



A message from Steve Hunt

To my Sisters, Brothers and Friends,

I have had the honour of fighting on behalf of workers with all of you for nearly four decades. Together, we have improved working conditions, pensions, wages, and benefits, not only for workers in Canada but around the globe.

None of our union's work would be possible without the dedication of our hardworking and talented staff in District 3. Through their long hours in the office and at the bargaining table, both staff representatives and support staff have been here to support our members when they reached out to the district office. We could not do what we do without you.

As many of you know, I started as a miner. Like many of you, I knew the importance of unions to my wages and working conditions. But I didn't understand the ins and outs of collective agreements. One thing I did know is that I wanted to make change. I got involved in my local and defended a co-worker's right to refuse unsafe work. I got fired for standing up and fighting with him. The union was there to help me get my job back. It was an important lesson that

nothing in our collective agreements means anything unless we stand up and fight.

I am proud of the fight we have all shared for equity and representation in government. From Women of Steel to NextGen and everyone involved in our political action, we have changed the face of our union to reflect the diversity found within our membership. We have also elected Steelworkers to the legislature in every province in District 3, who have fought hard to bring our union's priorities to government. Your fight is not done. Continue the fight for more equitable workplaces, communities and society.

Steelworkers know all too well the dangers of our workplaces. We know that every worker should come home safe at the end of their shift. We can't quantify the number of lives we have saved or injuries we have prevented through our unwavering fight to improve health and safety in the workplace. District 3 has been an example to the world of what unions can do for workers' safety.

The work that we accomplished in my time as Director did not start with me. It comes from the lessons I learned from the generations of Steelworkers who came before me. It comes from the thousands of sisters, brothers, and friends worldwide who are with us today and those we have lost. They taught me the importance of our work in the labour movement. I am proud of my career and what we, the Steelworkers, have accomplished together. It's been a tough go at times, but we have achieved so much for workers. I am proud of the work we did together.

The union doesn't start with I; it begins with U – each of you are the union. As

our union moves into this next chapter, I do not doubt that you will face new challenges. People and companies will try to divide members and weaken our movement. But I ask everyone not to forget our roots and the fights we fought. Be proud of our history. Know that our collective strength was achieved through solidarity, supporting each other, and learning together.

Sisters, brothers, and friends, I urge you never to give up the fight. Stand up for workers. Never stop fighting for what you believe in. And, remember this: solidarity works.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Hunt".

Steve Hunt

Mark Your Calendar

- MAR 1** USW International Installation Ceremony
- MAR 8** International Women's Day
- MAR 17** St. Patrick's Day
- MAR 18** Holi
- MAR 21** International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- MAR 23-24** Building Inclusive Locals: Gender Justice
- MAR 31** International Transgender Day of Visibility



A fond farewell to our brothers in their retirement – solidarity forever

Our staff representatives play a vital role in the success of our union. They are truly the face of our union and are there during bargaining, organizing, workplace health and safety, education, and much more.

Being a staff representative often means making big sacrifices; working long days, being available at all hours to answer the phone and emails, and being on the road, away from family and friends. It is also a very rewarding career that makes positive changes in the lives of our members, their families and in their communities.

Staff representatives carry a lot of knowledge of our past, present and future. Three long-time District 3 staff representatives have announced their retirements. USW District 3 wishes Tony Sproule, Keith Turcotte and Randy Gatzka all the best in their retirement.

Along with the departure of Director Steve Hunt, over 100 years of institutional knowledge is leaving our Steelworker family. These brothers have made a tremendous difference in the lives of thousands of workers here in Canada and abroad. Thank you for your leadership, mentorship, guidance and solidarity through the good and the tough times our union has faced.

Randy Gatzka has been a proud union member since 1973 and served 20 years as a staff representative. Randy worked for B.C. Rail and got involved with

the union because he did not like how management treated his colleagues. Randy would never shy away from a challenge and always provided advice when other staff needed help. He especially enjoyed problem-solving during collective bargaining and grievance arbitrations.

When asked what advice he has for members, Randy stated:

“Don’t sit on the sidelines waiting for someone to do the work – get involved and create change. I did my 50-plus years of work and saw how change affected some industries and how change is always constant in our life. I encourage everyone to think outside of the box and offer reasonable solutions to how change is affecting our working lives.”

Randy retired on February 18 and looks forward to spending time with family and grandkids.

Tony Sproule has been a proud member of the union for over 41 years and a staff representative for 16 years. Tony is most proud of working his way up through the ranks of the many executive positions at his old local, earning the respect of his fellow members, and to being elected as President of the local.

“My father was an International Representative for IBEW, and my grandfather was an instructor for the Steam Fitters/Pipe Fitters Union. Most discussions around my home hinged

on union activities, happenings, and workers’ issues. I learned very quickly where support was needed, and I was always a person who spoke up for people who were being mistreated or misrepresented. I will never forget the expression on my father’s face when I told him I was being hired by Director Hunt as a staff representative. That moment made me the proudest I have ever felt during my career.”

Tony is set to retire on March 31, and he looks forward to sleeping in for more than two days in a row and not worrying about missing any phone calls or emails.

“I would like to thank all my colleagues and the members I have worked with over the years, with a huge thanks to Director Hunt for all his support and friendship during my term as staff. It can be a very lonely job, and Steve was always there to support and be a friend. Being a Steelworker has allowed me to meet some extraordinary people over my career, worldwide, and almost all with the union heart.”

Keith Turcotte has been a proud Steelworker for many years and served as a staff representative for 35 years. Keith served as the Area Coordinator and was responsible for servicing Kamloops, Calgary and Edmonton during his career.

Keith encourages all members never to lose sight of our fight and continue fighting for what we believe in.

Workers at Foothills Forest Products join USW

Sawmill workers at Foothills Forest Products have voted to join USW Local 1-207. Foothills Forest Products is located south of Grande Cache, Alta.

“We are excited to welcome 130 workers from the Foothills Forest Products sawmill to our union,” said Pablo Guerra, USW District 3 organizer for Western Canada. “These workers came to us looking for better. For too long, they were left to fight for themselves, and now they will have real representation and the opportunity to get the respect they deserve in their workplace. We look forward to working with them to achieve better working conditions, wages and benefits.”

After a majority of workers signed union cards to join the USW, the Alberta Labour Relations Board ordered a vote by employees. The labour board counted

the vote on February 14, and confirmed a majority of the workers voted in favour of union representation.

“We are all very excited to be joining the Steelworkers after so many years of fighting for ourselves,” said a worker from Foothills Forest Products. “To now have backup and support from such a strong union is going to be great for our workers and our town.”

The next steps for the workers will include electing a bargaining committee and negotiating their first collective agreement with the employer.

The sawmill has a total annual production capacity of up to 120 million board feet of high-quality SPF (Spruce-Pine-Fir) lumber. In 2019, Dunkley Lumber Ltd. acquired Foothills Forest Products.

USW supports Los Mineros strike against Canadian miner

The United Steelworkers union, representing 800,000 workers in Canada and the USA, stands in solidarity with the members of Section 333 of the National Union of Mine, Metal, Steel and Related Workers of the Mexican Republic (Los Mineros), led by Napoleón Gómez Urrutia, who are on strike against Americas Gold and Silver, a Canadian mining company, at the San Rafael mine in Cosalá, Sinaloa, Mexico since Jan. 28.

The striking miners are demanding that the company recognize the national leadership of the union, which won control of the collective bargaining agreement in a government-certified election in 2020, and negotiate in good faith; pay back wages owed to the

workers; and drop criminal charges against current and former workers at the mine.

“CUSMA [the Canada-US-Mexico trade agreement] establishes strong labour obligations for Canadian companies in Mexico,” said USW National Director for Canada Ken Neumann. “Americas Gold and Silver must respect these laws, and Mexico must enforce them.”

“We urge Americas Gold and Silver to initiate a dialogue in good faith with Los Mineros and stop all threats to the safety of its members and any violent actions. We also support the union’s demand to pay all owed wages and the reinstatement of unjustifiably dismissed local union leaders.”



Calgary Starbucks set to vote

Following a delay with the Alberta Labour Relations Board (ALRB), Starbucks workers at the Chinook Centre Food Court in Calgary are voting to join the USW. Mail-in ballots have been sent out to the employees and are due back by March 9.

This Starbucks will be the second Canadian location to unionize with the USW when successful.

“The first thing is wages, but what we’re finding with Starbucks is often dignity and respect. Workers are really troubled everywhere,” said Steve Hunt, USW District 3 Director, in an interview with CityNews. “Workers are the front line; they’re the face of Starbucks. Sometimes workers are attacked because somebody doesn’t like to wear a mask, and workers have to deal with that. Now with the ability to Skip the Dishes and other avenues for take-out orders, while they’re filling out these orders there’s people standing at the counter.”

Support continues to build for Starbucks workers in Canada and the USA, with over 100 applications currently filed or in progress.

“It takes a tremendous amount of courage for people who are non-union, especially in jobs like this in the service sector to even go through a union, because you’ve got to get everyone together,” added Hunt. “I think what it means to Starbucks is that when they sit in Seattle and they make their policies, they might want to think a little more sharply on why people are doing this. They’re not doing this because it’s fun.”

Building Inclusive Locals: Gender Justice

Building Inclusive Locals is a series of 60-minute Zoom events!

In March, let’s talk about gender justice. As a woman in the USW, what does it mean for you to be included in your local union? How can we work together

to increase women’s participation and inclusion in locals and workplaces?

Wednesday, March 23 at 5:30 p.m. PST

Thursday, March 24 at 4:30 p.m. PST

Register at usw.ca/inclusive.



Thank you, Ryan Meili

On February 18, the Saskatchewan NDP leader, Ryan Meili, announced he will be stepping down as leader. When a new leader is selected, Meili will step aside to make room for that new voice.

“On behalf of the United Steelworkers in Western Canada, thank you, Ryan Meili, for your leadership and vision. As the leader of the Saskatchewan NDP, you stood with Steelworkers fighting to protect our jobs. Thank you for standing up for steel and having the backs of our members and their families. I wish you all the best,” said Steve Hunt, USW District 3 Director.

“I am very grateful for the support, first and foremost, of my family. I am thankful to the voters of Saskatoon Meewasin and to NDP members for their support. And I’m encouraged to see so many, as recent polls are showing, who are seeing through the deception of the Sask. Party and turning to support our party, who are seeking a better vision for Saskatchewan’s future,” said Meili in a statement.

“I look forward to a healthy leadership race and to supporting the new leader of the Saskatchewan New Democratic Party to become the next premier of Saskatchewan,” added Meili.

Need help planning events?

Is your local a contributor to the Family & Community Education Fund (FCEF) but stuck as to what events to host? Feeling too busy to brainstorm a project?

The FCEF has over 20 project templates on its website – pick the event that best suits the interests of your membership and find event planning tips, resource lists, and more!

It’s easy to connect national USW campaigns to your members. Raising the Bar on Women’s Health & Safety is a great initiative to participate in, and helps you get women more involved in your local. Find all the materials you need to give a short presentation on this campaign at usw.ca/RaiseTheBar.

FCEF contributors leading Raising the Bar events can easily secure funds to pay for food and swag costs. Reach out to Gabriele Simmons, the FCEF Coordinator, for help with drafting your project submission.



Celebrating International Women's Day

Unions need women and women need unions. We celebrate International Women’s Day (IWD) on March 8 by honouring women’s achievements and continuing our fight for change.

Let’s celebrate the great work that Women of Steel have done and are doing to make the world a safer, healthier place for all women, and commit ourselves to #BreakTheBias.



Local 480 donates to sick children’s fund

USW Local 480 has donated \$5,000 to the Gordy Steep Sick Children’s Fund.

This fund, initiated by the Local 480, assists families in need when they travel for medical care. The Memorial fund honours Gordy Steep, a man who played a big part in USW Local 480.



Building Power!

Nearly 40 members from Local 480 participated in a hybrid in-person and virtual Building Power CAT training on Feb 22 and 23 in Trail. The members are preparing for bargaining with Teck.

#FreebieFriday

Congratulations to our Feb 11 giveaway winners!

- James M. (Local 2004)
- Garrett R. (Local 5890)
- Letha L. (Local 1-423)

Thanks to all our members who entered. Didn’t get a chance to enter? Stay tuned for our next #FreebieFriday draw!

Do you have news to share from your local union?

Send in news, events, bargaining updates and photos to bbarden@usw.ca