vincent Mercille-Barrette is visiting USW locals to build support for the campaign. To invite Vincent to speak to your members, contact him at Vmercillebarrette@hotmail.com.



Steelworkers District 5 Director Alain Croteau speaks to news media about the shameful boycott of joint health and safety committees by Quebec mining companies.

SHAMEFUL BOYCOTT

Quebec Steelworkers Denounce Mining Companies for Shunning Joint Health and Safety Committees

Against the backdrop of numerous workplace fatalities and critical injuries, Steelworkers have called out Quebec mining companies for a deplorable boycott of provincial health and safety committees.

For the past year, Quebec mining companies have boycotted joint committees created by the provincial government to improve health and safety programs throughout the industry.

“We feel that mining companies are no longer focused on prevention. They are rejecting the joint committee model that has led to major advances in the industry over the last 30 years,” said Steelworkers Quebec Director Alain Croteau.

The boycott by the Quebec Mining Association (QMA) and its member companies began last year after the provincial workplace health and safety agency prohibited a specific method of ore extraction using explosives – due to safety concerns.

By boycotting the committees, the QMA is playing legal games and being childish, while workers’ lives are at stake.

– Alain Croteau
District 5 Director

The QMA is challenging the ruling and says that, since “all of its resources” are tied up by the legal proceedings, it can’t participate in the provincial health and safety committees.

In September, following a weekend in which one

worker was killed and three others were critically injured in Quebec mines, the Steelworkers held a news conference to condemn the QMA’s position and demand an end to the boycott. The union called on Quebec’s labour minister to intervene to resolve the critical issue.

“Nothing’s happening when it comes to prevention and developing an action plan for occupational health and safety,” Croteau said. “By boycotting the committees, the QMA is playing legal games and being childish, while workers’ lives are at stake.”

Mining Companies Boycott Safety Committees Despite Mounting Deaths, Injuries

Quebec Steelworkers went public in September to denounce mining companies for boycotting provincial health and safety committees despite mounting deaths and injuries.

- ▶ Roméo Girard, 53, was killed on Saturday, Sept. 9, at the Kiena Mine in Val-d’Or. Quebec’s occupational health and safety regulator is investigating the fatality.
- ▶ On the same September weekend, three miners were critically injured at the Westwood Mine, operated by IAMGOLD Corporation, near Rouyn-Noranda.
- ▶ On Feb. 23 of this year, USW member Pierre Audet, 59, was killed at the Westwood Mine when he was trapped between a loader and a security platform. The company was fined an undisclosed sum. ■

On October 4, Steelworkers joined vigils in communities across the country to commemorate missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG). A special delegation of Steelworkers representing every region of Canada – delegates to the USW Justice 2017 Conference – attended a moving MMIWG vigil in Vancouver.

“We remember and honour missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls,” said USW National Director Ken Neumann.

“Included in the missing and murdered are Steelworker sisters and the family members of Steelworkers,” said Neumann, who reaffirmed the USW’s call for the federal government to rectify its seriously flawed National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

“The families need a chance to tell their stories, and all Canadians need to listen, in particular those who shape our country’s laws and institutions,” he said.

Meanwhile, at an Oct. 4 vigil on Parliament Hill attended by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, MMIWG families criticized the Trudeau government for its failings on the national inquiry and its broken promises to Aboriginal people on many fronts.

“How do you come out here and say that you support families? How dare you come out here and say these things?” Trudeau was asked by Connie Greyeyes, of Fort Saint John, B.C., one of several vigil participants who assailed the Liberal government’s record.

In addition to the MMIWG National Inquiry’s failings, critics denounced an ongoing pattern of colonialism from a federal government that promised true reconciliation but still

resorts to court battles to thwart the rights and claims of Aboriginal people on health, education, social services and more.

Steelworkers across the country are proud to demonstrate their solidarity for the growing campaigns for justice for MMIWG families and for the rights of Aboriginal people who continue to seek meaningful social, economic, cultural and political change.

In July, Neumann sent an open letter to the Prime Minister, publicly supporting MMIWG families and emphasizing the union’s concerns with the government’s failings.

The families need a chance to tell their stories, and all Canadians need to listen, in particular those who shape our country’s laws and institutions.

