

ADDED COVER BECAUSE OF COVID-19

A magazine for the United Steelworkers

April 2020

USW@Work

NOTE: This magazine went to the printers before the coronavirus (COVID-19) was declared a pandemic. As a result, none of the articles in this issue mention COVID-19, the many related issues for workers, the measures USW is taking, nor does it list USW events cancelled, postponed or transferred to online formats.

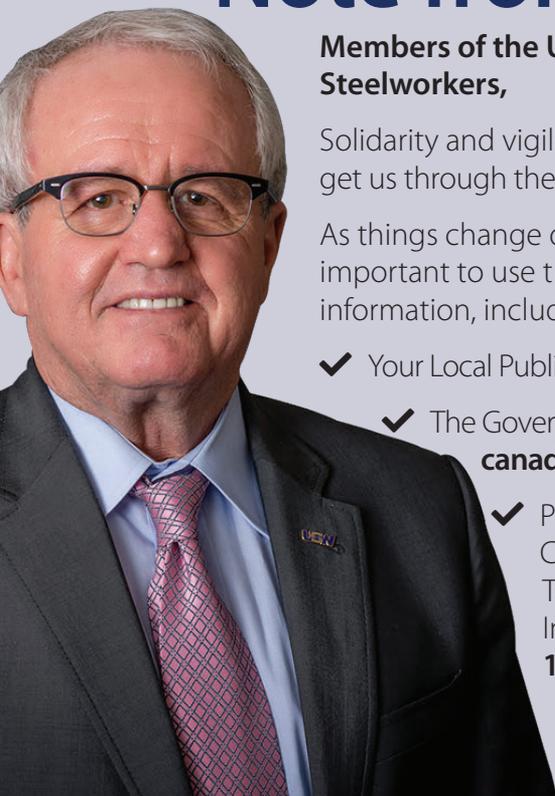
There is much helpful information for workers and members online at: usw.ca/covid19.

Turn this page to find important information on how to stay safe and protect yourselves and your loved ones.

For the latest Steelworkers and worker-related information on COVID-19, check our website regularly.



Note from the National Director



Members of the United Steelworkers,

Solidarity and vigilance are what will get us through these hard times.

As things change daily, it's important to use trusted sources for information, including:

- ✓ Your Local Public Health Authority.
- ✓ The Government of Canada: canada.ca/coronavirus.
- ✓ Public Health Coronavirus Telephone Info Line: **1-833-784-4397**.

If your workplace has temporarily closed, your staff reps and the National Office remain available by email and phone.

We will strive to keep workplace and job-related information, particularly as it relates to safety and your rights at work, up to date online at usw.ca/covid19.

Please stay safe, everyone. We're all in this together.

Ken Neumann
USW National Director

ADDED COVER BECAUSE OF COVID-19

COVID-19 INFORMATION on OUR WEBSITE

usw.ca/covid19

Keep informed and follow the rules

Stay up to date with the latest information from your local and provincial health authorities and Canadian health authorities (canada.ca/coronavirus)

- Only follow trusted, reliable news sources

Stay Healthy and Support Each Other

- Wash hands and practise social distancing
- If you're sick, stay home
- If you are around someone infected, isolate for 14 days
- Be active, stay social online if you can and monitor your mental health
- Push back against scapegoating and discrimination

More at: usw.ca/covid19

Workers Need to be Protected and Supported

- Refuse work that is not safe
- Sick leave and leaves of absence should be honoured
- Keep our brave health-care and essential services workers supported and in your thoughts
- Those at work have a right to information and protection

Take advantage of support measures available: canada.ca/coronavirus

More at: usw.ca/covid19

The Government Needs to Do a Better Job for Workers

- The federal government and provincial governments need to do more and get supports to workers sooner
- General wage subsidies to employers should be enacted, similar to Germany and the United Kingdom (60-80%)
- Relief on rent, mortgages, student loans and interest need to be legislated
- Government supports, such as EI, GST/HST credits and Canada Child Benefit need stronger measures

More at: usw.ca/covid19

COVID-19 INFORMATION on OUR WEBSITE

usw.ca/covid19

USW@Work



Big Victories

Quebec Bottles and B.C. Forestry
p. 11 and 16

USW@Work
April 2020

Official Publication of the United Steelworkers in Canada

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Join our online community of activists.

Printed on USW-certified paper.

COVER PHOTO: Relentless activism by Steelworkers and allies throughout Quebec led to the creation of a deposit and recycling program for glass and plastic beverage containers. Campaign volunteers included, from the left, Henri Noël (son of Donald Noël, assistant to the USW District 5 Director) and retired Steelworkers Louise Baril and Gilles Bordeleau.



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#40006737

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Together We Ac

WHEN WE FACE CHALLENGES, standing together makes us stronger. Some recent victories make me proud of our union's work together and I want to share them with you.

In a big battle in British Columbia, more than 3,000 members of USW Local 1-1937 have won their eight-month struggle against Western Forest Products (WFP) by standing together and building community support.

