



Peace and justice for all  
in the new century

# Guardian



VOL. 17, NO 5

THE VOICE OF THE HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

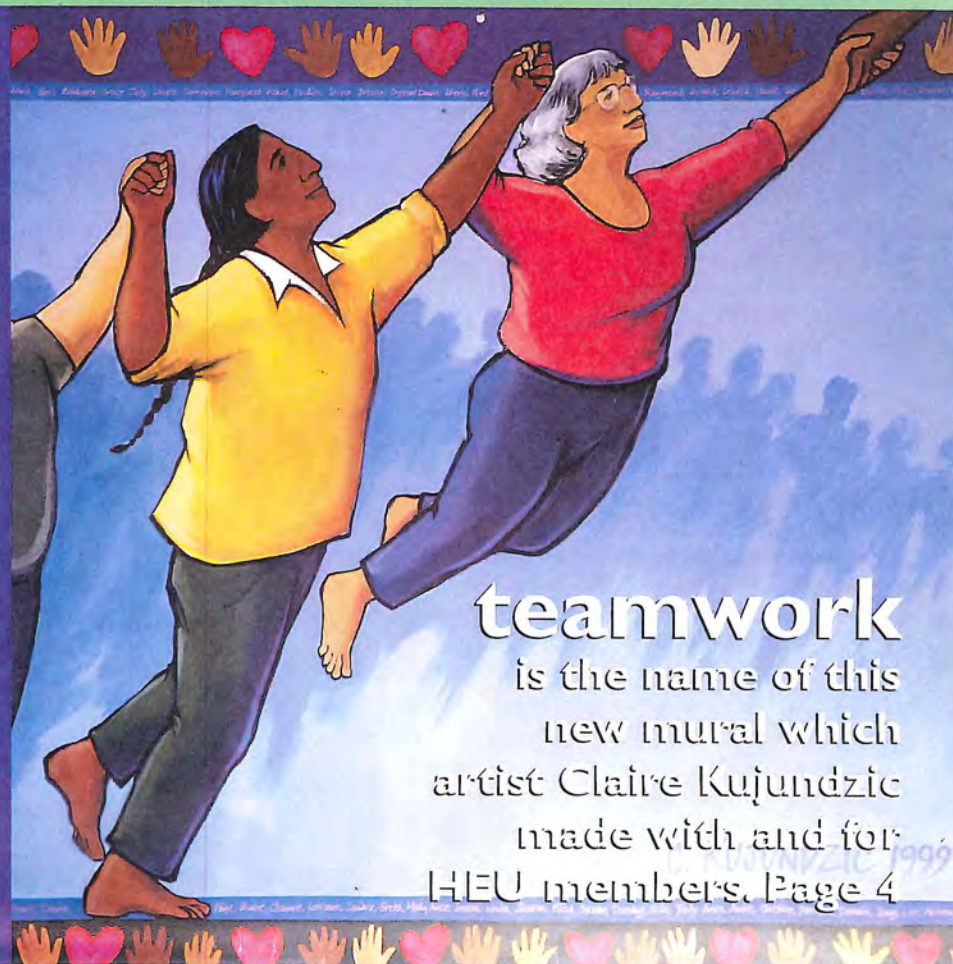
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1999

A new guide takes a look at the causes and what we can do to solve the problem. Pages 7 – 9

## STRESS



## ON THE JOB



### teamwork

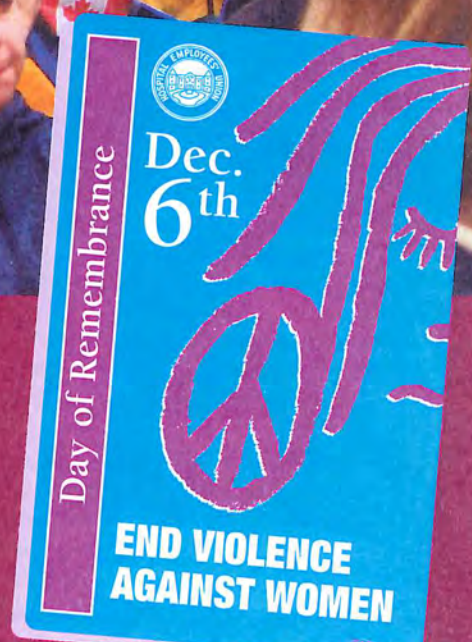
is the name of this new mural which artist Claire Kujundzie made with and for HEU members. Page 4



Mike Old photo.

HEU was there when tens of thousands of people descended on Seattle Nov. 30 to protest the World Trade Organization.

It's the 10th anniversary of the shooting deaths of 14 young women in Montreal. Page 5





## COMMENT

# Answer to senior care may be right under our noses

by Chris Allnutt

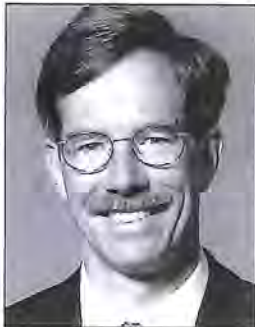
**W**hat's the health care issue that's creating the most challenges for government? The one affecting almost every family in the province? The one involving those British Columbians who are the biggest users of health care resources? The one that most urgently requires bold solutions? It's simple. Caring for seniors.

HEU members provide most health services for our seniors, and we know first hand about the problems in the system. Like lengthy wait lists for long-term care beds. That leave a Williams Lake woman, whose 92-year-old father is dying from a rare disease, with the prospect of moving him to Vancouver because a bed won't be available there for three years.

A dire lack of home support services means an elderly couple — she at home caring for her Alzheimers-afflicted husband — get locked in their bathroom. They stay confined there for five days before they're found, tragedy narrowly averted. Then there are the widespread surgery cancellations caused by — seniors occupying acute care beds because there's nowhere else to put them.

The number of seniors will soon double. Unless we're prepared to see Medicare crumble, we must come up with concrete solutions for 'better seniors' care now.

There are many problems. But there's also great opportunity to develop the same kinds of gutsy solutions that Tommy Douglas



launched in the 1960s. And like Douglas' historic struggle, the decisive victory for public Medicare, we have the ingredients for our own people's movement — a coalition of seniors, health workers and their unions, and even some forward-looking employers — to develop creative elder-care solutions and to campaign vigorously to win the broader support necessary to make progressive change a reality.

As front-line experts, HEU members have a wealth of ideas to make things better. Our "seniors health care protection plan" includes measures like more care beds and new supportive housing initiatives linked to pre-

ventative community-based care services. Expanding home care is crucial, so Victoria must put aside jurisdictional squabbling with the feds so that we can tap into new home care funding opportunities at a national level.

We desperately need alternatives to the current "doctors, drugs and hospitals" model of care. That means simple measures like 24-hour care in the community and a collaborative care team approach harnessing the expertise of a wide range of health personnel. And it means tougher rules to protect seniors in institutional settings and set stringent standards for community care, where none now exist.

## 'We must come up with concrete solutions'

However, there are those in government who want to turn to the private sector for more costly solutions to pressing seniors care problems. Like Ralph Klein and Gordon Campbell, these voices hail public-private partnerships (P3s) as the way to go: facilities that will be built, owned and operated by private corporations.

We need to develop a long range plan to improve seniors' health outcomes and reduce pressures on other parts of Medicare, particularly acute care. One that will meet the needs of hundreds of thousands of British Columbians now dealing with issues of aging.

Over the next 15 months, we must boost public confidence in the system. From our perspective, it's time to be bold. We need to modernize Medicare.

## voice/mail

THE GUARDIAN WELCOMES YOUR FEEDBACK. SEND LETTERS TO 2006 WEST 10TH AVE., VANCOUVER V6J 4P5 OR PHONE 1-800-909-4994. PLEASE BE BRIEF.

### Thumbs up to anti-stress guide

Just read my *Guardian* today, and I am so happy to see you will be doing an article on stress and bullying. I did not think the union cared about bullies.

I know Surrey Memorial Hospital says snubbing another worker is unacceptable in their harassment leaflet. Ours does not.

A year and a half ago a lady who I work with told me she would never talk to me again, after a small disagreement over changing a patient in bed. If I try to communicate she says I am harassing her.

Another lady who works a full shift with her gets the same treatment. It's been very stressful and on at least one occasion I thought about taking a stress leave. I sat at the lunch table last week when she passed around home baking to everyone, but when it came to me

she snatched the plate.

I am afraid of her. She used to tell me she enjoyed scaring people.

Author Tim Field has written a fab book called *Bully in Sight*. He has a great web site and gives useful info on how to cope with bullies. Another interesting book is *Work Abuse, how to recognize it and survive it*, by Judith Wyatt & Chauncey Hare. The British are going great guns in the news media about adult bullies. I am so glad you are doing something.

NAME WITHHELD BY REQUEST  
Delta Centennial Hospital

### I don't like Blended Care

The *Guardian's* July-August 1999 edition centerspread focused on what it calls Blended Care.

It reminds me of that catchphrase "health care reform" which was really intended to dismantle acute care in favor of "community care" as a way of getting at those reactionary doctors who were promoting care for profit.

What we got with few excep-

tions was what the doctors were promoting, the proliferation of non-union, private clinics, therapists, labs, agencies, etc.

These undermine public control and increase costs through profits and extra billing. The fact that most are non-union undermines union contracts.

Blended Care would merge the various services with institutions, amounting to "public-private partnerships."

Under public ownership and control and with a unionized health care work force, these services could be a welcome addition to the system. But under current conditions, we would be following the U.S. example where most people have inadequate or no health care coverage.

HEU and other health care unions should lead the fight against this offensive by the "medical industrial complex" which is making more and more inroads into the system, including ripping off scarce funds and sucking public health care dry.

PETER MARCUS  
Children's and Women's local

### Young, proud and ready

On Oct. 2, 1999 I had the great pleasure of taking part in the 1st annual B.C. Federation of Labour Youth Forum: *Union Youth, Union Proud: Talking Union*. The purpose of this forum was to educate and activate both the union and non-union youth in B.C. by discussing the importance of preserving the strengths of our respective unions. Jim Sinclair, president of the B.C.

Federation of Labour, spoke of the importance for unions to focus on its young members, and I could not agree more.

As a 24-year-old, and an active member of our union, I am very interested in doing my best to keep HEU strong and viable. But the reality is this: our union does not have a very large youth population. As a result, most of the educational opportunities are given to older members.

So, I commend HEU on our participation in this youth forum. The opportunity to network and to learn from other activists can only improve its longevity.

Approximately thirty activists from all over the province and from many different unions, began brainstorming on how to recruit young workers and how to activate our current young members. We talked about blitzing the media through commercials and the internet, forming more youth committees, also mixing art and politics by creating a play that would be shown to high school and elementary school students.

We would like to see more history on the labour movement being taught at the schools, as well as in all the locals of our unions.

Throughout these discussions one thing became very clear to me: WE NEED A VOICE. So it is my hope our locals will try and focus on younger members, and mentor us with the purpose of carrying the HEU into the 21st century and beyond.

JENNIFER NEELY,  
Chairperson, Kardel local

## Guardian

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

EDITOR:  
Stephen Howard  
MANAGING EDITOR:  
Dale Fuller  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR:  
Mike Old  
DESKTOP PRODUCTION:  
Carol Bjarnason  
DESIGN CONSULTATION:  
Kris Klaasen,  
Working Design  
PRODUCTION & PRINTING:  
Broadway Printers

The *Guardian* is published on behalf of the Provincial Executive of the Hospital Employees' Union, under the direction of the following editorial committee:

Fred Muzin, Chris Allnutt, Mary LaPlante, David Ridley, Colleen Fitzpatrick, Leo Bibb, Linda Hargreaves

### PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE

Fred Muzin  
President  
Chris Allnutt  
Secretary-Business Manager  
Mary LaPlante  
Financial Secretary  
David Ridley  
1st Vice-President  
Colleen Fitzpatrick  
2nd Vice-President  
Leo Bibb  
3rd Vice-President  
Dan Hingley  
4th Vice-President  
Sheila Rowsell  
5th Vice-President  
Linda Hargreaves  
Senior Trustee  
Julia Amendt  
Senior Trustee Elect  
Maurice Smith  
Trustee  
Louise Hutchinson  
Member-at-Large 1  
Ken Robinson  
Member-at-Large 2  
Iris Reamsbottom  
Regional Vice-President  
Fraser Valley  
Sandra Vicic  
Regional Vice-President  
Kootenays  
Kelly Knox  
Regional Vice-President  
Lower Mainland — Coastal  
Don Allen  
Regional Vice-President  
Lower Mainland — Centennial  
Casey O'Hern  
Regional Vice-President  
Lower Mainland — Central  
Mary Nicholls  
Regional Vice-President  
North  
Donisa Bernardo  
Regional Vice-President  
Okanagan  
Laura Neil  
Regional Vice-President  
Vancouver Island  
Sandra Harper  
First Alternate  
Provincial Executive

### UNION OFFICES

#### PROVINCIAL OFFICES:

Vancouver Site  
2006 West 10th Ave.  
Vancouver V6J 4P5  
(604) 734-3431  
e-mail: dfuller@heu.org  
Internet: www.heu.org  
Abbotsford Site  
2702 Ware St.  
Abbotsford V2S 5E6  
(604) 852-6571

#### VANCOUVER ISLAND:

Victoria Site  
201-415 Gorge Road East  
Victoria V8T 2W1  
(250) 480-0533  
Courtenay Site  
101-600 Comox Road  
Courtenay V9N 3P6  
(250) 334-3403

Nanaimo Site  
601-495 Dunsmuir Road  
Nanaimo V9R 6B9  
(250) 754-5558

OKANAGAN:  
100, 160 Dougall Rd. S.  
Kelowna V1X 3J4  
(250) 765-8838

KOOTENAY:  
745 Baker St.  
Nelson V1L 4J5  
(250) 354-4466

NORTHERN:  
1197 Third Ave.  
Prince George  
V2L 3E4  
(250) 564-2102





# What we're up to

## Niin Metsä Vastaa Kuin Sinne Huudetaan?

HEU members at Finnish Home joined forces with the facility's residents to come to the aid of on-site caretaker, Kauko Pusenius, after the Finnish Canadian Rest Home Board evicted him from his home of 13 years.

Apparently the board had decided that Pusenius was taking up too much space living alone in one of the manor's two-bedroom apartments and wanted to move him to an out-

of-the-way bachelor suite. As caretaker, Pusenius lives at and pays rent to Finnish Manor.

The Finnish Home local quickly coordinated a campaign to have board members reverse their decision and allow the highly-regarded worker to remain in his home. Their slogan – Niin Metsä Vastaa Kuin Sinne Huudetaan? (Who will answer when they're calling?) – is a well-known Finnish saying which indicates that people take care of one another especially in times of trouble.

Simultaneously, Finnish Home residents organized their own protest with a petition that every resident signed.

Consequently, at their meeting last week, Finnish Canadian Rest Home board members overturned their earlier decision – Kauko Pusenius has his home back.

"The Finnish Home community rallied around Kauko to help

him win his home back, and we did," said local steward Yana Grants. "That's given everyone a great feeling of accomplishment."

## Vexed in Victoria

The Capital Health Region says it will raise the price of staff parking at all the region's health care facilities by up to four times, and HEU members were so incensed they flooded the Nov. 8 CHR meeting. "Forty or more people from all the facilities in the region showed up to tell them just what we think of this," says Marty Terpenning, Victoria General Hospital local vice chairperson.

Chuck Rowe, vice president of operations for the CHR, claims that the measure is to encourage people to use the bus and to defray the cost of the new \$8 million parkade – a public-private partnership – at Royal Jubilee Hospital.

In the first-ever CUPE newsletter competition, HEU's *Guardian* won for the best overall in its class – union newsletters with a circulation over 3,000. National president Judy Darcy presented the award to HEU president Fred Muzin and *Guardian* editor Stephen Howard at the 1999 CUPE National Convention in Montreal in October.



If that is the case, workers all over the region will be paying for a parkade which they probably won't use – not even RJH workers.

Chris Allnutt, HEU secretary-business manager, suspects the real reason is the need to pay off a \$5 million deficit. "That the workers in the region should pay off this debt is unacceptable," says Allnutt. "The parking facility is scheduled to open in October 2000.

We calculate that the region will make enough between now and then – just on these increased parking rates – to pay off the deficit."

The CHR officers are holding forums throughout the region to explain the increase in parking costs, but Terpenning says that there is enough support to continue a campaign to convince them to cancel the increase.

continued on page 4

# Botched info system linked to controversy

Amid growing media clamour enveloping B.C.'s largest hospital and its top brass, HEU charges that a botched patient care information system (PCIS) is at the root of concerns over declining care standards and inadequate facilities at Vancouver Hospital, and could result in more patient care cuts in the future.

The PCIS controversy emerged in late October, when HEU went public with the major findings of two separate reports ordered by health minister Penny Priddy into the controversial information system and carried out by consultants Price Waterhouse Cooper, a respected international accounting firm, and health care labour relations specialist Peter Cameron. The project is a public-private partnership (P3) deal inked in 1996 by VH, BCTel (now Telus) and the Royal Bank. BCTel and the bank covered most of the \$50 million upfront implementation costs, while VH will fork over lucrative service fees to BCTel and repay the bank over a ten year period.

But the consultants identified a series of financial blunders and human resource planning problems that had poisoned the workplace over the past several years. For example, VH's cost savings projections – based on cutting 600 net full-time positions at the facility through work redesign – had gone sideways to the tune of \$150 million over the 10-year project implementation phase. Their cost saving targets were "overly aggressive" from the start and based on "extrapolated" data. The failure to achieve the targeted savings means the hospital is facing a severe cash crunch in the next two years and could be forced to cut health services in order to meet its obligations to Telus and the bank.

"This is an example of how not to implement change," said HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt, "for which the hospital board is ultimately responsible. And it's a clear message about the dangers of public-private partnerships that Victoria must urgently heed."



VANCOUVER HOSPITAL and Health Sciences Centre CEO Murray Martin went into heavy damage control mode when information systems cost overruns were exposed in a report to the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board.

"Clearly, something has gone horribly wrong with this project implementation," he says, adding that the union was alarmed when it reviewed the consultants' findings.

HEU has developed a comprehensive action plan to find solutions to the crisis, which it's discussed with Vancouver Hospital, the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board and Priddy.

# Negotiations proceed on implementation

As HEU continues negotiations with health employers on how to implement a major comparability decision, B.C.'s finance minister has acknowledged the province's obligation to fund the award.

While releasing the province's second quarter financial reports on Nov. 25, Finance Minister Paul Ramsay acknowledged that Stephen Kelleher's comparability decision could cost \$100 million more than budgeted in the 1999/2000 fiscal year.

"We're pleased that the government has indicated a commitment to fund the pay equity ruling," says HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt.

"It means that Victoria will avoid some of the same mistakes made by Ottawa in delaying its \$3 billion pay equity settlement with federal government employees.

"At the same time, Minister Ramsay and his government should instruct health employers to stop delaying the implementation of the settlement before its financial impact grows even larger."

The Health Employers Association of B.C. has appealed Kelleher's award to the B.C. Labour Relations Board, which has agreed to a hearing on the matter Dec. 21.

"I'm really pleased that the matter will

be considered reasonably quickly by the board," says Allnutt. "We're looking forward to a confirmation of Kelleher's ruling so that this final chapter in HEU's fight for comparability can be closed."

Even though HEABC has appealed the award, ongoing discussions have been taking place with HEU representatives on the nuts and bolts of implementing the comparability adjustments.

Allnutt says that proposals and counter-proposals were exchanged during three days of talks in November. The union's main objective is to distribute the comparability adjustments as

widely as possible.

The total value of Kelleher's Sept. 21 award, retroactive to 1996, is estimated at about \$110 million, not including maternity/paternity plan improvements worth approximately \$7 million annually. It's the second phase of comparability adjustments.

In 1994, an interim comparability adjustment valued at 3.7 per cent of payroll was applied across all classifications including those with no comparability gap.

The more recent award will likely be the biggest single economic gain for HEU members since the high inflation 1980s.



## WHAT WE'RE UP TO

### Logan wins council seat

Glengarry local activist Gordie Logan has won a seat on Colwood city council on Vancouver Island. He is the only one who won out of seven HEU activists who ran for municipal office in the November election. Sadly, incumbent — and PE member — Iris Reamsbottom was not re-elected to the Maple Ridge school board.

Other HEU members who ran were Hamid Moreau, Kevin Andrews, Heather Arnold, Jean Birch and Aaron Corzatt.

First-time councillor Logan looks forward to serving his three-year term, saying, "I decided to run because some issues of great concern to the community were being overlooked. I think we can do better and am willing to work with a variety of people and groups to ensure that we do."



Congratulations to Gordie Logan and to all those who showed their civic spirit by running for office. Kudos also for all the HEU members and friends who worked on the election campaigns, like these folks who showed up at the Carpenters' Union Hall in New Westminster on Nov. 9 to stuff envelopes: Iris Reamsbottom, unidentified woman, Lynn Halstead, Hamid Moreau, Maurice Smith, Don Allen, Cicera Ferreira, Laurie Harper and Tom Knowles.

### More than 250 new members

HEU has boosted its numbers by more than 250 members. Of these, 200 are at the North Shore Association for the Mentally Handicapped. This is the

largest single certification for HEU since the early 1980s.

There are six other new HEU certifications: South Granville Park Lodge, the Fian Group Home in Duncan, Brookwood Court in Langley, Urquhart

House in Prince George, Douglas House in Victoria, and Craigend Rest Home in Burnaby.

### Private eyes are watching you

Members of the VGH local were out early on Dec. 7 to greet their co-workers and hospital visitors with a smile and an information flyer identifying 23 surveillance cameras that are up and operating throughout the facility. Known locations of the "private eyes" include the Sassafras Cafeteria, the gift shop, patient accounts, Centennial Pavilion administration, the surgical day-care, the emergency department and the nurses' residence. The snoop tips were widely appreciated and some members of the public were downright upset to learn that their comings and goings were being recorded.

The VGH local promises to remain vigilant and announce the whereabouts of any other cameras as information comes available.

### Seeing red in Cranbrook

HEU activists in the East Kootenays are asking questions about why the Cranbrook Health Council is \$800,000 in the hole. The CHC is blaming excess spending on sick time and WCB claims and say they'll have to cut staff.

