



## U.A. LOCAL 324 NEWSLETTER

FALL 2020

### BUSINESS MANAGERS REPORT



Dear Brothers & Sisters,

As we head into the fall and winter, we need to remain vigilant as we continue to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic. I understand we are in the new normal at this point and hopeful a possible vaccine is forthcoming. Fortunately, to the best of my knowledge, we have not had any members infected with Covid-19. My priority is to ensure our members and their families remain safe. I appreciate the additional protocols put in place by our Provincial Health Officials to provide better protection for our members. Many jobsites are now making masks mandatory and in May we purchased 500 UA 324 face buffs for our members and just recently handed out 1000 face masks. There has been a recent surge in new cases and I believe our members should be provided with additional protection. We have now ordered another 2500 face masks through our Mechanical Trades Promotion Fund. I believe this will help provide additional safety and peace of mind for our members. We need to also continue ensuring that every jobsite has accessible hand wash stations. If you are on a jobsite without a proper hand wash station please contact your foreman to have this issue resolved. The next few months will be crucial for our economy. I believe if we can continue to keep practicing physical distancing, we will be able to flatten the curve and keep our construction industry going strong.

The construction work on the island has remained steady over the past few months. We are just now starting to see a slight downturn on new job tenders but fortunately we have many secured projects which will keep us going well into 2021. We have secured some key projects like the Victoria Fire Hall, Hudson Place 2, new Langford Middle & Elementary Schools, Colwood Corners, Esquimalt Town Center, English Inn, Customs House, Walmart Langford, Langford Towers Condo, Wale Rd Condo, 3<sup>rd</sup> St Sidney Condo, Oak Park 2 Condo, Bryn Maur Condo, Hockley Condo, Amica Seniors Complex, Hudson 2 Condo, Capital Park, The Hamlets Seniors Complex, UVic Student Housing, Nanaimo Correctional Centre, Nanaimo Hospital Boiler Plant, Nanaimo Marriott Hotel, Comox Ocean Front Seniors Center.

### Victoria Shipyard

The Victoria Shipyard currently has 121 members employed at this time. The shipyard has been very busy with members working on the OSFV 3, HMCS Vancouver, New Zealand Frigate Te Mana. We will see the Tote ship Midnight Sun arrive late December for the second phase of the LNG fuel conversion and the HMCS Ottawa will arrive spring 2021.

VISSC submarine program is also going strong. Over the next few weeks we'll see production on the HMCS Corner Brook reduced and commissioning increased. Work continues on HMCS Chicoutimi at the dockyard, with the bulk of work commencing next year after the HMCS Corner Brook hits the water.

### Union Meetings

We have been unable to hold in person union meetings due to Covid-19 protocols. However, we have started virtual union meetings to keep members updated with the latest information. We will be scheduling virtual union meetings every second Tues of each month. The meetings will be informational only without providing any financial information due to privacy concerns. Please email [jim@ualocal324.com](mailto:jim@ualocal324.com) to be placed on the meeting list.



## UA LOCAL 324 FALL 2020 NEWSLETTER

### **Special Called AGM Meeting Plumbers and Pipefitters Building Society**

There will be a special called meeting for the PPBS on November 10<sup>th</sup> starting at 6pm. The meeting will be held virtually with a link which will be sent out to any members interested in taking part in the PPBS AGM. Please email [jim@ualocal324.com](mailto:jim@ualocal324.com) to be added to the list.

The Plumbers and Pipefitter Building Society Directors met back in August to discuss purchasing two bare land parcels located at 2757 & 2763 Leigh Rd. The directors made the unanimous decision to purchase the properties. Plans for the property include a new administration and union meeting hall. In addition, we are planning to build a training facility which will upgrade the skills of our current and next generation members. The property is 26,500 sq ft and will provide 35-45 parking stalls. We will take possession of the property on or before Dec 15, 2020. This is a very exciting time in our 118<sup>th</sup> year history.