The members took on a large, profitable, globalized corporation that was attacking pensions, job security, benefits and fundamental rights. And they won. In February, they ratified a new five-year, zero-concessions contract (see p. 11).

In January, our union won an important case at the Canadian International Trade Tribunal (CITT) in Ottawa to prevent the dumping of Chinese extruded aluminum products.

Our members presented powerful evidence at the tribunal based on their personal experience. The CITT ruling is a welcome victory for Canadian aluminum workers.

We count another victory in the Lisa Helps report, released last December. Helps reviewed government and WorkSafeBC's actions following two sawmill explosions in 2012 that killed four workers and injured dozens more.



Share Victories

The report makes recommendations to strengthen worker health and safety and put workers at the centre of WorkSafeBC. The USW is the health and safety union and we campaigned for a review of WorkSafeBC's botched response to the tragedies.

Our union is growing. In January, employees at the Toronto operations of KIK Custom Products voted to join the USW. This is a great victory for these workers and for our union (see p. 6).

In January, Steelworkers at Montreal glass-bottle maker Owens Illinois, members of Local 206G, won their campaign for a provincial bottle-deposit system to recycle glass, providing benefits for the environment, the economy and for jobs (see p. 16).

Let's celebrate our victories at the bargaining table. Our bargaining committees have achieved a number of agreements across the country recently, giving workers wage increases, job security, improved benefits and more say at work (see p. 8).

On the trade file, NDP Trade Critic Daniel Blaikie, building on work done by his predecessor Tracey Ramsey, has won a commitment from Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland for greater transparency and accountability in future trade deals, to improve the process for working people towards better, fairer trade.

I am thrilled for Quebec Director Alain Croteau who has begun his new role as Special Assistant to USW International President Tom Conway. Croteau leaves a strong and healthy union to those succeeding him in District 5. Moving from Assistant to Director is Dominic Lemieux, and Donald Noël is stepping up as assistant to the director.

In solidarity,

Ken Neumann
National Director

P.S. In this issue, we've included a pull-out poster recognizing the National Day of Mourning, April 28. As we mourn for those killed and injured on the job, we will continue our struggle to fight for the living (see p. 20).

Pharmacare

Canadians want it universal
p. 4



Team Unite CLC

Strong candidates for change
p. 5



Organizing & Bargaining

USW successes and victories
pp. 6-9



Defending Steel and Aluminum

Lobbying MPs for our jobs
p. 10



Victory: Forestry Strike

Local 1-1937 wins eight-month fight
p. 11



Stop the Killing: Involving Locals

Meeting with provincial authorities
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Unionism on Turtle Island

Indigenous culture course
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Quebec Bottle Recycling Victory

Glass workers prevail
p. 16



Leo Gerard Honoured

Award and scholarships
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USW Community Projects

Union funds initiatives
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NAFTA2 Falls Short

Neumann tells MPs
p. 19



Day of Mourning

Pull-out poster inside
p. 20



PHARMACARE

Pharmacare Now Say Canadians

UNIONS ACROSS CANADA

have been part of a concerted effort to urge federal politicians to support a pharmacare program that will cover all Canadians and be the extension of our public health-care system, as envisioned over 50 years ago by the Father of Medicare, Tommy Douglas.

USW activists added their voices in a one-day lobby organized by the Canadian Labour Congress and will participate in a lobby effort sponsored by the Canadian Health Coalition in April.

The model promoted by health-care activists and the labour movement is a single-payer, universal public program, as recommended by the government's own Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare.

"Unfortunately, the Prime Minister's instruction to the Minister of Health in a mandate letter following the federal election is vague about meeting this goal," said National Director Ken Neumann.

In January, the minister said

Pharmacare is not a luxury. It is a program that will make Canada a more humane, caring society that values the health and well-being of its citizens.

– Ken Neumann
USW National Director

it is "hard to say" if the Liberal government will implement any form of pharmacare in the next four years.

"That is not acceptable," said Neumann. "Canada remains the only industrialized nation with a public health-care program that does not include pharmacare. Our aim, along with our political allies, is to fight for a plan that leaves no one behind. Canadians should not have to choose between necessary medications and essentials like food on the table and shelter."

The current momentum for pharmacare is not new. It was recommended by Royal Commissions as far back as 1964 and again in 2002.

In fact, it is estimated that one-third of Canadian workers do not get coverage from their

employer. The so-called "gig economy" almost guarantees that the number of workers not covered will grow.

Unlike hospital care, prescription drugs are not the exclusive jurisdiction of the provinces. The federal government can act to ensure a universal pharmacare program.

USW has signed on to a letter to Federal Finance Minister Bill Morneau, along with over 100 organizations, calling for the upcoming federal budget to include a minimum commitment of \$3.5-billion for pharmacare (2020-2022).

