

CLARIFIED DEAL GOES TO BALLOT

HLRA acceptance
triggers HEU
ratification vote

A CLARIFIED version of the framework agreement on employment security is going back for ratification by health care employers and by members of HEU and other health care unions. If employers ratify, HEU members will again vote on the agreement starting July 12.

After employers failed to ratify the deal in April, mediator Vince Ready was invited to help facilitate implementation of the agreement, which extends collective agreements by two years, reduces the work week to 36 hours

and provides job security during health care restructuring.

As a result of a set of clarifications by Ready and recommendations to resolve three issues which were due to go to arbitration, HEU's Provincial Executive is recommending that union members vote yes to approve the deal.

"We believe that the important parts of this agreement, especially job security protection for our members, remain a central part of this agreement," said HEU secretary-business manager Carmela Allevato.

Guardian



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THE VOICE OF THE HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

MAY/JUNE 1993

Taking on the Tories



100,000 Canadians rally against free trade and Mulroney's corporate agenda.

PAGE 10

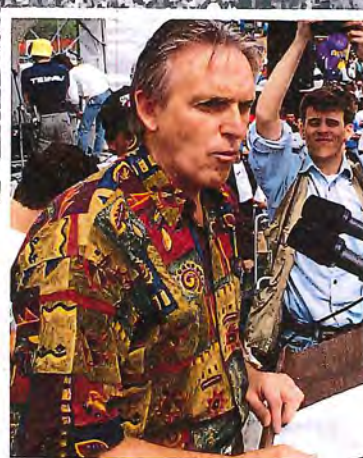


PHOTO FEATURES LTD. PHOTO

The May 15 rally is the largest show of force by Canadian unions in more than a decade – what CLC president Bob White calls sowing the seeds for a takeover from the Conservative agenda.

WE'RE ON TV!

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SEXUAL HARASSMENT: LOOKS CAN KILL

An inappropriate look, touch or comment can poison a workplace. That's why HEU members are using their contract to build a workplace free of harassment.

PAGE 8

HEU will miss Bill Macdonald's leadership

The first time I met Bill Macdonald was at a rally in 1983. I was among the crowd that cheered wildly as the trade unionists and community activists who had occupied Premier Bill Bennett's cabinet offices in Robson Square were introduced. Bill had participated in this act of civil disobedience.

One year later, I started working at HEU as in-house legal counsel and Bill became my friend and later my mentor, providing me with guidance and much needed advice over the years.

The Solidarity fightback saw Bill in the leadership limelight outside the union. Within HEU, Bill provided the steady principled leadership that guided this union through the last decade.

After the 1989 strike, Bill united the provincial executive around a strategy that harnessed the creativity and commitment of all members, staff and activists of HEU to make the Hospital Employees' Union the "heart of health care". This strategy, like all of Bill's work for the union,



COMMENT

by CARMELA ALLEVATO

was based on a profound respect for HEU activists and tremendous confidence in the membership.

Bill's decision to step down from the presidency reflected his confidence that HEU's membership had unlimited potential to produce capable new leaders.

As the leader of the largest union of women in B.C., Bill encouraged women to take up the responsibility and authority of leadership at all levels of our union. He carried through with this encouragement by promoting leadership training and advocating for the establishment of one of the most ambitious education program for HEU members.

Some important milestones were

reached by HEU during Bill's presidency: our return to the Canadian Labour Congress, achieving pay equity language, bringing all HLRA facilities under the Master Agreement, comparability for our long term care members, organizing Eagle Ridge Hospital, the employment security agreement, and many many more.

I will miss working with Bill every day. The wry sense of humour, the origami during endless bargaining sessions, the quotations from Ed Simm during those same endless bargaining sessions ("As sure as day follows night, there will be a collective agreement" is definitely my favourite), the compassion, the unfailing sense of where the membership is at, and the down to earth common sense.

During the course of our lives, we all come across people who help shape who we are or what we do. The members of the Hospital Employees' Union have been well served by Bill Macdonald. Those of us who had the fortune to work with him daily have learned much from him. We wish him well.

Personally, I want to thank Bill for encouraging me to take on the responsibility of Secretary Business Manager and for working hard to make it possible for me to serve the membership in this capacity.

Guardian

"In humble dedication to all those who toil to live."

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Letters



The Guardian welcomes letters to the editor. Please be brief. Write to 2006 W. 10th Ave., Vancouver V6J 4P5.

1199 supports Canadian style of medicare

As a 20-year member and delegate of this progressive and democratic union, it is with pride that I report there has been a change of position by the executive council of Local 1199. At a meeting held on May 9, 1993 there was a unanimous vote taken to support a universal single payer health care system.

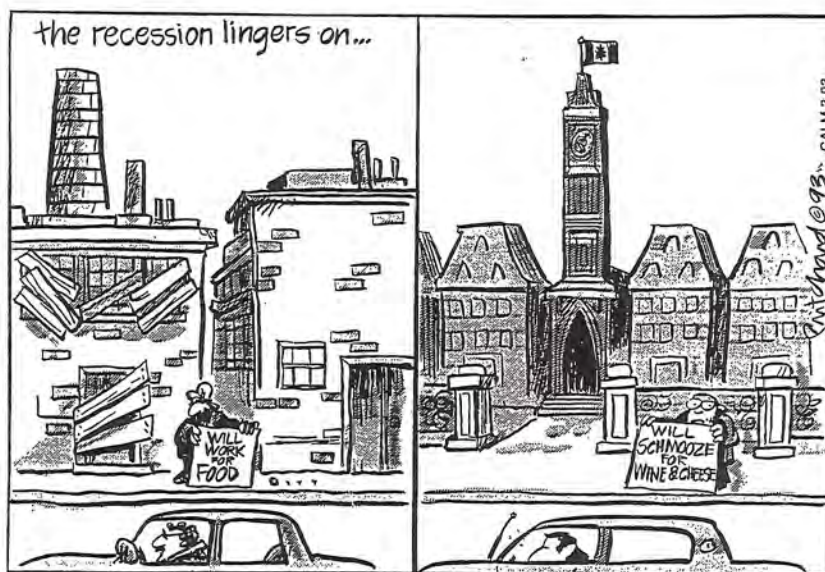
At present, another change is under way. 1199ers are voting by secret ballot to change the union's name to "1199, The National Health and Human Services Employees' Union."

THELMA C. CORRELL
1199 Retirees, New York

MacDonald letter good to ensure dialogue

I am writing concerning the letter by Terence MacDonald and the letter by Chris Allnutt in response. I think that this kind of dialogue is important in the letters to the editor.

As for the white man being a thief, this pertains to the colonization of the world by the white race, of their taking of the land, the



resources, the culture, livelihoods and way of life, and even of the taking of the lives of others, the enslavement of others for their own greed.

There is a lot of significance behind the remarks made at the session on women's issues at the conference. The male appendage has been used for power. It has inflicted pain and suffering on countless women and children around the world. For many women this will always be a scab, something to be gotten rid of.

There has been a lot of

backlash and a lot of male bashing. We need to work together, to educate and to support each other. I hope The Guardian will print all letters that lead to discussion and the further knowledge of our membership.

MARIANNE DAVIES,
Cumberland Local

Member feels HEU encourages attacks on males

With reference to Terence MacDonald's letter in the April/May edition of The Guardian.

Perhaps his question is

best answered with another question. While Geoff Meggs states that The Guardian's objective is to print all members' letters, would he really publish letters/poems etc. with titles such as "Homosexuals responsible for AIDS," "Jobs disappearing because of Asian immigrants," "Lesbians responsible for family break-ups?" Of course not!

HEU members, myself included, would not tolerate such blatant attacks on minority groups. However, within our organization we seem to not only tolerate, but actually encourage vitri-

olic attacks on another group: the white male.

Some would say that white males, as the majority group in our society, are responsible for all our social ills and therefore warrant criticism. This is simply scapegoating: the average white male is no more responsible for all our social problems than the average homosexual is for AIDS.

If the HEU is to apply a policy of political correctness it should do so with an even hand, and, in the words of Chris Allnutt, "strive for respect for the rights of everyone," white males included.

JULIE YOUNG,
Vancouver



What we're up to

People and events around the HEU. If you have news for us — a retirement, an election, a rally, a vote or whatever — please, let us know.

HEU figures big in NAFTA caravan

HEU played a big role in making the On-to-Ottawa caravan against free trade a smashing success. The union helped the Action Canada Network fund the tour, while Provincial Executive member Maurice Smith rode the caravan through its B.C. leg, then rejoined it — along with 100,000 others — on Parliament Hill.

The union also booked local activists off the job to organize for caravan events. Cumberland secretary-treasurer Marianne Davies drummed up substantial media coverage for the caravan sendoff in Courtenay. Prince George activist Nancy Lang, Evergreen local chair Kathy Dinning, and David Lowther from Victoria General, helped get events going in their communities.