### **BC Provincial Election**

- As you are aware there will be a Provincial Election on October 24<sup>th</sup>. It is important that all members get out and vote either in person or by mail in ballot. The NDP has supported unionized labour for many decades and here are some of the recent highlights;
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, the BC NDP government designated construction essential and put in place guidelines to ensure construction workers remained healthy and safe while building and maintaining vital provincial infrastructure.
- The BC NDP is committed to ensuring construction remains key to BC's economic recovery from COVID-19.
- In 2018, the BC NDP introduced Community Benefits Agreements on public infrastructure projects.
- Changes to the Workers Compensation Act brought in by the NDP comprise the most progressive legislation we have seen in more than 20 years.
- The BC NDP ushered in the single largest private sector investment in Canadian history with LNG Canada. Thousands of our members will ultimately work on the \$40 billion liquefied natural gas project in Kitimat, BC.
- Last year, the BC NDP government funded more than 27,000 apprenticeship and foundation training seats in public and private institutions
- The BC NDP amended the Labour Code to restore fairness and stability to organized labour.
- The NDP created BC's first Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions and dedicated \$608 million to combat the opioid crisis. This is particularly meaningful to construction workers and our families as tradespeople have suffered more than half of the overdoses in the province.

### **Mechanical Trades Promotion Scholarship Applications**

The Mechanical Trade Promotion Fund is offering two (2) scholarships of \$2,000.00 to first year students accepted or currently attending any accredited university, and two (2) scholarships of \$1,000.00 to first year students accepted or currently attending any accredited college. The scholarships are available to the children, spouses, and employees of mechanical contractors who contribute to the Mechanical Trade Promotion Fund and to the children and spouses of Local 324 members. These awards are primarily based on academic standing but other achievements and circumstances may be considered. Deadline for this year is November 1, 2020. The application form is on our website, [www.ualocal324.com](http://www.ualocal324.com)

In closing, please continue to work safe and ensure to follow our provincial health officials recommendations.

Fraternally yours,

*Jim Noon*

Business Manager / Financial Secretary



## UA LOCAL 324 FALL 2020 NEWSLETTER

### **Joint Training Committee**

As many of you are now aware, training has slowed down for face to face delivery. I am working with UA Canada on a new remote Learning Management System that we hope to have in place by the end of November for some courses. We will be 1 of 15 Canadian locals that have opted into using this new training platform, called D2L. This will enable us to easily share courses with other locals across Canada. We will be working closely with UA Local 488 Edmonton, to get the UA Steamfitter course ready for use on the D2L platform.

The plan is to get all NAUSC courses set up for remote learning. There are still processes to be worked out for face to face learning which is required for Medical Gas (brazing), and Rigging still requires a practical course to be performed.

There will be online instructor sessions to prepare our instructors for the delivery of these courses using MS Teams along with the D2L. None of this comes quickly or cheaply but we are getting there.

### **Apprentices starting school at Camosun College**

The college is still running the apprenticeship courses as a true blended learning, so each course looks a bit different. Generally speaking, you will either be met online for a live session in the morning with materials to work on in the afternoon, with an instructor available to help throughout the day, or you may be scheduled in smaller groups to be on campus for the practical sessions. You may be scheduled from half a day to a full day for instructor led activities on campus depending on the duration of the activity. To accommodate the practical sessions, we have had to increase the duration of the courses from 1 to 2 weeks depending on the amount of time required. We did not choose to reduce the class sizes by half which would have postponed many members/students attaining their journeyperson stature as the waitlists that already exist would automatically have doubled. As this is an all new learning curve to figure out how to safely continue to train and educate our members, we trust you will have patience and an open mind as we move to the new changes coming.

We are looking forward to getting these new changes up and running as soon as possible. Once we have all protocols in place, we will be able to start scheduling courses.

Respectfully submitted

**Jamie McPherson**, Director of Training

### **Health and Welfare Changes**

There has been a recent change to your DA Townley drug card, replacing social insurance numbers with new client identity numbers. All members on the plan should have now received their new card in the mail. Effective October 1<sup>st</sup> the new client identity number will be in effect. You will need to provide the new information at your next dental appointment or to your local pharmacist. As of November 1<sup>st</sup>, your Assure card will have pay direct capability for paramedical services like Chiropractor, Physiotherapy, Massage Therapy and Vision care, providing the facility you utilize accepts this new platform. If you have not yet received your Assure card please call the union office.

The trustees also recently passed a motion extending EHB reimbursements for plan members; In view of the continued financial impact that the COVID-19 pandemic is placing on our Members and their families, the Trustees have agreed to temporary extend coverage for Extended Health Care benefits including prescription drugs from 80% to 100%, until Dec 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020, at which time the Trustees will review the issue again. This will only apply to expenses incurred between April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 and Dec 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020. The Trustees reserve the right to amend this temporary change at any time between now and Dec 31, 2020 as they deem to be appropriate.

### **Counselling Services UAMAP**

We provide a member assistance program (MAP) through UA Canada National Wellness Program. The program will assist members and their families with counselling to deal with stress, addiction and mental health. There is no cost to you as this program is paid through our VMI Health and Welfare plan. The MAP is completely confidential and no personal information will be given out. If you require support please call 1-833-778-2627 or go to [www.workhealthlife.com](http://www.workhealthlife.com). If you contact UAMAP, please do not identify yourself as Local 324, you need to advise you are UA Canada National Wellness Program.

# UA LOCAL 324 FALL 2020 NEWSLETTER

## Children's Christmas Party

Unfortunately Due to Covid-19 restrictions we have had to make the decision to cancel this year's Children's Christmas Party. Hopefully, by next year we will be able to resume this great event.

## **UNION OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION**

**919 Esquimalt Road, Victoria BC V9A 3M7 ~ Phone: 250-382-0415 Fax: 250-380-1713**

**Website: [www.ulocal324.com](http://www.ulocal324.com) Facebook: [ulocal324](#)**

Jim Noon, Business Manager

jim@ulocal324.com

Jamie McPherson, Training Director

jamie@ulocal324.com

Jan Lageri, Office Manager

jan@ulocal324.com

Haylee Downey, Apprenticeship Training

haylee@ulocal324.com

Stefan Plusa, Union Representative

stefan@ulocal324.com

While the union office remains open, we request that members only come to the hall when absolutely necessary, to drop off forms, pick up items or to pay dues and health and welfare by interac, etc. Visa and Mastercard payments may be made over the phone.

At this time members may continue to call the hall when laid off and are not required to sign the out of work book in person. If the need arises to close the office once again to walk ins, we will inform members through our website and Facebook page.

## **UPCOMING 2020 / 2021 HOLIDAYS**

<i>Remembrance Day</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>November 11, 2020</i>
<i>Christmas Day</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>December 25, 2020</i>
<i>Boxing Day</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>December 28 in lieu of December 26</i>
<i>New Years Day</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>January 1, 2021</i>
<i>Family Day</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>February 15, 2021</i>
<i>Good Friday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>April 2, 2021</i>
<i>Easter Monday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>April 5, 2021</i>
<i>Victoria Day</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>May 24, 2021</i>
<i>Canada Day</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>July 1, 2021</i>
<i>BC Day</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>August 2, 2021</i>

## **CHRISTMAS OFFICE HOURS**

***The union office will be closed***

***At Noon on Thursday, December 24th through Monday, December 28, 2020***

***We will reopen Tuesday, December 29 - Thursday, December 31st, 2020***

***We will reopen Monday, January 4, 2021***

## **~ IN MEMORY 2020 ~**

Tom Foster ~ 57 year member

Aaron Johnston ~ 10 year member

Robert Johnston ~ 6 year member

Harold Halsall ~ 63 year member