

Unite

A newsletter for United Steelworkers in District 3 – Western Canada and the Territories

UNITED STEELWORKERS
USW
DISTRICT 3

DECEMBER 2023



Steelworkers made a difference in 2023

Sisters, Brothers and friends,

As we approach the end of 2023, I want to express my gratitude to all our members for another successful year. Our unity and support for one another make us stronger. Throughout the district, Steelworkers stood up to advocate and demand better conditions within their workplaces.

From British Columbia to Manitoba and the Territories, we've successfully negotiated favourable contracts for our members. This year, bargaining committees achieved significant improvements, including wage and benefit increases, improved contract language, and overall better working conditions. We also secured the first collective agreements for our new members at ADT Security by Telus in Calgary, Calgary Millrise Starbucks, and Sherwood Park Starbucks.

However, not every contract was attained without collective efforts to say enough is enough. The year began with a challenging labour dispute with Telus, where our members firmly rejected the company's inadequate offer and eventually ratified a deal that pushed back on major concessionary demands. A two-month strike by 166 Rockwool

Industry members in Grand Forks, B.C., resulted in a 13% wage increase, a \$4,000 signing bonus, improved employer-paid RRSP contributions, and an additional week of vacation. In November, nearly 300 Rogers Communications members in Metro Vancouver were locked out, and through their solidarity and action, they protected their jobs from aggressive contracting out language. Now, during the middle of the holiday season, workers at Hudson's Bay Company in Kamloops are on strike, advocating for a living wage.

Together, we are making a positive impact in our workplaces, communities and across our provinces and territories.

Looking ahead to 2024, there is much work to be done. We must continue to organize workers, such as our new members from Starbucks, ConocoPhillips, Town of Davidson, Westbin Waste Disposal, Bon Macaron Patisserie, HFN Hospitality Limited, and Andersen Pacific Forest Products. Key sectors like mining, forestry, healthcare, and telecommunications will remain central to our organizing efforts in the coming year.

In 2023, Steelworkers actively contributed to electing worker-focused

governments and MLAs, such as Wab Kinew's NDP in Manitoba. Our involvement in Regina by-elections and the growth of the Alberta NDP official opposition showcase our commitment through our Steelworkers Vote program. As we move into 2024, we aim to re-elect David Eby's BC NDP government and support the election of more Saskatchewan NDP MLAs to advance worker rights, safety and affordability for families in both B.C. and Saskatchewan.

Our ongoing commitment to maintaining healthy and safe workplaces, free of injuries, harassment, and bullying, remains crucial. No worker should suffer serious injury or death while performing their duties, as tragically witnessed in our workplaces this year.

I encourage all of you to get involved and participate in your union. We have a ton of great educational trainings and conferences planned for the year ahead.

The strength of our union lies in each of you. Challenges and setbacks may arise, and victories may not be guaranteed, but we are making progress on every front.

By continuing in our fight and standing together, we can make life a little better for our members and all working people in 2024 and beyond. Let's continue making a difference – as that's what the late Tom Conway, the former USW International President, would have wanted for all of us.

Warm holiday wishes to all Steelworkers in District 3, along with your families and loved ones.

In solidarity,

Scott Lunny, District 3 Director



Upcoming 2024 events

Jan. 7-12, 2024

**AFL/CLC Winter School
& Elevating Action Training**
Jasper, AB

Jan. 14-Feb. 16, 2024

CLC Pacific Region Winter School
Harrison, B.C.

Mar. 3-8, 2024

2024 Next Generation Conference
Pittsburgh, PA

Apr. 2024

USW Local Union Elections

June 9-14, 2024

**USW International Civil and
Human Rights Conference**
Detroit, MI

Aug. 18-23, 2024

**USW International Health, Safety
and Environment Conference**
Pittsburgh, PA

Sept. 15-20, 2024

USW District 3 School
Cranbrook, B.C.