Close to the heart

HEU's Shaughnessy local has developed close to the heart ties with striking Yellowknife miners and their families.

That's why about 30 Shaughnessy local members attended a special forum May 11 to hear the latest from Karen Fougere, the president of CLASS — a strike support group of the wives and partners of the miners.

Fougere detailed the latest efforts of Royal Oak mines to delay a decision on unfair labour practices brought against the company. She also reported on a recent Canada Labour Relations Board ruling which kept the door open for the association



GISELE BENTLEY PHOTO

SENDING A MESSAGE: HEU Provincial Executive member David Ridley pens a no to NAFTA message on a special banner at the April 17 On-to-Ottawa caravan rally in Victoria.

of scab miners to challenge the miners' union in a representation vote.

Support for their cause from unions like HEU is what helps keep them going since the labour dispute began in May 1992, Fougere said.

She also extended a big thank you to the 160 Shaughnessy members who donated gifts at Christmas for the miners' children.

Interviews produce pay equity results

Workers talking about their jobs in the pay equity interview process at Pouce Coupe Care Home had a powerful impact on their employer. The result was that about 30 workers won reclassification to higher positions.

HEU had a number of job review requests for food service and building maintenance workers dating back to February 1992 that the employer just wasn't moving on. But then shortly after the bosses sat in on the interview process which is a key part of HEU's pay equity settlement, things started to change.

At the end of April an agreement was reached to reclassify all FSW I and BMW I positions to twos. Soon after, three more positions were upgraded: cook I, medical records R11, and staffing clerk R9.

Pleased with the results, local chair Eva Nellis said that until the interviews, their employer "didn't really realize what workers do."

Don't wait, do it now

Do you have an updated death benefit card specifying the correct beneficiary? If you haven't checked your card recently, says HEU financial secretary Mary LaPlante, you should to make sure the correct information is recorded.

The union-provided benefit — set by the HEU constitution — gives the beneficiary of a deceased member \$1,000, or \$1,600 for deceased members with more than 10 years of service.

If you don't have a death benefit card, you can get one from your local secretary-treasurer.

Cont'd on page 4



SPECIAL TIES: Karen Fougere, centre, of the Yellowknife miners' support group CLASS, gave HEU Shaughnessy local members like Marie Thompson, left, and Karin Peter an update May 11 on their year-long struggle.



SIGN OR RESIGN: That's the message more than 300 members of the three health unions delivered at a June 3 rally against employers' rejection of the job security pact at HLRA's Vancouver office.

Job security agreement is back on track with Ready recommendations

Talks are under way for deal at CCERA, Pricare facilities

The employment security agreement is going back to the membership of HEU and other health care unions after a process "clarified" almost 30 areas of contention with employers. Talks are already underway to extend the clarified deal to union members working in long-term care facilities.

The process became necessary after employers belonging to the Health Labour Relations Association failed to ratify the agreement in an April vote. The agreement had already been overwhelmingly ratified by members of HEU, the B.C. Nurses' Union and the Health Sciences Association.

Immediately after HLRA rejected the deal, which is to provide job security for health care workers while the government reduces the workforce in acute care hospitals, HEU and other unions put pressure on the government and on employers who had rejected the agreement.

Discussions involving the unions, employers and the B.C. government led to a decision in early May to call well-known mediator Vince Ready to facilitate a resolution of disputes over the agreement. After lengthy discussions about issues which were identified as being points of dispute, Ready issued a set of 25 "clarifications" to these issues.

By this time, HLRA said that it would not return the agreement for ratification until it knew the exact meaning of provisions in the deal covering the 36-hour week and defining "comparable job" and "region."

Under the original agreement, the three issues were to be submitted to binding arbitration after ratification.

Along with BCNU and HSA, the HEU Provincial Executive agreed

to send the three issues to Ready for recommendations, and decided that the agreement, along with Ready's clarifications and recommendations, would be sent back to the membership for ratification after HLRA ratifies the deal.

"We will not allow the deal to be held ransom by a minority of hos-

pital administrators who are opposed to health care reform," said HEU secretary-business manager Carmela Allevalo.

"HEU is committed to a health care reform process that protects services and jobs," she added.

After Ready submitted his recommendations on implementing the 36-hour week and defining "comparable job" and "region" for workers who will be found new jobs should they receive displacement notices, the Provincial Executive recommended that HEU members accept the clarified agreement.

HLRA members are voting on the clarified agreement until July 9. If the employers vote to accept, the deal will go to HEU members in votes starting July 12 and ending July 28.

The employment security agreement was reached in March between the unions, government and employers. It extends the current collective agreement by two years, reduces the work week to 36 hours from 37.5 hours this year, and provides job security while the government reduces the workforce in acute care hospital by 4,800 full time equivalent jobs.

Full information on the clarified agreement is being made available to all HEU members through their locals.

News

What we're up to

Cont. from page 3

Improved WCB inspections just ahead

HEU continues to make headway in the fight to improve the Workers' Compensation Board inspections procedures for health care facilities.

One disturbing trend the union wants to stop is WCB field officers conducting inspections with no union representative present.

At its end the WCB has made moves to end the practice, but HEU has to act to ensure that the WCB knows who to contact before inspections take place.

Using the forms sent out in May, locals should provide WCB regional managers with names of local health and safety committee stewards and other officers and stewards who are authorized to take part in inspections.

Don't forget to send a copy of the form to the HEU provincial office.

HEU pioneer featured at labour history event

Participants at the Pacific Northwest Labour History Association Conference got a first hand account of hospital wages and working conditions before HEU was formed.

Joan Brimacombe worked at Vancouver General Hospital both before and after the facility was organized by HEU in 1944. She told conference participants how the union fought for better working conditions and fair wages in its early years.

HEU staff member Trish Webb interviewed Brimacombe at the conference as part of her research into the history of HEU.

Webb has collected stories from HEU pioneers around the province for a



BRIMACOMBE

book she's writing on HEU's history, which will be ready for the union's 50th anniversary convention in 1994.

Brimacombe recalled the horrors of split shifts, 65 hour work weeks and unsanitary working conditions that prevailed before HEU was formed.

"You've got to stick together," Brimacombe told workshop participants. "That's the only way to make things better."

Domestic workers employment protection

HEU has lent its support to the efforts of a group representing domestic workers to win changes in the provincial Employment Standards Act which openly discriminates against the 4,000 to 5,000 live-in domestic workers in B.C., most of whom are visible minority women from developing countries.

The provincial government is currently conducting a review of the act that sets minimum protection for non-union workers. The West Coast Domestic Workers' Association has called for 16 major changes to end the legal discrimination against domestic workers.

Key recommendations include repealing sections of the act that openly discriminate, like the provision for a wage rate below the provincial minimum, and to give the workers special protection and enforcement

provisions to recognize their live-in status.

Canada's immigration rules impose restrictive conditions on these women that creates a situation of bonded labour with their employers and leaves them vulnerable to abuse.

Organizing more gains

In addition to the Eagle Ridge Hospital victory HEU also won a separate certification to represent 56 Eagle Ridge food service workers employed by Versa Services Ltd.

The union continues to make inroads in the community care sector. New certifications have been won at two Kamloops group home operators: Beauvista Enterprises covering six workers, and Notok Ranch, a daycare for group home residents covering 10 workers.

HEU also won certification for 15 workers at the White Rock Come Share Society, an adult daycare for the elderly.

Deadline nears for bursary applications

The deadline to apply for one of HEU's 14 post-secondary education study bursaries for the 1993/94 school year is fast approaching. July 19 is the date that all applications must be received by the Provincial Office.

The bursaries, with a total value of \$6,700, can be used by members, their children and spouses at any post-secondary institute.

They will be awarded by the bursaries committee of the Provincial Executive on the basis of financial need and demonstrated academic achievement.

For further information, contact the Provincial Office.



CONTRACT NOW: HEU members rally June 11 outside the Vancouver business office of the owner of Bevan Lodge to show their support for Bevan local members.

HEU combats unfair employer for first contract at Bevan Lodge

HEU is taking its fight with a flagrantly unfair employer to the Labour Relations Board to demand that an arbitrated first contract be drawn up for workers at Bevan Lodge in Abbotsford who've been trying to negotiate a deal since they joined the union a year ago.

The union made the request at a June 23 informal LRB hearing, charging that the employer's refusal to bargain and an employer-driven decertification bid were flagrant and shocking unfair labour practices. HEU is also seeking to have the decertification bid ruled null and void.

Under the new Labour Code, either side can apply to the LRB to have a first contract reached by an arbitration process.

"It's pure and simple union busting," said Bevan Lodge local chairperson Ted Dyck, by an employer who has stated publicly that he doesn't want to deal with a union.

