

Acting Vice President
Pierre-Luc Dick

ACTING VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: CHALLENGES, CHANGES AND CHANCES AHEAD

I would like to wish Local 1944 members the best for this New Year. There are many challenges ahead, as the Local both prepares for a round of bargaining with our biggest employer Telus, and pursues rocky negotiations with Shaw for members at Unit 60 Abbotsford.

It may often seem that the balance of power lies on the companies' side. But over the past few months we witnessed small breezes transforming into winds of change throughout the country and around the world. These happen when workers realize that their force reside in their unity.

As the economic crisis worsened, the working people remembered, or rather "felt" that solidarity and unions can be their lifejacket in the storm. This is how employees at Amazon might finally be able to organize in the weeks to come, just like this is how some Starbucks employees did unionize a few weeks ago. This is how farmers in India march for their rights, this is how the working people are coming together to stand up against rampant poverty, inequity and abuse from unfair labour practices.

If there is one positive thing with crises, it is that they have the power to awaken our inner fighter, the one that stands up to defend our

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rights and our future. When the world seems to be on the edge of turning upside down, for better or worse, and you feel like you have nothing more to lose, you actually get up and fight. Politicians know to never let a good crisis go to waste; it is time we learn this too and apply this principle for our own sake.

2020 did teach us something that we may have forgotten before: We are responsible for making the changes we need in our lives.

There's another good thing to crises: They reveal in plain light what used to lurk in the shadows and they force us to take position on issues that we used to ignore. 2020 revealed systemic racism like never before, preposterous wealth inequities, and shameful labour practices by corporations. Now we cannot pretend that we don't know and we cannot think that we're alone in our home office or open space cubicle or truck and that our work issues are a single case. Again and again, the media has relayed cases of unfair work practices by large employers. Some of us may have difficulties speaking out for themselves and find it easier to speak out for all, and with all. This is why, too, crises bring back the concept inherent to every union but that most non-unionized workers never had the chance to think about nor experience: SOLIDARITY.

At Local 1944 we have an advantage that workers in other sectors don't: We are the workers that keep our country connected. We all know that the world never relied this heavily on telecommunications. Working from home became a hugely widespread practice that might last into the future.

As such, we can build our confidence: The people, the working people and the companies that hire them, have an enormous need for the work that we do. We can also build confidence from the fact that our major employers are making huge profits; their internal management teams might tell you otherwise, but the press releases and financial reports don't lie: Thanks to your work, skills and dedication that allow them to meet the national demand, your employers have seen huge increases in their profits. Shaw and Telus are amongst the highest-

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valued companies in the country. You can be confident that the Local Union is not pushing your luck when we're asking for more: YES your employers can offer more. You worked through the pandemic and you were the pillars of their success. You more than deserve to get your share of the benefits they reaped. This is what the Union is working for every day.

This year we are going to fight alongside each other, but we are also going to get back together. The Local Union Delegated Meeting (LUDM) that was scheduled in March has been postponed to later in the year, more likely in the fall. This decision was made on a Saturday by the Executive Board, upon a proposal of Administrator Omero Landi. The main objective of postponing the LUDM is to have the opportunity to get back together, as it will have been over 3 years since we were last able to meet as activists. This will be our own way of celebrating the end of successive confinements and other hardships, and stake our trust in better tomorrows. This is what a union is about, isn't it? The LUDM will be the occasion to strengthen our ties and friendships. The Local Union has gone through many positive changes over the last years; we are eager to share this new dynamic and energy with you then.

I would like to send my appreciation to all those of you who took the time to answer the 2021 USW / Telus Bargaining survey and vote at the November election. With this level of involvement, the upcoming round of bargaining will be promising! For those of you who haven't done so yet, we also need your participation in the ['RealityCheck' survey](#), to help grow our PUMA network and build solidarity from the ground up.

— Acting Vice President Pierre-Luc Dick

BARGAINING WITH TELUS - #RISEUP

MEET THE USW LOCAL 1944 – TELUS BARGAINING COMMITTEE

On November 20, 2020, members at Telus elected the USW Local 1944 - Telus Bargaining Committee. They will represent the membership at the bargaining table and will take on Telus in the next round of negotiations beginning in late 2021.

Alberta Representatives are Ashok Tripathi, a Client Care Rep in Edmonton, and Cory Anderson, a Service Tech out of Pincher Creek.

British Columbia Representatives are Matt Rizzo, a Service Tech out of Surrey, and Candace Knoll, a Client Care Rep in Burnaby, who is missing from the photo. The **Ontario Representative** is Aaron Ma, a Loyalty & Retention Rep in Scarborough, and the **Quebec Representative** is Robert J. Briza, the Acting Regional Executive Officer for Quebec and a Network Support Analyst in Montreal.

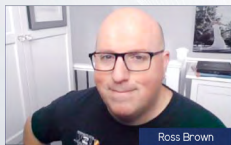
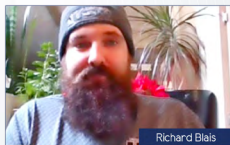
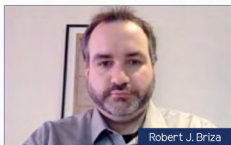
Alberta Regional Executive Officer Richard Blais is a Service Tech out of Hinton, Alberta; and Trustee Ross Brown is a Network Technician in New Westminster, British Columbia. **Officers** Richard Blais and Ross Brown were appointed as such by Acting President Donna Hokiro, **Chair and spokesperson** of the Committee, to represent the Union as a whole.

Staff Representatives Jayson Little and Scott Lunny are assisting the Committee in their deliberations, as well as Local 1944 **Administrator** Omero Landi.

The Bargaining Committee met from January 18 to 22 to analyze members' Bargaining Survey responses and to do initial prioritization and strategy work.

BARGAINING WITH TELUS - #RISEUP

MEET THE USW LOCAL 1944 – TELUS BARGAINING COMMITTEE



Stay in touch! Contact your Bargaining Committee
at bargaining.committee@usw1944.ca

Stay informed! Telus 2021 bargaining updates will
be available at <https://1944.fyi/bu-telus2021>

NEWS FROM UNIT 60

“Bargaining for our Shaw Abbotsford crew began, what seems like a long time ago, but was in fact less than a year ago. We exchanged proposals and began bargaining in early 2020 and then Covid reared its ugly head and forced us to cease our in-person meetings from mid-March until we met again in September. The company declared an impasse at the bargaining table in December and we entered into conciliation. The conciliation phase extends for 60 days and goes until February 22nd. At that point, if no deal has been brokered, there is a 21-day cooling off period that would take the parties to March 16th before any legal labour action can be taken.

Negotiations in this forum also broke down after a mere 2 days because the company has not moved from their position of aligning the term of this agreement to match that of the Vancouver and Surrey agreements, nor moved enough on their monetary position and are insisting on paying the members in Abbotsford less than those in Vancouver and Surrey for the same work.

On the morning of January 20, the BC members of the Bargaining Committee went to the Abbotsford compound before the crews started their shifts and held a socially-distanced and masked information session, letting them know exactly how little the company respects their work and provided them a copy of the company’s last offer.”

– Submitted by Steve McWhirter, Local Union Representative BC

You can help! Here’s how:

1. By staying informed: Check the regular bargaining updates [here](#).
2. By showing your solidarity on social media using the hashtag #NoFear



NEWS FROM UNIT 60

A QUICK REVIEW OF THE BARGAINING TIMELINE WITH SHAW ABBOTSFORD

November 27, 2019: Unit 60 Abbotsford members meet to begin preparations for the upcoming round of bargaining, and elect the Bargaining Committee that will represent them.

February 4-6, 2020: Members of the Bargaining Committee meet to go over the results of a survey completed by Shaw Abbotsford members and develop opening proposals based on their feedback.

March 31, 2020: The collective agreement between Shaw Abbotsford and USW Local 1944 expires.

September 14, 2020: The Bargaining Committee and Shaw's committee meet for a bargaining session.

September 30, 2020: Shaw shows its reluctance to work towards a fair contract and makes concessionary demands.

October 29, 2020: Shaw keeps its position and responds to the Bargaining Committee's sensible package with rollbacks.

December 11, 2020: Shaw's Bargaining Committee walks away from negotiations. Shaw submits an application for conciliation to the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services department. The pattern was identical for the last few rounds of bargaining with Shaw.

January 12-13, 2021: The Bargaining Committee meets with the conciliator.

HOW ARE THINGS GOING IN YOUR WORKPLACE?

**Because a right denied to one is a right denied to all,
Local 1944 members need to hear from you!**

Contact your [Local Union Representative](#)
Share your story by email at communications@usw1944.ca

NEWS FROM UNIT 60



Members from Unit 60 Abbotsford participated in the breakfast information rally at the Shaw Abbotsford compound on January 20th, 2021.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

In February we recognize and celebrate the achievements and contributions of historical and contemporary people of African descent through Black History Month. Still in 2021, anti-black racism is a predominant issue in our society, in our families, in our workplaces and in our communities, in Canada and worldwide.

“Let’s all keep ourselves and each other accountable as we try to create a society without racism,” said Donna Hokiro in a [statement](#) after George Floyd was murdered last year, in June 2020.

“In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends,” said Martin Luther King. It is up to each of us to tackle systemic racism. Let’s break the cycle of silence and become loud allies!

There are many ways to take action, during Black History Month of course but most importantly throughout the year.

In your workplace:

- Support any push for strong anti-racism language in your collective agreement during rounds of negotiation with your employer;
- When you see something, say something: Stand up and speak out against racist comments and jokes in your workplace and community. Speak up when you witness microaggressions and inequities.

In your Local Union:

- Get in touch with the Local’s [Civil and Human Rights Committee](#);
- Create a Human Rights Committee in your Unit by using the mandate in the USW Constitution’s Article VII, Section 12.

In your personal life:

- Talk to your children and family about race and the issue of equity;
- Whenever possible, boycott companies that show themselves to be counter to diversity;
- Challenge your own stereotypical beliefs;

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

- Support and liaise with organizations such as the [Coalition of Black Trade Unionists](#);
- Connect with your political representatives to ask them to take action against racial profiling by police;
- Lobby federal, provincial and municipal politicians to bring in equality legislation increasing protections against religious and race hatred.

2021 EVENTS

Though events will be delivered differently this year, Black History Month will be celebrated throughout Canada. The Civil and Human Rights Committee encourages members to check the listing in your local communities to join in.

British Columbia

[BC Black History Awareness Society](#)

[African Arts & Cultural Society - The Symposium](#)

[New Westminster & District Labour Council](#)

Ontario

[Coalition of Black Trade Unionists - Ontario](#)

[Niagara Parks Black History Speakers series](#)

[University of Toronto](#)

Quebec

[Black history Month](#)

Send your Black History Month pictures
or stories at communications@usw1944.ca

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

RESOURCES

[USW Anti-Black Racism and Anti-Racism Resources](#)
[Ontario Federation of Labour Anti-racism resource list](#)

More information on the [USW Local 1944 Civil and Human Rights Committee](#) **here**



Contact the Committee by email at rights@usw1944.ca



Follow the Committee on [Facebook](#)

Chairperson: Candace Knoll



TAKE ACTION

IN ONTARIO: PETITION FOR PAID SICK DAYS

Despite shrinking hospital spaces, and worsening long-term care conditions, the Ford government refuses to implement guaranteed paid sick days that would enable workers to stay home when they are sick.

In a report released earlier this month, Dr. Eileen de Villa, Medical Officer of Health for the City of Toronto, called paid sick leave an “essential” protection for workers, and [stated](#): “It has become increasingly evident that paid sick leave provisions are essential to protect the health of individual workers, their workplaces, and the broader community.”

“It is appalling that Ford’s government continues to refuse to act on this common-sense advice,” said [Ontario Federation of Labour \(OFL\)](#) President Patty Coates. “Since the beginning of the pandemic there has been a disconnect between stay-at-home orders and the provision of adequate government protections for workers. [...] Ford’s conservative government must step up, provide leadership and the protections that workers and communities need now.”

PAID SICK DAYS VS.

CANADA RECOVERY SICKNESS BENEFIT

PAID SICK DAYS	CRSB
Ensures no income disruption for workers while they are sick ✓	Requires workers to apply after they are sick ✗
Available to every sick worker who needs them ✓	Restricted to workers who earned at least \$5,000 in the last 12-months ✗
Enables workers with mild symptoms to stay home and keep communities safe ✓	Not available if workers miss less than 50 per cent of their work week ✗
Keeps workers and communities safe during COVID-19 and beyond ✓	Temporary and restricted to COVID-19 ✗

Petition for paid sick days now!
To do so you can use the OFL’s webform at 1944.fyi/9c5

TAKE ACTION

IN ALBERTA: SHOW YOUR SOLIDARITY WITH CESSCO WORKERS

Boilermakers Lodge 146 locked-out at CESSCO Fabricators have been on the line since June 28 and are asking for support. You can join them on their picket line everyday. How you can support the Local 146 workers locked out by CESSCO:

Social media: Use #StandWith146 on social media and share news about the L-146 CESSCO lockout as it happens. You can follow them on Facebook @boilermakers.union and @ibb146 and on Twitter @boilermakernews and @146lodge.

Stand with the members: Visit the picket line in front of CESSCO at 7310 99th Street NW, Edmonton. They are on the picket line every day from 5:30 am to 6:00 pm. Remember to practice physical distancing and wear a mask. Send your photos/videos from the picket line to reporter@boilermakers.org.



Cessco received aid through the federal government's Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS). The company has been using this money to hire replacement workers at the expense of the company's long-time employees who have been locked out now for months. Read more [here](#).

TAKE ACTION

WOMEN IN ALBERTA AND BRITISH COLUMBIA ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE WOMEN OF STEEL NETWORK

Sisters in Alberta and British Columbia are encouraged to join the USW District 3 Women of Steel Network to connect with other sisters across Western Canada. This is not a committee, all sisters can join.

The Network will enable discussions about topics and issues that concern women, be it workplace-related, political, informative, or creative, with a view to help build solidarity. The Network will utilize a private Facebook group. Sisters can participate from the comfort of their own home or on work breaks and can attend any speaker events or group chats.

Register to join the Women of Steel Network at
www.usw.ca/d3wosnetwork



WOMEN of STEEL NETWORK

The first **100** sisters to join will receive a D3 Women of Steel scarf!

* District 3 members only.
While supplies last.

The USW District 3 Women of Steel Network is an opportunity for sisters to connect with other sisters within their own locals and across the District.

- Networking
- Interactive Discussions
- Giveaways
- Special Events
- & More!



Join the Network today at
www.usw.ca/d3wosnetwork



POLITICAL ACTION



REO Alberta
Steve Durrell

OPINION: ALBERTAN MLAS WHO TRAVELLED OVER THE HOLIDAYS SHOULD RESIGN

This text was sent by Executive Board member Steve Durrell to Cochrane Today, and was published in the [Letter to the Editor](#) section on January 17, 2021.

"I'm mad, and it's beyond politics at this point. Albertans all over the province gave up much of their lives this past year, and cancelled many traditions they normally would have at Christmas, when stricter COVID measures were put in place.

Like many Albertans, we did the right thing. We set aside our traditions. My kids for the first time in their lives missed seeing their grandparents over Christmas, our tradition of a family meal was put on hold, while we did the right thing, and stayed home.

But then, over the past few days, we learned that many of our elected officials, including a cabinet minister, decided to go and travel internationally over the break, taking trips to tropical destinations, because in one of their words, it was a family "tradition."

I'm sorry, but it reeks of privilege, and entitlement, as a leader, to decide to go on a tropical vacation (one that many Albertans would consider a once in a lifetime vacation), in the middle of a pandemic, when the very government they are part of is telling people to stay home, and in a year when many Albertans are suffering financially.

It flies in the face of the financial struggles many Albertans are having today, it flies in the face of the efforts we all are putting in today for the greater good and it flies in the face of pain many families have experienced this year, giving up holidays, and last goodbyes with dying loved ones.

POLITICAL ACTION

The real icing on the cake, is in my opinion Jason Kenney has indicated there would be no repercussions for those in his caucus who decided to laugh in the face of Albertans, and run off to Mexico, or Hawaii or the UK, and more. No accountability, a refusal to admit wrongdoing and no consequences for their actions.

The entitled, tone deaf, disrespectful and inexcusable actions of these MLAs makes me feel ill. It's time for them to resign."

– Steve Durrell, Regional Executive Officer Alberta
and Co-Chair of the Political Action Committee

DONATION TO A USW MEMBER'S SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN FOR SASKATCHEWAN NDP MLA

"Dear Donna, I want to thank you and USW Local 1944 so much for your generous donation* to my NDP campaign in Saskatoon University! Having the support of my sisters and brothers as a member of 5917 means a lot! In Solidarity,"

– Jennifer Bowes, MLA Candidate Saskatchewan NDP

*[Elections Saskatchewan](#): Trade unions are allowed to donate to political parties and candidates in Saskatchewan.



Jennifer Bowes, Saskatchewan MLA

Jennifer Bowes completed a BA in Psychology. She was elected as the Vice President for the Elizabeth Fry Society, served overseas with CUSO International to empower women to seek positions of leadership; Jennifer now works for SEIU West as an advocate for employees in the healthcare sector. She's a member from USW Local 5917. More information [here](#).

POLITICAL ACTION



Shaye Anderson
Unit 3

A MEMBER FROM UNIT 3 IS SEEKING NOMINATION AS A NDP CANDIDATE IN NANAIMO-LADYSMITH, BC

Shaye Anderson, former MLA for Leduc-Beaumont (AB) and Former Minister of Municipal Affairs, recently moved to the Nanaimo area in British Columbia, becoming a member of Unit 3. He is looking for nomination in the next federal election for the [Nanaimo-Ladysmith NDP](#) riding.

When he was elected in 2015 as MLA in his Albertan riding, building schools and fighting for the families and kids in his region were his priorities. He was dedicated to improving the working lives of all Albertans and fighting for communities. His motto was to fight for the many, and not the few.

"I have contacted the Nanaimo-Ladysmith NDP President and have put my name forward for nomination as a candidate there," said Brother Anderson. "I would like to let our Union Brothers and Sisters know my intentions and if they are NDP members, to ask them if they might consider voting for me in the nomination process. If I am lucky enough to get the nomination and be the candidate, I will be running against the pretty popular Green Party MP Paul Manly."

Best of luck in your campaign, Brother Anderson!

Follow him on Facebook @ShayeAndersonAB

JOIN P.U.M.A. TODAY!



PUMA

CAMPAIGN #1 – REALITYCHECK

Telus asks for our opinions on its PulseCheck surveys, yet the Union consistently hears of members being told there will be negative consequences for their department if PulseCheck scores are low, or that members are suspicious that the results are not anonymous.

Our solution: “RealityCheck”, a survey that asks many of the same questions as PulseCheck, but guarantees you the freedom to tell the whole truth about your employer.



To take the survey,
scan the QR code or go to
<https://1944.fyi/realitycheck>

TO GET INVOLVED WITH THIS AND FUTURE CAMPAIGNS,
EMAIL PUMA@USW1944.CA NOW!

