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# **PSAC North Regional Council Activity Reports 2018**

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May 29, 2018

Regional Council Meeting Teleconference

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# Report of the Regional Executive Vice President

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February – April 2018

## Political Action and Mobilization

**Phoenix:** On February 28<sup>th</sup> PSAC North took part in the Burnt by Phoenix rally, standing in solidarity with PSAC brothers and sisters across the country. We continue to keep members updated on the Phoenix issue through our communications tools like social media, website, newsletter and other means.

## Regional Committees

There are currently 19 out of 27 regional committees operating in our region. PSAC North continues to be committed to recruiting committee members, strengthening the work of the committees and ensuring consistency across the territories. A drive to fill the remaining 8 committees is underway.

## Collective Bargaining

**Arctic Bay:** The bargaining team continues to work with the employer on behalf of the 19-member bargaining unit to reach a tentative agreement and to avoid labour disruption. The main focus is to reach agreement on wages and an increase to the Northern Allowance that is fair and comparable to neighbouring hamlets. The PSAC North office continues to support the component office to provide communications materials that will gather support in the hamlet for workers.

**City of Whitehorse:** PSAC North worked closely with the Yukon Employees' Union component to reach tentative agreements for the City of Whitehorse, a unit with 293 members, and Whitehorse Transit workers, a unit with 35 members. Ratification votes were held April 22 and April 26, 2018 with overwhelming support for the new agreements from both groups.

**Northern Safety Network Yukon:** A unit of 4 members. A tentative agreement was reached in March and ratified with overwhelming support on March 1, 2018. A four-year term with economic increases of 1.75%, 1.75%, 1.5% and 1.5%. Improvements were made to Special Leave access and Sick Leave to care for ill dependents and family members. No concessions or changes in bargaining unit composition were made. The new collective agreement will expire on December 31, 2021.

**Offshore Recruiting Services Inc. (ORSI), formerly NTCL:** A unit of 17 members. A tentative agreement was reached in March and ratified with overwhelming support on March 28, 2018. Economic increases of 2% and RRSP contribution increase of 1% as well as increase in the Northern Living Allowance. The new collective agreement will expire on March 31, 2019.

**Fort Providence Hamlet Council:** A unit of 11 members. A tentative agreement was reached in January and ratified with overwhelming support on January 25, 2018. The new collective agreement will expire on June 30, 2020.

**Salvation Army - Yellowknife:** A unit of 33 members. A tentative agreement was reached on March 15, 2018 and ratified on March 20, 2018. Economic and Vacation Travel Assistance increases of 1.25%, 1.5% and 2% over 3 years. Employees will earn 25% more sick leave and will have access to eight more hours of Personal and Family Leave. The new collective agreement will expire on March 31, 2020.

**Pond Inlet Housing Association:** A unit of 19 members. A tentative agreement was reached in March and ratified with overwhelming support on March 8, 2018. Economic Increases of 1.25%, 1.25% and 1.5%. Improvements include a bilingual bonus of \$1,500.00, doubling the plug-in allowance, and a two-year pilot project to try a December shutdown. The new collective agreement will expire on March 31, 2020.

**GNWT:** While progress remains slow, negotiations continue for members of the Government of the Northwest Territories who are bargaining for a new collective agreement. We remain confident that the determination and dedication of our members and staff will eventually lead to obtaining fair deals that benefit all members in our Northern communities.

**Hay River Housing Authority:** A tentative agreement was reached on January 17, 2018 providing for a 3-year contract with economic increases of 1.75%, 1.5% and 1.5%. In addition, a new economic premium for stand-by pay has been agreed to and acting pay for employees who are asked to act in an excluded position will receive a new acting premium of 10%. Other highlights include updated language in the agreement and improvements in bereavement leave, vacation leave and lieu time banking. The agreement was ratified on January 18, 2018 and will expire on March 31, 2020.

### **Campaigns and Community Involvement**

**Child Care Campaign:** The time for affordable, Universal Child Care is Now. Our office remains active in ensuring that universal child care service is provided throughout the North. We are working to find partners in the North who will support lobbying the territorial and federal governments to come up with a plan that will help cut child care costs for working Northern families.

**Healthy Apple:** We continue to work with communities to adopt the Healthy Apple campaign and support food banks in need. Because food prices across the North continue to rise, PSAC North is leading this ongoing campaign to ensure that food banks are equipped to meet the needs of families.