But front-line workers are pointing out that ongoing expenses like sick time, vacation relief and even drugs for the operating room weren't included in the budget.

Cranbrook HEU local secretary-treasurer Julie Reid says high workloads mean one in five care aides in her workplace are off-the-job because of injuries, yet management won't

## B.C. painter mixes art work with activism

by Dale Fuller

There's a wonderful new mural in HEU's Provincial Office. Born at last February's Equity Conference, continued at the 1999 Summer School and completed by artist and social activist Claire Kujundzic in the B.C. Cariboo town of Wells, this mural expresses HEU's diversity and its strength.

Kujundzic attended the Equity Conference, and after listening to people's concerns came up with a concept. "I left knowing this should be a visual expression of people leading the way to unity," she says. "I made some sketches and sent them out to the participants and got the go-ahead."

At a Summer School workshop Kujundzic taught students (some of whom had not touched art materials since elementary school) about drawing to scale and how to handle a brush and paint. They got to work painting the border, and together they all roughed out the central sketch to be painted later by Kujundzic back home.

The result is a work of art that speaks about HEU's members, hope for the future and pride in its history. It names all the people who worked on it — including Kujundzic, of course.

Given her background, it would be surprising if Kujundzic were not a social activist and an artist.

Kujundzic's family immigrated to Canada from Scotland when she was a little girl, and she grew up in Nelson and Summerland, B.C. Her Yugoslavian artist father started what eventually became the Kootenay School of the Arts, while her mother asserted her pacifist views on a local radio station.

In young adulthood she lived on an experimental cooperative farm. "Some of the people on the farm were from Vancouver, where they had worked with the unemployed or in civil liberties," she says. "They had a big influence on me, and I decided that I would move to Vancouver to 'see the world.'"

"I started doing things like walking other people's picket lines, and I learned a lot about the labour movement that way," says Kujundzic. As a matter of fact, she was learning about a whole lot of issues.

At the same time she was producing art. People



FOUR FIGURES are united and moving upwards rather than stagnant by marching in a straight line, says Kujundzic. Hands at top and bottom are the rest of the membership joining hands. The four logos represent the four equity caucuses.

liked what she was doing, and they started asking her to design things like posters or T-shirts. She soon was known as an artist in Vancouver's activist community.

She never received a formal art education, but taught herself the techniques of graphic art. And she produced enough paintings to begin to exhibit. She considers both art and social activism to be her career. "The challenge was trying to make it work economically," she laughs.

In 1979 she started doing solidarity work for Nicaragua, and that became an important focus of her life for many years. In 1985 she was invited to spend a year working in Nicaragua — designing postage stamps. Living in that country taught her that real change doesn't happen

overnight. "Someone in Nicaragua told me, 'We've won the revolution. That was the easy part; now the real work begins,'" Kujundzic says.

Now, living in Wells, population 200, Kujundzic has found new ways to be an activist. "Believe it or not, I am serving my third term as president of the local Chamber of Commerce," she says. "In a small community you take any available opportunity to show leadership and organize!"

She enjoys working collectively and teaching other people how to "do art." Two and a half years ago she mounted a travelling exhibition called *The Kitchen*

### BALANCING



### IT ALL

### 'Real change doesn't happen overnight'



GETTING DOWN Kujundzic at the 1999 Summer School literally in the middle of the work-in-progress.

Project: *Home is Where the Art Is*. This was art she created to reflect women's everyday experiences.

"The exhibit went from Courtenay to Prince George to Williams Lake. In each place I went I did a mural with women in the community. We spent a weekend finding out what we all had in common, what our struggles were, and from that we produced murals, which stayed in their communities.

That is the kind of project that she loves to do, and why she enjoyed doing the HEU mural. She thinks that it says what the members wanted to express. And thinks everyone should feel very proud of the piece.

• **BALANCING IT ALL** is a regular Guardian column about the challenges facing women activists.



## WHAT WE'RE UP TO

take the workload crisis seriously.

"They've cut two and a half positions just at Steepleview (Cranbrook's extended care)," says Reid. "And not one management position in the region has been eliminated."

As the *Guardian* goes to press, HEU activists from the Rocky Mountain, F.W. Green and Cranbrook locals are making plans to join other community members at a meeting of the CHC.

"We're hoping to make them more accountable," says Reid.

### 10 years after

Canadian women's groups commemorated Dec. 6 by issuing a Call to Action encouraging women across the country to join the World Women's March 2000 to end poverty and violence, and to hold the federal government accountable for its inaction on these

MIRIAM SOBRINO/BC FED PHOTO



Provincial Executive member and chair of the HEU's Women's Committee Louise Hutchinson places a candle in the ground at the Women's Monument in Vancouver's Thornton Park on Dec. 6.

issues.

An unprecedented alliance of Canadian organizations including the Canadian Labour Con-

gress, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women and the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres, will

join with women around the world to demand action from national governments and international institutions through a global mobilization and march of women.

December 6 marks a national day of remembrance and action against violence against women. On that date ten years ago, Marc Lépine murdered 14 young women at the École Polytechnique in Montreal. This tragic event has become symbolic of the male violence which destroys the lives of thousands of women across the country.

### CUPE launches green campaign

The Canadian Union of Public Employees has published a kit entitled *Towards Green Communities*. They call it a "simple guide to reducing waste in your community, workplace and environment." It includes sec-

tions on recycling in diverse types of homes and workplaces: apartments, co-op housing, offices, schools, hospitals, construction sites, parks and grounds, cafeterias and food service departments. There are also tips on composting.

The kit puts it all into context: why it is important to take care of our surroundings. "Until recently," it says, "people in their homes and work places had little regard for what they threw away and what impact their actions had on the natural environment." Of course, that has changed as we all realize that we can no longer afford to be so careless. The kit includes information on how to implement good environmental practices in your area, lobby politicians, mount a PR campaign and identify recycling opportunities in your workplace and community.

# In like a lion, out like a lamb

*Startling confession: Business Summit admits right-wing prescriptions wrong!*

**I**n a startling conclusion to a province-wide series of public meetings designed to validate right-wing prescriptions for our province's economic and social ills, B.C. business leaders acknowledged last month in Richmond that they might not have all the right answers after all.

HEU president Fred Muzin, who spoke at the Richmond meeting, says he's surprised but pleased by the outcome. "It was a candid admission by business leaders that they didn't have it right," said Muzin. "So it's an opening for business and labour to sit down and cooperatively develop solutions that build a strong B.C. economy and strengthen important public services like health care and education."

Unions like HEU, says Muzin, have strongly supported the campaign efforts of the B.C. Federation of Labour to challenge the business agenda during the entire summit road show.

"Throughout the past two months of public meetings, HEU activists have done the job, helping to organize community-based opposition to summit

proposals, and appearing at public meetings with our alternatives for a stronger economy and a fairer society," he said.

"It's a concrete example of the benefits of taking political action because we influenced and shaped public opinion on these business solutions which in fact are very much like the electoral

**'We influenced and shaped public opinion on these business solutions'**

platform of Liberal leader Gordon Campbell." The so-called summit began a year ago as a powerful forum of B.C.'s top business leaders. Mainstream media hailed the package of right-wing solutions like deep tax and spending cuts, privatization of public services like health care, minimum wage cuts and gutting health and safety protections as the panacea that would get B.C.'s economy moving.

STEPHEN HOWARD PHOTO



LABOUR AND COMMUNITY activists like HEU president Fred Muzin were front and centre at the B.C. Business Summit forums — telling them how their policies could hurt communities and workers.

But business leaders failed to kindle any kind of broader public support. And high profile media coverage had dwindled, while labour and community activists were able to earn extensive coverage of their alternatives.

B.C. Federation of Labour president Jim Sinclair says that British Columbians have made it clear that the prescriptions proposed by the business community are not acceptable. "They've said 'no thanks' to tax cuts for the wealthiest British Columbians, no thanks to the return of scab labour and no thanks to a lower minimum wage for young people."

## Privatization threatens Medicare

An announcement by Alberta Premier Ralph Klein that his government plans to contract out surgical procedures to the private sector has ignited a new national debate on future of Medicare.

Klein told Albertans on Nov. 16 that he will introduce legislation next spring opening the door to contracted

out surgical services. He argued that the move would provide more options to Albertans, reduce waiting lists and comply with the principles of the Canada Health Act.

His critics weren't so sure. "Waiting lists across Alber-

ta are problems caused by the (Alberta) government's irresponsible closing of hospital after hospital in the mid-1990s. To then use scarce taxpayer dollars to fund for-profit hospitals to attempt to solve their own problem is deplorable," said Alberta New Democrat Leader Pam Barrett. "It is easier, cheaper and more efficient to reopen



KLEIN

hospital floors and beds across the province."

The Prime Minister and Health Minister Alan Rock have also criticized Klein's proposal, but HEU president Fred Muzin says Ottawa's credibility gap on the Medicare question is

growing.

In a Nov. 23 presentation to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance, Muzin told MPs that transfer payment cuts to the provinces have undermined the federal government's ability to defend Medicare against Klein and other privatizers and have led to increasing

out-of-pocket health care expenses for Canadian families.

"If this government is serious about challenging Ralph Klein's plans for two-tier health care," says Muzin, "the next federal budget will include a restoration of transfer payments to the provinces for health care and other important social programs."

Muzin also urged the feds to exclude health, education and social services from the WTO discussions in Seattle.

"We already have serious concerns that Klein's privatization push could lead to incursions in public health care by American corporations under NAFTA," says Muzin.



## PRESIDENT'S DESK



### Human values must count over corporate power and wealth

by Fred Muzin

Our hope for the 21st century is buoyed by the resurgence in grass roots activism, especially among young people. Together we are demanding that a civil society be restored and renewed. As was evident at the November 30th anti-World Trade Organization (WTO) rally and march in Seattle, people are demanding a future based on values — where every person's inherent importance is nurtured — in order to create a truly richer world.

The WTO has become a flash point. It advocates for multinational corporations' insatiable quest for profit to be paramount over people's quality of life. Trade negotiators regard human and labour rights, environmental protection and sustainability, culture or food safety as infringements on their market control.

Secret trade dispute panels have ruled against the European Union for banning the import of hormone treated beef (carcinogenic); Canada is attempting to prevent France from banning the use of asbestos; Brazil and Venezuela successfully challenged the U.S. Clean Air Act to limit cleaner gas production/sale; four Asian nations overturned the U.S. Endangered Species Act that prohibited the sale of shrimp caught in ways that kill endangered sea turtles; the U.S. won a decision that favours Chiquita against Europe's practice of preferring to import bananas from its former colonies (to sustain the local economies). These are just some examples of how the WTO seeks to rule the world.

Under pressure, especially from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which are closely allied with the WTO, many governments have accepted the mantra that taxes are evil, that debt and deficit reduction must be absolute priorities, that it is impossible to sustain a vibrant economy if any services are regulated and that privatization is more efficient and the best alternative.

Governments are supposed to even out the fluctuations in our survival of the fittest 'free' enterprise system, to ensure that all citizens share the wealth of a country and to make decisions that benefit people, while respecting different views.

