

RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO:

Yukon Employees' Union  
2285-2nd Ave.  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Y1A 1C9

CANADA		POSTES
POST		CANADA
Postage paid		Port payé
Publications Mail		Poste-publications
40014844		

# Yukon Employees' Union

April 2018

# NEWS



**YEU Local Y022**  
**Whitehorse Transit**  
**Stronger. Together**  
**YEU Local Y023**  
**City of Whitehorse**



***Congratulations!***  
**Hard work and strong member support made all the difference.**  
***Solidarity!***

# Is your Family Growing?

## Changes to Maternity & Parental Leave for Yukon Government Employees

### Congratulations!

Recent changes to Employment Insurance affecting maternity and parental leave will impact many workers. In response, Yukon Employees' Union has negotiated an amendment to language in Article 26 of our YG Collective Agreement. We'd like to update you on the two key changes.

#### **1. The first change to EI is the provision of extended benefits.**

Extended EI benefits will now permit new parents to spread their EI payments over 18 months at 33% wages, instead of 12 months at 55% wages.

Employers are often willing to grant the extended leave when asked, but they maintain the right to deny the application and may require you to return to work after 12 months.

**The total amount of supplementary pay you receive from your Employer is the same whether you take standard EI benefits or extended EI benefits.** Should you take a 12 month leave, your payments will equal the difference between the 55% wages EI pays you, and 93% of your salary. If you elect to take an 18 month leave, the top-up you receive will not change.

#### **Example:**

Jane earns \$1000/week. If Jane takes a 12 month leave, she will receive 55% (\$550/week) from EI and gets topped up to 93% (\$930) by her employer. In this scenario, Jane receives \$380/week from her employer as top-up. If she took an 18 month leave, her EI payments would be 33% (or \$330). Top-up from her employer would stay at \$380 week, bringing her to \$710/week, or about 71% of full salary.

BUT - top-up doesn't last the full duration of leave. Whether you are on 12 or 18 month leave, you will be topped up for the one week EI waiting period, 15 weeks for maternity and 16 weeks on parental. The remaining time is covered by EI alone - no top up.



#### **2. Expect a shorter waiting period.**

The waiting period for EI is now one week instead of two. Our old contract language gave eligible employees top-up pay for the two weeks of the waiting period, in addition to 15 weeks of maternity and/or 15 weeks of parental leave.

Now that the waiting period is only one week, eligible employees get the additional week of top-up at the end of their parental leave. Again, the total compensation from your employer remains the same.

**If you are planning a maternity or parental leave, be sure to make arrangements to pay the employee portion of your benefit premiums while on leave.** You can do this through your Pay and Benefit Coordinator, and should initiate it as soon as possible once you know you'll be taking leave.

If you have questions, please ask your supervisor, contact your Shop Steward or get in touch with the staff at YEU.

Find out MORE:

<http://bit.ly/EILeaveChanges>

<http://bit.ly/EIMaternityParentalGovCan>

# NEWS

## From the President's Desk Steve Geick



In February, I joined the **Colombia Front Lines Tour** on behalf of the PSAC National Board of Directors. This 15 year joint venture between CUPW, PSAC, CUPE, CLC and Co-Development Canada exists to educate and connect Canadian union activists with Colombian labour and social justice activists.

For two weeks in early February, we travelled through Colombia and met with twenty five different advocacy organizations. We spoke with human rights defenders from trade unions, community groups, civil society organizations and indigenous communities. These men and women face staggering risk in their fight for what they believe in. The threats they endure are chilling, and the danger is real.

Throughout the country, social justice activists and trade unionists are regularly murdered and the perpetrators rarely face justice. One group we met was targeted just days after our visit; the barrio in which they worked was fire bombed and many people were killed.

Foreign investment and free trade agreements (FTAs) have had tremendous negative impacts on workers and indigenous communities, but many of the country's greatest threats to peace and prosperity have come from within. The long and brutal conflict between the government and the insurgent groups, notably FARC and the ELN is technically over, but true peace is elusive. Implementation of the peace process has been fraught with challenges and setbacks punctuated by violence. Corruption has paved the way for the ongoing violation of indigenous rights, especially in relation to foreign extractive companies, Canada a leader amongst them. Uncertainty surrounding the upcoming election has added to instability within Colombia's borders.

In our meetings, we discussed how Canada's unions could best support our Colombian partners during this critical period of social, political and economic fragility. Ideas ranged from providing emergency funding to support activists who risk assassination, to letter writing campaigns opposing Colombia's ascension to the OECD, and included support to research the Canadian companies that have bought out publicly owned services.

From the start, we knew this trip would be different from anything we had experienced. In the Pearson airport, we learned well-respected union and Afro-Colombian community leader Don Temis had just been assassinated.

Although his fate was far from unique amongst Colombian labour and human rights activists, his murder would profoundly impact union and community members and would underscore the urgency of all we experienced in our visit.

The quotes below are from Afro-Colombian Community Leaders and Activists whom we met with a few short days after Don Temis was assassinated.

"I wake up every morning wondering when they are going to kill me... I am frightened... I feel that what happened to Temis will happen to me... My life will never be the same."

"We are not victims of armed conflict; we are victims of development."

"Don Temis would tell us 'Every time they do an expansion [of the port], someone is always killed.' Now he is dead... Santos wants to 'clean-up' Buenaventura."

Some quick numbers. Workers attempting to exercise their rights suffered at least 1,466 threats and acts of violence, including 99 assassinations, 6 kidnappings, 7 disappearances, 6 cases of torture and 955 death threats between 2012 and 2016. In January of 2018, 30 leaders were assassinated.

Somehow, despite the constant threat of death, the kidnappings and the assassinations of their colleagues, these activists remain strong and committed to their important work.

I have been back in Canada for over a month but I can't stop thinking of the people I met and the things I learned Colombia. In the interest of space, I have to keep this article brief but if you wish to learn more or discuss the issues with me, I would welcome the chance to share. I will always be grateful for the opportunity to visit this beautiful, troubled country.

# Solidarity! Or, The Power of the Collective

The recently concluded round of bargaining between the City of Whitehorse and its two YEU/PSAC Locals was tough. Teams met with the employer repeatedly over six months, but no real negotiations took place until the final weeks. Not surprisingly, things didn't go well.

Early on, an impasse was declared and we moved to conciliation. It was a unique process, with almost no progress made in the initial rounds of bargaining or during conciliation. Members of the Bargaining Teams for Locals Y022 Whitehorse Transit, and City of Whitehorse, Local Y023 were frustrated by the lack of traction on even simple, non-contentious and non-monetary proposals.

If you're the betting type, you would have wisely put your money on some kind of labour disruption - a strike, or a lockout. Thanks to the City's foot dragging on an Essential Services Agreement (ESA), Local Y022 was in a legal strike position ahead of the larger Local Y023. Transit members gamely stepped up the pressure by commencing a work-to-rule campaign. Wanting to put pressure on the employer but minimize impact to riders, drivers chose to work their scheduled shifts but declined overtime and extra shifts.

Our transit system relies heavily on the use of casuals and overtime, so it didn't take long for the cracks to show. The first Saturday of job action was, by many accounts, chaos, with few buses on the road. Over the four day Easter long weekend, the city offered no public transit at all. Something had to give.

When the Maintenance of Services Agreement (or ESA) was finally reached at special Canada Industrial Relations Board meetings in Vancouver, the union was ready. With a strong strike mandate from the membership, the Bargaining Teams met the employer's teams with the support of the workforce solidly behind them. Strike notice was served for 8am Monday April 16th, and the final weekend of mediation began.

To say bargaining was intense is an understatement. Both teams worked incredibly long hours, but they got it done. Sunday afternoon meetings stretched into evening meetings, then overnight meetings. With no sleep, fuelled by solidarity and unhealthy doses of caffeine, a deal was reached less with than 2 1/2 hours to spare. Strike averted! That is one for the record books.

