

# Perspectives

*The struggle continues*

**STAYING**

**CONNECTED**

**THROUGH**

**COVID-19**

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# Message from the National Director



Welcome to the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of Pacific Perspectives. I hope you enjoy it!

When I was elected at our National convention in May 2019, one of the things I wanted to do was reactivate the regional paper. I believe all forms of communication are vital to the Union, and the more ways we try to reach out the better.

For the last year I have been learning all the aspects of the role I was elected to. There have been some challenges and I've made some mistakes, but hopefully nothing fatal. As a region we have endeavored to visit every local, and to date we are only missing 7 of 36 Locals. We had hoped to have visited all Locals by the end of the summer, but then Covid-19 happened. That was definitely not something I thought I would ever see in my lifetime.

As soon as we can get together again, the 7 Locals we missed will be our top priority. Once this was declared a global pandemic, the National Executive Board {NEB} starting meeting daily by virtual meeting room {VMR}, to discuss all the issues and concerns of the membership across the country. There was national and regional consultation with Canada Post almost daily, as we all tried to figure out how to deal with a global pandemic. It has been challenging times, filled with lots of different emotions.

I had been to Ottawa many times for National Executive Board meetings, before all of this happened, but my most favourite thing has always been visiting locals, doing work-floor visits and conducting local educations. I really miss that and hope to be back to it soon!

I had the opportunity to work with the BC Federation of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress, attending conferences, committee meetings and facilitating courses on their behalf. I also have had the pleasure of representing my local, Fraser Valley West, on the New Westminster and District Labour Council. If you are not already, I encourage all Locals to be involved with their local Labour Councils. We have fully embraced Zoom meetings. They are working well, but will never be better than face to face meetings.

As stated in an earlier Bulletin, Sister Irene Kwan has retired, she has been the backbone of this office for 45 years! We wish her all the best in her retirement. Sister Bethany Glover has joined our office as the new Administrative Assistant. Please join me in welcoming her to the CUPW Pacific Regional office.

Thank you to everyone who submitted content for the newspaper. It is so great to hear from all of you, and see what is going on around the region.

~Coleen Jones  
National Director—Pacific Region

## Land Acknowledgement

CUPW Pacific recognizes and acknowledges the Qayqayt First Nation, as well as all Coast Salish peoples, on whose traditional and unceded territories we live, learn, play and do our work.

# Regional Grievance Officer Report

Let me start off by giving a heartfelt thank you to all of our members who have shown our country, once again, just how awesome postal workers are. Your commitment to the Canadian people is extraordinary and we are so proud of the way that you have all stuck together and continued to work through this pandemic. A big thank you to the Local Officers, Shop Stewards and Local Joint Health and Safety Committee (LJHSC) members. These have been difficult times but you have all stepped up in a big way. We see the stress that you are under, and we thank you for continuing to do the hard work on behalf of the Union.

COVID has had a significant impact on the way that we conduct arbitration hearings. We have strict COVID guidelines in place for in person hearings, and most of our hearings outside of the Lower Mainland and Victoria are being conducted via videoconference. This has led to some new challenges, but we are working with the arbitrators and the employer to make it work. Thankfully we do not have a huge backlog of grievances in our region thanks to the hard work of the Local Officers who do their own grievances: Emily Ottewell, Erin Collins, Jessica Dempster, Kathleen Maher and Troy Coburn; and our UR's: Angel Hoare, Jennifer Savage and Wes McIntosh.

Over the last year, Urban grievances in our region have increased by 6% while RSMC grievances have decreased by 20%. For the most part, Urban grievances are being scheduled within months of the grievance being filed; it no longer takes years for an Urban grievance to go to arbitration. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for RSMC's. The RSMC

bargaining unit continues to see lengthy delays with some of the grievances. The reason for this is that there is currently only one arbitrator hearing RSMC grievances, compared to four for the Urban bargaining unit. It is clear that we will need more arbitration dates for the RSMC's in order to clear up the backlog. We will be dealing with this issue when looking at the scheduling for next year. We have also been in contact with Transforce Final Mile, looking for agreement on dates to schedule an arbitration for the outstanding grievances.

There are currently 113 Short Term Disability appeals that are being processed by the Regional office. Since the Short Term Disability Program was implemented in 2013, the Regional Office has completed 601 appeals. A huge thank you to Jessica Dempster, alternate UR and President of the Victoria Local, who was brought in following, Sister Karen De Francesco's departure, to assist with the backlog of Short Term Disability claims. She will be back with us in September and remain until we elect a new Regional Education and Organization Officer in November.

Finally, I want to thank all the folks that I work with in our Regional office. These folks continue to impress me on a daily basis with their leadership, compassion and knowledge. They are working hard to support the Locals and represent the members of the Pacific Region.

*~Cindy McDonnell  
Regional Grievance Officer*

At our August National Executive Board meeting, I had the honour of presenting a motion to grant Sister Joanne Miller lifetime membership status with CUPW.

Sister Miller has been a member of our Region since 2011. Prior to that, she was active in the Calgary Local holding many positions, including Local President for 6 years, as well as with the Alberta Federation of Labour.

Sister Miller was Secretary-Treasurer of the Columbia River Local and active in the West Kootenay Labour Council up to her retirement from Canada Post.

Sister Miller has worked tirelessly on behalf of the members of CUPW and the labour movement in Canada as a whole. It was my privilege to have this motion passed at the board.

Please join me in wishing Joanne a healthy and enjoyable retirement!

*~Coleen Jones  
National Director*

*Happy Retirement*

# 15 Things to Know About the Canada Post Defined Benefit Pension

## (The pension plan that covers eligible CUPW members at Canada Post)

1. **The pension plan is our deferred wages**

People take less home on their pay check because we make pension contributions. CPC also makes contributions to the pension fund for us on a monthly basis.

2. **The Canada Post Pension Plan is a service purchase plan**

The longer you work and contribute to the Canada Post Pension plan, the higher your pension will be upon retirement. You can contribute to a maximum of 35 years or until you turn 71 years of age.

3. **The Canada Post Pension Plan is a Defined Benefit Pension Plan**

Defined Benefit pension plans provide the most retirement security.

4. **The Canada Post Pension Plan has two parts**

This is your lifetime pension which lasts your entire life and your bridge pension which lasts till you are 65.

5. **Your eligible (eligibility) service**

This is the length of time you were a member of the Canada Post Pension Plan and were making contributions to the pension plan.

6. **Your pensionable service**

If you were or are in a part-time or RSMC position, your pensionable service is the hours you worked as a part-timer or RSMC converted into 8 hours per day. Your pensionable service is used to calculate your pension benefits.

7. **Your pensionable earnings**

Your pensionable earnings do not include overtime, shift differential, vehicle allowance for RSMCs and much more.

8. **Your Highest Average Earnings**

Is an average of your best consecutive five years of pensionable earnings.

9. **The amount you receive when you retire is based on yours of service, whether you were part time or full time and your earnings**

The formula for your lifetime pension is 1.3 times your highest average earnings times your years of pensionable service.

10. **There are penalties if you retire early**

For those who were a part of the Canada Post Pension Plan before December 21, 2012 there are no penalties. If you retire at age 55 (or later than that ) with 30 or more years of eligible service or at 60 with two or more years of eligible service.

For those who were a part of the Canada Post Pension Plan after December 21, 2012 there are no penalties if you retire at age 60 (or later than that ) with 30 or more years of eligible service or at 65 with two or more years of eligible service.

11. **The Canada Post pension plan is indexed**

This means that every year retirees receive a pension increase that matches the cost of living.

12. **The Canada Post Pension Plan contains provision for Medical Retirement— Retirement on the grounds of disability**

This is an important provision of the plan. To qualify for medical retirement you must be totally and permanently disabled based on medical evidence.

13. **The Canada Post Pension Plan provides for a survivors pension for your spouse and eligible children**

Your survivors are entitled to this pension if you pass away either at work or retired.

14. **The latest evaluation of the Canada Post pension found that if the pension fund continues to operate it has more than enough money to cover the**

**pensions of all current retirees and all CPC workers**

The Canada Post Defined Benefit Pension Plan's financial position as at December 31, 2018 is a going-concern surplus of \$3.3 billion. This is great news and we need to remember it when CPC tries to scare us about our pensions.

15. **The pension plan has a solvency deficit—and CUPW and CPC need to address that**

But a solvency deficit only comes into play if the pension plan winds up and CPC has to purchase annuities for all retirees and current workers. It is not very likely that the pension plan will wind up.

*~Marion Pollack  
Lifetime member, Vancouver Local*

## Health and Safety

Cold and flu season is quickly approaching. Please remember to carry hand sanitizer and a mask while you are working. The corporation must supply us with the PPE (personal protective equipment) to do our jobs safely. Masks are currently not mandatory at the time I am writing this, but it would be a good idea to have one with you. CUPW locals have been given a shipment, or a partial shipment, of masks for members, so please ask your local for a CUPW mask. The corporation should be supplying masks to you as part of your PPE. If you need a new one, please inform your supervisor.

Please keep your space between each other and follow health and safety protocols. If you aren't sure what your depot or plant should be doing, please find a LJHSC member to help you.

I know some committees may have some struggles with getting management on board with some issues you are having. Make sure you reach out to your local and Regional UR (Union Representative) to help. We have language in the Collective Agreement in Article 33 and in the Canada Labour Code that can help us stay on track.

We need to make sure all high, tough points are being sanitized. Please follow up with your LJHSC to ensure its being done. If your facility does not have a LJHSC, inform your Safety Representative.

Under the Canada Labour Code, you have the Right to Complain 127.1 and the Right to Refuse 128.1. In the Urban Collective Agreement, you also have the Right to Complain 9.07 and you have Article 33. Please be aware to not use these frivolously. If you need assistance, please see speak to your shop steward, your LJHSC and your local executive.

*~Sister Jessica Friesen  
Fraser Valley West Local*



# 2017 to 2020 CUPW/CPC Negotiations/Arbitration

We have now completed the second longest Collective Agreement negotiations in CUPW’s history, the longest being the 1997-2000 round.

## Timelines

September 12, 2017	Negotiating Committee in Ottawa
October 30, 2017	Ratification of Demands completed
November 14, 2017	Served CPC Notice to Bargain and applied for mediation
December 11, 2017	Presented CPC with our Program of Demands a received CPC’s proposals
January 15, 2018	Began negotiations/mediation using two mediators from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS)
October 22, 2018	Rotating strikes began
October 24, 2018	Government appointed a special mediator
November 22, 2018	Government introduced back to work legislation (Bill C-89)
November 24, 2018	Special mediator’s final mandate ends
November 26, 2018	Bill C-89 passed, ending our right to free collective bargaining
November 27, 2018	CUPW members return to work
December 10, 2018	Government appoints Mediator/Arbitrator as per Bill C-89
December 12, 2018	Parties meet with Mediator/Arbitrator to attempt a mediated settlement without success
January 16, 2019	Arbitration begins

## Arbitration

The arbitration lasted for 18 months and there were 44 days of hearings. The process lasted a lot longer than it should have due to scheduling difficulties of council and CPC’s delay tactics. We had a total of 18 witnesses testify (some testified more than once) and our case took 18 days to complete. Canada Post had 8 witnesses testify and its case took 22 days to complete. The last day of the arbitration was May 6, 2020. The arbitrator’s decision was due by June 30, 2020 and we received it on June 11, 2020.

## The Decision

We have always maintained that the best Collective Agreements are negotiated Collective Agreements. The problem with interest arbitration is that the Arbitrator must balance the needs and wants of both parties and attempt to award what they believe the parties would have agreed to, if negotiations had been allowed to continue, so neither side is usually happy with the outcome. That was the case with this decision. We achieved some of what we were asking but many large issues were not resolved, such as; pay for all hours worked for RSMCs, Group 1 staffing, one-bundle delivery, a bump up in wages for technical services employees (Groups 3 & 4), restructuring RSMC routes to 8 hours and many more.

There were some important gains in the decision, such as:

- wage increases above inflation
- improvements that should reduce overburdening for letter carriers and improve their health and safety
- job security and job retention for RSMCs
- changes to Clause 39.06 which now

includes hours worked by temporary employees in Group 1 which will give us the opportunity to create more full-time positions

- updating the date in Article 53 which gives almost 6,000 Urban employees full job security
- increases to the Union Education Fund
- including RSMC continuous service back to 2004 to qualify for Post-Retirement Benefits
- direct pay from CPC for RSMCs who are injured on the job (IOD)

## The Next Round

Arbitrators have no full understanding of the work we do, but we know what we live every day. A negotiated agreement without Government interference is essential. The next round of negotiations is rapidly approaching. It's time now to look at what was and wasn't achieved in negotiations and arbitration, and what our priorities are for the next round. We need to be sure that our resolutions are clear, realistic and focused and that our list is limited to what we really need.

When writing resolutions it is crucial that the 'because' or 'whereas' explains the 'we want' or 'be it resolved'. In plain language, describe why you want something and then what it is that you want.

Demands for negotiations come directly from the work-floor. Very soon there will be meetings locally and regionally to discuss and prioritize the demands that are sent by the locals. They then go to the National Executive Board of CUPW and are organized into one program of demands, which is then ratified by the membership. A short list of needs is better than a long list of wants, and it shows Canada Post that we are serious about our demands. Please attend your local meeting and participate.

## Information

You can find more information (bulletins) on the negotiations and arbitration on the CUPW national website – [cupw.ca](http://cupw.ca), including the full arbitration decision and the new wage charts.

*~Brother Stephen Gale & Sister Amy Anderson  
Negotiators—Central Island East Local*

## Social Stewards are Here for You

We are all working during a unique time. The workload has dramatically increased and we are working on the frontline of a pandemic. It has affected our social lives, our emotional wellbeing and physically, it has taken a toll.

As a file and rank member, I see what we have accomplished in the last few months. It was pretty amazing to see members continue on for Canadians during this stressful time, though we need to remember to take care of ourselves.

Whether it's something as simple as listening to some of your favourite music, participating in a creative activity, or even some meditation or deep breathing. Make sure you keep in touch with the people around you whom make you feel good.

If you are experiencing stress, anxiety, or depression, a Social Steward can help you. A Social Steward is a sister, brother or cousin that is here to listen to you. We are not counsellors, but will refer you to a person or a resource that will be able to provide you further guidance.

To find a Social Steward, ask your LJHSC (Local Joint Health and Safety Committee), your Shop Steward, your local and even your Regional Office UR (Union Representative). If you don't have a Social Steward in your local, you can reach out to a neighbouring local.



*~Sister Jessica Friesen  
Fraser Valley West Local*

# Update on Delivering Community Power

What follows is a chronological account of the efforts of the Powell River Local to publicize the DCP program.

Petition to the House of Commons:  
*We, the undersigned residents of Canada, request The Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Carla Qualtrough, to adopt the Delivering Community Power vision and turn post offices into the infrastructure of a green and socially just economy.*

- ◆ **April 6, 2019** We set up a table at The Townsite Market during Jazz Fest. 141 signatures
- ◆ **April 10, 2019** Members photographs appeared in the local newspaper, The Powell River Peak.
- ◆ **April 12, 2019** Member Noah Bourcier had his Opinion article published in The Powell River Peak.
- ◆ **May 2, 2019** We set up a table at The Powell River Recreation Complex during The Seniors Community Fair. 127 signatures.
- ◆ **May 8, 2019** A four person delegation spoke to The Youth Council of Powell River at City Hall.
- ◆ **May 22, 2019** Our delegation presented DCP to The Councillors and Mayor of Powell River.
- ◆ **June 10, 2019** We created the Resolution to be presented to the UBCM, the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, if the Powell River Council passed it at their next meeting.

## Canada Post “Delivering Community Power” Resolution

**Whereas** Canada Post Corporation currently has no plans in place for replacing its aging vehicle fleet, the largest in the country, with zero emission electric vehicles;

**And whereas** Canada Post Corporation has 6400 depots nationwide that are powered and heated by non-renewable sources contributing to a large carbon footprint;

**Therefore be it resolved** that the Union of BC Municipalities petition the Government of Canada to adopt the proposals described in CUPW’s program “Delivering Community Power”, and mandate that Canada Post Corporation adopt the policy of replacing all fossil fuel vehicles with zero emission electric vehicles by 2025 and begin the process of retrofitting all depots for increased energy efficiency and adding solar panels and other low carbon heating and power options so that each depot could be self-sufficient energy-wise.



- ◆ June 18, 2019 Our delegation presented this Resolution to The City of Powell River Council and after debate, it passed. This meant our Resolution would be presented to the UBCM convention in September 2019.
- ◆ September 30, 2019 The above Resolution was passed by the UBCM!
- ◆ This meant that the Provincial Executive had the opportunity to present it to the National Convention to take place in 2020.
- ◆ December 15, 2019 I presented our petition of 376 signatures to our newly re-elected Member of Parliament, Rachel Blaney, North Island/Powell River.
- ◆ March 9, 2020 Rachel Blaney presented our petition to The House of Commons.
- ◆ May 25, 2020 The Federal Government responded to the petition.  
<https://petitions.ourcommons.ca/en/Petition/Details?Petition=431-00133>

Our very small Local not only created a Resolution that was supported by the entire municipal level of the Provincial Government, our petition was read in The House of Commons.

I thank everyone in the Powell River local who helped with this project, especially Noah Bourcier and Leanne Beauregard.

~Brother Richard Armstrong  
Powell River Local



# Message from CUPW Vancouver Local

Sisters, Brothers, & Friends,

As we continue to deal with the COVID-19 outbreak, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) Vancouver Local would like to recognize the Postal Workers who continue to work tirelessly to ensure Canadians continue to receive their mail and packages during this unprecedented time. The Public Post Office is an essential service for Canadians, especially now for those under quarantine, have self-isolated, and are practicing social distancing.

We would like to thank each and every one of you for standing together and supporting each other during these trying times. This hasn't been easy but, we will get through this together by continuing to take the necessary precautions to ensure that everyone is safe, while continuing to support one another in new and creative ways.

Shop Stewards and LJOH committees are working hard every day to ensure our members are safe while holding Canada Post to task. Postal Workers, whether you work processing mail, servicing retail counters, maintaining the equipment and vehicles, or delivering mail and packages, you all have answered the call to action, and exceed all expectations. Our cities, province, and country owe you a debt of gratitude. We can get through this, but, we can't get through this without you.

Special thanks goes out to the Vancouver Local 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice-President Anju Parmar, members of the Pacific Processing Centre (PPC), and PPC Health & Safety Committee. Through their tireless efforts and organizing, they raised \$6,000 for the Downtown Eastside Women's Center. The downtown eastside has been especially hit hard during these times. Thanks to all those who stepped up to help make this possible. Helping those in need simply out of kindness and generosity during this unprecedented time, is a testament to the level of solidarity the Vancouver local and Pacific Region has shown.

While many Canadians remain at home, we understand that access to food, medical prescriptions, and supplies is a concern – Postal Workers can help. Vancouver local members are committed to working safely, and ensuring that Canadians continue to be supported by their Public Post Office.



~Chris Zukowsky  
President, CUPW Vancouver Local 846

*“Working during the pandemic has added lots of challenges for us at the plant. We’ve had to adjust our ways of working to include the proper amount of social distancing in work and breaks. Our processes also have had to change to honor peoples social distancing while working. But what’s given me hope is that people have stepped up to make things better and safer. We have volunteers who have stepped up to do extra cleaning of the high touch surfaces and equipment. They do this for the betterment of their fellow co-workers even though it is not part of their regular duties. It has given me hope in people though as we all work together to try and make our work place as safe as we can.”*

– Bryan Schuck Group 3 Technical Services, PPC LJOH Co-Chair

## Brothers and Sisters.... Thank you!

As we are going through these trying times, one should always remember to be kind and supportive to one another.

I work in the Plant where we have the mix of permanent and temporary members. We are about 2,000 members with many-different backgrounds.

During these past six months I have seen members breaking down on the work floor with the fear of losing loved ones. I have seen members breaking down in tears because their partner or spouse had lost their job due to Covid-19. I have seen members with mental illness struggling day in and day out, many single parents worried about their finances or about daycare expenses.

Since Canada Postal is deemed an essential workplace, so many of us are worried about

our overall health & safety. This pandemic has brought us all together and made us realize how important it is to support and stand with each other.

Work can be very stressful for various reasons, but making a little difference by listening to someone can get us a long way. Little gestures of help can save someone in many ways.

I would like to thank each and everyone one of us who stood by each other during these trying times and became strength for each other. We are all in this together and we all will get through it together.

**"This is our time to be kind, be calm and be safe."**

- Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer

In Solidarity,

*~Anju Parmar- Urie  
Vancouver local 846*

## The Education Corner

Missing the Education series? We are too! In subsequent editions, we will have an article on Education.

Until then, enjoy some of these shots from recent past events.



Wes McIntosh & Emily Ottewell



Rick Hansen



Jessica Friesen



Alvaro Dela Cruz



Jennifer Savage



Fiona Gunn



Tim Warkentin



Anju Parmar



# NOTABLE DATES

September 7, 2020	Labour Day (office closed)
September 15—18, 2020	National Executive Board
September 15—October 15, 2020	Bar Chart Review
September 2020 (TBD)	RSMC Annual Leave bid
October 1, 2020	International Day of Old Persons
October 12, 2020	Thanksgiving Day (office closed)
October 24 , 2020	United Nations Day
October 24—25, 2020	National Women’s committee
October 26—30, 2020	National Executive Board
November 1, 2020	Deadline to request for Lieu Days (Appendix “Y”)
November 7, 2020	Special Regional Conference (Virtual platform)
November 11, 2020	Remembrance Day (office closed)
November 20—22, 2020	National Presidents’ Meeting (Virtual platform)
November 24—26, 2020	BC Federation of Labour Convention (Virtual platform)
November 25, 2020	International Day of Elimination of Violence Against Women
December (1st week)	Start Urban Annual Leave bid
December 1—4, 2020	National Executive Board
December 6, 2020	Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women
December 10, 2020	International Human Rights Day
December 25, 2020	Christmas day (office closed)
December 26, 2020	Boxing day (office closed)

# LET'S HAVE SOME FUN!

**Across**

- 1. What we strive for everyday
- 4. Postal workers in the city
- 5. When we work together we are a \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. What we show when we are united
- 7. What we fight for everyday
- 8. Moral character

**Down**

- 1. Postal workers in rural areas
- 3. Why we work so hard everyday
- 6. The Union's first line of defense
- 9. The best Union ever!

Send your completed crossword to Bethany at [bglover@cupw-sttp.org](mailto:bglover@cupw-sttp.org), and the first five correct entries will win some cool swag!  
 Answers and winners will be announced in the next Pacific Perspectives issue.

## Your CUPW Pacific Region Team

<b>National Director</b>	<b>Coleen Jones</b>	<b>Regional Grievance Officer</b>	<b>Cindy McDonnell</b>
<b>Union Representatives</b>	Angel Hoare Jennifer Savage Wes McIntosh	<b>Administrative Assistants</b>	Nicole Van Dijk Bethany Glover

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*The interpretations in this document are provided on a without prejudice to error and omissions basis to any position the Union may take in arbitral proceedings or any other forum.*