

# The Transmitter



## TWU NATIONAL PRESIDENT LEE RIGGS FILMING ***BUILDING FOR OUR FUTURE*** VIDEO



- Page 4  
TWU-USW  
Merger
- Page 6  
Domestic  
Violence
- Page 10  
Lives Lost  
on the Job

## Message From the President



Dear fellow Telecommunications Workers Union (TWU) members,

As your president, I thought it important to write to all members following our recent merger vote.

I wanted to thank so many of you who took the time to become engaged in the process and cast your ballot. More TWU members participated in casting their ballots than in any previous poll relating to the TWU membership.

So how do we interpret the 64.41% vote for our merger with the United Steelworkers (USW)?

- There is very compelling support among members to build a better future.
- There is a clear majority support for merging with the USW. Ending just 97 votes short of hitting our constitution's high 66 + 2/3% threshold does not change that fact.

**“Together let’s build a tradition of airing our differences in the convention hall, within committees and in our meeting rooms. But, let us remember that we must stand as a united front behind the agreed upon decisions, when exiting those discussions.”**

- The merger agreement, as voted upon by our members, cannot currently be implemented.
- There is currently no mandate to start merger attempts with any other union.

In partnering with the USW we have accomplished a great deal over the last year. We have built an impressive level of unity and focus among our National Executive Council members. Special Convention in October produced a very strong message from delegates in favour of merging with the USW.

The membership vote in November had record participation, turnout was at an all-time high. Overall membership engagement has grown, with dozens of Rand formula employees committed to become members at various locals. This growing level of membership engagement will help us build the unity we will need during 2015 bargaining.

We must use these achievements and gains to build a better future for our members across Canada. As a first step, our National Execu-

tive Council unanimously chose to expand our strategic alliance with the USW. We'll launch tangible actions around collective bargaining, membership education, political action and organizing new members. The path to future progress towards a merger is not clear today, but there is plenty of work we can do together while we consider the future of the TWU.

I feel it is important to address why some of our members voted against merging with USW. There are some who voted against the merger because they love the TWU and want it to remain autonomous always and are against a merger of any kind. I can understand and empathize with this. The status quo can be comfortable, even when it's not working as well as it could.

There are members who expressed a desire to merge with a union other than USW, while others did not agree with a specific clause in the merger agreement. For example, there was feedback from a small group of members who would

have preferred to elect business agents to sit on our National Executive instead of having hired, trained staff reporting to our democratically elected rank-and-file executive, reasonable people can differ on this issue.

However, it is undeniable that the outcome was affected by a gross level of misinformation. False information about the pension plan was circulated, raising unjustified fears that this merger could affect the B.C. pension plan. These concerns were unfounded and unnecessary as the merger agreement was reviewed by experts, including our own independent legal counsel, all of whom confirmed that the TWPP would remain untouched.

Members were lied to by a dishonest video that took potshots at our union, at the USW and at our members who work in call centres. Additionally, many members' received an unsigned "Top 10 reasons to vote against the merger" mail-out, which was sent to their homes without knowledge or authorization from TWU officials. The video and mail-out lied about "jobs for life" for executive council members, was misleading about the finances of our new National Local, misrepresented our entitlement to the USW strike and defense fund and lied about the work of the USW as an international union.

The production and distribution of this video and mail-out would have undoubtedly been quite an expense. This was clearly a highly organized effort, by individual(s) who refuse to claim ownership, to misguide the membership and is being taken very seriously by TWU officials. The authorities are involved and anyone with any information is urged to come forward.

I have always been confident in the decision made by our Merger Selection Committee. I strongly support the merger of our union and the USW, it is the best match. The negotiated merger agreement would provide the membership with our unique TWU voice and autonomy maintained while giving our union an international presence.

As your president, I will work towards fostering a new culture of mature, civil and progressive debate in our union. That was part of my platform when I was elected in May and it remains one of my top priorities.

Together let us build a tradition of airing our differences in the convention

hall, within committees and in our meeting rooms. But, let us remember that we must stand as a united front behind the agreed upon decisions, when exiting those discussions.

I will work with our Executive Council, our delegates and our local activists to build solidarity, starting with how we treat each other in the TWU. We must oppose unfounded attacks to fellow members or other unions. My focus is on building unity, on listening to all reasonable opinions, while maintaining focus on our objectives and on providing clear factual information to our members.

On behalf of our entire National Executive Council, I hope your family enjoyed a happy and healthy holiday season. Let us each take time to be thankful for what we have and celebrate the New Year by working together to create a better future for us all.

In solidarity,

Lee Riggs,  
TWU National President



**TWU NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**, STARTING TOP ROW LEFT: Dave DiMaria, Joe Benn, Elizabeth Fletcher, Paolo Réhel, Ron Palmer, Jennifer Bucholtz, Tamara Marshall. STARTING BOTTOM ROW LEFT: Colin Brehaut, Lee Riggs, Betty Carrasco, Ken Neumann (USW National Director for Canada), Stephen Hunt (USW, District 3 Director).

Despite strong support leading into the ratification vote of the Telecommunications Workers Union (TWU) merging with the United Steelworkers (USW), results fall short of constitutional threshold.