Dyck said the employer's strategy is to stall at the bargaining table, try to provoke a strike, and threaten to close the facility, thereby creating the problems to kindle the decertification bid.

Two separate meetings were held which workers attended with full pay where the decertification pitch was delivered. One of the meetings was held on the same day that HEU members rallied outside the employer's downtown Vancouver business office.

But since the decertification bid was filed, Dyck said many of the workers who signed the original petition have formally revoked their signatures.

"The employer should get the message that people want the union and a fair contract," he said.

HEU members at Bevan were certified last summer and they are seeking an industry standard contract.

Justice prevails: HEU wins victory at Eagle Ridge

The May 29 certification of 172 Eagle Ridge Hospital workers with HEU is a "dream come true" for many pro-union activists at the facility who never gave up the fight to win the dignity and respect that comes with union protection.

It is also a milestone for health care workers in B.C., says union secretary-business manager Carmela Allevato, because Eagle Ridge was the last non-union hospital in the province.

"The 50-year-old dream of extending union representation to all workers in hospitals has finally been achieved," she said.

For long-time Eagle Ridge union supporter like unit clerk Divina Wong and stores/receiving worker Richard Perkins, it was a successful end to a long struggle.

"I never dreamed it would happen," said Wong. "We worked for it. We prayed for it, and now it's happened."

"I guess we're three times lucky," said Perkins, who was also part of the two previous but unsuccessful organizing drives.

It was also a victory for another key Eagle Ridge union supporter, tradesperson Bill Ritchie, who died four years ago.

Ritchie began working at the hos-

pital when it opened in 1984, and always fought hard for workers and for a union. But he paid a high price for his commitment, Wong said. After management got wind of his efforts to win unionization, Ritchie was given an order on the threat of discipline not to talk with anyone on shift.

"He drove everyone into making it come true," Wong said.

"It's sad he wasn't here. He used to say that in the end justice will prevail and people will have the union they want."

In his honour, the new local has asked that the Provincial Executive allow it to be named the Eagle Ridge/Bill Ritchie local.

Last year HEU lost a narrow vote at Eagle Ridge under the old labour code rules which allowed the total quality management employer to intervene in the vote process.

But after that loss, the core group of union supporters remained steadfast and committed to winning.

Together with HEU organizers Lila Murao from VGH, Bob Wilson from Victoria's Queen Alexandra local, and Langley Memorial's Debbie Mann, they succeeded this time, winning automatic certification under the new labour code.



WEAR IT WELL: The Shaughnessy closure was one issue Glen Clark, right, didn't talk about at HEU summer school. So acting union president Fred Muzin presents him with a reminder he can wear at work.

GLEN ERIKSON PHOTO

Thanks, Bill!

HEU president Bill Macdonald steps down after a career dedicated to improving workers' lives

By TRISH WEBB

RETIREMENT is a big step, especially when you've been at the head of a large, active union like HEU.

When HEU president Bill Macdonald decided to step down from the Provincial Executive earlier this year, he knew he was going to face an adjustment period.

"Knowing you're not going to work again gives you two feelings — a kind of relief, and a kind of dread," Macdonald said.

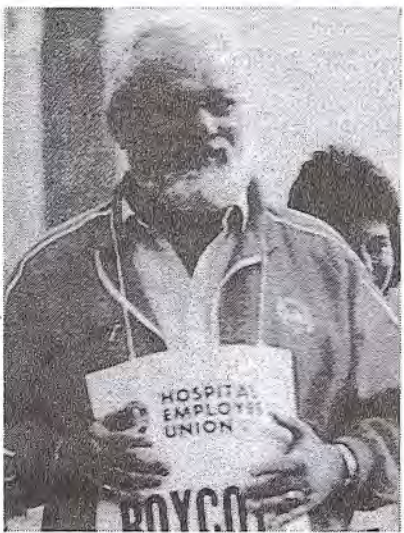
The 62-year-old former orderly from Chilliwack General Hospital announced April 15 his intention to step down from his position. He is being succeeded by HEU first vice-president Fred Muzin.

Born in 1931 on the Isle of Harris in Hebrides, Scotland, Macdonald immigrated to Canada in 1972. "Immigrating was a big step. It was quite scary at the time," he said.

To the benefit of this union, Macdonald settled in Vancouver with his family and started work at Shaughnessy Hospital. He moved rapidly from maintenance to nursing, training on the job to be an orderly.

He was already a shop steward when Shaughnessy was organized by HEU in 1974.

In 1976 Macdonald moved his



BUILDING A PROGRESSIVE UNION: Macdonald helped shape HEU into the best activist union in B.C. Top right, at the 1981 wage and policy conference. Above, being congratulated on his re-election by first vice-president Fred Muzin, secretary-business manager Carmela Allevato and financial secretary Mary LaPlante. Below, at the 1984 convention — the union's 40th anniversary.



family to the Fraser Valley and started work at Chilliwack General. By the following year he was chairperson of his local. In 1978 he was elected as a convention delegate.

Macdonald was elected to the position of regional vice-president at his first HEU convention. When he returned to convention in 1980, members recognized his work by making him third vice-president.

He became first vice-president at the 1982 convention.

In the spring of 1983, then-premier Bill Bennett introduced a package of 28 regressive bills known as the Restraint Program. The program curtailed the rights of trade unions to organize and represent their members and cut funding to vital social services such as health, education and welfare.

HEU joined with other unions and the B.C. Federation of Labour and formed Operation Solidarity to fight back.

On Aug. 10, 1983 more than 45,000 people crowded into Empire Stadium in Vancouver to protest the restraint program. HEU members were front and centre in the action, vowing full support for the fightback campaign. And weeks later, Macdonald was one of 87 people who occupied premier Bennett's Vancouver office.

First elected president in 1984, Macdonald steered the union through the difficult years of health

care budget cuts and attacks on trade union rights. He developed a reputation as a tireless negotiator when contract bargaining sessions dragged on into the night.

"At 4 a.m. at the bargaining table Bill could still come up with ideas

Macdonald displayed gentleness and humour under the pressure of union demands

on how to salvage a proposal," says HEU financial secretary Mary LaPlante. "He was really good at reading between the lines of the employers' proposals."

When Bill 19, Bill Vander Zalm's infamous Industrial Relations Reform Act, was introduced in 1987, HEU was fully mobilized. The leaders and membership of HEU had learned that the only way to protect their union was through political action.

DEMONSTRATING at the Industrial Relations Council with other B.C. trade unions was just the beginning of HEU's fight against Bill 19 and the right-wing agenda of Vander Zalm's SoCreds.

Macdonald also supported the struggles of other working people against repressive governments and employers. He joined striking workers at the Gainers meat packing plant in Edmonton during a bitter fight with multi-millionaire owner Peter Pocklington, and he backed Vancouver garment workers in their struggle to win a first contract.

Under Macdonald's leadership, HEU returned to the House of Labour through affiliation to the Canadian Labour Congress, the B.C. Federation of Labour and local labour councils.

"Bill was a leader," LaPlante said. "He helped people learn to think on their own, and he helped them to understand procedures, like how to make a motion in a meeting or at convention."

"He taught me a lot."

Last fall, Macdonald travelled to repression-torn Guatemala to visit a new medical clinic in a Mayan village. This community action project was particularly close to his heart.

He and his wife Nancy Macdonald, also a union activist, travelled to the village of Canton, San Jose carrying a message of solidarity from HEU. That message was a cheque for more than \$3,000, representing contributions from HEU convention delegates.

Throughout his trade union career Bill Macdonald has remained a warm human being with a true dedication to improving the lives of working people.



NOTEBOOK

Community, regional boards must have HEU input



By CHRIS GAINOR

HEU members have become all too familiar with certain parts of the B.C. government's reform of health care — especially the shift away from delivering health services in acute care hospitals.

But the "closer to home" move is only part of the reform process in health care, launched by health minister Elizabeth Cull.

From almost the moment she became health minister, Cull has stated the importance she places on giving communities control over the health system. She has promoted the "healthy communities" concept and other planning ideas which promise community input.

Cull said she wants to end today's system of unelected hospital boards and facility boards

operating under the supervision of the health ministry in Victoria.

In their place, a new system of community health councils (CHCs) and regional health boards (RHBs) will run B.C.'s health system under the guidance of a restructured Ministry of Health.

The CHCs and RHBs will be more than alphabet soup. They will be deciding which hospitals, facilities and agencies will deliver health services, and how much money they will get.

"The exact role that CHCs and RHBs will play will vary across the province, depending upon the size of the communities, the health services they provide, and the wishes of local residents," a health ministry document says.

In other words, anything goes. Unfortunately, the fine print shows that the CHCs and RHBs will not be very democratic, so it remains to be seen whether the "wishes of local residents" will carry much weight.

There is already strong evidence that the people who now run our hospitals are heavily involved in committees which are putting together the regional boards and community councils.

Hospital trustees and administrators have never been shy about defending their power, as their rejection of the job security agreement has shown.

The Simon Fraser Health Region in the suburbs

of Vancouver is reportedly moving toward a centralized community council run on a "corporate" basis by a strong chief executive officer.

Consultants who work for hospitals are advising the group setting up the council. An independent consultant advising the region is advocating an American style health delivery system that has not been proven in a Canadian setting.

One third of the community councils are supposed to be made up of members chosen by municipal councils and school boards, a third selected by the B.C. government and a third

elected members. Although many councils will start work in the coming year, no one will be elected until the fall of 1996, long after the councils are up and running, and decision makers put in place.

The government and the community councils are to decide who will sit on the regional boards.

These bodies will decide how health dollars will be spent, where they will be spent, and what services will be provided. They will also be deciding how health care workers will be treated.

Given the lack of democracy in the councils and boards, and the strong influence of old guard hospital bosses, there is reason to fear this new system of health care management won't be any better than the old one.

Old guard poised to take over

AFTER THE SHIFT

Artist's work relieves on the job stress

TRISHA MCLEAN'S job as a food service worker at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver is a big part of her life — so big that she's called Nutrishia.

But before she came to St. Paul's, she made a living for a decade as an artist in Holland. Today McLean still spends a great deal of time on her art.

One of her most recent creations



MCLEAN

is a cartoon (right) that she used to help relieve the tensions felt by herself and her fellow food service workers she serves as a shop steward.

"All the problems resulting from tech change in our department really depressed us, so I got input from other people and made this drawing. We had so much fun and we laughed so hard doing it that everyone looked forward to seeing it."

The cartoon was posted around St. Paul's on April 1, which was fitting not only because of the date but because the food service workers happened to be undergoing pay equity interviews that day.

McLean also paints, and her latest works have been strongly affected by what she has seen of the Mayan culture on recent visits to Mexico and Guatemala. "It made a real change in my art."

Being a shop steward in a department that moved into a new kitchen which suffers from shoddy non-union construction involves what McLean calls "moving mountains."

But McLean said many problems are being overcome, and she finds relief not only in her art but in martial arts such as tai chi.



Labour

Guatemalan union leader puts her life on the line in fight for justice

By STEPHEN HOWARD

For Rosa Marina Escobar, being a trade union activist in the most repressive country in Central America poses one great challenge — how to stay alive.

"Being a trade union leader means not only putting your job on the line but your life as well, and the lives of your family," Escobar told a May 31 HEU summer school forum.

The coordinator of the International Food and Agriculture Workers' Union women's committee, Escobar journeyed to Vancouver in the midst of a military coup in Guatemala, to tell Canadians about events and the struggle for justice being waged there.

Guatemala has the most sordid human rights record in Central

America — but one that is often ignored by the international community. Tens of thousands of people have died in violence and civil war since a 1954 military coup sponsored by the U.S. toppled a democratically elected progressive government.

The recent political upheaval, Escobar says, is the military's response to mounting opposition to government policies. It's part of an historic trend where trade union and social movement mobilization has been crushed by the iron fist of successive coups.

In the months before the coup protests against a government economic austerity package designed to redirect even more money to the military had grown sharply. People mobilized against skyrocketing price increases of up to 300 per cent for basic food stuffs, electricity and transportation. (The average wage is about \$100 a month, while the government-set poverty level is about \$200 a month.)

"This coup is an effort to shut-down a broad social movement pro-

testing starvation and misery," Escobar said.

The military and their civilian politician frontman suspended the constitution, arrested activists and union leaders at will, enacted total press censorship, and made illegal meetings of more than three people

Church meetings are the only legal form of expression she said, so political masses are a popular form of protest. Openly defiant public rallies have continued, and combined with international pressure, have forced the military to back down as events in the days following Escobar's speech indicate.

The Guatemalan union movement has always practised a broad social unionism that HEU aspires to improve salaries, living conditions and human rights for workers and the unemployed. Her union offers special educational and train-

ing programs for women workers and provides basic health care services in a number of communities.

"The union struggle is a survival struggle, a struggle for human rights," she said.

But union leaders have paid for their commitment to justice with their lives. In the 1980s the union movement was "decapitated" by repression. Its leaders were "disappeared" and killed. She estimates that there are 44,000 widows

of assassinated political activists.

"In Guatemala, there are no political

prisoners, they're all dead."

In this context, Escobar says the country's seven per cent unionization rate "is quite an achievement."

HEU has written Canada's secretary for external affairs Barbara McDougall calling for tough sanctions against Guatemala, and for increased pressure to safeguard basic human and trade union rights.



ESCOBAR



THE THREADS OF UNION HISTORY: To mark its 50th anniversary, members of Toronto's CUPE Local 79 created this quilt to symbolize the goal of working people — working together for a better future. With a government grant and under the direction of a quiltmaker, local members appliqued, printed, painted, patchworked and transferred to create the quilt. Their work has been on display throughout Toronto.

CUPE walks on Ontario NDP's deficit reduction debacle

The Ontario NDP government's disastrous efforts to wrestle \$2 billion in concessions from the province's public sector workers in a misguided deficit cutting measure took a turn for the worse June 15 when it tabled a sweeping legislative attack on free collective bargaining.

The legislation, which sparked the resignation of one of premier Bob Rae's cabinet ministers, gives the government the legal power to gut existing agreements and impose a wide range of concessions including a three-year wage freeze, and up

to 12 unpaid days for the province's 400,000 public sector workers.

Earlier in June, the province's 28 public sector unions walked out on Rae's highly-trumpeted "social contract" talks when a government final offer of freezes and rollbacks with no job security guarantees was unanimously rejected.

"The government gave us no choice," said Sid Ryan, president of the 165,000 member Ontario division of the Canadian Union of Public Employees. "The final offer was unacceptable because it gave our employers the unilateral right to

cut wages, slash vital public services and it ignored the real waste and inefficiency in the public sector."

"To have agreed to it would have meant surrendering hard-earned collective bargaining rights," he said.

If the government was truly interested in reducing public sector expenditures, said Ryan, "they would have taken steps to make public sector employers more accountable for their financial decisions." But he said that was never part of the NDP's plan

From the start of talks with the government, CUPE and other public sector unions had been wary of Rae's conversion to the right-wing obsession with deficit reduction. But still, he said CUPE was "deeply disappointed and saddened that an agreement could not be reached."

CUPE, which has organized anti-government rallies in cities and towns across Ontario, is mapping out a common-front response to Rae's legislative attack on working people together with the other public sector unions.

Sexual harassment can be a look, a word, a touch or much worse: more HEU members are using their contract to stop it

A WOMAN notices a fellow worker starting at her across the kitchen. She asks him to stop. He laughs. He denies staring. But it seems that every time she looks up, he's looking at her, smiling.

A man asks a fellow worker for a date. She says no. He asks again. And again. And again.

A man phones a fellow worker at home, out of the blue. They chat. She asks him what he is doing. He says he's reading a girlie magazine.

Some horseplay gets out of hand. In the midst of the uproar, a woman has a ball stuffed down her shirt.

A woman stretches as she sits down at the cafeteria table, pulling her arms behind her to ease tension in her shoulders.

A fellow worker looks up at her breasts and says, "no need to work out, they're big enough already."

Are these incidents of sexual harassment? In each case, based on similar incidents which involved HEU members, the woman concerned said yes.

In each case, annoyance, embarrassment or fear put the woman in a position of humiliation and intimidation. As a B.C. Federation of Labour handbook on the issue has noted, sexual harassment is not only wrong, it comes with a high price in tension, anxiety, poor work performance and unemployment.

Studies show that many women who experience harassment on the job later quit, the federation found. "They carry emotional scars and they pay a financial penalty. The harasser, meanwhile, is free to continue tormenting the next woman worker who comes along."

IT'S A FACT that "looks can kill" and an inappropriate touch or comment can poison a workplace.

There was harassment in each of the incidents described above, but each had a dramatically different outcome.

In the first, after a tense and lengthy controversy, the two workers' job locations were shifted to eliminate the possibility of eye contact.

In the second, the man was transferred to a different facility where his employer had another contract.

In the third, a grievance against the man led ultimately to his termination.

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This objective was expanded into a policy and procedure to protect human rights adopted in 1988.

Sexual harassment is against the law under the Canada and B.C. Human Rights Codes. Individuals are responsible for their own behaviour and employers are reported to provide a harassment-free workplace.

But the goal of contract protection only became a reality in 1992, when HEU and ILRA included strong new harassment clauses in the new Master Collective Agreement.

Article 1.03 of the ILRA Master (and Article 1.05 under the CCERA Standard) offer members five options to eliminate any behaviour in the workplace which violates the B.C. Human Rights Code. (See related story on the next page.)

Day by day, more and more HEU members are making use of this new contract tool.

The most popular option is the confidential inquiry to the complaints officers established under the clause.

If an incident involves two members of the union, the complaint is referred to lawyer Gwen Brodsky, who just replaced Vancouver city councillor Libby Davies in that role. (Complaints involving any non-HEU person should go to Vancouver lawyer Joan McEwen.)

In her term on the job, Davies found herself handling two or three inquiries a week even

WHAT YOU CAN DO

HEU members who feel they are victims of harassment have five options available to them under a protocol negotiated between HEU and employers represented by the Health Labour Relations Association and the Continuing Care Employee Relations Association.

The procedure covers any form of harassment prohibited under the Human Rights Act - "discrimination because of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, age or because that person has been convicted of a criminal or summary conviction offence

that is unrelated to the employment or to the intended employment of that person.

- The five options are:
- bring the matter to the attention of the supervisor or other management representative;
- file a grievance;
- file a complaint under the B.C. Human Rights Code;
- refer the complaint to the complaints investigation processes under Article 1.03 in the ILRA agreement; and
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The most common approach is to use the complaints process. If this is not satisfactory,

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Copies of the entire protocol are available from the Provincial Office, staff representatives or local officers of HEU.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

How widespread is harassment and sexual violence? A group of HEU members - all women - sat down at last year's summer school to write up their own experiences, only some of which occurred in health care jobs. Everyone had a story to tell. Here is a sampling from the lives of people just like those in your workplace. The stories range from harassment to assault.

As a newly-wed young bank teller, one day at work just before lunch, I had a miscarriage early in my pregnancy. I was afraid to tell the male accountant of my condition - he was so graphic and foul-mouthed he was not approachable - and worked all day into overtime before my husband picked me up and took me to the hospital. Recently I came into a work place situation where I work with his wife and was confronted by him again, 20 years later.

I was offered a ride home from work by a male person I thought of as a friend, but I do not feel that way any more. He did not give me a ride home, but to a gravel pit where he proceeded to grab and kiss me. I punched him in the nose, jumped out of the car and began to walk home. He called after me "bitch." I was so hurt to think that he felt so little of me that he would do something like this.

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Sexual harassment is "unwelcome." "Who can know if a behaviour is sexually harassing?" asks Larkin. "The person who experiences it!"

Because different people have different attitudes, behaviour which may not be offensive at one time may be offensive at another. (A more detailed definition will be included in a forthcoming HEU booklet on the issue.)

If someone feels harassed, Larkin offers nine points of advice:

- don't feel guilty;
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What of those accused of harassment? Regardless of which process is followed, every HEU member is entitled to fair representation. The union's duty of fair representation applies to both the complainant and the alleged harasser in a harassment case.

(This does not obligate the union to represent a member who clearly is guilty.)

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In all cases, however, the union must obtain all necessary information on which to justify a decision.

Employers have become aggressive enforcers of harassment policy, fearful of lawsuits and other consequences if they do not act promptly on complaints.

The result is a tendency to impose massive discipline in harassment cases even before less drastic options have been tried.

Here again, the complaints process in the agreement offers a way to achieve a resolution without direct employer involvement.

"The goal is to create a workplace free of harassment," says HEU secretary-business manager Carmela Allevato. "If we are truly committed to respect the rights of all, we must fight all forms of discrimination."

"Where members are facing harassment, we want them to know that the union can help them eliminate it - and that's good for everyone in the workplace."

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"There's no question harassment is a major question in the workforce," Davies says, "and most of the complaints I handled were sexual harassment."

THE COMPLAINTS PROCESS is particularly helpful, Davies believes, because "a lot of what we do is focused on resolution of a complaint. Problems often result from a simple lack of understanding and sensitivity."

"Because of the confidentiality and low-key nature of the process, it's likely to lead to a resolution. We've been able to work out some problems without any involvement by the employer or outside parties."

In all cases, a complainant may go on to seek other resolutions through the grievance procedure or under the B.C. Human Rights Code, but this seldom happens, Davies says.

The complaints process is good as far as it goes, but Davies believes the union and health employers must do much more to get at the root causes of harassment.

"Often employers don't know they have a harassment complaint," she says. "They write it off as a personality clash."

"A quick, confidential process is important, but it's just as important to have more education in the workplace so employers and workers are more aware of how to recognize harassment and are sure what to do."

Much of her work meant educating those accused of harassment about "how their comments or behaviour is interpreted and seen," Davies said.

"They may not intend to be insulting or offensive, but if that's how it's perceived, then it's harassment."

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by geoff meggs

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question for men, who are most often on the receiving end of complaints.

Harassment of men by women is not unknown, says Jackie Larkin, who has developed an education program for HEU on harassment issues, but it is a simple fact that women are overwhelmingly more at risk from a cycle of violence that ranges from harassment to assault and rape.

The stories printed on this page are the personal experiences of HEU members who participated in a women's workshop at the 1992 summer school. Every single woman had a story to tell, proof that hospitals are no exception to the rule that harassment pervades our society.

WHAT IS SEXUAL harassment behaviour?

Larkin defines it as a wide range of sexual or sexually oriented behaviour – including jokes, offensive comments, physical contact or dis-

play of pornographic pictures – which has the effect of making another person feel less powerful.

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By DAN KEETON

HEU Provincial Executive member Maurice Smith couldn't help but smile May 15 at the sight which greeted him on Parliament Hill.

Spread out before him on the vast lawn were tens of thousands who had come to the capital to tell the Tory government what it could do with its proposed North American Free Trade Agreement.

Three weeks earlier, Smith had been travelling on the On-to-Ottawa caravan, a large recreational vehicle that motored across the country to lead the Action Canada Network's fight against the NAFTA government policies.

NAFTA could be called "Son of FTA," the current Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement that has scooped some 500,000 mainly manufacturing jobs out of Canada's industrial heartland. But NAFTA — the FTA's monster offspring — will dwarf its parent's accomplishments, by linking Canada, the U.S. and Mexico into one economic zone.

"If we don't fight NAFTA, we won't have a social infrastructure in this country," Smith relates, as we bounce over the twisting highway. We're on our way to three stops that day: Williams Lake, Quesnel and Prince George, where the brilliant blue jackets of the HEU will stand out in the crowd of some 150 people rallying at a local mall.

HEU is a key player in the ACN's campaign, and that's why Smith is one of five people riding the 38-foot motorhome that makes up the western leg of the cross-country caravan.

The union is clear on the NAFTA threat, Smith explains. Free trade deals mean the privatization of public health services currently performed by union members making decent wages. The loss of a tax base through fleeing industries and mass unemployment means gutting government revenues that fund public health care.

"Canada is known around the world for our health care system. The world and the U.S. are looking to us as a model for our public health and medical care, and here we are trying to destroy it."

Under free trade, hospitals can bring in not merely private management of services, but entire work forces, Smith notes. Ottawa's Tories, and business-oriented provincial governments introduce measures like small-scale privatization and user fees to pave the way for the institution of whole-scale privatization under free trade.

On the road, we discover the public opposition to free trade. Some of

MEDICARE THREAT: NAFTA should be scrapped because it threatens the existence of our medicare system, HEU leader Fred Muzin told a May 15 rally in Vancouver.



PHOTO FEATURES LTD. PHOTOS

Taking on the Tories

The Ottawa free trade rally was the biggest show of strength by Canadian unions in a decade. HEU's Maurice Smith was there.



TORY TOMBSTONES: This Parliament Hill cemetery symbolized the 500,000 jobs lost because of free trade with the U.S.

it is born of fear. A senior in Penticton says that she'll die if the province de-lists several drugs currently subsidized. Provincial cost-cutting is due in part to the federal government's legislation extending patent protection to foreign-based drug corporations, driving up the cost of health care by billions of dollars.

Smith's words are borne out by testimonies of health care workers like Andy Kozyniak at rallies along the way. The Prince George hospital electrician and HEU shop steward tells of products from Mexico replacing the hospital's usual sources.



STEPHEN HOWARD PHOTO



THUMBS UP: Turnout for the rally exceeded all expectations, especially from private sector unions like the Canadian Auto Workers. But the big challenge for Canadian union leaders is what comes next?

The hospital gets Westinghouse electrical motors, breakers, solid-state diodes and fluorescent lamp ballasts made in Mexico, where low wages in the maquiladora zones keep workers in poverty, and prices no cheaper than those made in the U.S. or Canada. But the parts are failing and the hospital is covering up the fact these must be replaced at great cost.

"That's an example of free trade. There's no control. Since the products were produced so cheaply, they were able to flood the market with them," says Kozyniak.

Smith leaves the caravan at Prince George optimistic about the impact it will have. "During the trip I found people are bit down, but once we talk to them and they take our materials, they get inspired and say they'll talk to their neighbours and friends."

"The only way this can be turned around," Smith asserts, "is through coalition work. We must get rid of the right-wing corporate agenda and set policies for people."

Three weeks later, under the hot Ottawa sun, Smith surveys the sea of demonstrators, and he knows his optimism has been confirmed.



IN THE SOUP: The ingredients in the Kim Campbell Cream-a-Tory soup can are from Mulroney's corporate agenda recipe.

Granted, the Tories still hope to ram the deal through before the next election, which must happen this year. But the massive demonstration is an undeniable high in the long fight ahead, a planting of what CLC president Bob White calls the seeds of takeover from the old Tory agenda.

Laundry deal should be future trend

It may be a small deal, but a contract won by Penticton Regional Hospital to clean dirty laundry for the City of Penticton is a sign of what should be happening as part of health care restructuring.

"It's clearly a good move and will help preserve jobs and services," said HEU secretary-business manager Carmela Allevato. "It's an example that other administrators should follow."

The union, says Allevato, has been pressing government and hospital administrators to expand and make better use of a wide variety of public services and infrastructure like laundry and dietary provided by hospitals.

Earlier this spring Penticton Regional outbid two private sector laundry companies and won the \$6,000 contract to clean municipal workers' coveralls for the next three years.

The contract was previously the domain of the private sector laundries. So when the PRH bid, based on union wage rates, came in at half the price, the private operators were riled. One of them complained to the local newspaper that the hospital had an unfair advantage—it didn't have to worry about making a profit.

Despite the uproar, PRH administrator Don Burroughs says it's appropriate for the public sector to move in to these new areas, and a sign of the times. With tight budgets, hospitals are under pressure to maintain services and jobs.

"We have a belief that we should look at increasing revenue and maintaining or increasing employment," Burroughs said.

The way to do that, he says, is to look at ways to market hospital services to other public sector agencies and into the private sector.

"When money is tight, and the question is who can give quality at the best price, we can do it," he said.

Laundry worker and union local executive member Mike Vellerie is a strong supporter of expanding hospital services into outside areas. He and his 14 co-workers, who process one million kilograms of laundry annually in a bright modern facility, strongly supported bidding on the city contract. They've made suggestions to the employer on other jobs the facility could pursue.

The successful outcome was also a morale booster for the laundry workers. It shows, says Vellerie, "we're competitive, we're paid union wages, and we don't have to sacrifice quality to make a profit."

But Vellerie made it clear that if more work was being brought in, more staff would be needed.

Burroughs said the hospital was in the process of setting up a marketing committee to investigate new opportunities—like doing medical records and transcription for local doctors' office. Many of the ideas on which outside contracts to bid on come from HEU members themselves.



IT JUST MAKES SENSE: Penticton Regional Hospital laundry worker Mike Vellerie and his co-workers are tipping off their employer on new contracts to bid on.



GLEN ERIKSON PHOTO

LPN PARLAY: VGH activist Olga Cas-trucci reminds Clark that restoration of the nursing team and greater use of LPNs, long promised by the NDP, would help relieve his health care cost concerns.

Rigid employers make health reform difficult

Ideologically driven boards blocked employment security accord, Clark says

The B.C. government is finding that reforming health care with support from health care workers is more difficult than it expected, says finance minister Glen Clark.

Clark, who has been heavily involved in negotiating the health care employment security agreement, said the difficulty is caused by health care managers who want to cling to their old ways or simply want to oppose the government.

"One of the things we wanted to change is the culture of health care institutions," Clark told the HEU summer school. "This has been more difficult to do than we thought it would be."

"It's going to be extremely hard to take the rigid people (in management) and change their behaviour."

Many of the hospital trustees and administrators who have held up the job security agreement were motivated by "straight ideology," Clark said. "Some want to use the traditional management technique of making the workers pay the price of reform."

At the same time, Clark admitted that: "Part of the problem is our fault in not properly marketing the accord. We hope to learn from that."

The job security agreement is an important part of the general reform of health care, he said.

"You can't radically reform the health care system without having the support of the workers. I'm very proud of the accord and I hope it will be the model for other sectors."

The finance minister bluntly outlined why he believes the health care system must be reformed.

"The health care system as we know it is finished. The cost of health care is growing faster than the ability of governments to pay."

Health care costs rise at about 10 per cent a year due to population growth, an aging population, wage increases, inflation, new technology and building costs, while tax revenues go up by only three per cent a year, Clark explained.

"As the costs go up by 10 per cent, the revenue from the federal government isn't rising. In fact, it's frozen."

Clark said that Liberal governments in Quebec, New Brunswick and Newfoundland, and the Tory government in Alberta, are all pushing for user fees in health care. Federal Tories are talking about user fees, and the federal Liberals have not excluded user fees, he added.

NDP governments are resisting this pressure, and Clark said the B.C. government is trying to slow the rate in growth in health costs as an alternative to bringing in user fees and U.S.-style medicine.

Under questioning from HEU members, Clark said he has also raised taxes on rich British Columbians and corporations, who have seen their taxes fall under Socred and Tory governments.

"They're screaming loud. That's not to say they're paying their fair share." He said that he hasn't heard praise from trade unionists to counter the attacks from wealthy people.

Donisa Bernardo of the Kamloops local said hospital workers can't serve on hospital boards in spite of their expertise.

"We should fix that," Clark replied. "I can't think of anyone more qualified to sit on hospital boards than those who work in them."

HSA makes changes at top

The Health Sciences Association has made changes in two key leadership positions.

Cindy Stewart, a physiotherapist at Vernon's Jubilee Hospital, was elected as president of the union by a narrow margin over the incumbent Jackie Henwood at HSA's annual convention in May.

There were no substantial policy differences between the two candidates, who have worked together on the union's executive council for several years.

Henwood, who served as president for five

years, was instrumental in building much improved tri-union solidarity with HEU and BCNU. And HSA has taken a novel approach to filling its executive director position, appointing two women to share the heavy workload of the union's top post.

Maureen Whelan and Lisa Hansen, who will divide administrative and direct member servicing responsibilities, are the new executive co-directors.

Both women come from HSA senior staff positions.



ROSAMOND NOREURY PHOTO

THEY KNOW: Working TV is hosted by HEU member Lila Murao and former long-term care worker Nora Randall.

KEY ISSUE: Video footage from HEU leader Mary LaPlante's trip to Mexico to fight free trade is part of the lineup for June.



ROSAMOND NOREURY PHOTO

12 HEU takes to the air with comedy, music, and real working people

WE'RE ON TV!

HEU members, whether they're on the job, fighting for quality health care, working for pay equity or joining with others to defeat the North American Free Trade Agreement, are on television these days like never before.

It's all part of Working TV, a new cable television program sponsored by HEU in association with other unions, which is taking the Heart of Health Care message into thousands of B.C. homes.

The half hour show premiered in May on the Rogers Cable network in the Lower Mainland and South Vancouver Island.

And you can get involved by making your own television items, sending in your own suggestions for television coverage or helping get the program broadcast on your local cable network.

(Locals who want to see the show or obtain a kit describing how to arrange a local broadcast should call Stephen Howard at the Provincial Office, 734-3431.)

Working TV is the union's response to membership demand for a major push to put HEU's views front and centre where public opinion is moulded. These days, that means television.

"We listened carefully to what our members were telling us about our communications efforts over the past two years," says union secretary-business manager Carmela Allevato.

"Our Heart of Health Care theatrical and musical show in 1991 had a tremendous impact, but our members urged us to put it on television.

"At the same time, we were spending a lot of money in television advertising that wasn't producing an obvious return.

"The Working TV project solves several problems at once," Allevato said. "We can do a good job explaining our issues in a full program. Our members can get involved. And we get far better value for our expenditure than we could by advertising."

The result has already made waves

on Rogers Cablevision where more and more members are catching the program as they surf around the channels with their remote controls.

In the first program, watchers learned the truth about the Employment Security Agreement and saw detailed coverage of the On-to-Ottawa Caravan opposing the free trade deal.

A highlight for many viewers was the hilarious impression of a recovering "power-hungry hospital administrator," played by actor Steven Campbell Hill, who is treating his power abuse problems with the assistance of HEU shop stewards.

Health care workers' views and concerns are distorted by the mainstream media

Humour and music are a big part of the program, which aims to entertain while it informs.

Co-hosts of the show are Lila Murao, an HEU member and organizer, and Nora Randall, who also has a background in long-term care work.

Thanks to community cable television and the huge number of channels available, a union-sponsored program is as likely to be watched as anything else on the airwaves.

BIG ON LAUGHS: Actor Steven Campbell Hill plays a hospital boss recovering from his power abuse problems in a hilarious comedy skit.

AND THE REVIEWS ARE GOOD!

HEU members have already given *Working T.V.* the thumbs up. Here's a sampling of audience reaction from the general public:

"I thought it was a fantastic program...I really like to hear from the everyday working person."

"It was quite wonderful for a change to see something that reflects the reality of working people in this country."

"More, please!"

"It's about time we had some of that stuff."



To get the program produced, HEU approached Julius Fisher, a veteran trade union organizer with a long history of musical production for the labour movement.

Fisher is producing the program on behalf of HEU and other labour sponsors like the Canadian Autoworkers, the Vancouver and District Labour Council and the United Fishermen and Allied Workers' Union.

HEU is actively seeking the participation of other unions to assist in continuing the show or increasing the frequency of broadcast.

"There's no question our members' views and concerns are distorted or ignored by the mainstream media," says Allevato. "With *Working TV* we stopped complaining and did something about it. We're on the air ourselves."

The program is unique for the labour movement in B.C., says Fisher, although CBC Newsworld carries a national weekly program on labour issues.

Elsewhere in Canada and the United States, individuals and small groups have produced programs sporadically.

This is the first time, however, that various unions have banded together to produce an ongoing, high-quality show.

IT'S AN ALL-UNION production, using members of the Association of Canadian Television and Radio Artists, the American Federation of Musicians and the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians.

There are three ways for HEU members to get involved:

- make your own items on a Video 8 or Handicam camera and send it along to the program, care of HEU Provincial Office;
- obtain the kit available this month from HEU on how to arrange local broadcast of the program in your area;
- send in your ideas for stories.

Copies of the show are also available for viewing at local meetings.

The show covers the entire province and items have already originated from locations as far apart as Enderby, in the Okanagan, and Cumberland on Vancouver Island.

Later shows will visit the north and the Kootenays.

"We've found our members do the best job of telling the HEU story," says Allevato. "We think this may be the best way yet of helping them to do it."

How to get on air in your community

HEU has designed a special promotion kit to help you get *Working TV* on air in your community, and to get people watching.

Before you approach your local cable operator you should know that federal government regulations require cable companies to operate a community access channel and show community programming.

Working TV is filmed on location in communities across B.C. using union crews, and has high production values not often seen on community programming.

That's why the show is already on the full Rogers cable network from Abbotsford to Vancouver, and Victoria.

The kit contains all you'll need to get *Working TV* on the airwaves:

- a video copy of the show;
- all the necessary technical broadcast documents required by the cable operator;
- promotional ideas.

Kits are available from Stephen Howard, HEU communications department, 734-3431 or 1-800-663-5813.

"Working TV is a good idea because people will see that hospitals are more than doctors and nurses."

THAT'S WHAT three HEU Enderby local members think about HEU's new TV show. LPN Virginia Schulz, food service aide Annie Lee and health records technician Kathy McDiarmid were in front of the camera when *Working TV* went to Enderby—a small tourism and farming community north of Kelowna—to film a segment on pay equity in May.

Enderby was one of the facilities selected for the just-completed interview process that's a key element of the pay equity package won by HEU after last year's fight for fairness. With 20 acute care beds and 12 extended care beds the Enderby hospital is one of the smallest acute care facilities in the province. Lee, McDiarmid and Schulz told their stories about their work, about the long unrecognized physical and mental demands that are part of their jobs, and why they feel undervalued.

Working TV isn't yet on their cable channel, but they were eager to see the finished product. The three all agreed that the union is going in the right direction to get its Heart of Health Care message across.

You don't see working people on television news, said McDiarmid, "except in the background when they interview managers."

They see the show as a way for the public to better understand the jobs and roles that HEU members play in health care facilities across B.C.

"I don't think the public is aware of how much we do," said McDiarmid.

Schulz agreed. "It makes the public more aware of what goes on amongst our walls."

There's another benefit too, according to Lee. "I would really like to see HEU members in other hospitals on TV so we could compare jobs," she said.

What was it like being in front of the camera? Telling their stories they were remarkably relaxed, hamming it up while they were fitted for microphones and the camera operator framed the shots. They came across as polished pros.

"I'm not a movie star," said Lee, whose son and daughter have a video camera. "I was just being myself and telling the truth."

Schulz wasn't worried ahead of time either. "I've been so involved with other things that it wasn't a problem."

Shooting on location outside the Lower Mainland also scored two thumbs up.

"It's good that you're coming to communities like ours to do these things because our situations are totally different," said Schulz, who also chairs her local's pay equity committee.



Medical records technician Kathy McDiarmid.



LPN Virginia Schulz, left, and food service aide Annie Lee, right, with host Lila Murao.

Coffee Break



Helpful facts for difficult times

- If everything is coming your way, you are in the wrong lane.
- When you attend your 25th school reunion, you wear a name tag so that people know who you are. You wear a name tag at the 50th reunion so that you know who you are.

How big is BIG LABOUR?

Just how big is the big labour monster business writers fear so much?

Well, the 160 corporate members of the Business Council on National Issues control assets 1,000 times larger than the combined assets of Canada's 494 unions.

And Maclean-Hunter, publisher of *Maclean's* and a foremost big labour basher, has more assets on its own than all those unions combined.

Of course, when it comes to democracy and member involvement, big labour is pretty big — especially when it's compared to the tiny elite controlling Canada's national wealth.

How trickle down really was suck it up

Recent American studies have documented the strange effect of Ronald Reagan's trickle-down economics — they allowed the rich to suck up enormous sums.

Since 1977, the richest one per cent of Americans doubled their take of after-tax income to the 12 per cent it gets today.

This tiny group now owns more than what



BUSINESS MAN'S LUNCH

90 per cent of the rest of all other Americans own combined.

According to the Rand Corp., their income gains were 10 per cent above inflation at a time when the poorest 25 per cent of the population was steadily getting poorer.

— less than half of one per cent — in the communities where their chief executive officers live.

He can dish it out, but this boss can't take it

"I built this sandbox and all the toys in it. Somebody's trying to take all that away from me and I'm [mad] about it," said Gerald Wiegert, chief executive officer of Vector Aeromotive Corporation, explaining why he barricaded himself inside the company's Los Angeles plant following a vote by the board of directors to fire him.

Wiegert's company makes luxury, high-performance cars costing as much as \$700,000.

Board members want to oust Wiegert because the company is losing money.

They also complain about financial irregularities, such as Wiegert's use of corporate funds for purchases from a store called Naughty Nighties.

Free enterprise hard on Russian women

Seventy-five per cent of the people who have lost their jobs in Moscow recently have been women aged between 45 and 55.

Legislation banning discrimination is routinely ignored; job advertisements state openly the vacancy is reserved for a man, and there are proposals to limit the number of hours that can be worked by women with children under 14 months.



Yeah, but how high are his taxes?

Canada's richest resident, publishing baron Lord Thompson of Fleet, earns \$628,560 on an average day. On bad days, it can go under \$600,000.

Not in my wealthy back yard

An American survey of the 50 corporations that emit the most toxic chemicals found that they dump very little of it



LIFELONG STRUGGLE: Farm workers' leader Cesar Chavez, with HEU Vancouver Island regional director Raj Chouhan in 1983, dedicated his life to the cause for justice.

Chavez gave farm workers hope

The North American labour movement lost one of its most skilled and respected activists, when the United Farm Workers leader Cesar Chavez died April 23.

Chavez devoted all of his life to farmworkers' fight against the powerful bosses of the big U.S. agricultural businesses for safe working conditions, better pay and fundamental justice.

For HEU Vancouver Island region director Raj Chouhan, Chavez's death was like "losing an elder brother." As president of the Canadian Farmworkers' Union from 1980 to 1986, Chouhan worked closely with his U.S. counterpart.

"He's given hope to farmworkers all across the world that when they organize they can change their lot," Chouhan said. "He turned

around intolerable working conditions in the industry, like ending the use of short handle hoes and raising public awareness about the danger of pesticide use."

One lesson Chouhan and the CFU learned from Chavez was that to win in a struggle, a union can't act like a traditional union — it has to become a social movement and seek out broad public support to succeed.

On HEU's behalf Chouhan attended the ceremony celebrating Chavez's life in Delano, Calif., which included a march of more than 100,000 people.

Chavez died in Arizona, where he was set to appear in court to fight an employer's legal bid to lift the long-standing boycott of California table grapes.

Hospitals are the most dangerous workplaces

Health care is the number one source of time loss claims to the Workers' Compensation Board of B.C., outranking heavy manufacturing, building construction and logging.

The recent WCB statistics show not only that there is an epidemic of injury in health care, but that WCB inspectors are still ignoring this epidemic, opting for continuing their work mainly in male dominated work places.

According to 1992 WCB statistics, nine per cent of all time loss claims came from hospitals and other health care facilities. Heavy manufacturing and construction accounted for eight per cent each.

Three out of five health care claims filed from 1987 to 1991 came from nurses, and two out of three of the nurses were practical nurses or nurse aides.

Seventy per cent of the 29,706 health care claims filed from 1987 to 1991 were for strains. Of those, 6,577 claims were for back strains handling patients, 4,256 were for other back strains, 3,856 were for other strains handling patients, and 5,504 were for other strains.

The days lost to injury in health care continue to mount. Last year, more than 300,000 days were lost in health care due to injury, close to a 30 per cent increase over 1991.

Some incredible WCB statistics show that health care still does not get proper attention from board inspectors.

Health care, the number one generator of claims, got only 1.1 per cent of all visits or contacts from the board's occupational health and safety staff. Even though building construction had fewer claims than health care, it got 24 per cent of all contacts by the board staff.

When board staff did come to hospitals, they didn't go to patient care where most injuries take place. They only issued 1.6 per cent of WCB orders in patient care.

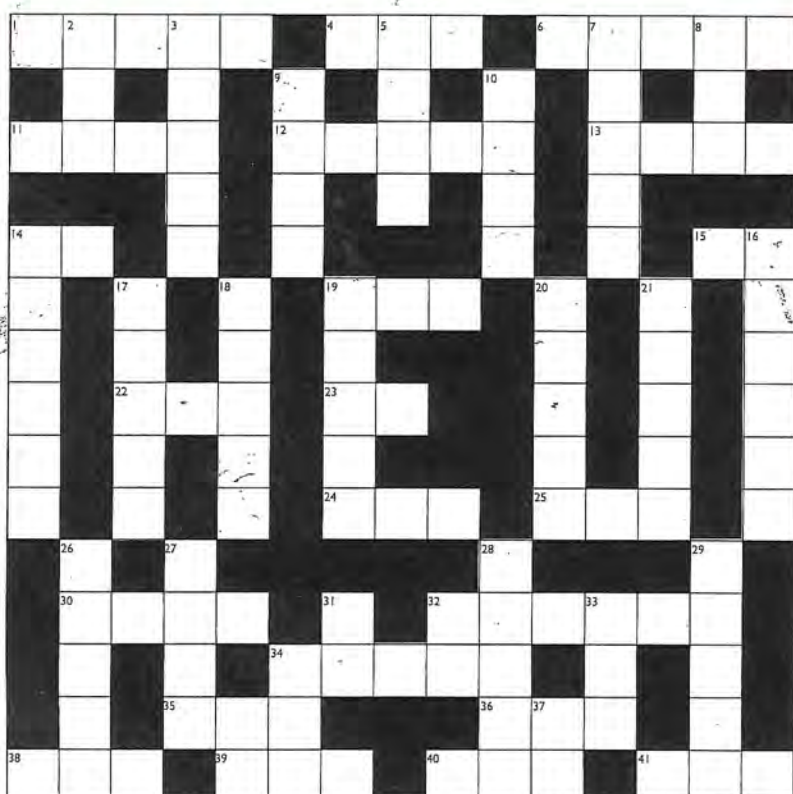
But in maintenance and trades, where 5.4 per cent of health care injuries take place, a whopping 63 per cent of all WCB orders in health care were issued.

"HEU is taking action to ensure that the Workers' Compensation Board lives up to its responsibility to assist in protecting our members from injury," said HEU secretary-business manager Carmela Allevato.

HEU is taking part in a special task force the board has set up to deal with health care injuries.

As well, HEU is asking every local to draw up a list of representatives for WCB inspections of health care workplaces.

PUZZLE



ACROSS

1. This kind of session irritates bosses (5)
4. Big partner in NAFTA - abbrev. (3)
6. Shortage of this causes layoffs (4)
11. Breaks strikes (4)
12. Can resolve strikes (5)
13. Wheel and - (4)
14. Doctor - abbrev. (2)
15. Where surgery happens - abbrev. (2)
19. More of this could reduce deficit (3)
22. The original Shaughnessy committee (3)
23. A.P.C. before the 286 (2)
24. What an administrator likes to do (3)

25. Health Sciences - abbrev. (3)
30. They service the locals (4)
32. He needs a billing number (6)
34. Calm comes before the (5)
35. 3-letter article (3)
36. This help comes first (3)
38. Practical nurse - abbrev. (3)
39. It's the heart of health care (3)
40. The law is sometimes this (3)
41. Political party (3)

DOWN

2. Nervous condition (3)
3. Main Tory complaint (5)

5. Stop working if it isn't this way (4)
7. Opposite of on top (5)
8. Heroic efforts are useless - abbrev. (3)
9. Needed to ratify (4)
10. There's a line for this in dietary (4)
14. Poor partner in NAFTA (6)
16. HEU has eight (6)
17. Bosses create this (5)
18. Patients' families do this (5)
19. Poison (5)
20. Cold symptom (5)
21. Latest trade deal (5)
26. Several people together (5)
27. X marks this (4)
29. General direction (5)
32. Doctor - abbrev. (2)
33. Little guy (3)

HEU people

Maple Ridge workers mourn Anne McLaren

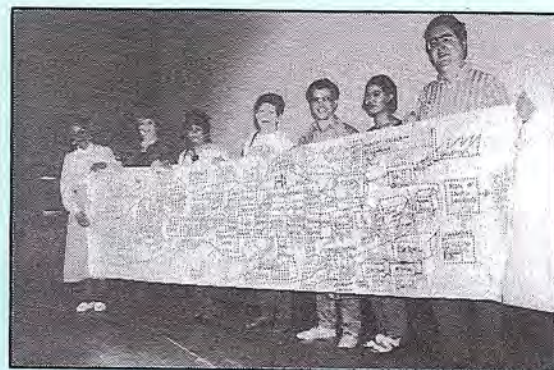
HEU Maple Ridge members are mourning the death Jan. 7 of Anne McLaren, who died at the age of 64 after a courageous battle with multiple sclerosis.

McLaren worked in the dietary department at the hospital and her passing is mourned by the staff who worked with her both as fellow worker and as a resident at Creekside Manor, where she moved as her illness advanced.

Kimberley's Delores Tooze retires

Delores Tooze, an HEU activist and cook at Kimberley Special Care Home since 1976, retired Feb. 19. She was a founding member of the local when the facility was organized in 1976.

A member of the local executive for many years, she looks forward to



PIECING IT TOGETHER: Students from an HEU summer school class on health care restructuring display the detailed diagram of how the health system runs and who all the players are that they developed in class to help union locals influence change in their communities.

babysitting her grandchildren, sleeping and working in her greenhouse.

UBC local member retires

Julia Robinson, a member of HEU's UBC local since the time the local transferred to HEU from CUPE, retired in February after 16 years of service.

A secretary in the an-

aesthesia department, Robinson will continue with volunteer work.

Hilda Fefchak retires in Oliver

Hilda Fefchak, a licensed practical nurse at South Okanagan General Hospital in Oliver, retired March 31 after 20 years on the job. She joined HEU in 1973.

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ON VIDEO



Poverty, repression & free trade - a 21 minute report on the trade union delegation tour to Mexico which included HEU financial secretary Mary LaPlante. Produced by the B.C. Trade Union Group and available from HEU Communications, 2006 W. 10th Ave., Vancouver.

Guardian



VOL. II NO. 3 THE VOICE OF THE HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION MAY/JUNE 1993



Thanks, Bill

Through nine years of leading HEU, former president Bill Macdonald remained dedicated to improving the lives of working people.

PAGE 5

Life on the line

In the midst of a military coup in her country, Guatemalan union leader Rosa Escobar tells about a struggle for justice and survival.

PAGE 7



Sexual harassment

A workplace free of harassment is the goal, and HEU members are using the collective agreement to make it happen.

PAGE 8



Working TV

Comedy, music and real working people make HEU's new television show different from anything you've seen.

PAGE 12



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We're on TV!



HEU takes to the air to bring the Heart of Health Care message to the public

ON ROGERS CABLE

watch working tv

AUG 7
Lockout interrupts Working TV
A lockout of IBEW Local 213 members by Rogers Cable in Vancouver & Victoria has temporarily halted production of alternate TV. With the union's cooperation we're seeking alternate facilities to get back on the air soon. Phone 604-253-6222 for revised schedule information.

Working TV, Vancouver only
... month, on the first Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Thursday at times and channels above.

Produced by the Democratic Media Division, of the Slim Evans Society, with funding from The Hospital Employees Union, and assistance from the Canadian Auto Workers and the Vancouver and District Labour Council. Want to see us on your local cable channel? Call Working TV at 604-253-6222.