



THE NEWSLETTER OF LOCAL 15, VANCOUVER MUNICIPAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY WORKERS



protected and not isolated. While you apply these new skills, it is very important to make sure you do a self-care assessment. It is a checklist that speaks to eight different types of self-care. It is important to care for yourself first before you support others.

They supplied us with many resources to refer to those who needed them as well as doing a survey. In that survey, the data for this subject has been numerous.

Choir night was very memorable. Our group came in third, singing the Britney Spears song, "Toxic" styled to the topic of our class. The reason we came third was because we forgot to bribe the judges!

Thank you CUPE Local 15 membership for sending me to CLC Winter School!

CLC Winter School – Harrison Hot Springs: Domestic Violence and Gender Based Domestic Violence and Harassment at Work Training for Union Representatives

by Cynthia Schadt, K-12 Sector Representative

From January 22 to 26, 2024 I was fortunate to have participated in the Canadian Labour Congress Domestic Violence and Gender-Based Domestic Violence and Harassment at Work course.

Our class consisted of members from the Steelworkers' Union, IBEW, USW, CUPE, ILWU, HEU, Move Up, IAMAW, and BCGEU. We were a collective of 13 individuals from all walks of life.

Our facilitators, Melanie and Vicki came from Human Rights, CLC, Ottawa.

I highly recommend this course to everyone. We learned how to see, name, and check the warning signs and risk factors of abuse. Safety planning at work is very important. Many different scenarios were covered. Having language regarding this subject in your collective agreement is very important as this guidance will help a victim feel

WE ACKNOWLEDGE...

We live, work and play on the unceded land of the Coast Salish peoples—Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations.



FEBRUARY 2024 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The General Membership Meeting will be held on **February 28, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.** using the Zoom platform. You will be sent an invitation by email if the union office has a personal email address on file for you. Details will also be posted at www.cupe15.org. If you do not receive emails from the union office and would like to attend this meeting, please call us at 604-879-4671 or email us at email@cupe15.org to update your information. There will be a draw at the end of the meeting and three lucky winners will receive a gift card (retailers TBA at meeting). Child and dependant care reimbursement is available as per eligibility requirements in Local 15 Bylaw Section 31.

Article B.10.1(c) of the CUPE National Constitution allows for Honourary Members to attend membership meetings with voice, but no vote. If you are an Honourary Member and would like to attend, please email the office on the day of the meeting, or the day prior to the meeting.

**Feb. 28, 2024
5:30 p.m. via Zoom invite**

UNDER DISCUSSION:

- Donation – Junior Black Achievement Awards Society
- Sponsorship Renewal – BC Labour Heritage Centre Society
- Committee and Staff Reports

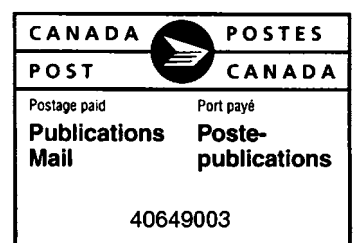
IMPORTANT NOTE

Virtual General Membership Meeting Invitations

After registering for the Virtual General Membership meeting, please do not share your link with fellow members. If they did not receive the invitation and would like to attend, please ask them to contact the union office and provide us with their contact information directly.

Once this is done, an invitation will be sent to them and they can register to receive their own link. This is important to facilitate accurate attendance records.

Return undeliverable
Canadian addresses to:
CUPE Local 15
545 W. 10th Ave.
Vancouver, BC
V5Z 1K9



Taking the Side of Humanity

by Warren Williams, President



WARREN WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

Dear members,

February is Black History Month. This is a time to reflect and celebrate the contributions of Black culture to society and recognize that these are contributions

that all have benefited from.

However, with everything that is happening in the Ukraine, Israel, the state of Gaza and

Palestine, it is difficult not to be reminded of the years of oppression, and the continued oppression of so many, including our indigenous communities. I want to be clear that my intention is to be on the side of humanity and to condemn the loss of life at the behest of political leadership, no matter who that leader may be.

We have a history of political leaders taking advantage of war and creating pacts with one another to divvy up the spoils of war for their own benefit, with a total disregard for the people who are affected by these decisions. Creating colonialism leads to the oppression of a people and provides an advantage for others. This is all built on lies and unkept promises for the benefit of economic control of a region, country, and peoples.

Our common history is littered with such short-sited made for profit decisions at the expense of our humanity. This, in turn, throughout our common history has either been upheld through violence or challenged by violence, all at the expense of our humanity. Of course either side of the political coin has an argument to defend their actions, but again, at the expense of our humanity.

We live in a time where knowledge, opinions, events, actions, and consequences of those actions made by political leaders are available to us almost instantaneously. It's what we do with this information that has and will continue to define us as a people. The right side of the argument is on the side of all humanity - to do what's right and correct past wrongs where we can.

February is Black History Month!



DEBBIE MOHABIR
SECRETARY-TREASURER

by Debbie Mohabir,
Secretary-Treasurer

Hello, everyone!

This year, from February 1st to 29th, Canada honours the legacy of Black Canadians. The theme is Black Excellence: A

Heritage to Celebrate; a Future to Build.

Canada Post released a new stamp celebrating Mary Ann Shadd, an American-Canadian pioneer in the fight for Black and women's rights. She was also an abolitionist and an anti-slavery activist, as well as journalist, publisher, teacher, and lawyer.

The eldest of thirteen siblings, she was born in Delaware to free African American parents. Her father was an abolitionist who worked for a newspaper called "The Liberator" and helped slaves to the Underground Railroad to escape to freedom. She would grow up to follow in her father's footsteps and become the first female African American newspaper editor in North America. Shadd eventually started a school for African Americans and by 1850, she had been teaching for ten years.

After the enactment of the Fugitive Slave Act, her and her brother went to Canada. Once in Canada, she opened an integrated school for children of the freedom seekers. Additionally, she became involved in the community and started a newspaper called "The Provincial Freeman" where she wrote exposé articles calling out any wrong doing, no matter who it was.

Unfortunately, the newspaper met its end as it wasn't financially viable and due to the lack of education available for black people, only the educated blacks could read it.

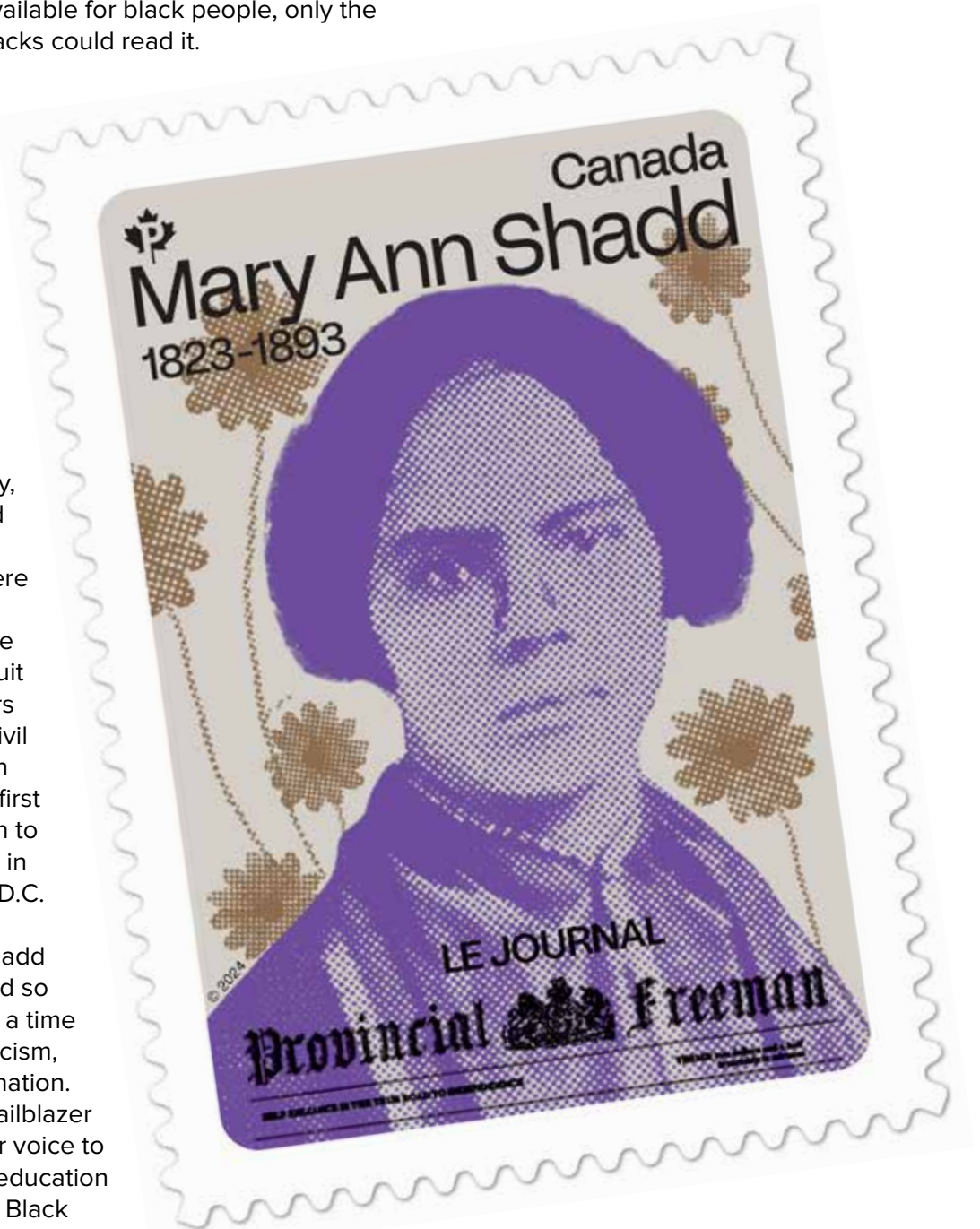
Shadd met her husband Thomas F. Cary and had two children, Sarah and Linton.

Unfortunately, Thomas died four years after they were married. She went on to be hired to recruit Black soldiers during the Civil War and then became the first Black woman to practice Law in Washington D.C.

Mary Ann Shadd accomplished so much during a time of slavery, racism, and discrimination. She was a trailblazer and used her voice to fight for the education and rights of Black people in the US and Canada.

Canada has a rich history of contributions made by many Black Canadians. I strongly encourage everyone to take some time to continue their learning on this topic.

How will you celebrate Black History month?



Born: Mary Ann Shadd
October 9, 1823
Wilmington, Delaware, U.S.
Died: June 5, 1893 (aged 69)
Washington, D.C., U.S.

Notices of Motion

- **The Executive recommends a donation of \$2,500 to the Junior Black Achievement Awards (JrBAA) Society Talk the Talk event.**

Explanation – The JrBAA works toward creating a safe space to learn and grow by providing education, workshops, and tools to uplift youth. This includes opportunities for youth to participate and speak at JrBAA and community events and celebrations. In 2023, \$10,250 in scholarships were applied for and awarded.

- **The Executive recommends sponsorship renewal for the BC Labour Heritage Centre Society for 2024 at a cost of \$5,000.**

Explanation – The BC Labour Heritage Centre Society is a well respected and credible source for labour history in our region, and is recognized for a wide range of projects and activities that amplify the value of the labour movement throughout our province. This includes preserving, documenting, and promoting the rich history of working people by engaging in partnerships and projects that help define and express the role that work, and workers have played in the evolution of social policy and its impact on the present and future shaping of the province. CUPE Local 15 started our annual sponsorship in 2022.

VSB Job Share Opportunities

1. SSA looking for a job share partner to work on Thursdays and Fridays starting September 2024 for the 2024/2025 school year at McKechnie Elementary. If you are interested, please contact Vicky at vicky.fiskilis@gmail.com.
2. SSA looking for a job share partner to work on Thursdays and Fridays starting September 2024 for the 2024/2025 school year at John Norquay Elementary. Please contact Sheila at sheilafarrales3@gmail.com if you are interested.
3. SSA looking for a job share partner starting in March 2024 to work Thursdays and Fridays at David Lloyd George Elementary. If you are interested, please contact Veronika at vsubarko@yahoo.com.
4. SSW looking for a job share partner to work Thursdays and Fridays (negotiable) starting September 2024 at Maple Grove Elementary. If you are interested, please contact Sophia at sophia_politis@hotmail.com.
5. OSC (Office Admin Assistant) looking for a job share partner for two days a week at Dr. George M. Weir Elementary starting September 2024 for the 2024/2025 school year. If you are interested, please contact Svetlana at svetlanaivezic@hotmail.com.

Election of delegates to CUPE BC Convention

As per the CUPE Local 15 Bylaws, the Table Officers (President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, and Secretary-Treasurer) have first preference to attend the convention.

Additional delegates were elected at the January General Membership meeting to represent CUPE Local 15 at the CUPE BC Convention in Vancouver in April 2024 as follows:

- Aaron Cook – City Sector
- Seagrin Worster – City Sector
- Cynthia Schadt – K-12 Sector
- Vanessa Mani – K-12 Sector
- Henry Lee – Parks Sector
- Subrata Dasgupta – Parks Sector
- Lucia Rincon – Health Sector
- Sarah Walker – Health Sector
- Rose Palozzi – College/University Sector
- Kasey Wong – Young Worker
- Chris Brown – At Large

Mission and Vision Statements

Mission Statement – Serving our members' interests by advancing and defending their rights and the rights of all workers.

Vision Statement – A union founded on respect and advocacy that instills pride and a sense of belonging for the benefit of all.

DECISIONS

BY THE EXECUTIVE

At the Executive and Society Board meetings on January 16, 2024, the following decisions were made:

- To approve a half-page ad in the 2024 DOXA Festival program book at a cost of up to \$750.
- To approve a half-page ad in the Royal Canadian Legion BC/Yukon Command Annual Military Service Recognition Book at a cost of \$1,155.
- To purchase a table for ten at the Vancouver and District Labour Council 2024 International Women's Day Dinner.
- To recommend to the members a donation of \$2,500 to the Junior Black Achievement Awards Society Talk the Talk event. (See Notice of Motion and explanation elsewhere in this issue.)
- To donate up to \$1,000 toward pursuing an "all unions" complaint with a CUPE Local 15 employer.
- To donate \$500 to the Vancouver Coastal Health Building Bridges Day event and to request a table as an exhibitor for Local 15.

BY THE MEMBERS

At the General Membership meeting on January 24, 2024, the members in attendance made the following decisions:

- To elect delegates to the 2024 CUPE BC Convention as per the union bylaws.
- To donate \$3,000 to assist in funding the printing of an updated edition of the Downtown Eastside Resource Brochure.

NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING IS ON FEBRUARY 28TH via Zoom





The Members' Voice is published nine times a year for members of CUPE Local 15 - Vancouver Municipal, Education and Community Workers. The deadline for submissions is 9:00 a.m. on the first Wednesday of each month. All submissions may be edited for brevity and clarity. Signed articles and letters do not necessarily reflect the views or policy of CUPE Local 15.

CUPE Local 15

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Web: www.cupe15.org

Local 15 is a chartered affiliate of the Canadian Union of Public Employees and is also affiliated with the CUPE British Columbia Division, CUPE Metro District Council, the Vancouver & District Labour Council, and the BC Federation of Labour. CUPE 15 is a member of the Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM).

CUPE Local 15 Executive Board Table Officers:

President: Warren Williams
Secretary-Treasurer: Debbie Mohabir
1st Vice President: Santino Scardillo
2nd Vice President: Ravina Lal

Sector Representatives:

City: Aaron Cook, Paul Chohan
College/University: Sophie Bennett, Rose Palozzi
Cultural: Courtney Gillen
Health/HSSCBA: Roxshanna Shankar
Health/HSPBA: Lucia Rincon
Parks: Bernie Dionne, Henry Lee
K-12: Chris Brown, Cynthia Schadt

Trustees:

Seagrin Worster, John Kaptein, Vanessa Mani

Staff Representatives:

Kathie Currie, John Geppert, Steve Salsman, Gail Johnson, Joy Tullos,

Office & Administrative Staff:

Mark Gloumeau, Accounting Coordinator
Nancy Strider, Accounting Assistant
Tia Tang, Office Manager
Michelle Yim, Office Assistant

Building Service Worker:

Elaine Duan

CUPE National Representatives:

Dan Todd, Michael Reed



CHINESE NEW YEAR OF THE DRAGON



Chinese New Year - The Year of the Dragon

by Debbie Mohabir, Secretary-Treasurer

This year, the Chinese Lunar New Year falls on February 10, 2024. Celebrations take place during this time and will end with the Lantern festival on February 24, 2024.

The Spring Festival is a time reserved for families. There is the reunion dinner on New Year's Eve, visits (拜年 / bài nián) to in-laws on the second day, and visits to neighbours after that. But on the 15th day of the holiday, everyone, regardless of age or gender, goes out to the streets to celebrate. Though the Lantern Festival symbolizes reunions (more on that later), it's also a time of socializing and freedom.

In Ancient China, women usually weren't allowed out the house. But on this night, they could stroll freely, lighting lanterns, playing games and interacting with men. The wild and romantic stories are why some say that the Lantern Festival is really the true Chinese Valentine's Day, rather than Qixi (七夕).

On a more serious side, the Lantern Festival also has religious aspects. It was important in ancient Chinese paganism, as well as modern-day Buddhism and ethnic minority cultures. Check out www.chinesenewyear.net.

What are the seven lucky foods for Chinese New Year? They are:

- Yú (fish), said to bring an increase in prosperity.
- Jiaozi (dumplings), for wealth.
- Chun Juan (spring rolls), for wealth.
- Tang Yuan (glutinous rice balls), for family togetherness.
- Good Fortune Fruit, for fullness and wealth.
- Nian Gao (sticky rice cakes), for a higher income or a higher position.
- Chang Shou Mian (Longevity Noodles), for happiness and longevity.

Gong hei fat choi!