"Pharmacare is not a luxury," said Neumann. "It is a program that will make Canada a more humane, caring society that values the health and well-being of its citizens. The time is now." ■



LILY CHANG
FOR CLC SECRETARY-TREASURER



BEA BRUSKE
FOR CLC PRESIDENT



SIOBHAN VIPOND
FOR CLC EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT

www.TeamUniteCLC.ca

USW Endorses Team Unite CLC *Supporting change and unity*

IMPRESSED BY THESE STRONG LEADERS, the USW Canadian Directors are proud to support Team Unite CLC. They're an activist team for change at the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC):

- **Bea Bruske** for CLC President
- **Lily Chang** for CLC Secretary-Treasurer
- **Siobhan Vipond** for CLC Executive Vice-President

Our union is sending a strong USW delegation to the CLC Convention in Vancouver, May 4-8, to support Bea, Lily and Siobhan.

Though we have had our differences with the CLC over the last few years, our union values the strength and solidarity of a strong central labour body – particularly a renewed congress.

“Our movement is strongest when we work together. I know that Bea, Lily and Siobhan are motivated to rebuild the unity of our movement through mobilizing and engaging our grassroots membership,” said

Let's work together to unite the CLC and make sure workers' voices are heard loud and clear from the grassroots up.

– **Bea Bruske**
Candidate for CLC President

Ken Neumann, USW National Director.

Bea Bruske for CLC President: Bea is Vice-President of UFCW Canada National Council and Secretary-Treasurer of UFCW Local 832 in Manitoba. Bea has served workers and families as an activist, workers' advocate, negotiator, community organizer and union leader for over three decades. She's passionate about disability rights and serves on the Manitoba NDP executive. “Let's work together to unite the CLC and make sure workers' voices are heard loud and clear from the grassroots up.”

Lily Chang for CLC Secretary-Treasurer: Lily is a long-serving executive member of CUPE 79, CUPE's largest local, representing 20,000 municipal workers at the City of Toronto. Local 79 Treasurer for 13 years, Lily currently serves as an elected officer focusing on member advocacy and grievance resolution.

Siobhan Vipond for CLC Executive Vice-President: Siobhan is Secretary-Treasurer of the Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) and a proud member of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE), where she served as Secretary, Vice-President and President of IATSE Local 210. Siobhan is Treasurer of Alberta's NDP.

Team Unite CLC are strong, dedicated and experienced, change-minded leaders committed to building a strong, unified CLC.

Sign up for updates at www.TeamUniteCLC.ca and follow on social media: #TeamUniteCLC. ■

From manufacturing to social services and airports to the hospitality sector, workers across Canada are turning to the Steelworkers to secure the better working conditions, dignity and rights provided by a union job:



KIK Custom Products – Toronto

In January, 500 employees at the Toronto operations of manufacturing giant KIK Custom Products voted to join the USW. KIK is one of North America's largest independent manufacturers of consumer packaged goods, including personal-care products, laundry detergent, fabric softener, bleach and cleaning products. The new Steelworkers at KIK's Toronto operations joined the union to address issues including pay packages, benefits, temporary employment and health and safety. The USW also represents employees at a KIK facility in Vaughan, north of Toronto.



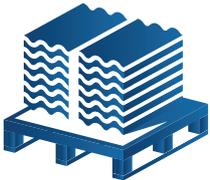
SSP Canada Food – Montreal

In late December, 245 employees of SSP Canada Food, which operates several restaurants at Montreal-Trudeau International Airport, joined the Steelworkers. They unionized to address issues including job security, harassment and wages. The restaurant workers add to the USW's significant presence at the Montreal airport, where the union also represents security screeners, tarmac security workers and employees in catering services and duty-free shops.



Captain Taxi – Saskatoon

The USW continues to build its status as the union for taxi workers in Saskatchewan, with drivers from Captain Taxi recently joining the Steelworkers. In this case, the employer has demonstrated it is a union-friendly company. Captain Taxi's owners previously were members of USW Local 2014, which represents taxi workers.



Les emballages Montcorr – Coteau-du-Lac

Employees of Les emballages Montcorr in Coteau-du-Lac, Que., joined the Steelworkers family last September. The workers manufacture corrugated cardboard from recycled paper, as well as pre-printed cardboard and wax coatings. They sought USW representation after facing arbitrary management actions and deterioration of their working conditions and pension and benefit plans while members of another union.



Aramark – Labrador City

Labrador City employees of Aramark, the multinational food services and facilities provider, joined the Steelworkers last October. The employees include cooks, cleaners, maintenance and front-desk workers. Aramark has a contract with mining company IOC to provide services at a fly-in camp and about 30 residences. The workers joined the USW after experiencing wage cuts and other regressive measures after Aramark secured the IOC contract.



Saskatoon International Airport

Two groups of airport workers in Saskatoon recently turned to the USW due to similar concerns with their respective employers. Though members of separate bargaining units, airport cleaners employed by Dexterra Integrated Facilities Management and airport shuttle and valet workers employed by Indigo Park Canada joined the Steelworkers to address issues including unfair treatment, stagnant wages and health and safety concerns.

Coming New Members Across Canada



Transcare Logistics – Hamilton

Employees of Transcare Logistics, a Hamilton subsidiary of CP Rail, joined the Steelworkers to address issues including workplace health and safety concerns. Transcare Logistics bills itself as “Canada’s first automated distribution hub” and the country’s “largest and the fastest steel transload facility.” The facility transfers steel products such as coil, pipe and plate from rail cars to trucks and into storage.