The broad coalition of 50,000 that helped to derail the Millennium Round of talks included students, trade unionists, church groups, environmentalists, politicians, women's and other social justice organizations, seniors and many more. Their vision of the world opposes the WTO's expansion that will threaten universal public services such as health care, education and social services by treating government programmes such as Medicare as unfair competitive advantages.

We must be able to protect the environment if we are to have a sustainable planet. Water should not be a commodity to be sold to the highest bidder. Currently the Sun Belt Corporation of California, under NAFTA's Chapter 11 provisions, is suing Canada for more than \$10.5 billion because B.C. has restricted the bulk export of water.

Nobody should be able to patent seeds and other life forms. Genetically modified foods must be proven to be safe before being marketed and clearly labelled if they are.

While there are legitimate reasons to stimulate fair trade, the corporate rule mentality and actions of the WTO must be stopped. Our New Year's resolutions for a civil society in the next century must be based on the determination and militancy that has carried our movement forward over the past 100 years.

## NOTEBOOK

### MDS targets Alberta hospitals, BC labs

by Mike Old

Remember last year's media maelstrom over the 'lab accord' inked between HEU, HSA and the provincial government? A side agreement to '98 contract talks, the accord contained proposals that would strengthen the public delivery of lab and rehab services while reining in relatively high outpatient lab testing costs in B.C.

Lab companies, the BCMA, the Fraser Institute, columnists and editorial writers lined up to slam the accord and defend the private sector's lucrative share of public health care dollars.

"Secretive decision to undermine private laboratories," screamed a Vancouver Sun editorial. "...reckless decision had generated largest single-day loss in share prices in MDS history," erred Sun columnist Vaughn Palmer.

The charges of secrecy were unfounded — news of the accord had been gathering dust on union web sites and hospital bulletin boards for weeks. But with B.C. lab earnings exceeding \$100 million, MDS and BC Biomedical clearly had an interest in shelving the accord.



**'MDS has bankrolled HRG's private hospital in Calgary'**

In particular, proposals to get a handle on lab costs threatened future profit expectations for companies whose growth has been fuelled by public health care dollars.

Fast forward to November 1999.

Ralph Klein — Alberta premier and Fraser Institute poster child — is once again pushing for a greater private sector role in providing surgeries. If successful, it'll be a bonanza for a company called HRG that runs a private hospital in Calgary.

Meanwhile, Capital Health Region CEO Tom Closson makes a pact with MDS to explore a joint venture to provide lab services.

Shadowy backroom discussions take place which could eventually lead to the privatization of core hospital labs. But this new direction — one that could fundamentally undermine public health care delivery — is not subject to review by the regional health board, let alone by the provincial government or the public.

There's a common link between Closson and Klein, Calgary and the Capital Health Region. That link is MDS.

MDS has bankrolled HRG's private hospital in Calgary to the tune of \$3 million. And it's MDS that's at the center of Capital Health Region plans that could lead to privatization of hospital labs.

Strengthening Medicare means stopping Klein's privatization proposal. But it also means remaining vigilant in our own backyard, where health care corporations like MDS are working hard to engineer a reverse takeover of our health care system.



### Design reflects concern

by Margi Blamey

When Patricia Ormond entered the HEU Women's Committee's competition to design the commemorative sticker to mark the 10th anniversary of the murder of 14 women engineering students in Montreal, she did it not because she considers herself an artist but because she likes contests. And this was a contest in support of something she felt strongly about — ending violence, and particularly violence against women.

"I thought it was a neat way to reach out to people," Ormond reflected when asked how she felt upon learning that her 1960s-inspired design had been chosen for the 10th anniversary sticker for the union's annual Dec. 6th campaign.

Ormond said that her concern about violence throughout our society, and in particular its pervasiveness in TV and movies for children and youth, was the inspiration behind her design, a hand-drawn picture of a woman's sad yet composed expression, whose hair flows into a peace symbol.

Ormond lives in Nelson and works as a care aide at Willowhaven Private Hospital, a long-term care facility that's home to 80 seniors.

She's worked there for 18 years and talked about the changes she's seen in long-term care over that time. The biggest changes are increased workload and residents with higher, extended care needs.

"Sometimes it just feels like there isn't time for that special stuff that really counts," said Ormond. "Little things you'd do, even sitting and talking with folks. We used to have time to take people outside for walks or gussy-up their hair a bit more or play cards and things like that. That's just not part of your everyday job anymore. It's the basics only now."

Ormond said that rushing to complete routine duties such as meal service are the order of the day and leave no time to put a human touch to the care that residents deserve. And today more residents have higher emotional, psychological and physical care needs than those who entered the facility even a few years ago.

Ormond is also an HEU activist. She's the secretary-treasurer of the Nelson local, is responsible for union communications at the Willowhaven site, and sits on the local's nursing team committee.

Patricia, her husband and their two teenage children live in the house in which Ormond was born and raised.

It's there that she indulges in her passion for gardening. Her two-acre yard allows her to grow both decorative and edible flowers — "the more, the better" — herbs, vegetables and fruit trees.

"I try to keep it under control so that it's not work but pleasure," said Ormond, laughing. "It's a good way to relieve my stress and make me feel good."

## ON THE



## JOB



“The work keeps piling up and we’re never listened to. Some of my co-workers have even started fighting with each other. By the time I get home, I’m so exhausted I just plop on the couch.”

— REENA *clerical worker, Lower Mainland hospital*

“We’re always afraid of making mistakes and we never get caught up. People are booking off sick because they can’t stand it.”

— GEORGE *shipper-receiver, Fraser Valley hospital*

## These HEU members are talking about the biggest complaint in the workplace today: Stress.

On-the-job stress is out of control, and workers are paying the price in injuries, poor health, anxiety, conflict—and worse. Physical hazards are no longer the leading cause of workplace injury and illness. Today people are more likely to be hurt by poor management practices, badly designed jobs and top-down power structures.

Employers are aware that stress is widespread but often treat it as a personal problem. They may offer stress management programs to help staff deal with tensions created by job loss and restructuring. Yet stress management isn’t the solution because stress is not a personal problem. It is a symptom of harmful working conditions.

Stress is an organizational problem that requires an organizational solution. The only way to stop the damage and reduce the stress is to change the workplace.

Unions and workers are moving to head off this modern-

day epidemic. Stress is a leading item on progressive occupational health and safety agendas. In Europe, it is the number one focus of many union campaigns. Workers’ compensation boards and other intergovernmental bodies are also concerned.

### Toxic stress

**What is it – and how are you affected?** Stress isn’t supposed to be a problem. In normal circumstances, it is a powerful physiological mechanism that allows you to deal with sudden dangers and demands. The problem arises when you are exposed to constant pressure yet have no way to respond.

In a normal stressful situation, the body goes through a series of biochemical and physical reactions called the fight-or-flight response. This is an ancient survival tool that enables humans to cope with short-term stressors, like needing to run away from danger.

But our bodies were not designed for prolonged or chronic stress. When it occurs, the natural stress response is thwarted and serious problems arise. This is known as

*continued on next page*

As the century draws to a close, workplace stress is epidemic – especially among health care workers. It’s time to get together to change the way we organize the work we do.

# STRESS



by **Nancy Pollak**

illustrations  
by **Terry Sunderland**

# ON THE JOB





### Stress leads to MSIs

A groundbreaking study of musculoskeletal injury (MSI) in a B.C. hospital confirmed what many of us suspected: Work overload, low control, and little support from supervisors is causing injuries among HEU members.

An MSI is an injury or disorder of the muscles, tendons, ligaments, joints, nerves, blood vessels or related soft tissue that may be caused or aggravated by work. MSI includes sprains, strains and inflammation; repetitive strain injuries (RSI) are a specific kind of MSI.

The study looked at 4,020 workers in an acute care hospital in the Lower Mainland between 1992 and 1995. It found that:

- Employees in direct care, security, and housekeeping had the highest rates of MSI symptoms and WCB claims.
- These rates increased with the worker's exposure to ergonomic stressors and low levels of control and support.

- People working short-staffed (during periods of high sicktime) had a two-fold increase in injuries and WCB claims, compared with people working during periods of low sicktime.

### Divide and conquer

Recognize any of the following symptoms?

- Getting mad at staff in another department because their work was shifted to your department.
- Accusing a co-worker of "not doing their share."
- Being afraid to speak out about work problems because co-workers may abuse or reject you.
- Talking behind someone's back, or starting rumours.
- Becoming withdrawn and uncooperative—never smiling or even talking with co-workers.
- Ridiculing a person's appearance, speech, or personality.
- Allowing racist, sexist, or homophobic comments to go unchallenged.



- Getting mad at the shop steward because he or she takes time off for union business, which adds to your workload.
  - Giving up on trying to improve things or on getting along with co-workers.
- Think about it! Stress is often at the root of these problems.

### Pull together, don't fall apart

Conflict among workers is caused by stressful working conditions, but gets fuelled by misunderstandings, fear, and pettiness. People may get really angry at each other without bothering to learn

the facts or talk over their concerns.

It takes courage and goodwill to rise above anger—plus communication skills. Start here:

- Talk directly (and calmly) to co-workers about problems.
- Check out what is rumour and what is fact.
- Get the big picture. For example, ask your shop steward or local representative for information about restructuring plans in your organization.
- Support your co-workers' efforts to take care of themselves.

### Toxic stress

#### Physical consequences

- Heart disease and heart attack
- Headaches
- Diabetes
- Ulcers
- Neck and back pain
- Arthritis
- Colitis and irritable bowel syndrome
- Insomnia
- Colds and flu
- Asthma
- Loss of weight and appetite

## Everyone responds differently to stress

continued from  
previous page

toxic stress. It occurs when you:

- face a demand/threat that doesn't stop
- have no way of dealing with it, and
- never get a chance to relax.

This is the kind of stress you might find at work: overwhelming demands, little control over the situation, and no relief in sight.

### Toxic stress is real

What are some of the consequences of being under prolonged stress?

- The adrenal cortex releases glucocorticoids (e.g., cortisol), which normally help to regulate the immune system and metabolism. However, if glucocorticoids build up in the body, they can impair your memory, cognitive function, emotional state and immune system.

- Extra fats and glucose released into the bloodstream are not used up. Fats cling to blood vessels, becoming a risk factor for heart disease. High glucose makes you vulnerable to diabetes.

- High blood pressure and rapid heart beat continue. Blood vessels lose their elasticity, again putting you at risk for heart disease.
- Muscles never fully relax from tension, leading to pain and malfunctioning in the musculoskeletal system.
- Less blood flows to the stomach and intestines, and the protective mucous lining of the gut becomes thinner. You are more prone to ulcers.

Toxic stress attacks the weak point in each person's health defences. One person may get an ulcer, another a chronic neck ache; yet another may suffer a heart attack.

The harm to the immune system is significant. In 1998, an important U.S. study showed that people with chronic stress were three to five times more likely to catch a cold than others.

### More injuries, more sicktime

When you're under stress and anxious, you're also more vulnerable to injuries.

Stress-related injuries are a huge problem for HEU members—and for the Canadian economy. In 1998, health workers in B.C.'s South Fraser region lost 24,977 days to injuries, a 73 percent increase over the previous year. This figure is the equivalent of 96 employees absent for a whole year. The reasons? Like many other HEU members, workers in the region face long hours, work overload, short staffing, overtime and difficult labour relations. They are also an aging workforce.

### Who is most at risk?

Everyone knows that high-powered executives, brain surgeons and air traffic controllers have awfully stressful jobs. Their work is certainly much more stressful than a clerk's or a food service worker's—right?

Wrong. In fact, medical research proves the opposite.

The Framingham Study was an eight-year project that compared the rate of heart disease in women in different jobs. It found that clerical workers were almost twice as likely to develop heart disease as women in managerial, professional, service or blue-collar positions.

The Whitehall Study was another famous project. Researchers tracked over 18,000 male English civil servants for nearly two decades. The study found that the death rate for men in clerical and manual jobs was 3.5 times higher than for senior administrators of the same age (between 40 and 64 years). The data was adjusted to take into account factors like smoking, blood pressure, and diet. Even so, the result was the same: "If a clerk and a manager both smoked 20 cigarettes a day, the clerk was more likely to die of lung cancer."

Both studies found that these vulnerable workers had very little control over their jobs and few opportunities to express opinions. This lack of control—and the stress it created—was making them sick. Researchers concluded that employees are at risk when they have jobs with high demands and little support, plus little control over their work environment.

**Clerical workers are almost twice as likely to develop heart disease as women in managerial, professional, service, or blue-collar positions.**





### Did you hear the one about the "disorganized" employer?

In a stress-filled workplace, management may accuse people of being lazy or incompetent. Common criticisms are:

- "You're just disorganized ..."
- "You've got problems at home ..."
- "You're spending too much time on union business ..."
- "You need better coping skills ..."

The common denominator? It's your fault.

### A stretch a day ...

People need to work together to get at the roots of job stress. But it's also essential to try and reduce the impact of stress in your own life. Self-care and mutual support are the keys.

Even a small amount of self-care can strengthen your immune system and make you feel better. Stretches, good posture, relaxation techniques, exercise, healthy diet, dancing, walking and other activities that are fun and joyful—all these will help you feel better.

At a long-term care facility in Nelson, B.C., the entire staff do a 10-minute stretching session together every day. Workers are given time off for these mandatory exercises, which are led by a different person each day. The joint health and safety committee proposed the sessions, and the manager agreed.

How do workers feel about these group stretches? "I can't get by without it," said one worker.

### Tackling stress: Some recommendations

The study of musculoskeletal injury in a B.C. hospital recommended a broad stress prevention strategy with educational, ergonomic and job design components. Specifically, the study proposed:

- Facilitated discussions among management, supervisors, and workers to determine how workers could have some control over their work environment, at both the job level and within the organization.
- Additional staffing at critical levels of workload.
- Ergonomic improvements, such as mechanical lifts, redesigned work stations and job variety.



### Toxic stress

#### Psychological consequences

- Irritability
- Apathy and hopelessness
- Fatigue
- Increased alcohol and drug use
- Depression
- Inability to concentrate

- Low self-esteem
- Eating too much – or too little
- Obsessive thinking
- Sleep disorders
- Conflict with co-workers
- Paranoid feelings
- Withdrawal from social and community activities
- Sexual problems

### Changing the Work, Changing the Workplace

Job stress is not caused by anxious individuals or by people with personality problems. It is rooted in the workplace—in power structures and in how the work is done. The only way to really reduce toxic stress is to change the work and change the workplace.

Recent studies show that job sites with participatory management practices have lower accident rates than traditional sites. In other words, when workers have greater involvement in decision-making, they have lower rates of sicktime and injury. One study found that "the subjective working environment can have a very significant influence on workers' compensation claims."

HEU members often talk about wanting more control at work, more say in how things get done. In effect, you are asking for a healthy job design: one that would reduce stress by giving you the right tools to do a demanding job well. A related idea is workplace democracy, which means all employees have some decision-making powers about their work and job design.

In a job with a healthy design, you would have:

- a clear job description and duties, including how you should respond to demands
- some decision-making power about how your job is done—and how it may be changed
- a reasonable workload and a fair pace of work
- mutual support from supervisors and co-workers
- job-sharing, flextime, and other options to help with family obligations
- time for caring contact with patients and/or clients (where applicable)

### Toxic stress is preventable

Unhealthy stress is not inevitable. Hospitals and other health care facilities will always be intense places to work. But when people have good support and some control over their work, even a highly demanding job can be a healthy job.

Stress is an organizational problem. Stress management courses and relaxation techniques are of limited value in reducing workplace stress. What will make a difference is an organizational commitment, at all levels, to tackle the roots of stress. Anything else is a bandage fix.



A democratic workplace means less sicktime, lower injury rates and fewer disabilities.

Every crusade to improve working conditions was launched by ordinary people who stood up, spoke out, and organized. Workplace stress is one of the crucial issues of our times. It will be up to us to focus attention on the problem in a way that creates tangible, long-term change. We can tackle workplace stress by:

- making stress prevention a central issue among workers, employers, and Health Authorities
- organizing to improve specific working conditions, job designs, and ergonomics
- fighting for changes to collective agreements, Workers' Compensation Board regulations, and legislation.

**When workers have greater involvement in decision-making, they have lower rates of sicktime and injury.**

HEU's *Workplace Anti-Stress Guide* will be available in early 2000. The easy-to-read guide has information, strategies, statistics, and graphics to use if you are tackling stress on the job.



# Reps learn why health care workers are hurting

Two days were jam-packed with workshops, panels and presentations

Change the culture, and the problem will go away." That's what Vancouver area health care managerial staff were told about the high illness and injury rate at their facilities – that the safety problem is only one of perception.

They were at a "health and wellness" conference that immediately preceded HEU's own Occupational Health and Safety Conference.

"But," said Chris Allnutt, HEU's secretary-business manager, "We know that the problem is workload, the physical environment and lack of control over it." He opened HEU's two-day conference on Oct. 26,



**META ROACH** wants Occupational Health and Safety Agency to remember workers in the community sector.

telling delegates, "What you will learn here is that the perception and the reality are the same."

Assistant-secretary business manager Frica Bosanic gave an overview on what the Nursing Team Committee achieved since last year's conference.

The conference's first guest speaker, Canadian Auto Workers' director of health and safety Cathy Walker, said that control of one's workplace is of the utmost importance. "It is the concept of control which we must understand if we are going to make safer workplaces," she said. "Those who control the workplace must, by definition, have more influence in whether it is safe or unsafe."

And it is not only the physical environment, but how it is organized. She cited the sad example of the Westray Mine disaster. The 26 miners who died there had no control over their workplace. The person who had control – and responsibility for their safety – was the mine's owner.

Ergonomist Judy Village gave a graphic talk on her study of the hazards of laundry workers' jobs. "I found there is high demand and no control in these jobs, and these workers are at a high risk of injuries," she said. The workers who have no control over their work environment and also have no support from supervisors are most likely to suffer from musculoskeletal injuries. As well, repetitive movements are high risk. The solution to that is job rotation, and involving workers in the design of their work, she said.

Before the workshops started, panelists Mona Sykes of BCGEU, Lynn Bueckert of the B.C. Federation of Labour and HEU's Teresa Prentice discussed violence in the workplace, repetitive strain injuries and how organization of work helps alleviate injury rates.

Dr. Annalee Yassi, founding director of the Occupational Health and Safety Agency, was the first speaker of the second day. One of the great victories

**'Control of one's workplace is of the utmost importance'**



**WORKPLACE ACCIDENTS** are symptomatic of workers' lack of control, says CAW's Cathy Walker.

of last year's collective bargaining was the establishment of this agency. Yassi clarified what she sees as the agency's mandate, and how she is putting that into motion. "The social and dollar costs of injuries in the health care industry are huge, and I want to make a difference," she said. The agency will first zero in on injuries that happen as a result of lifting and transferring.

To help the agency determine exactly where it needs to focus, it has hired Aleck Ostrey of UBC's health care and epidemiology department to conduct a needs assessment survey.

HEU members who work in the community sector encouraged Yassi and Ostrey not to forget about them. Meta Roach, from Gabriola Home Support Society, said their issues are not the same as workers in the facilities. Dan Hadesbeck of the Vancouver Mental Patients Association, agreed. "I work on the street; I just don't do bed transfers," he said.

Fred Muzin closed the conference after another day of workshops, which on both days explored ergonomics, stress and preventing workplace violence. Organizers consider that the conference was a success – that it was fruitful to bring all the OH&S reps together to discuss what issues they face every day in their workplaces.

## Nursing team holds 4th conference

For the fourth time in as many years, HEU nursing team members travelled from near and far to talk about the challenges they face every day on the front line. As the shortage of nurses in the province becomes more acute, it is clear to the HEU nursing team that more utilization of care aides and licensed practical nurses is part of the solution.

During the two days of the conference in early November, over 60 members of HEU's nursing team set the course for the next year or two.

Assistant secretary-business manager Zorica Bosanic gave an overview on what the Nursing Team Committee has achieved since last year's conference.

At a panel discussion researcher Irene Jansen reported that the \$5 million provincial government initiative to improve LPN utilization across B.C. and to upgrade both LPN and care aide education was in the process of being implemented.

Some facilities are committed to increased utilization of LPNs and care aides. But nursing team members in others have an uphill battle to convince their employers to take advantage of the opportunity.

Nevertheless, the \$5 million will be spent. "And there will be more," said Jansen, referring to the fact that although this particular initiative is limited to the nursing team members who work in long-term care, the government has said that there will be more money in the coming year for acute care.

The panel discussion continued with Wendy

Williams, a researcher who is looking into how LPNs and care aides are being utilized in facilities across the province.

Williams explained that she will be calling upon LPNs and care aides for interviews about what they do at their workplaces, trying to get a snapshot of LPN and care aide utilization today. She plans to get a good cross section of facility types and different job descriptions.

The results will be made available in June, 2000. HEU hopes that the document will be used as a tool to change practices in nursing team utilization.

Shirley Cogle, from the South Okanagan, and Eileen Record from the Orca Shores local, both told how they are

working on increasing utilization in their own facilities.

"Everyone should have a regional nursing team committee. That's how we got started," advised Cogle.

Record said they had to demonstrate that using more care aides and LPNs is cost-effective. "There's a nursing shortage out there," she said.

During the two days, participants attended workshops on stress, LPN utilization and education, "gentle care" and multi-skilling in long-term care.

New nursing team T-shirts were on sale at a good price and sold like hotcakes. However, there are some "I'm on the nursing team" T-shirts left that can be had for \$15 at Provincial Office. There are also lots of nursing team buttons that are yours for the asking.

**'Everyone should have a regional nursing team committee'**

## Guards belong in bargaining unit

HEU locals in the Simon Fraser Health Region have launched a campaign to bring security staff into the facilities sector bargaining unit.

The security staff work beside other health care workers yet are paid as little as \$8.30 an hour for putting their necks on the line each day. They have no job security, no paid sick leave, no pensions, no long-term disability and no protection from being reassigned – without notice – to a construction site or shopping mall.

And the Simon Fraser Health Region and Burnaby General, Royal Columbian, Eagle Ridge and Ridge Meadows hospitals are fighting to keep security staff out of our bargaining unit.

In other hospitals – VGH and UBC in Vancouver, Royal Inland in Kamloops – the employers have agreed to bring the security officers under the collective agreement.

"Health care facilities are dangerous places to work where health care workers face more on-the-job incidents of force and violence than any other occupation in B.C.," said HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt. "Security officers ensure a safe environment for patients, staff and the public, and they deserve the same rights and protections we enjoy."

Simon Fraser health region HEU members are circulating a petition called "Union Security – Part of our Team," which they presented to the Simon Fraser Regional Health Board at their Dec. 2 meeting.



# Labour

NOTEWORTHY NEWS ABOUT ISSUES AFFECTING WORKING PEOPLE HERE AND ABROAD

## Union workers' money talks

The Bank of Nova Scotia pulled its financing out of Oregon Steel, an anti-union company that provoked a bitter CF&I steel mill strike in Pueblo Colorado in October 1997.

More than 1,100 members of the United Steelworkers were thrown out of work as a result of the CF&I action. The U.S. National Labor Relations Board determined that the strike was the result of the company's unfair labour practices, including its refusal to fairly bargain a new contract. Even after the union's offer to return to work in December, 1997, the company continued to break the law by recalling only a handful of the 1,100 members who wanted to go back to work.

The Bank of Nova Scotia was targeted when their financial involvement in Oregon Steel became public in the spring of 1998. Scotia-bank, along with eight other banks, entered into a \$125-million lending agreement with the company.

The Steelworkers put pressure on the Scotia Bank, and workers all over the US and Canada withdrew \$21 million in savings.

Oregon Steel should get the message and negotiate with the union.

Source: CLC Outfront

## Education workers poised for job action across B.C.



UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA CUPE members take up picket signs for the first time in their union locals' 35-year history.

by Mike Old

**M**ore than 30,000 CUPE members are cranking up the pressure for new contracts in B.C.'s education sector.

In K-12, 47 CUPE school district locals representing 18,000 workers are coordinating their bargaining strategy but so far only one local has

settled. CUPE Local 728 signed a tentative agreement Nov. 26 with the Surrey School Board after a three day walkout. School district union members in Cowichan, Burnaby and Delta have all delivered convincing strike mandates to their bargaining committees.

Ironically, only six months ago, CUPE's school bargainers had every reason to believe they'd be negotiating at one table – not unlike HEU's

province-wide bargaining – rather than at 47 separate tables. But the provincial government failed to introduce promised legislation that supported sector-wide bargaining.

"With contracts being negotiated in more than two-thirds of B.C. school districts," said CUPE BC president Barry O'Neill last July, "the government had an obligation – and made a commitment – to introduce some measures to ensure these negotiations would cause minimal disruption to B.C. kids while protecting the collective bargaining process."

There's also 7,000 CUPE instructional and support workers turning up the heat at four B.C. universities to make gains in the areas of pay equity, job security and benefits improvements.

Seven university CUPE locals have held 'Days of Action' through the fall including a rally at the legislature and a successful one day walkout at the University of Victoria.

"Our actions have moved the employers dramatically in our direction," says Doug Sprenger, chair of CUPE's Universities Coordinated Bargaining Committee. "They're looking more seriously at a common settlement that works for all the CUPE locals."

"We're looking for a settlement before Christmas or else there'll be strike action in January," adds Sprenger.

More than 4,500 college support staff represented by CUPE are bargaining for a new contract.

## Herald workers take on global media baron

International press baron Conrad Black may have met his match in the Stampede City where newsroom staff and distribution workers have walked



CANADIAN LITERARY ICON Margaret Atwood and other Canadian authors joined striking Calgary Herald workers on their picket line Nov. 18.

off the job at one of western Canada's most established daily newspapers.

Members of CEP Local 115A and GCIU Local 34M set up picket lines on Nov. 8 after a year of first contract negotiations with Southam Inc.'s Calgary Herald. Southam is controlled by Hollinger Inc., through which Black controls about 600 newspapers worldwide.

Seniority rights are at the centre of the dispute. Herald publisher Dan Gaynor says seniority would "curtail our current ability to hire the best people, build around the best and utilize the talents of many freelancers who make important contributions to our content."

But workers at Black-owned papers say the Herald's refusal to negotiate seniority is motivated by an agenda to break the unions and control editorial content.

"There will be only one viewpoint permitted in the news organizations run by Hollinger and our reporters and editors will be required to be little Conrad Blacks, churning out the hateful, far-right rhetoric he is famous for," says Mike Bocking, President of CEP Local

2000 which represents newspaper workers throughout British Columbia.

Bocking told strike supporters at a Vancouver rally that Hollinger is bringing in managers from across Canada to break the Herald strike. Unlike B.C., Alberta labour law permits employers to use scab workers.

"Conrad Black wants to fight this anti-worker battle strictly in Alberta where he thinks the labour laws give him an advantage," says Bocking. "We are giving our full support to workers at the Calgary Herald and we think that the best way workers in the rest of Canada can show support for the Calgary workers is by boycotting the National Post."

"The Post is in a head-to-head circulation battle with the Globe and Mail," added Bocking. "As recent profit figures show, Hollinger can ill afford to lose money for any length of time."

The plight of the Herald strikers has

attracted support from prominent writers such as Margaret Atwood and from the International Federation of Journalists who have fingered Black for trying to break newspaper unions not only in Calgary but also at the Jerusalem Post where management has cancelled the existing collective agreement.

"These two disputes are half a world apart, but they have common elements – a belligerent management and a cynical campaign to take away our trade union rights," said IFJ head Aidan White. "Journalists around the world will support our colleagues."

Gaynor has told the unions he's too busy to return to the bargaining table.

CEP represents 160 writers, copy editors, photographers, graphic artists, librarians and support staff in the Herald newsroom. The GCIU represents almost 70 distribution staff, press cleaners and technical staff.

### HIT CONRAD BACK!

BOYCOTT THE NATIONAL POST

www.heraldunion.com



# Campaign puts brakes on lab deal

*But health minister will be pressed to bring it to a halt*

by Stephen Howard

HEU's efforts to stop the lab privatization bid of Capital Health Region CEO Tom Closson have slowed the boss' plans for widespread privatization of public lab services in the region, but the union will continue to press health minister Penny Priddy to put a stop to it entirely.

"We've definitely forced Closson to back off a number of elements of a joint venture with multinational MDS Inc.," said HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt. But he said that HEU remained deeply troubled by the package of nine recommendations announced Dec. 1 by senior CHR administrators. "These represent major changes in lab service delivery and are a sign that MDS and Closson are trying to destabilize Priddy's efforts to discuss lab restructuring at a provincial level," he said.

Representatives from HEU met with Victoria-area NDP MLAs to voice their alarm at what amounts to a private lab corporation taking over a region's lab services through the back door and with no consultation. The meetings resulted in four MLAs lending their



HEU MEMBERS Sandy Harper, Arleta Keppler and Marguerite Chalmers (foreground) received support for their campaign to halt a bid to privatize Victoria public labs from MLAs Andrew Petter (at left with assistant Heather Gropp) and Steve Orcherton at a Nov. 19 meeting in Victoria.

support and promising to press Priddy for an immediate moratorium on Closson's bid to privatize lab services in the region.

And, in a show of solidarity from other unions, the Victoria Labour Council approved a Nov. 17 motion opposing the joint venture and urging affiliates to write to Closson and Priddy demanding that CHR and MDS halt any further discussions, which the CHR said would be wrapped up by mid-December.

That's why HEU is urging members to take part in a postcard campaign to lobby Priddy to give clear and concise direction to Closson and MDS to halt their joint venture discussions.

Meanwhile, Royal Jubilee activist

Arleta Keppler made a wide-ranging presentation on lab issues to the Dec. 1 CHR board meeting. Keppler outlined a number of union concerns about the joint venture discussions. These ranged from job cuts, loss of lab revenue for CHR hospitals, implications under NAFTA and global trade agreements, and the fact that the public-private partnership arrangement that Closson and MDS touting under-

mines public Medicare.

She was critical that Closson began negotiating with MDS without the board's authorization and decried the fact that the board "may not have an opportunity to approve the [MDS] arrangement let alone debate its merits."

The union also presented the board with a comprehensive HEU research study of MDS which found similar MDS joint ventures in Ontario and Alberta hadn't achieved promised costs savings, but had generated concerns about quality issues. More importantly, the investigation found these joint venture labs operated behind a veil of secrecy that prevented public scrutiny. And, shockingly, the union found MDS is closely linked to Ralph Klein's Tories, and has pumped more than \$3 million into the controversial Calgary private hospital that's now poised to cash in on Klein's plans to privatize surgical services.

"What makes the Victoria situation galling," says Allnutt, "is that Closson has teamed up with a company that's set to profit by undermining Medicare in Alberta."

**'These represent major changes in lab service delivery'**

## CUPE says yes to solidarity, diversity

Thirty-nine delegates from HEU attended the CUPE Biennial Convention in Montreal from October 18 - 22. Three major issues dominated the debate during the convention: a solidarity levy, the provision of two diversity seats on the National Executive Board and a resolution - to develop long-term strategies for a stable and well-funded national defence/strike fund.

A constitutional amendment to assess a solidarity levy required a 2/3 majority vote, with debate lasting three days. When it passed it was with an amendment to include "strike aversion campaigns, to assist locals without the right to strike to achieve goals at the bargaining table."

The membership voted to add the two diversity seats. HEU supported two of its own delegates, Sisters Donna Dickison and Lorna Partridge, but Sister Marie Clarke Walker and Brother Fred Loft of Ontario were elected.

"Sisters Dickison and Partridge ran a very good campaign," says HEU president Fred Muzin, adding that they certainly increased the profile of diversity within HEU.

On the third important resolution, task force will review bringing the National Defence Fund to a sufficient and sustainable level and bring recommendations to the National Executive Board no later than Oct. 31, 2000.

# Show of strength saved the day for G.F. Strong Rehab Centre

by Margi Blamey

Four months of hard work has paid off for people with disabilities, health care providers and advocacy organizations. The Vancouver/Richmond Health Board voted unanimously November 25 to reject its controversial proposal to close the G.F. Strong Rehabilitation Centre and relocate and consolidate its services with those of the George Pearson Centre at the Pearson site.

Board members accepted recommendations to develop a strategic plan for adult and older adult rehab services over a 12-month period beginning next year. The goal will be to improve services and programs to people with disabilities utilizing an extensive consultation process guided by a broad-based task force of representatives from the disability community.

"We're very pleased with this decision," said HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt. "It demonstrates the board's willingness to listen to those most directly involved in rehabilitation—the people who use the services and the people who provide them. This report outlines steps and

guidelines that if followed will result in improved rehab services for people with disabilities in the region and in B.C."

"It is particular important that the board has recognized the expertise and commitment that exists in the disability community and is now going to utilize that talent to move forward with its

groups and workers, crediting their dedicated efforts as being responsible for the board's change-of-heart.

Mary Williams, vice-president of the BCCPD, thanked the board for responding to people's concerns by slowing down and expanding its planning process in order to truly seek improvements to rehabilitation.

Colleen Fitzpatrick, HEU second vice-president, reminded board members that the North Coast Community Health Council—where she is the labour member—had sent them a letter expressing concerns about the consolidation of the two tertiary rehab facilities. She said that it was good to see a health board respond to the opinions voiced by people in the province.

The board accepted recommendations based on a technical feasibility study, operational cost implications and feedback received from affected groups. Recommendations include provision for the development of a human resources strategy, extensive consultation guided by a broad-based project task force, greater provincial leadership and accountability for rehab and a single funding envelope for rehabilitation services.



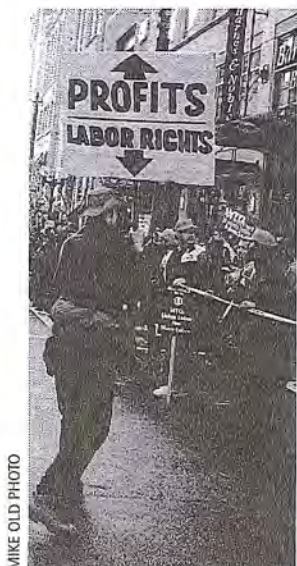
PAUL GAUTIER and Jeannette Anderson of the B.C. Coalition of People with Disabilities tell how the shutdown of G.F. Strong would affect them.



strategic planning," said Margaret Birrell, executive director of the B.C. Coalition of People with Disabilities. "The health board has raised the profile of rehab services in the region and in the province. There's no going back."

Immediately after the vote, V/RHB member and HEU fifth vice-president Sheila Rowswell spoke of the vast knowledge of individuals, advocacy





MIKE OLD PHOTO

DALE FULLER PHOTO



DALE FULLER PHOTO



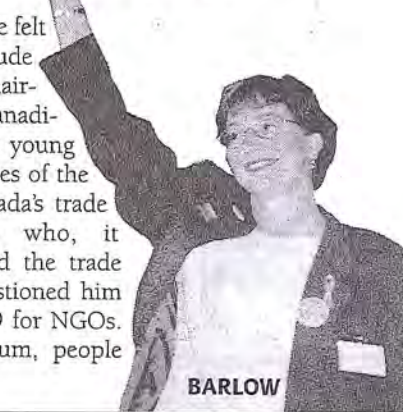
DALE FULLER PHOTO

**HEALTH CARE WORKERS** from B.C. joined other activists from around the world at the historic of protest against the World Trade Organization in Seattle on Nov. 30. Marchers gathered at a memorial stadium to listen to world-renowned defenders of human, labour, student and environmental rights. HEU activists proudly held their banner high — three busloads traveled to Seattle. In total B.C. activists filled 40 buses.

## Message is clear, WTO

While violence at the Nov. 30 protest against the World Trade Organization made the headlines, most of the protest was a peaceful one, with labour organizations from all over the United States and Canada. Marchers arrived from all over the world. Farmers came from France and Japan, *campesinos* came from Chiapas, Dr. Vandana Shiva, renowned for her fight against genetic engineering of plants, came from India. Ordinary people said they will no longer accept having their lives dictated by faceless, nameless,

unelected entities. People have felt powerless, but no more. Maude Barlow, national volunteer chairperson of the Council for Canadians, had high praise for the young people, calling them the heroes of the day. She was critical of Canada's trade minister Pierre Pettigrew who, it appeared, had not even read the trade agreement when Barlow questioned him at a meeting held on Nov. 29 for NGOs. "At the end of this millennium, people have said, 'No!'" she said.



BARLOW

MIKE OLD PHOTO

## And not a Canadian drop to drink

**D**elegates to CUPE's Water Watch Summit in September learned that the Canadian water supply is in peril. If we don't play our cards right, we could end up buying our water from foreign privately-owned companies.

It isn't as if the federal and provincial governments in this country aren't concerned — even alarmed — at this prospect. Where they disagree is in how to

prevent the export of bulk water from this country. It seems that the feds are waking up to the dangers inherent in NAFTA and the Free Trade Agreement. David Anderson, federal minister of the environment, argues that an across-the-board federal legislation banning any bulk water exports from Canada would define water as a tradeable good and therefore susceptible to NAFTA provisions. Most provinces — including B.C. since 1995 — already have legislation banning export of bulk water. Or, like Manitoba, soon will have. But at a Nov. 30 meeting in Alberta, five provincial environment ministers told their federal counterpart that they would not sign on to a national accord which would see provincial governments each ban bulk water exports from within their borders on environmental grounds — which is allowed under NAFTA. And the federal government will ban bulk water exports from boundary waters — like the Great Lakes that straddle the Canada-U.S. border.

This is already being tested, say critics in B.C. A California company, Sun Belt Inc., is suing the both the province and the Canadian government. When the 1995 ban was passed in B.C., the government canceled the company's import license which it had obtained under the previous Socred government.

Although the company never actually imported water, it is suing B.C. for compensation. And it is also challenging the government of Canada under a clause in NAFTA which protects private firms from "government harassment." These suits are being closely watched by NAFTA critics because, if successful, all their predictions of U.S. companies being able to override Canada's sovereignty will be proven correct, and it could lead to privatization of water.

Canada is steward of one-fifth of the planet's fresh water and is one of the few countries where control of water resources remains not-for-profit and under public control. Privatization of these resources would be catastrophic for Canadians.

HEU Provincial Executive member Leo Bibb, the union's delegate to the summit, says, "Human beings need water to survive, and at the summit we learned that a scenario could develop where poor people will not have access to clean water."

The delegates to the summit drew up a covenant aimed at citizens and governments.

It asks people to pledge to not hoard water when others might need it, and to come up with a fair and equitable way to make publicly-controlled water resources available to Canadians and anyone else that might need them. The

covenant also calls on citizens to work towards reducing their water intake by 25 per cent by the year 2010. "People have the inalienable right to water for basic needs. In order to ensure this right for all, water services should remain in the public sector," says the document.

The covenant calls on governments to do their part by: adopting comprehensive and sustainable water strategies to conserve and protect ecosystems, including human life; legislating against the bulk export and removal of water; providing sufficient funding to municipal governments for upgrading and expanding their water and wastewater infrastructure so they are not tempted to turn to the private sector to help them meet their needs.

### Water springs a leak under NAFTA

- **NATIONAL TREATMENT** means U.S. and Mexican companies will have the same claims to our water as we do
- **PROPORTIONALITY** means we will never be able to end the trade in water
- **INVESTOR-STATE SUITS** means foreign companies could sue our government if we ever interfere with their ability to make profits



DALE FULLER PHOTO

**NEW VANCOUVER**  
COPE city councillor Fred Bass was at the anti-WTO demonstration on Nov. 30. He says keep water out of international trade negotiations.



# HEU people

## A great start to 2000

Dec. 31 is much more than just the millennial New Year's Eve for Deanna Adams, it's her retirement date. For Adams, a cook II, the end of the year will mark more than 20 years at St. Bartholomew's Hospital in Lytton. Her retirement plans are classic: spend more time with her family and enjoy herself.



**GAY WITH BCNU's Shea Miles and BCGEU's Renee Poley conference for health board labour reps.**

## Family, friends and fun

The Cumberland Health Centre is short four smiles with the retirements of HEU sisters Betty Fullerton, Lorraine Hurley, Donna Edwards and Shirley Crouch. But their family and friends will be all the richer as the quartet's top-ranking plan is



**HAPPY TO BE FREE Shirley Crouch, Donna Edwards, Betty Fullerton and Lorraine Hurley at group retirement party earlier this year.**

to spend time with those nearest and dearest, followed by gardening, volunteering for community and church activities, and travelling.

## Another worker's voice

HEU coordinator of servicing, Karen Dean, was recently appointed to the B.C. Labour Relations Board for a two-year term as a worker representative. Sister Dean said that she was looking forward to ensuring that the rights workers have gained under B.C.'s Labour Relation Code are upheld. Labour minister Joan Smallwood extended welcomes to Dean and two other first-time worker representatives, noting that their diverse backgrounds in labour relations provide the kind of balance the board needs to be both representative and effective.

## A fond goodbye

HEU members and staff are bidding a fond farewell to Director of Regionalization Gay Burdison, 59, who retires this Christmas after more than 30 years at HEU.

An accountant from Burnaby Hospital, Burdison

was recruited as a staffer in 1977 and played a key role in organizing long-term care workers and helping them win new collective agreements.

Burdison found this rewarding because the union made a real difference to caregivers who worked under "deplorable conditions and had rotten bosses." In particular, she flags the

Windermere strike as milestone moment for HEU in its fight for parity for long-term care workers.

There aren't many roles in the union Burdison didn't play and over the last ten years she's held several director-level positions.

Her retirement plans include south-bound journeys by motorhome, summers on a converted fishing trawler, many rounds of golf and lots more time to spend with husband Jim and her grandkids. Burdison says she'll miss folks at the HEU and not be surprised is she pops up from time to time.

## In memoriam

### Janice MacAdam

The HEU Victoria General local, friends, and family are mourning the death of Sister Janice MacAdam, an admitting clerk at the hospital since 1990. One friend wrote that MacAdam took an interest in the lives of her co-workers and is sadly missed not only in admitting but also by the central staffing office and emergency departments.

## HEU'S CONFIDENTIAL HUMAN RIGHTS HARASSMENT PROCESS



COMPLAINTS INVESTIGATORS can help if you are being harassed at work because of:

- sex (including sexual harassment)
- race
- sexual orientation
- disability
- religion

(see Art. 4.03 of the Facilities Sector Agreement)

**1-800-310-6886**

call for a recorded message

## In memoriam Grace W. Berry

Grace W. Berry, retired HEU Burnaby local member, passed away on Nov. 6 at the age of 79. Grace worked as an LPN and a unit clerk at Burnaby Hospital and will be remembered by her colleagues for her friendly, caring manner. Sister Berry was the local's secretary-treasurer for many years, and during that time, assisted many members with their issues and concerns.

## In memoriam

### Elizabeth Lawrenow

The members of the HEU Castlegar local fondly remember "our sister and friend" Liz Lawrenow, who died July 29, as a wonderful person who was great fun to work with. Lawrenow was a food service worker at the Castlegar and District Hospital/Talarico Place at the time of her death. In memory of her 17 years of service, a magnolia tree was planted for Liz at Talarico Place.

## Boycotts, strikes and lockouts

The following list was compiled from the B.C. Federation of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress.

### Strikes and lockouts

- International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers, Local 219 vs Speedway Motors, Victoria
- International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers, Local 219 vs Woodland Auto Body, Duncan
- International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Local 31 vs Domino's Pizza distribution, Langley
- Industrial, Wood & Allied Workers of Canada, Local 1-3567 vs Raintree Lumber, Surrey
- International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers, Local 1857 vs JB Motorcade, Quesnel
- Industrial, Wood & Allied Workers of Canada, Local 1-3567 vs Solidlock Canada Inc., Langley
- Office & Professional Employees' International Union, Local 378 vs B.C. Automobile Association, Abbotsford, Burnaby, Chilliwack, Nelson, New Westminster, North Vancouver, Richmond, Surrey and West Vancouver
- IATSE Local 348 (B.C. Projectionists) vs Famous Players Theatres and Cineplex Odeon

### Hot edict

- Hyundai-Kerckhoff, B.C. & Yukon Territory

### Boycotts

- California Table Grapes
- Hyundai Products
- Non-Union Postal Outlets
- Philips Electronics
- Products from Indonesia

## EQUITY PHONE LINE

1.800.663.5813, ext. 514  
Lower Mainland 739.1514

### press 1

#### Ethnic Diversity

One union, many colours! Working across our differences! To participate, please call and leave us your name!



### press 2

#### First Nations

First Nations members would like to hear from you! Please call if you would like to help educate our union brothers and sisters on issues that affect First Nations people.



### press 3

#### Lesbians and Gays

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

We'd like to hear from you, if you are on WCB or LTD. Or if you are invisibly or visibly disabled in the workplace, let us know how the union can better meet your needs.



ALL CALLS ARE CONFIDENTIAL

## TALK TO US ... TOLL-FREE!

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

### PROVINCIAL OFFICES:

- Vancouver site  
1-800-663-5813
- Abbotsford site  
1-800-404-2020

### NORTHERN OFFICE:

- Prince George  
1-800-663-6539

### OKANAGAN OFFICE:

- Kelowna  
1-800-219-9699

### VANCOUVER ISLAND OFFICES:

- Victoria site  
1-800-742-8001
- Nanaimo site  
1-800-347-0290
- Courtenay site  
1-800-624-9940
- Kootenay OFFICE:
- Nelson  
1-800-437-9877



## You can

1. save HEU money
2. save trees
3. get your *Guardian* quickly

by notifying us promptly of any change of address.

Just clip this coupon, which has your mailing label on the back, fill in your new address below and mail to the *Guardian*, 2006 West 10th Ave., Vancouver V6J 4P5.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Facility \_\_\_\_\_



# HEU people

## A great start to 2000

Dec. 31 is much more than just the millennial New Year's Eve for Deanna Adams, it's her retirement date. For Adams, a cook II, the end of the year will mark more than 20 years at St. Bartholomew's Hospital in Lytton. Her retirement plans are classic: spend more time with her family and enjoy herself.



**GAY WITH BCNU's Shea Miles and BCGEU's Renee Poley conference for health board labour reps.**

## Family, friends and fun

The Cumberland Health Centre is short four smiles with the retirements of HEU sisters Betty Fullerton, Lorraine Hurley, Donna Edwards and Shirley Crouch. But their family and friends will be all the richer as the quartet's top-ranking plan is



**HAPPY TO BE FREE Shirley Crouch, Donna Edwards, Betty Fullerton and Lorraine Hurley at group retirement party earlier this year.**

to spend time with those nearest and dearest, followed by gardening, volunteering for community and church activities, and travelling.

## Another worker's voice

HEU coordinator of servicing, Karen Dean, was recently appointed to the B.C. Labour Relations Board for a two-year term as a worker representative. Sister Dean said that she was looking forward to ensuring that the rights workers have gained under B.C.'s Labour Relation Code are upheld. Labour minister Joan Smallwood extended welcomes to Dean and two other first-time worker representatives, noting that their diverse backgrounds in labour relations provide the kind of balance the board needs to be both representative and effective.

## A fond goodbye

HEU members and staff are bidding a fond farewell to Director of Regionalization Gay Burdison, 59, who retires this Christmas after more than 30 years at HEU.

An accountant from Burnaby Hospital, Burdison

was recruited as a staffer in 1977 and played a key role in organizing long-term care workers and helping them win new collective agreements.

Burdison found this rewarding because the union made a real difference to caregivers who worked under "deplorable conditions and had rotten bosses." In particular, she flags the

Windermere strike as milestone moment for HEU in its fight for parity for long-term care workers.

There aren't many roles in the union Burdison didn't play and over the last ten years she's held several director-level positions.

Her retirement plans include south-bound journeys by motorhome, summers on a converted fishing trawler, many rounds of golf and lots more time to spend with husband Jim and her grandkids. Burdison says she'll miss folks at the HEU and not be surprised is she pops up from time to time.

## In memoriam Janice MacAdam

The HEU Victoria General local, friends, and family are mourning the death of Sister Janice MacAdam, an admitting clerk at the hospital since 1990. One friend wrote that MacAdam took an interest in the lives of her co-workers and is sadly missed not only in admitting but also by the central staffing office and emergency departments.

## HEU'S CONFIDENTIAL HUMAN RIGHTS HARASSMENT PROCESS

COMPLAINTS INVESTIGATORS can help if you are being harassed at work because of:

- sex (including sexual harassment)
- race
- sexual orientation
- disability
- religion

(see Art. 4.03 of the Facilities Sector Agreement)

**1-800-310-6886**

call for a recorded message

## In memoriam Grace W. Berry

Grace W. Berry, retired HEU Burnaby local member, passed away on Nov. 6 at the age of 79. Grace worked as an LPN and a unit clerk at Burnaby Hospital and will be remembered by her colleagues for her friendly, caring manner. Sister Berry was the local's secretary-treasurer for many years, and during that time, assisted many members with their issues and concerns.

## In memoriam Elizabeth Lawrenow

The members of the HEU Castlegar local fondly remember "our sister and friend" Liz Lawrenow, who died July 29, as a wonderful person who was great fun to work with. Lawrenow was a food service worker at the Castlegar and District Hospital/Talarico Place at the time of her death. In memory of her 17 years of service, a magnolia tree was planted for Liz at Talarico Place.

## Boycotts, strikes and lockouts

The following list was compiled from the B.C. Federation of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress.

### Strikes and lockouts

- International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers, Local 219 vs Speedway Motors, Victoria
- International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers, Local 219 vs Woodland Auto Body, Duncan
- International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Local 31 vs Domino's Pizza distribution, Langley
- Industrial, Wood & Allied Workers of Canada, Local 1-3567 vs Raintree Lumber, Surrey
- International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers, Local 1857 vs JB Motorcade, Quesnel
- Industrial, Wood & Allied Workers of Canada, Local 1-3567 vs Solidlock Canada Inc., Langley
- Office & Professional Employees' International Union, Local 378 vs B.C. Automobile Association, Abbotsford, Burnaby, Chilliwack, Nelson, New Westminster, North Vancouver, Richmond, Surrey and West Vancouver
- IATSE Local 348 (B.C. Projectionists) vs Famous Players Theatres and Cineplex Odeon

### Hot edict

- Hyundai-Kerckhoff, B.C. & Yukon Territory

### Boycotts

- California Table Grapes
- Hyundai Products
- Non-Union Postal Outlets
- Philips Electronics
- Products from Indonesia

## EQUITY PHONE LINE

1.800.663.5813, ext. 514  
Lower Mainland 739.1514

### press 1

#### Ethnic Diversity

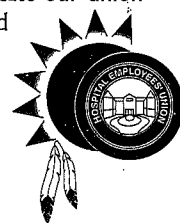
One union, many colours! Working across our differences! To participate, please call and leave us your name!



### press 2

#### First Nations

First Nations members would like to hear from you! Please call if you would like to help educate our union brothers and sisters on issues that affect First Nations people.



### press 3

#### Lesbians and Gays

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

We'd like to hear from you, if you are on WCB or LTD. Or if you are invisibly or visibly disabled in the workplace, let us know how the union can better meet your needs.



**ALL CALLS ARE CONFIDENTIAL**

## TALK TO US ... TOLL-FREE!

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

### PROVINCIAL OFFICES:

- Vancouver site  
1-800-663-5813
- Abbotsford site  
1-800-404-2020

### NORTHERN OFFICE:

- Prince George  
1-800-663-6539

### OKANAGAN OFFICE:

- Kelowna  
1-800-219-9699

### VANCOUVER ISLAND OFFICES:

- Victoria site  
1-800-742-8001
- Nanaimo site  
1-800-347-0290
- Courtenay site  
1-800-624-9940
- Kootenay Office:  
• Nelson  
1-800-437-9877



## You can

1. save HEU money
2. save trees
3. get your *Guardian* quickly

by notifying us promptly of any change of address.

Just clip this coupon, which has your mailing label on the back, fill in your new address below and mail to the *Guardian*, 2006 West 10th Ave., Vancouver V6J 4P5.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Facility \_\_\_\_\_



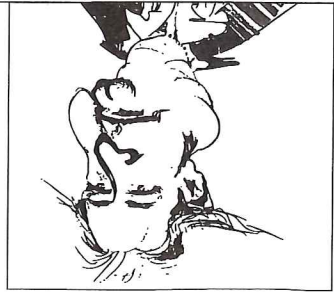


# Guardian

VOL. 17, NO. 5 THE VOICE OF THE HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1999

## Klein walking on thin ice

Alberta's premier says private surgeries don't violate Canada Health Act.



PAGE 5

## Backing Herald strikers

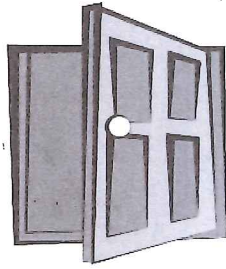
Calgary newspaper workers are fighting a mighty foe, but they're determined to win.



PAGE 11

## Brakes put on lab test

Lab giant tries to slip through the back door in Victoria.



PAGE 12

## Seattle's message

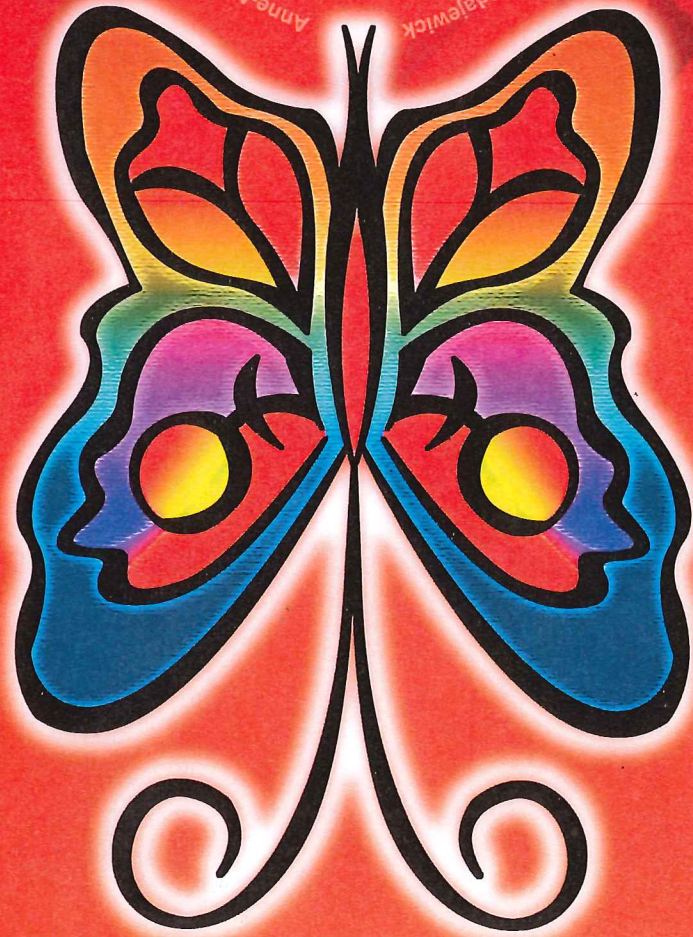
Not only were there a lot of people, there were many groups of people – all saying "No!"



PAGE 13

AGREEMENT NUMBER 1571931

Return address:  
The Guardian  
2006 West 10th Ave.  
Vancouver, B.C.  
V6J 4P5



## Until all women are free to be

December 6, 1989 - 1999 Remember and Work for Change  
CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES