

## Prairie Region Council Rep Reports December 2020

Position	Name	Rec'd by Deadline
REVP	Marianne Hladun	Yes
Regina AC Rep	Satinder Bains	Yes
Racially Visible Persons Rep	Neha Channan	Yes
Winnipeg Area Council Rep	Nestor Galarnyk	Yes
Southern SK Rep	Tim Hubick	Yes
Alternate REVP	Frank Janz	Yes
DCL Rep	Michelle Lang	No
Northern AB Rep	Stasi L'Hirondelle	Yes
NW Manitoba Rep	Heather McKinnon	No
Edmonton AC Rep	Dragana Ristivojevic	Yes
Southern AB Rep	Kirsten Strachey	Yes
GLBTQ2+ Rep	Steve Sukhbir	Yes
Lethbridge AC Rep	Krysty Thomas	Yes

Indigenous Peoples Rep	Sandra Ahenakew	No Report
Calgary AC Rep	Alec Goertzen	No Report
Young Workers Rep	Glenn Hollyoake	No Report
Saskatoon Area Council	Evelyn Jackson	No Report
Westman AC Rep	Glen Johnston	No Report
SE Manitoba Rep	Gus Mardli	No Report
RWC Rep	Leila White	No Report
Prince Albert AC Rep	Pennie Young	No Report

**REPORT FROM THE REGIONAL EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT, PRAIRIES  
TO THE PRAIRIE REGION COUNCIL  
DECEMBER 2020**

This reporting covers the period from the last PRC meeting in February.

Sisters, Brothers and friends,

This continues to be an unusual time and I know we are all adjusting to this new COVID reality. It's been very challenging for me not to be able to interact with members in person. I never thought that we would be running ratification votes for a potential 19,000 members all online. I also never thought that we would have to cancel our typical Labour Day activities because they go against basically every public health order.

This time has been even more trying because the Prairies are going through some significant challenges. In Manitoba, we have a premier who has been asleep at the wheel throughout the pandemic. The few times Pallister has taken action, it was to attempt to buy seniors' votes with direct cash payments, threaten Manitoba's public sector and universities with layoffs and significant cuts, respectively, and shame low-wage workers who lost their jobs due to the pandemic shutdowns for accessing CERB. Recently, after skyrocketing COVID-19 cases and becoming the province with the most cases per capita, Manitoba's government finally took action and applied some of the most strict public health orders in the country. Manitobans are still waiting to see the effect of those measures.

In Saskatchewan, we have government that is so apathetic to the concerns of parents, teachers and school administrators they waited until the start of classes to announce additional funding to support schools adjust to the pandemic and compared substitute teachers to yoga mats as things that weren't budgetary priorities at the moment. Following the provincial election in October, we still don't have any assurances on the future of our crown corporations – where PSAC represents members – are being threatened. Saskatchewan, like the other Prairie provinces, is facing some of the highest rates of COVID-19 cases per capita in the country. Despite that, the provincial government has been slow to act and is leaving Saskatchewanians with more questions than answers.

In Alberta, contempt is the word that most accurately describes the government's attitude towards working people and public services. Kenney's UCP government is criminalising dissent with Bill 1; waging war on Alberta's labour movement, devaluing young workers with their new, lower youth minimum wage, enabling employers to have exemptions from minimum labour standards, and is essentially putting an end to overtime pay with Bill 32. The UCP government also had the gall to attack Alberta's health care professionals and put forward Bill 30, a piece of legislation that opens the door to privatization of Alberta's healthcare system in the middle of a pandemic. With Bill 47, Kenney and his government are weakening workers compensation on the backs of injured workers.

This is all on top of government health policy that is more focused on supporting businesses in the province than the health and safety of Albertans. Currently, bars, restaurants, and casinos are still open, even when Alberta is reporting more active COVID-19 cases than Ontario – a province three times the population of Alberta. I'm genuinely scared for Albertans as the government puts plans in place for field hospitals before considering further community restrictions.

Throughout our unstable realities, the pandemic hasn't stopped the work, only shifted the way that we must respond.

### **REVP Activities**

On January 16 & 17, 2020, as the AEC officer assigned to the PA and Common Issues teams, I participated in the PA PIC Mediation session. A frustrating two days of waiting but it couldn't be said that the team wasn't ready and available for negotiating.

As many units were in the process of strike votes or preparing for the beginning of strike votes, I attended several events including a UNE Alberta initiative for Parks locals to start planning for strike votes. A great session with many unique yet effective ideas.

I attended as many strike prep sessions in the Winnipeg office as possible to talk about the process of bargaining. It was so encouraging to see the boardroom full at each session. I attended the Agriculture Local 50056 AGM in person, UHEW 50012 AGM in person and UNE SSO 30040 AGM by phone.

On January 30<sup>th</sup>, I participated in an RSS with the Winnipeg Airport Authority Firefighters bargaining team and was able to sit in caucus with them on March 5<sup>th</sup> to further develop our strategy. It has been a difficult round of bargaining but the team is committed to a fair deal for their members.

On March 11<sup>th</sup>, I attended a meeting in Regina with Negotiator Seth Sazant with members of UHEW 40721 to discuss concerns about taking possible strike action. While attendance was low, it was a respectful and productive conversation and provided an opportunity for members to hear directly from the negotiator as to what has transpired at the table and how we got to the point of requesting a strike vote.

Since the shutdown of the office, we have used a multitude of platforms to stay connected and active. In addition to regular and as needed calls with the AEC and NBOD, I have been in regular communications with DCL employers and separate employers. I attend a weekly call with Casino Regina management (was twice weekly initially before the layoffs), as needed calls with CAHRD management and local executives, as needed with University of Winnipeg and Brandon University. There has also been a number of virtual meetings regarding MOU's for several of our airport units.

### **Regular Communication with PRC and National Officers**

In order to have good communication, be informed about local struggles and solicit feedback during the pandemic, there have been bi-monthly meetings separately with

the Prairie Region Council and Prairies National Officers. The national officers have expressed that it is helpful to hear the reality in other workplaces. Members of the PRC appreciated being able to connect as a group. These regular meetings took a break for the summer starting in July and we continued with these meetings in the fall.

### **Canadian Museum for Human Rights**

In early June, former staff came forward online through #CMHRstopying following online support expressed on the museum's Facebook page for the Black Lives Matter protest in Winnipeg. Former staff detailed harassment, discrimination, inappropriate practises as well as being silenced and pushed out of their jobs. Staff were also forced to censor gay content in the museum for specific groups. We were saddened but unfortunately not shocked to hear of these stories. The PSAC Local at the museum has been raising these issues with museum management since at least October 2018. As recently as two weeks before the information was made public, the Union made proposals in contract talks with the museum to ensure anti-harassment training for all museum staff – including management – proposals that were rejected by the museum.

At the time, PSAC-Prairies called for the museum to accept proposals to proactively work against harassment and discrimination at the bargaining table. We continue to call for this. Additionally, PSAC-Prairies and UNE urged the Canadian Museum for Human Rights to not extend Mr. Young's term as CEO. Mr. Young resigned as further allegations of ignored sexual harassment became public. A new CEO, Isha Khan, former Executive Director of the Manitoba Human Rights Commission, was recently appointed. Staff are hopeful with this appointment however there are many staff that still exist within the management team that helped foster the environment that lead to the public allegations.

### **Meeting with Staff of Minister Guilbeault, Minister of Canadian Heritage**

The Chief of Staff from the Minister's office requested a meeting to discuss the CMHR issues. Myself and Brother Kevin King, UNE National President participated. We were asked to provide as much information as possible on the reality within the Museum and also asked to provide what we saw as solutions. They were aware of many of the issues and we received a commitment that the Minister was committed to affecting change within CMHR both internally and externally.

### **Win on Federal Assistance for Museum Workers**

Working with Brother Silas, PSAC Prairies and NCR issued a joint letter to the Minister of Canadian Heritage urging federal assistance for national museums during the pandemic. On Friday, June 19, 2020, the Ministry released new program information called the Museums Assistance Program (MAP). I am grateful that Minister Guilbeault listened to our call and took action to ensure that our national museums weren't left behind.

## **Response to Paul Samyn's comments criticizing Service Canada Employees**

Paul Samyn, one of the Winnipeg Free Press editors, writes an introduction piece to their daily COVID-19 newsletter, and has been since the start of the pandemic.

However, with one of his introductions in June, he chose to give readers the impression that workers at Service Canada were on vacation while Canadians couldn't get access to the vital services that they needed. Nothing could be further from the truth.

In response to these comments, an op-ed was written in response, and when it was clear the Winnipeg Free Press wasn't going to publish our response, it was posted to the website, social media accounts and shared through our MailChimp newsletter. Our response was well received by members. Labour allies in the province were also reached out to for support. The response can be read on the PSAC Prairies website.

## **Regional Highlights**

### **Convention 2021 Preparation**

Plans for the 8<sup>th</sup> Triennial Prairie Region Convention were well underway. The Prairie Region Council met in Calgary February 27<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020 to prepare the budget and resolutions for convention committees. Convention committees which included PRC and also some component national officers were held February 29<sup>th</sup> and March 1<sup>st</sup>.

Registration was closed and we were in the process of seeking nominations for the Prairie Voice Awards. However, due to COVID-19, the work around Convention preparation was suspended. In the Spring it was confirmed that the 2021 PSAC National Triennial Convention will be postponed until 2022 and the PSAC Regional Conventions and PSAC Component Conventions will be postponed until 2021. Prairie Region Convention has been rescheduled to June 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021 in Regina, SK.

### **Strike votes**

There were a number of strike vote meetings planned as well as worksite visits prior to the shutdown. These included an event in Calgary with National President, Chris Aylward. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, all meeting and events were cancelled. It is unknown when an in-person outreach event such as this will be able to be rescheduled.

### **Closure of all Regional Offices**

On Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020, staff were notified that all regional offices in the Prairie region would be closed for at least two weeks and that staff were being asked to work from home. Staff have continued to service members during the physical office closure. The offices are not scheduled to open up until at least June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

### **Health and Safety Webinars**

Since the office closure, the Prairies region has been hosting weekly webinars, with a focus on health and safety. The Health and Safety Representative was taking the lead initially, however, we have expanded the development of the weekly webinars to all regional office staff as well as the topics of the webinars. On May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Chris and Magali joined the Prairie Region webinar for an interactive session, where members were able to hear directly from their National Leadership and ask questions.

List of Webinars topics and dates:

- **Webinar #1:** COVID Pandemic and Your H&S Rights at Work (March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1016 attendees).
- **Webinar #2:** COVID-19 Pandemic and the Role of Representatives (March 31<sup>st</sup>, 64 attended).
- **Webinar #3:** Union Strategies for Mental Health & Well-Being (April 9<sup>th</sup>, 159 attended).
- **Webinar #4:** Ergonomics and Working From Home (April 16<sup>th</sup>, 77 attended).
- **Webinar #5:** Mental Health Challenges (April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 76 attended).
- **Webinar #6:** What is Work/Life Balance During a Pandemic? (April 30<sup>th</sup>, 73 attended)
- **Webinar #7:** Connect with your National Leadership (May 7<sup>th</sup>, 149 attended).
- **Webinar #8:** PSAC 101. An Introduction to Your Union (May 21<sup>st</sup>, 74 attended).
- **Webinar #9:** Returning to Work Following the Pandemic (May 28, 156 attended).
- **Webinar #10:** How the Federal Public Service Pension Plan works! (June 4, 381 attended)
- **Webinar #11:** Get Involved. It's Your Right! (June 11, 57 attended).
- **Webinar #12:** Simple Steps to Being a Better Ally (June 18, 41 attended).
- **Webinar #13:** Preventing a Grievance, Strategies for Early Conflict Resolution (June 25, 36 attended.)

### **Still Here for Canada Campaign**

PSAC members have made significant contributions to the COVID-19 relief efforts, consistently gone above and beyond, adjusting quickly to emerging federal priorities. The Prairies REVP office continues to work with regional offices and the national office on the development of the Still Here for Canada campaign to showcase PSAC's members contributions to help Canada get through this unprecedented situation. Three members have made submissions so far. As we actively promote the campaign and reach out to members individually, we hope for more participation in the region.

### **PSAC Post-Doctoral Researchers Developing COVID-19 Vaccine**

In a state-of-the art research lab at VIDO-InterVac, nestled in the University of Saskatchewan campus, a team of PSAC post-doctoral researchers are inching their way closer to a viable vaccine for COVID-19. This lab received federal research dollars in one of the early federal relief announcements. Members from DCL Local 40004 are working directly on the vaccine for COVID-19.

### **National Public Service Week**

This National Public Service Week was an important time to recognize the membership for their hard work and significant contributions to Canada's pandemic recovery. PSAC Prairies placed a print advertisement with the Winnipeg Free Press and Post-media in Saskatchewan and Alberta including the Calgary Herald, Edmonton Journal, Regina Leader Post and Saskatoon Star Phoenix. Additionally, radio ads ran in all three Prairie provinces including CJOB 680 AM, CFPG 99.1 FM The Peggy, BOB FM, and NCI Spirit

of Manitoba in Manitoba, CJME 980 AM, CKOM 980 AM, and CHQX 101.5 FM in Saskatchewan, and CFFR 660 AM, CHQT 880 AM, CFRV 107.7 FM, and CFWE (rebroadcasts in 35 communities) in Alberta. A virtual solidarity party was hosted during NPSW but was advertised to all our membership. Regional op-ed pieces were published in the Calgary Herald, Edmonton Journal and through the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – Manitoba.

### **Continued Closure of all Regional Offices**

Staff in the region have continued work from home throughout this reporting period and it is unknown when and how the regional offices will be able to safely reopen. The COVID-19 active case count varies significantly from region to region. Staff have done an exceptional job responding to this new work reality while continuing to provide excellent service to the membership. The regional office closures have been a challenge for many staff with respect to certain tasks and have negatively impacted the region's committees and area councils.

### **COVID-19 Membership Impact**

#### **Casino Regina**

Due to public health orders, Casino Regina had to close to the public. All members were laid off with the exception of maintenance and security staff. An MOU was signed with the employer regarding the process of recall to ensure that members who were without childcare or lived with someone immune-compromised could refuse callback during the pandemic period. The Casino re-opened with limitations and some members are temporarily working as security to ensure that health orders are observed. In early October, a restricted number of table games will be allowed to open which will allow more members to return to work.

#### **Airports**

The impact of COVID has been significantly felt with our airport members. Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon, Regina and Winnipeg airports have all had layoffs both temporary and permanent. Regina airport and Protec (firefighters at Saskatoon airport) have recalled some members.

#### **Universities**

At the start of COVID, our academic members moved to virtual work and were able to complete their terms. The impact is being felt more so now that there are less contracts for the fall term as the universities move to a primarily virtual model. We continue to push for health and safety protections for our members and to find ways to connect with members now that some may not even be physically in the same city.

### **Mobilization**

#### **Phoenix Anniversary Rally**

To recognize that PSAC members have been dealing with the consequences of the Phoenix Pay system for four years, members in Edmonton, Calgary and Winnipeg held

rallies. We received a respectable amount of media coverage for all three events and good levels of membership and ally participation.

Additionally, other activities took place across the Prairies to mark the day. Members from UTE Local 30027 in Lethbridge mourned yet another anniversary of the failed Phoenix pay system. Members from UNDE locals 30907 and 30910 rallied at the front gates at CFB Suffield with informational handouts on phoenix and the damages agreements. This activity was supported by UNDE local 30912 who are not directly affected by Phoenix. They also delivered letters to Member of Parliament, Glen Motz's Office. Local media covered the activity. A few locals marked the day with a cake, including AGR Local 30049.

### **Local 40004 Tuition Fee Increases Campaign**

At the beginning of February, the local was made aware of substantial tuition fee increases planned for the University of Saskatchewan graduate students. This was released through a report from the Dean of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. The tuition fee increases planned were 10 percent in every year for 5 years for domestic students with a 6.9 percent differential increase for international graduate students. These increases would have placed an undue burden on PSAC members, negatively effecting the financial stability, food security and mental health of our members.

A letter was written to Dr. Trever Crowe, Interim Dean, College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies by myself on behalf of Local 40004 members urging him to reverse course as well as a press release that garnered media attention from the Star Phoenix. A rally as well as quarter-page advertisement in the Star Phoenix was planned, however both were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the end of in-person classes on campus. It was thought that the timing of such an ad would be inappropriate and membership mobilization would be impossible.

Currently, the University of Saskatchewan has put on hold the majority of tuition fee increases, including the increases planned for a significant part of our membership. This struggle against tuition fee increases will likely continue in the future, however it is impossible to tell when that may be at this moment.

### **Local 40005 - Support Casino Regina Workers During COVID-19**

After closing their doors on March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Casino Regina workers anticipated layoff notices. However, due to the mobilization of Local 40005 and the PSAC Prairie region, SaskGaming committed to paying workers until April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020. This was a significant victory for members who saw their livelihood dried up practically overnight.

There were regular phone calls with SaskGaming as the pressure continued to extend this commitment beyond that deadline. Unfortunately the Crown Corporation decided on its own to issue temporary layoff notices to 549 unionized staff and 42 non-union employees effective April 3<sup>rd</sup>. The union was made aware of this information on an afternoon phone meeting on March 26<sup>th</sup>.



PSAC-Prairies mounted an online campaign calling on the provincial government to intervene and overturn the decision of Casino management. This included a letter writing campaign through NewMode which saw roughly 400 letters of support for Casino Regina workers sent to the province and SaskGaming as well as media campaign. Unfortunately, those calls did not impact SaskGaming's planned layoffs, however, members will still retain their benefits.

### **University of Saskatchewan's researchers join PSAC Local 40004**

Following an organizing drive that began in fall 2018, the Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board certified PSAC as their bargaining agent on April 14, 2020 following a vote by secret ballot which confirmed strong majority support for unionizing. We are proud to welcome 120 research associates, professional research associates, professional associates and research scientists employed at the University of Saskatchewan.

The next steps for the Local include developing concrete bargaining proposals, electing a bargaining committee and sending a notice to bargain to the University of Saskatchewan to negotiate a first collective agreement.

### **Ratification Votes for PA, TC, EB, and SV groups as well as PSAC-UTE**

Over the summer and fall, PA, TC, EB and SV groups of Treasury Board, CFIA and Park Canada employees as well as PSAC-UTE reached tentative agreements with their employers. All groups ratified their collective agreements.

Due to the public health recommendations, all ratification votes had to be conducted online. For the Treasury Board, ten webinars are scheduled for the PA group, six webinars for TC group, three for the EB group and six webinars for the SV group. Seven webinars are scheduled for PSAC-UTE members, four webinars for CFIA and five webinar sessions for Parks Canada members.

At the start, there were some challenges with members signing up for the wrong webinar. However, some changes were made to the way the webinar information was advertised and that seemed to help with member's confusion. Overall it is a new process and more succinct messaging will be required for any future virtual processes.

### **Solidarity and Political Action**

#### **MFL Call for Presumptive WCB Coverage for Workers with COVID-19**

At the beginning of the pandemic upheaval, the Manitoba Federation of Labour called for the Government of Manitoba and the Workers Compensation Board to immediately move to provide presumptive coverage for all Manitoba workers who are infected with COVID-19 through the course of their employment. We promoted this call using PSAC Prairies social media accounts and wrote a letter in support of this call to the Minister of Finance, Hon. Scott Fielding.

## **AECEA ask for Alberta Government to Provide Assistance to Early Learning Centres**

The Association of Early Childhood Educators of Alberta asked for PSAC-Prairies to support their ask for the Government of Alberta to provide urgent assistance to early learning centres in Alberta. While the provincial government's announcement of deferrals for tax payments and the federal government's offer of interest-free loans are welcome, they are insufficient to help organizations meet immediate and ongoing costs. We signed on to their call and contacted Minister Schulz on behalf of AECEA's call.

## **MOFA and CFS-MB Campaign Against up to 30 percent cuts to Manitoba Universities**

PSAC represents workers at the University of Winnipeg, Local 55600, who are markers, tutors, lab demonstrators, teaching assistants, English language instructors, research associates and research assistants as well as Brandon University, Local 55601, who are student assistants, research assistants, academic residence assistants, student ambassadors, and tutors. The proposed cut would dramatically impact our members working conditions as well as their ability to obtain work. We used PSAC Prairies social media accounts to promote the campaign and petition calling on the Manitoba government to reverse its plan. We also wrote a letter of support for the campaign to the Manitoba Premier, Hon. Brian Pallister and the Minister of Economic Development and Training, Hon. Ralph Eichler.

## **Resource Support for the Manitoba Health Coalition's Webinars**

PSAC-Prairies is a member of the Manitoba Health Coalition. We received a request from the organisation for the use of our webinar tool, GoToWebinar. So far, we have supported three webinars for the organisation, and they have expressed interest in using the webinar tool in the future.

## **MFL International Women's Day Breakfast**

Every year, the Manitoba Federation of Labour hosts an International Women's Day breakfast at the Union Centre. PSAC-Prairies purchased four tickets to support this year's breakfast.

## **Day of Mourning in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta**

With a state of emergency in effect in all three Prairie provinces leaving us unable to congregate, the Day of Mourning was forced to look very different than in previous years. This year, all activities took place online. In Manitoba, the Manitoba Federation of Labour livestreamed a ceremony on Facebook. In Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress – Prairies collaborated on a video that sought community members in Saskatchewan to each read the names of people who were killed or injured at work, or who died of a workplace illness within the last year. In Alberta, the Edmonton and District Labour Council produced a video as well. We shared all contributions to the day on social media. We hope that next year we will be able to come together in person.

## **Saskatchewan Provincial Election**

On October 26, 2020, Saskatchewan went to the polls in one of the first elections to take place in Canada since the beginning of the pandemic. In order to support the membership as they make their decision on how they will vote, an election leaflet was mailed to members with information on key issues that affect working people, including keeping our Crowns public. Casino Regina, PSAC Local 40005, is a Crown corporation and it is in the best interest of our members for it to remain a Crown.

## **Partnership to Defend Public Services – Manitoba**

Unions in Manitoba successfully challenged Bill 28, the *Public Services Sustainability Act*. The bill was passed by the Progressive Conservative government in 2017 and was found unconstitutional in June. It mandated a two-year wage freeze for public-sector workers as each new collective agreement was negotiated, followed by a 0.75 per cent pay increase in the third year and one per cent in the fourth. The Pallister government has filed an appeal and affected unions continue to meet with legal counsel.

## **Manitoba: Bill 16, Labour Relations Amendments Act**

Instead of listening to the court ruling, Premier Brian Pallister gave Manitobans Bill 16, *The Labour Relations Amendments Act*. Unfortunately, Pallister has learned nothing from the June ruling and instead has chosen to engage in a petty and cynical attack on working people and their unions. There are many changes, however here are some of the highlights: Bill 16 makes it easier for bad employers to fire striking workers, to decertify a union, to reject union certification and removes the requirement of employers to notify workers for an upcoming technological change, eliminates Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), and targets the public sector unions that took him to court.

## **Alberta: Bill 1, 30, 32, and 47, Defend Workers Rights Campaign**

In the spring, Kenney's UCP government released Bill 1, the *Critical Infrastructure Defence Act*, which threatens freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. Bill 1 dramatically effects unions' ability to legally picket during a strike by deeming trails, roads, alleys, squares, sidewalks, boulevards, ditches "essential infrastructure" where legal picketing could be punishable by fines and jail time. AUPE has filed a legal challenge to the bill. PSAC will be there to support in any way that is necessary.

The goal of Bill 32, *Restoring Balance in Alberta's Workplaces Act*, it to tip the scales of power in the workplace towards employers and corporations and away from working people. It wages war on Alberta's unionized workers and undermines foundational rights all workers have through the *Employment Standards Act*.

Here are some highlights to Bill 32: allowing for easy employer access of union financial statements through new financial report guidelines, requiring that unions determine the amount or percentage of the union dues are spent on "political activities and other causes" and require that union members opt-in to consent to the union's political work, removing timelines for union certification, restricting workers from picketing at a second location, making it illegal to delay those crossing a picket line for even a minute, relaxing work permits for 13 and 14-year-olds, creating a new lower youth minimum wage,

reducing layoff pay and time necessary for shift changes, and forcing averaging overtime arrangements onto workers, basically eliminating overtime pay in the province. The Alberta Federation of Labour have expressed their intention to enact an legal challenge to Bill 32 and PSAC is working with them to support that challenge.

Bill 30, *the Health Statutes Amendment Act*, is an omnibus bill that opens up Alberta to increased privatization of healthcare and lays the ground work for two-tiered health care in the province. The UCP government has made important regulatory changes and are looking to ramp up private surgical facilities and contracting out of surgeries, a privatization plan that constantly fails to provide better, more cost effective service to Canadians. The long-term effects on Alberta's healthcare system could be devastating. PSAC will keep the board updated on any more developments as well as the ways that the union can help in the struggle to keep healthcare in Alberta public.

Bill 47, *Ensuring Safety and Cutting Red Tape Act*, not only make worksites less safe by cutting OHS, but it also makes it more difficult for injured workers to get WCB benefits, makes it easier to kick injured workers off benefits and focuses on saving employers money on the backs of injured workers.

### **SOLIDARITY RALLY for USW Local 9074 Members**

In June, the employer at Fat Cat Wear Parts, USW Local 9074, in Selkirk, Manitoba locked out its workers. The 60 members of the Local were shut out of the plant at midnight on June 19, after the company rejected the union's proposal for a two-year wage freeze without any further discussion or attempt to bargain further. Frank Janz, alternate REVP and I attended a solidarity rally for the locked out workers, organised by the Manitoba Federation of Labour. The lock out ended on August 27 when members ratified the proposed collective agreement, achieving a wage increase that was approximately 50% higher than the offer rejected on June 19.

### **Resource Support for the Manitoba Health Coalition's Webinars**

PSAC-Prairies is a member of the Manitoba Health Coalition. We have been providing support to the organisation through the use of our webinar tool, GoToWebinar. So far, we have supported four webinars for the organisation, including one on September 9, 2020 on the topic of a senior's advocate for Manitoba.

### **Make Revera Public! A Virtual Town Hall**

On December 2, PSAC Prairies partnered with the Manitoba Health Coalition to host a virtual town hall to discuss PSAC's *Make Revera Public* campaign and hear directly from staff and family members affected by the consequences of private, for-profit long-term care homes like the ones owned by Revera Inc.

In Manitoba there have been two particularly egregious examples of the consequences of private, for-profit care. As of November 30, 2020, at least 382 residents and staff have been infected with COVID-19 at Revera homes, including Parkview Place and Maples. At least 69 residents have died. There is no room for profit in long-term care.

PSAC members are in a unique position to help and take action because most PSAC members contribute to the Public Service Pension (PSP) plan through their federal government pension contributions. PSP Investments is the sole owner of Revera, Inc., which is the second largest owner and operator of private, for-profit long-term care homes in the country.

There is currently a letter to the federal government that PSAC members and non-members can sign to take action. The next step up the ladder of engagement is calling their Member of Parliament.

### **UNDE Campaign – Uncover the Costs**

On October 26, UNDE and PSAC nationally launched a joint report, *In the Interest of Safety and Security: The Case for Ending the Privatization of Department of National Defense Services*. In order to follow-up the national launch with regional media outreach, regional press releases were drafted and sent out in each province featuring regional examples of the consequences of contracting out DND service. Membership engagement was also prioritized. A webinar for Prairies UNDE members featuring national officers from UNDE, June Winger, National President, Mona Simcoe, Vice-President, Manitoba and Saskatchewan and Brian Meakin, Vice-President, Alberta and the North was held on November 12.

Members were asked to participate in the campaign by signing a letter to the federal government as a first step, followed by calling their Member of Parliament to request a meeting on the campaign. Every MP across the Prairies received the report along with an introductory letter highlighting regional examples. Marianne Hladun, REVP, PSAC Prairies and Mona Simcoe, UNDE VP, MB and SK, had a productive meeting with MP James Bezan, Defence Critic for the Official Opposition.

For next steps in the campaign, UNDE Locals across the Prairies have been sent lawn and handheld signs to organise local (safe and socially distanced) actions. PSAC and UNDE have been meeting weekly to work together on the regional component of the campaign. We will continue to do so into the new year.

### **Development of Food Security Campaign**

Following a motion from the last PSAC National Convention to develop a campaign that tackles food insecurity in the North, PSAC Prairies is working together with regional offices in Ontario and the North along with the national office on the development of the campaign. There is no firm deadline of when the campaign will launch at this time.

### **Dec 6, National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women**

With the current state of COVID-19 in Manitoba, we continue to not be able to congregate. In order to recognize December 6 while following public health directive, the Manitoba Federation of Labour hosted a virtual memorial on the Friday before December 6. Unions and community partners across the province came together virtually to remember and mourn the fourteen women who were killed by misogyny at l'Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal as well as women who have been killed in Manitoba

over the last year. The Alberta Federation of Labour and the Calgary and District Labour Council hosted similar virtual events on December 6.

### **Negotiations**

The graduate employees bargaining unit at the University of Saskatchewan have continued to bargain virtually since the shutdown of online classes at the University. A tentative agreement was ratified in October.

Notice to Bargain has been issued for the Professional Research Associates at the University of Saskatchewan that became members of PSAC in April 2020. The University negotiator has requested a postponement to commence this set of negotiations.

A tentative agreement has been ratified for the Royal Canadian Mint Protective Services Officers (GSU) in Winnipeg.

A tentative agreement has been reached and ratified by UCTE Firefighters at the Winnipeg Airport.

Notice to bargain has been issued to CAHRD (DCL Local at Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development). Bargaining will be done virtually Dec. 7-9, 2020.

A tentative agreement has been reached for UHEW members at Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. Ratification will be conducted in December 2020.

Negotiations continue at the Canadian Museum of Human. The newly appointed CEO had asked for a short postponement in order to review our proposals before bargaining resumes.

Following ratification of a tentative agreement with DCL 40005 at Casino Regina, the employer refused to honor the signed minutes of settlement. All issues have now been resolved and the agreement has been signed and printed.

In addition to regular negotiations, we have been working with employers to clarify our interpretation of collective agreements and/or negotiating letters of understanding:

Several LOU's have been negotiated with the Royal Canadian Mint.

An LOU was reached with Saskatoon Airport Authority to keep members employed but doing different work. This has been extended.

An LOU was reached with Calgary Airport Authority to rescind some layoffs and return members to payroll through the employer wage subsidy. This has been extended.

An LOU was negotiated with Winnipeg Airport Authority for staff reductions and cost saving measures. Members rejected the LOU and there were some layoffs both permanent and temporary.

LOU's were negotiated with Edmonton Airport Authority for three bargaining units. Two units rejected the LOU and one accepted. There have been layoffs.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Hladun". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a stylized "H".

Marianne Hladun  
Regional Executive Vice-President, Prairies

**Satinder Bains**  
**Regina Area Council Rep**  
**Prairie Region Council December 2020**

In light of this unprecedented nature of the Covid-19 we have suspended nonessential meeting and gatherings, holding our Area Council and Human Rights meeting via Zoom. We too are front line workers as we work in our profession and dealing with our Union members whom are experiencing hardships in the workplace and at home.

In the last months I have been joining Area Council meeting via Zoom when I am available. Due to the environment we are in, I do not have too much to report.

I just to thank everyone for their hard work during this difficult times. Our PRC and Union could not function without you.

In Solidarity,

Satinder Bains

Regina Area Council Rep.



**Neha Channan**  
**Racially Visible Persons Representative**  
**Prairie Region Council December 2020**

Activities in my Official Capacity since March 2020:

Apr 16	PSAC National Human Rights Committee, Impacts of COVID-19 on Our equity group
Apr 21	PRC Update Call
May 5	PRC Update Call
May 28	PSAC Prairies, Returning to Work...Webinar
Jun 2	PRC Update Call
Jun 4	PSAC Prairies, An Overview of how the Federal Public... Webinar
Jun 10	All Committee/PRC/Staff Call via Skype
Jun 11	PSAC National Human Rights Committee Racially Visible Member's Working Group Call
Jun 16	PSAC Update Call
Jun 18	PSAC Prairies, Simple Steps to Being a Better Ally Webinar
Jul 20	PSAC, An Introduction to Anti-Racism for White Folks Webinar
Oct 8	PRC Update Call – Did not attend
Aug10	PSAC Ontario, Understanding and Confronting Racism Webinar
Nov 18	PSAC FB National Townhall Bargaining Update
Nov 30	All Committee/PRC/Staff Call via Zoom

With respect to the PRC Education Committee, an Education Forum was held on August 18<sup>th</sup> for respective Prairie cities. Due to personal reasons, I was unable to attend and participate the Edmonton forum. PSAC staff advised that the results would be compiled into a report to be distributed. To my knowledge, results have not been distributed to date.

In solidarity,

Neha Channan

**Nestor Galarnyk**  
**Winnipeg Area Council Rep**  
**Prairie Region Council December 2020**

Elected to PRC on June 17 from W.A.C. and placed into the Finance Committee.

Prior to the PRC, I contacted my MP Raquel Dancho (Kildonan-St.Paul) to discuss putting pressure on the Treasury Board on come to the bargaining table with a mandate.

Being a member of the bargaining team for the SV table I wrote an email to Treasury Board President Jean-Yves-Duclos and I did receive a response.

On July 20 went back to the bargaining table for several weeks, all done virtual which was not the easiest thing to do, but we did get a deal done.

Participated in Winnipeg Area Council virtual meetings:

June 17.

September 14.

November 17.

Participated in the Ratification Vote Webinar for the SV table:

September 9, 15, and 24

I did participate in several virtual meetings/webinar/teleconferences for PRC and general prairies groups, yet the most impacted one was July 8. Not only was it my birthday, but we lost Sister Sheilagh Hanson. She was different, unique and always on Sheilagh time.

Last, being in this pandemic I hope we all can make it out and one day see each other in person ...

Stay Safe.

Nestor

**Tim Hubick**  
**South Saskatchewan Geographic Rep**  
**Prairie Region Council December 2020**

Since our last meeting, our world has been set upside down. Do to Covid the way we do union business in Saskatchewan.

I had the opportunity to encourage memberships to attend webinars put on by the PSAC.

Due to Covid it has been a learning curve for or members to engage members has created challenged and silver linings it has allowed members who may not always be able to attend a face to face training or meeting a chance to attend.

I have attended all Area council and human rights meetings via no in person meetings.

Saskatchewan had their provincial election in which I encourage members to get out and make their vote count.

Southern Saskatchewan also saw many municipal elections and members were encouraged to get out and vote.

Due to Provincial restrictions we saw many of members of Casino Regina being laid off.

During the Covid mess it has taken it toll on the mental health of many of our members. With talking to members, I have been encouraging member to reach out. To supports in the community and the union.

One in persons event I did attend and was greatly moved by was I had the chance to visit the Tristen Durocher camp. This was the camp that Tristen was on a hunger strike to bring awareness of suicide and suicide prevention.

I do look forward to continuing to navigate and serve though this trying time.

In Solidarity

South Saskatchewan Geo Rep

Tim Hubick

**Frank Janz  
Alternate REVP  
Prairie Region Council December 2020**

I have supported the PSAC Prairie Region Council in all their events and activities that put forward our members concerns and issues to the government of the day and Canadian citizens at large.

I have enjoyed my time as the AREVP and I am proud of the things we have been able to accomplish as a council. I wish the next council success and I will always be there for my sisters and brothers to move the labour movement forward.

In solidarity,

Frank Janz AREVP

**Stasi L'Hirondelle**  
**Northern Alberta Geographical Rep**  
**Prairie Region Council December 2020**

So many things have changed since my last report due to the global pandemic of Covid-19. I want to start by saying that I hope everyone is staying safe and taking all necessary steps to protect both your physical and mental health. If anyone is struggling, and wants some resources, please don't hesitate to reach out to myself.

Since my last report, I have attended two zoom meetings for Prairie Region All Committee/PRC/Staff. These provide a great opportunity to share ideas and work towards building engagement amongst members. I've also joined some zoom training events. These events are available on the PSAC Prairie website and I encourage all members to login, watch the training sessions and become involved with your union.

As the pandemic continues, I fear more push back will happen from employers with regards to 699 leave. Members need to contact their components and stand in solidarity against such actions.

All the best for 2021, and as always, please reach out to me if you have any questions regarding my report or would like some assistance. I will endeavour to assist you to the best of my abilities.

In Solidarity,

Stasi L'Hirondelle

**Dragana Ristivojevic**  
**Edmonton Area Council Rep**  
**Prairie Region Council December 2020**

Since the COVID pandemic was announced, we have continuously been hearing “this is the new normal”. What is “the new normal”? The question we should be asking ourselves is what will our new normal be like? I myself have questioned how do we incorporate activism in “this new normal” when we are required to self-isolate and maintain social distancing. The fear of COVID-19 is a real deterrent from a large group of people coming out to mass rallies and is currently illegal. Issues are still not going away. All we have to do is read the newspaper, watch television or any social media. In the past, we heard the saying “the pen is mightier than the sword” and in today’s time we have modern technology. If we cannot physically meet, we need to compensate with mass communications such as continuing with video chat, webinars or something similar to maintain communication with our members. I miss the days where we capture the attention and show solidarity at rallies which were loud, holding our signs and waving our Union flags showing our discontent with government policies or with bargaining issues, etc.

As I am required to self-isolate, I am addressing the issues plaguing my own neighborhood and surrounding communities. The municipal elections will be held next Fall of 2021. Currently, homeless people were shoved into the Convention Center and many have caught the COVID. Homelessness has always plagued my neighborhood and surrounding communities which has constantly been ignored. I believe in “All Lives Matter”. Not only this but people are losing their jobs and homes which are adding to the existing problems. It sickens me to see individuals in search of food in garbage dumpsters. The increase in violence against women and children are rising; where once they could seek shelter from their abusers being at work or at school. We also need to be seen as supporting our medical personnel. They are all vital to each and everyone of us.

Even with 100 percent compliance and availability a vaccine program which is estimated to take over a year to fully implement. I encourage all of us whether we are unionized and/or non-unionized to think about an issue that pulls at their heartstrings and help with the fight. We are all activists at heart.

In Solidarity,

Sister Dragana Ristivojevic  
PRC Edmonton Area Council Rep

**Kirsten Strachey**  
**Southern Alberta Geographic Rep**  
**Prairie Region Council December 2020**

Due to the global pandemic the opportunities and ways to engaged have changed, as have I and my family. These past months have been filled with anxiety, information overload, cancelled events and uncertainty, not my usual way of living. This has taken a toll on me and although my commitment in representing members remains strong, I haven't been able to do most things on my to-do list. I am still seeking how I can be of service without burning out from all the online meetings or putting my health at risk.

I have attended numerous online meetings for the Alberta Federation of Labour. The UPC government has continued to make it clear that they are not a friend to workers, and it seems like there are too many fronts to fight. Being at the table of these passionate unionists still gives me hope that we can make a difference.

The AFL is also helping to align like-minded activists on the childcare front, creating a working group called ChildCareNow, which will be meeting later this month.

As always, in solidarity,

Kirsten Strachey  
Southern Alberta Geo Rep

**Steve Sukhbir**  
**GLBTQ2+ Rep**  
**Prairie Region Council December 2020**

I have participated in the PRC conference calls and facilitated online meetings for the Edmonton Human Rights committee. I am also on the Steering Committee for the National Equity Conference which has been put on hold due to Covid-19.

I am also part of the national LGBTQ2S + committee which has been doing diligent work in getting the New Flag designed and Planning for the national conferences in the future.

In Solidarity,

Steve Sukhbir



**Krysty Thomas**  
**Lethbridge and District Area Council Rep**  
**Prairie Region Council December 2020**

A lot has changed since my last report from February 2020. The operations of the Area Council have looked a little different since March 15<sup>th</sup>, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However we have not slowed down and continued to think of creative ways to serve our members and the community we work and live.

As VP to the Alberta Federation of Labour Executive Council, I took part in several COVID response conference calls. These discussions were centered on how Alberta workplaces as well as governments, both provincial and federal were responding to the COVID crisis. There was conversation on how to protect workers from workplace exposure to COVID as well as rolling out necessary supports to those affected by closures and lack of sick leave.

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, I had the opportunity to join a ZOOM call with NDP leader Jagmeet Singh and NDP MP Heather McPherson to discuss the labour movement within the context of the federal government. I asked the leader to push the current government to get back to the bargaining table and also reminded that Phoenix pay system is still not working for everyone.

May 15<sup>th</sup> was Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day. The Area Council signed onto an open letter to Alberta Minister Schulz, the Minister of Children's Services, calling on the Alberta government to provide the necessary funding needed for child care providers to remain viable during the COVID pandemic and beyond. As well as provide early childhood educators with better wages and working conditions.

The Area Council held an online meeting May 27<sup>th</sup> to brainstorm some summer actions taking into consideration the COVID restrictions that are now in place.

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, members of the Area Council attended a physically distanced protest and left chalk messages on the sidewalks of our local MLA. Messages we related to access to high quality childcare and protecting our public services.

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, members of the Area Council attended a protest at City Hall Protest Against Racial Discrimination in light of the Black Lives Matter Movement.

In recognition of National Public Service Week, the Lethbridge and District Area Council had a letter published in the Lethbridge Herald calling on the government to reach a fair collective agreement with our bargaining teams as well as provide adequate compensation for the Phoenix damages.

On July 13<sup>th</sup>, members of the Area Council attended a protest at City Hall to support a bylaw that bans conversion therapy within Lethbridge. A letter of support for the bylaw was also submitted to city council from the Regional Office. The bylaw was passed.

August 31<sup>st</sup> was International Overdose Awareness Day and members of the Area Council attended an event at City Hall. This day raises awareness of overdoses, reduces the stigma of drug use and drug-related deaths and acknowledges the grief felt by families and friends. This year August 31, 2020 also marks the closing of Lethbridge's only Supervised Consumption Site, along with other harm reduction-oriented programs. Lethbridge's SCS was the most accessed in all of North America and the closure will bring with it a spike in deaths that could have been prevented.

The Area Council also partnered with a local organization called Stitch it Forward to make 100 re-useable masks that were donated to vulnerable members within our community.

For Labour Day, the Lethbridge and District Labour Council did not host their annual Labour Day BBQ. The Area Council usually sets up a booth at this event as well as contributes cotton candy for this kids. This year the Area Council donated these funds to help support the Lethbridge Soup Kitchen for an entire month. Members of the Area Council volunteered their time on Labour Day to help serve meals that day.

The Kenney government has been taking Alberta in the wrong direction since they took office. They've attacked wages, overtime, worker rights, unions, fired thousands of teachers and education workers, are driving doctors out of the province and the list goes on. The AFL is organizing and connecting people who have had enough into Community Action Teams. Members of the Area Council have signed up to be leaders within Lethbridge Community Action Team. This group will help people come together and regularly participate in local actions to show our UCP MLA, Nathan Neudorf, what the government is doing is wrong and that we won't stand for it. There will be several more actions going forward leading up to the next provincial election.

Should you have any questions about my report, please contact me directly at [munnsk@gmail.com](mailto:munnsk@gmail.com) or phone 403.393.2688.

#### **Activities since last report:**

<b>Feb 26:</b>	PRC Finance Committee Meeting, Calgary AB
<b>Feb 27-28:</b>	PRC Meetings, Calgary AB
<b>Feb 29-Mar 1:</b>	Convention Committee Meetings, Calgary AB
<b>Mar 8:</b>	Women's Day Rally, Lethbridge
<b>Mar 10:</b>	Lethbridge Regional Women's Committee Annual General Meeting
<b>Mar 11:</b>	Lethbridge and District Labour Council Regular Meeting
<b>Mar 13:</b>	AFL Political Action Committee Conference Call
<b>Mar 18:</b>	AFL Conference Call – Covid Response Call #1

**Mar 23:** PRC Conference Call Covid Response  
**Mar 24:** All Prairie Labour Council Zoom Meeting  
**Apr 1:** AFL Conference Call – Covid Response Call #2  
**Apr 8:** Lethbridge and District Labour Council Regular Meeting (via Zoom)  
**Apr 9:** AFL Political Action Committee Conference Call  
**Apr 15:** AFL Conference Call – Covid Response Call #3  
**Apr 29:** AFL Conference Call – Covid Response Call #4  
**Apr 29:** Agriculture Union Human Rights Committee Conference Call  
**May 4:** PRC Finance Committee Conference Call  
**May 5:** PRC Conference Call  
**May 7:** Zoom call with NDP leader Jagmeet Singh and Heather McPherson  
**May 13:** AFL Conference Call – Covid Response #5  
**May 13:** Agriculture Local 30048 Regular Meeting  
**May 13:** Lethbridge and District Labour Council Regular Meeting  
**May 26:** Lethbridge and District Area Council Regular Meeting (via Zoom) #3  
**May 27:** PRC All Committee Call  
**May 27:** Municipal Election Planning Meeting #1  
**May 27:** AFL Conference Call – Covid Response #6  
**May 28:** Agriculture Union Human Rights Committee Conference Call  
**May 28:** AFL Political Action Committee Conference Call  
**June 3:** Municipal Election Planning Meeting #2  
**June 4:** Protest against Racial Discrimination  
**June 10:** Lethbridge and District Labour Council Regular Meeting  
**June 22:** Digital Pride Flag Raising  
**June 24:** AFL Conference Call – Covid Response #7  
**July 6:** AFL Webinar: Universal Childcare Now!  
**July 8:** AFL Conference Call – Covid Response #8  
**July 8:** Lethbridge and District Labour Council Regular Meeting  
**July 13:** Ban Conversion Therapy Rally, Lethbridge City Hall  
**July 13:** AFL Defend Worker's Rights Campaign Kick-off Webinar  
**Aug 12:** Lethbridge and District Labour Council Regular Meeting  
**Aug 31:** International Overdose Awareness Vigil, Lethbridge City Hall  
**Sept 7:** Labour Day – Soup Kitchen Volunteering  
**Sept 9:** AFL Political Action Committee Call  
**Sept 9:** Lethbridge and District Labour Council Regular Meeting  
**Sept 23-24:** AFL meeting of the Executive Committee and Council (via bluejeans)  
**Sept 23:** Lethbridge Town Hall with Rachel Notley and Shannon Phillips (NDP)  
**Oct 4:** Sister In Spirit Annual Candlelight Vigil  
**Oct 8:** PRC Conference Call  
**Oct 13:** Agriculture Local 30048 Regular Meeting  
**Oct 14:** Lethbridge and District Labour Council Regular Meeting  
**Oct 18:** Volunteer a Soup Kitchen in recognition of Person's Day  
**Oct 26:** Rally to support for hospital workers wildcat strike  
**Nov 9:** AFL Political Action Committee Call  
**Nov 17:** Agriculture Local 30048 Annual General Meeting

**Nov 18:** Lethbridge and District Labour Council Annual General Meeting  
**Nov 18-19** AFL meeting of the Executive Committee and Council (via bluejeans)  
**Nov 19:** Lethbridge Community Action Team – Lethbridge Leaders Call  
**Nov 24:** PSAC Webinar - 16 Days of Activism  
**Nov 28:** Municipal Election Planning Strategy Call  
**Nov 29:** Canadian Labour International Film Festival, Lethbridge (hosted by Lethbridge Regional Women’s Committee)  
**Dec 1:** Bill 32 Regulations Consultations meeting

**Upcoming:**

**Dec 3:** Bill 32 Update on Legal Strategy Meeting  
**Dec 4:** AFL Political Action Committee Call  
**Dec 6:** The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women Soup Kitchen volunteering  
**Dec 15:** Lethbridge and District Area Council Regular Meeting #4 (via Zoom)

In solidarity –

Krysty Thomas  
PSAC Lethbridge and District Area Council President and Representative to the PRC

## Late Reports

**Michelle Lang**  
**Directly Chartered Locals Rep**  
**Prairie Region Council December 2020**

Hello Fellow Workers,

WOW, what a time we are in!! I can say this pandemic has impacted everyone in so many ways! This is going to be a different type of report to say the least.

First Business....

### PSAC 40004

Graduate student workers have ratified a four-year collective agreement with the University of Saskatchewan.

Approved within this collective agreement are the best wage increases for graduate student workers in the country at 1%, 3%, 3%, and 3% over the four year period. Improvements to language on harassment and discrimination were achieved as well as much needed changes to the language around hours of work.

Provisions were added to cover maternity and parental leave, critically ill family leave and interpersonal and sexual violence leave. These changes bring the collective agreement in line with the *Saskatchewan Employment Act*.

The new collective agreement improves language around training provisions as well as disciplinary procedures.

A Memorandum of Agreement on Employment Diversity and Inclusion was signed which allows the union to consult and collaborate in ways which demonstrate a mutual commitment to EDI.

### PSAC 40005

Things at Casino Regina are not looking favorable for workers with the safety implications put on by the province. For example in a Shoppers Drug Mart you can have 148 people but in the casino that is 3 city blocks long we are allowed 30. I only say this because at the Casino, I can't believe I am saying this never mind typing it, the corporation is taking all the precautions and safety measures seriously. We have had one known positive case in October by a guest and it had zero transmission from what we were told. I don't foresee the corporation keeping all the staff on with only 30 guests for long, so we will be facing layoffs to some staff in the future. We still have around 75 staff members laid off since March. The relaying off of people is going to be detrimental to some of the member's mental health. I try to be there as much as I can but often think I need to do more. With this pandemic we have seen a lot of greedy and selfish people and that makes my heart hurt. We need to all stick together and realize we are all in this pandemic together but we are all dealing with separate storms. We need to be better and we need to do better.

Lastly,

I want to thank a few people. I want to thank Marianne, for her consistent work through this pandemic making sure we are all taken care of. Her texts and words have got me through some rough times. To PSAC, thank you for being there to help me represent my local and always having my back, I promise my fight has just started and I am looking forward to years more of fighting along with PSAC by my side. I want to thank Diane White, wow what a fighter!! She is a breath of fresh air and lets me just scream!! I want to thank Jessica Bonish from CEIU, she has seen many tears flow through my eyes, and sends me care packages of treats to lift my spirits, she is always messaging me to check in. I want to thank Dani Aubichon, I don't know what I would do without her check INS, She, herself has been laid off from the start and always caring about someone else before herself. There are far to many people to thank and I look forward to a time where we can all meet face to face and I can give hugs again. I love each and every one of you and I want to thank you all from the bottom of my heart for the things that you do,

Please Keep Safe and for the love of mankind please wear a mask!!

Solidarity,  
Michelle Lang

**Heather McKinnon  
North-West Manitoba Geographic Rep  
Prairie Region Council December 2020**

There is not a lot to report on during this period. I was relatively inactive due to a couple of factors, but always available to the membership via email or phone.

I have reached out to contacts under my purview, to advise of our meeting and ask if there are any concerns they wish to have brought forward.

In solidarity,

Heather McKinnon