Nortek Air Solutions – Montreal

Close to 300 workers at manufacturing company Nortek Air Solutions in Montreal became Steelworkers in mid-2019. They joined the USW to address issues including working conditions, job transfers, contracting out and enforcement of job classifications. The workers manufacture heating, ventilation and air conditioning equipment.



Municipal Firefighters – Kirkland Lake

Members of the part-time firefighting brigade in the Town of Kirkland Lake, Ont., joined the USW to seek respect and a real voice on the job. “Our goal is to provide safe fire suppression service by ensuring that our members have all the tools and equipment to be successful,” the firefighters said in a statement.



Permacon Group – Mississauga

Permacon Group employees in Mississauga, Ont., voted to become Steelworkers, following other Permacon workers in Ontario who are USW members. The company manufactures concrete masonry and landscaping products. The new Steelworkers turned to the USW to address issues including wages, health and safety, benefits, scheduling and respect and dignity in the workplace.



A.S.P. Security Services – Sudbury

Security and customer service workers at the Greater Sudbury Airport joined the USW to address concerns including being required to pay for health and safety training, uniforms and licensing costs – costs that are commonly covered by employers in unionized workplaces. The workers are employed by A.S.P. Security Services.



Leeds & Grenville Interval House – Brockville

In Brockville, Ont., employees at Leeds & Grenville Interval House, a shelter for abused women and children, voted in January to join the USW. The employees, all of whom are women, include social workers, child witness workers and outreach workers. They provide emergency and transitional services and support to women and children in distress, including accommodations, counselling and a 24-hour crisis and support line. ■



252G 

Auto glass workers overcome concessions, improve conditions

The 220 members of Local 252G, who manufacture auto windshields at Pilkington Glass of Canada in Collingwood, Ont., overcame concession demands and negotiated an improved collective agreement providing wage and pension increases, a \$400 ratification bonus and improvements in benefits, life insurance, vacation, tool allowances and probation language.

**7940
8794** 

New contracts benefit Steelworkers and entire community

An entire community will benefit from five-year agreements negotiated by the 400 members of locals 7940 and 8794 working at steelmaker Ivaco Rolling Mills, by far the largest employer in the small town of L'Original, Ont. Annual wage increases of 2% will raise top rates to \$35.98 for production workers and \$40.83 for tradespeople by the end of the agreements. The contracts also improve language, premiums and health and welfare benefits.

7065 

Seniors-care workers make wage gains

Local 7065 members delivering care to seniors at the Villa Port-Cartier in Port-Cartier, Que., negotiated a three-year agreement that will boost wage rates by 4% annually. The starting rate for client care attendants was increased to \$17.04 on ratification. The contract also improves night premiums, bereavement leave and uniform allowances.

9598 

Metal alloy workers improve wages, work schedules

Local 9598 members who produce metal alloys at the Elkem Métal plant in Saguenay, Que., negotiated a six-year contract that will increase wages to a top rate of \$39.94 over the term of the agreement. The deal also improves bonuses, work schedules, overtime provisions and contract language.

6709-11 

Care workers negotiate training to address violence and harassment

Local 6709 members who provide nursing care and other services to residents of Riverwood Senior Living in Alliston, Ont., negotiated a three-year agreement that calls for third-party anti-violence and anti-harassment training. The contract provides 2% annual wage increases and improvements to union representation, staffing and shift premiums, uniform allowance, overtime provisions and a ratification bonus.





Rocanville potash workers strengthen contract language, wages

More than 500 members of Local 7916 at the Nutrien Ltd. Potash mine in Rocanville, Sask., negotiated stronger contract language and wage and pension improvements in a five-year collective agreement. Key improvements include new contracting-out language as well as special assignment language to protect union jobs. Total wage increases amount to 11.75% over the term of the agreement.



Sheet metal workers boost disability plan, wages

Local 7625 members working at sheet metal fabricator Entreprises alliées in Montreal won total wage increases of 8.5% in a three-year contract that also boosts disability insurance payments from \$2,500 to a maximum of \$4,000 per month. The agreement includes increased employer contributions to the Fonds de Solidarité FTQ pension plan and improvements to the work boot allowance and contract language on several issues.



Security guards negotiate housing clause for snow days

In addition to bread-and-butter issues, a new contract negotiated by Local 9597 in Goderich, Ont., includes an unusual clause addressing members' needs – paid accommodations when driving home after work becomes unsafe due to snow squalls that are common in the Lake Huron community. The two-year agreement also provides the security guards, employed by ASAP Secured, a \$1-per-hour wage increase and improvements in vacation entitlement, sick leave and benefits, as well as reimbursement for licensing and first-aid training costs.



New USW members achieve good first contracts at retirement homes

Members of separate bargaining units of Local 1-207, working at two retirement homes near Edmonton, made numerous gains in their first-ever collective agreements. The new USW members include 48 employees at Chartwell Country Cottage Retirement Residence in Sherwood Park and 148 workers at Chartwell St. Albert Retirement Residence. Both collective agreements include wage increases, a new group RRSP with matching employer contributions, new shift differentials, paid sick leave and seniority rights. Members include licensed practical nurses, health-care aides, housekeeping, laundry, kitchen and dietary staff.



B.C. Forest Workers Win Historic Strike

USW Local 1-1937 members defeat WFP's concession agenda, makes gains in five-year agreement.

Through incredible solidarity during the longest-ever forestry strike in British Columbia, USW Local 1-1937 members completely beat back the massive concessionary demands of Western Forest Products and won a five-year collective agreement with numerous improvements.

The contract, which covers 3,000 forest workers on Vancouver Island, includes total wage increases of 12.5% and improvements to health and welfare benefits, shift differential premiums and contract language on issues including health and safety and union security.

"Our membership stood up and pushed back against a company that was bent on breaking our local union," Local 1-1937 President Brian Butler said following the agreement's ratification in February, which ended the 225-day strike. "Our members have negotiated a contract that achieves many of our goals and notably did not give Western Forest Products any concessions." ■

Activists Get Political for

STEEL and ALUMINUM



One of the USW's delegations outside the Canadian International Trade Tribunal (CITT) in Ottawa.

USW ACTIVISTS in Canada's steel industry will have an opportunity this spring to take their concerns and ideas to Parliament Hill.

The union is holding a week-long conference and political lobby from May 25-29 in Ottawa.

The conference is a way to bring steel-sector locals together to share the challenges the industry and the union have faced over several years – from unfair trade dumping to unstable market conditions, the fallout from bankruptcy protection and the failure of governments to protect and grow the Canadian steel market.

"The union has responded to these challenges in a variety of ways," says USW National Director Ken Neumann. "We lobbied the federal government to expand our role in trade cases that go before the Canadian International Trade Tribunal (CITT). As result, we secured the right to participate

Steel is our history, and it must be a significant part of our future.

– **Ken Neumann**
USW National Director

in these proceedings. Now we are seeking the right to actually initiate trade complaints when our members are impacted, which they almost always are. This right is available to our union in the United States."

Participation has meant local union involvement and appearing in multiple hearings, with favourable results.

The industry has also been challenged by illegal tariffs imposed by the U.S., which claimed that Canadian steel posed a "threat" to national security. Working with USW members in the U.S., we were successful in having those tariffs lifted.

"We believe the government must continue to push for a full and sustained commitment from the United States that it will not deem Canadian-produced steel – and aluminum – as a

threat to their national security," Neumann recently told a parliamentary committee.

Most Canadian steel producers have little or no ownership based in Canada, but these global operations continue to employ thousands of USW members. Meanwhile, large Canadian projects are found to be using imported steel, rather than clean Canadian steel that creates jobs and sustains communities. The cycle of being in and out of bankruptcy protection over the last two decades has left workers facing layoffs and retirees' pensions and benefits cut.

"It is definitely time to tell our story to the politicians in Ottawa," said Neumann. "Steel is our history, and it must be a significant part of our future." ■
usw.ca/steelconference



Our Young Members Were Right: **WE WON!**

Local 1-1937 wins longest-ever strike in B.C.'s forest sector.

JOHN LITTLE has seen a lot of battles in his 39 years at the Duke Point sawmill. He's had a front-row seat, in fact, as an active participant in the fighting spirit of the United Steelworkers.

John's story, which begins in Nanaimo on Vancouver Island, is one of 12,000 tales that could be told – reflecting the number of USW members who work in British Columbia's forest industry.

The Duke Point sawmill in Nanaimo, operated by Western Forest Products (WFP), is where John works with 180 other members of Steelworkers Local 1-1937. The local has a strong and proud history, from its origins as an IWA local, to present day. But one of its most challenging fights isn't from days long past; it just happened.

Photo: Tyler Merriman with his father Bill.

Continued on next page

B.C. FOREST WORKERS WIN HISTORIC STRIKE

Continued from page 11

On July 1 last year, 3,000 Steelworkers employed by WFP up and down Vancouver Island went on strike to save their pensions, seniority rights and long-term disability benefits from being cut by the company, as well as to make improvements to health and safety.

A fight for dignity and respect

USW Local 1-1937 President Brian Butler summed it up this way: "We're fighting for a collective agreement that ensures that members have safe shifts, secure jobs and are treated with dignity and respect."

WFP's attempt to extract concessions was bad enough.

Making it even more objectionable was the company's financial picture, which told the story of a very profitable business.

According to its own 2017 and 2018 financial reports, WFP made over \$1 billion in sales and made net profits of \$74.4 million and \$69.2 million, respectively. In addition, the salaries of the CEO and Vice-President had steadily increased from \$1.5 million in 2015 to \$2 million in 2017 for the CEO, and from \$500,000 in 2015 to \$1.2 million in 2017 for the Vice-President.

Despite this reality, WFP decided to attack its own employees with attempts to

introduce a two-tier pay system for new hires, eliminate the current pension plan and roll back a number of other clauses of the collective agreement that were bargained and agreed to over decades.

It was not going to stand. Steelworkers were not going to roll over. The fight was on.

Strong public support

As USW members hit the picket lines, support from the community and other unions was strong. The cities and towns on Vancouver Island depend significantly on the work that Steelworkers do. Their wages support more local businesses than you could count. But the



B.C. FOREST WORKERS WIN HISTORIC STRIKE

company dug in as well, using its political influence to have anti-union local politicians demand the provincial government end the strike.

Support for the strike also came in the form of a “hot edict” of WFP wood products announced by the BC Federation of Labour (BCFED).

The edict meant that all affiliated unions of the BCFED would no longer handle any WFP wood products. Most significantly, the refusal of maritime union workers from touching WFP’s raw log supply and finished products meant that millions of the company’s products would lay dormant.

Tyler Merriman started working at Duke Point when he was 18. He came by the work honestly. Both his father and his uncle worked at the sawmill for almost 40 years. That generational employment history is common throughout the forest industry, as is union activism being passed on within families.

It gave Tyler an important perspective during the challenging times of the strike.

“I drew a lot of motivation from my dad. He told us to keep fighting for our rights and not to give in when times are tough,” he says.

“On the picket line, we showed solidarity as a group that stuck together and supported one another. We

never missed a shift through the snowstorms and rain; we were always on the highway with our signs.”

Tyler says he was proud that the union did a great job throughout the eight-month strike.

My dad told us to keep fighting for our rights and not to give in when times are tough.

– Tyler Merriman

“We were always notified and informed when talks were happening. Our union reps at Duke Point, Nolan Paquette and Stephanie Empey, did an amazing job helping everyone out.”

Pride in young members

John Little swells with pride when he talks about watching younger members stay strong in what, for many of them, was their first strike.

“I’m really proud of them,” he says. “At the beginning, they weren’t entirely sure what this would entail, how long it would go, but they never wavered.”

John says they connected the fight they were in with battles the local union waged in the past.

“All members understood that we were fighting to protect things that previous generations had fought for. We weren’t going to just give up the things that members who came before us had bargained and won.”

As solidarity on the line remained strong, the pressure from WFP increased. The company started speaking publicly about the need for the provincial government to step in. Coming during the midst of sawmill closures and curtailments in other parts of the province, it was clear the government was feeling the pressure.

Things looked bleak when famed mediator Vince Ready withdrew from the talks, with the company still seeking concessions. The local union was clear about what was at stake.

“They were bent on breaking our local union,” Butler says.

Then after an intense bargaining session, news broke that a tentative agreement had been reached in what became the longest strike in the history of the B.C. forest industry.

We talk a lot about “one day longer” in the United Steelworkers. The WFP strike, at 225 days, was one day longer than the 224-day strike in the southern interior in 1967 led by the iconic IWA leader Jack Munro.

The agreement, ratified by a margin of 81.9%, achieves many of the local members’ goals and includes no concessions.

“During the strike, our young members always vowed, ‘one day longer,’” says John.

“They were right. We won this one.” ■

A Call to Action

STOP THE KILLING.

AS ANOTHER CASE OF JUSTICE DENIED surfaced in February with a decision by Ottawa police to end an investigation into the 2016 death of 24-year-old worker Olivier Bruneau, the union's campaign to Stop the Killing, Enforce the Law has entered a new phase with a national Call to Action.

Olivier Bruneau was killed by an unsecured massive block of ice that fell from a wall at the bottom of a nine-storey pit at a condo construction site. As so often happens, the companies involved (a builder and a sub-contractor) pled guilty last May and were fined under the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act. The criminal investigation that should have happened in the first place was halted in February due to "a lack of evidence."

"This is a stunning example of the failure of the system and the need for law enforcement and Crown attorney training to get it right," said USW Ontario/Atlantic Director Marty Warren. "What is disgraceful is that 16 years after the Westray Law was passed, the police chief (now

retired) called the investigation of workplace fatalities 'a fairly new area for police services.' Where on earth has he been?"



THE CALL TO ACTION

A recent mailing to USW locals across Canada from all four Canadian directors calls on activists to set up meetings with provincial and territorial elected representatives to demand that these governments develop protocols between occupational health and safety regulators and police services, along with training for police and prosecutors.

"Enforcing the Criminal Code is provincial jurisdiction," says National Director Ken Neumann. "We all need to focus

on provincial attorneys-general and labour ministers to enforce the Westray Law so that no chief of police can get away

with calling workplace fatality investigation a new area for policing."

The directors said activists should meet with provincial politicians in their ridings, regardless of political party or whether they are a cabinet minister.

"All provincial and territorial politicians have a voice and we must demand that they speak up for workers and their families," said the directors.

"Let's make Stop the Killing, Enforce the Law a reality in 2020." ■ **EnforceTheLaw.ca**

Turtle Island

As part of USW's Unionism on Turtle Island course in Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., an Elder from Batchewana First Nation lit a sacred fire under a teepee in the USW parking lot. In the course, Steelworkers learn more about our shared history as Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, see how union struggles and Indigenous struggles connect and discuss how members, locals and our union can practise reconciliation.

