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A Message from the Union Chair

Hi everyone!

It's hard to believe we're near the end of 2025 already! At the beginning of the year, our commitment was to engage more with members and to provide members with better opportunities to attend meetings. While we can always do more, I am proud of the work that our team of Executives, Stewards, and members have done to help with that process.

As many of you may be aware, the Local's Bargaining Committee has commenced negotiations with the Library. The bargaining bulletin will have more information about the process, but we were well-prepared leading up to this meeting, and will continue to update the membership as we progress through the negotiations.

Thanks to everyone for your continued support of your Union.

In solidarity,

Jasper

2025 Meeting Dates

Friday, Nov. 21:
5:30 pm, in-person
at FL

no meeting
in December



CUPE402.02
SURREY LIBRARY WORKERS

Union FAQ: The Bargaining Process

What does bargaining involve?

The union forms a bargaining committee to negotiate terms of our employment with management. This is a multi-stage process with several meetings between union and management. Negotiations eventually result in a written collective bargaining agreement, which lasts four calendar years. The collective bargaining agreement sets the terms for many aspects of the union membership's employment, including wages, benefits, leave time, and working conditions.

Why does our bargaining process take so long?

Under the Federal Public Sector Labour Relations Act, the union can only give a "notice to bargain" four months prior to the end of a given collective agreement. In practice, four months is usually not sufficient time to get what we want out of the bargaining process. So even when a given collective agreement "ends" at the close of the fourth calendar year, its terms stay in effect as a placeholder until the new collective agreement is agreed to. In this interim period, we consult with bargaining committees across the Lower Mainland to gauge how their negotiations are going and how they are timing them. Typically, the first bargaining committee that reaches a new collective agreement "sets the tone" for the rest of the committees in the region. We also talk closely with our local, CUPE 402, on bargaining approaches particular to the city of Surrey.

We issued a bargaining survey to membership back in April of this year to collect your input and determine our priorities. With the help of your feedback, we have a proposal outlined, and we are now at the

bargaining table with management. We anticipate that bargaining table rounds will continue into early 2026.

Why haven't I heard anything specific about what we are bargaining for?

For a couple of reasons, the bargaining committee is careful not to get too specific about our bargaining proposals in writing. The first is that proposals often change throughout the bargaining process, so we do not want to send mixed signals to our union members until we are reasonably certain of our demands. The second reason is that the employer can better anticipate what we are bringing to the bargaining table, thus reducing our leverage. On October 24, the bargaining committee hosted an in-person Proposal Outline Ratification session that went over many of our new bargaining proposals. Thank you to everyone who attended this session and gave us feedback— your input is vital to the union's success.

Will any terms of the upcoming bargaining agreement be retroactive to the "interim period?"

Wage increases are usually retroactive to the interim period. For example, if we finish negotiations for the "2025-2028" collective agreement in early 2026, any negotiated wage increase for regular hours worked so far in 2025 and 2026 will then be calculated and paid out in a lump sum.

What can I do if I have a bargaining-related concern/suggestion?

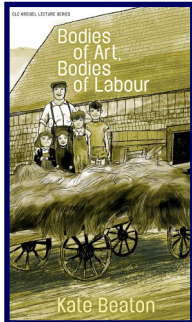
Please bring any suggestions or concerns to a member of the 402-02 Executive Committee (contact information on page 4 of this newsletter).



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Union Goodreads

Bodies of Art, Bodies of Labour—Kate Beaton



This slim volume contains the full text of Kate Beaton's (author of the Canada Reads-winning graphic memoir *Ducks: Two Years in the Oil Sands*) 2024

Kreisel Lecture at the University of Alberta. Throughout her lecture, she uses her background to examine several questions about the intersections of art and class: *Who is empowered to make art, to express themselves? If some are more empowered than others, how do empowered artists depict the disempowered? And how can disempowered, forgotten artists begin to take control of their stories?*

Beaton hails from a long line of working-

class Nova Scotians, and she is well aware that her breakthrough as an artist has come, to some degree, in spite of the modest social status markers that her home of Cape Breton Island typically affords. Here, she takes the opportunity to historicize some of the themes that are more implicit in *Ducks*. Her most illustrative example is the contrast between her bardic ancestor, who drew from his lived experience in his songs, and popular travelogues of the time that depict Nova Scotia as sodden, austere, and uncultured.

As a white settler, Beaton is forthright about her limitations in her own lived experience, and she recognizes her and her family's story is one among many. Still, *Bodies of Art, Bodies of Labour* is a quick, worthwhile read for those interested in Canadiana, working class history, and the politics of art. —**Zach**

Did You Know?

Good of the Union

Do you know a fellow member who is celebrating something special? In need of support or acknowledgement?

Email Zach (cupe40202mal@outlook.com) or let any member of your Union Executive team know, and we'll send the member a card.

Do you have anything you'd like to see in our Winter Newsletter?

Please let Zach or any member of our Executive know. Next issue expected early 2026.

CUPE's Annual BC Library Health and Safety Survey Report Acknowledges Ongoing Workplace Concerns

CUPE has released their 2025 Health and Safety Survey for British Columbia libraries—and the results are alarming. The report suggests BC library workers face increasing risks to their health and safety on the job while employer support systems erode.

Most library worker respondents in BC say chronic understaffing has created unsafe working environments (77%). Even more report feeling unsafe at work "at least some of the time" (83%). 90% of workers reported exposure to biohazardous matter. 70% do not receive debriefs after critical incidents, and 57% say they receive no communication or action taken at all. The most common health and safety incidents involved patrons with signs of intoxication (81% of respondents experiencing at least one incident like

this), verbal abuse (68%), and threats (49%).

Only 13% of respondents said that workplace policy and training procedures were straightforwardly "effective" at reducing health and safety risk. Nearly two-thirds said that their policy and training was just "somewhat effective," and 20% said it was simply "ineffective."

CUPE concludes the report by calling on the province and municipalities to take immediate, material steps to ensure the safety and security of library workers. Libraries cannot be left to absorb the downstream effects of public health crises and societal challenges by ourselves.

To read the full report, visit cupe.ca/bc-library-safety.

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Recipe: Potato Leek Soup

- 4 large leeks, white/light green parts only
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 pounds Yukon gold/yellow potatoes, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, grated
- 6 cups vegetable broth
- 3 fresh thyme sprigs, bundled
- 1 cup milk or heavy cream
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice, optional
- Chopped fresh chives, for garnish



Source: <https://www.loveandlemons.com/potato-leek-soup/>

1. Chop the white and light green parts of the leeks. Wash well.
2. Heat the butter in a large pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the leeks, salt, and several grinds of pepper and cook for 8 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, or until the leeks are soft. If the leeks start browning before they soften, reduce the heat.
3. Add the potatoes, garlic, broth, and thyme and simmer for 20 minutes, or until the potatoes are very soft. Remove the thyme, then use an immersion blender or transfer the soup to an upright blender to blend until smooth. Return the soup to the pot and stir in the dairy. Season to taste, adding the lemon juice, if desired.

Activity: Fall Trivia

Questions

1. Which Canadian prime minister was born October 18, 1919?
2. Indigenous planters in the Americas developed a sophisticated, symbiotic agricultural system with three staple crops known as the "Three Sisters." Which crops traditionally comprise the "Three Sisters?"
3. Leaves turn different colours in the fall due to decreased levels of what chemical compound?
4. What North American sporting championship is colloquially known as the "Fall Classic?"
5. Name Canada's first national park, established November 25, 1885.
6. Which sweet Halloween treat was originally called "chicken feed?"

Answers

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Send your answers (with your full name) to Kelly Kennedy to have your name entered into a draw for a \$10 gift card! You must get at least 3 out of 6 answers correct to be entered into the draw.

Please send your answers by December 15. Solutions will be provided in the next newsletter.