## TWU-USW Merger Falls Short of 66 2/3% Threshold

The official results of the vote regarding the ratification of the tentative merger between the TWU and USW fell short of the required 66 + 2/3%.

Nationwide, a rank-and-file vote was conducted by electronic ballot over a period of two weeks. Final results were released the afternoon of Friday, Nov. 15 after being validated by an independent auditor. The level of support shown by those who participated was 64.41% and the engagement rate of the membership was over 46% of the entire membership.

**“A solid majority of our members support the merger agreement, but our constitution is clear,” said TWU National President Lee Riggs. “This was a truly democratic process.”**

The Merger Negotiations Committee endorsed the merger agreement unanimously. The National Executive Council (NEC) members voted overwhelmingly to approve the agreement and at the Special Convention in Gatineau, Québec, delegates voted 73.5% in favour of the merger agreement.

The Special Convention was full of debate amongst rank-and-file members as well as NEC. Members of USW were also in attendance as they discussed pros and cons of merging. Delegates were energized and engaged and a standing ovation ensued when the ballot results were displayed on the screen. Many reported that they felt hopeful and excited at the prospect of merging with USW.

Despite much of the positive feedback, throughout the ratification process there was a small but vocal group within the union who were against the potential merger. A highly organized ‘No’ campaign disseminated misinformation throughout the membership, which was unfortunate as it undoubtedly affected the outcome of the ratification vote.

“A solid majority of our members support the merger agreement, but our constitution is clear,” said TWU National President Lee Riggs. “This was a truly democratic process.”

The TWU and USW maintain a strategic alliance that was recently renewed by the NEC. The level of engagement regarding the merger was positive, bringing to light many of the challenges our union faces and the many benefits a merger would bring. It is clear that the TWU cannot continue in the same way and that changes will have to be made. Hopefully we can continue to foster that level of excitement to unify the TWU and work together to build a brighter future for our membership.



**TWU REPRESENTATIVES AT BC FEDERATION OF LABOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY CONFERENCE.**  
FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:  
Perry Pasqualetto, Business Agent, Burnaby;  
Sherry Fraser, Local 1;  
Karen Phillips, Local 7;  
Michael Phillips, Local 52;  
Tom Cusick, Local 32.

# Moving Forward With the TWU-USW Strategic Alliance



## **SPECIAL CONVENTION 2013 IN GATINEAU, QUÉBEC.**

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Ken Neumann, USW National Director for Canada; Leo W. Gerard, USW International President; Betty Carrasco, TWU Vice-President; Lee Riggs, TWU National President; Tom Roper, Legal Council.

The TWU National Executive Council (NEC) unanimously voted on November 21 to strengthen our existing strategic alliance with the USW. A formal alliance agreement between our two unions was struck in 2010 and renewed unanimously by the NEC in 2012. The TWU will seek ways to expand and enhance the USW alliance specifically in the areas of education, organizing and collective bargaining. A plan of action will be developed by the TWU Strategic Alliance Committee and will be presented to a future NEC meeting for approval.

**WHEREAS** there is and continues to be strong support within the TWU-STT for a merger with the United Steelworkers (USW); and

**WHEREAS** this support has been expressed by the unanimous choice of the USW by the TWU-STT Merger Selection Committee, by the vote of National Executive Council to take that selection to the 2013 Convention and by vote of 64% of that Convention to pursue a merger with the USW; and

**WHEREAS** the Merger Agreement negotiated by the USW and the TWU-STT received the unanimous recommendation of the TWU-STT Merger Negotiating Committee and the Merger Advisory Committee as well as the support of 19 members of the National Executive Council; and

**WHEREAS** the Merger Agreement was endorsed by 73.5% of Delegates at a Special Convention held on October 19, 2013; and

**WHEREAS** 64.4% of the Membership voted in favour of the Merger Agreement, which does not satisfy the high constitutional requirement for ratification of such vote in our Union; and

**WHEREAS** the 2766 TWU-STT members who voted in favour of the Agreement represent the highest absolute number of members in recent history to vote in favour of a question put before them in a referendum vote; and

**WHEREAS** education is of paramount importance to our Membership; and

**WHEREAS** organizing is the lifeblood of all trade unions in the labour movement; and

**WHEREAS** there is upcoming Collective Bargaining in 2015 at both Telus, Shaw and Strategic Communications; and

**WHEREAS** the merger discussions and the ratification process highlighted many areas in which the USW programs and experience would help the TWU-STT prepare for and engage in bargaining; and

**WHEREAS** the TWU-STT has had a Strategic Alliance with the United Steelworkers since 2010, which was renewed by a unanimous vote of the National Executive Council in September 2012 and signed in November 2012; now

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Strategic Alliance Committee explore ways in which we can draw upon our Strategic Alliance with the United Steelworkers (USW) to assist and prepare strategies for collective bargaining in 2015; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Strategic Alliance Committee be authorized to meet with the USW for the purpose of developing a plan to expand and enhance the strategic alliance specifically in the areas of education, organizing and collective bargaining, that will be presented back to the National Executive Council for approval.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Betty Carrasco, TWU Vice-President, BC Federation of Labour Women’s Committee, Canadian Labour Congress Women’s Committee; Mindy Johnson, Local 31; Robin Arndt, TWU Business Agent, BC North.