Important 2020 Dates

15-16 April

**USW National Gathering
for Indigenous Steelworkers**
Toronto

4-8 May

**Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)
Convention**
Vancouver

11-13 May

**District 3 Health and Safety
Conference**
Saskatoon

13-15 May

District 6 Atlantic Conference
Halifax

25-29 May

USW National Steel Conference
Ottawa

7-10 June

District 6 Women's Conference
Hamilton

14-19 June

District 3 Summer School
Kimberley, B.C.

3-6 August

USW International Convention
Las Vegas

12 September

District 5 Golf Tournament
Léry, Que.

5-8 October

USW Justice Conference
Montreal

18-20 November

District 5 Annual Assembly
Rivière-du-Loup, Que.

usw.ca/events

RECYCLING VICTORY TIMELINE

November 2015: USW Local 206G, representing Owens Illinois glass workers, presents a resolution at the Quebec Steelworkers' annual conference, calling on the USW and the FTQ to lobby the Quebec government to establish a glass deposit and recycling program.

Summer 2016: In solidarity with Local 206G members, activists distribute leaflets advocating for a deposit/recycling program at SAQ (Quebec's liquor control agency) stores across the province

November 2017: The campaign continues to grow, with an expanded public awareness initiative including a video release by the USW and participation of members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the CSN labour federation.

Spring 2018: A petition campaign expands in Quebec, generating more than 35,000 signatures that will be submitted to the National Assembly.

Summer 2019: At the initiative of Mercier MNA Ruba Ghazal, a parliamentary committee on glass holds hearings, with Steelworkers and several civil society organizations making their voices heard. A strong consensus emerges in favour of a glass deposit/recycling system, with some opposition from container manufacturers.

January 2020: Victory! The government announces a deposit and recycling program will be launched by 2022, diverting millions of containers from landfill sites annually.



USW WINS RECYCLING CAMPAIGN

Victory! In January, after relentless activism by Steelworkers and many allies, the Quebec government announced it will establish a deposit and recycling program for all glass and plastic beverage containers by 2022.

For more than four years, the USW and other unions led a political lobbying and public awareness campaign advocating a province-wide recycling program. Members of Steelworkers Local 206G, employed at the Owens Illinois manufacturing plant in Montreal – the largest glassworks facility in Quebec – were key drivers of the campaign.

“This victory is proof that our activism and mobilization work. When you're determined, when you have a just cause and you put the energy into it, you can move mountains,” said USW Quebec Director Dominic Lemieux.

“In this case, our union not only defended the interests of our members, we also defended a cause that has an impact on our society as a whole,” Lemieux said.

This victory is proof that our activism and mobilization work.

– **Dominic Lemieux**
District 5 Director

The deposit and recycling program will divert massive amounts of glass, currently dumped at landfill sites, to be re-used and for use as feedstock at glassworks facilities such as the Owens Illinois plant. It will support quality long-term jobs while also lowering production costs and reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the manufacturing process. ■

BRAVO
À TOUS CEUX QUI SE SONT ENGAGÉS
DANS LA CAMPAGNE

**JE SIGNE
POUR LA
CONSIGNE!**

ENSEMBLE
ON FAIT BOUGER LES CHOSES!

2020 USW Scholarships!

Summer placement and scholarship deadlines are coming up on May 31 and June 30. Take advantage of these opportunities for you, your children or grandchildren.

Scholarship	Amount	Application Deadline
USW Post-Secondary Scholarship	\$1,000	June 30
Steelworker Summer	Paid placement	May 31
David Ellis Scholarship	\$500	June 30
Westray Post-Secondary Scholarship	\$2,500	June 30
USW Lifelong Learning Scholarship	\$1,000	June 30
Rudychuk Scholarship Placement Program	District placements	No deadline

More information, eligibility criteria and application forms:

Download at www.usw.ca/scholarships

Call **416-487-1571**

Email scholarships@usw.ca

USW INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT EMERITUS LEO W. GERARD'S

five-decade legacy of labour and social justice activism is being recognized with prestigious honours at the national level and in his hometown.

Gerard, who retired in July after serving as USW International President for 18 years, has received the Ellen Meiksins Wood Prize from progressive think tank, the Broadbent Institute. The annual award, named in honour of internationally renowned scholar and author Ellen Meiksins Wood, recognizes the outstanding contributions of an academic, labour activist or writer.

Gerard received the honour for his many outstanding contributions to social and economic justice and decades of service to progressive movements. The prize also requires the recipient to deliver the Ellen Meiksins Wood Prize Lecture. Gerard is



expected to deliver his lecture this spring.

In February, Gerard also was honoured in his hometown of Sudbury with the creation of a new student scholarship program and lecture series at Laurentian University.

The Leo Gerard Legacy Fund was established at the university with donations from the USW at the national, district and local levels and from the Sudbury and District Labour Council.