Sept. 30-Oct 4, 2024

**USW National Health, Safety and
Environment & Justice Conference**
Gatineau, QC

Oct. 19, 2024

B.C. Election

Oct. 28, 2024

Sask. Election

Oct. 28-31, 2024

USW District 3 Conference
Winnipeg, MB

Steelworkers celebrate new anti-scab legislation

The new federal anti-scab legislation marks another victory for workers coming out of the New Democrats' supply and confidence agreement with the government. Banning the use of replacement workers in the event of a strike or lockout has long been a priority demand for the USW and the rest of organized labour because it brings greater fairness to labour relations across the country.

"Steelworkers have been part of the fight for anti-scab legislation for decades," said USW National Director Marty Warren. "The bill is not perfect, but it's a big step in the right direction and proves



the work we've been doing is delivering results."

Federal anti-scab legislation will help 80,000 USW members and approximately one million workers across Canada.

Read more at usw.to/4uj.

Vancouver Starbucks barista fired for union support

Frédérique Martineau, a dedicated Starbucks partner and shift supervisor for almost five years, was fired due to her outspoken support for unionization among Starbucks workers, according to Starbucks management. Martineau, who had recently been transferred to the 16th and MacDonald Street store after the closure of the unionized Dunbar Starbucks, expressed her disappointment and sense of betrayal over her termination.

"Disappointed, sad, angry and betrayed, that's how I'm feeling right now after being fired and humiliated in front of store customers," said Martineau.

In February 2023, Martineau helped organize the Starbucks on Dunbar Street in Vancouver, which became the first Starbucks in Vancouver to successfully unionize since the late 2000s.



"The USW stands in solidarity with Frédérique and all Starbucks workers who seek to exercise their right to organize and collectively bargain," said Scott Lunny, USW District Director. "It is imperative that workers feel empowered to advocate for fair wages, benefits and working conditions without fear of retaliation."

USW encourages Starbucks to reconsider its decision to terminate Frédérique and engage in constructive dialogue with workers regarding their concerns. Read more at usw.to/4sy.

Rogers locks out 300 technicians

On Nov. 6, USW 1944, Unit 60 members were locked out by Rogers, after the union issued a 72-hour strike notice to fight against the erosion of jobs from contracting-out language. A tentative agreement was reached on Nov. 17 and voted on with 96% in favour of ratification.



New episodes posted monthly!
usw.ca/d3podcast

124 food banks across Canada receive \$247,250 from the Steelworkers Humanity Fund

The Steelworkers Humanity Fund is contributing \$247,250 to 124 food banks and community organizations across Canada in 2023 including 46 in District 3 totalling \$79,500.

Economic challenges persist for many Canadians, particularly among marginalized and economically disadvantaged segments of the population. Canadians are grappling with rising living costs, including housing, health care and education expenses. A notable consequence of these challenges is the increasing reliance on food banks across the country.

“The soaring demand food banks are seeing reflects the harsh realities and challenges individuals and families face in meeting their financial needs,” said Marty Warren, President of the Steelworkers Humanity Fund.



“Addressing the root causes of poverty, enhancing social safety nets and implementing targeted economic policies are crucial steps to alleviate the economic hardships faced by many Canadians, fostering a more inclusive and resilient society,” Warren added. “In this context, the Steelworkers Humanity Fund plays a crucial role as a solidarity tool for the United Steelworkers, working for greater social justice.”

View the list of food banks receiving contributions in 2023 at usw.to/4u7.

Members at Delta Airlines negotiate industry-leading pay rates

USW members working at Delta Airlines operations have negotiated a new collective agreement providing industry-leading compensation, among other gains.

The three-year agreement covers some 300 members of USW Local 1976 who work in above-wing and below-wing jobs at Delta Airlines operations in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto and Montreal. Local 1976 members work in positions including ticket and gate

agents, baggage handlers and ramp workers.

The new contract will see compensation levels rise by 14% over three years, including total wage increases of 12%. The agreement also includes a new retirement benefit to supplement employees’ defined-benefit pension plan, valued at a further 2% of wages. Other gains in the contact include benefits and pension improvements.



