

# TWO'S NEWS

JANUARY 2021

Editor: Duane Gale

[twosnews@ppwclocal2.com](mailto:twosnews@ppwclocal2.com)

2021 - YEAR OF THE CONTRACT

HAPPY NEW YEAR

## HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYBODY!

As the *new* Twos News editor, I look forward to providing content consistent with PPWC local 2 values and beliefs.

Strength and unity are paramount to a solid, well run union organization – equally as important is open, transparent communication.

That said, USE TWOS NEWS - let's hear your opinions, likes, dislikes, rants, random musings etc., and send them via email to [twosnews@ppwclocal2.com](mailto:twosnews@ppwclocal2.com)

A big thanks and thumbs up to the 2021 Executive and Committee members.

A special thanks for those who have served - thank you for your commitment and involvement in the function of our union.

Duane Gale - Twos News editor

## IN THIS EDITION:

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- 🍁 Union Myths
- 🍁 Is a Covid Vaccine Mandatory?
- 🍁 Much more ...



We are an independent, democratic labour union that represents more than 400 workers in Crofton, British Columbia. The PPWC is a member of the Confederation of Canadian Unions, the largest association of independent unions in the country.





## THE PRESIDENTS PAGE



### Brothers and Sisters

Happy New Year everyone. Hopefully we will all have a better year in 2021 than we did in 2020. 2020 was a year to forget.

2020 brought us a COVID virus, computer virus, curtailment with layoffs to some of our members many suspensions and a firing. I have not seen anything like this in my working career. A lot of things like the COVID 19 are out of our control, but we can control how we deal with it. If you are feeling depressed, worried and angry we have the EFAP program that can help. Contact one of our Health and Welfare Trustees for more info or call Vancouver Island Counselling to book an appointment.

There are many issues that the executive board are dealing with. Again if you have a grievance please start with a shop steward to start the process. This executive board has enough piled on us to fill out grievances and to run around to get them signed. This is a contract year. With that and ongoing pay issues that we are dealing with please understand that there is a lot going on. We do take your grievances seriously but we also ask for your patience.

Many of us are still dealing with pay issues after 10 months since the company went from HSI to PGi.

I can't tell you all how frustrated I have become over this, as meetings with management in Crofton and company executives from Vancouver have proven to be futile.

We in the executive board have been working to find solutions to these ongoing errors for the past 10 months but in my own opinion the company does not seem to care. This is totally unacceptable and we will be fighting this all the way to arbitration if need be. As I mentioned previously, this is a contract year. This membership in local 2 has been paid 3 to 4 dollars less per hour across the board in every job than any other mill on the west coast. It's up to this membership to decide if we are ok with this. I personally am not. Forecasts say the price of pulp will rise at some point in 2021.

China will also be looking for market pulp should the country proceed with its ban on imports of recovered paper in 2021. Hopefully this will give our industry a rebound year.

**In Solidarity**  
**Chris Wipplinger**  
**President**  
**PPWC Local 2**

### NOTICE OF ELECTION

Vote via [ppwc2.simplyvoting.com](https://ppwc2.simplyvoting.com)

If you are on the email list, you will receive instructions on how to place your vote

If you are not on the email list, please contact the union office

[admin@ppwclocal2.com](mailto:admin@ppwclocal2.com) or 250-246-9272

START: Tuesday, January 5, 2020 - 8:00am

END: Thursday January 7, 2020 - 12:00pm

#### **One Year Master Shop Steward Operations - 1 to be elected**

REDENBACH, Cory

HAYWOOD, Dave

#### **Wage Delegate Alternate - 1 to be elected**

JOHNSON, Jeremy      Power Engineer

BEAM, Jon              Power Engineer

MICHEL, John      Machine Room

TUTTE, Sean              Machine Room



# Vancouver Island Counselling

COMPASSION, RESPECT, INTEGRITY

**Duncan: 250-746-6900**

**Nanaimo: 250-754-8222**

**Port Alberni: 250-723-7001**

**Victoria & Lower Mainland: 1-877-746-6911**

Covid mitigation measures in effect

## 2021 PPWC Local 2 Executive



CHRIS WIPPLINGE

**President / NEB Member**  
Machine Room



AL KUEBER

**Second Vice President**  
Electrician (Day)



TRACEY MEHMAL

**Recording/Corresponding Secretary**  
reports@ppwclocal2.com



TROY BELBECK

**Financial Secretary**  
Millwright



VACANT – Election Jan 5-7

**One Year Master Shop Steward -Ops.**



GERARD DALLE VEDOVE

**One Year Master Shop Steward -Maint.**  
Instrument Mechanic



DON PEARSON

**Two Year H&W/ Trustee**  
Millwright



SEAN TUTTE

**Inside Guard/Trustee**  
Machine Room



KEITH MALVENA

**Outside Guard/Trustee**  
Machine Room



GEOFF DAWE

**Wage Delegates Chair**  
Power Engineer

9-10-05 © 2005 Scott Adams, Inc./Dist. by UFS, Inc.



### THEY SAID IT

"The cool thing about being famous is traveling. I have always wanted to travel across the seas, like to Canada and stuff."

"I've never really wanted to go to Japan. Simply because I don't like eating fish. And I know that's very popular out there in Africa."

Brittany Spears

### WE ARE ...

PPWC Local 2  
1616 Chaplin Street. Crofton, BC.  
V0R 1R0 - 250.246.9272  
info@ppwclocal2.com

Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday  
8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Closed from 12  
Noon to 1 pm for lunch.

## **Vancouver Sun reporter Vaughn Palmer: Bains appears set to scrap secret ballots for union certifications.**

*Bains confirmed that if the New Democrats didn't need the vote support of Weaver and the other Greens to get the bill through last time, they would have dumped the secret ballot in favour of a card check.*

When Premier John Horgan reappointed Harry Bains as labour minister last month, he signaled that workers will be stripped of the right to a secret ballot in deciding whether to join a union.

Unions prefer a certification system where workers have to indicate their preference by signing — or refusing to sign — cards provided to them by colleagues or organizers.

Bains, himself a former official with the Steelworkers-IWA, pushed for the so-called card check system in the last term of NDP government. But he ran into entrenched opposition from the Green party leader Andrew Weaver.

The signatures were still fresh on the NDP-Green power-sharing agreement when Weaver announced his preference for the secret ballot.

“Now I know from first-hand experience that in any certification drive there are those people who feel pressured to sign a certification card, but they want the opportunity to have a secret ballot,” he said. “I’m a big supporter of unions, but you have to give people the right to a secret ballot.”

He was referring to his experience on the bargaining team with the faculty association at the University of Victoria.

“I will never support legislation that will eliminate the secret ballot,” he told reporters the month before Horgan took office with Green party support. “It is simply not going to happen. And no amount of convincing will ever convince me to do that.”

Not that the New Democrats didn’t try to convince him. Weaver would later recount lobbying from NDP politicians, staffers and their allies in the trade union movement. His stance got a boost when a government-appointed review

panel on changes in the Labour Code reported back in 2018.

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*“I’m a big supporter of unions, but you have to give people the right to a secret ballot.”*

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The panel recommended sticking with the status quo secret ballot for stability’s sake, citing four swings in the certification process through each change of government over 35 years.

Weaver seized on that recommendation in refusing to budge in Green party support for the secret ballot.

“The significant policy swings we’ve seen are incompatible with predictability, certainty or balance,” he said. “If they (the NDP) ignore the expert advice, we’ll push them back to the expert advice.”

Apparently he did so. For when Bains prepared to table amendments to the labour code in the spring of 2019, Weaver offered to bet reporters that the secret ballot would remain untouched.

“I’ll bet you one hundred bucks,” he teased. “I’ll even give you two-to-one odds.”

There were no takers and a few minutes later, Bains ended the non-suspense by announcing that “the highlights” of the legislation “include maintaining the current secret ballot vote for union certification.”

Outside the legislature chamber, the labour minister readily conceded what had happened.

“Yes, our friend Andrew Weaver made it very clear if there’s a card check included in this bill, he would not support it,” Bains told reporters.

He also confirmed that if the New Democrats hadn’t needed the vote support of Weaver and the other Greens to get the bill through, they would have dumped the secret ballot in favour of a card check.

**(Cont. on page 5)**

**(Cont. from page 4)**

"If I was proceeding with a majority government, that would have been my preference," Bains said.

Weaver offered his own self-satisfied post-mortem on the NDP legislation: "They had a decision to make. Do they bring in the legislation that reflects our values and concerns, so that they know they have our support bringing it in? Or do they bring in what they want knowing we will amend it? That'd be a risk they'd have to take." But the more telling comment of that day in 2019 came from Laird Cronk, president of the B.C. Federation of Labour. "We have not finished making the public debate on this." Fast forward to Election 2020 and Premier John Horgan being pressed on whether the secret ballot would survive an NDP victory. "I believe that if workers in a workplace want to join a union, that should be done without intimidation, free from all of that," claimed Horgan in discussion with Mike Smyth on CKNW radio. But having said that he added: "The federal government has card check. Other jurisdictions have card check. It is proven to be successful in protecting workers and making sure that industries and businesses understand the rules of engagement. I believe that's appropriate.

"But when we did the review of the Labour Code the B.C. Green party wouldn't support us (and) we put that to one side," he said leaving not much doubt that if the New Democrats won, it would be reactivated.

Sure enough, high on the premier's to-do list for the reappointed Bains was this item: "Ensure that every worker has the right to join a union and bargain for fair working conditions."

Bains has other priorities: Increase staffing and inspections at WorkSafeBC Restore compulsory apprenticeships in the trades. Develop transparency legislation to close the gender pay gap. Increase protection and entrenched benefits for workers in ride-hailing and other branches of the "gig" economy.

He was also directed to "create new consultative mechanisms to engage employer and worker representatives in consideration of any changes proposed to workplace legislation to ensure the widest possible support."

I doubt those consultations will save the secret ballot this time. More likely Bains will do what he said he would do as labour minister in a majority government, and bring in legislation to wipe out the secret ballot for union certification votes.