Congratulations. It was the support of the members that helped the Teams make it through the long night and get a good deal.



The staff of Local Y031 Many Rivers Counseling and Support Services have been working with an expired contract for over a year. They are awaiting mediation in mid-May in hopes of reaching a negotiated settlement. In 2012, members of YEU/PSAC Local Y031 went on strike to achieve a contract that allowed members flexibility to meet clients at times outside their normal schedule.

The organization has offices in Dawson City, Watson Lake, and Whitehorse where its staff also operates the No Fixed Address outreach van. Many Rivers is contracted by the organization recently awarded the EFAP Contract for the Government of Yukon workers, providing counselling services to members and their families.

Local President Brandon Murdoch recognizes the value of members solidarity, and the role that support plays in the bargaining process.

“Throughout bargaining Many Rivers members have been incredibly supportive, standing behind the bargaining team. It has been a long process but the team is hopeful they'll negotiate a fair and favorable contract.

The support from the union has also been greatly appreciated through the ups and downs of the process. This especially includes the support, skill, and energy of PSAC Negotiator Anne Juneau, and the support of YEU President Steve Geick.”

Bargaining without the strong and continued backing of the Local membership would be a lonely struggle. We're always stronger together.

# Jessica Kish

## *Labour Relations Advisor*

YEU is happy to introduce our new Labour Relations Advisor Jessica Kish. Jessica joined our staff early in April, and she has hit the ground running.

Jessica brings a wealth of experience and a Master's Degree in Industrial Relations to the role. She has only been in the Yukon for a couple of years, and worked previously as an Employment Relations Advisor with the Yukon Teacher's Association.

We hope you'll say hello the next time you visit the YEU Hall, and welcome Jessica to our Union.



# Christie Harper

## *Executive Director*

Christie Harper is the new Executive Director of Yukon Employees' Union. Known to our members as a level headed and effective Labour Relations Advisor, Christie has a background in advocacy and worker protection that spans many years.

Prior to starting with the YEU in 2014, Christie was a Worker Advisor with the Ontario Office of the Worker Advisor (OWA). She serves on the Board of Directors of the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health & Safety Board.

Christie recognizes that the strength of a union lies in its Locals and staff, and looks forward to creating opportunities for growth and relationship building.

Congratulations Christie, on your new job. We are happy to have you at the helm of the YEU!



The members of YEU Local Y044, Skookum Jim Emergency After Hours Shelter held their AGM recently at the YEU Hall. It's great to see these small Locals so engaged, with such high rates of participation in the Local's work.

This bargaining unit has just ratified their new Collective Agreement, and wanted to share their thanks to the members of the team who bargained on their behalf.

*"Members of Local Y044 (Skookum Jim Emergency After Hours Outreach Services) wish to thank the hard-working members of our Local who diligently bargained on our behalf to achieve our first Collective Agreement ratified on February 17, 2018. You all dedicated considerable time and care in accounting for a wide range of needs and wants within our Local; most of you did so while also attending to other commitments. Thank you all for taking on this arduous and thankless task! Bravo! Well done!"*