Candace Knoll, USW 1944, was recognized at the 29th annual United Way of B.C. Lower Mainland Region Labour Appreciation Night.



Premier David Eby dropped by the USW District 3 and CUPE BC Solidarity Social evening at the BC NDP convention in Victoria.

Don't be a Grinch, HBC!

With just days until Christmas, USW 1-417 members had a chat with Santa to ask for a living wage for Christmas. He mentioned there’s still an opportunity for the Hudson’s Bay Company in Kamloops to avoid a lump of coal if they get back to the bargaining table. Don’t be a Grinch, HBC!



USW 2009 Starbucks members held their Red Cup Rebellion Rally on Red Cup Day to demand a fair contract.



Tom Lindsey, a USW 7106 member from Flin Flon, is now the Speaker of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly and he is the first Steelworker Speaker in Manitoba too!

Ryan McKenzie: from Marine Corps service to union leadership

In a remarkable testament to the transition from military service to civilian life, Marine Corps Corporal Ryan McKenzie has embarked on an extraordinary journey with the military and the United Steelworkers.

Ryan's story not only highlights his dedication and personal growth but also underscores the USW's Veterans of Steel program, which aims to support veterans and help integrate them into the union and their communities. What makes Ryan's story even more unique is his Métis, indigenous ancestry, which allowed him to make a fateful decision that changed his life forever.

Ryan served four years of dedicated duty in the United States Marine Corps, stationed in Palm Springs, California, and specialized in 60mm mortars.

During his service, he quickly realized that the discipline, toughness and solidarity of being a Marine could also be harnessed to make a difference in the lives of others.

His transition to civilian life led him



back to Canada to the pipe shop at Evraz Steel in Regina, Saskatchewan. He quickly rose to Vice President of Local 5890. As a proud Canadian citizen, Ryan's journey has taken him to the heart of the United Steelworkers District 3 in Western Canada, where he now serves as the District 3 Veterans of Steel Coordinator.

In his capacity as a coordinator for the USW's Vets of Steel program, Ryan plays a pivotal role in fostering camaraderie among veterans and helping them find their place within the union. The program's mission is straightforward yet powerful: to encourage veterans to get involved, even if it's just through registration.

Read more of Ryan's journey at usw.to/4tq.



The USW Southern Alberta Area Council donated \$1,500 to Be The Change YYC. The cheque was presented by Kent Irving from USW Local 6673.



Mike Pulak, USW staff rep and Gord Fergusson from USW Local 4297, attended the Canadian International Trade Tribunal on transformer dumping by Korea.



USW Local 480 helped to host over 175 visitors take part in events to commemorate the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation in Trail, B.C.



USW Local 5442 donated a total of \$3,000 to two community organizations in Selkirk: Our Daily Bread soup kitchen and the Growing Years Family Resource Centre.

District 3 bargaining updates

Robar Industries Local 2009

Highlights include 15% wage increase over 3 years, 6% pension increase in each year of the contract, a \$750 signing bonus, improved dental coverage, life insurance, and severance language, and expanded bereavement coverage.

Nutrien Patience Lake, Nutrien Cory and Nutrien Allan Locals 189, 7458 & 7689

Highlights include 3-year term from May 1, 2022-April 30, 2025. 10.5% on wages over three years with full retro on wages and premiums. \$6 increase to DB Pension, and increases to shift premium, weekend premium, boot allowance, vision and eye exams, paramedical, maternity leave

and military leave top-up, market adjustment for 2nd class power engineers, in addition to many other improvements.

Royal City Taxi Local 2009

Highlights include a 4-year contract with wages at an average of 4% per year and significant pension improvements.

Beaver Brook Square Starbucks Local 1-207

Highlights include improved working conditions, better job security, mechanisms for resolving disputes. The workers also receive wage increases of 5% upon ratification and an additional 5% over the following two years.