## Domestic Violence Affecting the Workplace

It is important that the workplace be a safe environment, especially when home isn’t. Participate in this important survey that could help develop legislation regarding domestic abuse in the workplace.

December 6 was Canada’s National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women. On this day Canadians honour victims of domestic abuse as it marks the anniversary of the Polytechnique Massacre, also known as the Montréal Massacre, which occurred Dec. 6, 1989 at École Polytechnique in Montréal. On that day 14 women were targeted and shot because they were female, 10 others were injured and 4 men were shot in the crossfire before the shooter took his life.

Canadian society has progressed considerably in its quest for gender equality but we still have further to go. Unfortunately violence against

**“At any given moment, of any given day, there is a woman or a child who is being sexually assaulted in Canada.”**

women continues to plague our society, especially among the marginalized; women of racial minorities, low socio-economic class, or women with disabilities, for example.

As unionists and activists we must continue to stand together in support of our sisters and their rights. Here are some facts, as provided by the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), to outline why:

- **At any given moment**, of any given day, there is a woman or a child who is being sexually assaulted in Canada.
- **Homicide** is the number one killer of women in the workplace.

- **Each week**, 1 – 2 women are murdered by a current, or former, partner.
- **Excessive number** of missing and murdered Aboriginal women have been reported.
- **Women with disabilities** are 1.5 – 10 times as likely to be abused as non-disabled women, depending on whether they live in the community or are institutionalized.
- **Up to 360,000 children** in Canada are exposed to domestic violence every year.
- **Physical and sexual abuse** costs Canada over \$4 billion each year.
- **Recent study** by the Department of Justice Canada estimated that employers in Canada lose over \$77.9 million annually as a result of domestic violence.\*



The bottom line: domestic abuse impacts the workplace. To address domestic violence in the workforce the CLC partnered with the University of Western Ontario's Centre for Research & Education on Violence against Women & Children (CREVAWC) to launch the first nation-wide survey studying the impact of domestic violence on workers and workplaces.

All workers, aged 15 years or older, are encouraged to take part in this confidential online survey, regardless of whether they have personally experienced or witnessed domestic violence. The more diverse the answers the richer the data will be for researchers.

The results from this survey will be utilized to help unions, employers, advocates and governments develop good public policy. A similar survey was conducted in Australia and as a result of that work, over one million Australian workers are now covered by domestic/family violence workplace benefits, including dedicated paid leave, protection from adverse action and flexible work arrangements.

The survey will only take 10-30 minutes, it is available in both English and French, and is online until June 6, 2014.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP\*

It is important that the workplace remain a safe environment, especially when home isn't. There are actions that can be taken to create a safer workplace and help end violence against women. The CLC suggests the following:

1. **Learn to recognize** the signs of violence and speak out against it.
2. **If you suspect** that a woman close to you is being abused or has been sexually assaulted, ask if you can help.
3. **Get training** in violence prevention.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Irene McConkey, Local 2 President; Jennifer Bucholtz, TWU Business Agent, Burnaby; Betty Carrasco, TWU Vice-President; Lori Travis, TWU Councillor for Local 51.

### WORK WITH YOUR UNION TO:

1. **Make sure your employer** keeps information readily available on support networks for women experiencing violence.
2. **Negotiate a workplace violence prevention program**, which includes psychological harassment into your collective agreement.
3. **Review your workplace** violence program yearly.
4. **If you live in a jurisdiction** with Workplace Violence legislation, make sure your employer is in compliance. If you don't, advocate for legislation requiring employers to develop policies and programs to help prevent workplace violence and harassment and take precautions to protect workers from domestic violence in the workplace.

The TWU urges members to demonstrate their support to co-workers and union sisters by participating in this survey. This small action could result in research used to affect long-term policy that could make lasting differences in the lives of those who suffer from domestic abuse, because we all deserve to be safe at work.

To participate in the survey:  
[www.fluidsurveys.com/s/DVatWork/](http://www.fluidsurveys.com/s/DVatWork/)

Or scan QR code:



\* The following information is from the CLC website, (2010) "National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women" [Online]. Available: <http://www.canadianlabour.ca/14actions>

**Bill C-4 will jeopardize the health and safety of workers in Canada, it is time to take a stand!**

## **National President Protests Bill C-4 to Prime Minister Stephen Harper**

Dear Prime Minister Stephen Harper,

As the National President of the Telecommunications Workers Union (TWU) I feel that it is my duty to write to you and protest the dangerous changes to the Canada Labour Code that your administration is proposing to make.

Buried deep in Bill C-4, the Budget Implementation Act 2013, your government has hidden changes to legislation that will jeopardize the health and safety of over a million Canadians.

Your government is proposing to weaken the definition of “danger” in Part II of the Canada Labour Code. These changes will take away

**“TWU members will be encouraged to vote in favour of a government who better values the health and safety of workers in upcoming elections.”**

employees right to refuse dangerous work, end the role of federal health and safety officers in the investigation process AND give employers the power to take disciplinary action against workers when a worker invokes the right to refuse dangerous work.

These changes will in fact make the Canada Labour Code provision on the right to refuse dangerous work the weakest in the country.

It is both an embarrassment and offensive that in a great and democratic nation, such as Canada, the federal government would try to sneak such legislative changes past the very citizens your government has sworn to protect and serve by hiding them in a budget bill.

At the TWU, our safety creed reads: “The demands of the service or the importance of the job are never so great that we cannot do the job safely.” It is beyond disappointing that our own federal government does not value the lives of its citizens to the same degree that our union does.

Because of the severity of these legislative changes, and the serious threat it will pose to employees, I will be urging all TWU members to take a stand against Bill C-4. We will be putting pressure on MPs to fight to remove the provisions relating to the health and safety of workers from this budget bill. Furthermore, TWU members will be encouraged to vote in favour of a government who better values the health and safety of workers in upcoming elections.

Sincerely,

Lee Riggs  
TWU National President

For more information on Bill C-4, or to email your local MP, visit:

<http://www.canadianlabour.ca/right-to-refuse-unsafe-work>

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# Beware Anti-Union Legislation in Alberta, Bills 45 and 46

Further restrictions to the labour movement imposed by Conservative government, Bills 45 and 46 violate Canadian's Charter of Rights and Freedoms.



Submitted by **Harmony Jackson**, Business Agent for Locals: 201, 202, 204 and 213 Assist.

The TWU is very concerned about how the recently passed, anti-union, Alberta Bills 45 and 46 will affect unionized workers in Alberta and throughout the country. These bills trample on Canadian's Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and are a blatant abuse of power by the Conservative government.

**Bill 45: Public Sector Service Continuation Act**, places further restrictions on public sector workers who are already denied the right to strike. It broadens the definition of strike to include any slowdown or activity that has the effect of restricting or disrupting production or services. It strips individuals, regardless of whether they are a union member or not, of their right to freedom of expression for discussing, encouraging or supporting strike action. This restriction is not limited to officials within an affected union or their members, but to anyone. Discussion of a strike would be considered the slowing down of work production that could lead to prosecution and fines to the involved workers. These fines could be higher than those given for environmental violations, or to a company found to be at fault for causing the death of a worker.

**Equally concerning is Bill 46: Public Service Salary Restraint Act**, which we believe is likely illegal. This bill takes away the right of the Alberta Union of Public Employees (AUPE) to negotiate a fair collective agreement. When the Conservative government stripped these civil servants of their right to strike, they were given the ability to seek arbitration in the event of a bargaining impasse as a mechanism to resolve a deadlock. This new bill no longer allows workers to seek arbitration and imposes a wage settlement without negotiation. The TWU believes this will clearly lead to bargaining in bad faith. Right now this bill only applies to AUPE workers; however it opens up the door to the Conservative government to use similar legislation as a tool to bully other civil servant unions in negotiation, like the United Nurses of Alberta (UNA) and Health Sciences Association of Alberta (HSSA). These bills are consistent with the continued anti-union attacks by federal and other provincial governments.

The Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) and their affiliated unions and allies, including the TWU, have made it clear that they plan to launch a legal challenge to this legislation.

"It's clear that we will be going to court and it's clear that the Redford government will lose," AFL President Gil McGowan said in a news release December 5. "The Supreme Court of Canada has been very clear in its recent ruling in labour law: workers have the right to associate in unions. That right is meaningless without the right to collective bargaining and governments that use legislation to impose contracts make a mockery of collective bargaining."

**"The Conservative government continues to attack the worker, with no regard for their families or a stable relations climate."**

"The Conservative government continues to attack the worker, with no regard for their families or a stable labour relations climate," commented TWU National President, Lee Riggs. "Bills such as this will ultimately have a negative effect on the Canadian economy by restricting free collective bargaining. The judicial system will not put up with this bad behaviour and neither will Canadians."

Alberta TWU Vice-President, Ivana Niblett, added her support saying: "This is a gross violation of our right to association and expression. It is a despicable attack against labour in Alberta. We will stand behind the AFL and all unions to protect these fundamental rights."

The TWU fully supports the AFL, AUPE, and allies in these legal challenges and will continue to update our members on future action.

For more information please visit the AFL website at [www.afl.org](http://www.afl.org)

Campaign launched to enforce legislation that could see corporate executives put in jail for criminal negligence.

## Stop the Killing and Enforce the Law!



Submitted by **Dave DiMaria**,  
Business Agent for Locals:  
1, 5, 31, 35, and 43

The TWU is gravely concerned about the number of workers lives lost on the job and supports a national campaign spearheaded by the USW to lobby provincial and federal governments for greater enforcement of the Westray Act. The Westray legislation was passed unanimously in

the House of Commons in response to the Westray coal mine explosion in Nova Scotia that killed 26 miners on May 9, 1992. The USW lobbied for nine years leading to the passage of the legislation in 2004.

**“It is inconceivable that not one company’s actions, or inaction, could be said to be criminally liable.”**

The Westray legislation was intended to hold corporate executives, directors and managers criminally responsible for workplace deaths. Since the law was enacted in 2004, approximately 9,000 Canadians have been killed on the job, yet not one corporate executive, director or manager has faced a single day in jail. With that number of worker deaths, it is inconceivable that not one company’s actions, or inaction, could be said to be criminally liable.

Key changes being sought by the USW’s *Stop the Killing – Enforce the Law* campaign include:

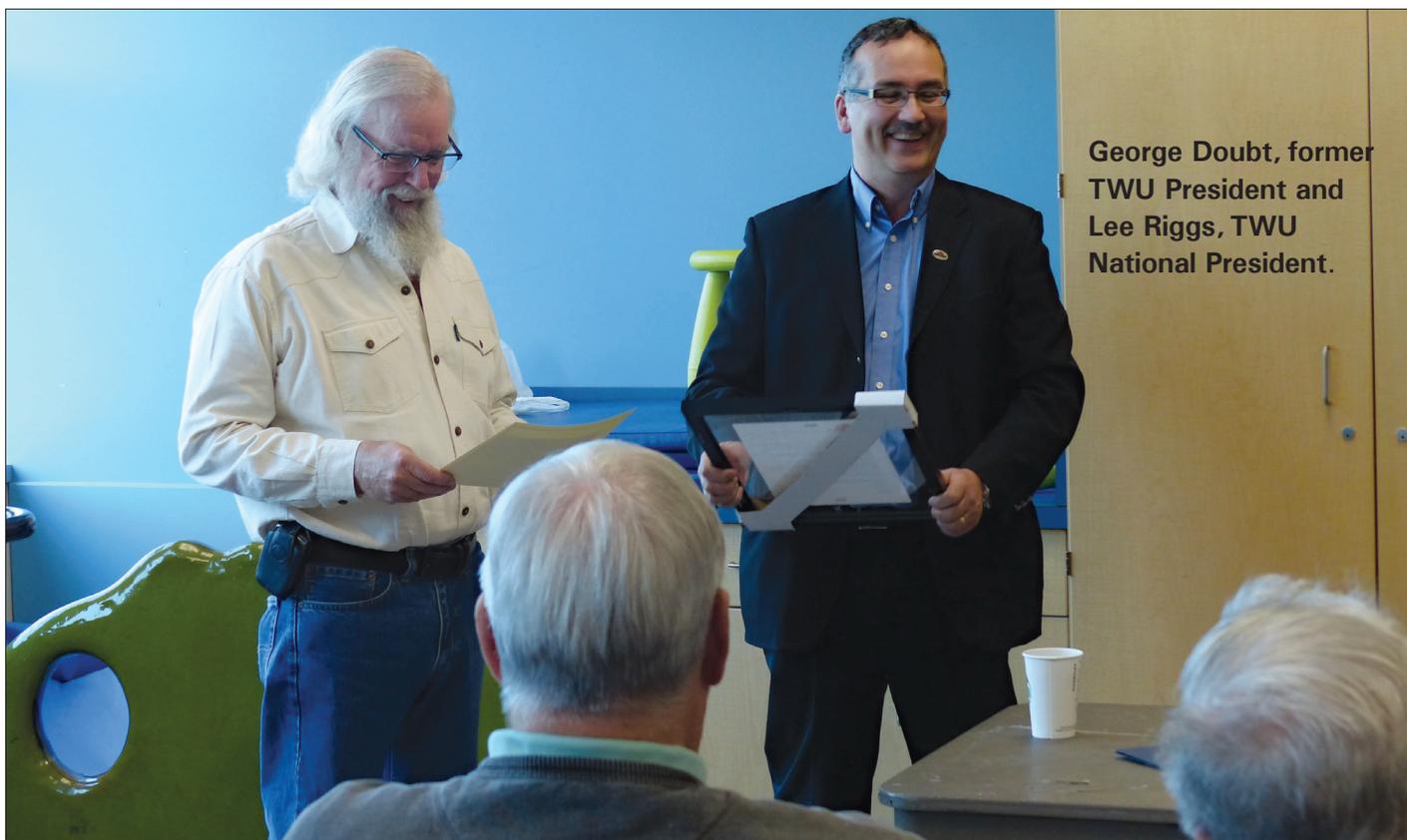
- **Education, training and direction** for Crown attorneys to apply the Westray legislation;
- **Assigning dedicated prosecutors** the specific responsibility of handling workplace health and safety fatalities;
- **Education, training and direction** for police services to apply the Westray legislation;
- **Greater coordination** among health and safety regulators, police and Crown attorneys so that regulators are trained to reach out to police when there is a possibility that criminal charges under the Westray legislation are warranted.

Show your support and help end the killing of innocent workers.

Visit [www.stopthekilling.ca](http://www.stopthekilling.ca) to watch a short video and sign the petition.



View from National Executive Council table at Special Convention 2013 in Gatineau, Québec.



George Doubt, former TWU President and Lee Riggs, TWU National President.

## A Letter of Thanks to the Former National President of the TWU

November 22, 2013

Dear Brother Doubt,

The TWU, and myself personally as your successor, would like to thank you for over 40 years of dedication as a trade unionist.

The TWU is a stronger union thanks to your unparalleled commitment to building a stronger and more vibrant future for our union and for the overall good of the labour movement.

The legacy that you have left behind is your wisdom as a Telecommunication Workers Pension Plan (TWPP) trustee, board member of Concert Properties, and TWU National President, during which you have bettered more lives than you will ever know.

For the better part of seven years you served as president, during which time you demonstrated an unwavering hand at collective bargaining against Telus.

You led this union in the right direction towards securing a brighter future for the membership. You had the perception to see the slow erosion of labour legislation and workers' rights and foresaw the importance of strengthening our union by forming strategic alliances with the United Steelworkers and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, a

vision which now is recognized throughout the membership and strongly supported.

Your thoughtfulness and attentiveness to the challenges of workers embodies the true essence of the labour movement. You are remembered fondly by your peers as a storyteller with the ability to bring to life both the trials and victories of the working class world round.

You have been inspirational to your members and colleagues and, for me personally, you are a mentor who continues to provide me with insight.

I am truly proud to have you as my brother.

In Solidarity,

Lee Riggs,  
National President, TWU

## A letter to the membership

# Brothers and Sisters in the LGBT Community Need Our Support



Steve McWhirter

To the members of the TWU National Executive Council,

I would like to thank National President Lee Riggs for assigning business agents Tamara Marshall (locals 50 & 60) and Jenn Bucholtz (locals 2, 3, 51 & 60) to participate in the Vancouver Pride Parade and Festival this past summer as well as Vice-President Ivana Niblett for her support with funding.

That being said, I would like to say that I am very disappointed in the overall national participation in the various Pride events around the country. It's not that I don't appreciate how busy schedules get, but the

**"It is important that as unionists and activists we unite against oppression of the basic human rights of any minority."**

consistent lack of attendance demonstrates that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) issues are not a priority. We should be demonstrating, with the rest of the labour movement, that we care about gender equality and follow in the example of Jim Sinclair (President of the BC Federation of Labour) and NDP politicians such as the former Jack Layton. It's a fact that if we as unionists/activists get complacent on anything, we will lose the gains that society has fought for.

I believe we often take for granted that in Canada, especially here in B.C. Lower Mainland, there is generally an accepting and liberal attitude towards minorities. However, I have witnessed discrimination against the LGBT community here in Vancouver that would shock most of our members. It is unfortunate that I must remind the membership that discrimination is alive and well today. If we have become complacent in our activism for the LGBT community, assuming that the world has become more accepting, then recent worldwide attacks on homosexuality should serve as a harsh reminder.

Zimbabwe's president, Robert Mugabe, has been vocal in the criminalization and punishment for homosexual activities. Then there are Russia's draconian new laws on homosexual "propaganda," which has stirred up controversy as the Winter Olympics are soon to be hosted in Sochi, Russia. Both athletes and celebrities have refused to attend the 2014 Winter Olympics in support of the LGBT community, and sponsors of the event are facing backlash as well. It is important that as unionists and activists

we unite against oppression of the basic human rights of any minority.

I suspect that some individuals might be uncomfortable with the idea of homosexuality, but participating in the parade or a rally does not mean that you belong to the LGBT community. It means that you're in favour of equal rights for all. It means that you defend our right to exist without discrimination.

Please consider how the lack of participation at various Pride events is interpreted by the LGBT community and the example it sets for our membership. I would like to leave you with this poem by German pastor, Martin Niemoller, which I feel illustrates why it is so important that we stand unified in showing our support for the LGBT community and all minorities facing discrimination.

First they came for the **communists**,  
And I didn't speak out because I  
wasn't a communist.

Then they came for the **socialists**,  
And I didn't speak out because I  
wasn't a socialist.

Then they came for the **trade  
unionists**, And I didn't speak out  
because I wasn't a trade unionist.

Then they came for the **Jews**,  
And I didn't speak out because I  
wasn't a Jew.

Then they came for the **Catholics**,  
And I didn't speak out because I  
wasn't a Catholic.

Then they came for me, And there  
was no one left to speak for me.

In Solidarity,

Steve McWhirter, Local 51

## Unions coming together for the 2013 Fort McMurray Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo's Annual Santa Parade.

# Brothers and Sisters Come Together to Spread Holiday Cheer



**CUPE 2157 MEMBERS:** Trish Reid, Emily Hicks – representing Wood Buffalo and District Labour Council.

TWU Local 210, Fort McMurray, supported the Wood Buffalo and District Labour Council (WBDLC) in the 2013 Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo's Annual Santa Parade.

TWU Local 210 graciously donated materials and labour to help make the parade a success. This included banners with images from the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) Together Fairness Works campaign on a lighted stand, built by TWU Local 210 Secretary-Treasurer Ken McPherson.

Brothers and sisters from the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), United Nurses of Alberta (UNA) and Unifor built and staffed the float

for the annual evening parade. Many hours were spent on preparation, organizing paperwork and insurance by Heidi Gould of the UNA and secretary for the WBDLC, Karli Matthews of CUPE and many others who donated time and money to the cause.

The public reacted positively to the family event, demonstrating comradery and solidarity with the labour movement.

It is the advocacy and support of labour organizations like the WBDLC, Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) and the CLC that provides fairness, safety and security in the work place for workers.

Regrettably WBDLC President Steve Kelly could not attend the parade, stating: "Due to work commitments I was unable to attend this great event. Thanks to all the brothers and sisters who contributed to make it a grand

event. Events like this showcase how local groups can come together and contribute; they are the corner stones of labour councils' and union foundations. Fairness and team work creates solidarity."

The council would like to extend a special thanks to Keyano College and its president

**"Events like this showcase how local groups can come together and contribute; they are the corner stones of labour councils' and union foundations. Fairness and team work creates Solidarity."**

and CEO Kevin F. Nagel, for the use of the facilities that aided in a more efficient set up and teardown of the float. The council also extends special thanks to Brother Barritt Wilson, Unifor 707a, for the use of his truck, trailer and time. The WBDLC appreciates and thanks all of the brothers and sisters who were involved in the event.

*Submitted by Brother Ken McPherson, Telecommunications Workers Union, Local 210 – Secretary-Treasurer Wood Buffalo and District Labour Council – Membership Chair*



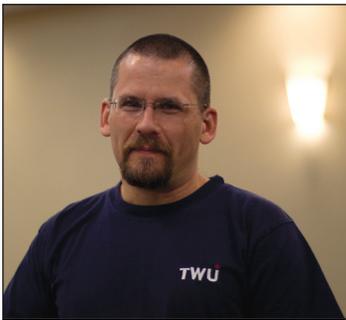
Jennifer Bucholtz, Business Agent for Burnaby at the Sign the Accord Rally 2013.



TWU Vice-Presidents Ivana Niblett and Betty Carrasco; Lee Riggs, TWU National President; John Hockley, Ontario Business Agent; Kevin Rerrie, Local 502.



Sergeant at Arms Widmarc Innocent, Local 602 at Special Convention.



Colin Brehaut, Business Agent for Interior BC at Special Convention 2013.



Delegates from Local 502 at the Ontario Federation of Labour Convention 2013. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Kevin Rerrie, Brenda Forward, and Michael Bertumen.



Hans-Woosly Balan, Business Agent for Québec at Special Convention 2013.



Ken Louie, Local 10 at Special Convention 2013.



Merger Selection Committee, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Dave Michie, Bruce Kennedy, Dave DiMaria, Betty Carrasco, Hans-Woosly Balan, George Doubt, Brenda Forward.



Steve Lewis, Local 3 at Special Convention 2013.



Isabelle Miller, Business Agent for Québec at Québec Federation of Labour Convention 2013.



Keller Reeves, Local 60; Leader of the BC NDP Adrian Dix; Perry Pasqualetto, Business Agent for Burnaby.



Ron Palmer, Business Agent for Edmonton, Alberta at TWU Convention 2013.



# Letters of Appreciation

## The UFCW Extends Thanks to TWU Members for Support During Strike

November 5, 2013

Good day,

The last year has been a very busy time for United Food and Commercial Workers Canada(UFCW) Local 401. We have been busy building a campaign around Superstore bargaining that was intended to prepare our members for the real possibility of strike votes and even a strike. With high turnover, a large component of part-time workers, and the typical fear people have when faced with battling a billionaire boss, we had our work cut out for us. But knowing the fight we were going to be faced with, we began our work in earnest to keep our members informed and engaged at every step of the bargaining process throughout the year.

In the end, our efforts to show Loblaw that we were serious about our members' bargaining goals fell on deaf ears and they forced us into a strike, albeit a short one.

We want to take a moment to extend, on behalf of all our staff, our most sincere gratitude and thanks for spreading the word and encouraging your staff and activists to not only boycott Loblaw, but come and visit us on the line when our members needed it most. Visits, donations, letters to Galen Weston Jr. and Loblaw demanding justice for Alberta's workers, and mor-

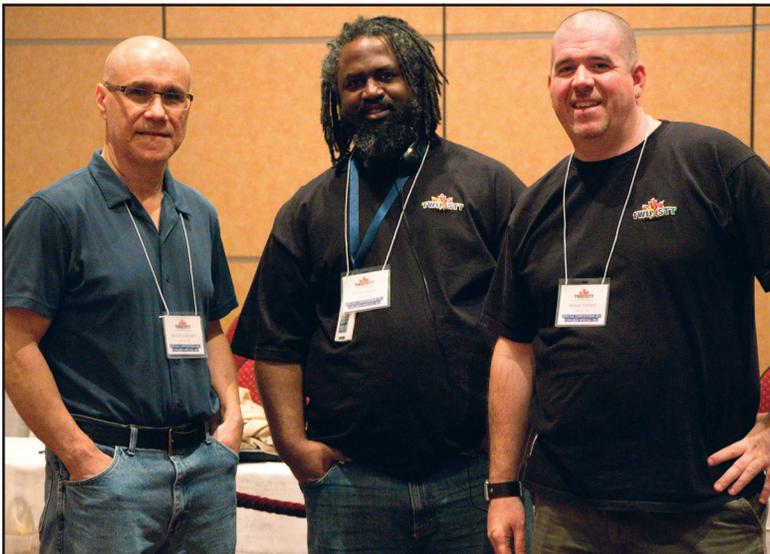
ale boosting were all key to a solid campaign and maintaining solidarity during our short strike. Our members reported to us that they were simply overwhelmed by the generosity of yours and other unions during our short strike.

We had numerous reports from picket lines every day and it became very clear to us that we had a well oiled machine that allowed us to continue bargaining into the wee hours while management's heads spun at the efficiency with which the picket lines were impacting their business and their reputation. This picket line reaffirmed to us that organized labour in Alberta is strong and once again, always comes together to fight even the worst of the deep-pocketed, greedy employers, which in Alberta are not in short supply sadly. We have to pick our battles wisely and the time was ripe for our Superstore & Liquorstore members and with your support, we could not be more proud of what has been accomplished.

Thank you again for all that you have assisted us with. It has made a huge difference to not only the approximately 8500 Superstore & Liquorstore 401 members, but all in the industry who will benefit from the standards being raised as a result of this win.

In Solidarity,

Douglas O'Halloran, President  
Theresa McLaren, Secretary Treasurer  
UFCW Local 401



Rocco Visconti, Local 503; Kevin Rerrie, Local 502; Brian Turner, Local 502.

Thank you for the retirement package I just received from the TWU. It is very much appreciated. Thank you for the cash gift from the Benevolent Society and the honorary lifetime membership. It has been my pleasure to work with the brothers and sisters at Telus for the past 34 years. I am very appreciative of those who stand strong and make life better for everyone who is employed by Telus.

In solidarity,

Allen Monson, Local 204

Dear TWU:

Thanks ever so much! I really appreciate my \$1,000.00 retirement gift. Thanks again! (It was a long wait since my buy-out in the Campbell River operator service department: 10 years, 4 months + 8 days!!)

Carole Hentze, Local 35

## BRITISH COLUMBIA Burnaby Head Office

5261 Lane Street  
Burnaby, BC V5H 4A6  
PHONE: 604-437-8601  
FAX: 604-435-7760

## Kelowna

#403-1630 Pandosy St.  
Kelowna, BC V1Y 1P7  
PHONE: 250-860-5025  
FAX: 250-860-6737

## Prince George

#102-3645 18th Avenue  
Prince George, BC V2N 1A8  
PHONE: 250-960-2220  
FAX: 250-563-2379

## ALBERTA

Calgary  
#402-5940 MacLeod Trail SW  
Calgary, AB T2H 2G4  
PHONE: 403-237-6990  
FAX: 403-802-2381

## Edmonton

#1280 – 5555 Calgary Trail NW  
Edmonton, AB T6H 5P9  
PHONE: 780-444-6945  
FAX: 780-488-6911

## ONTARIO

Scarborough  
#901-10 Milner Business Court  
Scarborough, ON M1B 3C6  
PHONE: 416-506-9723  
FAX: 416-506-9722

## QUÉBEC

Westmount  
#540-4060 Ste. Catherine St. W.  
Westmount, QC H3Z 2Z3  
PHONE: 514-788-8811  
FAX: 514-788-8813

## TW PENSION/BENEFITS

#303-4603 Kingsway  
Burnaby, BC V5H 4M4  
PENSION: 604-430-1317  
BENEFITS: 604-430-3300  
FAX: 604-430-5395  
WEBSITE: [www.twplans.com](http://www.twplans.com)



Hello,

I spent 10 years in Calgary Network before moving to Medicine Hat in the winter of 1990. In the late 90's when the vote to become served by the TWU came down some opposition was received. Retired brother John Skraba and myself decided enough was enough and we were going to become TWU members. John was a long time member and officer of the IBEW in Medicine Hat. He signed the first card and I signed the second card. We mailed our new cards and dues to the head office in Calgary. We were rewarded with Alberta Local 201. I have now retired from Telus Network in Medicine Hat, Jan. 12, 2013, after 31 years of service. I wanted to thank Ivana for all of her support over the years. I will miss those debates we always seemed to have at our local meetings. Thank you for the gift and plaque from TWU.

Regards,

David Worth, Local 201

To My Sisters & Brothers,

Please accept our heartfelt gratitude from my family and me for your generosity and well wishes.

Thank you,

Tom and Hilary Penko  
Local 205

Dear Amor and the Columbia Institute Selection Committee,

I am writing to thank you for your generous \$1000 Telecommunication Workers' Union Scholarship. I was thrilled to learn of my selection for this honor and I am deeply appreciative of your support.

I am currently majoring in Mathematics at the University of the Fraser Valley with hopes of attending the University of British Columbia to finish my degree as a secondary school teacher. The financial assistance you provided will be of great help to me in paying my educational expenses, and it will allow me to concentrate more of my time on studying. Attending the University of British Columbia has always been a dream of mine, and thanks to you, I am one step closer to attaining that goal!

By awarding me the Telecommunications Workers' Union Scholarship you have lightened my financial burden which allows me to focus more on the most important aspect of school, learning. Your generosity has inspired me to help others and give back to the community. I hope one day I will be able to help students achieve their goals just as you have helped me.

Sincerely,

Larissa Kowalski

## THE TRANSMITTER

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Secretary-Treasurer: MICHAEL THOMPSON

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Photography Contributors: ETTA HALL, DAVE DIMARIA,  
JIM ORFINO, KEN MCPHERSON

[www.twu-stt.ca](http://www.twu-stt.ca)

[editor@twu-stt.ca](mailto:editor@twu-stt.ca)

PN: 40022297

Return undeliverables to: TWU Circulation,  
5261 Lane Street, Burnaby, BC V5H 4A6

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