– Ken Neumann, USW National Director

“The United Steelworkers knows that the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women is a Steelworker issue. It’s a Canadian issue. That’s why we have offered financial and moral support to the Native Women’s Association of Canada, which has played a leading role in raising awareness of and action on this issue. And that’s why we are also offering financial and other support to Steelworkers who have lost loved ones to this crisis and who want to attend a hearing of the national inquiry,” Neumann stated in the letter.

“I am deeply concerned that the Canadian government is not providing adequate support to the national inquiry, and, as a result, is not supporting families of the missing and murdered. The inquiry has struggled with logistics, when it should be paying attention to

Indigenous women, to Indigenous women’s organizations, and to Indigenous families.

“We need to hear the families’ stories, and the families need to be treated with respect, dignity and support. And then we, as a country, need to act on what we have heard. It would be an additional tragedy if the inquiry process were mishandled due to inadequate resourcing. On behalf of all Steelworkers across Canada, I call upon you and your government to fully support the national inquiry into murdered and missing Indigenous women so that it can fulfill its critical mission.”

Neumann’s open letter was sent to the prime minister immediately following the USW’s second National Workshop for Aboriginal Steelworkers, held in Edmonton in July.


Dozens of Aboriginal Steelworkers attended the workshop and were joined by USW leaders and activists from all levels of the union. They shared stories of the intergenerational impacts of residential schools, the suffering from the loss of loved ones who were among the murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls, and the economic, political, social and cultural challenges they are confronting.

The National Workshop for Aboriginal Steelworkers, first held in Winnipeg in 2015, evolved from policies adopted by USW delegates from across the country at our

2013 National Policy Conference. These policies mandate the USW to organize Aboriginal workers, engage and empower Aboriginal members at all levels of the union, bargain collective agreements that respect Aboriginal rights and play an active role in improving living and working conditions for Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

"It's a very powerful experience, to be part of it," said Stephanie Saunders, a USW Local 9074 activist from Norway House, Man., who co-moderated the Aboriginal workshop in July.

"It can be very difficult to confront some of the issues that we discuss – murdered and missing women, residential schools, racism," said Stephanie, whose mother is a residential school survivor. "But it really lifts you up as well. It's like a healing journey to attend. It's important for people to be there and to speak out and to connect." ■

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a large, conical, woven straw hat with two silver buttons on top and a white feather on the side. She is wearing a leopard-print jacket over a dark patterned shirt. She is holding a large, round, light-colored drum with a wooden frame and a drumstick in her right hand. The drum has some greenery and yellow paper inside. The background is blurred, showing trees and what appears to be a street scene with traffic lights.

Steelworkers Support **ABORIGINAL JUSTICE**



Teaching Steelworkers to ***SPEAK UP AGAINST VIOLENCE***

United Steelworkers District 3 is partnering with the Ending Violence Association (EVA) of British Columbia on a leading-edge initiative to break the silence on violence against women.

The Be More Than a Bystander campaign is the result of an original partnership between EVA BC and the BC Lions Football Club that has trained over 100,000 people in B.C. since 2011 to speak up and break the silence on violence against women.

The campaign has produced films and videos, won a number of awards, reached millions on social media and been profiled by the United Nations. The campaign's work is acclaimed for its innovative, three-day train-the-trainer courses and sector-specific programs that raise awareness and change attitudes. Other groups involved in the Bystander campaign include the Winnipeg Blue Bombers, Saskatchewan Amateur Football, B.C. Institute of Technology and Simon Fraser University.

USW District 3 is very excited to announce its partnership with EVA BC to deliver customized training that will allow Steelworkers to carry on this important

social change work. The program will equip USW members with the confidence and skills to speak up about violence against women and become leaders in delivering this message throughout our union and workplaces.

The in-person training course will include participation from BC Lions and Winnipeg Blue Bombers players, who will be working in conjunction with an experienced EVA BC trainer. The program is interactive and focuses on building skills rather than transferring information.

"As Steelworkers we pride ourselves on leading the way," says District 3 Director Stephen Hunt. "This is a very exciting partnership that will allow us to continue to lead the way and take on important issues that affect our members and their families. I encourage our members from across the district to support this work and consider applying for the training."

The first training session will be held Feb. 13 to 16 in Harrison Hot Springs, B.C.

For detailed information on the program or to submit an application to participate in the training, please visit www.usw.ca/district3 or email dskykes@usw.ca. ■



Grassroots Heroes

Jefferson Awards recognize Steelworkers' community work

Steelworkers make great neighbours. Our members give back to our communities in so many ways. In 2015, the USW partnered with the Jefferson Awards Foundation (JAF) in the U.S. to celebrate members doing amazing works of community service.

Four Canadian Steelworkers were honoured with Jefferson Awards this year, and one of them, Nancy McCurrach (TWU, USW National Local 1944), won the National Jefferson Award for Outstanding Service by an Employee.

The foundation, created in 1972, honours grassroots heroes who make meaningful contributions to their communities through their volunteer and charitable efforts.

Continued on page 18

Congratulations to All Our J



Nancy McCurrach, District 3 TWU, USW National Local 1944

Nancy McCurrach founded Tri-Cities Refugee Welcome Wagon, a group of friends and co-workers who help Syrian and Turkish refugees as they settle in Port Coquitlam, B.C. The group raised \$4,500 to pay for refugees' urgent medical needs and to buy strollers, transit passes, food and more. The group befriends and supports their new neighbours by eating meals with them, driving them to school and teaching them English.

McCurrach is a four-time cornea transplant recipient due to a rare disease called Keratoconus. Despite her own adversity, she volunteers tirelessly for many community organizations, including a group that uplifts women and girls who struggle with poverty and addiction.

"I'm so grateful that my union supports members like me who want to make a difference through community service," said McCurrach.

McCurrach was selected as the USW's overall Jefferson Awards volunteer for 2017 as well as the union's nominee from District 3, Western Canada.

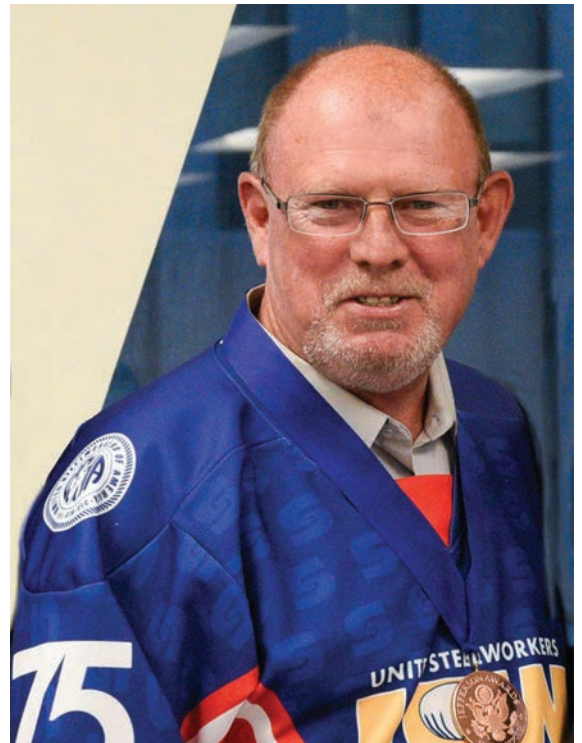
Darren Green, District 6 USW Local 5328

Darren Green spearheaded the Hamilton Steelworkers Area Council's project Operation Backpack. Volunteers stuff backpacks with school necessities for kids returning to classes in the fall. Now in its sixth year, the project has attracted corporate and community sponsors, and in 2017 distributed more than 1,000 backpacks for children in need.

Green leads efforts to feed the homeless and volunteers at local shelters. He has helped raise over \$400,000 for food banks, he instructs anti-harassment courses at workplaces in Ontario and Alberta and leads anti-racism efforts.

To change the public perception of the labour movement, Green created and pushed the #CommunityMatters hashtag on social media.

"To me, it's the most important thing that we do," said Green, president of Local 5328.



Jefferson Award Honorees!

Lena Sutton, SOAR, Chapter 10

Lena Sutton is the President of the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) Chapter 10 in Hamilton and is one of SOAR's USW Jefferson Awards winners for her continued commitment to those in need.

Sutton joined USW Local 7711 in 1974 and was elected President of the area's SOAR Chapter in 2006. In more than 40 years of activism, it's estimated she's helped raise more than \$100,000 and prepared and served thousands of meals for the needy and homeless.

Sutton is involved in the Hamilton Area Women's Committee and raises money for the United Way and other local charities. She helps prepare tax returns for low-income families and retirees.

"I witnessed my parents helping many families in our small town during times of need. And now I do it because I care about my neighbours and I believe community matters," said Sutton.



Marien Landry, District 5 Local 6951

Marien Landry, a retired member of USW Local 6951 in Quebec, was the District 5 Jefferson Award Winner for his work constructing education and health-care facilities to benefit the children of Guatemala.

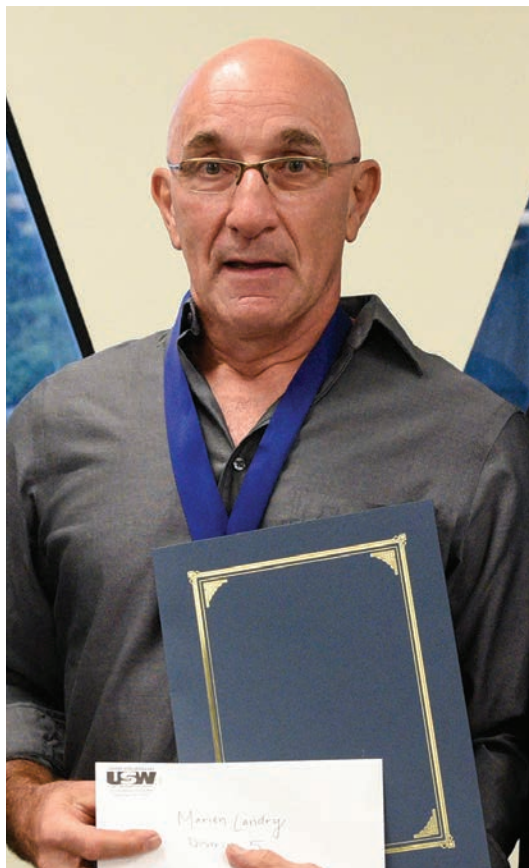
Landry worked for 30 years at ArcelorMittal as an inspector and casting tank preparer.

When Landry first visited Guatemala seven years ago, he recognized the need for school buildings and adequate health-care facilities. In an effort to create a better life for the people of the Central American country, he created The Guatemala Project.

Since retiring, Landry has worked on a variety of projects constructing and renovating vital buildings in small communities. He says the children of Guatemala are his main inspiration.

"My main goal is to give education to the greatest number of children by building schools," said Landry.

Along with assistance from the USW, he has raised over \$165,000 towards the project. ■





USW National **HEALTH, SAFETY, ENVIRONMENT** Conference

The stories stand out.

Staff rep Lynne Descary worked alongside a male colleague for years without knowing he was being beaten by his wife. After years of abuse, he finally told Descary the truth about his injuries, and she helped him leave and get help.

Statistics show that one in three women will experience sexual assault in their lifetimes. It is a women's issue. But Descary's story brings home why we need to negotiate domestic violence leave provisions into all collective agreements, not just in female-dominated workplaces.

Now retired, Marsha Bradcoe transitioned from male to female in a male-dominated workplace working as a haulage truck driver in a B.C. coal mine. While she had support from co-workers, her union (Local 7884) and her employer,

many transgender people are not so fortunate and suffer social ostracization, depression and suicide.

Michelle Dey works in a call centre and her workplace policies forbid her from hanging up on a customer, even when he is sexually harassing her, calling from a hot tub while pleasuring himself.

These stories brought to life the important work of our USW activists in health, safety, environment and human rights. Three hundred delegates gathered in Vancouver for education, training and networking over four days.

"Our health and safety activists are known as the most dedicated and committed movers and shakers in the labour movement," said USW National Director Ken Neumann in his opening remarks.

"Our human rights activists have

made us aware that harassment and discrimination happen in many parts of our society, including where we work," he said.

"Justice reminds us that our union is in the business of fighting for justice in the workplace, for our planet and for those who are marginalized."

Somebody's going to jail.

– Detective Kevin Sedore

The USW's campaign to Stop The Killing, Enforce the Law, was the highlight of the second day with Detective Kevin Sedore's retelling of the Christmas Eve Metron scaffolding collapse that killed four men in 2009.

Delegates heard the harrowing audio from one of the 911 calls, as first responders kept a traumatized apartment building resident on the

JUSTICE 2017

Syndicat des Métallos
Conférence nationale sur la santé, la sécurité,
environnement et les droits de la personne



Panel on Structural Violence in the
Workplace



Det. Kevin Sedore



ENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS

line to describe what she had seen. While at first he thought it was an accident, Sedore realized more was going on, so he “took over” the scene from the Ministry of Labour investigators.

Through Sedore’s painstaking work gathering and analyzing evidence, he discovered the scaffolding equipment had been modified, that it wasn’t safe to hold the weight of people and equipment that were on it and through it all, the construction company wasn’t cooperating.

Through his investigation, Sedore learned about the Westray Law that holds corporations criminally liable for workplace deaths and injuries.

“I’m sufficiently pissed off at this point,” he said at the USW conference. “Somebody’s going to jail.”

Sedore’s work led to the arrest of

three men and charges against the company. Of those, project manager Vadim Kazenelson was convicted and sentenced to 3½ years in January 2016 – the first jail sentence under the Westray Law. Kazenelson’s appeal will be heard in December 2017.

USW District 3 Director Stephen Hunt thanked Sedore for his work applying the Westray Law. “You’ve helped us move the yardstick,” said Hunt.

Workers continue to die at work at alarming rates. Pat McGregor, President of Local 1-423 told of how he applied for standing as part of a coroner’s inquest into the death of Bradley Haslam, 18, who was caught in a conveyor while on the graveyard cleanup crew at Tolko’s Lavington sawmill on June 15, 2013.

McGregor wasn’t on the scene, and the Lavington sawmill was

a non-union workplace. Inquest participants, including the employer and WorkSafeBC raised eyebrows at our union’s participation.

However, the USW received standing for representing workers at 10 other Tolko sites in B.C. In the end, many of the inquest recommendations derived from USW suggestions. Haslam’s family thanked the USW for being the only participants speaking on behalf of workers.

McGregor’s story, like so many of the stories shared during the conference, is an example of our union in action, for the betterment of all workers, not just our members. We will stop the killing. We will enforce the law. We will bring positive changes in our workplaces and our communities through our ongoing work for justice. ■

Jagmeet Singh

New NDP Leader
brings youth,
momentum



Jagmeet Singh

In a decisive vote, Jagmeet Singh has been chosen as the new leader of the federal New Democratic Party. Singh achieved 53.8% of votes by party members in the first ballot round, announced in Toronto on Oct. 1.

Singh, an elected Member of Provincial Parliament in Ontario, made history as the first non-white leader of a major federal political party in Canada. His campaign of "Love and Courage" signed up the most new members to the party, claiming more than 47,000 including 1,500 in Quebec.

"Campaigns are never about one person, but about a team," said Singh after the ballot results.

"The NDP leadership race has renewed excitement for the NDP and raised powerful ideas. This wouldn't have been possible without my colleagues in this race," he said.

"Canadians deserve the type of government that only New Democrats can deliver. ...

Canadians deserve a government that understands the struggles people are facing."

A criminal lawyer before being elected to the Ontario Legislature in 2011 in the riding of Bramalea-Gore-Malton, Singh, 38, brings youthful energy and charisma that will help the NDP match the appeal of Prime Minister Trudeau and new Conservative leader Andrew Scheer.

Singh's lack of a federal seat did not hamper his leadership bid. Singh has named

fellow leadership candidate Guy Caron as the NDP's Parliamentary Leader in the House of Commons – a role that will see Caron act as Singh's stand-in in the parliamentary arena.

Singh put forward a suite of policy ideas and often demonstrated an openness to adopting proposals from his opponents.

Canadians deserve the type of government that only New Democrats can deliver.

– Jagmeet Singh
Leader, New Democratic Party

For workers, Singh's platform includes a Better Work Agenda including a \$15 federal minimum wage indexed to inflation, equal rights for temporary agency workers and a national framework for enshrining Community Benefits Agreements (CBA) in federally funded infrastructure projects.

"It is unacceptable that a person working full time can't make ends meet. Yet for more and more Canadian workers that is their reality. The rise of insecure work is a key part of Canada's growing economic inequality. Canadians are worried and looking for action," said Singh.

During the campaign, Singh described himself as an ally of working people, trade unions and grassroots movements such as \$15 and Fairness that are fighting for the rights of workers across the country.

Other policy planks include proposals on income security, tax fairness, electoral reform, racial and Indigenous justice, a working Canadians guarantee and protection for temporary agency workers.

All of the NDP leadership candidates

brought value to the race for leader. Niki Ashton's free tuition proposal and emphasis on movement-based politics enhances our party's progressive credentials and community connections. Charlie Angus's "Got Your Back" fight for the underdog and track record of advocacy on behalf of First Nations communities makes us proud.

The only Quebec candidate, Guy Caron, impressed with his policy depth including a proposal for basic income.

During the course of the leadership race, Steelworkers hosted a lively candidates' debate in Toronto, encouraged USW locals to hold membership drives and held two telephone town halls for USW members.

The USW thanks Tom Mulcair for his principled leadership and steadfast friendship.

With the leadership contest behind us, now it's time for Steelworker New Democrats to unite behind our new leader.

Demonstrating his willingness to work with Steelworkers, Singh reached out with a personal call to USW National Director Ken Neumann on the night of his victory.

Singh is already getting to work in Ottawa. He's earning lots of upbeat media coverage for the party and strategizing with the NDP caucus before going out on tour to every province and territory in Canada.

Upon Singh's victory, the USW sent a letter of congratulations, pledging our union's commitment to working together, excited for the work ahead towards the next federal election in 2019, particularly around social justice and issues important to working people. Our union is excited for the future of our party with Jagmeet Singh at the helm. ■



Photo: Steve Dietz

USW's Working Forest Campaign E

The USW's Working Forest campaign to strengthen communities dependent on the forest industry is enlisting the support of municipalities in the wake of the still-unresolved softwood lumber dispute between Canada and the U.S.

Get involved and sign the petition at:
workingforest.ca

Following the expiry last year of the previous Softwood Lumber Agreement, Canada's lumber industry was hit with crippling preliminary tariffs by the Trump administration totalling nearly 27% – 19.88% for countervailing duties and 6.87% for anti-dumping levies. Contrary to all tribunal dispute

findings, the U.S. industry claims that provincial stumpage fees paid by Canadian companies are "subsidies," a claim refuted by Canadian industry and governments.

The U.S. Commerce Department was scheduled to make a final decision on duties against Canadian softwood lumber in September, but delayed that decision while NAFTA renegotiation talks continue between Canada, the U.S. and Mexico. At the same time, negotiators continue to seek a new agreement specifically on softwood lumber.

"This U.S. Commerce Department decision could be seen as a reprieve, but our industry and communities are still under threat by the powerful U.S. lumber lobby," said USW Wood Council Chair Bob Matters. "In an era of uncertainty, we cannot let

down the pressure on all levels of government to preserve an industry and way of life that has literally built Canada."

The Working Forest campaign is calling on city and town councils to adopt its resolution to "support a campaign aimed at securing, through fair negotiation with the United States, a softwood lumber agreement that puts the interests of communities, forestry workers and their families first."

The USW campaign has been given a boost by delegates to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), representing more than 2,000 local governments across Canada, who passed the following motion:

"... Resolved that the FCM continue to work with the federal government to support the interests



Expands

Ken Neumann (USW), Napoleon Gomez (Los Mineros), Richard Trumka (AFL-CIO) and Leo W. Gerard (USW).

International Trade *Does it HAFTA be NAFTA?*

“We got sold a bill of goods with NAFTA,” is how National Director Ken Neumann characterized the original trade agreement in The Toronto Star last month as NAFTA renegotiations intensified.

Since Canada started preparing for negotiations early this year, USW has used all available platforms to insist that the bottom line of any resulting agreement must be an increase in the protection and advancement of Canadian workers.

Neumann and International President Leo Gerard used the Trilateral Labour Summit in Washington on Oct.12 to insist on workers’ rights in any new NAFTA deal.

“We know first-hand the impact of failed trade policies. That impact has been devastating for our members. Since NAFTA, wage inequality has worsened, wage growth has stagnated and job losses have increased in both Canada and the United States,” said Neumann and Gerard in a joint statement.

Whether you call it NAFTA or something else, the USW has long supported a better trade deal that includes regional rules of origin and enforceable labour and environmental rights. This deal needs to severely limit levels of offshore content, and prevent companies from moving jobs to jurisdictions where wages, working conditions and safety standards are the weakest.

In a submission to Global Affairs Canada in August, Neumann said it’s also essential that NAFTA’s Chapter 11 be eliminated. The provision allows private corporations to sue the Canadian government – in secret tribunals – for laws and regulations protecting our environment, health, labour and other rights if the corporations claim they are adversely affected.

“This provision has been used to sue the Canadian government for billions of dollars. That has to stop,” said Neumann.

Our government also must insist on preserving Chapter 19, the binational appeal process. Without this, final decisions would be in the hands of the U.S. courts. Chapter 19 has been crucial for Canadian forestry workers, using it to successfully appeal hundreds of millions of dollars of unfair U.S. tariffs.

“Our Canadian government continues to say it is promoting a ‘progressive’ trade agenda. But words are just that,” Neumann said.

“What we need is real action to ensure that this trade agreement truly benefits working people and not just corporate elites. If our government cannot secure these goals, we see little reason to continue down this road.

“Without improvements, ending NAFTA would not be the end of the world.” ■

of communities affected by U.S. countervailing duties on softwood lumber; and work to ensure that the federal government understands the full impact of softwood lumber trade measures on local economies and conveys that impact to U.S. counterparts.”

In addition to municipal support, the Working Forest campaign is inviting individuals to sign our support petition at workingforest.ca. With literally hundreds of thousands of good-paying direct jobs across this country provided by the lumber industry, we call on everyone to speak up and let the Canadian government know we need a good softwood lumber agreement. ■

Bankruptcy bill proposes that vulnerable pensioners should come before CEOs, big banks and investors. Do the Liberals agree?

Steelworkers are rallying behind a private member's bill proposed by NDP MP Scott Duvall to protect pensioners affected by corporate bankruptcy proceedings.

Duvall, a former president of USW Local 5328 who represents the federal riding of Hamilton Mountain, is proposing legislation to stop injustices that have been

inflicted on countless workers and pensioners across Canada over decades.

Duvall's bill would modernize legislation that dates back to the 1930s, and would protect workers' pensions and benefits during corporate bankruptcy and insolvency cases.

Under the bill, pensioners would become secured creditors in bankruptcy cases and their pension plans would have to be fully funded before other creditors could be paid. The legislation would prevent companies and courts from suspending retirees' health benefits during restructuring proceedings – an insidious practice

that recently victimized thousands of USW pensioners at U.S. Steel (Stelco) in Ontario and at Cliffs Natural Resources in Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador.

Duvall announced in September that he expected to introduce his bill in Parliament before the end of the fall session in mid-December.

"Far too many Canadians have suffered due to decades of inaction by successive Liberal and Conservative governments," said USW National Director Ken Neumann. "It is time for the Trudeau Liberals – who campaigned on improving retirement security – to support meaningful change that will protect workers and pensioners."



Steelworker and NDP MP Scott Duvall with USW's Ken Neumann and then-NDP Leader Tom Mulcair.

PROTECT PENSIONERS, Not Wealthy CEOs and Banks

The Sears Canada bankruptcy case – just the latest such scandal to devastate thousands of workers and pensioners – adds to the mountain of evidence that federal laws must be reformed.

After entering court-sanctioned creditor protection in June, Sears Canada announced in October that it planned to shut down its operations across the country. Some 12,000 workers were expected to lose their jobs and 18,000 retirees were facing the prospect of disastrous cuts to their pensions and benefits.

The prospect of workers and retirees losing pensions and benefits is made more appalling by the fact that, just a few short years ago, Sears Canada's pension funds had a \$220-million surplus.

However, by last year the company's pension funding position had deteriorated to a \$110-million shortfall. Incredibly, during the same period that its pension funding suffered, Sears Canada gave massive payments – a whopping total of \$1.4 billion – to its executives and shareholders through special dividends and share buybacks.

As part of this “methodical process of value extraction,” as critics describe it, hundreds of millions of dollars went to a single person – the chief executive of Sears Canada's U.S. parent company – who reportedly holds a 45% stake in the Canadian subsidiary.

In other words, the Sears pension plan could have remained fully funded with an injection of a small fraction of the value “extracted” from the company in recent years. Not to mention what could have been accomplished if some of that value – which was created by employees in the first place – had been reinvested in the company's future. Equally appalling is the fact



Steelworker and NDP MP Scott Duvall presenting a plaque to constituents in Hamilton.

that many of Canada's largest corporations have long engaged in the same practice of short-term “value extraction” at the expense of jobs, pensions and other longer-term investments.

A recent analysis of 34 corporations showed that total funding of their defined-benefit pension plans plummeted from a combined \$560-million surplus in 2007 to a \$13-billion shortfall in 2016.

However, during these ‘hard times,’ the same corporations showered their shareholders and executives with \$410 billion in ‘extracted value’ – more than 30 times greater than the total pension shortfall. Such numbers go a long way toward debunking the corporate narrative that defined-benefit pension plans, which provide workers with a decent and secure retirement, are not sustainable.

Shamefully, the Liberal government not only condones such grossly unjust practices, it has introduced legislation that would further enrich some of the country's largest corporations by allowing them to back out of defined-benefit

pension obligations in favour of lesser plans. The Liberals' proposed legislation, Bill C-27, revives a plan put forward by the previous Conservative government before it was abandoned in 2014.

“The Liberals campaigned on promises of improving retirement security and protecting retirees. But they are so intent on giving another gift to corporations, they are reviving failed Conservative policies, at the expense of decent pensions for Canadians,” said Neumann.

“Bill C-27 will further erode retirement security and it should be abandoned, for good. The Liberal government can begin to fulfill a campaign promise by supporting Scott Duvall's private member's bill to bring long-overdue improvements to Canada's corporate insolvency laws,” he added.

“Canadian workers and pensioners want more than hollow words of sympathy when their pensions and benefits are cut while banks, CEOs and wealthy investors profit.

“Canadians want their government to finally do the right thing.” ■

www.ndp.ca/pensions

FOR A LITTLE LESSON IN
BLACKMAIL AND TAX EVASION

BON VOYAGE!



Steelworkers and others question whether multinational's threat to leave Quebec is simply blackmail to avoid regulation

In late September, gig economy giant Uber announced it was prepared to withdraw from Quebec rather than accept basic regulations.

After allowing the company to operate under terms of a year-long pilot project, the Quebec government announced Uber drivers would be required to complete 35 hours of online training and submit to a criminal background check by police.

These minimal public-safety requirements pale in comparison to the regulations, inspections and licensing costs faced by taxi companies and drivers. While Quebec cab drivers working with government-approved companies also take 35 hours of training, independent taxi and limousine drivers must complete 150 hours of training.

Still, the government's minimal requirements for Uber prompted an extreme reaction from the U.S. company – a public threat that it would leave Quebec in October. (At press time, it was not clear if Uber would follow through on its threat).

Many Quebecers, including Montreal's mayor and taxi drivers represented by the Steelworkers through the Regroupement des travailleurs autonomes Métallos (RTAM), wished Uber good riddance if it could not accept basic regulations.

"Uber's unlawful business model is not made for Quebec. From the beginning, we've asked that Uber drivers be subject to the same rules as taxi and limousine drivers. The government's requirements for Uber don't even go that far, yet it's still too much for Uber," said RTAM spokesperson Wilson Jean Paul.

The RTAM urged the government not to cave in to Uber's threats.

"Quebec must stand firm and not allow itself to be swayed by the tactics of this rogue multinational,"

Jean Paul said. "The Transportation Minister gave his word with these requirements for Uber. This is a commitment to keeping Quebecers safe."

Quebec's Transportation Minister Laurent Lessard said his government was firm in its decision.

"We are not in negotiation mode," Lessard said. "I cannot believe that a multinational company like Uber is unable to adapt to Quebec's laws and regulations."

Even if Uber leaves Quebec, it will have left significant damage in its wake. The government confirmed the value of taxi permits plummeted by 38% in the past year alone, with losses estimated at \$332 million. Total losses since Uber's arrival in 2013 are likely much higher. ■



Uber's threat to leave Quebec rather than abide by basic regulations was welcomed by taxi drivers, including members of the Regroupement des travailleurs autonomes Métallos (RTAM).

Good Riddance Uber?