**No Place for Poverty Coalition:** PSAC North continues to serve an integral role in the diverse ranks of the coalition this year by attending regular meetings.

**Moose Hide Campaign:** PSAC North continues to be a strong proponent of the Moose Hide Campaign, garnering more signatures of support and distributing Moose Hide patches to visitors to our office. This ongoing campaign encourages Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Men to stand up against violence towards women and children.

**Living Wage Campaign:** Postcards for Northern residents to sign and send to their Premiers are being distributed. The postcards will indicate their support for a Living Wage. We look forward to working with community partners in pressuring our northern governments to better support our low-income workers.

**Folk on the Rocks and Alianait Arts Festival:** PSAC North is a supporter of the Arts in the north and proudly partners with this year's festivals, helping to share music, dancing, family activities, arts and cultural experiences with the people of the north.

#### Other updates

**Staffing:** Theresa Baird is now the Assistant to the REVP North and Yusur Al-Bahrani has joined the REVP's team as the Political Communications Officer.

Respectfully submitted,



Jack Bourassa  
Regional Executive Vice-President, North



Jack at the North Caucus meeting, PSAC National Convention

## Itinerary Highlights

February 2018 – April 2018

Date	Event	Location
Feb. 5	RSCC Meeting - GNWT	Yellowknife
Feb. 5	RSCC Meeting – Baker Lake	Yellowknife
Feb. 6	RSCC Meeting - NTCL	Yellowknife
Feb. 6	Regional Council Meeting	Yellowknife
Feb. 9	RSCC Meeting – Baker Lake	Yellowknife
Feb. 11-17	AEC & NBoD Meetings	Ottawa
Feb. 18-24	NEGO Pre-Convention Bargaining Meetings	Ottawa
Feb. 14	RSCC Meeting – City of Whitehorse	Yellowknife
Feb. 16	RSCC Meeting – City of Whitehorse	Yellowknife
Feb. 27	RSCC Meeting – City of Whitehorse	Yellowknife
Feb. 28	Burnt by Phoenix Rally	Yellowknife
Feb. 28	National Anti-Bullying Day Event	Yellowknife
Mar. 7	Regional Council Meeting	Yellowknife
Mar. 22	RSCC Meeting – City of Whitehorse	Yellowknife

Mar. 23-25	AEC Meeting	Ottawa
Apr. 9	Yukon Pride Committee Meeting Guest	Yellowknife
Apr. 11	RSCC Meeting – City of Whitehorse	Yellowknife
Apr. 13-19	City of Whitehorse – Strike Action	Whitehorse
Apr. 18	Regional Council Meeting – via Teleconference	Whitehorse
Apr. 20	AEC Conference Call	Yellowknife
Apr. 27- May 5	PSAC National Triennial Convention	Toronto



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## Report of the Yukon Health & Safety Committee Chair

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### Health & Safety Committee goals:

- Representatives of the committee may request invitation to attend other PSAC North committee meetings to enhance networking
- Explore the options to deliver a short workshop to make natural cleaning products
- Promote health and safety through the Yukon Employee Union newsletter and electronic media
- Identify how the PSAC Domestic Violence awareness program will be communicated to members, Sister Williams will be attending the PSAC training in Ottawa mid June
- Identify how to educate members on Cannabis in the workplace, rights and responsibilities
- Explore ways to support Labour day event at shipyards park

### The Day of Mourning/Injured Workers Memorial

- The PSAC Yukon Regional Health & Safety committee was invited to speak at the event. The theme is Domestic Violence and Harassment; Not part of the job. Saturday, April 28 at 1230 at the tent in shipyards park.
- Canadian statistics for 2016: 904 fatalities; 301 Injury related; 603 Occupational disease related {Occupational diseases include Asbestosis, Black Lung, Silicosis, bad air quality, etc.} Prepared by Naresh Prasad





The Whitehorse STAR, Monday, April 30, 2018

YUKON 5

# Yukoners mark Day of Mourning

By STEPHANIE WADDELL

Star Reporter

With flags throughout the city at half-mast, Yukoners gathered Saturday at the permanent workers' memorial at Shipyard Park for a somber ceremony honouring those who have lost their lives or suffered injuries on the job.

Saturday marked the National Day of Mourning, with the event in Whitehorse being one of many held across the country.

