

# YOUR UNION

Local 480



Trail, B. C.

February 2024

VOL.52 No.1

## LOCAL 480 NOMINATIONS EXECUTIVE POSITIONS

The International Constitution of the USW provides for an Executive election at the Local Union level every three (3) years. The constitution states that this election must take place on or near the date of the monthly Membership Meeting in the month of April.

Local 480 Bylaws stipulate that nominations for officers shall be made at the immediately preceding Membership meeting. Notice of the nomination shall be given to the membership at least one (1) week in advance of the meeting.

The nomination meeting for Local 480 will be at the regular Membership meeting on **Thursday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024 at 3:45 p.m.** Executive positions which are eligible for nomination at this meeting are:

**President**  
**Vice President**  
**Recording Secretary**  
**Financial Secretary**  
**Treasurer**  
**Grievance Chair**  
**Safety Chair**  
**Safety Coordinators (2)**  
**Guide**  
**Inside Guard**  
**Outside Guard**  
**Trustees (3)**  
**Trades Rep.**  
**Operator Rep.**  
**O&T Unit Chair**

### Eligibility:

The following is an excerpt from the Local Union Elections Manual:

*...“the member must have been in continuous good standing from the time that said member joined such Local Union; and (c) has attended at least one-third (1/3) of the regular meetings held by the member’s Local Union during the twenty-four (24) month period immediately preceding the month in which the delegate election is to be held.”*

Issued by:  
Local 480, USW  
7 February 2024

### **What’s Inside:**

Summer Student Position	Page 7
Local 480 Scholarship	Page 8
O&T Report	Page 10
	Page

# We are Online and Live!



[www.facebook.com/usw480](http://www.facebook.com/usw480)

You can also find us at: [www.uswlocal480.com](http://www.uswlocal480.com)

## YOUR UNION

### EDITORIAL STAFF

Chris Walker – President  
Leigh Creegan – Editor  
Nylan LaFreniere – Assistant Editor

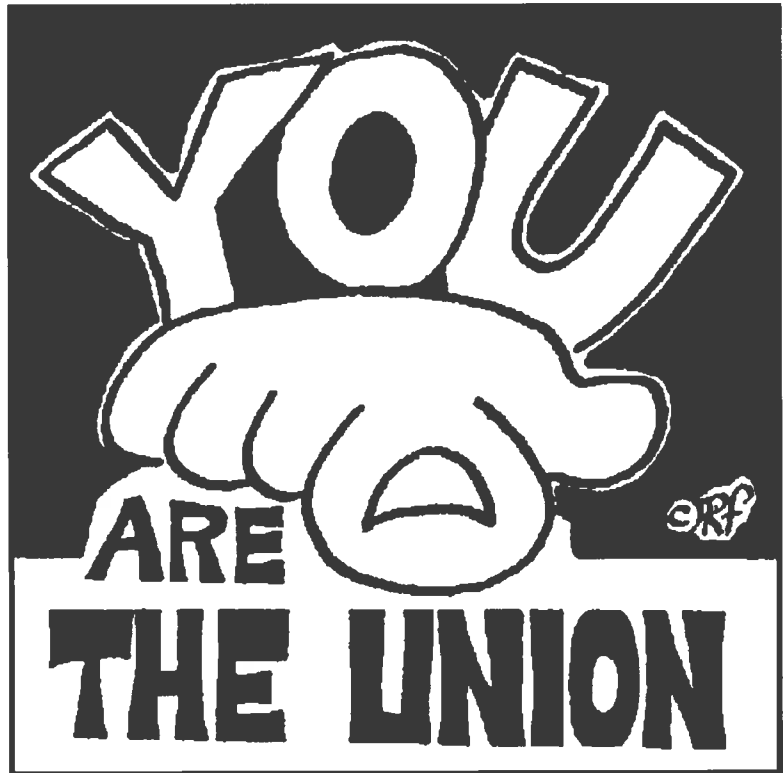
Fax 1-250-368-5568

The editors reserve the right to edit any or all material submitted



“Your Union” is a member of the United Steelworkers Press Association and abides by the constitution of the organization

Come check out our Local 480 merchandise! Items may be purchased at the hall. All items are proudly union made!



**LOCAL 480  
MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
February 15 , 2024 3:45 PM & 5:30 PM  
480 STEELWORKER HALL**

- Executive Elections
- CWS Trades Update

# President's Report

Chris Walker, President

## Updates and Executive Election

We are well into 2024 and we have many ongoing issues remaining from 2023; as well as, elections and a major shutdown in April. The status quo these days seems to be that we have more new issues than resolved ones, but if I've learned anything in this role, it's that all you can do is keep pushing forward.

I would be thrilled to not have to discuss CWS for Trades anymore; however, this issue has been a top priority for me and our executive to help our Trades get some well-deserved increases and we won't quit until we make some changes. I will say this, it's been so uplifting to hear so many people in Operations say they 100% support our Trades. We'll continue to push for this as long as it takes.

As much as I say I'll work on it as long as it takes, it may not be my fight with the Executive elections coming up in April. These elections allow us the opportunity to step up and run for positions when we think change is needed. I think elections are very healthy, and

sometimes a change in roles is healthy as well. I take no offense to anyone running against me. If I lose, I will happily return to the Fire Dept. and continue being a strong supporter of our Union. If I am successful, my only promise to you is I will continue to try my best. I won't solve everything or fix every problem and clearly I will not be able to please everyone; but, I will always try.

Whoever gets in any position, I hope that our membership will strongly support their executive. These positions are usually just people who want to help and genuinely care about their union. I'm well aware that some people try and put dividers amongst us, that's a slap in the face of all of the parents and grandparents who built this place. I am truly disappointed in those who try and spread such a divide. When we all stand together, we are far stronger than apart.

Recently we traveled to Vancouver for a BC mining's meeting. One of the things we talked about is the potential for



a battery recycling facility at Teck Trail. I think this is now starting to become more likely than not that it will happen. And we will have a strong push that all new jobs will be Local 480 unionized members.

From what I've learned they will be recycling "black mass" into commercially salable products (nickel sulfate, cobalt sulfate, lithium carbonate, magnesium dioxide, potassium sulfate.) I don't have a lot of confirmed info beyond that at this point, but I do know that if this happens it will be a great win for all of us in Trail. It will create more jobs and grow the sustainability of Teck Trail. I will do my best to update you all along the way, even though we have not been involved with anything at this point.

A reminder of the next membership meetings on February 15 @ 3:45 and 5:30. Hope to see you there.

In solidarity,  
Chris Walker



# Benefits Co-ordinator Report

Leigh Creegan, Benefits Co-ordinator

## What to Do When Hurt And Maximizing Your Benefits

To the members of Local 480,

It has been a steady start to the new year in the Benefits Office. We have four WCB claims in the Review process. Two have been submitted, while the other two are at the evidence gathering stage of the process. I will keep the membership updated on the status of these claims. We also continue to work on finding accommodations for our members who need them; however, that process poses its own challenges, but we continue to work together to find solutions for those members.

As a reminder, if you are hurt at work be sure to report the incident and go to first aid. Your SUPERVISOR should be sending you with a list of modified duties available so they can be discussed and reviewed. After first aid or hospital treatment, be sure to follow the doctor's restrictions and make a claim with WCB (1-888-967-5377). Once that is done contact me and we

will track your claim together and take the necessary steps. Please, if injured report your injury to WCB as soon as possible. You have 1 year from the date of injury to make your claim, after that it is very difficult to get WCB to accept a claim.

Our benefits have a lifetime maximum of \$100,000.00 that is affected by our extended health care including medications. With that being said depending on your health that lifetime maximum can last a long time or it can disappear fairly quickly. If you are on medication for a given illness have the conversation with your doctor to see if there is a generic version of the drug(s) you take. Generics often do the exact same as any big named brand pharmaceutical but at a fraction of the cost. Also ask the question if government programs will cover the cost of certain medications. Lastly, if you haven't already sign up with BC PharmaCare too. If you take the following steps you can max-

imize your benefit plan to your advantage; however, if you do exhaust your lifetime maximum please let me know. It was agreed in bargaining that additional funds will be discussed on a case by case basis.

I have attached the Canada Life webinar schedule for the year below. If you have any questions about your RRSP's or want to change them, contact Les Zacharias or Jennifer Cook (250)364-3140. Also, if you are interested you can logon to your Canada Life account and sign-up for newsletters and alerts.

If you are off on a sick leave or WCB claim keep me informed about your progress, and if there is anything we can do for you. Our next union meeting will be held on February 15<sup>th</sup> at 3:45pm and 5:30pm at the Union Hall.

In solidarity,  
Leigh Creegan

Quarterly theme	Upcoming webinars
RRSPs and TFSA's	Feb. 7 and 21 RRSPs and TFSA's - Tax, facts and impacts Understand the essentials of Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs) and Tax Free Savings Accounts (TFSA's), including what they are, their tax implications and how they can help you reach your saving goals
Investing	April 3 Investing - Basics for beginners Learn the basics of investing, including the different asset classes and how to choose the right investments for your goals  May 15 Investing - Beyond the basics Learn more about investing including investment risks, active and passive investment strategies and how to avoid common investing mistakes
Retirement	Sept. 4 Retirement - Saving for your future It's never too early to start saving for your retirement. Not sure where to start? This is the webinar for you  Sept. 11 Retirement - Getting close Are you getting close to retirement? This webinar dives into the details of retirement planning. Topics include understanding retirement risks, tips to save on taxes and understanding income investment options.
Participate in your plan	Oct. 16 Your plan - Make it work for you Discover the benefits of your group savings plan and the resources available to you

# Grievance Committee Report

Jesse Nicoll, Grievance Chair

## Grievance Updates

Hello Brothers, Sisters and fellow Steelworkers,

The grievance committee has been busy representing our membership. There has been a recent rise in discipline cases. We have filed a few grievances on those as well as some other issues.

We filed a grievance on behalf of one of our members who was suspended, as well as, for another member who was also suspended in a different incident. We feel that management was heavy-handed in those cases considering the facts of what happened.

We filed a grievance for a Step I issued to one of our members and we were able to get that reduced to a Coach and Council.

We had one of our members disciplined for being one minute late, we filed a grievance and that is at Stage I of the grievance procedure.

There is a grievance filed against a manager who has been inappropriately surveilling gate times. This grievance went to Stage III of our grievance procedure, and we are currently waiting for a response from the Company.

There has been a grievance filed for improper pay of a member. This grievance is going to be presented at 3<sup>rd</sup> Stage of the grievance procedure.

Another of our members brought forward a pay issue recently. Prior to filing a grievance, I met with the Company and am happy to report it was a



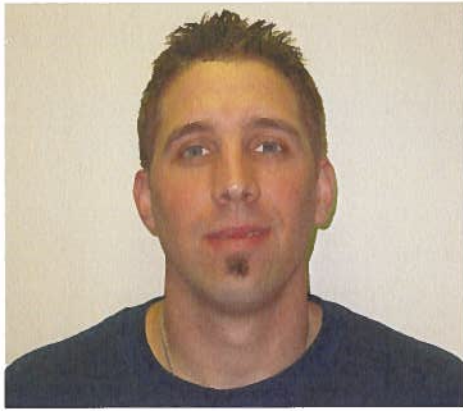
good meeting. The members' pay has been corrected and they will receive some retro pay.

Last article I informed you of two grievances for one of our members that was scheduled for arbitration. Both involved the termination of one of our members. The Union, Company and member agreed to a settlement regarding the issues prior to the arbitration which was scheduled for Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup>.

We just secured Arbitrator Cathy Knapp for April 9<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup>. I will keep you posted in the next article on that grievance.

In Solidarity,  
Jesse Nicoll





## Health & Safety Committee

Kyle Jorgensen, Safety Chair

### Time For Action on Safety

There have been a lot of issues getting in the way of maintaining a safe and healthy workplace. As you will see in Jay and Dean's articles, there are a variety of concerns, and it seems like we are jumping from issue to issue without being able to fully solve the problem. In order to fully solve the problem, the very first thing that needs to happen is for the workers, us the membership's, voice to be heard. That doesn't just mean someone sitting in a room and delivering a message, it means members being able to fully speak freely without the fear of repercussions. It means workers having an equitable voice of the realities that are faced every day, not just someone's understanding of what they believe is happening. It means questions being asked and answers being given, even if they are hard to hear or require lots of work and/or money.

Far too often, issues are downplayed. Even when they are not, we are having recurring issues which clearly indicate that we are not getting down to the root of the problem, we are just band-aiding a problem or fixing that particular incident while not preventing a repeat incident. Solving concerns takes work and sometimes it takes a lot of time and a lot of work. However, if we are going to solve the problem long-term and make sure the issue doesn't come back, we have to put in the work and put in the time to make sure we actually solve the issue and not just deal with a symptom of the issue.

We need to continue to speak up. We know it is hard and sometimes it is downright frustrating repeating the same message or being asked the same question and having to give the same response, but we

have to continue to speak up. We cannot give up; we have to continue to be loud until we are heard. It is us, the members, that are the ones at risk of getting hurt. We need to make sure that it is known that there are large concerns out there from running short of people, which in turn affects training and housekeeping and our ability to do our jobs, to basic concerns like unaddressed issues. We need these large issues to be the center of focus and not trivial issues like someone's mustache potentially being 1 mm too long.

We know it is not easy to speak up. We are here to help. We also have our Vice Chairs in each area able to help out as well. The number to the Hall is 250-368-9131.

In Solidarity,  
Kyle



**LOCAL 480 SUMMER STUDENT EMPLOYMENT 2024**

USW, Local 480 is offering an enthusiastic individual an opportunity to work in a Union based summer student work program.

**LOCATION:** Trail Labour Centre  
910 Portland St.  
Trail, BC

**HOURS OF WORK:** 30 hrs/wk.  
Up to 10 weeks.  
Rate: \$25/hr.

**START DATE:** TBD

**JOB SUMMARY:**

- Summer educational and training internship.
- Learn about Unions.
- Learn about Union elected positions and responsibilities.
- Accompany the Local 480 Safety Department with onsite tours and inspections.
- Learn the basics of grievance procedures.
- Train on building repair & maintenance.
- Basic yard care/building maintenance.
- Subject to educational schedule.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Grade 12 education diploma/GED. (education will be verified)
- Enrolled in post-secondary education. (will be verified)
- Valid Class 7 driver's license.
- Ability to work in a safe and efficient manner.
- Positive attitude and self-starter.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills.
- Knowledge of power operated hand tools, equipment, and instruments.

**APPLICATIONS:**

Must include proof of post-secondary acceptance.

Will be accepting applications up to 4:00pm on Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

Applications to be emailed to [jo-lynn@usw480.com](mailto:jo-lynn@usw480.com)

*Local 480 would like to thank all applicants for their interest and will only be replying to those selected for an interview.*

# Safety Co-ordinators

Dean Johnson & Jay Walters

## Housekeeping In Your Plant



Local 480 Members....

I would just like to put out a few quick reminders for all of us.

**Ask the Questions.** If there is anything out there you are unsure of, be sure to ask the questions. Whether it's a job or a task you have never done before or a task you haven't done in a while, ask. If it is a situation where you feel you need more training or have questions about the training you've been given, ask the questions. Do not sign off any anything you are not comfortable with and if you feel you need more training or peer training before you go out on your own, ask. Complete and

thorough training is one of the most important steps in the process to keep you safe.

**Report to first aid.** Even if it's something you may feel is minor. It could turn into something worse down the road. There are also corrective actions for every report. These reports help to change unsafe conditions and make your workplace safer. If you want a change out there, make sure to report.

**Put in a near hit report.** If there is a situation that under slightly different circumstances could have resulted in an incident or injury, report it. Use the near hit reporting cards and bring it to your supervisor. This

should start a corrective action report. Again, these reports help to change unsafe conditions and make your workplace safer. If you want a change out there, make sure to report.

If you need any assistance with any of these points, we are here to help. If you are uncomfortable bringing up an issue, reporting to first aid or are being put on a task you are not trained for, call us. Whether your special assignment or full time, give us a call at the hall or an email anytime.

Stay safe out there,  
DEAN

## Keep Us Posted

As you are all aware, there have been many safety incidents already this year. We all need to take a step back and reflect on why this may be happening. Crews have been running short for some time now, and plants are relying on overtime to survive. This puts internal pressure on workers to do more with less, creates fatigue with excessive overtime, and tends to negatively affect training. Running short is only one possible contributing factor to incidents, but it seems to come up a lot when we start asking questions. Please take a few

minutes to assess the risks of your job beforehand, and have unsafe conditions fixed before commencing work.

With that being said, I want to remind everyone to make sure we are notified as soon as possible when there are significant safety incidents. Please do not assume that your plant management is going to notify us in a timely fashion. Sometimes they do, sometimes they notify us a couple of days later, and sometimes they don't at all. We've had several instances lately of discovering an

incident after reading a first aid or corrective action report. When we find out that way, the scene has usually been cleaned up and there is nothing left to see, so we must rely on peoples' recollection of the event after some time has passed. In a perfect world, both union and company safety would be notified right away after serious incidents, but right now that's not the case. If you have a notable event in your area, ask your shift leader if we've been notified, and if they seem dismissive about it, please give us a call or even just an email.

*(Continued on page 9)*



(Continued from page 8)

All too often, we hear about these things days after the fact.

Along those same lines, make sure you are getting the minutes from your monthly safety meetings. Every work area should have both monthly crew

meetings, and area safety meetings. These area safety meetings are important and must have ops and trades from the floor in attendance to be effective. During the presentation, an action log will come up. This is where you list ongoing issues in your area. Obviously if there are no work-

ers in the meetings, that action log won't have much added to it. Ask about these meetings and ask to see the minutes of them.

In Solidarity,  
Jay



## From the Piggy Bank



### LOCAL 480 - 2024 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

To qualify for a Local 480 scholarship or bursary, the student must write an essay of 500 to 1000 words on *“What impact has Local 480 had in the community, workplace safety or workers’ rights? Also, if any, what role has Local 480 played in your family or families that you know?”*

Each essay will be evaluated on content, accuracy of information, form, and grammatical correctness. The scholarships are worth \$500.00 and bursaries are worth \$250.00 and are based on the following evaluating components:

- demonstrated academic ability
- need

Essays must either be delivered to the Local 480 Hall (addressed to Jo-Lynne) or emailed to [jo-lynn@usw480.com](mailto:jo-lynn@usw480.com), no later than, Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

The scholarship/bursary will be made available to each successful candidate who will be furthering their education through post-secondary education. You will be required to provide a receipt from the institution of your choice showing that tuition fees have been paid prior to collecting your scholarship. In order to ensure that we have all signatures required to issue your cheque, it would be greatly appreciated if you would please phone our office at 250 368-9131 to make arrangements for your scholarship.

We sincerely hope the scholarship/bursary will be of assistance in the pursuit of a chosen career and wish each student the very best of luck.



## Office and Technical Chair, Report

Ron McKenzie, Unit Chair

# Busy Start to 2024

Hello to all,

First off, I'd like to fix a mistake in my last article. A big thank you to both Jennifer Soltys and Michelle Cure who I missed on the list of shop stewards last month. You have both been a huge help to me, and the membership over the last year, it is truly appreciated!

It has been a busy start to the New Year, here are a few things to note.

I have been working with quite a few members on medical accommodations and disability leaves. These can be complicated and are harder to deal with after a problem has already come up. So, if you are off a long time, file a WSBC claim, or may need accommodations to come back, reach out to the Union, the earlier you do, the easier it is to help.

Please be aware there has been a push from the company to reduce work from home. Even work done efficiently and effectively from home for years now is not protected in the contract, and the company has been reducing this benefit for many. Where work from home is recommended as part of a recovery

plan, they have been asking the medical provider to explain explicitly, why it is needed instead of accommodations onsite. So, let me know if you have been or may be affected by this, even though there is not much we can do to stop it, we can ask why it is necessary.

I have seen a couple requests for alternate or extended shifts schedules, for shutdown, and pilot projects this year, and there will likely be more to come. Let me know about any plans for you to work on something other than your normal shift. Not all managers are aware they need to involve HR and the Union or that there are differences between the two contracts. Usually, a Letter of Agreement specific to the project must be made and this process can take some time.

There have been several questions around what rules/benefits apply to casuals. If you are a casual bring your questions to your shop steward Tonya Farewell, or call me at the union hall. The casual language is limited and not that clear in the CBA, so it can leave many casuals unsure of what applies to them or not, asking is the best way to find out.

5:30 pm on Wednesday Feb 28<sup>th</sup> we will be having our first O&T unit meeting of 2024. This is open to all O&T Unit members. It is your opportunity to ask questions and gain unit specific information. So, please attend if you are able.

The USW rules to run for Unit positions say you must have been a member in good standing in the unit and have attended 1/3 of the meetings in the 24 months prior to an election. This will be the third meeting for the O&T group in that time frame. So, to run for an O&T Unit position this spring, you need to have worked here for 24 months and attend at least one of these unit meetings.

480 O&T Unit Positions and Current incumbents:

- O&T Unit Chair (Ron McKenzie)
- O&T Unit Griever (Mike Mozak)
- O&T Unit Safety Coordinator (Trevor Allegretto)
- O&T Unit Secretary (Tonya Farewell)

In solidarity,  
Ron