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Yukon Employees' Union
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Yukon Employees' Union

NEWS

January 2013

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Application for union submitted to Canada Industrial Relations Board Air North Flight Attendants organize

The Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) has submitted an application for union certification to the Canada Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) on behalf of flight attendants employed by Air North.

The application for certification was presented to the board on January 7. Strong support among the flight attendants for unionization was clearly evident—a significant majority of the employees signed union cards prior to PSAC's application. Representatives for Air North presented their response to the application on January 18.

The decision to unionize was entirely an employee-driven initiative. The workers approached the Yukon Employees' Union, which then assisted them in the process. YEU was selected in part based upon its reputation and its ongoing success as a northern union. The high level of support and assistance offered by President Steve Geick and Vice President Loralee Kesler also influenced the decision.

A response to an application by CIRB normally takes two to three weeks. There is every reason to believe that the application will be approved. Negotiations toward their first collective agreement will follow in the coming months.

Union and Yukon Government exchange proposals YG Pre-bargaining Team meets

Members of the Pre-bargaining Team representing employees of the Yukon Government met on Monday, January 21, at the YEU office. The team, led by PSAC Negotiator Erna Post, prepared the pre-bargaining package, and exchanged proposals with the government the following day.

As is normally the case during pre-bargaining, most of the proposals exchanged related to administration matters. The union tabled proposals related to hours-of-work and scheduling, overtime, vacation and special leave, discipline, safety and health, duty to accommodate, and transfer of leave credits. The union also made it clear that it will not engage in concessionary bargaining.



PSAC's Pre-Bargaining Team—Shandra Ursich, Michael Lauer, Blaire Andre, Steve Geick, Erna Post and Debbie Wren

Issues resolved at the Pre-Bargaining Table will be forwarded to the Main Table for incorporation into the Memorandum

Union News

YEU hires Senior Union Advisor



Laura Hureau has joined the Yukon Employees' Union as Senior Union Advisor.

YEU now has three Union Advisors on staff to assist our members and shop stewards. The senior advisor will work with YEU's Executive Director on broadening

the design and delivery of educational opportunities for our members—in addition to providing traditional member representation.

Laura was an employee of the Yukon government for the past 23 years, most recently with the Yukon Housing Corporation. She brings our organization extensive policy and program development experience, and an innovative, problem-solving focus.

Laura was raised in Whitehorse, and is the mother of four. She has been involved in school council work, the Yukon Law Society and Whitehorse Minor Hockey.

Her education focused on business and public administration, legal studies and human resources. Currently Laura is working on an MBA with Royal Roads University.

It's about common goals, not colonial guilt

Idle No More matters to all of us

Heiltsuk community organizer Jess Housty published a thoughtful and moving response to people (both indigenous and non) asking about *Idle No More* this month on The Tyee (www.thetyee.ca).

A few of his thoughts are summarized here, but union members are encouraged to read his full commentary.

Housty argues that while most Canadians acknowledge the massive issues facing First Nations across the country—from housing to education to health care—deep issues remain beneath the surface of the crisis. These include a sense of helplessness, dependency and a feeling of defeat that has long dominated First Nation communities.

The *Idle No More* movement encourages the people of First Nations to become the strongest leaders they can be in every way they can. But nothing will change unless the people demand it and work for it.

He maintains that conscientious Canadians have an important role to play in the resolution of this crisis. He avoids laying a guilt trip, but instead offers concrete ideas and suggestions for joint action. Housty points out that we share common goals, such as the work being done by those who care about the environment.

Please take the time to read his article, both to gain a better understanding about the *Idle No More* movement, and why it matters to all Canadians.

YEU is developing a Union Hall member-created art gallery

The art of labour

YEU has committed to the display of original artwork created by its members in a new Union Hall gallery.

Original works may be purchased for permanent display, or accepted on loan as part of an alternating gallery presentation. Details about procedures, length of display and selection criteria will be provided on our website and in the YEU News in the coming weeks.

The goal of this initiative is to provide artist-members of YEU with an opportunity to have their work viewed by both other members using the hall, and the general public who sometimes book rooms or visit the premises.

Submissions in all artistic media are welcome. The art need not be labour-focused or themed. The selection standard will be quality and member provenance.

President's Message



YEU President
Steve Geick

It's been a particularly busy January, as this newsletter demonstrates.

Major developments included Air North flight attendants' application for union certification, and the initiation of collective bargaining for Yukon Government workers.

As YEU continues to grow, we took steps to ensure our members receive the support they deserve by hiring a Senior Union Advisor and filling the new position of Intake Officer to speed our response time to member requests for assistance.

Our union's community involvement increased throughout 2012, and will continue to mature in the coming year. I encourage members to come out during the Yukon Sourdough Rendezvous to visit the YEU tent, and enter our contest to win 2 return tickets on Air North to Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Dawson City or Old Crow.

YEU's new website is being updated and populated with current information. We have also continued our growth in the use of social media to advance the level of communication with our members.

YEU's continued growth bodes well for the future—one I am certain will also present many challenges.

YEU—investing in the community

Each year the Yukon Employees' Union supports initiatives and organizations working for the betterment of our community. In 2012, YEU donated prizes, awards, person-hours, and direct financial assistance.

Some events or organizations YEU supported in 2012 include:

- Educational Bursary Awards
- Yukon Learn (*PGI Golf Tournament for Literacy*)
- Yukon Pride Committee
- Whitehorse Food Bank
- Blue Feather Music Festival
- Second Opinion Society
- Yukon WITT (*plus iPod*)
- Kinette Club
- FH Collins Ally Day
- Skills Canada
- Yukon Sourdough Rendezvous
- Watson Lake Bonspiel
- Big Brothers (*Bowl for Kids*)
- White Ribbon Foundation
- Lion's Trade Show (*booth*)
- Canadian Labour International Film Festival
- Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre
- Yukon African Caribbean Association
- Royal Canadian Legion
- Labour Day Barbecue
- Yukon Human Rights Commission
- Canada Ski Patrol System

Win a return flight for 2 **Rendezvous with YEU!**

The Yukon Employees' Union will be out in force again this year in support of Yukon Sourdough Rendezvous. And this year you can enter our contest to win a return trip for 2 on Air North.

The rules are simple:

- Stop by the YEU "Hall" tent at the festival grounds in Shipyards park and pick up a *YEU in the Community* poster.
- Find any Rendezvous or Yukon icon (can-can dancer, Sourdough Sam, airshow pilot, YEU squirrel, etc.) and snap a photo of yourself holding the

poster with the icon—just like the photo on the right.

- Upload your photo to Facebook or Twitter, or email it to YEU.
- Tag **You Psac** on Facebook or **@yeupsac** on Twitter and we will enter your name in a draw to win 2 tickets. The winner will be selected at random, and **YES**, you can enter more than once!

A full contest description and instructions can be found on the YEU website at www.yeu.ca, or will be available at the YEU tent.



Member of the Month

Richard Wagner



Long-time member Richard Wagner was elected President of Yukon Government Employee's Local Y010 at this year's Annual General Meeting.

He has worked in Property Management with Highways & Public Works for many years as an Auxiliary-on-Call, a term employee, and now holds a permanent position.

Richard's reasons for his continuing union involvement are best presented in his own words.

"I first became involved in Union matters in 1987 with CUPE Local 728, but it wasn't until 1994 that I truly understood what a Union was. That year I was diagnosed with

Crohn's disease. During my stay in the hospital, which lasted 2 months, I had many visitors from the Local bringing a lot of support and much love."

That experience had a profound impact. "My wages were paid but it was more than that", he explained. "It was a feeling that deeply affected me. Since that stay in the hospital I decided to give back to the members who had given so much to me!"

Since moving to the Yukon, Richard has continued helping fellow members. Our Union is a huge part of the community, and he has made it clear that he wants to be a part of that as well.

"We are here to speak for people when they can't speak for themselves", Richard says. "Living with a disability, I'm thankful to live in the Yukon and will always share my compassion with all."

Meetings & Events

Grievance Handling Training—Friday, February 15 & Saturday February 16, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Dawson City

City of Whitehorse Transit Workers Local Y022 AGM—Wednesday, February 20, 7:30 p.m., YEU Hall

YEU Monthly Executive Meeting—2nd Thurs., 6:30-9:00 p.m., YEU Hall

Y010 Monthly Meeting—2nd Wed., 5:00-7:00 p.m., YEU Hall

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

Y023 Monthly Meeting—1st Thurs., Noon

Y025 Monthly Meeting—3rd Wed., 6:00 p.m., YEU Hall

Y026 Monthly Meeting—3rd Thurs., 7:00 p.m., Dawson City

PSAC Regional Access Committee—3rd Thurs., 5:15 p.m., YEU Hall

PSAC Aboriginal Peoples Committee—1st Tues., 5:15 p.m.

PSAC Racially Visible Committee—1st Wed., 5:00 p.m.

PSAC Regional Women's Committee—2nd Tues., 5:15 p.m.

PSAC Health & Safety Committee—1st Thurs., 6:00 p.m.

Dawson Regional Women's Committee—1st Wed., 5:15 p.m., Legion Hall

PSAC Regional Youth Committee—4th Thurs., 7:00 p.m., Lucy Jackson Training Room, YEU Hall

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Office Hours—Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

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