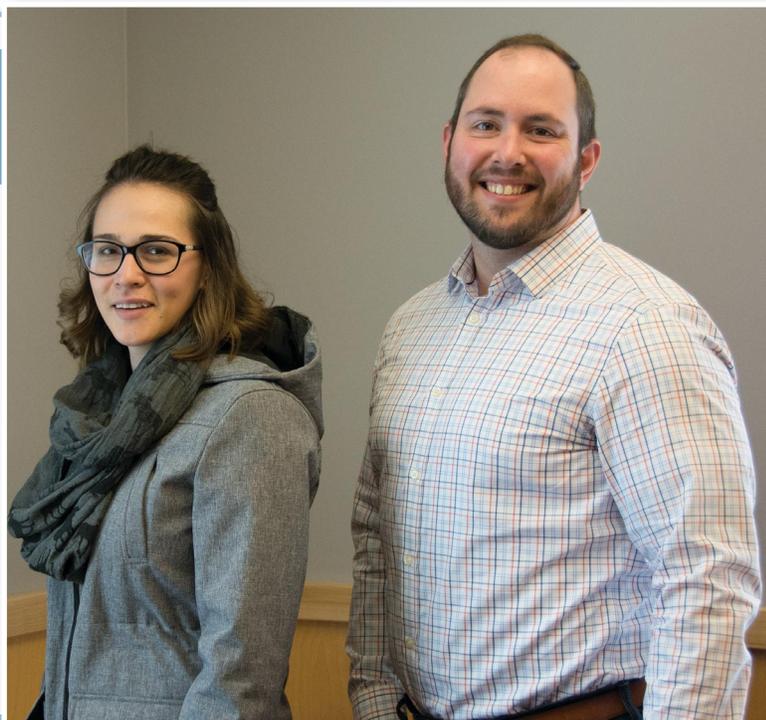
*Local Y044*

## Some Good News from the Bargaining Table!

Bargaining is not ALWAYS a difficult and time consuming process. Occasionally, things just go like clockwork.

Pictured are Randi Jobin of Northern Safety Network and PSAC negotiator Joshua Paddon. In approximately a day and a half from start to finish, the union's team and the employer negotiated a tentative collective agreement which both parties expect to ratify in the coming weeks. That must surely be a record setting round of bargaining!

It takes commitment from the team, member involvement and a good employer to make such quick success possible. **Congratulations to everyone involved!**



## Day of Mourning

Remembering Yukon workers  
injured or killed on the job.

You are invited to come and honour injured  
and deceased workers and their families.

# April 28

## 12:30 pm

Workers' Memorial, Shipyards Park

**Together,**

**You and I will keep each other safe.**

# YEU Local Y010 Supports Homelessness Initiative



*The Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition is pleased to sign a joint Memorandum of Understanding with Local Y010 of the Yukon Employees' Union. The MOU comes with a \$7,000 investment in the territory-wide By-Name List initiative, with a goal of ending homelessness in Yukon.*

So began the January 25, 2018 Media Release issued by the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition. This community advocacy group works hand in hand with many Yukon groups, working to eliminate poverty and end homelessness across the Territory. YEU has worked with the YAPC in the past, but Local Y010 has taken a powerful leadership role with this contribution and partnership agreement.

Whitehorse is one of five Canadian cities receiving funding to pilot a By-Name Priority List of individuals who are chronically or episodically homeless. The By-Name List is a tool proven to kick-start plans to end homelessness. This list will help ensure services and housing reflect the needs of the individual, and not the needs of the system they work within.

Thanks to the financial support of Local Y010, this initiative can now extend beyond Whitehorse, more accurately reflecting the need for appropriate housing and support services throughout all Yukon communities.

Mark Loewenberger, President of Local Y010 and champion of this partnership said “we are very excited to support the portion of this pilot project that will engage and work with people beyond Whitehorse. Our members see the need for better coordination, communication and support for people struggling every day with housing issues. Local Y010 wants to be part of the solution.

YAPC Executive Director Kristina Craig, pictured above with Mark Loewenberger said “We are really grateful for the support from Local Y010. This is a welcome example of community support for a new way of approaching a serious and urgent issue that affects all communities, not just Whitehorse.

Congratulations to Local Y010. If you're a member of Y010 and want to learn more, attend a monthly meeting. Contact Mark at [loewenberger@gmail.com](mailto:loewenberger@gmail.com).

