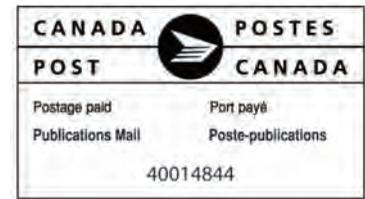


RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO:

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



Breaking new trail for workers' rights & social justice.

June 2016

Yukon Employees' Union NEWS



Residential Youth Homes in Crisis. Who Pays Most for YG's Cost Savings?

Kids-in-care have faced more trauma than most of us will experience in a lifetime, most with first-hand exposure to violence & addictions. Many have been subjected to instability, uncertainty and the absence of caring, consistent authority figures. Ensuring an environment that provides stability, nurturing and structure is no easy task.

The Government of Yukon operates 7 homes for youth-in-care in Whitehorse housing children from younger than 10 to 17 years old. These Residential Youth Treatment Services facilities (RYTS) are staffed around the clock by a group of dedicated workers, employees of the Department of Health & Social Services.

**Some children in residential care have complex problems. They have physical and mental health needs and can have multiple diagnoses.*

Often these children have histories characterized by instability, abuse, neglect, and rejection. In some cases these children can act out violently and there is increased risk for addiction and risk taking behaviour.

Typically, children in residential care are angry, they are depressed, and they act out. For some youth, their placement into residential facilities is their last chance at social services before a move into the juvenile justice system. For younger children, a successful placement in a group home setting could prevent them from transfer to a more institutional setting.

RYTS staff try to meet the physical, recreational and emotional needs of the children while making sure they attend school, medical and other appointments. The role these caregivers play is equal parts parent, tutor, counsellor and guide. The staff provide the consistent presence of caring

adults who do their best to maintain a calm home life despite the semi-institutional setting.

The Yukon Government is failing children in care and their caregivers through chronic understaffing and inadequate safeguards.

In homes occupied by traumatized children and youth, workers struggle to maintain a safe environment when they are forced to work alone. There are many clear and obvious dangers, including the threat of residents harming each other or violence directed against the adult caregiver. RCMP or social services also provide requirements for some of the youth; frequently, staff are legally obligated to maintain "line-of-sight" contact with more than one resident simultaneously, even when on duty alone. If a resident returns to a home intoxicated or aggressive, there is no back-up if a violent incident erupts.

RYTS workers have come to the union because they are concerned, even afraid. They report a dramatic increase in the number of shifts where only one worker is scheduled. RYTS staffers are expected to work alone overnight with residents who require specialized attention or care. While two staffers may be scheduled, if someone is ill or called away to another understaffed home, there is no effort made to bring in replacement personnel to fill the shift. This creates a high risk environment for the worker, for the young people and exposes all parties to a heightened level of liability.

Caregivers know the importance of maintaining a healthy and safe environment for these kids. A heavy burden of stress is carried home when that objective is compromised.

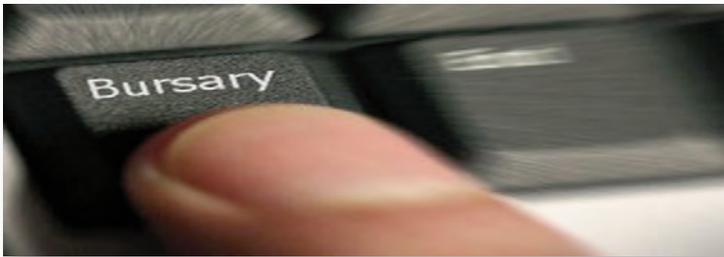
Continued on page 7

YEU Now Accepting Applications for 2016 Education Bursaries

YEU is proud to help support the educational goals of our members and their children through the annual award of 9 \$1000 Education bursaries.

To review criteria & apply for a bursary, visit our website today. The application deadline is September 30, 2016.

yeu.ca/for-members/yeu-2016-education-bursaries



YEU Activist Lisa Vollans ready to join a rally for Universal Childcare in Ottawa

Activism & Career Development

Volunteering as a Steward allows you to commit to helping others. Shop Stewards are trained to act as problem solvers & advocates at work, and some of the skill building can lead to real career growth. What expertise do YOU stand to gain as a Shop Steward?