[Vpalmer@postmedia.com](mailto:Vpalmer@postmedia.com)

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**THEY SAID IT**

I owe a lot to my parents, especially my mother and father.

Greg Norman



**DID YOU KNOW ...?**

Monday is the most common sick day, except in Australia, where the most common sick day is Tuesday. McDonald's has 761,000 employees worldwide. The Netherlands has the shortest work week in the world at 29 hours per week.



## HISTORY of the PPWC, CHAPTER 5

The June union of members of Local 1, Castlegar, of the Canadian Pulp and Paper workers, bore its baby, the PPWC, in January of 1962. While it's true that Braaten and Macphee were the prime shakers in the move to a Canadian union, both were still caught in the throes of an International relationship. Castlegar became the first Canadian union in pulp and paper. The workers there were the first to bargain their own contract, free of any international influence. Those workers were also the first to reject CLC affiliation. When they left the International, the CLC affiliation went by the wayside.

Prompted by the likes of Biasutti, Local 76, the local leadership decided to apply for membership. After much deliberation, the CLC concurred and presented the proper documents for approval by the Local 1 membership. In a show of determination and, certainly, clarity, Local 1's membership refused the application. Writing about this episode, John Wales, corresponding secretary, Local 1, says, "This is a clear indication that we do not wish to continue to partake directly or indirectly in the ill-mannered rift presently displayed by the International."

Displayed in the January, 1963, edition of the "Western Pulp and Paper Worker" is the Local 1 executive, with C. S. Haviland, president.

The nine months from conception to birth are certainly intriguing in our history. Going back to June '62, fallout from the recent CLC convention stole the headlines. The convention, held in Vancouver, brought to the fore the divisions in Canadian labour. The before-mentioned Castlegar UPPU/International mess was debated, and the Carpenters/IWA issue was debated. The latter event was unfolding in Newfoundland, where the Carpenters International local was attempting to certify loggers. The IWA believed this to be their arena. Also debated was the Mine Mill/United Steelworkers of America dispute. Mine Mill was a newly-formed Canadian union holding certifications in Thompson, Manitoba, and Sudbury, Ontario. The Steelworkers were raiding them. Mine Mill had applied to the CLC (unlike Castlegar, they were affiliated) for remedy. No remedy had come.

Orville Braaten had supported Mine Mill in several articles in the past. He was singled out for special attack from the United Steelworkers at this convention. The attack came from a CLC vice-president, who also happened to be a Steelworker director.

He, William Mahoney, had the privilege of as head-table seat and microphone from which to launch his bombardment. Orville came away feeling vilified and unfulfilled. He was guilty of supporting Canadian unions and, as a speaker from the floor, he didn't get his chance to respond to the accusations.

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*Cox began a very personal and intense project. He was going to bring the Canadian union to Crofton.*

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Gordon Wickham, writing from Nanaimo, called for more positive action at conventions. He found that nothing happened to enhance the Canadian labour movement. The convention was essentially deemed a failure and of little importance to anyone.

Conventions come and conventions go. If Vancouver offered little by way of interest, another convention delivered in spades. In September of '62, over 30 delegates from BC packed their bags for the International convention in Detroit. Many decided to stay in Windsor, Ontario, and commute daily. Among these were Macphee and Braaten.

When Macphee and Braaten showed up at US Customs, crossing the bridge between Windsor and Detroit, they were denied entry into the US. Both were questioned extensively, Angus for six hours. Questions varied but, generally, revolved around Cuba and the Communist Party. It is interesting to note that US Customs had a list of all BC convention delegates. Only Angus and Orville were refused entry, although a few others were detained for a time. Most commentaries on the denied-entry affair are very condemning of US policy.

Most are also aware that, only through collusion between US Customs and the International union, this could have occurred. Big Al Smith, Woodfibre, perhaps says it best: "If I have never seen a machine in action, I have seen it now. From the Chairman on down, most were part of a machine determined to maintain the status quo in spite of the wishes of the rank and file. By guile they maintain their positions." He spoke further of being denied access to the floor mikes when the voting for areas representatives issue was advanced. He says McCormack stood for 3½ hours and was not recognized by the chair. In closing, he offers this last view of his first and last convention: "As I left the convention hall I felt dirty, depressed and a bit dazed. I crossed back into Canada and took a bath." **(Cont. on page 7)**

**(Cont. from page 6) PPWC HISTORY, CHAPTER 5**

Gord Wickham, Local 695 (8), says, "Our demands for area representation ran smack into the iron wall defense put in place by the leadership of the International. Undoubtedly, the time has come for all sincere union members to take a long, hard look at the status quo."

Ray Koob, Local 433 (5), championed Canadian unionism with a challenge to all to have the fortitude to stand on their own two feet, the strength of character to become independent on a local and national level.

Reno Biasutti, Local 76, however, did not agree with the previous assessments. Rather, he said, Braaten, McCormack, Smith, et al, were, in fact, a machine dedicated to the disservice of the International union.

Nationalism, like politics, makes strange bed fellows. That time-worn sentence brings us to Bill Cox. Cox was a member of International Local 833, certified at BC Pulp and Paper's Crofton mill. More than a member, he was the president of that local in 1962. While he shared none of the political convictions of McCormack, a self-confessed communist, or Macphee, certainly a socialist and the number 1 red-bait target, Cox was still dissatisfied with much that he had seen in the International.

He was one of the 30 some BC unionists who traveled to Detroit for the '62 convention. Upon returning home, he made a decision that was, albeit, downstream from Castlegar, to play a large part in the PPWC. He gathered around him four others he believed he needed in pursuit of his aims. The four—Pat O'Brien, Gord Carlson, Jack McDougall, and Frank Jamieson—became known as the Original 5. Cox then proceeded to enlighten the Crofton workers on the need for change.

The Detroit convention Cox attended was a huge turning point for him. His prior dissatisfaction turned to complete contempt. When, in his words, Canadian speakers at that convention were cut off (their microphones were shut down) if they talked anything other than pro-International union, this was enough for him.

Cox began a very personal and intense project. He was going to bring the Canadian union to Crofton. Events, as they unfurled, gave the Crofton Original 5 the impetus

to move ahead. The events, of course, involved others as well evolving in this fashion.

In November of 1962, the BC Federation of Labour (BC Fed.) convention was held in Victoria at the Empress Hotel. Ray Koob, who attended on behalf of Local 433 (5), remembers the delegates being in attic rooms complete with rafters and cobwebs. Rays says the locals then, as now, didn't have a lot of money, so they sort of shared accommodations in a dorm set up above the more expensive rooms at the Empress. Gord Carlson doesn't remember the rafters, but he does remember being awed by the Empress and not having a lot of money.

Anyway, during the BC Fed. Convention, the International locals represented met daily to discuss the plight of their unions. The failure of any RFMDA-backed resolutions, the entry denial to Macphee and Braaten, and the added complete lack of democracy at the Detroit convention highlighted the discussions. Several agreements were reached during these after-hours discussions. Among these were:

- Draft constitution would be developed in short order.
- Orville Braaten, guided by the acknowledged union lawyer, Isaac Shulman, would prepare the draft.
- Further meeting would be held on December 1 and 2, 1962, at the Ritz Hotel in Vancouver. This meeting would conclude discussions on the constitution.
- Founding convention would be held on January 12 and 13, again at the Ritz.

The December meeting occurred as planned. Representatives from 8 of 11 International locals attended. While details are sketchy, Bill Smalley, Local 312, Ocean Falls, in a report to his membership, said, "A draft constitution was drawn up by Bro. Braaten and Isaac Shulman. The draft is a guide only, subject to many expected amendments. Our two-day meeting was spent on the constitution, and we feel we have come out with a very democratic and workable organization. "The union, proposed in the constitution, is set up similar to the IWA, a three-level structure: local unions, regional units, and the national union. Regional units will not be necessary for the time being. Their inclusion now, however, will make them easier to set up as necessary.

"A regional convention will be held yearly with a national convention every other year. Until regions are in fact set up, national conventions will be yearly.

**(Cont. on page 8)**

**(Cont. from page 7) PPWC HISTORY, CHAPTER 5**

"The national executive will be the president, vice-president, secretary-treasurer, and one executive elected by and from each chartered local.

"The president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer will be elected by referendum ballot by the total membership. Nominations will be accepted at convention.

"A provision for recall will be in place. Any national officer will be recalled by a petition of 25 per cent of the national membership along with 25 per cent of all chartered locals.

"A verbatim report of all national executive committee meetings will be distributed to all locals. A special auditor, who is not an employee of the national union and who is a chartered accountant, will be hired to audit the books at least yearly. Copies of his report will be distributed to all locals.

"These are the highlights of the new constitution. We will review it once more on Jan. 12 and 13, again at the Ritz in Vancouver. There it will be ratified and officers will be elected on a temporary basis until the first regular convention, which will be held no later than January, 1964.

"Beyond that, observations of the discussion show that Crofton and Woodfibre will lead the move to the new

union. Prince Rupert and Vancouver will follow. Support there is also good.

"Castlegar will merge once the new union is established. Port Alice and Nanaimo may go either way while Powell, Alberni, Port Mellon and Elk Falls will not participate at this time."

Ocean Falls, he points out, will make their own decision. He believes, meanwhile, that a truly decent and democratic trade union will be built from these foundations.

Bill Smalley was first vice-president of Local 312 at the time.

Another report from Peter Marshall, president of Local 312 at the time (soon to be international business representative), confirmed almost verbatim Smalley's report. However, Marshall spoke in opposition to the new union. He did not believe that it served the best interests of the membership.

The founding convention of January 12 and 13, as promised, happened.

## HOW UNIONS WORK

Union members democratically elect their leaders who are then responsible for advocating for the good of the members. Elected leaders have defined terms, and are always accountable to the membership they represent. Unions are governed by clear constitutions, bylaws and other rules that are accessible to and changeable by the membership at regularly held conventions or meetings.

CLC



**I heard you worked so many hours that you passed out for 20 minutes. To be clear, we're not paying for those 20 minutes.**



# MONTHLY MEETING

**BE CONNECTED. BE HEARD. BE INFORMED**

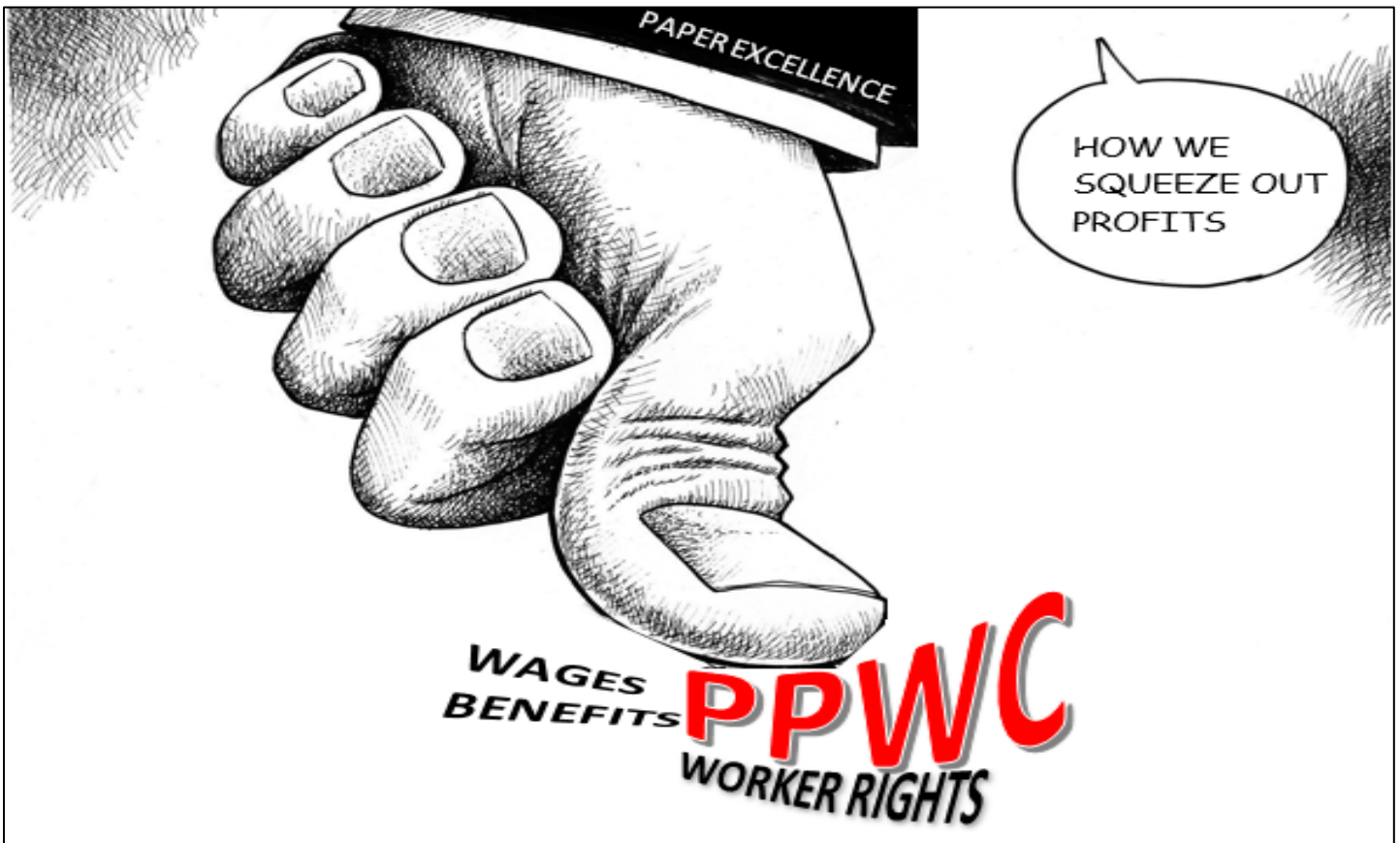
**JAN 19<sup>th</sup> - 6:30 PM**

**AGENDA:**

**VIA ZOOM WEBINAR**



**EXPIRES MAY 1<sup>st</sup>/2021  
ARE YOU PREPARED?**





**VS.**



### MY OPINION

Obviously the easy fix for payrolls' never-ending boondoggle is a reversion back to the previous system. This would actually answer and fix all our woes, a no brainer, simple right?

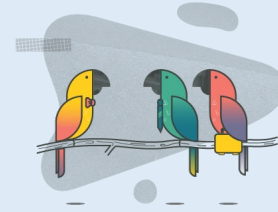
Not so fast, after months and months of PGIs wasteful and questionable abilities – the company seems like they are going to stick with it. I don't quite see the logic in this – nor can anyone else for that matter.

This wasteful, pointless system is going to continue to cause grief for our membership. We are destined to endure more untold amounts of time tracking and tracing the myriad of issues – too many to list here.

This is the 21<sup>st</sup> century - we can send a probe to a passing comet, retrieve a sample and return it to the earth – but we can't figure out the pay structure of a Sunday Letter. Perhaps a plus to all of this is that we can pad our resume' with "Experienced Forensic Payroll Auditor".

As the Mandalorian says....This is the way.

**The Editor**



A man goes into a pet shop to buy a parrot. The shop owner points to three identical looking parrots on a perch and says, "The parrot on the left costs \$500 dollars." "Why does the parrot cost so much?" asks the man. The owner says "Well, the parrot knows how to use a computer."

The man then asks about the next parrot and learns that it costs \$1,000 dollars because it can do everything the first parrot can do plus it knows the UNIX operating system.

Naturally, the increasingly startled man asks about the third parrot, only to be told that it costs \$2,000 dollars. Needless to say this begged the question, "What can it do?"

To which the owner replied, "To be honest, I have never seen it do anything but the other two call him boss!"

### THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

January 5, 1933: Construction officially begins on the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. Safety netting suspended under the floor of the bridge from end to end saved the lives of nineteen workers; however, ten of the eleven deaths on the job occurred when a section of scaffolding fell through the net. The bridge opened in 1937.

### WOULD YOU BELIEVE?



Squirrels are responsible for more power outages in the US than any other cause.

### FOLLOW PPWC Local 2 ON FACEBOOK



## IN REMEMBRANCE

### Prominent union man mourned

It is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of Len Shankel. Len was a long time President of Local 9 (32 Years). Len was a giant in the labour movement. He, along with a few others help lay the ground work of the present day PPWC. He was one of the early members who seen a need to break away from the International Union. At one point in this struggle Len along with 4 other Local 9 members were fired from the pulp mill, at the urging of the International, because of their attempts to break away from the International. In true PPWC fashion the members of Local 9 banded together and supported these 5 brave men, financially and in solidarity, until they were re-instated and thus, our Local was born. Not just our Local, but the Independent Canadian Union which is now known as the Public and Private Workers of Canada (PPWC).

PPWC Local 9 President Chuck LeBlanc – Prince George

Editor's note:

A lengthy more informative article available,  
Kathy Nadalin / Prince George Citizen DEC.12<sup>th</sup>, 2020



[twosnews@ppwclocal2.com](mailto:twosnews@ppwclocal2.com)

## NEW TOOLS ON THE PACIFIC BLUE CROSS MOBILE APP

Pacific Blue Cross has added the following tools to their mobile app that we would like you to be aware of:

**Medimap** is a convenient resource that uses your location to connect you to walk-in clinics in your area. It can provide current wait times as well as the ability to remote check-in to some clinics so you can reserve your place in line before you arrive. This means no more calling or visiting multiple clinics trying to find a spot and less time spent in the waiting room.

**PocketPills** allows you to chat with an online pharmacist directly through your Pacific Blue Cross Mobile App

**Babylon** by TELLJ health allows you to consult with a doctor online.

If you haven't used PBC digital tools in the past, here's what they also have to offer:

- Find an Insta-Claim health provider to process your claims on the spot
- Check your coverage balances
- Buy personal health insurance
- Buy travel insurance fast (remember, members get 10% off)
- Health and wellbeing tips and tools
- Sign in using fingerprint touch ID
- Never forget your card again — your digital member card is always with you



## Unsafe workplaces during COVID-19 taking huge toll on workers' mental health.

By Sara Mojtehdzadeh – Dec 14/2020 Toronto Star

Poor workplace COVID-19 precautions exacted a greater toll on workers' mental health than losing a job during the pandemic, a new study has found.

More than half of essential workers with inadequate safety protections on the job reported symptoms of anxiety, according to a new survey of more than 3,300 workers across Canada. And more than 40 per cent met the screening criteria for depression.

Meanwhile, half of essential workers surveyed reported that their workplace did not perform adequate infection control. Peter Smith, the Toronto-based Institute for Work and Health's senior scientist and lead author of the study published Monday, called that figure "alarming." These workers fared even worse than those experiencing layoffs: just over a third of the latter reporting symptoms of depression.

But in what researchers call a "surprising" twist, employees who went to work but enjoyed excellent safety precautions reported better mental health than those working remotely.

The study notes this could reflect feelings of "isolation, reduced social support from the workplace, and reduced structure between work and home" — all factors that can lead to poor mental health outcomes.

"This is a traumatic situation, which is carrying on for a long time," he said, but the research also

comes with clear policy implications, said Oudyk: when employers listen to what workers need to feel safe — and act on it — there are substantial benefits.

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*"The pandemic has been going on for more than eight months," he said. "That's a long time to feel vulnerable in the workplace."*

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"These things don't cost a lot. It's a matter of organizing the workplace appropriately and providing protective equipment," he said. "It's an intervention that's fairly straightforward and can have a huge impact."

The study found workers' mental health was associated with specific infection control measures — particularly physical distancing, physical barriers and regular cleaning.

"Taken together, this suggests that specific unmet needs, not a general disposition towards feeling needs are unmet, is driving the associations observed," the report says.

Smith said the findings also point to the need for enforcement to ensure "workplaces are adequately implementing, and consistently understanding (safety guidelines)."

Oudyk says COVID-19 has repeated those mistakes made during the SARS pandemic - particularly in its failure to apply the precautionary standard: *Providing workers with the maximum possible protection in the absence of scientific certainty about a hazard.*

"The pandemic has been going on for more than eight months," he said. "That's a long time to feel vulnerable in the workplace."

### THIS MONTH IN LABOUR HISTORY:

Jan.20/1914 - Joseph Mairs, 21, a coal miner from Ladysmith, British Columbia, dies in prison after failing to receive adequate medical treatment. He is one of more than 200 strikers arrested in a long struggle for recognition of the United Mine Workers of America.



### BC Ferries settle

BC Ferries and the union representing ferry workers have inked a new contract ensuring smooth sailing on the labour front for the next five years. The parties reached a deal in October, prior to workers' old contract expiring. The union membership has now ratified that deal.

Under the agreement, ferry workers won't see a wage increase in year one, but will be in line for two per cent hikes in years two and three. They'll be able to negotiate a possible higher bump come years three and four.

BC Ferries President Mark Collins thanked the union for agreeing to "fair and modest" wage bumps and said it marked a 22-year run of labour stability at the corporation.

The union represents about 4,000 workers and the new collective agreement will be in place until the end of October 2025.

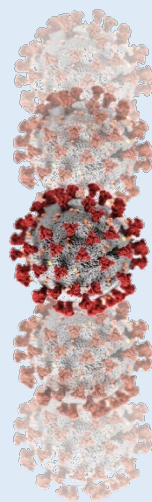
### CPR & IBEW settle

Canadian Pacific Railway Limited and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Canadian Signals and Communications System Council No. 11 are pleased to announce that they have successfully negotiated a new tentative five-year collective agreement. "This tentative collective agreement is the result of hard work and good faith negotiating between the IBEW and CP," said CP President and CEO Keith Creel. "We look forward to its ratification and to five years of continued growth and opportunity with these employees."

The IBEW represents 360 Signal Maintainers at CP in Canada, the collective agreement is subject to ratification by union membership. No other details were available.



- Data
- Outbreaks
- Public Exposures
- Symptoms
- Testing
- Prevention
- Plus much more



Visit: <https://www.islandhealth.ca/> for current information.

### THEY SAID IT

Smoking kills. If you're killed, you've lost a very important part of your life. – Brooke Shields

### Paper Excellence invests \$13M in upgrades for Port Alberni paper mill

Project will see paper mill increase production of food grade paper  
Paper Excellence Canada is investing \$13 million in upgrades to its Port Alberni paper mill. The move will allow the company to diversify into unique food grade papers used by restaurants and food preparation enterprises.

"With the help from the leadership of B.C.'s government, we are very excited to invest in a winning project like this at Port Alberni; a mill that supports over 300 jobs," said Patrick Corriveau, vice-president of Paper and Packaging at Paper Excellence.

The project will improve production processes and allow the company to increase capacity of its products.

Paper Excellence will upgrade both of the paper machines still operating at the Port Alberni mill to make food grade paper at the same time.



## UNION MYTHS

Want the Straight Goods on Unions?

Despite facing ceaseless opposition, unions and their members have made a positive difference in the lives of Canadian working families and their communities. It was the labour unions that fought for - and won - numerous rights and benefits that employees enjoy today.

They were in the forefront of the struggles for public health care, public education, minimum wages (and minimum wage increases), human & civil rights, and better employment conditions. **In fact, it was the labour movement that helped to develop maternity/parental leave, Employment Insurance (E.I.), overtime pay premiums, bereavement leave, the 40-hour work week, work accommodation arrangements, and the Canadian Pension Plan.**

In addition, unions have worked to establish equality measures in both society, and the workplace. Through legislation, anti-harassment, anti-discrimination policies and collective

bargaining, these progressive changes have helped many. It is clear that unionized employment offers many benefits to its affiliates; however, negative stereotypes and misconceptions abound, peddled mostly by corporations, companies and the media.

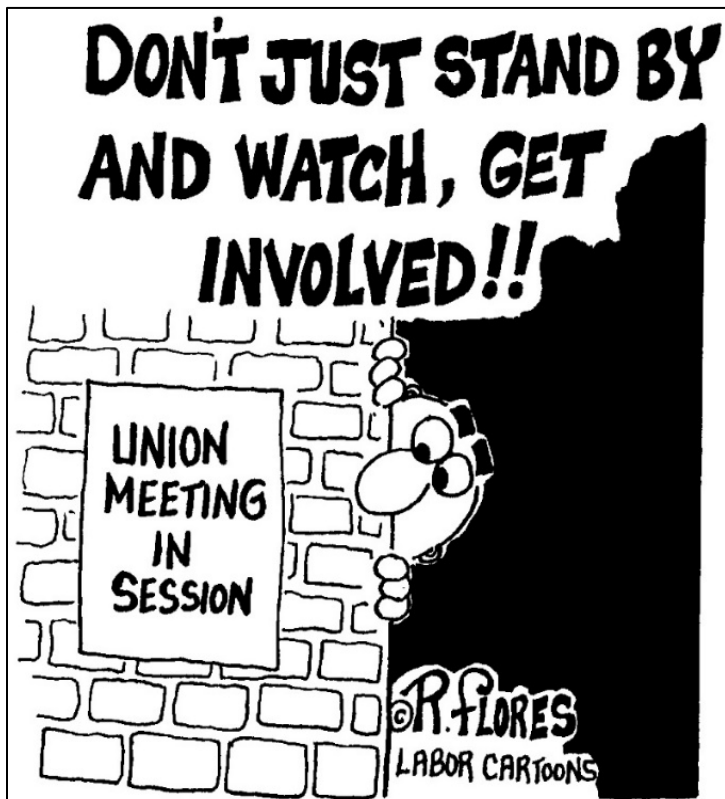
**Myth: Unions always make unreasonable demands and only want more money!**

**Fact:** While money and wage increases are important, unions are also concerned with other important aspects of employment. Some examples include non-wage benefits, workplace safety, job security, employment conditions, and equality within the workplace.

But really, what is a reasonable wage demand anyway?

Unfortunately, no one has yet devised a workable algorithm for determining wage increases that would be considered reasonable by all parties involved. Generally, unions base their demands on the needs indicated by their membership.

Unfortunately, too many employers resist any type of improvements unions try to negotiate. - COPE 343



## JANUARY'S EMOJI AWARD



And the winner is ....

**The Paper Excellence Payroll Dept.**

For continued incompetence, lack of empathy and a strong belief in a system (PGI) that is devoid of any intelligence.

The end of year pension correction was the final straw making this an easy selection.

Runner up:

- HR Staffer who has an unusual take on Carded Rates of Pay.

## CAN EMPLOYERS REQUIRE WORKERS TO TAKE A COVID VACCINE?

(This article has been edited for brevity – it is intended to stimulate discussion only - no legal opinion should be inferred - DG)

As people begin the largest mass vaccination in Canadian history, many workers are asking if they can require their employees to be immunized against COVID.

The answer is a qualified yes. Employers have a duty to protect their workers.

“With a highly contagious virus that has caused a global pandemic, if there's an antidote, employers are within their rights to require employees to take it to keep the rest of the workforce safe,” says Ryan Watkins, partner at Whitten & Lublin Employment Lawyers, in Toronto.

In some instances, requiring a vaccine is even stronger. For example, in retail, where workers interact with the public, or long-term-care homes, where they deal with a vulnerable population, if an employee refuses to take the vaccine, their bosses would be within their rights to dismiss that employee without cause, he says.

The exception is where an employee has a credible human rights claim, says Watkins. An employee may object to taking the vaccine on religious grounds, or because they have an allergy or other medical condition. While the employer has the right to ask questions and verify the claim, *a bona fide human-rights issue will trump the employer's interest in protecting the health and safety of the workplace*, says Watkins.

Vaccines are a solution to the risks faced by employers if the virus spreads in their workplace. If employers fail to keep the workplace sufficiently safe and in compliance with the relevant standard of care, employers could be negligent,” said Levitt, senior partner at Levitt Sheikh Chaudhri Swann Employment + Labour Law.

“Any one of these negligence actions for death, and maybe proximate deaths of family members who then end up dying or getting permanently immunocompromised, can bankrupt a lot of Canadian companies,” he said.

And while there is a “clear conflict” between privacy rights and workplace safety, throughout the pandemic the law has consistently leaned toward safety, said Levitt.

*.... answer is a qualified yes...they have a duty to protect their workers.*

Given the huge potential for penalties, multiple pieces of safety legislation and the views of public health authorities establishing duty of care, it is clear the courts will make refusing a mandatory vaccine cause for discharge, said Levitt. He added the two exceptions will be human rights exemptions for religion and disability.

Christopher Munroe, a labour, employment and human rights lawyer with Roper Greyell LLP, told Canadian Lawyer the question of mandatory workplace vaccinations is “very much a live issue with very good arguments on both sides.”

“Fundamentally, you’re asking someone to make a very personal decision about their body and what they want to do with it, and that’s difficult because it engages privacy concerns. And those privacy issues are closely guarded. Particularly by arbitrators in a unionized setting.”

The issue has arisen with seasonal and annual flu vaccines, says Munroe. Arbitrators and courts have found the requirement is unreasonable, but he adds that COVID is much more deadly and contagious than the flu. Munroe expects a distinction between union and non-union environments will emerge, with non-union workplaces more easily imposing mandatory vaccinations.

“But I expect if it’s going to be allowed, it will only be for a very narrow subset of employees who are dealing with vulnerable populations in a healthcare-type setting,” he says. - Aidan Macnab  
<https://www.canadianlawyermag.com/authors/aidan-macnab>

## THE LAST WORD

I expect to publish within the first week of every month. The **Twos News** will hopefully evolve into an informative, up to date union newsletter.

However, it's going to take the involvement of the membership to make this materialize. I especially would like to hear from the Executive and Committee members. I don't require lengthy articles (but that's ok). Very much need interpretation material on recent company announcements etc., like the recent AD&D bait and switch. Also, much needed info regarding union current affairs, such as negotiation updates and any company propaganda etc.

Duane Gale – Editor

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# PPWC

**Public and Private Workers of Canada**

