

Pacific

SPRING 2022

Perspectives

The struggle continues

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Rising Above Our Challenges

Message from the National Director



Well, here we are at the start of a new year, and it appears we will be dealing with COVID for a while longer. I want to start by thanking everyone I work with in the Regional office. They are all amazing people; their dedication to the members of this region is unparalleled.

They are always available to support the locals, each other and me. This Region would not function without them. Jennifer Savage, Erin Collins, Wes McIntosh, Angel Hoare and Tom Jackson..... thank you for everything you do!

I also want to give special thanks to our fabulous staff, Nicole van Dijk and Bethany Glover, who are the backbone of this office and we would be lost without them.

Things have been busy with meetings that are never ending. As I am sure you have heard, there was a discussion on the National Executive Board on the upcoming National Convention in May of 2023, whether we should plan for a virtual convention or continue in person. It was agreed that we would continue planning for an in person convention, with the understanding that if we have to pivot to a virtual convention at the last minute we couldn't pull it off right away and convention may have to be delayed. Just so everyone is aware, the logistical

planning has to start now even though it's more than a year away.

The Region has been holding monthly Zoom calls with all the locals, since we cannot really do workplace visits due to the pandemic. I hope that executives are finding these monthly update calls helpful.

Local Executive members are really starting to burn out as there has been so much going on and they are volunteers to the positions they hold. If you haven't attended a union meeting lately or would like to be more involved in the union, please reach out to your local, attend a meeting, volunteer to post bulletins, or ask what they could use help with. Every little bit helps and locals could really use the support right now. It has been a long two years, but there is light at the end of the tunnel.

We need to start to prepare for Bargaining in the fall of 2023 and start thinking about changes you would like made to the National Constitution as those changes will be discussed and debated at Regional Conference then at Convention. The dates for upcoming events are included in this publication.

Finally, thanks to all of you for all you do everyday. Stay safe and be kind. We are all in this together!

*~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.

TForce Private Sector Members Go Into Negotiations

The members of TForce Final Mile will be entering into negotiations for their own Collective Agreement. Let's wish them well during the bargaining process.

List of Demands:

1. Improvements to the Extended Health plan – optional basis, partially paid by the company
2. General Paid Holidays – paid at benchmark rates. Days as specified in the Canada Labor Code, including any future additions, as well as any additional stats in the province where you work. To be paid in addition to any earnings for working on those days
3. Commission rates – increase rates
4. Pay increases – Warehouse workers (including drivers performing warehouse work), Benchmark rates, time paid for meetings, Ad hoc - Job must be entered within 24 hours of the service provided
5. Fuel surcharge & weight – money to go to the owner operator for end to end work where the company does not touch the freight and move to bi-weekly adjustments for FSC
6. Employer paid WCB Premiums – to be paid 100% by the employer
7. Service/recognition award program – to recognize years of service
8. Pay increases - to be retroactive to the date the Collective Agreement comes into effect
9. Communication – between the parties
10. Severance – create severance pay system

The Bargaining Committee Members:

Jennifer Savage

Regional Education & Organization Officer

Angel Hoare

Union Representative

Laurie Ezako

TForce Driver

Patrick Ward

TForce Driver

Jean-Philippe Grenier

On February 15th, Jean-Philippe Grenier, who was the 3rd National Vice-President in charge of Organizing, resigned from his position. His last day is March 6th. JP has taken a job with the Fédération des Travailleurs du Québec (Quebec Workers Federation). I have worked with JP since 2015 and I will miss his passion and commitment to CUPW as well as his great sense of humour. He could always keep us laughing. We wish him great success in his new job! The FTQ's gain is CUPW's loss.

Article 3.35 of the National constitution speaks to an election when an officer resigns. Please watch for upcoming information on this virtual one day conference to conduct the election. The posting for people to put their name forward and be nominated for this position will be out in the next couple of weeks. Regions who have vacancies in their offices will be having elections at that time as well.

The only vacancy in this Region is 3rd Alternate to the Regional Disciplinary Committee. There will be a call-out for anyone interested in holding that position when we get closer to the date of the conference.

All regional elections will happen in breakout rooms specific to each region.

~Coleen Jones

National Director, Pacific Region

Albert Jackson

Albert Jackson was:

- A. The first Black person to be a local President in CUPW**
- B. Canada's first Black letter carrier**
- C. Canada's first Black postal retail clerk**
- D. A Black leader of the 1965 postal strike**

If you chose answer B you are correct!

Albert Jackson was Canada's first Black letter carrier. He started working for the Post office in 1882 and worked as a letter carrier for over 36 years.

Mr. Jackson did not have an easy time. He faced racism and discrimination from numerous sources, including his coworkers. His story tells us about prejudice and bigotry, organizing for your rights, and personal resilience.

Anna Maria Jackson, Albert's mother was an enslaved woman in Delaware USA. She ran away from her slave masters when she learned that her slave master intended to sell some of her children to other slave masters. So she and her children, including Albert, escaped.

The route Anna Maria and her children took was difficult and harrowing. There were slave catchers everywhere. These were bounty hunters who would capture, brutalize, and return slaves for a monetary reward. Albert Jackson was the youngest child and the escape was gruelling.

Fortunately, Anna Maria Jackson and her family met up with people from the Underground Railroad. This was a network of routes, places, and people that helped enslaved people escape.

The brave people from the Underground Railroad took Anna Maria and her family to Toronto. They settled there and this was where Albert Jackson spent his childhood and youth. Albert and his family experienced racism all the time.

Albert Jackson knew he had to help support his

family. So he applied at the Post Office for a job as a letter carrier. He was hired. He became Canada's first Black letter carrier.

In terms of letter carrier training, Albert Jackson:

- A. Was trained by his coworkers who were eager to train him**
- B. Was trained by a Union activist, because his other coworkers refused to train him because they refused to train a Black man**
- C. Received no training, he just went out on his route and trained himself**
- D. Was faced with his coworkers refusing to train him, because they did not want to train a Black man**
- E. Was sent on Post Office time and money to be trained in Ottawa, because his coworkers refused to train him because he was a Black man, but several letter carriers in Ottawa volunteered to train him**

If you chose D, you are correct!



Albert Jackson's hiring did not end his experiences with racism. His coworkers, white letter carriers, were outraged and appalled at the idea of a Black man working with them. So, they refused to train him or assist him in any way. The Employer responded by giving him a job as a lesser paid hall porter. But, Mr. Jackson

wanted to become a letter carrier and he began to organize to ensure that would happen.

He contacted leaders in the Black Community, and they organized to ensure that Mr. Albert Jackson could work as a letter carrier. They wrote letters to the editor, published editorials in historically Black newspapers, and held meetings.

The timing of this campaign was crucial. A Federal election was just around the corner and then Prime Minister, John A. MacDonald, wanted his government to be re-elected. He knew that in order for this to happen he needed the support of the Black

Community. So, the Prime Minister pulled some strings, and pressured his friend who just happened to be Albert's boss.

The campaign worked. Mr. Albert Jackson's boss agreed to train him as a letter carrier. For years Albert Jackson worked delivering mail to residents of Toronto.

While working at the Post Office, Mr. Albert Jackson married and had a family. He delivered mail even though he faced name calling, hate, and much more. After 36 years of carrying a mail bag, Mr. Albert Jackson retired.

He died in 1918.

The story of Albert Jackson was largely unearthed by CUPW activists and leaders. CUPW has published an Albert Jackson Human Rights poster

More than 100 years after the death of Mr. Albert Jackson we need to acknowledge that anti Black racism still exists. Our Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour coworkers, friends and neighbours face racism and discrimination every day. Some of it is overt and some of it is less overt but equally draining microaggressions.

February is Black History Month. We need to learn the story of Albert Jackson and the many people like him who persevered against tremendous odds. But we also have to learn that like what Mr. Jackson did, we need to take action to stand up against racism and bigotry.

*~ Marion Pollack
Lifetime Member, Vancouver Local*

Did You Know?

On September 1, 2019, there were changes made to the Canada Labour Code concerning Bereavement Leave. Everyone, including temporary workers and OCRE's, are entitled to five {5} days of leave; three {3} of which are paid. The leave can be taken in one or two periods within six weeks of the death of an immediate family member as defined in the RSMC and Urban Collective Agreements. There is no change to the amount of special leave required to travel.

This means that depending on the date of death, you defer to either the Collective Agreement or the code, whichever is the greater benefit.

Scenario #1

If day of death was a Wednesday and the employee's regular days off are Saturday and Sunday. The employee is entitled to three {3} paid days {Thursday-Friday} plus an additional day paid within six {6} weeks of the death.

Scenario #2

If day of death was a Monday and the employee's regular days off are Saturday and Sunday. The employee is entitled to four {4} paid days of leave {Tuesday-Friday} because the Collective Agreement is the greater benefit.

Also, because son-in-law, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law and brother-in-law are not included in the definition of immediate family, under 21.02 [pg.173] of the Urban Collective Agreement, you are entitled for paid leave for the day of the funeral.

The RSMC Collective Agreement is silent on this issue, but it should have been covered by the pay equity decision. If you are denied leave for the day of the funeral, contact your local and file a grievance.

*~Coleen Jones
National Director Pacific Region*

The Hard Learned Lesson

Alexander Pope said “To err is human”, and who of us is more human than a fresh face at the Post Office? A new hire still struggling to come to terms with their work environment, still learning the ins and outs of a risk laden job, still fearful of not fulfilling expectations. Many of us will remember a former version of ourselves, doe-eyed, excited and scared to be part of a storied institution. It is that version of me, and the error I made, that provided me with an invaluable lesson.

I was walking down Kenneth Street, a nice road only a few blocks away from the Glanford Delivery Centre/ Victoria MPP. There was frequent construction traffic that day, so I was keeping my head up. I heard a dog bark behind me and when I turned to look, I misstepped and rolled my ankle as I stepped off the sidewalk-less road. After a few minutes of muttering every expletive I could imagine, I stood up, dusted myself off and hopped on one foot back to my Transit which was parked about a block away. After twenty or so minutes of resting my foot, I picked up the mail and limped through the remaining forty-five minutes of my blue section.

Every morning when I get out of bed, that first step of the day vividly reminds me of that event. A sharp pain in the ankle, It’s completely manageable, but permanent. When I reflect on my choices, I’m left with the following question: What did I have to gain from my actions? The simple answer is, nothing at all. I was fearful of bringing the mail back, ignorant of my rights and ultimately my desire to be a good employee outweighed my understanding of career longevity. However, much like touching the hot stove and learning not to do it again, I understand now that injuries are worth reporting as soon as possible and that I should not work through the pain.

I hope that this story will be enough to convince anyone to put their health ahead of any other consideration. For anyone who has already made a similar mistake, please don’t be too hard on yourself. Just remember the second half of that famous quote. “To err is human, to forgive divine.”

~ *Graham Scott*
Victoria Local



Add these events
to your calendar!

February 28-March 4, 2022

March 7, 2022

March 8, 2022

March 11 & 12, 2022

April 4-8, 2022

April 28 2022

National Executive Board

Farm Workers’ Memorial

International Women’s Day

National Presidents Meeting

National Executive Board

National Day of Mourning

CONFERENCES

September 15-18, 2022

November 28—December 4, 2022

Regional Women’s Conference

Pre-Convention Regional Conference

Break the Bias

≡ International Women's Day ≡



MARCH 8



Information About Our Canada Post Pension Plan

There is a great deal of misinformation about our Canada Post Pension Plan. Canada Post benefits from this misinformation.



1. Some highlights of the Canada Post Pension Plan covering CUPW members:
 - Provides a guaranteed monthly retirement income for your life based on your earnings and years of service
 - Includes survivors benefits for your spouse (same and opposite sex) and eligible children
 - Provides disability benefits if you are permanently and totally disabled based on medical evidence
 - Increases annually based on rises to the cost of living
 - Offers several options if you leave Canada Post before becoming eligible for an unreduced pension (a pension with no penalty for early retirement)
2. The Canada Post Pension, covering CUPW members is a Defined Benefit Pension Plan.

Defined Benefit Pension Plans are the safest and most secure type of pension plans. The amount of pension you will receive in your retirement is based on a formula which takes into account the years you have paid into the pension plan and your earnings. Your pension may also be affected by your age when you retire.

Under a Defined Benefit Pension plan your pension at retirement is predictable.

In a Defined Benefit Pension Plan, the health of the stock market does not affect the amount we will receive at our retirement.

In previous rounds of bargaining, Canada Post argued that new hires should be part of a far less secure Defined Contribution Pension Plan. The amount of pension you will receive in retirement under a Defined Contribution pension plan is dependent on factors including investment returns and interest rates. The amount of money you receive in retirement is neither predictable nor secure.
3. The Canada Post Pension Plan is a Service Purchase Plan
Each day you work at Canada Post and make contributions to the Canada Post Defined Benefit Pension Plan (up to 35 years) the amount of money you will receive in your pension at retirement increases .
4. Both you and Canada Post make contributions to the Canada Post Pension Plan.
Our pension plan is our deferred wages.
5. It is compulsory to join the Canada Post Pension Plan.
All permanent full and part time workers in the Urban Operations Bargaining Unit and all RSMC's holding routes of twelve hours or more are required to join and contribute to the Canada Post Pension Plan.
6. Pensionable service is used to calculate the amount you will receive as your monthly pension when you retire. Eligibility service is used to calculate how long you can contribute to the Canada Post Pension Plan
Pensionable service means the complete or partial years of service credited to you at retirement. Your pensionable service is used to calculate the amount of pension you will receive at retirement.
Pensionable service is based on an 8 hour work day. Canada Post uses a formula to determine pensionable service for part time and RSMC workers.
Eligibility service is the years, months and days while you are a member and contributing to the Canada Post Pension Plan, to a maximum of 35 years. Eligibility service is measured the same for full-time and part-time service.

7. When can I retire without a penalty from Canada Post?

Retiring without a penalty means that you do not take a pension reduction for retiring early from Canada Post.

It is important to note that retiring without a penalty is different than receiving a maximum pension. In order to receive a maximum pension you would have to contribute to the Canada Post Pension Plan for 35 years as a full time worker (being paid for 8 hours a day).

As a result of Collective Bargaining between CUPW and Canada Post, there are two different formulas for determining when you can retire without taking a pension reduction from Canada Post.

If you joined the Canada Post pension plan **before December 21, 2012**, (this means you were hired as a permanent worker, full time, part time, or RSMC, prior to December 21, 2012) you are eligible for regular retirement, without a penalty, if you meet the following criteria:

- You are at least **55 years old** and have at least **30 years** of eligibility service
OR
- You are **60 years old** and have at least **two years** of eligibility service

If you joined the Canada Post pension plan **after December 21, 2012**, (this means you were hired as a permanent worker full time, part time or RSMC on or after December 21 2012) you are eligible for regular retirement, without a penalty, if you meet the following criteria:

- You are at least **60 years old** and have at least **30 years** of eligibility service
OR
- You are **65 years old** and have at least **two years** of eligibility service

*~Marion Pollack
Lifetime Member, Vancouver Local*

Local Joint Health and Safety Committees

Health and safety issues have been at the forefront of our concerns. Especially during COVID-19. So, a huge thank you to everyone on the Health and Safety Committees for working so hard!

With the increased workload during these unprecedented times, sometimes the committees end up doing more work than they should be. Burnout is real, and committee members need to ensure we are only following the functions listed in the Canada Labour Code and the Collective Agreement. At times, management may give

you extra to do, under the guise of Health and Safety, but it's really not. If you aren't sure if something falls into your role as a Committee member, reach out to your Local Executive.

The functions laid out in the Urban Collective Agreement in Article 33.03 (c) and the Canada Labour Code in Section 136, is what we should be following. These functions are not just solely for our members, as it is a joint committee. Management should be participating along-side with us.

*~Jessica Friesen
Fraser Valley West Local*



Migrant Workers Rally

In December 2021, I was able to attend the rally held in support of migrant workers. This rally was organized to support the female migrant worker who was detained by CBSA officers in an alley in New Westminster in November 2021. She was coming back after dropping her 5-year-old daughter to school. A lot of people from the community showed up for a protest at a New Westminster school on Saturday December 17th to support School District 40, in New Westminster, which has a "sanctuary schools" policy in place to support undocumented immigrants trying to give their children an education. Speakers at the rally included New Westminster-Burnaby MP Peter Julian, City Councillor Chinu Das, and New Westminster Teachers' Union, President Sarah Wethered.

The New Westminster School District is the only one in the province with a sanctuary school system in place, which also forbids CBSA officials from entering school grounds except when required by law.

Organizers of this rally made some signs along with people from the community:

"We believe that every school in the province should have the same approach."

"It's actually an international human right of children to be in school. This is not some idea we've come up with."

The federal government's immigration policies forced precarious migrants into "dangerous" situations.

"I think a lot of us don't realize how much of our labour is coming from people who are not given the same security that the rest of us count on".

It was an eye-opening experience for me, where I heard the stories and struggles of the migrant workers in BC.

*~Anju Parmar
President Vancouver Local*



Expectations and Reality

The current Canada Labour Code requires all federally regulated workplaces of twenty or more employees to establish a workplace Health and Safety Committee. Without this requirement very few employers would participate. It costs time and money to have employees take part, and then the Committee starts identifying hazards which can cost a lot more money to the employer and time to address.

Every employer cares about their employees to a degree, but their bottom line is profitability. Every union's bottom line is their people. I didn't really understand this dynamic when I first volunteered to be part of the Health and Safety Committee at the beginning of 2017. I joined expecting to slowly gain experience, but in less than a year I was the only one left. Turnover on H&S committees is quite common. Many people volunteer with the intention to make their workplaces safer but resign frustrated and burnt out.

I want to believe that the company I work for has my well-being at heart. The supervisors I work for are human beings after all, and so is everyone above them. But the bureaucracy isn't a human being. It's something else. And at the end of the day, we all have a job that we are paid to do.

What CPC wants Union H&S reps to do and what we are willing to do are sometimes different. We remind management that we WILL NOT participate in on-street audits or "safety blitzes" with supervisors. We will not be a witness to any potential discipline. We will not jeopardize the trust of our coworkers by showing up on route with a supervisor. Instead, we will go as pairs of union members to identify hazards on route, with the expectation that our findings will be addressed by management.

We will not accept 'extras' that would jeopardize the trust we have built with our coworkers. Please don't offer me a \$10 Timmy's card for my participation on the H&S committee, because I will have to tell you how wrong of me it would be to accept it. How will my coworkers know if I have their best interests in mind if I'm accepting these gifts?

A couple of years ago CPC wanted to take my committee out for lunch in recognition of our hard work. We said it wouldn't be right of us to accept a free lunch and how about instead we put on a lunch for everyone? That wasn't in the budget. We said okay, take that same budget and do something small for everyone like coffee and donuts. This suggestion was also turned down. We said okay, we want to see this money you were so eager to spend on us to go to a local charity instead. The answer again was "no". This experience changed how I regard the power dynamics that exist, despite the H&S training that says both parties are equals and should remove their hats at the table.

Today, my expectations as a H&S Committee member are more realistic. It takes months to change some light bulbs, despite the lack of adequate lighting being acknowledged as a safety hazard for the main sidewalk of the Glanford facility. It takes years to address cleaning schedules. Decades in fact. See the McMaster University Research Project published in December of 2003 titled "The Health and Safety of Postal Workers".

The McMaster Study identifies environmental issues of dirt, dust, and cleaning. Equipment issues of damaged, broken, outdated, and inadequate equipment. Physical injury issues of repetitive motion, weight, carpal tunnel syndrome, back problems, strain, pain, and joint problems. Mental health issues of stress, fatigue, and devaluation. And general issues of blaming the worker for their injury, lack of training, lack of staffing, and too much shift work especially graveyards. Does any of this sound familiar?

So, the next time you get a Timmy's card or a pizza party from your supervisor, think about where that health and safety money could have been spent instead, like on improving your workplace.

*~ Nick Gulajec
Victoria Local*

LET'S HAVE SOME FUN!

Signs of Spring



AWAKENING
BARBECUE
BICYCLE
BLOOMING
BUDDING
BUMBLEBEES
BUTTERFLIES
CAMPING
CHIRPING
CLOUDLESS

CROCUSES
DAFFODILS
ENERGIZED
FARMERS MARKET
GARDENING
GRASS
LONGER DAYS
MIGRATION
PARK
PICNIC

RENEW
ROBIN
SIDEWALK CHALK
SNOWDROPS
SPRING CLEAN
SPROUTING
SUNSETS
SUNSHINE
TULIPS
YARD SALE

Your CUPW Pacific Region Office

National Director
Coleen Jones

Regional Grievance Officer
Erin Collins

Regional Education & Organization Officer
Jennifer Savage

Union Representatives

Angel Hoare
Wes McIntosh
Tom Jackson

Administrative Assistants

Nicole Van Dijk
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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.*

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