The fund will provide schol-

arships to students enrolled in Laurentian's Workplace and Labour Studies Program. It also will fund a lecture series at the university featuring nationally and internationally renowned experts on issues affecting working people and organized labour.

"I am honoured that the USW is supporting my hometown university in its mission to prepare graduates to address some of the world's most pressing issues, such as workers' rights, inequality and social justice," Gerard said. ■

USW Locals Build Community

Photo: Karl Tremblay

USW FAMILY & COMMUNITY EDUCATION FUND



OUR UNION has always made education a priority; outside of the workplace, USW locals are strong community partners. Now those values are combined in a revived USW Family and Community Education Fund

"I have noticed our children rarely speak our Cree language and hardly understand simple Cree words. I feel strongly if we lose our Cree language then we start losing our identity and slowly lose a piece of ourselves," said Stephanie Saunders, a member of the local that organized the course.

Five USW locals organized a community sledding day in Sept-Îles, Que.

teaming up to host the event, adding on an outreach and education component for young people. The important contribution from the Family and Community Education Fund makes the event possible.

The fund is expanding by supporting projects in our communities in four theme areas:

- Supporting Steelworker families.
- Promoting USW in the community.
- Supporting and engaging young activists.
- Supporting and engaging new activists.

Encourage your USW local to develop a project and apply for funding. Ask your local to join the fund if it is not already contributing.

Until June 30, the Family and Community Education Fund is open to all Steelworkers locals to apply for special projects. After that, locals will need to join the fund in order to apply. ■

usw.ca/fcef



Learning Cree: Students from the USW-initiated Cree language course.

that is offering funding to USW local unions for education and community projects.

In Norway House, Man., Local 9074 offered a free six-week adult Cree language course, where the union was able to increase its visibility in the community and contribute to local reconciliation efforts.

In Sept-Îles, Que., five local unions across the Côte-Nord region joined together to organize a community sledding day. More than 700 people attended in 2019. Organizers served more than 1,000 hot dogs and 12 gallons of maple syrup.

This year, locals 7065, 7401, 6869, 9344 and 5778 are again

NAFTA2 Leaves Much Unfinished Business

IN FEBRUARY, USW National Director Ken Neumann told the Parliamentary Committee on International Trade that the Canada-U.S.-Mexico Trade Agreement – or NAFTA2 – leaves much to be desired, with outstanding concerns over potential impacts on key Canadian industries.

The seven-year timeline for North American steel requirements in the auto industry is far too long. This delay will allow the use of non-North American steel in the auto supply chain, putting the jobs of Canadian steelworkers at risk.

Neumann reminded the committee that USW was at the forefront of the fight to eliminate U.S. tariffs on Canadian steel and aluminum for bogus national security reasons. However, NAFTA2 leaves open the prospect of similar, unjustified tariffs in future.

“The government must insist on a full and sustained commitment from the United States that it will not deem steel and aluminum from Canada a threat to their national security,” he said.

Meanwhile, USW members are angry that North American aluminum requirements in the auto industry are not part of the final deal – an oversight for which the

We need agreements that ensure high labour and environmental standards.

– Ken Neumann
USW National Director

Canadian government must be accountable.

“This exclusion is deeply disappointing. Canada must do more to defend our domestic aluminum industry,” Neumann insisted.

As well, forestry, which employs more than 20,000 USW members, will see little benefit from the anti-dumping and countervailing duties provisions, Neumann told the committee.

“The deal will not prevent the U.S. from applying duties on softwood lumber in the future. The softwood lumber dispute has never been resolved and Canada has once again missed the opportunity to permanently settle this issue. Meanwhile, our members who work in forestry have experienced layoffs and uncertainty because of this failure by our federal government.

“What is needed is a combination of trade and domestic policy measures that promote value-added manufacturing.”

Neumann said the USW will continue to advocate for fair and progressive trade. The

recent agreement forced on the federal government by the NDP regarding future trade deals will hopefully help avoid these oversights.

“We need agreements that ensure high labour and environmental standards, not ones that advantage products that are cheap because of poor labour and environmental standards.

“If unions had the ability to initiate trade cases, not merely to participate – as is the case in the U.S. – that would go a long way to making sure Canadian workers were seriously considered.” ■

USW National Director
Ken Neumann.



April 28 National Day of Mourning

More than 1,000 workers are killed every year at work in Canada. On April 28, we mourn for the dead and commit to fight for the living, every day.

USW member Carl Charlie was killed in a sawmill explosion in Burns Lake, B.C., on Jan. 20, 2012, a tragedy that also killed USW member Robert Luggi and injured 20 others.

UNITED STEELWORKERS
USW
MÉTALLOS

28 avril Jour de deuil national

Plus de 1000 Canadiens et Canadiennes perdent la vie au travail chaque année. Le 28 avril, nous pleurons les morts et nous nous engageons à lutter, sans relâche, pour les vivants.

Les Métallos Carl Charlie (sur la photo) et Robert Luggi ont perdu la vie dans l'explosion d'une scierie à Burns Lake (C.-B.) le 20 janvier 2012, une tragédie qui a également blessé 20 autres travailleurs.