

*Difficult and lengthy negotiations ongoing since June 2016*

## **New contract ratified at Kitimat's Northern Sentinel newspaper**



It's been over two years of difficult negotiations that have paid off with worthwhile results as a new collective agreement has been reached with the Northern Sentinel, a Black Press-owned community newspaper in Kitimat.

"The cost of living has gone up everywhere and all of us living here in our northern communities have felt the pressures too," said Misty Johnsen, Shop

Steward at the Northern Sentinel. "Our bargaining committee was patient with our proposals and we were realistic and fair with our demands. At the end of the day, we reached a new agreement and ratified the new contract on September 21st."

"We started out being miles apart with this employer," said Local 780G president Alex Charles "Black Press was seeking major concessions, and our members were very concerned. We have seen jobs leave newspaper production facilities and the big question is always 'are we next'?"

As previously reported in the Unifor Local 780G NEWSletter, the Black Press model, like all newspapers now, is to contract out as much of the work as possible. The press room left years ago, as did most of the prepress work. The Union has been able to retain office and clerical, classified, sales and journalist staff. Since taking ownership, Black Press also opened a "hub" for preparatory work in Washington State which has resulted in the elimination of the last prepress position at the Sentinel.

"It is a difficult time for newspapers. More and more jobs are being "outsourced," said Brother Charles. "Misty showed great strength and perseverance and that played a big role in securing this new agreement."

The three-year contract features significant wage increases - the major issue that was key to getting a deal. The settlement includes a \$1500 signing bonus and wage increases of between \$2.64 and \$2.93 per hour (17 to 18%) retroactive to June 1st, 2018, plus a further one percent increase in both 2019 and 2020.

"I would like to thank everyone involved for their dedication to and participation in this process," said Alex Charles, "Congratulations on a long and hard fought achievement!" 

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## **Your Unifor Pension Plan Statement has now been mailed**

As your Unifor 780G NEWSletter heads to the press, all Local 780G members who are active participants in the Unifor Local 780G-210 Pension Plan or the Unifor Graphical Pension Plan of Canada should have received your Annual Statement from the Plan(s). Please note, retired members and deferred members of either Plan do not receive annual statements.

If you haven't received a statement and you think you should have, or are unsure, please contact Toby at our Union office and she will be able to assist you.

**Local phone  
(in the lower mainland):  
604-372-0029**

**Toll Free: 1-800-876-5171**

**Office Hours:  
Monday - Thursday,  
9:00 am to 4:00 pm;  
Friday 9:00 am to 3:30 pm**

## Members at Queen's Printer prepare for bargaining a new agreement



**W**ith their contract set to expire at the end of June, 2019, Unifor 780G members working at the Queen's Printer in Victoria BC are preparing to begin bargaining a new collective agreement with their

employer, the BC Public Service Agency (BCPSA) through the province's Public Sector Employers' Council (PSEC).

Two Unifor Locals represent members working at the Queen's Printer – Local 780G and Local 2000 – and together are recognized as the Council of Graphic Arts Unions of BC in this contract.

“There is speculation that bargaining could start early as the BC Government & Service Employees Union (BCGEU) began negotiations 9 months before the agreement covering their members working in the Community Services Sector (CSS) expired,” says Charles.

“With the BCGEU members ratifying a new contract in August, we are speculating our negotiations could happen sooner than we think, as in the past we've followed in the bargaining rotation fairly soon after the BCGEU gets wrapped up,” said Charles.

This round of bargaining will be subject to the government's “2019 Sustainable Services Negotiating Mandate” that limits wage increases to 2% in each year of a three-year agreement.

Brother Charles reports he has contacted both Local 2000 and the employer to secure meeting dates and reports both parties have agreed at this time to reconnect in mid-January. **U**

**Stay connected and informed – attend your next Union Meeting**

**Saturday, December 15, 2018**

Starting at 10 am in Cloverdale at the Unifor 780G office. Check your union website for further details: [www.unifor780g.org](http://www.unifor780g.org)

## Staying healthy and safe while earning a living

Submitted by Antonio Lopes, Vice President, Unifor Local 780G, in memory of Brother John Walsh who recently passed away due to prolonged workplace chemical exposure.

**S**ince 1950, a joint committee of the International Labour Organization and the World Health Organization has defined and regularly revises the objectives of occupational health. The most recent definition reads:

“The main focus in occupational health is on three different objectives: (i) the maintenance and promotion of workers' health and working capacity; (ii) the improvement of working environment and work to become conducive to safety and health and (iii) development of work organizations and working cultures in a direction which supports health and safety at work and in doing so also promotes a positive social climate and smooth operation and may enhance productivity of the undertakings.

The concept of working culture is intended in this context to mean a reflection of the essential value systems adopted by the undertaking concerned. Such a culture is reflected in practice in the managerial systems, personnel policy, principles for participation, training policies and quality management of the undertaking.”

Measured by these objectives, workers in Canada are not enjoying good health on the job. Every day, workers are faced with hazards of dusts, fumes, gases, vapours, noise, vibration, heat, cold, stress and physically unsafe work processes.

A massive and concerted attack must be made on the working conditions that cause not only illness, injury and death but also increasing mental stress and disruption to family and social well-being.

Please support your Safety Committee representatives and Union in this very important endeavour.

For more important information and valuable resources on health and safety, please visit your Union website at

**[www.unifor780g.org/health-safety/](http://www.unifor780g.org/health-safety/)**

*Are you enrolled?*

## Graphic Communications Benevolent Trust Fund (BTF)

The Graphic Communications Benevolent Trust Fund, or BTF as it is most commonly referred to, is a long standing international fund managed by a union member Board of Trustees that provides a financial benefit to your designated beneficiary after your death.

The Fund's participants are the graphical members of Unifor in Canada and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters in the United States, including your Union Local 780G that submits contributions on your behalf. These contributions and their investment returns are managed by a Board of Trustees elected by the participating Locals, with Local 780G president Brother Alex Charles the Trustee representing Canadian members.

The BTF has endured the tests of time and today is the result of almost a century of various union member benefit funds that have merged together to meet the many changes our industry and our Union has undergone over the years. But the purpose and intent of the Fund has remained constant – a desire to ensure there is financial assistance available for families at a difficult time.

All members of Local 780G are enrolled in the BTF [provided you have completed the enrollment form](#). Please note, it is extremely important that you keep your contact and beneficiary information up to date so funds can be dispersed to your beneficiary when the time comes. If you have any questions regarding your beneficiary, your contact information, or if you have any inquiries, please contact Toby at the Local Union Office. **U**

## Alberta workers now benefit with Joint Health & Safety Committees

On June 1, Alberta workers saw long awaited changes to the occupational health and safety landscape. In fact, it took 42 years for Joint Health and Safety Committees to be mandated for workplaces with more than 20 workers and representatives for workplaces with between five to 19 workers. The new legislation spells out the many duties of the committee or representative, including workplace inspections and the development and promotion of programs for education and information concerning health and safety. The employer has additional obligations relating to the committee, ranging from consulting and cooperating, to resolving health and safety concerns, to ensuring committee co-chairs or representatives are trained.

## Keep or change how we elect MLAs in BC? Have your say

If you are a BC resident registered on the voter's list, you will receive a ballot in the mail in late

October asking you to indicate which voting system British Columbians should use for electing MLAs in future provincial elections.

In both 2005 and 2009, British Columbians rejected changing our current electoral system of "first past the post". Previously, the threshold to change the system was set at a 60% majority of votes cast in 100% of constituencies. With the passage of the Electoral Reform Referendum Act last year in the BC Legislature, the threshold has now been lowered to 50% + 1 of all votes cast.

There is not enough space in this newsletter to fully debate the referendum questions. You can choose the system we have been using or you can learn more about the various proportional systems being offered. What is most important is that you mark your ballot and then put it in the mail to reach Elections BC by the deadline of 4:30 pm on Friday, November 30, 2018. Results will then be counted and will affect the next election called on or after July 1, 2021.

Please visit the Elections BC website for more detailed information on the questions in this important referendum.

**[www.elections.bc.ca/referendum](http://www.elections.bc.ca/referendum)**



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## Mark your calendar! Make an alert! Set an alarm! BC's Local Elections Voting Day is Saturday, October 20, 2018

However you remind yourself about important dates, **DO IT NOW** as your vote counts! This year's important local elections in BC to choose your Mayor, Councillors and School Trustees are taking place on October 20th, 2018, with advance voting opportunities taking place in all communities - check your local municipal website for dates and locations.

With a trend of low voter turnout, your participation is vital as you **can** have a huge effect on the future of your community **simply by voting**.

Whether you are a homeowner or renter, your local government plays a seriously important role in your daily life. It's this level of government that impacts building and development in your community, sets property taxes, determines zoning and other bylaws, and have responsibility for local roads, city parks, community centres, waste removal, and much more. Local governments also participate in regional policies that determine public transportation priorities and infrastructure to provide public water and sewage services.

For many residents in communities across BC, and particularly in the lower mainland, affordable housing has become a major issue as its local governments that determine where and what kind of development takes place. They issue building permits, make zoning changes and are responsible for planning your community.

Local governments are elected every four years and the biggest impact you can have is to identify the issue(s) important to you and then connect to candidates seeking election as your mayor, councillor and school trustee. Candidates are approachable as they seek your vote and this is the time you can have the biggest impact as you plan to vote in these important elections.

Some Labour Councils have published lists recommending candidates for your consideration who have gone through a labour-focused endorsement process. Web links are provided below:

**New Westminster & District Labour Council:**

<http://www.nwdlc.ca/committees/>

**Vancouver District Labour Council:**

<http://vdlc.ca/political-action/>

**Victoria Labour Council:**

<https://www.facebook.com/victorialabourcouncil>

Additional important resource:

**Elections BC** - <https://elections.bc.ca>

For a complete list of candidates seeking election to Municipalities, Regional Districts, Island Trust, Commission & Park Boards and School Districts, please visit the following web link:

[https://bc.localelections.ca/candidates/index\\_m.html](https://bc.localelections.ca/candidates/index_m.html) **U**

**U** Unifor Local 780G

# NEWSletter

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Representing working people for more than 100 years

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