- 1. Coaching & Conflict Resolution:** Gain skills in de-escalating stressful situations and finding compromises between parties with conflicting interests. Learn to coach angry, upset people while you help resolve their issue.
- 2. Communication:** Gain proficiency in both oral and written communication. Learn to apply contract language in a collective agreement & learn to write grievances & explain the union's position.
- 3. Project Management:** Gain valuable experience as you learn to manage your caseload, set priorities, and manage competing deadlines & critical timelines.
- 4. Teamwork:** Grow your collaboration skills as you work with other Stewards & seek advice from experienced Chief Shop Stewards and union staff.
- 5. Leadership:** Earn the trust of your co-workers; members often look to their Shop Steward as the first person to approach with a workplace issue. Take a hand in keeping members informed about union business and bringing member concerns to the union.
- 6. Interpersonal Skills:** Learn to adapt to different roles in different workplace situations. You're always an employee, but you're also a representative of the union. Grow as you learn to collaborate with co-workers as both colleague and trained problem solver.

Make a difference in your workplace; help others & ensure fair treatment of your co-workers. The training and experience you gain as a Steward may even help advance your career.

Call 667-2331 today for a copy of our new publication *Getting Started as a YEU Shop Steward.*



YEU Local Y010 Shop Steward Khairul Alam at May's Shop Steward Round Table



In April, Local Y023 - City of Whitehorse found a window of opportunity when Union Presidents Derrick Andersen (Local Y023), YEU President Steve Geick and PSAC North Regional Executive Vice President Jack Bourassa were all in the same place at the same time!

They planned an informal social night at Boston Pizza and invited the members to come meet the elected leaders. The event provided a rare opportunity to ask questions directly of the leadership and get to know more about the union & its structure.

Here are some of the comments from A Night out with the Presidents:

“ I really enjoyed hearing from Jack about some of his plans to involve members more. I had met him briefly before, but this was the first time I got to sit down and chat with him. He struck me as very dedicated to his work. Glad we have him working for us!”

“I learned that a lot about the union structure, ways to get involved and the strategic direction of our region. It has sparked my interest in learning more about the union.”

Great idea, Local Y023!

Strategic planning means preparing for the future of YEU in a deliberate way to help the Union to meet its goals.

The Executive of the Yukon Employees’ Union is committed to delivering the mandate set at the 2014 convention. We held our first Strategic Planning session in April 2015, and a smaller group was invited to develop the implementation plan including action items in September of 2015.

These two sessions identified five Strategic Goals:

1. Clarify the roles of the PSAC, the Component (and staff) and the Locals
2. Ensure our infrastructure and capacity meets our needs
3. Improve our communication with members
4. Enhance member engagement and education
5. Provide appropriate support to Locals and Shop Stewards

On April 22, 2016, YEU invited Local Presidents to a follow-up session. We asked them to report on the Union’s progress and to identify action items for the 2016/17 fiscal year as we build toward our 2017 convention.

Locals large and small see member engagement as a fundamental issue. This challenge presents as a lack of shop stewards, low turnout at AGM’s, and the need to draw on the same few activists to lead the Locals as elected members of the executive. Low participation rates also mean that paid YEU staff are called upon more often to represent members when there are no shop stewards available to support members in the workplace.

We hope our members really take time to consider the many benefits the union brings to the workplace. The truth is, much of what you take for granted would disappear quickly without those workers who lead the way through their participation. Get involved...attend a union meeting!

National Aboriginal Day
Join the Celebration Tuesday June 21



Opening Ceremonies 12pm
Kwanlin Dun Cultural Centre

Live Music • Dance & Drumming •
 Craft Fair • Kid’s Activities • Storytelling •
 Bannock Bake-Off • Hand Games •
 Arctic Sport Demos & Workshops •

Special Guest, Comedian Howie Miller

Shop Steward Round Table

For All New & Experienced YEU Shop Stewards

Wednesday June 15
 9am - noon
 YEU Boardroom



Member Representation

A major part of a Shop Steward’s role is representing the interests & concerns of co-workers, to management. Representing can be complicated when one member has a complaint against another and they both want a Union rep. or when a member wants to file a grievance against a supervisor with whom you have a personal relationship. In this SSRT we will consider some of these difficulties and clarify your role.

Call 667-2331 to register

Friends & Comrades

Lisa Vollans

For years, the terms *Brother* and *Sister* have been used by unionists to call together our community. Through the work of many trans activists and the push by YEU/PSAC to include trans members in all aspects of our organization, we've begun to recognize the inherent exclusivity of our gendered terms of community. Unions work together for the advancement of rights for all people - we try to be inclusive, but our language excludes.

We don't all find ties with the traditional binary of male and female or brother and sister. Some of us identify somewhere outside that space. We also want to be included in the motions brought forward and to be represented when we step to the podium, calling on our comrades & friends to stand in solidarity for the gains we strive to attain.

I've been thinking about the intentional use of Sister and Brother. I've been thinking about how to begin my own non-gendered call for support in a more caring, compassionate and inclusive way. I think about these things as the traditional use of brother and sister falls from my mouth and I now know I'm leaving people out. That doesn't feel right - I don't feel right because I am being exclusive. Instead I'll use the words Comrade and Friend.

Where do you stand? How will you refer to members of our community?

Lisa Vollans

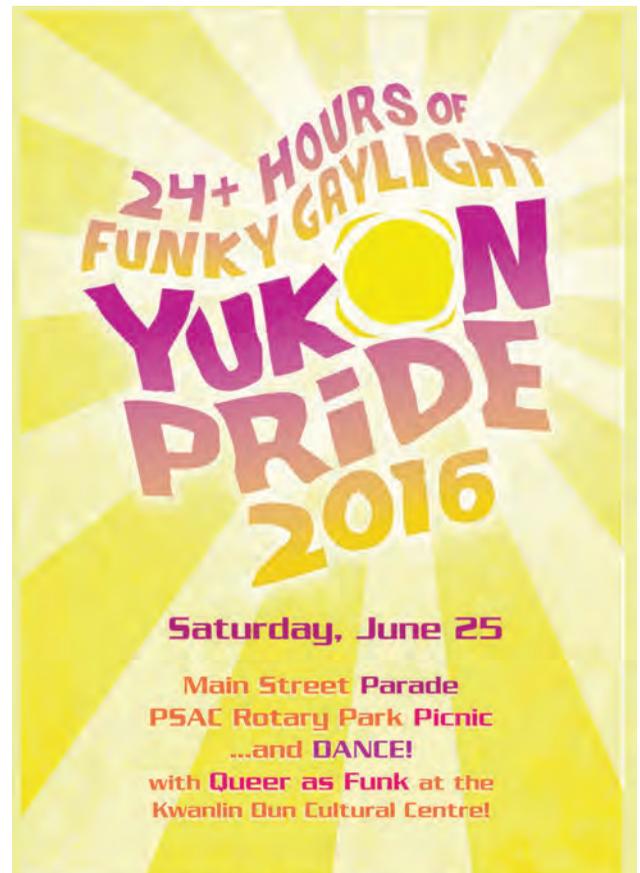
YEU Executive,
PSAC Yukon Pride Committee
& Northern Region Representative to the
PSAC National Human Rights Committee



Pack your bags!

Summer adventures are just around the corner! Take advantage of great savings for members of Yukon Employees' Union & PSAC!

Save with Via Rail, Avis, Delta Hotels & Pacific Gateway Hotel at YVR
Visit our website to learn how YOU can save all year long.
<http://yeu.ca/for-members/benefits-of-membership/>



24+ HOURS OF FUNKY GAYLIGHT
YUKON PRIDE 2016

Saturday, June 25
Main Street Parade
PSAC Rotary Park Picnic
...and DANCE!
with Queer as Funk at the Kwanlin Dun Cultural Centre!

YUKON PRIDE 2016:
24 HOURS OF FUNKY GAYLIGHT
is excited to welcome
Queer as Funk to this year's celebrations.

Queer as Funk brings together some of Vancouver's hottest musicians in an explosive, high-energy dance band. With repertoire ranging from beloved funk, soul and Motown classics of the 60's and 70's (Aretha Franklin, Otis Redding, Stevie Wonder) to contemporary favourites (Amy Winehouse, Bruno Mars, Mayer Hawthorne), Queer as Funk is also the sharpest dressed suit-and-tie band around. Together with DJ Slade, this is going to be an amazingly funky night of music and dancing.

Saturday, June 25
Kwanlin Dun Cultural Centre
8:00pm

This event is open to all ages and all LGBTQ+allies (so basically, everyone who loves love and music).

To get all the details on Yukon Pride, visit



From the President's Desk



What a busy month! Bargaining with the Yukon Government has been a main focus in the last month. While we had made good early progress, it became clear that we would benefit from the help of a mediator to bring our two parties closer together. Of course the unresolved issues were almost entirely those that the bargaining input committee identified as our priorities

for this round of bargaining. We are pleased that, following mediation meetings in late May we have reached a tentative agreement. We'll be booking ratification meetings in early July when all YG members can review the changes and cast their ballot.

