



**MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:**  
YANN TROUTET

**DISABILITY MANAGEMENT**  
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**BARGAINING UPDATE**  
JONATHAN VANDERHOEK

# On Stream

October 2025

Selkirk College Faculty Association

## STRENGTH THROUGH SOLIDARITY

by Takaia Larsen, SCFA President

It has been a busy start to the academic year and as the college continues to face financial challenges, we are looking at another year of looming layoffs and cutbacks across our schools and departments. Most notable would be the recent announcement that KSA will be closing. My main priority as we navigate these tumultuous times is to be there to support all members of the SCFA. I have been hearing from an increasing number of you about your concerns, and I want to encourage you to continue to bring your issues forward. I will take every opportunity I have to give voice to our collective considerations, and hearing from you is a fundamental part of this work.

More broadly, labour unrest in the province has been continuing to increase as we began active bargaining here this month. During BCGEU's 8-week strike, we were reminded of how important it

is to support local union members and their job action. The work they did on the picket line will have a direct benefit to all public sector employees and it helped bolster their efforts to have other unions

This is a new approach from FPSE to put pressure on the government and has been driven by the increasing crisis we are facing in the post-secondary sector in BC. Traditionally, FPSE's political efforts have been focussed on discussions with the Ministry of Post-Secondary and Future Skills, but this new approach seeks to expand our scope and apply pressure onto a much wider variety of ministries including Jobs and Economic Growth and Rural and Social Development. I am looking forward to bringing our rural perspective and our unique concerns from the Kootenay region to the provincial table. Look for my update in the next On Stream on how this went.

And finally, please continue to reach out. My office is in SEN 204 and my email is [PresidentSCFA@selkirk.ca](mailto:PresidentSCFA@selkirk.ca). I want to hear from you so that I can direct my work and energy toward collective action that will serve us all well today and in the future.

In solidarity,  
Takaia



*SCFA members visited the BCGEU picket line in Castlegar in early October in a show of solidarity.*

show up in solidarity. Thanks to all SCFA members who took the time to visit a picket line in their community and show support for their efforts.

At the provincial level, FPSE is currently preparing for a week of lobbying in Victoria in November. As your representative on FPSE's President's Council, I will be attending those lobbying sessions.

# NEWS FROM ACROSS THE SECTOR

COMPILED BY LEESA DEAN

## ***BCGEU Reaches Tentative Agreement After Eight Weeks of Job Action***

The BC General Employees' Union (BCGEU) has reached a tentative agreement with the provincial government, bringing an end to a historic strike that involved more than 25,000 public service workers and eight weeks of job action across British Columbia.

Under the agreement, employees will receive a general wage increase of 3% per year for four years, along with additional targeted pay adjustments to address the affordability crisis. It also includes a range of non-monetary improvements, including:

- Stronger job protections, including a new process to review excluded positions and return improperly excluded ones to the bargaining unit.
- A faster grievance tribunal process.
- Improved vision care and counselling benefits to better support mental health and overall wellbeing.
- Established a category of fully remote workers that have unique agreement protections.

Read the full press release [here](#).

## ***PEA took down picket lines, returned to bargaining with BC Government***

The Professional Employees Association (PEA), representing Government Licensed Professionals who work for the BC public service, took down picket lines across the province on Monday, October 27 as the union prepared to resume negotiations with the BC government.

The same general wage increases as well as other key proposals that were agreed to by the BC General Employees' Union (BCGEU) have been extended to the PEA, and lead negotiator.

Read the full article and learn more about ongoing negotiations [here](#).

## ***Students Lobby Government for Investments in Post-Secondary***

From October 21-23, student representatives from across BC travelled to Victoria to highlight to government decision makers the critical need for investment in the province's post-secondary sector.

BC Federation of Students' representatives met with 40 Ministers and MLAs, reiterating their ask for post-secondary public funding to return to at least 75% of operating budgets as cuts continue at institutions across the province.

80 programs have now been cut, suspended or paused across the province. In 2000, public funding made up 68% of institutional revenue; today it only accounts for 40%.

Read the full article [here](#).



*President Maggie Matear with three of this year's SCOPE Award winners (L-R) Rebecca Deane, Kailey Allan, and Pablo Pastor. Missing: John Tucker.*

# PD SPOTLIGHT: A TRIP TO IRELAND

BY RENEE HARPER

In August 2025, I travelled to Galway, Ireland, for the Biennial Conference of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment, UK and Ireland. I presented my paper "Arcadia Unraveled: Settler Dreams, Ecological Realities, and the Erosion of the Okanagan Orchard Myth," drawn from my doctoral work and my in-progress monograph *Unsettling Eden*. It was exciting to share this research with international colleagues and to exchange ideas about how literature engages with land, ecology, and colonial histories. I also read from my poetry collection, *Boundary Territory* (2024), which gave me the chance to bring my creative and critical work into conversation with other writers from around the world.

I was fortunate to have our former colleague, and ecocritic in her own right, Almeda Glenn Miller, join me for the intense conversations in the University classrooms and beyond. Our trip ended with a field trip to Inis Mor (where we got hopelessly lost, but befriended donkeys) and being swept up in the Air Canada strike that sent us on a 3-day odyssey home via too many airports. Despite the inconvenience, we felt nothing but solidarity with the workers on the picket line.

Thank you to the PD committee for approving this opportunity. I am deeply grateful for every part of the experience and look forward to bringing the lessons into my classrooms and research.



**FPSE**



**SCFA**  
FPSE LOCAL 10

Earlier this month, the SCFA conducted a week of negotiations with the employer. Both parties agreed to restrict discussion at the table to non-monetary items. Everyone in the province was in a bit of a wait and see mode on monetary items until there was some resolution to the impasse between the government and the BC General Employees Union and the Professional Employees Association. The two parties have now reached a tentative agreement on a four-year deal that includes a 3% wage increase each year.

Although talks with the employer were restricted to non-monetary items, we had productive conversations and made progress on language related to job security and layoffs (Article 5).

The sides return to the bargaining table for two days in December and seven days in the new year.

Regards,

Jonathan Vanderhoek  
VP Negotiations

# YANN TROUTET: IT ALL STARTED WITH A VAN

Twenty-three years ago, I was working at Sherbrooke's Musée de la Nature et des Sciences while toiling to finish my Master's. A colleague's boyfriend desperately wanted to buy my antique, carpeted, camperized, copper-coloured 1977 Dodge Tradesman 100 van. The dream? To coax it across the country to this oh-so-cool-electronic-music-festival-in-the-woods and no-less-cool-town-down-the-valley—Nelson, BC. We shook hands: \$250 upfront + \$250 on the van's improbable return.

Months later, I spotted the van, littered with branches and propped up on cinder blocks in a small downtown yard. It had no doubt died without ever leaving Québec. Yet, the cross-country idea had infected me... and a toponym had stuck.

Still, years passed. Work drew me to the wilderness of northern Québec where I was a National Park Warden, Ecosystems Scientist, Park Ecologist, and Acting Resource Conservation Manager. Eventually, with baby after baby came the desire for easier fun, more road trips. A parental leave was our ticket. My partner's long-standing dream of training in art and art therapy would be the pretext. Researching options, a long-remembered place name resurfaced: Nelson.

Selkirk College's ceramics program and Nelson's Kutenai Arts Therapy Institute were remarkable. The town's mountain culture, art scene, bilingual possibilities, family-friendliness were a lifetime opportunity, but uprooting was hard. I was in the middle of heavy advocacy work in the face of looming hydro projects in Northern Quebec, and our efforts were resonating. After years of travails, the Muteshekau Shipu (a.k.a. Magpie River) was to be granted Legal Personhood, a first in Canada (shameless plugs: see link below). I felt guilt-ridden, stepping away.

But the West Kootenay didn't disappoint. My partner's ceramics training at KSA was world-

class. She found good part-time work and I could support the budding family as a father-at-home for a couple of years.

My master's degree had taught me Remote Sensing – a branch of Geomatics. At Parks

2018, an opportunity arose to develop and teach an online Remote Sensing course. I now teach across all four years of programming at the School of Environment and Geomatics, including first year geomatics, Outdoor Recreation Management, Remote Sensing, and the final year of the 4-year GIS Bachelor's degree.

With the privilege of a good education and a healthy family, I feel indebted.

Besides work and family, one of my passions is climbing. The voice for climbers in our area is The Association of West Kootenay Rock Climbers (TAWKROC). The development of rock-climbing around Castlegar is truly in its golden age. It's exciting to be part of it, but there's lots of work to do to ensure public access to climbing areas. I've recently taken on the role of President of TAWKROC, hoping to create closer ties between the climbing community and our various governments.

The beauty in all of it? The effort put into my community involvement informs the work I do with students, and vice versa. There's no moving forward without balance.

Life in the Kootenays has moved me forward.

About the [Magpie River's Legal Personhood designation](#).

About TAWKROC, at [tawkroc.org](http://tawkroc.org).

Canada, I had supervised our geomatics staff. Yet, I was never proficient at the wizardry of day-to-day GIS (Geographic Information Systems). That bugged me. So, as have so many of our colleagues, I enrolled at the college!

The Advanced Diploma in GIS (ADGIS) program opened the door to internships with the research team, then Faculty Assistant work. In



SCFA member Yann Troutet has many talents, including igloo construction.

# DISABILITY MANAGEMENT REPORT

SUBMITTED BY JENNIFER REID

I have had the privilege of being the SCFA representative on the joint union-management Disability Management and Rehabilitation Committee for the past 4 years. As a long-time social worker, I came to this committee with experience in supporting folks to navigate systems of support while facing health challenges which has helped me in this committee work. Access to Short Term (STD) and Long Term (LTD) is a part of the health benefits in our SCFA collective agreement to support members who need to take extended time away from work to address serious mental or physical health issues. I meet with Selkirk HR Disability Management coordinator every 6 weeks to get updates on open STD and LTD claims of SCFA members. This is an opportunity to identify members who may benefit from extra support and ensure ongoing compliance with collective agreements. I also attend biannual FPSE committee meetings for updates on Disability Management Committees at other colleges, to identify any emerging trends in disability claims and to receive education and training related to DMRC work. One of the emerging trends provincially is an increase in disability claims related to mental health concerns. This trend is not currently reflected here at Selkirk but I am continuing to monitor this, particularly given the current uncertainty within the post-secondary sector and the potential impact on the mental health of SCFA members.

For this committee update, I wanted to share some of the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders when making a disability claim for members who may not be familiar with the process:

## Employee Responsibilities

- Notify Supervisor and HR Disability Management Coordinator of your need to access longer term sick leave and then provide updates if it becomes a STD claim

- Provide proof of illness (doctors note) during sick leave longer than 5 days and then update documentation for STD or LTD
- Ensure regular communication with Manulife case manager with any updates



*Jennifer Reid has been the DMRC Standing Committee Representative for the past 4 years.*

while on leave

- Respond to requests for information or updates from Manulife in a timely manner
- Actively participate in return-to-work planning, this involves connecting with your healthcare providers, Manulife case manager and potentially your supervisor and Selkirk HR Disability management coordinator.

## Supervisor and Employer Responsibilities

- Supervisor contacts HR Disability Management Coordinator if an employee will be absent for longer than 5 days.
- Contact between the supervisor and

employee should not be for regular updates on employee's health status during a leave, any questions about length of leave should be directed to Selkirk's HR Disability Management Coordinator.

- Provide modified work options for temporary health issues when possible
  - Selkirk's HR Disability Management Coordinator provides employees with information about STD and LTD processes, can be a liaison between Manulife case managers and supervisors and is involved in the decision making about how to manage vacancies during employee leaves.

## Manulife

- Adjudicate all short-term and long-term disability claims.
- Assist in difficult sick leave claims.
- Ensure timely and accurate payment to employees

## DMRC SCFA Representative

- Meets regularly with Selkirk HR Disability Management coordinator
- Provides employee advocacy, education and guidance to SCFA members during disability claims and return to work planning.
- Ensures confidentiality and compliance with agreements by the employer and Manulife
- Attends biannual FPSE meetings for provincial DMRC updates and ongoing education

## Questions? Reach Out!

I am available to answer any questions members have about accessing disability benefits and can provide information, support or advocacy for members who are on leave. Please feel free to reach out with questions or concerns.



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## NEWS - EVENTS - MOVERS - SHAKERS

- » The SCFA is currently planning an **after work gathering** in Nelson for sometime in late November/early December. Stay tuned for the date! The event will serve to connect members from various disciplines and offer opportunities to ask the President questions.
- » This year's **Lunch Club** events will alternate days (Mondays, Tuesdays or Thursdays) in order to accommodate different teaching schedules. The next Lunch Club will be on **Thursday, November 13th from 12-1 PM** in the Staff Lounge. See you there!
- » Do you want an **SCFA T-shirt** but didn't order one in the spring? Good news: we have about ten extras in a variety of colors and sizes. We also have some SCFA toques available, just in time for the winter season. Email Leesa Dean at [ldean@selkirk.ca](mailto:ldean@selkirk.ca) if you'd like to drop by and grab one.

Did you know **SCFA member Darcy Ingram published a book this month?**

- » The book is called **The Second Greatest Show on Earth** and is about wealthy American expatriate Henry Bergh (1813-1888) who chose suddenly to abandon a life of leisure in Europe. Returning to his home city of New York, he set to work on what soon proved a remarkable accomplishment: the establishment of an institutional framework for the animal protection movement in America. Grounded in discussions of cultural capital, dramaturgy, and modernity, *The Second Greatest Show on Earth* presents a striking analysis of motivation, leadership, and identity in the development of the modern social movement.



⌘ *James Nichol, Biology Instructor, has hosted the annual SCOPE Awards Ceremony for several years now. Attendees appreciate his great humour and excellent outfits.*

## SCFA Executive

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VP Negotiations

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## On Stream

*is the official newsletter of the SCFA, keeping members informed and connected. Whether you're new or a longtime member, this is your space to stay engaged.*

*Published monthly, we welcome submissions from all members—share your stories, photos, ideas, and achievements.*

*Submit your ideas to:*

*Leesa Dean, Editor*  
[ldean@selkirk.ca](mailto:ldean@selkirk.ca)

