

Official magazine of LiUNA! Local 1611

# THE LABOURER

Winter — 2022



## WHEN WORK HURTS

An early connection  
leads to opportunity  
of a lifetime

‘It all starts with  
opportunity and that’s  
what LiUNA provides’

**LiUNA!** Local 1611  
BC & YUKON

## #WeAreTheLabourers

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Front cover photo:  
Kiranjeet Kaur, a  
security officer with  
GardaWorld, keeps  
staff, patients and  
visitors safe at the  
Abbotsford Regional  
Hospital and Cancer  
Centre.

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## Editor's Message

Corry Anderson-Fennell  
Director of Communications/Political Liaison

Your union magazine has a fresh new look! It's called The Labourer, and it's all about you – your work, your sector, your community and your union. In this issue, you can read about a member who battled WorkSafeBC and prevailed; how our organizing team won seven union supporters their jobs back after their employer fired them; how a service representative overcame personal trauma to help others; and so much more. I hope you like what you read, and if you have story suggestions for future issues, please email me at [cfennell@cswu1611.org](mailto:cfennell@cswu1611.org). Until then, grab a coffee, get comfortable and turn the page!

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# Pierre Poilievre is not our friend

Nav Malhotra |  
Business Manager/Secretary-Treasurer



**T**hough he may play one on TV, Pierre Poilievre is not a friend of workers.

Poilievre is the new Conservative leader and he is desperately trying to court the working class, hopeful that Canadians will forget that he has made a career out of going to war with workers. Indeed, he has used legislation to try to decimate unions, make it more difficult for workers to join unions and silence those most likely to oppose his tactics.

Poilievre knows all the touch points that resonate with Canadians. He uses words like “freedom” and “choice” as commonly as he uses “ands” and “buts.” And this Trumpian style of public speaking – the best way to describe it – went a long way to help get him the job of top Tory.

But the job of prime minister is another matter.

Poilievre is a career politician who has been collecting a six-figure salary since he was 24. He was named minister of state for democratic reform in the Harper government in 2013, and quickly got to work on the so-called Fair Elections Act, which is more aptly titled the Unfair Elections Act.

This piece of legislation, which was rolled back by the Trudeau Liberals in 2018, was an abominable assault on democracy, especially where the rights of young, poor and disenfranchised voters were concerned (the rich and elite were not negatively impacted and were probably secretly pleased not having to line up with as many young, poor and disenfranchised voters at polling stations).

The act sought to address basically non-existent voter fraud by tightening the voter ID requirements to the point that voting became a monumental task for the millions of Canadians who still do not have a driver's licence, including up to 75 per cent of people in rural Indigenous communities. It must be mentioned here that Poilievre once had to apologize after giving an interview to an Ottawa radio station in which he questioned the compensation package for “those who partook in the residential schools” and that residential school survivors just needed to work harder and be more self-reliant.

Then there is Poilievre's crusade against unions. Research tells us that higher rates of unionization lead to reductions in economic and political inequality overall, and for members, being part of a union is associated with racial and gender equality. Union leaders are democratically elected by their members to represent them and secure collective agreements with higher wages and benefits.

Yet Poilievre has pushed U.S.-style right-to-work (otherwise called right-to-work-for-less) legislation that makes it optional for workers to pay membership dues in unionized workplaces, but still get the advantages of coverage under a collective agreement. Without dues, a union cannot do its job, and certainly will not last long, which is the real objective of the scheme. A sidebar: Martin Luther King Jr. warned Americans in 1964 that the purpose of “right to work” laws is to “destroy labour unions and the freedom of collective bargaining by which unions have improved wages and working conditions of everyone.”

Poilievre has also, if not outright aligned himself with far-right extremists, at least enjoyed a coffee or two with them while posing for photos. He supported the truckerconvoythatshutdownOttawaandhesupported the anti-vaccine mandate protestors. He speaks of his private member's bill to abolish all vaccine mandates as “medical freedom.”

Make no mistake. Poilievre is an existential threat to the working class, to economic equality, to diversity and inclusion, and to basic democracy.

He is not our friend.







# JUSTICE

Mark Olsen | President

# HONOUR

LiUNA was established across North America in 1903, some 120 years ago. Three words were used to originally describe the Union and these words still encircle the logos of LiUNA and local unions like 1611 today.

These words are Justice, Honour and Strength. These words continue to be the backbone of the Union and describe the Union's very essence. Here are some examples of these words in practice.

## Justice

*Justice is dictionary-defined as fair treatment; using laws fairly to uphold the justice of a cause; to do justice to something or someone.*

The pursuit of justice is practised every day by all those who work for Local 1611.

Historical examples include the largest human rights award in Canada at \$2.1 million on behalf of the foreign workers on the Canada Line; the longest strike (six years) in B.C. in support of our Wescon membership; to the five (5) research papers on needed changes to

immigration law in Canada to support both foreign and Canadian workers; to the most recent example of Para Space Landscaping, where the Labour Relations Board just awarded Local 1611 an automatic certification after the company committed an unfair labour practice by firing several employees during the Union's organizing drive.

Additional important recent examples include our Indigenous relations efforts in support of reconciliation and our multi-pronged strategy to support Ukraine and new Ukrainian immigrants affected by the Russian invasion of their country.

## Honour

*Honour is defined as having and showing respect for a person or thing; being honourable; something that makes you proud.*

Local 1611 honours our retired members through the efforts and activities of the Retiree Club; we honour those members who perished on-the-job with the Memorial Wall and tranquil area outside our head



Mark Olsen speaking at the LiUNA Canadian Conference in Lake Louise, Alberta in June 2022.

# STRENGTH

office; provided financial donations to those affected people and communities as a result of wild fires, heat domes and flooding in B.C.; made a recent donation to the Red Cross in support of those in Atlantic Canada affected by Hurricane Fiona; and the inclusion of Indigenous acknowledgements at all meetings and in Union publications and correspondence.

These are but a few of the examples of honour, as practised by Local 1611.

## Strength

*Strength means having a capacity to withstand great force and pressure; a state of being strong; quality of exertion or endurance.*

Local 1611's strength comes from the membership, who all work hard and who illustrate justice, honour and strength every day.

Local 1611's strength also comes from its diversity of membership, varied sectors represented, demographics and the fact that members provide a Union presence in every city, municipality and town in B.C. In fact, over the past decade Local 1611 has grown by an astounding 44 per cent (5,600 to 10,000). There is more growth yet to come and it gives Local 1611 a strong voice in its advocacy and lobbying efforts.

Specific examples of strength include successfully supporting the BC NDP in their election and re-elections; to attaining important legislative changes like getting rid of Medical Service Premiums (MSP), labour law changes, CBAs and PLAs and WCB changes, to name a few.

Justice, Honour and Strength truly define Local 1611. These are not mere words; they define our very essence. Now a question for the membership, how are you showing justice, honour and strength in your daily work and in your daily life? I am certain these words define you as well.

In closing, this holiday season we wish all members, their families and friends, peace, harmony and goodwill.

I would be remiss if I did not thank our LiUNA Western Canada staff, Jennifer, Kelly, Darcie, Jeffrey, Don, Ryan, Nicholas and Tom, for their efforts in 2022. We are looking forward to another great year ahead.

Please be safe and healthy.

# Generosity as a way of life



When Rajesh Bawa won \$250 in LiUNA! Local 1611's monthly member giveaway contest, he didn't want the cash prize.

A security guard with Garda at the Abbotsford Regional Hospital and Cancer Centre, Bawa redirected his winnings to the hospital to go toward the purchase of a wheelchair.

His work exposes him to people every day coping with unimaginable hardship – illness, loss, grief and the death of loved ones. He said he just wanted to help people in their time of need.

"It was my human duty to do that," said Bawa. "In my experience, when your soul feels proud and satisfied with how you've served, that is the Super Grand Prize of your life."

As a boy, Bawa used to volunteer teaching blind students. He recorded books on tape for them and declined any gratuity or stipend that was offered. Bawa considers himself a spiritual person who is happiest merely showing kindness.

"Spiritualism has the power to generate real-time assets of humanity: honesty, integrity, love, affection, respect, honour, in your life forever."

In his work, Bawa was awarded Fraser Health's first-ever "Spotlight Award" for his commitment and professionalism during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, when rules and protocols were often changing.

"I feel at peace and in my soul I feel proud and satisfied that I worked to help people in need."

## #WEARETHELABOURERS

# LiUNA! working with BC Metis Federation to advance Indigenous workers



From left: Darcie Petuh, Indigenous Liaison for LiUNA! Western Canada, Keith Henry, CEO of the BC Metis Federation, Nav Malhotra, LiUNA! 1611 Business Manager/Secretary-Treasurer and Larry Villeneuve, LiUNA! Western Canada Indigenous Affairs Liaison.

**T**he BC Métis Federation has signed a new partnership agreement with LiUNA! Local 1611.

The agreement commits partners to shared goals for training and employment opportunities for Métis in British Columbia and increasing the number of Métis in trades across the province.

The latest data from the Industry Training Authority reveals that the LiUNA Training PLUS (Professional Labourers' Union School) is the fourth largest sponsor of Indigenous apprentices in B.C. in its category. Training PLUS has 47 per cent Indigenous apprentices, which is the highest proportion in the BC Building Trades.

"We are committed to truth and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples," said Nav Malhotra, the Union's Business Manager/Secretary-Treasurer. "As one of the most diverse labour unions in the building trades, LiUNA recognizes the rights and interests of Métis people to work, advance and excel in the B.C. construction sector.

"We will lead the way in removing longstanding barriers so that support, training and often life-changing career opportunities are prioritized for Métis people."

BCMF Director of Industry Engagement, Greg Mazur states, "This partnership is so important for Métis members and partner communities to have access to all sectors of the construction industry and trades. I believe this partnership will be mutually beneficial for years to come and am looking forward to working closely with LiUNA to secure great jobs and futures for our members."

The agreement includes commitments from both parties, including for BCMF to maintain a list of eligible and ready-to-work Métis people for current and future construction work. BCMF members are encouraged to submit their resumé to BCMF's Employment Coordinator for inclusion in this new labour initiative. Resumés can be sent via email to [employment@bcmetis.com](mailto:employment@bcmetis.com).



# WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

*We're here to help*



**MEDICAL &  
PENSION PLAN**  
**604-538-6640**

**TRAINING PLAN**  
**604-538-5101**



**DISPATCH**  
**604-538-0721**

**MAIN OFFICE**  
**504-541-1611**



**LiUNA!** Local  
BC & YUKON 1611

## Labourers CARE!

**New committee to  
respond in emergency**

When you have an emergency, we're here to help. LiUNA! Local 1611 has started a new emergency response committee to provide assistance to our members and their communities during events such as severe weather and failures in transportation or communication infrastructure.

Aptly named Labourers Critical Action in Response to Emergencies (Labourers CARE), the new committee will activate as needed.

"In the last couple of years, our members have been impacted in various ways by the COVID-19 pandemic, forest fires, flooding and heat waves," said committee chair Charlene Delmaestro. "We want to be able to help them, whether that means providing direct assistance, or connecting them to the organization or agency already set up to respond."

Delmaestro, who works in LiUNA!'s pension department, is a Langley Township firefighter while committee member Fred Webber, who is an instructor with Training PLUS (Professional Labourers Union School), is a Harrison Hot Springs firefighter. Committee member Tom Miller, Training PLUS Administrator, chairs the union's health and safety committee and in that capacity provides naloxone training to students and instructors. The committee's combined experience provides insight into where Labourers CARE can best provide aid.

The committee will work with the union's existing support systems, including the Labourers' Union Charity Foundation and the Labourers Advancement Fund. It will also work with the union's Retiree Club to identify vulnerable seniors and respond as needed.

"For example, if we have another heat wave, we could have volunteers check in on our retirees to ensure they're safe," said Delmaestro, who is also a member of the personal disaster assistance team with Langley Township's fire department. "Maybe all they need is groceries delivered. It starts with a conversation and we would go from there."

Said Local 1611 Business Manager/Secretary-Treasurer Nav Malhotra: "It's really just about looking after one another, and as a union, that's what we do."

If you have an idea where the CARE committee can assist, send an email to [care@cswu1611.org](mailto:care@cswu1611.org).







# An early connection leads to opportunity of a lifetime

**M**y journey up to this point has been one of many unforeseen events.

My first experience with LiUNA! Local 1611 was about nine years ago when I participated in an outreach event for the driving school where I worked as an instructor. A colleague had prompted me to join him for a safety promotion at the Cloverdale Rodeo called the Cone Zone Experience, a free and family-friendly interactive theme park with multiple activities aimed at urging drivers to slow down, pay attention and be respectful in roadside work zones.

by Sherif Sidky — Local 1611 Member

**D**uring that event, I met many passionate advocates for roadside worker safety, the most influential to this story being Sarina Hanschke, an active member who helped organize the event on behalf of LiUNA! Local 1611. I was amazed and touched by the camaraderie and the capacity for connection among all the traffic control and road-building union members, all of them volunteering to help educate the public and amplify a message to keep vulnerable roadside workers safe.

I already knew I wanted to contribute to the solidarity and strength of being in a union, and with this introduction, I could clearly see that this was something I wanted to be a part of.

It didn't happen right away, but that experience stuck with me.

Fast-forward to about two months ago, and I reached out to Hanschke, aiming for a chance to join the union in earnest. She connected me with Local 1611's Vancouver Island Service Representative, Brady Carter, who matched me with a position at Seaspan. And here I am now in a hard hat and coveralls, ready to meet some new challenges.

The union will help me provide a stable and promising future for my family through the benefits of job placement, health coverage and the potential for training in a field where I can implement the skills and experience I have acquired over the years. The only real obstacle has been overcoming the doubt I had in myself, the unfortunate consequence of working in jobs that lacked what the union provides.

I am now pleasantly met with a great sense of relief and pride, that there is in fact a place for me with Local 1611.

I believe anyone seeking to improve their quality of life can do so by pursuing a path with a union. I look forward to growing into my potential at Seaspan, being an active union member, and becoming equipped to reciprocate and help others in the way that I have gained from the gift of being brought on board with LiUNA and Seaspan.

**#WEARETHELABOURERS**

# WHEN WORK HURTS

*Labourers' Membership Services provides advice to members about their Workers' Compensation Board, Employment Insurance and Canada Pension Plan claims and helps with their appeals.*

*We often support members during some of the worst situations of their life. They are struggling to recover from their workplace injury, losing income from not being able to work and are unsure what to do because their WCB claim was denied. The appeal process is sometimes their only option, and it can often be long and difficult. However, when appeals are successful, members are finally able to get the compensation they need to treat their injuries and start building towards their future after the claim.*

*We would like to share one of those special stories with you. Chelsea Norris is a longtime member who was involved in a workplace incident at the end of 2019, and her employer was fighting her claim. She came to LMS for assistance with her appeal.*

- Workers' Advocate Tony Parkinson



**A**t 4 a.m. on a chilly October night three years ago, Chelsea Norris's life changed forever.

A high-volume traffic supervisor, Norris was operating a buffer truck at a construction site on a busy stretch of Highway 99 in Richmond. Her job was to keep the workers safe by demarcating the closed lane and situating the buffer truck between the maintenance crew and any approaching traffic.

If a vehicle appeared to be approaching too fast or looked like it wasn't going to stop, Norris was to radio ahead to warn the other workers.

"I saw this car coming at me," recalls Norris, who was four-and-a-half-months pregnant at the time. "I honked the horn and radioed. Then I heard the brakes hit."

The buffer truck assigned to Norris wasn't equipped with an attenuator or scorpion tail, which would have acted like an accordion to reduce the impact; instead, any collision would be a direct hit. Norris managed to nudge her vehicle ahead about 15 feet to increase the distance between the speeding Mercedes and the truck.

The car almost came to a stop before careening into the buffer truck, thanks in part to Norris's quick thinking. However, adding insult to injury, the intoxicated driver of the Mercedes then hurled a barrage of insults at

Norris while trying to flee the scene. Crews chased her down and snatched her keys until the police arrived.

"She called me a stupid flagger, told me I was worthless," said Norris.

Norris had been flagging for 10 years and was accustomed to drivers behaving badly. She's had beer cans, shoes, cigarettes and various liquids thrown at her by drivers, as well as a tire iron and a hammer. She's had to jump into a ditch to avoid a car's intended bumper. But the physical harm those experiences could have caused didn't compare to the mental anguish she now felt as a result of this incident.

She'd been pointing out various safety issues with her employer for a long time, including the buffer truck's lack of a scorpion tail. Her concerns were dismissed and she was labeled as "emotional."

"After that, I couldn't function. I didn't know what was wrong with me. I couldn't sleep at night, I couldn't move. I didn't want to exist."

In addition to being pregnant, Norris was also parenting her other two little ones, aged two and three-and-a-half. A single parent, she'd always been able to provide for her family in every way; in her 10 years in traffic control, she could count on one hand the number of sick days she'd had.



Norris was completely debilitated.

Meanwhile, her employer was trying to have her file a claim with ICBC instead of WorkSafeBC. About two weeks after the accident, she contacted LiUNA! Local 1611 and agreed to have Workers' Advocate Tony Parkinson represent her with WorkSafe.

"He made me feel that my feelings were valid and that I was finally being heard, and that the way I was being treated was not OK," says Norris. "He took over the load that I was carrying."

As the Workers' Advocate, Parkinson helps Union members navigate the complicated workers'



Horse T-46, now known as Buddy, was rescued by Norris at auction. He was in horrible shape.



Buddy flourished under Norris's care, and he helped her heal from her own trauma. Alex Bayer Photography

compensation system. Much like a lawyer, he compiles evidence and provides arguments to WorkSafeBC and, if necessary, the Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal to ensure injured workers are treated fairly and achieve the compensation and benefits to which they are entitled. He also connects workers with services they may not even realize they are entitled to.

"What he did was huge," says Norris. "He took over the fight and did everything for me."

Initially, WorkSafe denied Norris's claim, but Parkinson fought the decision through WCAT, and, almost three years later, won. When Norris got her settlement cheque and a lifetime pension award, she bought her kids new shoes and clothes for the first time since her accident.

It was life-changing.

"After feeling insignificant for such a long time, I actually felt like I mattered. He was so human and so kind, and so clever at exploring all our options."

That's not to say the time before the settlement wasn't challenging. Norris had to go on social assistance and had no idea what the future held. She couldn't even afford the repairs to fix a leaky exhaust pipe in her truck and had to drive around with the windows open for a year after the accident.

*continued next page*



# Labourers help Fiona victims

**L**iUNA! Local 1611 donated \$20,000 to the Canadian Red Cross to assist victims of Hurricane Fiona in September.

"Hurricane Fiona devastated parts of Atlantic Canada and our hearts go out to the people who have been impacted," said Nav Malhotra, LiUNA's Business Manager/Secretary-Treasurer. "Some people have lost everything, and we want to do what we can to help them."

Local 1611 has a long history of supporting communities. The Union donates thousands every year to initiatives ranging from school meal programs and dry grad celebrations to cancer research, hospice care and programs for families living in poverty.

The Union chose to support the Red Cross's Hurricane Fiona appeal for several reasons, one of

which is the federal Liberal government's commitment to matching all donations made before Oct. 23. But the other reason hit closer to home – literally: close to 200 of Local 1611's almost 10,000 members live in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island or Newfoundland and Labrador.

"People in our sector travel where the work is, and right now the work is in British Columbia," says Malhotra. "We have lots of members working on major construction projects who actually live in the Maritimes."

Hurricane Fiona has affected hundreds of thousands of people across Atlantic Canada and Eastern Quebec. Donations to the Red Cross provide services to those in need, and include interim housing, clothing, food and other essential supplies.

*continued from previous page*

But she knew she had someone – Parkinson – in her corner. Now Norris is retraining as a heavy equipment operator and will soon have an entirely new career. She's also able to spend time on her passion project, which is rescuing horses from auction and neglect.

Norris says she sees a bit of herself in these essentially discarded horses, and the experience, though a mix of joy and sorrow, is incredibly healing.

"I felt like I could relate to them a little bit. At auction, they were just a number, and they were in there getting thrown away and starved – and that's after how many

beginner kids they'd helped learn to ride? They made their owners money and then they were just thrown away like garbage."

With donations and some of her own funds, Norris finds homes for horses that are adoptable, gets them veterinary care, and offers a final home for the ones that can't be adopted or saved. She provides comfort and solace, and is often the last human face they see.

"These are animals that have lost their trust and have been defeated. Working with them is healing for me."



*This is the reason LMS exists, to achieve outcomes like Chelsea's for our members. We are so very happy for her and her family.*

*We work every day to achieve these results for the members we are representing. Unfortunately, we aren't always able to get the same outcome for every member that we did for Chelsea. The success of an appeal depends on a variety of factors, but the most important factor that members can control is time. The longer you wait to seek medical attention after an injury, file a claim or contact me for assistance with an appeal, the more difficult it can become to be successful.*

*If you have received a decision that you don't agree with or have questions about, it is important that you contact our office as soon as you receive the decision letter. If an appeal is needed, we will assist you through the process, but there are strict time limits. Contact our office at 604-538-6992 or email [info@lms1611.org](mailto:info@lms1611.org).*



**Tony Parkinson**  
| Workers' Advocate

# An honest day's work for an honest day's pay

## 84-year-old George Pater recalls life in LiUNA!

There's a two-car garage in the popular Vernon retirement community of Desert Cove with an impeccable cement foundation. Unlike the others in this massive adult resort community, this foundation has no cracks

That's because its original owner, George Pater, snuck onto the property one weekend while it was being built, grabbed a nearby compactor and spent an hour compacting the soil himself.

"They were going to pour the garage and there was a compactor out front, and I knew how to run those, so I took it and knocked the soil down by about five inches," remembers Pater, 84.

"On Monday, I went back to the site and the workers told me how strange it was that the soil went down five inches over the weekend, and that they had to get more dirt in there before pouring the cement," laughs Pater. "And you know, my floor never did crack."

Pater was a member of LiUNA! for almost 40 years



Local 1611 President Mark Olsen (right) caught up with George Pater at his home in Vernon recently. Pater is holding his gold membership card, as well as a card that has every membership pin he's ever received going back 60 years. Olsen is holding Pater's zippered Job Steward case that he used back when he was part of the Tunnel & Rock Workers Local 168. Local 168 later merged with other locals to become Local 1611.

before retiring in 1999. He spent his career working on pipelines, bridges, canals, tunnels and roads from the Kootenays to Vancouver Island, and if he could do it all over again, he says he would.

"I've enjoyed every bit of being a longtime Union member," said Pater, who started his career as a member of LiUNA! Local 602 and also belonged to Local 168, where he was a Shop Steward. (It was locals 602, 168, 1070 and 1093 that ultimately merged to create Local 1611 in 1997.)

"I still have my Local 168 Shop Steward leather case, pins and a Local 168 cap," says Pater proudly.

Pater says he didn't have a favourite job, but thoroughly enjoyed "anything and everything." Asked his philosophy on work, he says, "As far as I'm concerned, you do an honest day's work for

an honest day's pay, and that's it."

Pater and his wife, Irene, still live in Vernon. They've raised three kids and will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary this month.



# Painting the past and the future of construction



herself venturing into the LiUNA archives in order to ensure the paintings were historically accurate. “Even high-visibility vests have changed over the years,” she laughs.

Knauer went through photos going back decades, and in the process learned a lot about the men and women who build, maintain and provide services to B.C.

“I learned so much about construction in B.C. and all the projects that have been done – the dams, the freeways.”



**J**ackie Knauer's art is making history!

A Tamanawis grad, Knauer recently created four paintings depicting the history and diversity of the Labourers' International Union of North America (LiUNA) Local 1611 for the union's anniversary celebrations.

LiUNA is marking 85 years in B.C. and the Yukon, and 25 years since Local 1611 formed from the amalgamation of four other chapters. The 1611 head office and training centre are located in Surrey's Campbell Heights.

“There was a fair amount of research that went into this project,” said Knauer, who found



LiUNA 1611's almost 10,000 members work in a variety of sectors, including construction. They work on dams, roads, bridges, tunnels, mines, pipelines and more, and have helped build some of the province's most iconic urban landscapes and skylines.

Each of Knauer's paintings depicts a particular period of LiUNA's history, from construction of the Waneta Dam in 1954 to a colourful modern piece showing the diversity of LiUNA's membership in the servicing sector.

By the time she had finished all four pieces, Knauer

says she felt like a member herself.

"They made me feel like part of the family. I was honoured to be part of this project."

Knauer graduated from Tamanawis in 1997 and has been painting for about 17 years. Her first project was a friend's nursery. It was just for fun, but it led to other projects and now Knauer's work can be seen all over the Lower Mainland. She does custom art, indoor and outdoor murals, commercial window paintings, chalkboards, signs and logos. You can find her work on Instagram at @customartbyjackie.



# Local 1611 celebrates Our 50+ year members

## 65 Years

COURNEYA, FRANCIS  
DE ANGELIS, HUGO  
KATINS, HORST  
MADSEN, AL  
ROSSATO, GIOVANNI

## 60 Years

ALMEIDA, JOAQUIM  
BRANYIK, STEVE  
CARDINAL, MARVIN  
DE FONTES, HERMANO  
EGGERT, FRED  
GIBSON, GEORGE  
GOMES, DOMINGOS  
GUERREIRO, JOSE  
MOREY, NELSON  
PATER, GEORGE  
TOME, JULIO

## 55 Years

ALVERNAZ, MANUEL  
ARRUDA, EDUARDO  
CAMERON, DAVID  
CHATTEN, CHUCK  
CUSCITO, ORLANDO  
DA PONTE, GUILHERME  
DEVLIN, PATRICK  
DRAYTON, ROBERT

DURO, JOSE  
EAKIN, ALFORD  
FAST, HANS  
FEDERICO, ANTONIO  
FORNASIER, NANDO  
GOMES, EDUARDO  
GONCALVES, MANUEL  
GRECO, CARMELINO  
GREGORICH, DANNY  
LAKATOS, VICTOR  
LANG, JAMES  
MATIAS, FRANCISCO  
MINELLI, GAETANO  
MORDEN, VIC  
OLIVEIRA, EDUARDO  
PERRY, KENNETH  
PICARD, ANDRE  
PIRC, JOHN  
REILLY, TOM  
SEMIENIUK, DONALD  
SOCIEDADE, MANUEL  
STRUTZ, RICHARD  
TOMAS, ALBANO  
WARKENTINE, DONALD  
WARKENTINE, LARRY  
WEST, DONALD  
YAMAKAWA, GEORGE

## 50 Years

AGUIAR, ARTUR  
ALMEIDA, JOSE  
ARAUJO, ALFREDO  
ARAUJO, JOSE  
BALOC, ANDREW  
BAMPTON, STANLEY  
BATISTA, JOSE  
BATTERSBY, BLAKE  
BLOODOFF, JACK  
BRUGGER, RENE  
BURBECK, JOHN  
CABIDO, JOSE  
CADRAIN, JAMES  
CHAVES, MANUEL  
CRAIG, RAYMOND  
CUSANO, BIAGIO  
DI RUGGIERO, SILVIO  
DO PACO, ANTONIO  
DOSIL, MANUEL  
DUARTE, CONSTANTINO  
GALLELLO, DOMENICO  
GOSSELIN, KEN  
GRILLI, SERGIO  
IAMARTINO, NICOLA  
ISIDORO, JEREMIAS  
JORGE, MANUEL  
KAY, DAVID

LAMPREIA, MARCELINO  
LINSMEYER, ALFRED  
LOEWEN, HOWARD  
LOPEZ DE MUNIAN, JOSE  
LOVISON, ANTONIO  
MAHAR, MERLEN  
MAKORTOFF, PETE  
MARTIN, TERRY  
MEDEIROS, LOUIS  
MILANOVIC, JANDRE  
MORRISSEY, RICHARD  
MOTA, MANUEL  
NOBREGA, JOSE  
OLLERICH, DAVID  
OLSON, LAWRENCE  
OTERO, NESTOR  
PEREIRA, JOSE  
PICCOLO, COSIMO  
QUEIROGA, HENRIQUE  
RAIMUNDO, MANUEL  
SALAPURA, DRAGAN  
SANTOS, CASIMIRO  
SINISCALCHI, GIUSEPPE  
SOARES, DIOCLECIOS  
STARK, JOHN  
STOOCHNOFF, HAROLD  
STROHMAIER, WILFRED  
THRIEN, LOTHAR

# In memoriam

We Honour Our Deceased Members, May They Rest in Peace  
December, 2021 to October, 2022

ACTON, MITCHELL  
ALEXIS, ELLIOT  
ARBANAS, NICK  
BAKER, STEE-AYE-EVIN  
BALDASSARRE, ROCCO  
BOGOR, ABDIRASHID  
BOWEN, EDWARD  
BUIZER, TRAVIS  
BUSCH, PHILLIP  
BUSTO, SABINO  
CABIDO, JOSE  
CASARANO, COSIMO  
CUBA, ILIJA  
DE VICO, UMBERTO  
DEL BIANCO, UGO  
DELA CRUZ, ANGELITO  
EDLER, ROGER  
ESCHE, HOWIE

FARIA, VITAL  
FIOLLEAU, ANDRE  
FOWLER, RICHARD  
GREGORIO, CESAR  
HAWKHURST, JOHN  
HERRETT, D O'DARE  
JOHNSTON, KENNETH  
KALANJ, MIRKO  
KILBRAI, DANIEL  
KINAKIN, STEVE  
KLYNE, GERALD  
KOTILA, VEIKKO  
LAGO, MARCO  
LAKATOS, VICTOR  
LAMBRECHT, MARSHA  
LANGAN, LEO  
LEITE, MANUEL  
LLOYD, DARIEN

LOKAU, NORBERT  
MARTIN, ELDON  
MARTIN, TERRY  
MARTINS, JOAQUIM  
MATTIELLO, IVO  
MICHELON, GIUSEPPE  
MOORLEY, MICHAEL  
MUELLER, OTTO  
NASH, VICTOR  
OLSON, LAWRENCE  
PERANIO, GIOVANNI  
PONTES, RUI  
REGO, MANUEL  
REID, ALVIN  
RENAUD, RICHARD  
RINSMA, BRAD  
ROSS, DOUGLAS  
ROWAN, ROBERT

ROYAL, THOMAS  
SANTOS, CASIMIRO  
SAUNDERS, RICHARD  
SCHNABEL, WILFRIED  
SEBESTYEN, STEVEN  
STAMENKOVIC, MILIVOJE  
STARK, JOHN  
SWANSON, DALE  
TAVARES, ILIDIO  
TAVARES, DUARTE  
TOM, ANDY  
TOME, JULIO  
VERISSIMO, MANUEL  
WATSON, ANDREW  
WONNENBERG, FRED  
ZUBCIC, IVAN



# Big projects and a bittersweet goodbye



Manuel Alvernaz | Special Representative

The 50th annual constitutional convention of the BC Building Trades was bittersweet for me.

Held in Victoria in October, I attended as an Honorary Life Member, nominated by our Business Manager/Secretary-Treasurer Nav Malhotra two years ago (thank you, Brother!).

While at the convention, I had the pleasure — and privilege — of meeting our friend and my friend, Premier John Horgan, who was also made an Honorary Life Member of BCBT. It was extremely special to me, as LiUNA! Local 1611's executive board, including myself, had already made him a Local 1611 Honorary Member five years earlier. I had the honour of presenting the premier with his certificate back then, too.

The premier gave a speech to the convention, then took me aside for a photo and said, "Manny, now that I'm retiring, we belong to the same club!" I thanked him for everything he did for the labour movement and for Local 1611.

Thank you, Premier Horgan, my Brother.



Members starting shift at Parkland

## Precast work still going strong

2022 has been by far the best year for Con-Force Structures in precast work contracts, employing on average 80 to 90 of our members and producing diverse

kinds of precast units for many projects. The largest projects were the Kicking Horse Canyon and widening of Highway 1 from Kamloops to the Alberta border, and precast girders for the Highway 5 flood repair work, a large contract for the Ministry of Transportation.

Also a large project is the LNG Canada project in Kitimat. Con-Force trying to secured more precast work on the LNG terminal and dock facilities. We hope they will be successful getting that work so they can keep the same number of our members working into next year.

## Parkland Refinery

We currently have around 50 members working at Area 2 and Area 1 doing maintenance work for CIMS and civil work for **Greystone Design Management**.

There are still two Tanks to be built and a modest pipeline from Area 1 to Area 2. A major shutdown that is expected last six to eight weeks begins in 2023 and will employ 200-plus of our members. They will run two 10-hour shifts. They will start hiring slowly from now to the end of the year, and will ramp up in January 2023.

## TEL Group

It's been a very busy year for **Fred Thompson Contractors**, employing eight to nine of our members on a steady basis with some overtime attached to it throughout the year performing mostly hydro utility and maintenance work that yields excellent wages and benefits.

**Hyland Excavating** has also had a steady year doing utility work until end of August, then they secured a four-month water and utility contract with the City of Burnaby, which will keep them very busy, at least into January 2023.

I would like to thank all the LiUNA! Local 1611 members for their hard work throughout the year and I wish you and your families a healthy Christmas and a happy and prosperous new year.



Members casting precast girders at Con-Force Structures



# 'It all starts with opportunity and that's what LiUNA provides'



When Lisa Flesher was 18, she wrote an essay about her life for a high school assignment.

In a jarring narrative her teacher could never have anticipated, Flesher detailed the breakup of her parents' relationship, her mom's descent into drug addiction and prostitution, being in and out of foster care with her younger brother, and even being homeless at 16.

She wrote about her then four-year-old brother, who was deaf, being given up for adoption because her mom never learned sign language in order to communicate with him. But Flesher, who was five, knew sign language and the siblings' separation was horrific for both of them.

It was an honest and articulate essay that made her teacher weep, and the teacher asked if she could share it with the rest of the class.

"That was the first time I didn't feel ashamed," remembers Flesher of that day some 30 years ago.

For the class, Flesher's essay demonstrated the importance of kindness and compassion, because we never really know what someone is going through. It's a philosophy to which Flesher herself subscribes, and it's made her a strong service representative with LiUNA! 1611—but that wasn't her initial career path.

After graduating from high school, she wanted to be a youth worker. However, she also needed to support herself and her one-year-old son, so college wasn't in the cards. Instead, she became a server and eventually managed a pub and beer store in Burnaby.

She enjoyed the job, but the salary wasn't great and there were no benefits. Every time her son needed a new pair of glasses, Flesher paid cash, which cut into

all the other expenses the family faced. She also had a daughter by then.

"I was a single parent most of my life and I needed to make a decent wage. There was no way I was going to have my kids go through what I went through."

Flesher joined LiUNA and began working for one of the union's signatory contractors, earning life-changing wages and benefits. Flesher was accustomed to the precarity of life, so she poured over her collective agreement to make sure that both she and her employer followed all the rules.

"I thought it was important to know my rights and responsibilities and that led to me becoming a Job Steward," says Flesher.

Flesher proved herself a capable Steward and worker, and she was tasked with things like co-ordinating traffic control for the BMO Vancouver Marathon. The thousands of racers, volunteers, spectators and drivers alike connected to this event will appreciate the necessity of good traffic management.

After 10 years on and off as a Job steward, Flesher became a Service Rep for LiUNA! 1611 in 2019 and it's a job she truly loves. Flesher's story is an example of the difference unions can make in a people's lives.

"Being in traffic control is a great introduction into the Union, and it can also be a career. If you get out there and you want to learn more, we have courses that allow you to further yourself and make changes. We're never going to not give someone an opportunity."

It all starts with opportunity, and that's what LiUNA! 1611 provides.

"We're just here to help people."

# Counselling & Coaching

**FREE for members of LiUNA! Local 1611!**

Everyone faces challenging and stressful events in their lives. Most of the time we can handle these situations ourselves; other times we may need some support. And you've got it, with LiUNA! Local 1611.

Your benefits include professional, confidential and FREE counselling and support services from Homewood Health, one of Canada's leading employee and family assistance program providers.

## What benefits are available to me?

Confidential counselling is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to help you with any challenge — whether it's a first step in facing a possible addiction, or managing day-to-day stress.

## Counselling programs

- Marriage/relationship
- Family
- Stress
- Addictions
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Life transitions/change management
- Grief & bereavement
- Other personal issues

## How it works

You will be matched with a counselor who suits your needs and can provide you with short-term solutions. If you are identified as requiring additional, longer-term treatment or specialized support, you will be referred to community-based resources and programs that suit your unique needs.

Counseling services can be offered face-to-face or over the phone. Offices are local and appointments are made quickly, with your convenience in mind.

### GETTING STARTED

It's easy!  
Call 1-800-663-1142  
(24 hours a day, 7  
days a week)

**LiUNA!** Local  
1611  
BC & YUKON

## DOWNLOAD THE APP!

Once you register at [homeweb.ca](http://homeweb.ca), you can create an individual profile, receive personalized content recommendations and access lots of helpful resources anywhere, any time.

You can even download the app right onto your device.







Jesse Saunders | Service Representative

## Winter is almost upon us, but LiUNA doesn't stop

Every day I see how hard our membership works in conditions that can be dangerous, at times overwhelming. With winter creeping up on us now, the weather across our beautiful province of B.C. is going to add to our challenges. I've spent most of my working life in those conditions. I feel proud to have been involved in developing ways to make our working conditions safer and developing our union in this province.

Having almost finished my first year as your new Service Representative, I've seen just how proud our membership is to carry on our trade as skilled labourers. I've met up with crews who start work before 5 am and some on night shifts who return home early the next morning. Our members show up fit and ready every day, ready to challenge all kinds of weather and still produce quality work. I've been fortunate enough to sign new members into our union and help mentor them through the early stages of their new career in construction as proud Labourers.

Many of the friends I made early in my work life through the LiUNA family have advanced so much because of the training and mentorship that the Local has provided. A very special thanks to our Training PLUS department for helping our members achieve competency and develop the safety skills needed to be successful in our trade. If work ever slows down this winter, I encourage everyone to update and take courses through the Training PLUS office to be ready for another busy year ahead of us.

In closing, I wanted to reach out to all the families of LiUNA members. During the dark months of winter in the Lower Mainland, juggling work and home life can be challenging. Finding the right balance is difficult. Workdays are long, cold and tiring. A family who will listen and talk about our work can help warm us up for the next day of work. Simply asking how work was is enough to show someone that you care. Everyone needs to feel as though someone is willing to listen. If you don't have family here to talk with, please don't forget that I'm just a phone call away.

Stay warm and healthy, Brothers and Sisters.



Eduardo Velasco (right) and Chacho Martinez are working on the Second Narrows Water Supply Tunnel.



Frank Lamarca with concrete pump hose ↑



# Pride in the work, pride in the Union

Mike Berg | Service Representative



**H**appy holidays to all our membership representing Local 1611! I will probably jinx us but it feels great to have life back to normal other than a few masks here and there.

## Service Sector

This has been a solid year of bargaining in the service sector. The cost of living has been outrageous, reaching highs of eight per cent in early summer. Some who travel great distances to and from work have really felt the pinch at the pumps, never mind the price of food.

A review of the contracts we worked on this year:

**SCIC Funeral Division** — completed in the spring, our members were in favour of a strike vote, and we went back to the table for another push, which sealed the deal.

**Impark and Advanced Parking (Reef)** — bargaining started in May and a ratification vote was mailed out in mid-October. The wait has been too long for our members, and I understand their frustrations when money has been tight with all the increases. We hope to have good news in November on this five-year agreement when the votes are in.

**Cascades Recovery** — started bargaining in June and at the time of this magazine, we were going to mediation some time later in the year.

**Versacold** — We started bargaining in late July and had this contract ratified in September. Our members stood strong and unanimously turned down their first vote to come back to the table and get what they needed to finalize this deal. A deal allows the newly purchased company to secure the cold storage market and hopefully expand the facility.

**Railway Agreement** — a mail-out-vote was sent out in mid-October.

Thank you to all the Job Stewards for their dedication and representation for their co-workers during these stressful times. Thank you to my support staff at Local 1611 for making this an enjoyable workplace.

## Construction Sector

A special thanks to all the Job Stewards who have assisted me on the job this year. Three years as a rep at the time of this article and I am so grateful for the staff that supports me and the membership who work hard and represent this great Union.

What does the Labourers Union stand for? When I walk onto job sites, I try to remind our members the importance of our image. LiUNA! is better because our members are better, faster, safer, and smarter.

Contractors can call upon us to deliver labour on short notice; non-union and employer-friendly unions cannot compete with this.

Our dispatch board is constantly pumping out over 100 members a week and I see the percentages of women and Indigenous workers growing as time goes on. This is great work by Greg, Eddie and Donna.

What gives us a bad name are those who take advantage of the Union and look to manipulate the contract in their favour. We do not represent laziness or repeated tardiness.

Our Local 1611 brand has been recognized throughout North America for its rapid growth in membership. Local 1611 has doubled in size during my three years.

Thank you to the support staff at LiUNA. I wish them the happiest of holidays.

We have months of work ahead so keep up with your tickets and training so we can get you out when called upon. Ho ho ho!

Our Local 1611 brand has been recognized throughout North America for its rapid growth in membership. Local 1611 has doubled in size during my three years.



Lisa Flesher | Service Representative

## 2021 was a year to celebrate

Wow what a year!

As many of you know this was an anniversary milestone year for all of you and us, with LiUNA being in B.C. for 85 years and your Local 1611 being here for 25 years. Thank you to everyone who has put in submissions for our monthly give aways. It was great to learn some of the stories of our amazing membership and thank you to everyone who took time out of their busy schedules to come out and celebrate with us. Our six events throughout the province were a huge success.

**Michels Canada** continues to keep our members working hard on Spread 7A and Spread 6 of the Trans Mountain pipeline. The Union continues receiving numerous dispatch requests for both spreads. As we have entered the rainy season, Michels has got the pumps up and being manned. Trans Mountain is predicting all work to be completed by next fall.

Traffic control continues to be booming. All over,

companies are in need of hardworking traffic control persons. We have had **Bear Claw Traffic Control, True North Flagging, Highway Traffic Control** and **4way Traffic** join us this fall. **Dinamac, BCW, Glen Traffic, Tangerine and United Traffic** continue to be supplying traffic control for the pipelines. There is no sign of the industry slowing down.

Nathan Ferguson is now the Service Representative for **Garda Security**. It was a pleasure to have met some of you and spoken with the members from Garda. Nathan will do an amazing job representing all of you.

I would also like to welcome **Para Space**, a Landscaping company that has been certified this year. We started bargaining in November and will hopefully have an agreement in place very soon.

Lastly, thank you to the Job Stewards and members for all their hard work. This Union is nothing without all of you.

Happy holidays to you and your families and all the best in the new year.



Tom Miller | Training PLUS Administrator

## Demands on Training PLUS kept us on our toes

It has been another wild and chaotic year for all of us here at Training PLUS. The combination of the major projects going on around the province with the bustle that our signatory contractors are facing has made things challenging.

The landscape of training and its ever-increasing needs has made 2022 a whirlwind. The post-pandemic rush, the continuum of major projects, the increasing requirements for safety certifications, and our growing membership has really kept us on our toes. I want to extend a huge thank-you to our entire team here as they have worked tirelessly to provide exceptional instruction and service to help keep our membership trained and safe out on the job.

I also want to extend a big thank-you to our membership. Without you and the sweat equity you exert out on the job, none of what we do would be possible. You give us the motivation we need to continue to facilitate, educate and develop our training programs and we truly appreciate it.

I expect a year of change in 2023. A part of that change will be growing our instructional staff. If you think that you have the ability and desire to become an instructor and give back to the membership, please send a resumé to me at [tmiller@liuna1611.ca](mailto:tmiller@liuna1611.ca).

To all of you and your families, thank you again for all of your hard work and we're wishing you a happy and healthy new year.

# We are successful because of our members

Steve Hecocks | Service Representative



As we wind down another year and winter arrives, let's take a moment to reflect on what we have accomplished this past year. We have built our membership to almost 10,000 members strong, and our training department has put on more training in the Kootenays than in any other year. Our Local is the second biggest in Canada and 15th biggest in all of North America. That is amazing, but all of this is because our members provincially have done an outstanding job filling the roles and responsibilities that our signatory contractors require. I want to thank each and every member and all of our contractors for all you do on a daily basis. It makes me proud to say I belong to the Local 1611 family.

The widening of Highway 1 is progressing rather nicely. **Springline** and **Dawson Construction** will have wrapped up their respective portions in Chase and Salmon Arm by the time this magazine reaches your door.

**CIF, Pennecon** and **KHCC** are still going strong in Chase, Quartz Creek and Kicking Horse Canyon in Golden. There are still a few more portions of the highway to be awarded in the next year.

**CIMS, West Kootenay Mechanical, Clayburn** and **TVE Industrial Services** all have been working at Teck Cominco on a shutdown that had over 230 of our members working.

**Western Industrial Contractors, Region 4 Safety Services** and **Andritz** have kept many of our members in the Kootenays busy.

**Emil Anderson, CGL Contractors, Randy Frasch Enterprises, BA Dawson, Pashco Blasting, Newport Structures, Huron Developments, SCI, Progrus, Kingston Construction, Impark, Rock Construction, Glacier Blasting, Michels** and newly signed to the Union **GFSS Germain** have had many of our members working in and around the Okanagan area.

**Alliance Traffic** has been busy again putting our members to work keeping all the roadways and highways safe for the travelling public.

I want to thank all our office staff who assist me every single day in helping provide valuable information to

our members, plus all my colleagues in Local 1611 who share knowledge and ideas that make our Union even stronger and my job more fulfilling.

A BIG thank you to all Job Stewards who help our members and protect our jurisdiction.

I want to wish everyone a very happy holiday season and good health, happiness and a prosperous 2023. I am here to help and my door is always open.



Construction at Kicking Horse Canyon near Golden.





Roger Bennett | Service Representative

# Another busy year in the Northeast

## COASTAL GASLINK

The Coastal GasLink project to date will be at 75 per cent completion for 2022 and is projected to have all pipe in the ground by end of summer 2023.

Prime contractor on Section 3, **SA Energy** has 70 per cent pipe in the ground and employed up to 220 members. Section 4 is completed.

On Section 6, **Michels Canada** has 70 per cent pipe in the ground and employed up to 200 members.

On Section 7, **OJ Pipelines** has 30 per cent pipe in the ground and employed up to 200 members.

## TRANS MOUNTAIN (TMX)

**Banister** is responsible for Section 4B, which is 95 per cent completed and most of our members have been laid off. Banister had employed 200 to 250 members for nearly two years.

**Lonestar Vac** worked the 2022 season on TMX with 20 members.

**Premay Pipeline Hauling** kept around 35 members working on TMX and CGL thru 2022.

## CONTRACTORS

**MTS Pipeline Hauling** kept 10 members busy thru spring and summer on the NGTL Pipeline Project.

**Marathon Drilling** employed members on CGL and TMX.

Local Prince George companies **Progrus Constructors, CMH Underground, WCIC, Viking, WIC, Zettl Masonry, Alliance Traffic, PG Hydro Mechanical, A&B Rail, Lafarge** and **Pittman Asphalt** all had a busy 2022 season and kept over 300 members employed.

The new year will see a continuation of record-breaking hours of work in all sectors.

Happy holidays, Brothers and Sisters!



Chris Mansel | Service Representative

# More milestones, thanks to members

After a long and productive summer and fall, the Northeast has shifted into high gear to get as much as possible completed before the cold winter months.

The companies working up at Site C are on track to have the dam completed and operational by 2025. AFDE's Labourers still have a lot of work to get done before that completion date. The dam's concrete count is at 1.7 million cubic metres of concrete placed. This

achievement is a huge win for all our Brothers and Sisters out there working on the dam, and for that we say thank you. Site C would not be at this point without you.

Voith continues to install the turbines in the powerhouse, with help from our Brothers and Sisters doing both the fire-watch and hole-watch duties.

After a big push and lots of work completed, the window for Carpi Tech to install the liner on the dam has closed, and they have shut down from the end of October until the weather picks up in March/April.

Elsewhere in the North, Garda Security continues to work tirelessly to keep the public safe on all their jobs in Fort St. John.

Stay warm and safe!



← Site C headworks

# Members working hard in the Northwest

Jordan Heal | Service Representative



The Northwest has had a successful 2022 and this will continue into 2023 for our Brothers and Sisters.

The widening of Highway 1 is progressing rather nicely. **Springline** and **Dawson Construction** will have wrapped up their respective portions in Chase and Salmon Arm by the time this magazine reaches your door.

At the LNG Canada Project, **Bird Construction** has completed work at the retention ponds. That scope of work saw 37,000 m3 of concrete poured and approximately 188,000m3 of earth excavated. **ServcoCanada** ramped up in November adding 90 new members to their snow removal campaign. **Fluor Constructors Canada** has completed most of their civil underground work but have large crews assisting with flagging, snow removal, dewatering and concrete prep

work. **Lorneville Mechanical** and **BFI Constructors** will be working well into the new year on the LNG storage tank.

**Western Industrial Contractors Ltd., Viking Construction, ABC Industries, JHW, Broadwater Industries SL&B** and **Terus Construction Limited** all had great years. Much of the work was at Rio Tinto with the paving companies working all over the Northwest from LNG Canada to Prince Rupert.

**Glacier/Pacific Joint Venture** will continue into the new year at the Coastal GasLink pipeline. Certain sections are completed or nearing completion with the western portion of Section 8 scheduled to be completed by next fall.

Thank you everyone for all your hard work over this past year. Stay safe and see you in the new year.

## Book chronicles our work, celebrates our members

2022 was our 85/25 anniversary and although it's coming to a close, we still have more to celebrate with our digital commemorative book titled *From the Ground Up*.

Our growth and achievements are all due to the strength and dedication of our members, who all have stories to tell. This unique and interactive commemorative anniversary publication celebrates their work and commitment to making our Union what it is today.

*From the Ground Up* captures the pride, passion and spirit of our membership in a meaningful way and we hope it inspires new and renewed activism reflecting the ideals of our Union.

What's inside?

- Congratulatory letters from leadership
- Video highlights from the celebrations around the province

- Testimonials from members, and written messages from our various departments that serve the membership and community
- Highlights from member submissions from the 85/25 monthly giveaway

Would you rather have an electronic copy of *From the Ground Up*? Email [cfennell@cswu1611.org](mailto:cfennell@cswu1611.org).

Follow this code to access the book:



*From the Ground Up*

Happy holidays to you all. We wish you and your families all the best for the Christmas season and a wonderful new year!





Greg Letkeman, Eddie Foong, Donna Mansel | Dispatchers

# Dispatch Report

## Season's greetings, Brothers and Sisters!

**A**nother year has come and gone, and we continue to be at the forefront of the labour movement. It is because of the hard work and dedication of the entire 1611 membership that we have grown exponentially over the last few years. Your Union dispatch has been busier than ever, more than doubling the number of members dispatched in 2021 than we had in 2019. This shows how integral the Labourers are to the growth of our beautiful province. Since your work has been deemed essential by the government, our working hours have skyrocketed, and collectively we have made lives better for thousands of members.

We would like to take a step back and fondly remember those we have lost this year, some to natural causes, and some to not-so-natural causes. Each one of these lives lost has had a significant impact on those around them who care for them. We also want to celebrate all their lives and remember the good fight they fought each and every day. We mourn for those taken too soon, from the growing opioid epidemic. Addiction is a medical condition, not always a choice, sometimes brought on by the stigma surrounding the construction industry. Whether a person is in chronic physical pain or experiencing mental health issues, there are resources available to all of us, either through our own Medical and Benefits Plan, or through our MFAP (Member & Family Assistance Program), Homewood Health. Please contact the Union office for more information on our MFAP.

As busy as your Union dispatch has been, we have tried to be there for all of you. We appreciate your patience while we make dispatch happen, day after day. Regardless of each member's personal situation, Dispatch is often the first point of contact for a lot of members. From dispatcher, to confidante, to sometimes

just a listening ear, we care about all of you. We are here for you. We try our best every day to be as member-friendly as we can, providing it falls within the current rules of dispatch.

We understand that members are always looking to broaden their horizons by vying for certain jobs that they may not have done previously. We appreciate the members' willingness to learn new things and expand their scope of experience.

The exception to this is when contractors require a certain level of experience for their dispatch requests. We pride ourselves on being able to match qualified Union members with Union contractors when they are looking for skilled Labourers. We need your help for this. Please be up-front and accurate when communicating your

skillset to dispatch as we do not want to put anybody in a situation that compromises anybody's safety or well-being.

We would like to remind all Local 1611 members who utilize the Union dispatch about being available when we call. We can spend hours in a day calling the members for work, leaving voicemails and sending emails with potential dispatch info. Often, contractor requests are submitted to dispatch with very little lead time to fill. This puts the dispatch office in a time-crunch, as most agreements give a 48-hour window to clear requests. Also, a friendly reminder to keep dispatch up to date with any newly acquired skills and certifications. You can double-down on your email check-in with dispatch by including any new tickets in your email to [dispatch@cswu1611.org](mailto:dispatch@cswu1611.org).

Happy holidays to you all. We wish you and your families all the best for the Christmas season and a wonderful new year!

Keep dispatch up to date with any newly acquired skills and certifications.



# Job Steward courses coming



Nathan Ferguson  
| Recruitment Officer/Director of Jurisdiction

As of October 2022, I have assumed the Garda Canada portfolio in B.C. outside Fort St. John and Prince George. This bargaining unit also consists of newly initiated Canada Border Services Agency employees working under federal jurisdiction.

I want to thank Lisa Flesher for her continued support as I learn the service sector ropes. Lisa has been a big help during this transition, and I very much appreciate her encouragement. There will undoubtedly be a learning curve involved, but I want to assure members that they will always have my full support. Please email any Garda questions or concerns you may have to [nferguson@cswu1611.org](mailto:nferguson@cswu1611.org) or call the Surrey head office at 604-541-1611. I will make sure to return any calls as

soon as I can.

The online self-directed and in-class **Job Steward** course rollout will continue in the new year. We expect to put on 12-plus in-class courses as we aim to reach every active Steward in the Union. Each course will also be adjusted to meet sector needs.

A useful Steward handbook will follow and will be sent out to every Job Steward who completes both courses. The first **construction sector** in-class offering is tentatively scheduled for **Sunday, Jan. 8, 2023**, and the first **service sector** in-class course is tentatively scheduled for **Sunday, Jan. 15, 2023**. Registration and waiting-list requests for active **Stewards** can be made by scanning the QR code on this page.



Job Steward Sign Up

2022 has been the busiest year in the Union's 85-year history. For many, you have been working harder than ever before. You have absolutely earned a peaceful holiday, and I wish all of you a safe season filled with warmth and loved ones.



Nathan Ferguson with member Surinderjit Dhillon, who works for Garda.

# Busy year for benefit and pension office



Tara Campbell  
| Medical & Pension Plan Administrator

With a record number of members working through Local 1611, the benefit and pension plan office has been busier than ever this year.

We look forward to the continued success of the

union and growth in the numbers of members covered for benefits.

If you have any questions about your benefit or pension plan, please call our office at 604-538-6640.

# A little LUC goes a long way

The number of Education Assistance Awards offered in 2022 more than doubled from 2021!

The Labourers' Union Charities (LUC) committee was thrilled to be able to help so many members and their families further their education. In total, \$92,000 in education awards were issued.

## *Congratulations to all the recipients*

Aaron W.	Cosette T.	Ivona G.	Nikki J.	Atalaya A.	Bianca C.
Abraham M.	Edwin C.	James M.	Phoenix D.	Cody Y.	Emma K.
Alejandra M.	Ella K.	Jordan S.	Rebecca C.	Edward L.	Jaida L.
Alvin L.	Ellise R.	Jordan S.	Reegan S.	Haley S.	Ryan M.
Amanda B.	Elyaas W.	Joshua B.	Shamia C.	Jakob T.	Matthew W.
Amanda L.	Elyssa N.	Kalie C.	Shawnassie S.	Liam B.	Monique S.
Amirah M.	Ethan J.	Karis B.	Simone R.	Paolino V.	Oakley B.
Benjamin D.	Ethan K.	Keeleigh N.	Skie C.	Thomas O.	Alexis W.
Brooke love	Eurielle C.	Kieran D.	Sydney W.	Hayley P.	Christine L.
Camille C.	Eve H.	Lauryn K.	Tegra J.	Kalee G.	
Chailee N.	Francesco M.	Mackenzie L.	Victoria H.	Mark O.	
Christian C.	Gabriella C.	Martina G.	Vivien li	Shreya C.	
Conor B.	Ishai F.	Mary-Anne B.		Trevor B.	

## Making our communities better

### Labourers' Union Charity (LUC FOUNDATION)

Shelley Moore, Chair | Tom Miller, Brady Carter, Shona Dion

The Labourers' Union Charities proudly supports members, their families and their communities in meaningful and relevant ways.

Kerala Cultural Association

Port Alberni Toy Drive

Variety – The Children's Charity

Cool-Aid

Northwest BC Women's Hockey Team

Wounded Warriors

Optimist Club for Christmas

BC Fed Holiday

Make a Wish Foundation

# Members stand strong for a good contract

Shelley Moore | Service Representative



**B**argaining for the Cascades agreement continues as members stand strong for a contract that supports their families with good benefits. Your Union is committed to work on your behalf to bring a decent deal to the table that addresses the high cost of living that we experience in the province of B.C.

Thank you for your dedicated and hard work that you do for your company to provide consistent and essential services through the recycling process.

## HEALTH CARE

*AXIS Family Resources, H.O.M.E. Society (Community Social Services)*

*James Bay and Sandringham Care Centres (Long Term Care)*

Bargaining continues for all the strong and essential health care members. The bargaining climate in B.C. is tough and deals are increasingly hard to ratify.

The Local is proud of its health care membership and will always stand strong to achieve meaningful and fair contract achievements through collective bargaining.

Local 1611 bargaining units from both sectors include care aides, LPNs, activity workers, home support workers, specialized residential workers, drug rehab workers, program co-ordinators, counsellors and administration workers, to give examples.

Our workers provide care to families, children, the vulnerable and elderly people who live in your communities.

Local 1611 bargains together with 11 unions representing health care workers from AXIS and HOMES. Currently at this table, the parties do not agree on how to reach a tentative agreement and

talks have been on pause. Members have mandated an agreement that includes fair wages and safe, healthy workplaces. Please check our website for updates as they come in.

The new owner of Local 1611's long-term care facilities, Agecare, is being orientated to the dedication of Local 1611 when it comes to the members' rights. Bargaining has been slow with strong mandates from the workers to support them in their worksites.

All of our members in health care are experiencing serious staff shortages and work many extra hours of overtime. COVID-19 initiated the crisis and with current rising costs, workers are experiencing burnout.

Thank you for all you do. We remain proud to be your representatives.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

Five health care workers received scholarships for themselves or family members and Local 1611 will continue to support you and your families with important education achievements. Thank you as well to the members who participate in the Local's online contests. It is super fun to go and present cheques to the winners!

Take care everyone by working safely and making good choices to promote healthy and happy lifestyles.

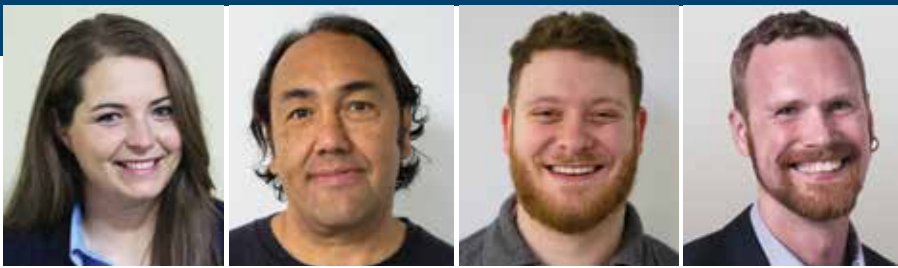
Stay up to date on happenings in the community social services sector, including bargaining updates, on our website at [cswu1611.org/axis-homes](http://cswu1611.org/axis-homes).

All of our members in health care are experiencing serious staff shortages and work many extra hours of overtime.



## #WEARETHELABOURERS





Sarina Hanschke | Lead Organizer - Oscar Sanchez, Ben Ger and Keith Murdoch | Organizer

## 7 fired workers see justice at the LRB

While the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom protects the right to form a union, employers are known to unjustly overreach and engage in shameful tactics when they hear of a union drive.

Panicky employers may lie to, coerce and intimidate workers when they realize these workers are forming a union. These activities (called Unfair Labour Practices) are illegal abuses of power, meant to create fear with the goal to stop the union drive dead in its tracks. Workers who would normally support joining a union shy away from having any future involvement of joining the union for fear of retaliation by the employer. The actions that damage and unfairly influence the worker's right to choose are taken seriously under the law in British Columbia.

Less than a week after launching a formal union drive at Para Space Landscaping, and right after the Labour Day long weekend, seven union supporters were

suddenly terminated without cause. Based on the facts, LiUNA was quick to respond, filing an Unfair Labour Practice claim with the Labour Relations Board, which initiated an expedited hearing three days later.

The employer was found in breach of the Labour Relations Code and the terminations of the union supporters to be unlawful. Para Space was ordered to stop engaging in Unfair Labour Practices, to reinstate the workers to their former positions, and to cover any related missed wages and benefits. In addition, since the actions of the employer caused damage to future progress of the union drive, and to better protect the workers who were reinstated, the Labour Relations Board ordered a Remedial Certification of the whole company.

We have welcomed these workers into the union and are now in the process of establishing and building on relationships with these new members and negotiating their first collective agreement, which they will vote on.

We thank the NDP government for strengthening the laws to protect a worker's right to unionize. With these much-needed improvements to the laws, we were able to seek a fair decision with confidence. Now is the best time to unionize!

Please forward any union organizing leads or contacts you have to [organizing@cswu1611.org](mailto:organizing@cswu1611.org)

for their hard work throughout the year and I wish you and your families a healthy Christmas and a happy and prosperous new year.

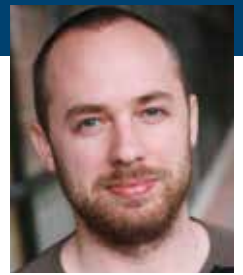


We welcome new members of Para Space Landscaping.

# Island work on the increase

## Ground broken on Cowichan Hospital

Brady Carter | Service Representative



Greetings Brothers and Sisters.

Last March I celebrated my 10-year anniversary working for the Local. This opportunity has been amazing one and I want to thank our Business Manager/Secretary-Treasurer Nav Malhotra, our team, and you, the members, for the chance to serve as your representative.

In November last year I was fortunate to become a father to a healthy girl named Freja. I'm not sure if I would have started a family without this career and that is only possible through our amazing membership and the projects we have accomplished together.

On the topic of projects, we continue to see new and increasing amounts of work across the Island. The Cowichan Hospital BCIB project has just broken ground with the expectation it will be fully under way in the early new year.

Several hydroelectric projects are in consideration with significant amounts of work for our members. We are still waiting for official announcements and details but when we know more, we will communicate with all of you.

If you are laid off or out of work, please do not forget to register with our Dispatch office. As well, make sure to update them on any new skills you've developed.

The last few years have been very trying living with COVID and many of you have had to deal with workplace changes and challenges. I want to thank you all again for how you have dealt with these challenges.

As we enter the winter and holiday season, I wish the best to all of you and your families.



Brady Carter (left) with Seaspan Superintendent Dylan Goddard. This photo was taken at the Government of Canada-owned facility, the Esquimalt Graving Dock.

# Retirees fought for what we have today

Let me begin by extending my warm personal regards to all retirees. I would especially like to welcome some of our retirees who are among our hall of honour members, who have achieved 50 years of membership. These members are Manuel Chaves, Harold Stoochnoff, Lothar Theien, Domenico Gallelo and John Burbeck.

The number of retirees now totals 851. These retirees are the heart of our Local 1611 and are the people who have fought the fight to gain us the medical and

pension benefits we all enjoy today.

Unfortunately, COVID has had a negative effect on our ability to hold retiree meetings. However, we remain hopeful that we will be able to hold retiree meetings in the new year. As the holiday season approaches again, the Retiree Council extends warm seasonal greetings to all our retirees and your families.

Have a wonderful holiday season and please stay safe.

Bruce Ferguson | Retiree Club President







# THE LABOURER

Workers celebrate drilling the 2.6-kilometre underground tunnel connecting the Burnaby and Westridge terminals on the Trans Mountain expansion. The area is roped off and a PPE-exempt zone. Trans Mountain photo