Our bargaining initiatives and priorities were defined entirely by our members. At our pre-bargaining sessions last fall, the bargaining input committee voted upon which member proposals would be taken forward.

The bargaining process is guided by our negotiator but it's the bargaining team who make the decision whether or not to recommend an agreement to the membership. While I participate at the bargaining table, at the end of the day it's the members who decide the terms of their contract, not me, and not YEU/PSAC staff.

Another huge issue we are grappling with is a systemic lack of commitment by the employer to ensuring respectful workplaces. This issue resonates through a number of our locals, both large and small. We are working to address both individual worksite issues and systemic departmental concerns.

While some employers have specific offices to deal with issues of workplace dignity & respect, most don't. For those who don't, we've enlisted the help of Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services - an agency of the Federal Government. While much of the work they do is within the realm of bargaining, they also offer interventions in disrespectful workplaces and training for joint labour-management committees. If you work for an NGO or smaller employer and believe your workplace would benefit from this type of intervention, please let us know. Their services are free both to the Union and the employer - a real incentive for the smaller organizations who couldn't otherwise afford such assistance.

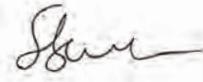
Another prominent theme in the last month has been workplace health and safety. To my knowledge there are or will soon be 3 significant investigations underway by Yukon Workers Compensation Health and Safety Board.

I would like to stress that all employees, unionized or not, are entitled to a safe workplace; that right is guaranteed under legislation. The only way that investigations happen and issues are solved is if employees come forward with their concerns. Those concerns are not limited to a physical threat to your health but can also include threats to your mental wellbeing. If you need direction or assistance, please contact us so we can help.

Good news from our office; after one round of negotiations with our YEU employees, we have reached a tentative agreement. Our unionized staff are represented by NCAW 2499.

I have had some amazing opportunities over the last month to meet lots of members face to face in a variety of communities and venues. Whether our conversations took place at AGM'S, local meetings or at the recent Yukon Trade Show, I consider myself lucky to have spoken individually with so many YEU members this month.

In solidarity,



Steve Geick, President
Yukon Employees' Union

YEU Member Benefit

The Pacific Gateway Hotel, Vancouver Airport offers special YEU & PSAC rates !
With free airport shuttle, free breakfast & free wifi in a unionized hotel right next to YVR, it's a great new benefit for our members.

Deluxe Rooms from \$119/night

Email: res@pacificgatewayhotel.com
Hotel toll free reservations: 1-866-382-3474
www.pacificgatewayhotel.com

Please enter code: PSAOC under Corporate/Promotion code.



PACIFIC GATEWAY HOTEL
VANCOUVER AIRPORT

Yukon Employees' Union **BARGAINING UPDATE**

Local Y010 Local Y034
Local Y017 Local Y035
Local Y028 Local Y043

Successful Mediation leads to Tentative YG Contract

Your bargaining team and that of the Government of Yukon have been in negotiations since November, 2015. Last month, contract talks reached an impasse, leading both parties to seek the expertise of a mediator.

Thanks to the willingness of both sides to work for resolution and the guidance of experienced mediator Vince Ready, we are pleased to announce that a tentative agreement has been reached.

Contract ratification meetings will be scheduled around the Territory in early July, allowing all members the opportunity to have the new contract explained in detail. The tentative agreement will only take effect once it has been ratified by the membership.

We appreciate your support throughout the bargaining process. The bargaining team will unanimously recommend the contract's acceptance.

In solidarity,
Your Bargaining Team



Where's Tony?

My name is Tony Thomas and I am YEU's Vice President for Communities. I was elected to this new position in October 2014 at YEU'S last convention. I'm a 30 year Dawson resident employed by the Yukon government on the Dempster at the Klondike highway camp.



In my role as Community VP, I travel the territory as part of YEU's "boots on the ground" commitment. It's important that members outside of Whitehorse have a voice and know who represents them.

One of our goals is to try and identify the needs of members in the communities and provide the services they're entitled to. We want to help them access the information they are looking for, whether that is their collective agreement or training. Sometimes there are issues in the work place that need help, but our members aren't sure where to turn. Hopefully I can provide answers to some of these questions and steer them toward a resolution, whether through a shop steward or a union advisor.

My mandate is to visit every community twice a year (that includes Old Crow), so I thought I'd update you on where I've been & where I'm planning to be:

March 15-16: Mayo and Pelly Crossing doing some work site visits.

April 5-7th: Carcross, Tagish, and Haines Junction doing site visits.

April 8th: Along with our other VP Sue Christianson, I attended Yukon Utility Workers' AGM in Whitehorse. They had a good turn-out of members to elect their new Local Executive.

April 26-29: Watson Lake, once again doing work sites visits.

May 16-20: Whitehorse bargaining the Village of Haines Junctions first Collective Agreement.

May 30-June 4th: Watson Lake, bargaining

June 20-24th: Contract negotiations in the Town of Watson Lake. If you need to see me when I'm there, call the Union Hall in Whitehorse and the staff will let me know.

To those of you I've missed previously on my visits, hopefully I'll see you sometime this summer. Let me know if you're going to be in Dawson and I'll meet you for a cup of tea.

Tony Thomas,
YEU Vice President, Communities

Risks at RYTS

Continued from Page 1

Frequent assaults on workers inspired the YWCHSB to conduct a safety audit in 2013. The recommendations of that audit, though not shared with the affected workers, have resulted in no significant changes in the unusually high risk workplaces.

Chronic understaffing is one result of management's decision to reduce staffing costs, including costly overtime. These cost saving measures have also resulted in a series of incidents which put both workers & youth in danger.

In residences housing children who are likely to self-harm or cause harm to others, the safety net provided by a shift-partner is critical. When an at-risk occupant is escalating and violence is likely, who maintains the safety of the other residents? Who calls for help if a caregiver is working to maintain calm or has been injured?

The Government of Yukon has a duty to provide a safe work environment for its workers while they do everything possible to provide a safe environment for the children they work with.

When a home is understaffed, programming that is scheduled and anticipated can't take place. While the kids may have been promised a soccer game in the back yard after completing their homework, the lack of a shift partner can result in disappointment instead of reward.

The Department of Health & Social Services has been saving on wages at the expense of the youth in their care. Rather than hire more employees to ensure appropriate coverage, they have chosen to slash the number of Auxiliary On-Call hours by over 2000 in the past quarter. 2000 hours is equal to over 166 12-hour shifts UNSTAFFED; 166 shifts that were regularly staffed just a few months ago.

- **166 unstaffed shifts** means recreational programs are not reliably maintained.
- **166 unstaffed shifts** means outings are cancelled.
- **166 unstaffed shifts** means increased tensions & stress in the RYTS homes.
- **166 unstaffed shifts** means higher risk of violent assault by traumatized house-mates.
- **166 unstaffed shifts** means Whitehorse's Residential Youth Treatment Services homes are being managed to serve the bottom line, and not to meet the needs of Yukon's most vulnerable children.

We ask the Government of Yukon to show leadership and staff these homes appropriately, right now.

These children have faced enough uncertainty, instability and danger already. Let's help them to rebuild, to develop their innate resilience and find hope.

"My concern is that they do not seem to have any regard for the children - we are a protection service for youth who come from horrendous, traumatic pasts and yet we don't make decisions based on what is best for them but on what is best financially."

*Security Review, Residential Youth Treatment Services (RYTS) Prepared by Paladin Security, 2013 for YWCHSB



Join the YEU 4-person team at the 2016 PGI Golf tournament in support of Yukon literacy programs!

**Saturday June 18
Mountainview Golf Course
Whitehorse YT**

We need 4 golfers to represent us on the course. Not a pro? No problem!

Call us at 667-2331

YEU is a proud supporter of the PGI Golf Tournament & Yukon Learn





**KEEP CALM
AND
CALL YOUR
UNION**

**YUKON EMPLOYEES' UNION
667-2331 • 1-888-YEU-2331**



**Proud to Be
UNION!**



*Have YOU signed a union card?
Visit yeu.ca or call 667-2331 & be sure!*



Meetings & Events

Y010 Monthly Meeting: 2nd Tues., 5:30-7:30 p.m., YEU Hall

Y017 Monthly Meeting: 4th Wed., 7:30 p.m., YEU Hall

YEU Monthly Exec Meeting: 2nd Thurs., 6:30-9:00 pm, YEU

Shop Steward Sandwich Session: Tuesday June 7, 12-1, Local Room

Shop Steward Round Table: June 15, 9am - noon, YEU

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Visit www.yeu.ca, follow us on Facebook & Twitter or visit our blog; www.theunionbillboard.com

Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm.