A female doctor with dark hair, wearing a white lab coat and a stethoscope, is looking up and to the right while holding a large, glowing map of British Columbia. The map is held in front of her, and she appears to be examining it. The map shows various geographical features, rivers, and cities across the province.

**Studies show
our health is
directly linked to
income, working
conditions and
social programs**

**Are government
cutbacks making
us SICK?**

page 8



Representatives from public-sector unions around the world marked World Public Services Day on June 23 in Vancouver.

They were attending the second world congress of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), which brought together 1,400 delegates under the theme “Now the People: From the Crisis to Global Justice.”

In total, 311 national union organizations from 155 countries and territories were in attendance. ITUC represents 175 million union members.

Congress delegates planned action on economic, environmental and human rights issues. They also elected the first woman to head up the organization – Sharan Burrow – a former teacher from Australia.

DAN GAWTHROP/PHOTO

Protecting decent jobs and quality services is a global undertaking

It's hard to deny that 2010 is shaping up to be a year when global events seem closer to home than ever before.

For example, the environmental catastrophe in the Gulf of Mexico has sparked an important debate on the future of offshore oil drilling along our own coast.

And the major earthquakes in Haiti, Chile and China touched many HEU families in one way or another, and resulted in an outpouring of generosity from B.C. communities.

The recent meetings of G8 and G20 leaders in Ontario, are another example, demonstrating just how international economic agendas affect our working lives here in B.C.

At the urging of Canada's prime minister, Stephen Harper, the leaders of the world's largest economies set out accelerated deficit-cutting targets that are nothing short of an all-out attack on social programs and public services built up over several decades.

If they follow through, there will be a massive spree of spending cuts that many economists predict will derail the global

economy's weak recovery from the meltdown of 2008. And like then, it won't be investment banks and multinational corporations that pay the price.

Harper made sure of that by leading the charge against an international “Robin Hood” tax on financial transactions that would have curbed reckless speculation and provided revenue to support global anti-poverty and environmental initiatives.

Instead, it will be working people and their communities who will pay with the loss of decent jobs, good pensions, quality health care and other public services.

HEU members have seen this movie before and know just how damaging these cuts can be to our communities – and even to the health outcomes of individuals (see our special coverage, page 8).

As Harper and Gordon Campbell ramp

up their austerity measures, we can expect to see more. More closures of social service group homes and long-term care beds, more restructuring and consolidation of health services, and more contracting out.

Across Europe, similar attacks have provoked workers to take to the streets to defend jobs, pensions and public services. (see our coverage on page 11).

And both here and abroad, it's the same British, French, Spanish and American

Here and abroad, it's the same British, French, Spanish and American corporations who are taking home the profits from contracting out, privatization and other “deficit-fighting” measures.

corporations who are taking home the profits from contracting out, privatization and other “deficit-fighting” measures. But as trade unionists, we also have

international connections. And we'll need to foster those relationships, share information and strategies and provide mutual support in order to protect what's so important to our communities and our families.



JUDY DARCY

Regional meetings build solidarity

This spring, as I attended regional meetings in Vancouver Coastal, the Interior, Vancouver Island, Fraser and the North, I was inspired to see local executives come together to strategize about issues close to home and move the work of the union forward.

Above all, I was struck by how far we have come in the years following our first-ever regional meetings in April 2007, when we launched a new structure to promote greater regional representation and accountability within the union.

And I want to congratulate everyone who attended for the spirit of solidarity and innovation they cultivated during the two-day events.

Regardless of approach, each region stimulated healthy and often moving discussions about the issues that matter most to members.

Agendas were full and diverse – reflecting common concerns in each region. Meeting organizers also used a variety of approaches to engage participants and share information.

On Vancouver Island, for example, activists broke into workshops to brainstorm ideas about the specific actions locals could undertake to support community social services members in bargaining, promote the union's seniors' care campaign, and build awareness during this year's National Nursing Week.

In Fraser Health, we heard from two first-time bargaining committee members in the facilities sector who described their experiences and what they learned when negotiating our most recent collective agreement. Their accounts of the talks – our late-night discussions, our democratic decision-making which involved all bargaining committee members, and how the

presentations of front-line workers brought their case home to employers – gave members an up close and personal look into the collective bargaining process.

In the North, members broke into workshops for an animated discussion about potential constitutional amendments and resolutions that are particularly relevant to the North. Ideas generated will be circulated throughout the group to assist locals in preparing for convention.

In the Interior, members focused on how to build mutual respect and support both within the workplace and in the union. Discussions within occupational groupings centred on the variety of ways people go the extra mile for patients, and each other, in the face of workloads that regularly have people run off their feet. This part of the agenda, where members shared stories of mutual support, illustrated just how interconnected our jobs are in the health care team.

And in Vancouver Coastal, meeting organizers used a series of facilitated workshops to identify and build connections among members on several issues related to sector, occupation and equity groups.

Regardless of approach, each region stimulated healthy and often moving discussions about the issues that matter most to members, while building stronger connections among local executives. I'm very much looking forward to our next round of regional meetings in September, and hearing members' ideas as we prepare for our 27th biennial convention in October.

Have a great summer.

voice.mail

Thanks for the opportunity

My name is Shane and I work at two facilities – The Hamlets at Westsyde and Kamloops Seniors Village. I just got back from the youth conference that the B.C. Federation of Labour put on at Camp Jubilee and I want to say thank you.

It was the experience of a lifetime. I met many brothers and sisters from different unions around B.C. and made connections that will last a lifetime. I learned about the setting up of a youth committee at HEU and organizing one at my local. I also learned about using social media and the media to our advantage.

We also learned a lot about the labour movement. I have to recommend that anyone under the age of 30 should try and attend this conference next year because they

promised us it is going to be bigger and better.

I met four other people from HEU and we brainstormed ideas off each other to bring back to HEU and our locals.

Again thank you so much for the opportunity.

SHANE KALLUSKY
Kamloops

Retreat inspired activism

I wanted to thank the union for the opportunity to attend the Young Worker Retreat at Camp Jubilee. I had a great time and was able to connect with many of the other young workers.

The weekend was well-structured, balancing both recreation activities and learning opportunities. Some of the participants had attended this retreat before, but the majority were first-timers.

I was registered in the introduction to the labour movement class. As a new union member, it gave me some good background on the history of the labour movement and where it is going now.

One of the things I most enjoyed was the outdoor scavenger hunt. We were divided into four teams and had to run from station to station answering

labour-related questions and performing challenges.

There were two messages the facilitators were trying to get across this year. The first one was that a huge number of the current workforce will be retiring in the next five years. There is going to be a need for informed, active members to replace the retirees to keep the labour movement strong. It is time to get active now, attend union meetings, take courses offered, so as to be prepared.

The other message was – as union sisters and brothers – we need to come together and help advocate for the rights of non-union workers.

The weekend has inspired me to become more involved in the labour movement and the HEU.

Thank you again for the opportunity. It was not wasted.

MISTY GLEAVE
Powell River

Abrupt termination cold and calculating

Many employees at Royal Inland Hospital were saddened on Tuesday, June 8 when we suddenly got word that Len and his security staff were told their services would no longer be needed and they were asked to leave.

This came a month earlier than expected and there was no time to say goodbye or wish them well. Shock waves

reverberated through the hospital when we got the news that the guys were gone. In the end, there was no time for closure.

I have worked at RIH since 1988 and interacted with security on a daily basis in my previous position as an admitting and emergency room clerk. Many times, on evenings, nights, weekends and holidays, I had to call for their help and they responded immediately.

They were a great group of men and I will miss them a lot. They did an excellent job over the years and I thank them for that. It has been difficult to watch the privatization of their positions and difficult to understand why it needed to happen in the first place.

Abrupt termination of the security staff came across as cold and calculating.

INGRID BARNES
Royal Inland

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO THE GUARDIAN!

Email us at heu@heu.org (be sure to have "Guardian" in your subject line) or send us a note via regular mail to:

HEU - Attn: Guardian Editor
5000 North Fraser Way
Burnaby B.C. V5J 5M3

We look forward to hearing from you!

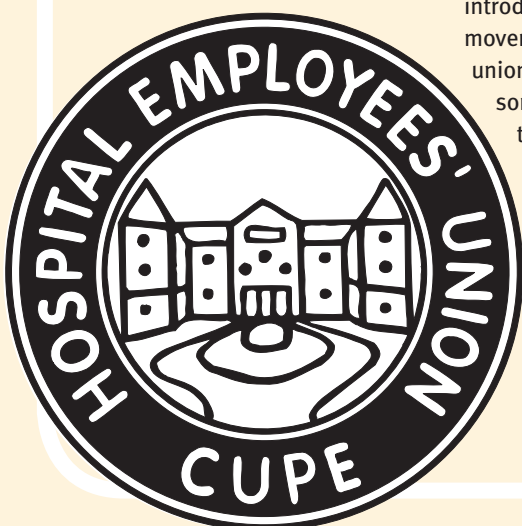
Nominations open for Sisterhood Award

Is there a union sister in your local who has done outstanding work championing women's issues? Has her commitment, advocacy and impact reached beyond the union and into her community? If someone immediately comes to mind, now is the time to have your local nominate her for the Mary LaPlante Sisterhood Award.

Secretary-treasurers and chairpersons can check their mail for the letter from HEU president Ken Robinson calling for nominations, listing the criteria and outlining the selection process.

The closing date for nominations is Wednesday, August 25. The Provincial Executive will choose this year's recipient from the names put forward. The 2010 award winner will be honoured at HEU's 27th Biennial Convention in October.

The Mary LaPlante Sisterhood Award was established in 2006 in honour of Sister Mary LaPlante, the first woman elected HEU financial secretary and who was retiring from office after 22 years. That same year, LaPlante became the first recipient. In 2008, retiring assistant secretary-business manager Zorica Bosancic became the second recipient. Both were recognized for their achievements in furthering women's equality and for their service to HEU members.





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Municipalities back member concerns over **contracting out** in seniors' care

Hospital Employees' Union members fighting contracting out and privatization in Vancouver Island residential care facilities have succeeded in gaining the support of their municipal councils, as seniors' care issues continue to attract media and public attention.

This spring, four Vancouver Island municipal councils passed strongly worded motions opposing contracting out and privatization moves that negatively impact seniors living in residential facilities and the workers who care for them.

In Ladysmith, 160 HEU members were laid off when Lodge on 4th contracted out care and support services. The mayor and council unanimously passed a resolution recognizing the importance of ensuring quality residential care and the harmful impact contracting out has on maintaining continuity of care for seniors.

In nearby Duncan, the city council unanimously passed a motion opposing contracting out in seniors' care and calling on the provincial government to "work with concerned parties to address the deterioration of seniors' care" in the Cowichan Valley.

That resolution was in response to contracting out care at Cerwydden Care Centre — where the B.C.

Government and Service Employees' Union members were losing their jobs — and deteriorating conditions at Sunridge Place, the private, for-profit residential care facility that replaced Cowichan Lodge.

On the South Island, Saanich and Oak Bay councils each unanimously passed motions objecting to the Vancouver Island Health Authority's plan to sell the publicly owned lands upon which the residential care facilities of Mount Tolmie Hospital (Saanich) and Oak Bay Lodge sit.

"Municipalities generally are recognizing that the quality of care seniors receive is everyone's concern," says HEU secretary-business manager Judy Darcy. "This is particularly true in rural communities where council members often know, first-hand, the contributions seniors have made to their town, and understand the impact provincial policies have at the local level."

The union's research director Marcy Cohen points out that the number of public and not-for-profit long-term care beds has decreased over the last decade while private, for-profit residential care ventures have multiplied.

"These are not your 'Mom and Pop' nursing homes anymore," says Cohen. "They are profit-driven corporations, owning and operating facilities where the seniors living there are increasingly being asked to pay extra for basic services including recreation outings, medical supplies and equipment, physiotherapy, foot care and more."

"Along with this has come the reshaping of the workforce as contracting out of direct care and support services is driving down wages, turning family-supporting jobs into part-time shifts, and compromising quality of care for residents," Cohen says.

The issues of private, for-profit operations replacing publicly owned and managed residential facilities, contracting out of care and support services, and the sale of public land to



More than 200 people from the Cowichan Valley rally in opposition to contracting out at the Lodge on 4th in Ladysmith and Cerwydden Care in Duncan.



developers was also top of mind for many who attended VIHA's board meeting in Victoria on May 19.

Seniors, family members, health care workers and other concerned citizens came from as far away as Nanaimo to attend a South Island Health Coalition-organized rally beforehand and to give board members an earful about the worsening state of seniors' care on the island during the meeting.

And on May 14, more than 60 people were at the BC Health Coalition's seniors' forum to hear the province's Ombudsperson Kim Carter talk about her office's December 2009 report on seniors' care and the recommendations that include a call for the formation of family and resident councils supported by legislation, a comprehensive website about residential care facilities in the province and a genuine residents' bill of rights.

Following Carter's address, attendees grouped in workshops to further discuss the many challenges facing seniors' care and to develop plans for

improved and expanded care and services.

Finally, the provincial government has further complicated the provision of care to seniors by reallocating existing residential beds as badly needed mental health spaces, something that has occurred in Providence Health Care's Youville Residence in Vancouver.

MARGI BLAMEY



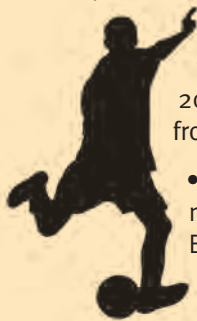
COFFEE BREAK

FIFA fever: test your knowledge

Were you one of the many HEU members taking in the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa this year?

Here are some facts you may not know:

- Over a billion people followed the month-long tournament played between teams from the world's top 32 soccer-playing nations.
- Brazil's Pelé is the only player to win three World Cups – 1958, 1962 and 1970.

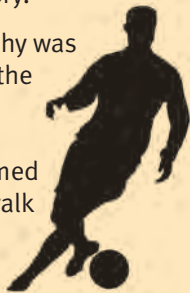


- The 30 referees who worked in the 2010 World Cup came from 28 countries.

- The country with the most appearances is Brazil (all 19 World Cups).

- 91-year-old Nelson Mandela played a pivotal role in bringing the World Cup to South Africa for the first time in the tournament's history.

- The World Cup trophy was stolen just before the start of the 1966 World Cup in England. A dog named Pickles (out for a walk with his owner in South London), discovered the trophy wrapped in some newspapers under some bushes, a week after it was taken.



- Average attendance per game at the World Cup – just over 43,000 fans.
- The tournament attendance record is held by the USA (more than 3.5 million fans attended all 52 games of the 1994 World Cup).



- Argentina was the last South American country to stage the World Cup in 1978.

- 100-year-old Francisco Varallo of Argentina is the only person still alive to have played in the first World Cup in 1930.

- Bora Milutinovic is the only man to coach five different countries in World Cup history.
- The 20th World Cup will be staged in 2014 in Brazil.

Community Social Services contract talks take a break for the summer, will resume in September

Contract talks aimed at reaching a new collective agreement for B.C.'s 15,000 community social services workers are suspended for the summer and will resume in September.

HEU bargaining committee members say this has proved to be a difficult round of negotiations as the Community Social Service Employers Association continues to insist that no monetary gains are achievable within

the government's current "net zero" bargaining mandate.

The two parties met on several occasions following the expiry of the collective agreement on March 31, 2010, where the Community Social Service Bargaining Association steadily pressed for "real gains" to the current collective agreement.

At the same time, members in community living services are experienc-

ing another round of cutbacks. Several agencies are facing service reductions and potential group home closures as a result of Community Living B.C.'s efforts to find \$22 million in savings.

Members are encouraged to connect with individuals and families and to speak out about the negative impact these cutbacks are having on caring and working conditions throughout the sector.

Know your rights

Casual work gains momentum: rights strengthened by new facilities contract

As casual employees become an increasingly significant part of the work force in health care, it's essential for those HEU members – in the Facilities Bargaining Association (FBA) – to be protected by their union contract.

The 2010-2012 facilities subsector collective agreement secured a number of new rights for casual workers that recognize their vital role in health care delivery.

There's no question that casual status suits some members' family situation or lifestyle. They can choose the most convenient shifts, coordinate work around school, child care or social commitments, and enjoy an overall improved quality of life.

But all too often, employers manipulate the posting of positions in order to avoid contract rights and benefits that often accompany regular full-time and part-time status. That's why new collective agreement language, negotiated by the union, is important recognition for casual employees.

Casual workers have long-standing

rights as outlined in the *Addendum: Casual Employees* – and are placed on the same hourly wage scale as regular full-time and part-time workers, including overtime rates as per the scheduling provisions in the collective agreement. They also receive a percentage of their straight time pay in lieu of scheduled vacation and statutory holidays.

In the new contract, casuals will also benefit from the special wage adjustments for nursing unit assistants (unit clerks), lab assistants, sterile supply technicians, buyers, buyer supervisors, accounting supervisors and accountants, as well as the newly negotiated wage grid increments for licensed practical nurses and orthopaedic technologists.

Training opportunities

In addition, criteria for the FBA Education Fund, which was first negotiated in 2006 bargaining for regular full-time and part-time employees, has been expanded to include casual workers who need financial support for skills upgrading and career mobil-

ity opportunities.

Casual members can apply for short-term or long-term training funds. Please check the union's website (www.heu.org) for more information and application forms.

Job security and porting seniority

Casual employees, who are laid off as a result of contracting out or privatization, can now register for work in another department with their current employer, or port their seniority to a new health-sector employer, if they are re-employed within 180 days (six months) of termination.

Like all regular employees, casuals – who voluntarily leave their jobs with an FBA employer and are subsequently rehired by the same employer, or hired by another facilities employer within 180 days (six months) – can now port their seniority.

For more information on the facilities 2010-2012 collective agreement, check the bargaining section on the union's website at www.heu.org.

<<newsbites>>

Ontario moves to bring drug costs under control

It's no secret that drug costs in Canada – which account for a huge portion of our nation's publicly funded health care budget – are spiraling out of control at a staggering rate.

So, it makes sense for governments to do something about it – something that puts more money back into the public purse and less into the coffers of pharmaceutical retailers.

That's why on April 7, Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty's Liberal government introduced a controversial bill to help bring the province's skyrocketing drug costs under control.

The proposed *Prescription Drug*

Reform aims to save the province one billion dollars a year by lowering the cost of generic drugs to 25 per cent of the brand name price (currently, pharmacies can "mark up" generic drugs by 50 per cent), and eliminating professional allowances (a "kickback" pharmacies receive from drug companies for carrying their products).

At issue, according to Ontario's Health Minister Deb Matthews, is the lack of transparency around the \$750 million a year that Ontario pharmacies receive as "professional allowances".

To make drug retailers more accountable, the Ontario Liberals are proposing a direct-billing plan where pharmacies would bill the government

for their services, such as holding flu clinics, administering narcotics, or providing counselling – in a similar process to doctors billing for health care services they provide.

As part of the drug system reform, the Ontario government has budgeted \$300 million to offset the costs of increasing dispensing fees by one dollar per prescription and four dollars per prescription in rural areas, and to cover pharmacists' direct-billing fees.

But these proposals have outraged stakeholders including the Ontario Pharmacists' Association, independent pharmacists, and the country's biggest drug store chains.

Pharmacists say the McGuinty

Living wage campaign gains momentum

When HEU launched its Living Wage campaign in 2007, the dream was that the initiative would reach beyond our own members and gain recognition and support from the broader community for the benefit of more low-income workers – unionized or not – and their families.

And that's exactly what has happened.

Through a variety of activities and many speaking engagements, HEU's Living Wage activists brought reality to the slogan, "Because work should lift you out of poverty, not keep you there."

Their efforts and commitment not only resulted in collective agreements that moved Sodexo, Compass and Aramark members toward the goal of a living wage, but also captured the attention of a number of progressive organizations and other unions.

Now, First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition is taking the living wage message even further with "A Living Wage for Families" campaign <www.livingwageforfamilies.ca>. HEU is a member of the campaign's advisory committee along with several other labour and community-based groups.

One of the most recent and significant successes of "A Living Wage for Families" came on April 26 when the New Westminster City Council voted unanimously in favour of a living wage bylaw, the first of its kind in Canada.

Since then, the campaign has made presentations to the social planning departments of Burnaby, Maple Ridge, Richmond and Surrey as these municipalities explore what a living wage entails.

In May, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives in B.C. released an update to its 2008 report "Working for a Living Wage" with recalculated living wage rates.

It puts \$18.17 an hour as the 2010 wage required to keep a Metro

Vancouver family with two children and two working parents above the poverty line. In Victoria, the figure is \$17.31 an hour. Calculations for other cities can be done by accessing the resources at <www.policyalternatives.ca/livingwage2010>.

And for Facebook enthusiasts, join the online group "I Support a Living Wage for B.C."

In June, HEU hosted a Living Wage barbeque at the union's Provincial Office where members, guests and community partners from across the Lower Mainland gathered to celebrate the successes of the our Living Wage campaign and look forward to the next phase.

Watch for more news about HEU's Living Wage campaign plans later this summer.



MARGI BLAMEY PHOTO

New Westminster councillor Jaimie McEvoy (left) thanked HEU members attending a June 24 celebration for the critical role they played in promoting a living wage. New Westminster is the first municipality in Canada to pass a living wage bylaw.

FOCUS ON LOCALS

Seven Shining Stars strengthens membership, builds activism

HEU's Seven Shining Stars local includes about 300 members working for Sodexo at seven different sites – Brock Fahrni, GF Strong, Mount St. Joseph, St. Paul's, UBC, VGH and Youville.

Since the local was created in the fall of 2005, the executive has worked hard to overcome some of the challenges facing a multi-site local, where many members work two or three jobs.

Local chair Cora Mojica remembers that when she began attending union meetings in the first six months of the local's formation, participation was very low, and not all sites were represented.

"So we decided to start doing some things differently," says Mojica. "We started to send written invitations to people's homes besides posting notic-

es on the bulletin boards. We moved the meetings from the hospital to the Collingwood Neighbourhood House. It's a central location. Bus and skytrain are right there. And it's a very nice space."

In addition, the local executive started phoning all the individual shop stewards and occupational health and safety representatives to find out about any current issues or problems for the meeting's agenda and to remind them to encourage members to attend.

"Slowly, slowly, we were able to get more members coming to the meetings from different sites," says Mojica.

"And then what really made a difference was our first Christmas party. We were very surprised that more

than 100 attended."

The party was held at Collingwood House. Members and their families were welcome. There was lots of good food, music, dancing and prizes. Most of all, it was fun.

The next one was even better than the last one, says Mojica. "Oh boy, it was our best yet."

The Christmas parties, and now the summer picnics, have proved to be a great way to build relationships among members.

Seven Shining Stars has also put some other ideas to work. They always bring food to the meetings – "food invites people" – and if they have time, they prepare it themselves.

They also held a meeting that brought all the shop stewards and OH&S representatives together to meet each other and discuss the various issues members face at the different sites.

Mojica says this helped build people's confidence and make people stronger, knowing they have the support of their peers.

"Slowly, slowly, we were able to get more members coming to the meetings from different sites... what really made a difference was our first Christmas party."

Liberals haven't laid out payment plans for the services they're being asked to provide, and criticize the government's \$300 million offer as not going far enough.

At press time, implementation of the reform bill – which was scheduled to begin on May 15 – had been delayed to allow the government more time to address concerns and iron out the details.

Once implemented, Ontario's pharmaceutical reform will follow on the heels of Alberta's recent initiative, which cuts the costs of generic drugs by 30 per cent, effective April 1, in an effort to save Alberta taxpayers about \$100 million a year. Prior to that, phar-

macists were permitted to jack up the price of a generic drug by 75 per cent of its brand name counterpart.

The Ontario government has urged other provincial health ministers to organize around similar cost-saving measures for generic drugs in Canada to bring pharmaceutical prices more in line with those in the United States and United Kingdom.

Nova Scotia first province to ban bottled water

This past April at a CUPE convention in Halifax, Nova Scotia Premier Darrell Dexter announced plans to have his province lead the way in banning bottled water from all government offices.

Dexter told delegates that this initiative would decrease the alarming amount of plastic waste littering landfills

in his Atlantic province, and also promote the safety of public water.

During his address, the premier said he wants "to support the well-run municipal water systems that exist here in the province and make the point that you can get, for pennies a



glass, some of the highest-quality and best-tasting water anywhere."

Although supporters, like the Council of Canadians, applaud Dexter, they hope the new policy – yet to be drafted by the province's environment department – will expand to include all government-operated facilities, including schools, libraries, hospitals and community centres.

They also advocate for installing more drinking water fountains in parks and the government facilities currently using bottled water.

Following Nova Scotia's example, the Canadian Federation of Students in St. John's recently formed the Newfoundland Bottled Water Free

Family councils key to improving care

Members working in residential care know how important family councils are when it comes to advocacy and problem-solving.

Families and their loved ones frequently develop strong, trusting relationships with staff. The very personal nature of the care means that family members and workers talk frequently, exchange stories and share information that is critical to maintaining the health and well-being of residents.

It's because of this trust and common interests that family councils are fast becoming an essential part of our long-term residential care system.

"That's why we're encouraging our members to reach out to and connect with family councils on a regular basis," says HEU secretary-business manager Judy Darcy. "We see family councils as one of the most important mechanisms to bring about improvements in residential care."

Lyne England, chairperson of the Vancouver Island Association of Family Councils (VIAFC), says that communication "is really the starting point. We would like to help workers all we can. We know there are not enough feet on the floor. We hear that from family council members at individual meetings and at our regional meetings."

Like HEU, England wants the recommendations from B.C. Ombudsperson Kim Carter's 2009 report on seniors' care to be implemented in full. "They are all very solid, thoughtful, valid recommendations," England says, "And they wouldn't take long to implement."

In particular is the recommendation to enshrine an expanded role for family and resident councils in legislation or regulation. Carter also specifies the

need for a designated person at each facility and in each health authority to assist and respond to councils.

England, who has been an active family council member for more than a decade, says there was a time when the health authority was much more engaged with family councils than it is now.

In fact, VIAFC has been years in the making. England says the current organization is the successor to the Regional Family Advisory Council – which became operational in 1999 – and is the result of work that started in the early 1990s with the former health authority.

"Family members recognized the value of family councils then," England says. "We knew we needed to move forward with the concept. We needed to liaise with the health authority of the day and reach decision-makers."

"We worked with the powers that be who said 'yes' to the idea of family councils and to a regional structure," she says. "We came up with terms of reference and the health authority provided secretarial support and meeting space."

In recent years, VIHA has withdrawn its participation. A social worker who always attended meetings was pulled and the secretarial support ended. Finally, VIHA stopped providing meeting space in December 2009.

Although VIAFC continues to keep the health authority informed, England says,

"It's difficult to make decisions if the people with the information aren't there."

However, the association and VIHA are talking as the relationship "continues to evolve and grow," says England.

In the meantime, the work of individual family councils and VIAFC goes on. "We're looking at a time when we have representation from the north, mid and south Island," England says. "This is the vision."

MARGI BLAMEY

"We're encouraging our members to reach out to and connect with family councils on a regular basis."



KEN ROBINSON

PRESIDENT'S DESK

Our stewards are priceless

2010 is the Year of the Steward – arising from a resolution adopted at the last CUPE National Convention, and an opportunity to recognize those members who have stepped up to do the important work of defending our collective agreement rights.

During a recent visit to Prince George, I heard about one shop steward who has been representing members for 25 years. It reminded me how much these members do for their co-workers on a daily basis and how little they are recognized for such a valuable contribution.

I'm sure this veteran steward could tell you just how much things have changed in the workplace.

Heavier workloads and fewer staff mean that when shop stewards go off the job to assist a member, their work backs up. Others often need to shoulder the load – but frequently, there's no one available to pick up their duties.

Just as health care has become more complex, so have our collective agreements. These days, shop stewards have to deal with a lot of challenges –

scheduling and rotations, restructuring and layoffs, transfer agreements, LTD and return to work, and workload grievances. This means they are often dealing with a far more "legal world" than was the case in decades past.

Finally, many are looking after aging parents and/or raising younger families. Others may be working two or three jobs to keep up with the cost of living. This really puts another level of pressure and stress on those

who are willing to be there for their co-workers when they need help protecting their collective agreement rights.

For all these reasons, I want to encourage locals to do what they can to recognize the sisters and brothers who take on these critical roles and to look for ways to support them. It's also important to recruit and mentor new shop stewards, especially as more people retire and we lose the knowledge they have built up over their years of service.

At the provincial level, strengthening our steward network continues to be a top priority. Our education department delivers a solid training program, which equipped about 350 new and experienced stewards over the past year and a half. Your work is greatly appreciated.

For members who may be interested in taking on steward duties, I encourage you to contact your local executive.

And finally, on behalf of the Provincial Executive, I want to thank all stewards for everything they do. You may be "silently" appreciated on a daily basis, but you deserve a public thank you for the dedication and commitment you bring to your role.

In every way, you are priceless.

I encourage locals to recognize the sisters and brothers who take on the shop steward role and to look for ways to support them.

<<newsbites>>

Coalition to lend their voices to the cause. Their mandate is a provincial ban on selling or buying bottled water at all government locations.

Still at a grassroots level, the coalition was also created for geographic, environmental and economic reasons. They say the shortage of available recycling plants or fees to access private recycling facilities throughout the province make it unaffordable for many Newfoundlanders to recycle, period.

Nova Scotia's water bottle ban policy is yet to be put in place.

CUPW ends boycott of private postal outlets

The Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) has ended a two-decade-old boycott of private postal outlets and franchises.

The move came in June when the union's national executive voted unanimously to conclude the boycott and begin organizing private outlet workers.

Although CUPW does not support the privatization of Canada's postal services, it does recognize that private postal outlets have become a reality and that in many communities private outlets are the only options available.



By ending the boycott, CUPW can turn its attention to organizing non-unionized, private workers whose wages, benefits and working conditions are inferior to those of Canada's public postal employees.

CUPW is currently organizing

franchise workers in Montreal and elsewhere. (CALM)

Comox coalition fights bed cuts

A campaign to save 18 acute care beds at St. Joseph's General Hospital in Comox has gained community-wide support in an all-out effort to stop the potential downgrading of the hospital.

On June 2, area MLA Don McRae tabled a petition "from approximately 8,400 residents from the Comox Valley and the north Island who want to see the current level of service, professional

care and acute care beds maintained at St. Joseph's Hospital."

Comox Valley citizens reacted quickly to the March announcement that over 20 per cent of the hospital's medical/surgical beds would be converted to transitional beds, in a move that hospital administrators estimate will save \$1 million.

Throughout the spring, the St. Joseph's Health Coalition – which formed to fight the bed closures – carried out a public awareness campaign and petition drive, calling on St. Joseph's and

HEU: organizing the unorganized

It's been almost a decade since B.C.'s Liberal government and its health authorities first teamed up with corporations to drive down workers' wages through privatizing health care services.

During that time, thousands of health care workers have lost their jobs and their unionized workplaces to contracting out.

But when you look at the record, workers aren't buying what government's been selling – namely, non-union work sites where employers have the unfettered right to pretty much do as they please, within minimal employment standards.

In the past few months alone, more than 650 workers have made the Hospital Employees' Union their union of choice.

"It's remarkable, really," says HEU's organizing co-ordinator Susan Fisher. "Given all the obstacles government has put up to impede the ability of workers to join a union of their choice – and stay unionized – many workers still want a union that will stand up for their rights and the rights of their patients and residents."

This is currently true in long-term care where employers have used *Bill 29* (the *Health and Social Services Improvement Act*) and other B.C. Liberal legislation to contract out staff in all classifications. And at times, recontract out services to new companies and/or subcontractors once workers join a union.

For example, *Bill 29* eliminated a common labour standard – "successorship" rights – for health and social services workers. Those rights, which still belong to other unionized employees, are key to ensuring a workplace remains unionized if or when services are contracted out.

"The way it now stands," Fisher says, "you can work for years in the same seniors' care facility, rarely miss a day of work, and every time the contract flips, be right back at the beginning with a new employer."

"But once workers start to feel the imbalance of power in their workplace, they realize there's only one way to address it – by organizing and demanding union representation."

This is why workers like Felix Magallanes wanted HEU to represent health care workers in his Surrey facility.

"I love my job. I enjoy my job. But I also want my rights to be protected when I need to speak up about

any issues or concerns I have," says Magallanes.

"When you're not unionized, there are very few limits or restrictions on what an employer can do. That's why workers need a union, and a legally-binding collective agreement – to make sure there is shared responsibility and accountability in the workplace."

Magallanes says having strong union representation "helps us improve our lives, our employment, the quality of care we provide to residents and our relationships in the workplace."

Fisher believes workers put their trust in HEU because "we have a strong history of advocating for the basic rights of workers, their families and their communities, one that goes all the way back to our earlier years when we joined the struggle to build a public Medicare system in Canada."

Over the decades, HEU has undertaken countless workplace campaigns to improve both working and caring conditions. And the union has worked in partnership with community organizations on various issues to help build a more just and caring society.

Recent examples include the union's Stand Up for Seniors' Care campaign, where HEU

works closely with family groups and seniors' advocacy networks, and HEU's Living Wage campaign, which helped create a living wage movement in the province.

Carey Haslam, a new HEU member and cook at Sunridge Place in Duncan, says she and her co-workers had to deal with a lot of challenges when they decided they wanted to join HEU.

Now, with the union in place, she says, "we don't feel alone any more. We've got support. We're able to get our questions answered. When you call the union, they get back to you. Now, I feel like there's always someone backing us up."

Haslam says she's learned a lot since Sunridge members joined HEU last December. "It's exciting to be learning new things, whether it's about occupational health and safety or how the union works. Being a member also gives me lots of opportunities to sign up for the union's education courses."

"Once workers feel the imbalance of power in their workplace, they realize there's only one way to address it – by organizing and by demanding union representation."



When it comes to organizing and, in some cases, reorganizing workers in the long-term care sector, HEU has been up against the same push to lower workers' wages and benefits through privatization that impacted hospital support services in 2003, says Fisher.

"To be employed by a for-profit contractor in long-term care these days can be a very discouraging experience," says Fisher. "If you join a union, you risk being contracted out to another company. If you don't, you're without the union protections you need to raise issues that are critical to you, your co-workers and quality care."

But just as HEU vowed in 2003, when many hospital support services were contracted out to corporations, Fisher says, "We're just not prepared to abandon newly privatized workers to low-wage jobs, without the advocacy they need to improve their lives and working conditions."

"That's where the rubber hits the road. It's a responsibility we have to our own members, unorganized workers and the broader labour movement. It's what propelled our reorganizing efforts in hospital support services and it's why we fought *Bill 29* all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada."

She acknowledges that while HEU's 2007 Supreme Court victory did not provide a remedy that could "undo all the damage done by *Bill 29*" it did – among other things – enshrine collective bargaining as a charter-protected right for the first time in Canadian history.

"When you're prepared to fight for the rights of one group of workers, and you're totally committed to improving their lives, in the end, you're fighting for all workers," she says.

PATTY GIBSON

the Vancouver Island Health Authority to rethink the decision, which was made without consulting the hospital's doctors, nurses and other health care workers or the community.

An April town hall meeting drew more than 300 Comox Valley citizens to hear about the plan that would permanently eliminate acute care beds and lay off up to 40 health care workers.

The coalition, which includes HEU members, will keep their public campaign going and continue to collect signatures through the summer.

Read more about the St. Joseph's Health Coalition and their work at <www.stjosephshealthcoalition.ca>.

HEU takes home top honours at CALM awards

The Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM) recognized the work of the Hospital Employees' Union with four awards, presented during a dinner gala in Windsor on May 15.

The union won Best Overall Publication (the *Guardian*), Best Website

Content (www.heu.org), Best Radio Ad (Stand Up for Seniors' Care), and the Ed Finn Award for Best Original Feature on "Greening Health Care".

HEU also received Honourable Mention for Best Photograph – a picture of a young woman with a developmental disability participating in the 2009 Walk for Community Social Services.

The annual CALM Awards recognize excellence in union publications and communications.

Entries are judged by

independent experts in a variety of categories and classes.

Next year's CALM Conference is scheduled to be held in Vancouver.

CUPE to convene health sector meeting

CUPE is holding a national health care sector meeting in Victoria from October 20 – 22 and HEU will be there in force, drawing delegates from locals across the province.

Information about attending the meeting will be mailed to HEU locals soon, complete with delegate application forms.

This meeting is a great chance for member activists, elected leaders, and staff from every region in the country to gather together and learn from each other, pick up new information and strategies, and build our strength as champions of Medicare.

You can also expect a "green meeting" as CUPE is committed to reducing the event's environmental impacts to ensure the smallest possible footprint on the natural environment. Speakers, workshops, panel sessions and a delegate reception are in the planning stages.

How government policies

“CANADIANS ARE LARGELY UNAWARE that OUR HEALTH is shaped by how income and wealth is distributed, whether or not we are employed, and if so, the working conditions we experience.”

~ *Social Determinants of Health: The Canadian Facts*

if you're keeping tabs on the steady stream of services that have been cut back or completely eliminated in B.C., you already know that the web of social programs we all depend on is gradually disappearing.

But what you may not realize is that the decisions governments make in a wide range of public policy areas can damage our health.

As HEU members, like other British Columbians, struggle to deal with an onslaught of cuts in programs and services – spanning everything from schools, to sports programs, to community health and social services – there is growing evidence that this provincial government's lopsided priorities are literally making us sick.

That's because good health is not just determined by health care, although that's an important ingredient. It's a direct result of all the other things that make up our living and working conditions.

Try talking with most people about the “social determinants of health” and chances are you'll be watching their eyes glaze over. But talk about how inadequate housing, poor working conditions or the loss of community support services are key factors affecting how long we will live, and they tend to take notice.

In 2003, that point was emphasized by the Vancouver Island Health Authority's chief medical health officer Dr. Richard Stanwick, when he criticized his own employer for contributing to ill health by laying off hundreds of HEU members working in Island hospital support services.

Referring to studies concluding that being put out of work can cause stress that reduces your lifespan, Stanwick said VIHA's planned layoffs risked the health of more than 1,600 people.

CANADA'S FAILING RECORD

A recently released study by York University “Social Determinants of Health: The Canadian Facts” spells out just how far Canada as a whole is lagging behind other western nations when it comes to good social policy.

“For years, we bragged that we were identified by the United Nations as ‘the best country in the world in which to live’. We have since dropped a few ranks, but our bragging continues,” says former Minister of National Health and Welfare Monique Begin, in her introduction to the report.

“The truth is that Canada, the ninth richest country in the world – is so wealthy that it manages to mask the reality of poverty, social exclusion and discrimination, the erosion of employment quality, its adverse mental health outcomes, and youth suicides,” she adds.

“While one of the world's biggest spenders in health care, we have one of the worst records in providing an effective social safety net. What good does it do to treat people's illnesses, to then send them back to the conditions that made them sick?”

The report's authors – Juha Mikkonen and Dennis Raphael – point out that while Canadians are generally healthier than Americans, we don't compare as well to other wealthy developed nations when it comes to supporting citizens through their lifespan.

“Our income inequality and poverty rates are growing and are among the highest of wealthy developed nations,” they state. “Canadian spending in support of families, persons with disabilities, older Canadians, and employment training is also among the lowest of these same wealthy developed nations.”

Recently, former head of the federal NDP Ed Broadbent has weighed into the discussion about Canada's fragile social safety net. And he is sounding the alarm that Canada is rapidly reversing many of the social and economic entitlements created in the post-World War II years – government pensions, universal health care, trade union rights, comprehensive unemployment insurance, and greater access to post-secondary education.

“When it came to social policy, the Liberals led by Pierre Trudeau and the Conservatives led by Robert Stanfield differed from the NDP on social policy more often on speed and detail than on general direction,” he told the Congress of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences in late-May.

“Trudeau had campaigned on the ‘just society’ agenda, and Stanfield openly accepted Medicare. The commonly assumed future for Canadians was to achieve increasing equality through redistributive taxation and a wide range of social and economic rights.”

Clearly, that vision has suffered greatly in the past two decades under various Liberal and Conservative governments – both provincial and federal – which have steadily slashed spending in health, education, and a wide range of social services.

The impact, says Broadbent, is also an assault on equality rights.

“The progressive politics of my generation were driven by the equality agenda because of ethical considerations, and also by concern for macro-economic stability,” he says.

“However, we now have recent and clear evidence that more is at stake than stability and ethical concerns about equality. More equal societies are not simply more stable and just; they are also healthier in virtually every respect for everyone in them.”

He cites the work of two leading British epidemiologists – Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett – who have produced a comprehensive analysis of data gathered from dozens of countries.

Their research shows that more equal nations like Sweden, Norway, and Denmark are better off in almost every way. Their citizens are healthier, live longer, have fewer teenage pregnancies, are more law-abiding, participate more in civic projects, and are more trusting of their neighbours.

“It's time to reverse the growing trend to deep inequality in Canada,” says Broadbent. “This requires positive action by governments, among

“While one of the world's biggest spenders in health care, we have one of the worst records in providing an effective social safety net.”

Legislate a poverty reduction plan

In February, 200 organizations from across the province joined together in a call for all-party support for a legislated B.C. poverty reduction plan. HEU was one of them.

The union's secretary-business manager Judy Darcy had this to say: “More and more, we see people who go to work every day, but still struggle in poverty. Some of them

belong to unions and many don't. There are policies that would make a dramatic difference. They are known and possible. B.C. needs a comprehensive approach to boost the incomes of those living in poverty, but we also need to build the social infrastructure, public services and assets that are vital to providing a path out of poverty.”

are making us sick

other obligations, to build hospitals and schools, provide adequate pensions, ensure employment insurance for all workers, guarantee equal pay for men and women, and create and enforce laws enabling workers to have unions.”

THE B.C. EXPERIENCE

So if Canadians overall have reason to be worried about the direction the country has taken, what about the experience of British Columbians, specifically?

Since coming to power in 2001, the B.C. Liberal government under Gordon Campbell has carried out an agenda that has had a direct, negative impact on virtually every major social determinant of health – health services, income, education, housing, early-childhood development, disability, employment and working conditions, unemployment and job security, gender, race and Aboriginal status.

Shamefully, B.C. has had the highest rate of poverty and child poverty in the country. Despite having the highest cost of living, B.C. now has the lowest minimum wage. Welfare rates also are among the lowest in Canada.

Homelessness has become a leading issue in all major urban centres. Education and post-secondary education have both suffered from inadequate funding. Child care spaces and support are sadly lacking. And inevitably, the gap between rich and poor in B.C. is growing at an alarming rate.

In the last few months alone, British Columbians have witnessed the elimination of numerous health services and community social programs.

THE WAY FORWARD

As to what is to be done, Mikkonen and Raphael call for strong political and social movements to pressure governments into creating public policy that will strengthen the social safety net. They say health-serving organizations in particular have a responsibility to educate themselves and their clients about the social determinants of health and to promote public policy action. And they call for policies that would make it easier for workers to unionize their workplaces.

“In Canada,” they state, “working under a collective agreement is related to higher wages, better benefits, and improved employment security and working conditions. All of which help keep workers and their families healthier.”

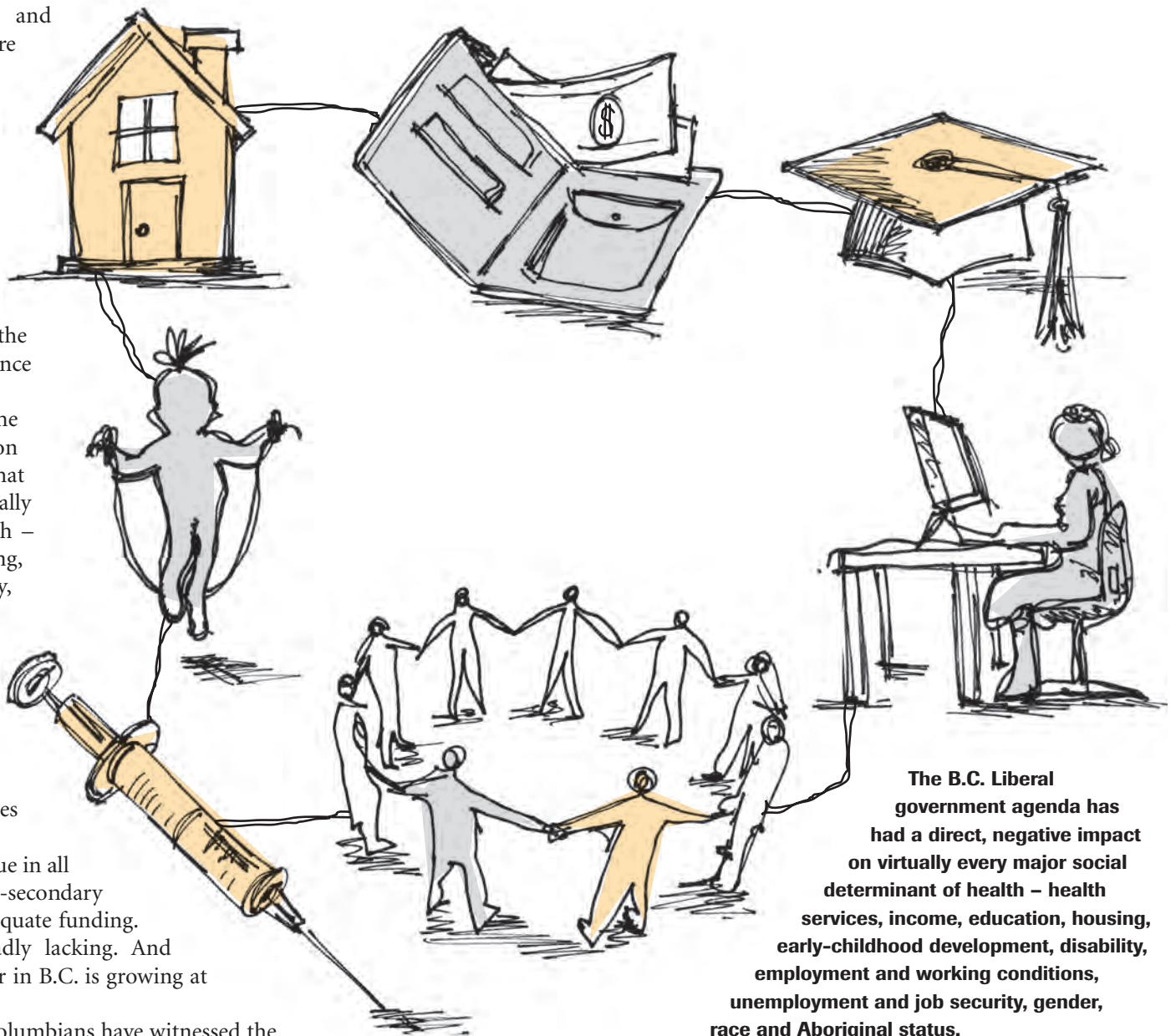
Here in B.C., Seth Klein of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, recently presented the case for a comprehensive poverty reduction plan to the B.C. Legislature’s Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth.

“The price of poverty is not merely borne by the households who experience it first hand,” he told the committee. “We all pay in higher costs for social, community and charitable services, in higher costs to the criminal justice system, in lost productivity and lower school success, and particularly in terms of higher health costs.”

What’s needed, he explained, is a poverty reduction plan. And given that 56 per cent of poor children in B.C. live in households with at least one parent working full-time, all year around in the paid labour force, the plan must deal with issues like the minimum wage, employment standards and a living wage.

He cites the success that both Québec and Newfoundland have experienced – two provinces which have the longest-standing poverty reduction plans – while noting that there are now six provinces in Canada that have introduced serious, accountable measures to reduce poverty.

Back in 2004, for example, Newfoundland’s poverty rate was the second highest in Canada, after B.C.’s. It is now the third lowest. How they got there was through concrete policy changes: a higher welfare benefit rate, a \$10



The B.C. Liberal government agenda has had a direct, negative impact on virtually every major social determinant of health – health services, income, education, housing, early-childhood development, disability, employment and working conditions, unemployment and job security, gender, race and Aboriginal status.

minimum wage, a universal dental care for children, and other measures.

Ontario also has created a plan – the *Ontario Poverty Reduction Act* – with a goal of reducing poverty by 25 per cent over the next five years. And more recently, New Brunswick has tabled their plan with the passage of the *Economic and Social Inclusion Act*.

Klein says all these plans include specific targets and timelines, usually embedded in legislation; comprehensive measures that address income, social assistance and other government income supports; all-party support; and measures to address housing, education, child care and community health care.

In addition, they target poverty among populations where poverty is most acute, such as Aboriginal people, recent immigrants, people with disabilities and mental illness, and single parents.

Klein says the amount of money needed to take everyone in B.C. who is below the poverty line, and raise their income to the poverty line, is about \$2.4 billion, or 1.3 per cent of provincial GDP.

“We can afford to do this,” he says. “Surely, in a province as wealthy as ours, with an annual gross domestic product of almost \$200 billion, closing a poverty gap of \$2.4 billion should not

be seen as insurmountable.”

Former chief medical officer for Vancouver, John Blatherwick, in a special commentary to the *Vancouver Sun* on June 17, strongly supports a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy to reduce homelessness and poverty in B.C. “Poverty is one of the most powerful determinants of health,” he wrote. “A health care system that treats illness instead of promoting health is unsustainable and costly.”

He says an effective strategy must include adequate, accessible income support for the non-employed; improved earnings and working conditions for low-waged workers; a plan for affordable and supportive housing, and universal, publicly funded child care.”

You can learn more about the social determinants of health at <www.thecanadianfacts.org>.

Health-serving organizations have a responsibility to educate themselves and their clients about the social determinants of health and to promote public policy action.

PATTY GIBSON

Pension campaign makes headway

Federal and provincial finance ministers have agreed to further negotiations on expanding Canada Pension Plan (CPP) benefits at their June meeting in PEI.

CUPE National president Paul Moist says the labour movement continues to make progress to win improved retirement incomes for all Canadian workers.

“These are positive developments,” says Moist, “and it means CUPE will now have to focus on a two-prong approach.

“We will need to lobby provincial governments to win their support for expanded CPP benefits. And we must boost pressure on the Harper government to increase the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) to lift hundreds of thousands of low-income retirees out of poverty.”

Moist says provincial backing is vital if reforms are to be won because of the CPP amendment formula. Two-thirds of provinces representing two-thirds of the population must sign on for any change to be implemented.

“It’s time to step up our efforts to make sure we get the real reforms we need,” says Moist.

Find out more and take action at www.cupe.ca/action/fix-the-pension-crisis.

B.C.’s Labour Relations Board throws out BCNU raid applications

Canadian Federation of Nurses removes BCNU’s voting rights

A year-long raid on HEU and other health unions has ended in failure with the BC Labour Relations Board dismissing all raid applications filed by the BC Nurses’ Union last November.

The June 18 LRB decision officially confirms that BCNU failed to attract enough support in any of B.C.’s six health authorities to back even one application to raid LPNs from HEU and other health unions.

Their province-wide application was also dismissed.

The BCNU publicly launched its raid on May 13, 2009 – the day after the BC Liberals were elected to a third term in office.

The Canadian Labour Congress immediately demanded that BCNU end its actions as they violated the anti-raiding provisions of the CLC constitution.

At the time, BCNU vehemently denied it was raiding, despite evidence to the contrary, and failed to change course.

So by July, BCNU was barred from voting at – or participating in – the activities of local labour councils, the B.C. Federation of Labour and the CLC.

More recently, the Canadian

Federation of Nurses Unions removed BCNU’s voting rights at its meetings. In response, BCNU has given notice to CFNU that it intends to withdraw from the national nurses’ organization next year.

During the course of the raid, the BCNU employed a number of questionable tactics including issuing a bulletin falsely accusing HEU of faking phone calls from BCNU’s executive director. They later admitted the calls originated from BCNU’s own polling company.

In another incident, the B.C. Government and Service Employees’ Union (whose LPN members were also targeted) rejected an overture from BCNU to “compensate” them for the potential loss of LPN members due to the raid.

BCGEU president Darryl Walker wrote in response: “Our members are not chattels to be brokered or paid for in a hostile takeover bid.” BCNU denied the charge.

On the floor, many LPNs were subjected to intense pressure from BCNU organizers to sign cards especially as the “open” period for card signing was drawing to an end, and it was increasingly clear that they did not have the numbers to support their attempted raid.

They nevertheless filed a number of

applications on November 30. But just a few weeks later, in an eleventh-hour attempt to withdraw their applications and avoid a time bar on a future raid, BCNU admitted that they didn’t have the signed cards to back them up.

The LRB rejected the attempt to avoid the consequences of a failed raid and finally, after a series of procedural delays, all BCNU’s applications were dismissed on June 18.

That decision includes a time bar on future raid applications for the 22 months following the date of their unsuccessful applications.

HEU secretary-business manager Judy Darcy hopes that the unequivocal decision from the LRB will convince BCNU’s leadership to abandon their divisive actions altogether.

“HEU and BCNU members share many values and objectives. We all benefit when we focus on issues that unite us.”

Darcy thanked LPN members for standing by their union, often under intense pressure from BCNU organizers.

“By staying focused on nursing practice issues and bargaining objectives through this challenging period, HEU and its LPN members continued to move the profession forward with concrete gains in the last round of bargaining,” says Darcy.

“That work will continue with the support of a strong and growing network of LPNs within the union.”

“HEU and BCNU members share many values and objectives. We all benefit when we focus on issues that unite us.”

>>notebook>>



B.C.’s historic citizens’ initiative has been compared to the right-wing U.S. Tea Party movement. But this is no Tea Party North.

HST debacle underscores need for debate on fair taxes

This summer, Elections BC will check through more than 700,000 signatures to determine whether the grassroots campaign to upend the Harmonized Sales Tax will be the first successful initiative under the B.C.’s *Recall and Initiative Act*.

If it is, the B.C. Liberal government must either put the proposed initiative legislation to a vote of the legislature (where it can be defeated by the Liberal majority) or to a province-wide vote (which is non-binding).

So for the time being, it appears that the major damage won’t be to the HST itself but rather to the electoral fortunes of the BC Liberals who are already suffering from negative polling numbers, a cabinet resignation and a list of MLAs targeted for recall.

B.C.’s historic citizens’ initiative has been compared to the U.S. Tea Party movement – a right-wing reaction to taxes, stimulus spending and health care reform south of the border.

But this is no Tea Party North.

To be sure, British Columbians are concerned about the unfairness of the HST which essentially shifts taxes from corporations

to individuals and families, and will cost the average household more than \$500 extra a year.

But I think voter anger is more about the deceitful manner in which the BC Liberals quickly moved to adopt the HST, just days after a provincial election where the possibility was not raised – and even denied.

Anger was further fuelled by the cynical and completely empty claim that they would commit all revenue from the “revenue neutral” HST to health care spending. And by the plea that B.C. couldn’t pass up a time-limited bribe from the Feds to get on board.

But British Columbians also understand that taxes pay for health care, education and the other public services that keep our families and communities healthy and safe.

And the message that politicians of all stripes must draw from the HST debacle is that citizens demand and deserve an open and honest debate about a fair tax system that supports these services.

MIKE OLD • HEU COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

European workers reject deep cuts demanded by international financiers

In recent months, the world has seen mass demonstrations in Greece and other European countries as workers in both the public and private sectors rise up against government cuts to pensions, wages and social services. Those cuts are the result of austerity measures demanded by the European Union and the International Monetary Fund.

Although the economic meltdown began in Greece, its effects have quickly spread to Spain, Portugal and Italy. Even wealthier countries like France have followed suit with attacks on worker benefits that have also generated massive demonstrations.

It's in this context that world leaders attending the recent G8-G20 conference in Toronto agreed to years of punishing austerity by its member states.

The so-called stimulus spending, following the 2008 market collapse has been declared over. Now, workers are demanding that those responsible for the crisis – the financial sector – should be held to account through increased taxes and legislated limits on reckless speculation. And they are rejecting any cut-backs agenda that would make workers and communities pay for a crisis they did not cause.

“The Greeks, unlike most of us, get it,” wrote Chris Hedges on truthdig.com, concerning the strikes and demonstrations. Like the U.S. under George Bush, Greece's right-wing rulers “looted taxpayer funds to enrich their corporate masters and bankrupt the country. They stole hundreds of millions of dollars from individual retirement and pension accounts

slowly built up over years by citizens who had been honest and industrious.”

Neither the austerity measures themselves, or the mass protests opposing them, have stopped at Greece's borders.

Spain has decided to cut \$80 billion from its budget and 13,000 public service jobs, while freezing pensions and reducing state employees' salaries by five per cent.

Portugal has implemented a hiring and salary freeze throughout the public sector.

Italy will cut \$24 billion in public spending by 2012, reducing civil service jobs and salaries, raising the retirement age and cutting health care.

France has moved to freeze public-sector salaries for three years and raised the retirement age to 62 from 60.

And in response, workers have taken to the streets in an escalating series of strikes and demonstrations.

As the *Guardian* goes to press, Greece had experienced its fifth general strike of the year. On June 29, workers shut down ferries, public transport and other state services. The private-sector General Confederation of Labor joined ADEDY, the civil servants' organization, in the 24-hour



Greek mayors take part in a 24-hour strike on April 8 in support of local government employees to fight against the austerity policies implemented by the Greek government.

stoppage. Even journalists were among those who walked off the job.

“We are faced with almost the totaling of Greece's social security and labor system,” said ADEDY leader Spyros Papaspyrou.

Harsh measures include hiking retirement to 65 from 60 for women, paying new hires 84 per cent of the minimum wage, cuts to severance pay and allowing employers to fire more workers.

“For millions of workers and young graduates, the newly adopted measures mean rising unemployment and poverty levels. In particular, old-age poverty will again become a mass phenomenon in Europe,” warns the Roosevelt Institute's Henry C.K. Liu. “Nothing will remain of the post-war welfare state.”

Such measures are self-defeating if the aim is economic recovery, said economist Mark Weisbrot in the *Monthly Review*.

“This process of ‘internal devaluation’ – whereby unemployment is deliberate-

ly driven to high levels in order to drive down wages and prices while keeping the nominal exchange rate fixed – is not only unjust, it is unviable. You cannot shrink your way out of recession; you have to grow your way out.”

Public opinion polls show most Greeks agree something has to be done so that Greece will not default on loans, but they want those who caused the crisis to pay for it.

What the Greek demonstrators are demanding, says U.S. economist Michael Hudson, is to “reverse the global tax shift off property and finance onto labor, and to give labor's financial claims for retirement pensions priority over claims by the banks.

“Economically, the Greek uprising is a revolt against the policy of sacrificing prosperity to pay foreign creditors in this way,” he says. “At issue is whether nations will be run by creditors or by popular aims to reap the benefits of economic growth.”

DAN KEETON • VANCOUVER WRITER

>>voices>>



The BC Liberals are in complete denial about the funding crisis and apparently they want to keep it that way.

B.C.'s education funding crisis hurts students

Right across British Columbia, school districts are making cuts. They are closing schools, reducing support for children with special needs, and cutting specialists like teacher-librarians. They're not doing it because it is good for students; they're doing it because the B.C. Liberal government refuses to adequately fund public education and cover provincially downloaded costs.

After months of bad press, Minister MacDiarmid finally took action. She grew so frustrated by the excellent advocacy of trustees on the Vancouver School Board that she appointed a special adviser to review their budget. However, the review ignored the government's role in the dispute. Once again, the BC Liberals refused to be accountable for their decisions and the funding crisis they created.

In her report, the special adviser stated: “Specifically excluded from our scope of work was the structure of the provincial funding model for education.” In other words, the minister of education didn't want any analysis of funding levels provided by her government.

The review could have been an opportunity to really assess education funding in B.C. However, the government used it to try and shift the blame from its record. The BC Liberals are in complete denial about the education funding crisis and apparently they want to keep it that way.

Sadly, it's the students who lose out. We will see another round of devastating cuts in September. School districts across the province, not just Vancouver, have significant shortfalls that will force them to make cuts.

Since 2001, 176 schools have closed in B.C. As of this June, 33 more closed and another 34 are threatened with closure. On March 2, 2010, the government brought forward a new budget that actually froze funding for 33 of B.C.'s 60 school districts. In this school year, there were 12,000 classes that violated the government's own class-size and class-composition legislation. That is up from 10,000 only two years ago.

IRENE LANZINGER
PAST PRESIDENT, BC TEACHERS' FEDERATION

Clerical team update

This past spring, more than 800 HEU clerical workers took part in an online survey to gather data on the amount of resources used to do skills re-testing, an issue brought forward by members during 2010 facilities bargaining and at last fall's clerical conference.

Organized by the union's clerical subcommittee, the survey results will be presented by the Facilities Bargaining Association in meetings with the Leadership Council (health authority CEOs and senior health ministry officials) to measure how much time and health care money are wasted on clerical re-testing in a time of shrinking budgets.

At issue, in particular, is the inconsistency in re-test-

ing across the province, as well as within health authorities, when clerical workers apply for other positions with equivalent qualifications (lateral transfers) or for permanent jobs that they're already filling in temporary postings. Some are even re-tested when applying for jobs at other work sites within the same health authority.

The clerical subcommittee is also busy planning this year's Clerical Team Appreciation Day on September 22.

Check the union's website and upcoming issues of *PaperWork* for more details. And if you'd like to be part of HEU's clerical information network, please send an email to <clericalworkers@heu.org>.

Run for water

On May 30, HEU president Ken Robinson, Provincial Executive members Rhonda Bruce and Carolyn Unsworth, along with Provincial Bargaining Committee member Josh Charette joined 2,000 participants in the 3rd Annual Run for Water in Abbotsford.

"It was a really good community event," said Robinson. "We hope to have an increased involvement with a stronger HEU presence in future years."

Run for Water 2010 raised more than \$150,000 – through pledges donated to walkers/runners competing in the half-marathon, a 10km run, or the 5km "fun run" – for Hope International Development Agency, a non-



profit organization based out of New Westminster.

HOPE and its partners spearhead a number of initiatives to improve the living conditions for people in underdeveloped countries, such as Ethiopia, the Philippines, Cambodia and Afghanistan. Their projects include promoting health care; cleaning up the environ-

ment; improvements to sanitation, and providing clean, safe water.

Monies raised from this year's Run for Water have been earmarked for a clean water project to benefit several Ethiopian villages.

For more information check out <www.hope-international.com>.

BEHIND THE SCENES

BRENDA WHITEHALL

In a typical shift, **pharmacy technicians** perform a wide range of complex, highly specialized duties to ensure medications are accurately processed, packaged and delivered

KEEPING B.C. PATIENTS SAFE

Like many HEU jobs that are primarily behind-the-scenes, pharmacy technicians play a vital role in the delivery of health care that often goes unrecognized.

As part of HEU's patient care technical family, pharmacy technicians bring a wealth of comprehensive education, training and professionalism to perform some of the most critical services in B.C. hospital settings.

These health care professionals receive, process and enter physician's orders into dedicated computer software programs, fill prescriptions, distribute narcotics, mix IV bags, prepare chemotherapy products and syringes, and ensure medications are properly stored, labeled and dated.

HEU's financial secretary Donisa Bernardo, a pharmacy technician at Royal Inland Hospital in Kamloops since 1984, understands full-well the high level of accuracy and knowledge these HEU members need to effectively carry out their work.

Bernardo says HEU pharmacy technicians not only contribute to quality patient care, they also save the public health care system valuable taxpayer dollars.

"Pharmacy techs handle some very expensive drugs," says Bernardo. "And we play an important role in saving money by not wasting those costly products through errors when we're mixing, calculating or compounding them under extreme time pressures."

There's no question that accuracy can mean life-or-death in the services provided by pharmacy technicians. And Bernardo says that with years of experience and knowledge about pharmaceuticals, the margin for error shrinks. She also credits the safeguards that are

in place for preventing potential problems.

"Techs check each other's work," explains Bernardo. "The on-call pharmacist usually makes the final decision if there's a discrepancy or a concern about a medication order. I would also phone the unit clerk or the patient's nurse to check on something, if an inconsistency was detected when cross-referencing a physician's order that came to our department with an entry in our computer system."

In a typical shift, pharmacy technicians perform a wide range of complex, highly specialized duties to ensure that all physician-ordered medications are accurately processed, packaged and delivered to hospital units in a timely, and often urgent, manner.

"You need a lot of math and people skills in this job," says Bernardo. "You'll get STAT orders, the units and physicians will be phoning you, and you can't get frazzled. You have to be cool under pressure."

In an era of rapidly changing pharmaceuticals and technology, pharmacy technicians are required to keep their extensive drug knowledge updated. Their roles also include monitoring drug safety, maintaining inventory of controlled substances like narcotics, and some even oversee clinical trials.

But pharmacy technicians' levels of responsibil-

ity far exceed processing medications. They have a broad knowledge base and as their scope of practice continues to expand, they're expected to review patient medical charts and history to determine any allergies, physical challenges or adverse drug interactions that need to be red-flagged for physicians or the head pharmacist.

"With experience, you recognize if a dose is too high," says Bernardo.

"For example, the doctor may write 1.25 mg of Digoxin [heart medication], when it should be 0.125 mg. The decimal was in the wrong place. And when you have knowledge about the drug and regular dose, you pick up on those errors."

Bernardo says the variety of duties, hours of work, shifts and rotating through different work

stations in the department not only keep pharmacy technicians' skills sharp, it also helps prevent repetitive strain injuries.

"I have arthritis in my thumbs from filling syringes and doing IV pushes over the years," she says. "Joint injuries are common because you're using your hands so much for pretty intricate work. That's why it's important to rotate through the work stations."

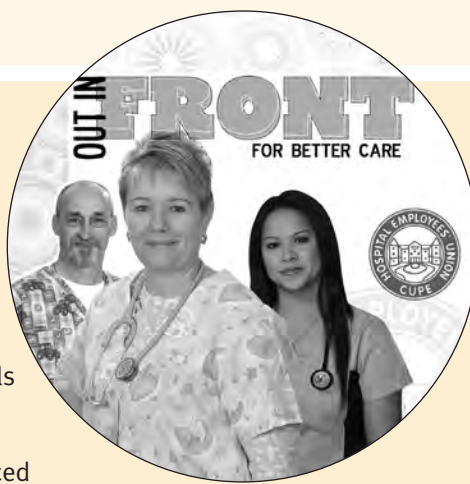
Other OH&S challenges include poor work station ergonomics, exposure to cytotoxic drugs, chemicals, biohazardous materials and infectious diseases.

"It's important to have training protocol on new

drugs so that you wear the appropriate personal protective equipment like goggles and masks," says Bernardo.

"It's easy to open a bottle and get sprayed in the face. I always wore double gloves when processing chemotherapy products or other biohazardous chemicals. We're also trained on chemical spills and clean up."





New guidelines for Joint Re-training Fund

As part of the 2010-2012 facilities subsector collective agreement, the Facilities Bargaining Association negotiated additional funding and more flexible guidelines for the Joint Re-training Fund.

Those eligible to receive re-training funds must be regular employees, who are laid off or bumped due to contracting out. Members who choose to bump, fill a vacancy, or take the enhanced severance package are not eligible for funding.

The Joint Re-training Fund will cover tuition and course materials – up to a total of \$10,000 – plus a maximum \$100 daily stipend for each full-time training day (pro-rated based on actual course

hours per day upon verification of attendance from instructor) for up to one year.

Go to www.heu.org for criteria, application forms and more information, or contact the Fund Administrator at 604-456-7184 (Lower Mainland) or toll-free at 1-877-476-7184.

Nursing Week celebrates team

Once again, National Nursing Week in May gave union locals an opportunity to recognize the critical contribution our patient care team brings to quality nursing care.

In addition to a variety of outreach activities undertaken by union locals, teams of LPNs and care aides visited several work sites to engage members in discussions about recent

gains made at the facilities bargaining table.

And on May 13, LPN Day, we celebrated HEU LPNs and how their unique professional skills are doing more for B.C. patients and residents.

The union also produced two journals to assist members in keeping track of education, upgrading, professional development, and other activities undertaken to maintain and improve their skills and knowledge base.

You can order a copy of the LPN Professional Development Journal – or the Career Development Journal (for care aides, activity workers and rehab assistants) – online at www.heu.org. And while supplies last, we'll also send

you HEU's SBAR card – a guide for structured communications in patient care.

Blue Poppy contest winners

HEU's Persons with DisAbilities standing committee recently sponsored its second annual Blue Poppy contest on April 28, the International Day of Mourning, when we remember workers who have been killed or

injured on the job.

Locals raised awareness about the hazards members face at their worksites.

Congratulations to first-place winner Beckley local who will receive the grand prize, a \$500 HEU boutique gift card. Honorable mentions go to Goodwin, PHSA Amalgamated and Dogwood locals who will receive a \$100 HEU boutique gift card.

"Selecting the grand prize winner was difficult," says HEU president Ken Robinson. "Our selection committee was particularly impressed that a smaller local like Beckley put on such a solid campaign despite limited resources."

Beckley's team visited all workers on site to lead discussions OH&S issues.

continued on page 14

AFTER THE SHIFT

PATTY GIBSON

When HEU member **Jim Friesen** is off shift, he spends his time focused on capturing the extraordinary natural beauty of B.C.'s ever-changing landscape.

A WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES

If you walk into the front lobby of Central City Lodge in downtown Vancouver, you'll see five amazing photographic prints – all of them landscapes – mounted on the wall. Another three have found a home in the fourth-floor library.

They are the work of HEU member Jim Friesen, an activity coordinator who's worked at the 100-bed care facility for the past 28 years.

When he's on shift, he takes his inspiration from Lodge residents in the long-term care area, focusing on their needs and "helping make it possible for them to look forward to the day, and enjoy it."

After the shift, he's inspired by the ever-changing beauty of the natural environment – the sky, the light, the branches of a tree, the varied textures in a stretch of sand – and the challenge of capturing it on film.

"Really, it's the sky that creates the character in the day," he comments. "It's what's happening with the light that creates a certain mood."

Friesen has been an on-again, off-again photographic artist for about three decades. Self-taught, because he was "too busy or too broke" to take classes, he began snapping pictures with "the cheapest camera I could get" while living on the prairies.

"Like any art form that you fall in love with," says Friesen, "I soon found out just how hard it is. And I also discovered that a lot of pictures that I wanted to

take couldn't be taken with the camera I had."

After a gap of about 15 years, during which time he had moved to B.C. and started a family, Friesen had the opportunity to purchase a 35 mm camera from a friend "and I started remembering all the things I had wanted to do with a camera and never did."

At the same time, he started reading more and



PATTY GIBSON PHOTO

more about photography, learning as he went, and pursuing his passion for the landscape.

When HEU negotiated a signing bonus, as part of settling the 2006-2010 facilities contract, he was ready to go to the next level. The bonus made it possible for him "to buy a really good camera, one that could better do what the eyes see and the mind imagines."

Again, he was facing a steep learning curve that included discovering how to make the most of his photography with Photoshop – the digital darkroom.

With an excellent camera, new computer tools and a good teacher, Friesen says everything just started to fall into place. At last, he was able to do some of the things he'd admired in other artists' photography.

Soon, he was making photo art cards, first sharing them with family and friends, and then selling them in various public venues. This was followed by a couple of shows in a neighbourhood bistro and a local gallery.

Friesen says he's grateful to everyone along the way who has helped him pursue his artistic journey. He considers his photography a way to share, and it's "an incentive to keep on learning" – joking that when he recently scanned some old negatives, he was astounded by "the number of bad pictures I took in one 10-year period."

But then, he says, it's all part of the process: one that began by looking at other people's photos – family members and friends – and studying the great art photographers of the 19th and 20th centuries.

"When I looked at those photographs," he reflects, "all I could think was 'I want to do that.'"

When asked about any advice he has to other aspiring photographers, Friesen says, "Look at pictures whenever and wherever you can. See what the great and successful photographers are doing, and find out how they did it. Take lots of pictures, and if you can, take a course."

"A teacher can help you understand things like exposure settings, depth of field and quality of light. It will help you learn faster, and you'll get some honest feedback about the pictures you are taking."

You can check out Jim Friesen's work at www.little-eye-studio.com.

continued from page 13

PHSA local created a “wheel of misfortune” and conducted a survey on stress. Results showed the top reasons for stress were workload, short-staffing, lack of support from supervisors and too many changes in health care delivery.

Goodwin local organized a lunch hour meeting, distributed publications and blue poppy pins, and raffled off first aids kits. Dogwood local sponsored a contest to point out safety hazards, distributed a safety poster and focused on OH&S issues and problems.

Support Workers Day

On August 24, HEU locals will take time to honour support workers. On this third annual Support Workers Day, locals are planning activities

to raise awareness about the crucial role these health care workers play in delivering patient and resident care.

Members of the support workers subcommittee will be calling all locals to encourage activities. HEU will contribute up to \$50 per local to match costs for local events. The committee will also be sending out a questionnaire on workload issues.

Committee co-chairs Rhonda Bruce and John Evans are asking locals to email photos and a brief description of their activities to <rbuce@heu.org>.

HEU clerical reps meet Ontario peers

P.E. members Carol Kenzie and Bev Trynchy were recent guests at a two-day Ontario

Council of Hospital Unions (OCHU) clerical conference.

About 50 delegates from health care centres across the vast province attended the June forum to discuss issues facing Ontario clerical workers. Many echoed the same challenges faced by B.C.'s clerical team – workload, not being backfilled, mandatory re-testing, OH&S concerns, and lack of recognition for their valuable contribution to patient care.

Topics ranged from legal issues related to working from home, to violence and harassment in the workplace, laws around use/misuse of employer-owned computers, and rights to privacy.

Delegates also strategized ways to organize around bargaining issues relevant to their occupational group

such as standardized job descriptions, comparable wages throughout the province and local agreements, and stronger contract language for members working from home (a growing trend in Ontario, particularly for medical transcriptionists).

Some OCHU members also spoke about the lack of career mobility, access to training, and limited job opportunities, as an increasing number of health care facilities shift to bilingual work environments.

The Sky is the Limit

On June 19, HEU's Pink Triangle Standing Committee hosted *The Sky is the Limit*, a skydiving challenge and BBQ to raise money for Vancouver's 25th Annual AIDS Walk for Life (being



held September 19).

Each year, the committee participates in a variety of fundraisers as part of their community outreach to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS. They also coordinate an HEU Team to take part in the annual AIDS Walk, with proceeds going to the B.C. Persons with AIDS Society (BCPWA).

To date, the Pink Triangle Standing Committee has raised more than \$10,000 for BCPWA through a series of fundraising initiatives.

Join HEU's Team or pledge a donation. Check HEU's website, or contact Victor Elkins at velkins@heu.org or call 604-763-5781.

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

JULY 27

Deadline for HEU Convention delegate credentials, resolutions and constitutional amendments

AUGUST 1

Vancouver Pride Parade

AUGUST 2

B.C. Day stat
(HEU offices closed)

AUGUST 24

HEU Support Workers Day

AUGUST 30 - SEPT 1

P.E. meeting

SEPTEMBER 6

Labour Day stat
(HEU offices closed)

SEPTEMBER 8

International Literacy Day

SEPTEMBER 22

HEU Clerical Workers' Day

OCTOBER 4-6

P.E. meeting

OCTOBER 11

Thanksgiving Day stat
(HEU offices closed)

OCTOBER 24-29

HEU Convention
Vancouver

Counterculture icon wraps up DOXA

If you're from the 60s generation, Wavy Gravy (Hugh Romney) and his hog farm commune may ring a bell.

But whatever generation you're from, you'll be captivated by this true life story of counterculture legend Wavy Gravy, whose extraordinary commitment to making the world a better place has spanned the better part of six decades.

From his early days as a poet and prominent anti-war activist to his infamous emceeing at Woodstock (“what we have in mind is breakfast in bed for 400,000”), to his current mission aimed at preventing and curing blindness in developing countries, Wavy Gravy is a force to be reckoned with.

Michelle Esrick's *Saint Misbehavin': the Wavy Gravy Movie* not only captures the remarkable life journey of one irrepressible peace activist and humanitarian, it also showcases the historical significance of a generation that challenged the status quo.

The film opens with a 70-something Wavy, in his characteristic clown costume, lighting a candle and offering up a poetic improvised prayer to every deity imaginable, that concludes with: “Help me be the best Wavy Gravy I can muster.”

From that point on, you know you are poised for a wild and wacky ride into a real-life drama that, as it unfolds, literally takes us “back to the future.” And therein lies some of the magic that Esrick brings to the screen.

Weaving together archival footage and current interviews with Bonnie Raitt, Buffy Ste-Marie, Jackson Browne, Steve Earle and many others, she creates a film that's rooted in past political and cultural events, but springs forward into a current, timeless appeal for social justice.

At the centre of it all is Wavy – funny, inspirational and, to all

appearances, tireless – in his mission to create a world at peace where all can eat, no one goes hungry, and health care is available to all.

Along with his wife of 40 years, Jahanara Romney, and other members of the hog farm commune, Wavy continues to initiate projects that have brought concrete change into the lives of millions.

His philosophy? Put your good where it will do the most.

And one of the places his good is doing the most is the Seva Foundation, which he co-founded with Dr. Larry Brilliant, Ram

Das, the World Health Organization's Dr. Nicole Grasset and others in the late-70s.

What began as a “small group with a big idea” is now a powerful organization dedicated to building healthy communities. To date, Seva has brought cataract surgeries to more than three million blind people in Asia and Africa – 500,000 in the last year alone.

In 1983, Seva expanded its work to include the Community Self-Development Program, which partners with local indigenous groups in Guatemala and Mexico. And in 1996, Seva launched a diabetes prevention and treatment program with Native

Americans that has served 75 tribal sites and has trained nearly 600 health care professionals.

Saint Misbehavin' was 10 years in the making, and has not yet been released into mainstream movie theatres. But according to Esrick, it will be. In the meantime, the film has been screened at several festivals, and a schools' tour is in the early-planning stages.



Saint Misbehavin': the Wavy Gravy Movie closed this year's DOXA festival in Vancouver, a documentary film festival which HEU has helped sponsor for the past eight years. Director Michelle Esrick, Wavy Gravy and his wife Jahanara Romney joined the Vancouver screening and stayed to answer questions from an enthusiastic audience.

PATTY GIBSON

Retirement

Iris Reamsbottom, long-time activist, HEU member and six-year member of the HEU Provincial Executive, retired on April 30 from Ridge Meadows Hospital.



For 25 years, Iris worked in **REAMSBOTTOM** the clerical job family – health records, switchboard, admissions and medical imaging.

Iris worked tirelessly for 23 years as a shop steward, and held nearly all local executive member positions – including secretary-treasurer, chief shop steward and chairperson.

She has a long history of activism, not only in HEU, but also in the labour movement. She's fought for women's rights, been involved with the NDP, and worked as an enthusiastic community activist.

In her retirement, Iris says she plans to stay just as active. And says she's pleased to see how members now recognize that equity groups need to be treated with respect. She encourages members to "keep aware of why unions have to exist. We still need unions."

Iris is particularly grateful to her Maple Ridge local – who hosted a retirement dinner for her on May 6 – for their years of support.

HEU's Provincial Office

wishes Iris all the best in her retirement.

Welcome to HEU

HEU is pleased to welcome **Chris Kinkaid** to HEU's staff team. He will be replacing Research and Policy Director Marcy Cohen when she retires later this year.



KINKAID

Kinkaid, an accomplished researcher, comes to the union from BCGEU where he worked for the past three years.

"I am excited to have joined HEU, a strong, progressive union which in my mind is right at the front line of so many issues crucial to the membership," says Kinkaid. "I've always been impressed with HEU. HEU has been able to fight back, adapt and come out stronger."

Kinkaid looks forward to researching workplace and policy issues at HEU and "is pleased to have joined a union that not only works for its members, but also tackles broader, community-based and social justice issues."

From 2005 to 2007, he worked for the national research department of the United Steelworkers union.

Kinkaid recently celebrated his first Father's Day with his partner Anna and six-month old daughter Ruby.

In memoriam

Friends and colleagues of HEU support worker

Norma Jean (Nonie) Frank were saddened by her death from cancer in April.



FRANK

Nonie worked at Cumberland Health Centre for more than 25 years in the housekeeping and kitchen departments. She was well-known at her work site as someone who rarely complained and was always positive.

For the past year, Nonie was on LTD. She was a devoted family person, who leaves behind her husband and two sons. Nonie will be missed by all who knew her.

Shirley Carr, who served between 1974 and 1992 as Executive Vice-President and later President of the Canadian Labour Congress, passed away in June at the age of 81.

Carr was the first woman in the world ever to be elected as leader of a national labour body. She moved women's rights to the top of the labour agenda and was also a fearless campaigner against apartheid in South Africa. She was also known for her outstanding work in the international labour movement. In 1980, Carr was named an Officer of the Order of Canada.

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PRESS 2



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PRESS 3

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For support: afraid of being identified, feeling isolated, want to know your rights? Call for information on same-sex benefits, fighting homophobia and discrimination.

PRESS 4

People with disAbilities

If you are on WCB, LTD, or if invisibly or visibly disabled in the workplace, let us know how the union can better meet your needs.

PRESS 5

Women's

The HEU Women's Standing Committee works with women's groups, coalitions and other union committees to advance women's social and economic rights. Want to get involved?



Talk to us Toll-Free!

You can call any HEU office toll-free to deal with a problem or get information. It's fast, easy and free.

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