The ceremony featured a traditional welcome from elder Billie Giqua of the Kwakwaka'wakw First Nation. This followed an honour guard and colour party featuring members of the Whitehorse Fire

Department and RCMP.

Justin Lemphers, the president of the Yukon Federation of Labour, then made the opening statement, pointing to the sentinel marking the important day.

"This year we have been joined by a sentinel bearing the Day of Mourning standard," Lemphers said. "Our sentinel is Mr. Kent Winterbottom, an emergency medical services worker."

"He is standing in tribute for this year's National Day of Mourning theme: 'Violence and harassment, not part of the job.' As an emergency responder, Mr. Winterbottom has seen the aftermath of what happens when harassment escalates into violence."

Lemphers then highlighted a study showing many workers have experienced harassment or violence in the workplace, much of which is mist and may only be reported anonymously.

Following Lemphers' opening address, Dianne Williams, who chairs the regional health and safety committee for the Public Service Alliance of Canada North, addressed the crowd.

She shared her personal experience in dealing with workplace harassment, noting it started off very subtle and intensified as time went on.

"When my co-worker used a different tone of voice with me, I said nothing," Williams recalled.

"When she would use condescending remarks and exclude me from conversations, I thought I was being personal."

"The behaviour became more aggressive, and I was sure this was harassment. Once I had the courage to speak up and address it, I thought it would end, although this didn't change anything," Williams told those on hand.

"I went to management and they decided to have the situation mediated. Unfortunately, the mediation never happened, and it was swept under the rug."

"The unresolved situation had a lasting impact on the workplace environment," Williams said.

"Within a few months, I resigned for medical reasons and mental health. This changed my economic freedom, my social interaction and my personal reality."

Workplace and domestic violence does not discriminate, she said.

Williams recalled a co-worker who came to work bruised, asking others to screen calls from a woman who called him many times through the day or dropped by unexpectedly.

"When I asked him what was going on, he had a story about being clumsy or distracted," Williams said.

"Imagine how this was impacting his self-esteem and productivity. This is a tale of domestic violence – a worker's personal life can have an impact in the workplace."

"And you may question, why is this a concern? We see the concern in the case of Lori Dupont, a registered nurse who had worked in the Yukon and moved to Ontario."

Dupont had ended a toxic relationship with Dr. Mark Daniel, who worked at the same hospital. Co-workers and management were aware of the fear and abuse," Williams told her listeners.

"One day, Daniel stabbed Dupont to death in the hospital recovery room while she worked. He then administered a lethal injection to himself."

"Two avoidable deaths occurred because there was no plan or support in place."

Dupont's family members did not want her death to be in vain. They succeeded in lobbying for changes to legislation to address domestic violence impacting workplace."

"Domestic violence and harassment take away a person's self-esteem and safety many times, resulting in workplace violence or victim suicide," Williams said.

"Please use your eyes to see what is happening around you, your voice to speak up, and always follow through."

"One act of kindness can change



DIANNE WILLIAMS

**"Please use your eyes to see what is happening around you, your voice to speak up, and always follow through."**

- Dianne Williams

an obstacle to a triumph; the objective to a goal; the end result will be a safer, more positive work environment for everyone. That achievement in the end is our greatest success."

Also addressing the crowd was Ron Rousseau, the president of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers Local 852.

While violence and harassment are common for many workers across the country, Rousseau said, it's preventable, and should never be seen as "just part of the job."

On this Day of Mourning, unions are asking the federal government to do more to prevent and stop workplace violence and harassment, he added.

"We can and must lead by example in preventing violence and harassment in the workplace," Rousseau said.

"We must challenge it when we see it. Employers should work with health and safety committees to develop policies and programs in co-operation with workplace health and safety committees, offer training to prevent workplace violence."



RON ROUSSEAU

including harassment, identify workplace and develop an action plan for addressing them; address domestic violence at work by conducting workplace risk assessment, offer planning and safety training, and ensure supports are in place for workers experiencing domestic violence."

The federal government can help prevent workplace harassment and violence, Rousseau added.

It can do so by making it safe for workers to report through anti-retaliation measures and whistle blowing protection, hiring and training more federal health and safety officers, and in recognizing domestic violence as a workplace hazard.

Rousseau pointed to the case of Eric Donovan, who died from a heart attack in 2013 that was linked (following a lengthy legal battle) to workplace bullying he had experienced.

"Everyone has the right to a safe workplace, free of bullying and harassment," Rousseau said.

"Everyone has the right to return home to their loved ones, grandchildren, grandparents, brothers and sisters."

Candles were then lit honouring workers who died or have been injured on the job and a moment of silence followed.

Pledges – for government, municipalities, workers, employers and health care providers – were then made emphasizing the importance of safe workplaces before Saturday's ceremony ended and flowers were laid.

Last year saw one worker death in the Yukon.



Star photo by VINCE PEDRONI

**A SOMBER MOMENT** – Justin Lemphers, the president of the Yukon Federation of Labour, places a red rose and the black candle representing the one Yukon worker who died on the job in 2017.

**Your Health! Your Way!**

Are you living with a chronic condition, or supporting someone who is?

Join a new online webchat series that offers support to those with a chronic condition, or supporting someone with a chronic condition.

**Wednesday May 2 – June 6, 6:00 – 8:00 pm**

**Whitehorse Health Centre**

Free of charge. For more information, contact your local health centre.

**Yukon**

## Educational brochures: (Canadian centre for occupational health & safety) \*\*

- Cannabis in the workplace (Health Canada facts – posted on PSAC North website)
- Sitting at Work
- 10 Healthy workplace habits

## Committee executive members: Dianne Williams - Chair

Luanne Kotelko - Secretary; Khairul Alam – Secretary; Carrie Lynne Robinson – Director

Congratulations to Sister Brenda Pilatzke-Vanier on the birth of her daughter, April 1, 2018.

Regards,

Dianne L. Williams  
Chair, PSAC Yukon Regional Health & Safety Committee

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## Report of the Whitehorse Women's Committee Chair

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### Activities since the last Regional Council meeting

#### Women's Committee

February 1 – Regular Meeting & Package of Starter Baskets for Women's Shelter

March 8 – Special Meeting Brenda elected as Treasurer / Regular Meeting on International Women's Day

April 19 – Regular Meeting with Guest Rachel Grantham Y010 to discuss Gender Based Violence at Work

April 29-May 4 – Chair attended PSAC National Convention along with YEU delegates.

May 10 – Bear Witness Day Teddy Bear Picnic at noon #JordansPrinciple

May 23 – Special Meeting to elect a Secretary

- 25 Starter Baskets were delivered to the Women's Transition Homes on February 3

- Responded to Request for input into LGBTQ2S+ Legislative Amendments

- Responded to Request to attend IWD Tribute at Yukon Legislature

- Added names to Letter to Prime Minister re. National Action Plan

Addressing Violence Against Women

#### Councils (North Regional & Yukon Area)

December 20 – Yukon Area Council meeting

January 15-19 – North Regional Council Meeting and Strategic Planning

January 31 – Yukon Area Council meeting

February 6 – Regional Council Conference Call

March 7 – Regional Council Conference Call

March 22 – Yukon Area Council Special Meeting

April 18 – Regional Council Conference Call

May 29 – Regional Council Conference Call

PSAC Child Care Campaign – launching June 2018

Chair North Regional Council Vision committee

Chair North Regional Council Economic Insecurity committee

Member of North Regional Council Member Engagement committee



## Challenges and attempts to overcome them

- Low participation in committee
  - Planning events with a more social outreach to make connections with women from workplaces.
  - Collaborate with YAC and other committees to get new engagement tools out to locals and on union bulletin boards.
  - Special meetings and guests to fill positions and discuss issues of interest to the members.
- Committee connections
  - Regular emails/visits to PSAC regional office staff to keep up to date.
  - Chair attending YAC and North Regional meetings
  - Facebook page used to share local and union women's issues.
  - Partner with local women's organizations to increase effectiveness



## Future plans

- write the Commissioner in support of making ASL Translator position Permanent (still Temporary after 6 years, even though funding for ALS Program is now permanent)
- Address Gender Based Violence in the Workplace for August 26 Women's Equality Day
- Strategies to engage women in the communities
- Lobby for Yukon to adopt new national Maternity Leave provisions.



In Solidarity,

Teresa Acheson

Chair, Whitehorse Women's Committee





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## Report of the NWT Women's Committee Chair

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The NWT Women's committee held meeting on January 23th, February 20th, March 6th, and April 17th.

On March 28th I attended the NHRC Women's Working Group by teleconference and sent minutes to both Women's Chairs in Nunavut and Yukon.

Attended Area Council Meetings January 11th, February 13th, and April 11th.

### **Projects we completed over the last few months:**

#### March 8th - International Women's Day

We put together toiletries bags for all women's shelters in the NWT. Bags were sent to the following places: Inuvik, Tuktoyaktuk, Hay River, Fort Smith, YK Betty House, YK Alison McAteer House, and Centre of Northern Families. A total of 130 bags were giving out. We also had a few members attend an event at the Legislative Assembly on International Women's Day.



*Anne Juneau, Debbie Ribchinsky, Director of Allison MacAtier House and Dawn Skinner*



*Nancy Lamb, dropping bags off at Lynn's Place in YK*

#### A big thank you to our sponsors:

Public Service Alliance of Canada North

Union of Northern Workers

Northern Territories Federation of Labour

Local 33 - Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority (including those in Fort Resolution and Lutsel K'e) and the Salvation Army.

Local 2 - Fort Smith Region - GNWT employees

Local 345 - City of Yellowknife

Adam Dental Clinic

Frame Lake Family Dental



*Geraldine Penney and Samantha Moynes*

**On March 9th**, we attended a rally to support the UNW; this event was to support the GNWT, NTPC, and Hay River H&SS during their Collective Agreement deliberations.



We also donated toiletries to the Salvation Army in Yellowknife. They are always so grateful to receive the toiletries, so I encourage all of you, when traveling, to collect your unwanted toiletries and donate them to some place in need in your own community.

**On April 28th**, we attended the Day of Mourning at the Legislative Assembly to remember workers who were killed or injured on the job. This was organized by the Northern Territories Federation of Labour.



*Nancy Lamb, Simone Cummings, Dawn skinner and myself at the National Day of Mourning Ceremony*

**Upcoming Projects:**

From May 12th to 13th we have a booth at the YK Trade Show to promote all PSAC committees, Childcare, Thirsty for Justice, and Living Wage campaigns.

In September, we have a guest speaker night (Rebecca Thompson).

On October 4th, we will sponsor and attend the Sisters in Spirit walk.

On December 6th, we will sponsor and attend the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women.

**Upcoming Meetings:**

- May 15
- June 19
- September 18
- October 16
- November 20 (AGM)

I will be attending the PSAC pilot workshop on recognizing the signs of domestic violence in the workplace from June 15 to 17 in Ottawa.

In closing, I would like to thank my awesome executive and all ladies that attend our meetings, we are growing slowly but we are growing our committee together.

I would also like to thank the PSAC North Staff for all your guidance and patience.

Respectfully submitted,

Geraldine Penney

Chair, NWT Regional Women's Committee

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## Report of the Northwest Territories Access Committee Chair

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### Activities

We took part in the Arctic Winter Games by volunteering. We obtained buttons with the help of PSAC that draw attention to Access. We thought we had a plan but things went a different direction. I took a video of the 20 buses that left Ft Smith for the opening of the AWG in Hay River and it was viewed more than 58,000 times. As a result, I was interviewed 3 times. Each time I was asked about the Access button. Great for getting the message about Access out there but it was Alaska, Northern Alberta and the Sami team's people that interviewed me. I'm still calling it a success.

The other main thing we have been doing is helping a friend of the family that has dementia and was taken advantage of by his own family. To the point he lost his house and was living in an old vacant house with no power or water. This house had been empty for 15 years. It's mildew and mold infested. We with the help of GNWT Social Services have him safe, healthy and waiting for a room in the dementia wing at Northern Lights Special Care Home, here in Smith.

Currently he is living in the hospital here in Smith. One person but it's another victory. I might add he was taken in at the hospital December 27 from that house. He never would have survived the winter. We're pretty proud of what we did and are doing. Thank you PSAC for giving me the chance to take these things on with the backing of PSAC. Otherwise I'm just a guy off the street who making demands. And much thanks to our Access members.

No real obstacles or problems. I find I can make things happen if I choose.

We as a committee have not made any plans for the next little while. I'm very proud of the work we have done in our first year. The above mentioned items and the \$11,000 package we put together for the NWT Disabilities Council fund raising auction show our commitment and caring. And the truth is it's a hard thing to deal with at times. At our upcoming meeting we will test the waters as to the mood going forth.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Gudeit

Chair, Northwest Territories Access Committee