## Do you have concerns about something in your workplace? Not sure who to talk to?

Contact the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner

Phone: 867-667-8468 Toll free in the Yukon:  
1-800-661-0408 (ext. 8468)

Talk to your supervisor, Deputy Minister  
or contact the Union

667-2331 or 1-888-YEU-2331  
[contact@yeu.ca](mailto:contact@yeu.ca)



Shop Steward  
Round Table  
May 16, 2018

Topic: Problem Solving  
& Grievance Handling



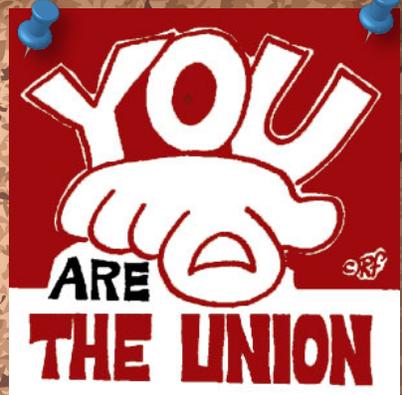
**FRANCOPHONE SHOP STEWARDS NEEDED!** Have you thought about volunteering as a Shop Steward?  
Contact Intake Officer Beckie Huston at 667-2331 or email [bhuston@yeu.ca](mailto:bhuston@yeu.ca)  
Shop Steward training & support are always provided!

## Social Media and Your Job 5 Tips to Protect Yourself!



1. **Do NOT identify where you work** in your profile! Try a "no work friends on Facebook" policy.
2. **HIDE your Friends list**, make your **LIKES** private.
3. **Remember NOTHING is private online** - not in a secret group, not in a closed group, not even in a snapchat! **NOTHING** is private.
4. **Don't be a jerk!** Trolls are found & fired every day. Treat social media like the people you expect to interact with are church friends of your grandmother.
5. **Keep it tame!** If you are online at work, and your social media feed (based on your likes & follows) is racy, you may find yourself facing discipline.

Yukon Employees' Union [www.yeu.ca](http://www.yeu.ca)



**YG Bargaining  
Input Deadline  
June 15th 2018**

**YG Bargaining  
Input Committee  
Nomination  
Deadline:  
June 15, 2018**



## MEETINGS & EVENTS

**Shop Steward Round Table:** 3rd Wed, 9am - noon, YEU  
**YEU Monthly Exec Meeting:** 2nd Thurs., 5:15 - 7pm, YEU  
**Y010 Monthly Meeting:** 2nd Tues., 5:30-7:30 p.m., YEU Hall  
**Y017 Monthly Meeting:** 4th Thursday, 7:15 p.m., YEU Hall

### AGM's:

**Local Y038 - Apr. 24 5pm, Wye Lake Cabin, Watson Lake**  
**Local Y017 - May 31 7pm, YEU Hall Training Room**

## YEU STAFF CONTACTS

**Susan Koser**, Labour Relations Advisor; [skoser@yeu.ca](mailto:skoser@yeu.ca)  
**Dan Robinson**, Labour Relations Advisor; [drobinson@yeu.ca](mailto:drobinson@yeu.ca)  
**David Anderson**, Labour Relations Advisor; [danderson@yeu.ca](mailto:danderson@yeu.ca)  
**Jessica Kish**, Labour Relations Advisor; [jkish@yeu.ca](mailto:jkish@yeu.ca)  
**Beckie Huston**, Intake Officer; [bhuston@yeu.ca](mailto:bhuston@yeu.ca)  
**Tammy Olsen**, Financial Officer; [tolsen@yeu.ca](mailto:tolsen@yeu.ca)  
**Roseanne Elias**, Membership Svcs Assistant; [relias@yeu.ca](mailto:relias@yeu.ca)  
**Deborah Turner-Davis**, Communications; [dturner-davis@yeu.ca](mailto:dturner-davis@yeu.ca)  
**Christie Harper**, Executive Director; [charper@yeu.ca](mailto:charper@yeu.ca)

Yukon Employees' Union Office, 2285 2nd Avenue Whitehorse YT Y1A 1C9

PH: 867-667-2331 Fax: 867-667-6521 Toll Free: 1-888-YEU-2331 Email [contact@yeu.ca](mailto:contact@yeu.ca)  
Visit [www.yeu.ca](http://www.yeu.ca), follow us on Facebook & Twitter & visit our blog; [www.theunionbillboard.com](http://www.theunionbillboard.com)  
Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm.