



NewsBulletin

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June 2015

**Nursing
Week**

PAGE 7

**Blanket strike
bans ruled
unconstitutional**

PAGE 8

NDP SWEEP

Alberta election coverage

PAGES 2-5

Premier designate Rachel Notley



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Editor: David Climenhaga
Production: Kelly de Jong

Provincial Office

700-11150 Jasper Avenue NW
Edmonton AB T5K 0C7
p 780-425-1025/1-800-252-9394
f 780-426-2093

Southern Alberta Regional Office

300-1422 Kensington Road NW
Calgary AB T2N 3P9
p 403-237-2377/1-800-661-1802
f 403-263-2908

www.una.ab.ca

nurses@una.ab.ca

[facebook.com/unitednurses](https://www.facebook.com/unitednurses)

twitter.com/unitednurses

Executive Board

President: Heather Smith
H: 780-437-2477 W: 780-425-1025

1st Vice-President: Jane Sustrik
C: 780-915-8367 W: 780-425-1025

2nd Vice-President: Daphne Wallace
C: 780-991-4036 W: 780-425-1025 or
403-237-2377

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C: 403-510-5163 W: 780-425-1025 or
403-237-2377

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Congratulations to Rachel Notley, elected UNA members and nurses who kept health care on agenda



By Heather Smith
President, United Nurses of Alberta

ON May 6, the morning after Alberta's provincial general election, I issued a news release congratulating New Democratic Party Leader Rachel Notley and all the members of her new majority government caucus on their truly stunning election victory the night before.

That morning, rooftops and lawns here in Edmonton were covered in a blanket of snow, leading some to comment that it appeared that you-know-where really had frozen over. As this is written, though, the sun is shining and the trees on the grounds of the Alberta Legislature are showing signs of bright spring green.

What a change from a few days ago – in the weather, and in the political climate!

In UNA's news release, I described how we look forward to working with Rachel and the NDP government to enhance and protect Alberta's public health care system.

I told how encouraged nurses were during the campaign by Rachel's strong commitment to maintaining funding and support for Alberta's public health care system and other public services. I said I am persuaded Albertans' strong support for protecting and enhancing our public health care system was a contributing factor to the election results, and we look forward to ensuring the government has the opportunity to work with front-line nurses to find ways to improve and maintain public health care in Alberta.

I was particularly pleased to congratulate two UNA members – Danielle Larivee in Lesser Slave Lake and Cameron Westhead

in Banff-Cochrane – who now join the government caucus as MLAs, along with at least close to 30 other union members or former union members.

I know members of UNA support different parties, and we are careful to be non-partisan during election campaigns. Still, many nurses supported the NDP this time because of the party's strong commitment to public health care.

Regardless, and to me this is the important part, health care was at the top of the agenda for all political parties in this campaign, and stayed there throughout the election because nurses were prepared to speak up loudly and clearly about the needs of the system. I think every one of you deserves to be congratulated for keeping health care on the front burner. We are grateful there are now members of the government caucus who understand nurses' workplace issues and labour's perspective, and who know what our health care system needs.

We hope now the Notley government will be successful working with Ottawa to find a better formula for national funding of health care and to develop a national Pharmacare program, which would save taxpayers billions of dollars and ensure all Canadians have access to the full medical treatments they need.

That's why UNA will be playing an enthusiastic role in federal election health care awareness campaign that has just been launched by the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions.

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Rachel Notley, with Calgary NDP candidates, shortly before the May 5 election

Election of NDP government, committed to health care, seen as sign of hope

By David Climenhaga
UNA Communications Advisor

WHEN Progressive Conservative leader Jim Prentice called an Alberta provincial election for May 5, 2015, who would have imagined that on May 6 United Nurses of Alberta President Heather Smith would be sending NDP Premier Designate Rachel Notley a letter of congratulations?

But here we all are – it’s a new political world in Alberta, one unexpected by most political pundits and even by the NDP itself when the election campaign began. There’s an NDP majority government in Edmonton. The provincial government’s agenda is different – if not radically so. Two UNA members – Cameron Westhead and Danielle Lavilee – are members of the government caucus. In all, there are nearly 30 union members or retired in the NDP caucus!

Rachel Notley, the new premier of Alberta, once worked for UNA as a Labour Relations Officer.

Not so long ago – a couple of months, let alone longer – all this would have seemed like a pipe dream.

But while none of us were really noticing, big changes were happening behind the scenes in Alberta, and those changes made the election of a majority New Democratic Party government possible on May 5.

It’s a very hopeful moment in this history of the province, said United Nurses of Alberta President Heather Smith.

“We were encouraged during the campaign that Ms. Notley was so strongly committed to maintaining funding and support for Alberta’s public health care system and other public services,” she said the day after the election victory.

Smith encouraged the Notley government to press Ottawa for the establishment of a national Pharmacare plan, and as the president of an organization that represents large numbers of women, she congratulated Notley for running a campaign that saw the election of a record number of women candidates.

In particular, Smith congratulated the two UNA activists who won seats in the Legislature on May 5. Larivee becomes the MLA for Lesser Slave Lake and Westhead MLA for Banff-Cochrane.

“It’s great to know we have members of the government caucus who understand health care, not to mention front-line nurses’ issues,” Smith concluded. 🍷

New direction likely for health care under NDP

IT will be a few weeks before Alberta's new NDP majority government can sort through the transition process, assess the real state of the province's books and begin to set out its legislative priorities.

At least until then, we need to look at the promises made in Premier Rachel Notley's New Democratic Party platform during the month-long campaign to get an understanding of the direction of Alberta's new health care policy.

The key NDP promise, summed up in a phrase, is the government's commitment to "protecting and improving public health care."

From the perspective of RNs and RPNs represented by UNA, the key NDP promise, summed up in a phrase, is the government's commitment to "protecting and improving public health care."

Following through on that will mean sweating the small stuff, cleaning up and repairing Alberta's health care facilities, and some pretty big stuff too, like building a new cancer treatment facility in Calgary.

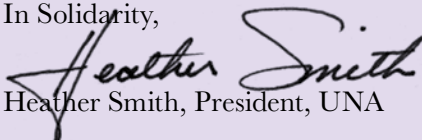
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President's Message

There are many questions: What will happen to our public sector pension plans? Will Rachel bring new hope to our aspirations for an expanded Canada Pension Plan? Will Alberta Health Services' proposed changes to health districts now proceed?

As UNA members look forward to summer, we are attempting to complete contract negotiations for several worksites including Good Samaritan, Extendicare and Capital Care. Copies of the Provincial Agreement are being printed and will be available soon.

In Solidarity,


Heather Smith, President, UNA



It will be hard to do during a time when the high oil prices on which Alberta became dependent under successive Progressive Conservative governments have fallen.

Key NDP promises included:

- Putting the \$1 billion the PCs planned to remove back into front-line health care
- Dropping the PC plan to make individuals pay health care premiums, replacing it with a more progressive income tax
- Creating 2,000 public long-term care beds for seniors, and to open up acute care beds for the patients who need them
- Phasing in a new model for expanded public home care
- Negotiating stronger mandates for Primary Care Networks
- Ending the PCs' costly experiments with privatization and spend the money in public health care
- Implementing a mental health strategy
- Reallocating funding to health and other needs from the PCs' discredited carbon-capture boondoggle

The NDP government has also promised to invest in child care, supplements for low-income families, review employment standards, create a women's ministry, encourage safer and more environmentally friendly oil and gas extraction activities and begin work on a charter for Alberta's cities. 🍷

Two UNA activists join Alberta's government as NDP MLAs

WHEN it comes to dealing with the stresses and problems in Alberta's health care system, Alberta's new NDP government will have the counsel of two Registered Nurses, both experienced UNA activists, in the Legislature.

On May 5, Cameron Westhead was elected MLA for Banff-Cochrane and Danielle Larivee as MLA for Lesser Slave Lake.

Westhead, an operating room nurse at the Foothills Medical Centre in Calgary and a member of Local 115, was until his election the South Central District Representative on UNA's Executive Board. He unseated Progressive Conservative backbencher Ron Casey.

Larivee, a public health nurse in Slave Lake and former president of Local 315, has worked in the region

for 17 years throughout which she has been an active community volunteer for such organizations as Mothers Against Drunk Driving, the Regional Wellness Advisory Committee and the Community Friendship Temporary Mat Program. She defeated veteran PC Pearl Calahasen, the longest serving MLA in the Legislature at dissolution.


Westhead, 37, thanked UNA for giving him the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills he used in his successful election campaign.

"I didn't get here on my own," he said. "It's due to the people who believed in me, and encouraged me along the way to get where I am today. I owe a debt of gratitude to those people and our organization for fostering future leaders and giving them the tools they need to succeed.

I have never been more proud to be a UNA member."

Westhead lives in the town of Bragg Creek, west of Calgary, with his wife Marcella Campbell. He was born in Oshawa, Ont., east of Toronto, and the couple moved to Alberta in 2005.

Larivee, 41, also thanked UNA for preparing her to run for office and work as an MLA. "My time with UNA has certainly been one of the more positive experiences in my life and has helped me to develop skills and knowledge that will be beneficial in my new role," she said.

"I look forward to seeing many of you again and I hope that I can be part of change that will make life better for the RNs and RPNs of this province and our patients, clients and residents." 



Danielle Larivee



Cameron Westhead

Canada's nurses put patients first in federal election campaign

EIGHT provincial nurses' unions including United Nurses of Alberta will register as third-party advertisers in the expected 2015 federal election as Canada's nurses get ready to stand up for the country's health care system throughout the campaign.

The eight unions are all affiliates of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions concerned with the federal government's plan to cut \$36 billion from Canada's public health care system over 10 years.

"The needs of health care services are increasing, especially as our population ages, yet budget cuts make it impossible to answer those needs," said CFNU President Linda Silas at the campaign's launch at the start of National Nursing Week on May 11. "We cannot wait any longer to take a stand and defend our country's health care system."

"The voting decisions Albertans made on May 5 were influenced by their support for protecting and enhancing public health care," said UNA President Heather Smith. "All federal parties need to pay attention to what happened in Alberta and the priority voters everywhere in Canada assign to their health care system."

A situation cannot be allowed to continue in which the need for health care services continues to increase, especially as our population ages, but budget cuts make it impossible to answer those needs, she said. "Alberta alone will lose more than \$4-billion in funding over the decade," she said.

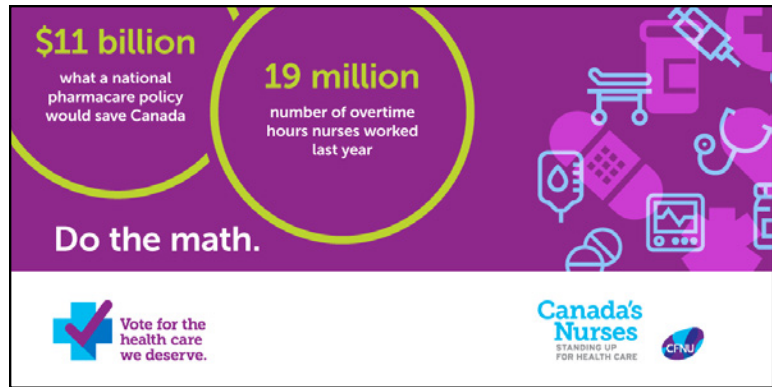
The CFNU says the three areas most important to Canada's health

care system are developing a safe seniors strategy, creating and implementing a national Pharmacare policy, and protecting nurses and other health care workers with a safe staffing strategy.

"Canadians pay more for prescription drugs than nearly every other developed country, our seniors don't have access to the care they need, and nurses are working millions of overtime hours each year, while assaults against health care workers rise," Silas said.

The CFNU hopes that as Canadians celebrate the success of nurses during National Nursing Week, which ran until May 17, they will push the discussion forward on treating front-line health care workers fairly.

Smith said UNA supports the CFNU effort because health care is not just a provincial issue. "We understand that health care funds to make a national system possible come to all provinces via Ottawa, and the federal government needs to make health care a priority so that Canadians everywhere can expect the same quality health care services they deserve."



One of CFNU's social media info-graphics

Silas added that CFNU used National Nursing Week to demand federal leadership on strengthening Canada's health care system and securing the safety of all Canadians because "our nurses work on the front lines of Canada's health care facilities and witness daily the effects of the cuts we're already facing.

"To cut further would be a tragedy," Silas said. "Long wait times and hospital beds filled with patients waiting to be moved elsewhere are only the beginning. That's why we need to make health care a priority this election, before things really spiral out of control."

A full launch of CFNU's federal election strategy will take place at the CFNU biennial convention in Halifax from June 1-5.

UNA represents approximately 30,000 Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses in Alberta. Through its affiliated unions, CFNU represents close to 200,000 nurses and student nurses in hospitals, long-term care facilities, community health care and Canadians' homes. 🍷



Radio ads mark National Nursing Week

MAY not only means the beginning of spring, but National Nursing Week, which celebrates the work nurses do in their role as the backbone of the Canadian health care system

Traditionally, National Nursing Week in Canada falls on the week of Florence Nightingale's birthday, May 12. So this year, it ran from May 11 to 17.

As has become a tradition, United Nurses of Alberta was on the air with a radio advertisement reminding listeners about our province's more than 30,000 Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses of their

issues on radio stations throughout the province.

The 30-second message, voiced by UNA President Health Smith, told listeners in every part of Alberta that nurses are on their side and at their side: "You count on them for expert, professional care. You trust them to advocate for a stronger health care system, to meet the needs of our growing, aging population. ... Let's celebrate the nurses in our lives!"

The ads were in heavy rotation throughout the week on major market radio stations from Airdrie to Whitecourt, including

several stations in the Calgary and Edmonton metropolitan areas.

Florence Nightingale, born in 1820, was a celebrated English writer, social reformer and statistician, credited with being the founder of the modern nursing profession. She came to prominence for her work training nurses during the Crimean War, 1853-1856.

Her birthday is celebrated as International Nursing Day throughout the world. She died at the age of 90 in 1910. 🍷

The photos illustrate Nursing Week 2015 activities by UNA Members



UNA challenge prompts court to rule Labour Code's strike bans unconstitutional

A judge of the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench has made a landmark ruling in a case brought by United Nurses of Alberta that sections of the *Alberta Labour Relations Code* banning strikes by all employees of Alberta Health Services and other "approved hospitals" are unconstitutional.

The March 31 decision by Mr. Justice Dennis Thomas was the culmination of a fight by UNA against the blanket ban on strikes in the *Labour Code* that dates back to the early 1980s, when the restrictions were included in laws affecting most unionized workers in Alberta. Even before the election, the Government of Alberta consented to the ruling.

The blanket ban on strikes by all hospital workers was included in the *Labour Code* in 1983 after strikes by Alberta nurses in 1977, 1980 and 1982.

"UNA opposed the ban on strikes in 1983 and has opposed it since then," said David Harrigan, the union's director of labour relations. "We have always argued that nurses have the right to strike with reasonable measures to guarantee essential services as part of the collective bargaining process."

Since then, UNA members have formed their own committees to ensure essential services were provided in the event of a technically illegal



Supreme Court of Canada Building, Ottawa

strike, he explained. "This decision shows that our people were on the right track the entire time."

In the March 31 judgment, Justice Thomas ruled blanket prohibitions against strikes and lockouts in Section 96 (b) and (c) of the *Alberta Labour Relations Code* violate the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and are not saved by the Charter's provision allowing reasonable limits demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.

As a result, Justice Thomas ruled, the two sections "are therefore without force and effect." He suspended his declaration for one year to allow the government to draft changes to the legislation in accord with the *Charter*.

The decision also took into account actions brought by two other unions, the Health Sciences Association of Alberta and the Alberta Union of

Provincial Employees. UNA filed its action in January 2014 against Bill 45, the *Public Sector Services Continuation Act*, and also argued the sections of the *Code* were in violation of the *Charter*.

UNA argued that both the *Code* and Bill 45 contained provisions violating fundamental freedoms, including freedom of association and expression.

In his ruling, Justice Thomas noted that Bill 45, passed by the Alberta Legislature in December 2013, was repealed by the Prentice PC government in the Legislature on March 25.

A review of Alberta labour law to bring it into accord with the court ruling announced by the PC government will have to be continued by Alberta's new NDP government.

He also cited the Supreme Court of Canada's January 30 decision in *Saskatchewan Federation of Labour v. Saskatchewan*, which saw the country's top court strike down as unconstitutional a Saskatchewan law preventing public-sector employees in that province from striking.

UNA is pleased that the courts have protected the fundamental right of working people in Alberta and Canada to bargain collectively. 🍷

1980 strike gave nurses process for Professional Responsibility Concerns

David Cournoyer
UNA Communications Advisor

THIRTY-FIVE years ago, 6,400 members of United Nurses of Alberta began a legal strike at 79 hospitals across Alberta. UNA attempted to achieve a settlement at the bargaining table through conciliation, but when this failed, union members voted to strike.

On April 21, 1980, the Alberta government ordered nurses back to work. An emergency tribunal was instructed to issue a binding settlement and penalties for failure to comply with the back-to-work order were issued.

Nurses refused to return to work and UNA went to court to challenge the validity of the back-to-work order. Negotiations resumed soon after court proceedings began and a negotiated settlement was reached on April 27.

On April 28, Alberta's nurses returned to work with a negotiated two-year settlement that included a 39.8 per cent wage increase over two years, improved scheduling, the creation of a Professional Responsibility Concerns process and many other contract improvements.

In the 1980 round of hospital negotiations, the Alberta Hospitals Association (AHA) tried to proceed

to compulsory arbitration for the Foothills Hospital, the Alberta Children's Hospital and the Glenrose Hospital, which employed UNA members covered by the Public Services Employee Relations Act (PSERA). At the time, nurses employed at these three hospitals did not have a legal right to strike because their worksites were administered under a different labour relations law than most other health care worksites.

Under the terms of PSERA arbitration provisions, a number of issues were declared to be "non-arbitrable", including a demand for a Professional Responsibility Concerns committee. Had UNA complied with the order to proceed to compulsory arbitration, these three hospitals could not have been awarded a PRC process.

Because UNA reached a negotiated settlement with the AHA in 1980, these three hospitals were included in the agreement to enshrine Professional Responsibility Concerns in the hospital provincial collective agreement. 🍷



UNA members at the Holy Cross Hospital in Calgary joined 6,400 nurses from across Alberta on a legal strike in April 1980.

UNA proceeds with application in Extendicare staffing case, but election offers new hope of resolution

“For several years, some Alberta nursing home operators have been failing to ensure levels of staffing required by law in their facilities.”

– UNA President Heather Smith

SHORTLY before the May 5 provincial election, United Nurses of Alberta went to court in the case of a nursing home in Athabasca whose owner has failed to hire Registered Nurses as required by provincial law and regulations.

Increasingly frustrated by the apparent reluctance of Alberta Health Services and the former Progressive Conservative government to enforce the Nursing Home Act and its required-staffing regulations, UNA

took the unusual step in early March of asking the courts to force the province to enforce the law.

UNA asked the Alberta Court of Queen’s Bench on March 9 to issue a “writ of mandamus” to force the Athabasca nursing home and ensure the presence of a Registered Nurse in a facility legally defined as a nursing home.

“For several years, some Alberta nursing home operators have been failing to ensure levels of staffing required by law in their facilities,” said UNA President Heather Smith at the time of the court application. “When UNA and its members brought these failures to the attention of Alberta Health Services and the government, they appeared reluctant to enforce the law.”

While the challenge remains before the courts, the change in government offers new hope the case can be resolved without a lengthy legal process.

In the case in question, a private, for-profit nursing home run by Extendicare Canada has been refusing since last fall to staff the site with RNs at any time.

In response to repeated queries from UNA and the union’s call for Extendicare to comply with the regulation, which was adopted by the Alberta government in 1985, AHS has told UNA it is looking into the problem and has not arrived at a final position. 🍷

Canadian Cancer Society’s online community connects cancer patients and caregivers

THE Canadian Cancer Society’s CancerConnection.ca on-line community – a free, Canada-wide service – helps cancer patients and their loved ones share their experience and build supportive relationships.

To register and create a profile, simply visit CancerConnection.ca.

In addition, the society’s CancerConnection phone peer support service offers emotional support.

Trained volunteers listen, offer encouragement and share ideas for coping-all from their unique perspective as someone who’s been there.

“Our volunteers can listen, share practical experience about living with cancer and provide emotional support,” says David Kirkham, a former communications officer with the Health Sciences Association of Alberta and a cancer survivor, now living in British Columbia.

He emphasizes that the service is free and available for people with any type of cancer. Connections with volunteers who speak other languages may also be possible.

The aim is to make cancer patients feel more supported, help them to cope and feel less anxious – with a high percentages of clients indicating they experienced these benefits, Kirkham said.

Contact Cancer Connection at 1-800-822-8664 or info@cis.cancer.ca. 🍷

Negotiations continue at smaller worksites

NEGOTIATIONS are ongoing for United Nurses of Alberta members employed at numerous worksites throughout the province. In May 2015, UNA continued bargaining with employers Revera, AgeCare and the Good Samaritan Society.

Bargaining between UNA and Extencicare Canada Inc. on behalf of Registered Nurses at eight of the private-sector company's worksites in Alberta began on April 7 in Edmonton. Extencicare facilities with UNA locals are located in Edmonton, Fort Macleod, Leduc, Mayerthorpe, Red Deer, Viking and Vulcan.

Members of UNA Local 416 employed at Blood Tribe Department

of Health Inc. in Stand Off, near Cardston, voted on April 13, 2015 to ratify a new collective agreement with their employer.

Improvements for Local 416 members covered by the new three-year collective agreement include:

- Provincial parity on salary with equity compensation for April 1, 2017.
- New \$500 lump sum payable every six months
- Employees cannot be unreasonably denied a request for additional orientation
- In the absence of performance evaluations employees are meeting expectations

- Increased vacation accrual during the 4th and 5th years of employment
- Introduction of Christmas Day as a super stat
- Named holiday overtime clarification
- Increased dental maximums to \$3000
- Inclusion of occupational injury or illness to sick leave, STD and LTD
- Employees not required to contribute to CPP may elect to do so receive employer contributions.
- Increased RRSP matching from 2 per cent, 4 per cent and 6 per cent to 8 per cent
- Personal leave
- Part-time employees eligible for two traditional days off with pay
- Inclusion of Gerontology and Certified Diabetes Educator Certificates to education allowances
- New 1-per-cent long service pay adjustment for employees with 20 years of employment with the Blood Tribe



UNA's Extencicare bargaining team, from left to right: (Back row) UNA President Heather Smith; Levine Turner, Local 170; Wendy Luther, Local 189; Brent Smith, UNA Labour Relations Officer; (front row) Tammy Callum, Local 168; Grace Breen, Local 2; Arlene Chapman, UNA Labour Relations Officer.

UNA provides a wide range of services to its members. A key role is negotiating the excellent collective agreements that regulate salaries, benefits, schedules and working conditions of members. UNA also administers its agreements to resolve disputes, improve working conditions and protect nurses' workplace rights. 🍷

Hazel Paish, 1919-2015

a ground-breaker for nursing and UNA



UNITED Nurses of Alberta lost a long-time activist on January 4, with the death of Hazel Paish of Grande Prairie at the age of 94.

Born Hazel Irene Dearing in Empress, Alberta, on May 29, 1919, she grew up on a farm in south-eastern Alberta near the village of Buffalo, the sixth of nine children.

At the age of 10, Hazel decided she would be a nurse, just like the wonderful nurse who cared for her through a severe illness. She never wavered from that plan.

To complete high school, she moved to Armstrong, B.C., where she lived from 1934 to 1937.

In 1939 she came to Edmonton to train to become a nurse at the Edmonton General Hospital.

After graduation in 1942, she was offered a job at the hospital in Empress, later becoming District Nurse at Blueberry Mountain near Spirit River.

Once in Blueberry Mountain, district nursing on horseback began in earnest. This included inoculations, dispensing medications, handing out food for welfare recipients, treating all kinds of injuries and infestations from lice to bedbugs, pulling teeth, suturing and delivering babies. Often, hers was the only help available.

In 1945 Hazel married and started a new life as a farmer's wife and mother. The next 25 years were spent raising 13 children, milking cows, working in the field, feeding threshing crews, growing massive gardens and doing everything necessary to keep the farm going. In the most difficult of times, Hazel sold cream and used the funds to buy material or clothes for the kids.

In 1969, with seven children in tow, Hazel bravely moved off the farm into Grande Prairie to resume her nursing career. She worked nights

so she could be home for the kids during the day.

After a few years, she was nominated as one of the representatives for the area's Alberta Association of Registered Nurses. She was soon voted to be a member of the Council with meetings in Edmonton, gathering information from head office and disseminating among the northern nurses as well as taking concerns from the north to head office. Before long, she was publishing a newsletter.

When United Nurses of Alberta was formed, Hazel was elected a council member of UNA as well as AARN. All the while, she was taking the time to coach softball, getting the kids to cadets and Brownies and upgrading her nursing skills. She became District President and Local President. Union work took her across Canada and to the United States.

In 1980, Hazel moved to High Prairie to nurse there. During this



time she was Local President, District President, Council member and Negotiating Committee member – as well as nursing.

She turned 65 in High Prairie, where the hospital policy did not allow members to work past that age. She decided to fight the policy. While waiting for the case to be decided, she purchased a house in Grande Prairie. After her case was won – setting the precedent for the province – she was required to return to work in High Prairie. She did so, but after two years, she decided to come back to Grande Prairie.

Just the same, Hazel continued to work until she chose to retire at age 75.

Hazel received the AARN Heritage of Service Award in 1990. Two more moves took her to Woking, Alberta, and then finally to Spirit River where she lived independently for the rest of her years.

“Retirement” gave Hazel even more chances to travel. She went on

In 1980, Hazel moved to High Prairie to nurse there. During this time she was Local President, District President, Council member and Negotiating Committee member – as well as nursing.

tours of China, Italy, Turkey, Greece and the Greek Islands. She also loved to pick up her family and head out for a day or a week to see the sights locally or even a spontaneous trip across the country to Manitoulin Island where her parents grew up. Her favourite time to travel was the spring when the new leaves were coming out.

Hazel deeply loved her family, caring for people, current events, politics, and gardening – both for food and for beauty. She constantly challenged herself to stay sharp both physically with walking and mentally with jigsaw puzzles, crossword puzzles and Sudoku.

Volunteering with the District Museum, the Women’s Auxiliary and the Happy Hour brought her much pleasure. She was always giving tours, working at the casino or selling tickets for the latest raffle. She was a caregiver – whether it was a family member who needed her support or friends she wanted to help. She would hop in her car and travel wherever she was needed. She was never still. She was in the process of writing her memoirs, which her

family promised to see through to completion.

Hazel is survived by her sister Elma of Calgary, by her children John (Marion) of Spirit River, Jim (Debbie) of Rycroft, Mike (Val) of Edmonton, Ron of Edmonton, Cliff (Joan) of Bonnyville, Vic (Trish) of Spirit River, Laura (Richard) Driver of Sexsmith, Irene (Dan) Keating of Lloydminster, Joseph of Edmonton, Robert of Grande Prairie, Ken (Laureen) of Beaumont, and Alice Coker of High Prairie, 19 grandchildren, 28 great grandchildren, and 3 great-great grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her parents, William and Lauretta Dearing, sisters Lila and Daisy, brothers Orval, Vernon, Roy, Clifford, and Bob, and by two of her children, a baby boy and her son Elgin.

In keeping with her love of learning and her dedication to medicine, Hazel made arrangements for her body to be part of the Anatomical Gifts Program at the University of Alberta.

A memorial service was held March 21 at the Blueberry Hall near Spirit River. 🍷

When United Nurses of Alberta was formed, Hazel was elected a council member of UNA.





Dream no little dream, AFL convention delegates told

MORE than 90 members of United Nurses of Alberta participated in the 2015 Alberta Federation of Labour “Dream No Little Dream” convention held from April 16 to 19 at the Calgary Convention Centre. Four hundred delegates, representing unions from across the workforce, debated policy resolutions focused on important issues ranging from workplace safety to child care.

The AFL welcomed guests and speakers from around the world, speaking on China’s fledgling labour movement, Norway’s oil industry, and the movement of labour through guest worker programs – and bringing the subjects home to how they impact Albertans.

“This is a reflection of how important global solidarity is. Workers across the world need to be able to rely on each other,” Alberta Federation of Labour President Gil McGowan said. “Alberta’s workers are affected by these global forces. And when our unions in Alberta work together, we can affect global change.”

Delegates also heard from guest speakers including former Canadian Ambassador to the United Nations

Stephen Lewis, childcare advocate Martha Friendly, former director of the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate Rolf Wiborg, and Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions President Linda Silas.

Wiborg, former Director of the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate and internationally recognized expert on managing oil wealth, urged delegates to “think like owners” when it comes to Alberta’s oil and gas wealth.

“I’m sorry, but you’re getting ripped off,” he said of his experiences in Norway.

“We stood up to the oil companies. We were tough, but fair, because we have the interests of Norwegians in mind. Norwegians own the resources, after all,” Wiborg said.

“We stood up to them, and you know what? They didn’t run away. In fact, because Norway is a fair and stable country with well-funded social programs, the oil companies were beating down our door for a chance to work with us,” Wiborg said. 🇳🇴

Scenes from the AFL 2015 Biennial Convention





Professional Associations **UPDATE** from CARNA

CARNA asks: What makes a Registered Nurse unique?

WHAT makes Registered Nurses unique among the broadening range of health-care providers? So asked the College and Association of Registered Nurses in a recent questionnaire. “We thought you, the RN, would be the best person to ask to define and distinguished the RN practice,” CARNA says.

As a result, a new project hit the ground running, aptly named Uniquely RN, with two main objectives:

1. To describe the RN practice in terms that are clear and easy for members and stakeholders to illustrate and explain
2. To establish strategies to educate and engage members and stakeholders

Between November 2014 and January 2015, CARNA held 13 different discussions with 123 RN members and engaged more than 2,500 RN members through ThoughtExchange interactive discussions collecting member insights, perspectives and ideas on the above objectives.

The regulatory college found “the RN knowledge base is seen to be the primary distinguishing quality and the foundation for the unique roles/abilities identified by members, including: complex critical thinking, co-ordination of care, leadership of multi-disciplinary teams, comprehensive/big picture assessment and holistic care.”

There was broad agreement that the role and demonstrated value of the RN is not understood and needs to be clearly articulated for health-care providers and leaders, government, patients and the public, CARNA said. “Members felt that CARNA should lead this effort.”

Detailed information including next steps can be found in the Uniquely RN Executive Summary, the ThoughtExchange Report and the ThoughtExchange Interactive Report on the CARNA website at nurses.ab.ca. 🇨🇦



Stephen Lewis

CFNU President Linda Silas



Mow, mow, mow your lawn ... with the environment in mind

SPRING has sprung – if with typical Canadian reluctance – and the minds of many UNA members will soon turn to keeping their lawns green, in every sense of the word.

It's worth thinking, then, that there may be more environmentally sustainable ways to maintain a lawn.

Mow only as often as you need to – to keep most lawns in good shape, it helps anyway to let the grass grow just a little longer, say, nine centimetres instead of six centimetres. This will crowd out some weeds and help the grass retain water, as well as requiring less non-renewable resources.

Use compost or natural fertilizers instead of chemical fertilizer – one good source of natural nutrients for your lawn is grass clippings, either left on the lawn or composted for use in the garden.

Introduce earthworms – which naturally water and air to penetrate the soil and recycle thatch back into nutrients the grass can use.

Consider using a push mower – especially if you have a small lawn, an old-fashioned hand-powered motor are easy to use, cheap to maintain, don't draw on the power supply and contribute no pollution to the atmosphere.

Simple! These tips come from the EarthShare website, www.earthshare.org. 🍷

Green corner, on environmentally friendly topics likely to be of interest to UNA members, is brought to you by the Advocacy and Engagement Committee.

Calgary UNA members' spouses and dependents eligible for CDLC scholarships

DEPENDENTS and spouses of UNA members who work in the Calgary area may be eligible to apply for two \$1,500 scholarships offered by the Calgary and District Labour Council.

The S'ean Gillen Memorial Scholarships are available to dependents under 26 years of age and spouses of members of unions affiliated with the CDLC. Applicants' parents must be members in good standing of their union, and union locals must have been affiliated with CDLC for at least one year.

Those locals will fall roughly inside the geographic area extending from the Saskatchewan border and the east to the B.C. border on the west, and the town of High River in the south to the city of Airdrie in the north.

Applicants are required to submit a 2,500-word essay on one of the following three topics:

- What unions mean to me
- The history of the labour movement in Alberta
- The future of the labour movement in Alberta.

The scholarships are available for education or training from a recognized educational institution in Alberta.

For more information on the scholarships, including more information on eligible institutions, email admin@thecdcl.ca or visit www.thecdcl.ca/. An application form is available on the website.

The deadline for applications is June 1, 2015. 🍷

Health Care Matters – Canada’s Nurses say ‘vote for the health care we deserve’

By Anil Naidoo
Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions

NURSES across the country will be speaking up in the coming federal election campaign to ensure the health and well-being of Canadians are at the forefront of government priorities. As we approach an expected October federal election, it is important that health care is “on the ballot.” The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions is committed to working strongly with provincial nurses unions and our front-line members leading to this election.

Currently, nurses are facing funding cuts, staffing cuts, unhealthy work environments and extreme demands for overtime hours. This inadequate approach threatens the ability of nurses to deliver quality care to our patients. Tackling this and developing a plan for nurses that creates safe staffing standards across the country will require national leadership. All political parties must clearly communicate their plans for a sustainable and strong public health care system. We must demand that every candidate speak out on their commitment to our public health care system.

In 2012, public sector nurses in Canada worked over 21.5 million hours in overtime. This amount is the equivalent of 12,000 full-time jobs and cost Canadian taxpayers nearly \$1 billion per year. In spite of this, hospitals across the country continue to cut nursing positions. While these cuts are inherently tied to provincial budgets, it is decisions made at the federal level that have created this problem.

The federal government will cut \$36 billion in health-care funding over 10 years, starting in 2017. The federal government also neglected to uphold its duty and meet with the provinces, instead opting to allow the Health Accord to expire. Future transfers will be tied to economic growth, a formula that leaves poorer provinces with less and does not take into account factors like an aging population or increased drug costs. This is a clear failure of the federal government in their obligations to Canadians.

These decisions show a complete disregard for Canada’s universal, publicly funded health care system. The proposed changes will lead to fewer jobs and more dangerous workplaces, making it difficult for nurses to do their jobs and putting patients at risk.

As the front-line workers of the health care system, Canada’s Nurses must stand up and speak out for health care this election. Demand support for a publicly financed health care system from your local federal candidates and help secure the health of Canada’s future.

Vote for the health care we deserve in this federal election. 🇨🇦



CANADIAN
FEDERATION
OF NURSES
UNIONS

WHEN KNOWLEDGE MEETS KNOW-HOW

Local 95 member helps out at orphanage in Swaziland with boost from UNA



THANKS in part to a humanitarian grant from United Nurses of Alberta, a neo-natal intensive care nurse from the Calgary Children's Hospital was able to spend two weeks in Swaziland in March working in an orphanage where most children have not only lost their parents to AIDS but have the disease themselves.

Local 95 member Neilla Amero traveled with 14 other volunteers from Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver to the tiny southeast African state in mid-March to volunteer at the orphanage in the mining community of Bulembu.

The economy of Bulembu was devastated when the mining company that operated the community went into liquidation in 2001, leaving the orphanage with about 300 children in its care, Amero wrote in a letter thanking UNA for the financial support.

Since 2001, a number of smaller companies have adopted the 76-year-old town with the goal of helping it to become self-sufficient by 2020. "They now have a dairy, a honey producing business, a spring water bottling company and a timber mill, all of which produce goods that are sold throughout South Africa," she said. "The proceeds help support the children."

Amero made a presentation to staff members at Alberta Children's Hospital last Christmas and received donations that were used to add a roof to the orphanage's dining hall, buy articles for the special needs and music teachers that included music, instruments, music software, music CDs, games and exercise equipment for the Bulembu orphanage, Amero wrote.

"I was amazed at these young lives. Some had obvious burns, mental and physical fears, but were in such a loving environment to help them recover from some terrible past experiences."

—Neilla Amero



Below: Neilla Amera with Local 115 Member Sarah Rivera and Jerome Rivera, a Registered Respiratory Therapist at Foothills Hospital.



Money was also used to assist in the transportation and care of a young lady who needed surgery to have a leg amputated and to have a prosthetic limb fitted by a physician in the United States.

Amero was assigned to work in the toddler home, where she helped care for 10 boys of three to four years of age.

“I helped two ‘aunties’ clean the house daily, did the laundry and hung it to dry, helped with the preparation and serving of their lunches, taking of their temperatures and giving them their needed medications, and most of all provided cuddles, loving , stories and general care,” she wrote. “I was amazed at these young lives. Some had obvious burns, mental and physical fears, but

were in such a loving environment to help them recover from some terrible past experiences.

Amero said she, another nurse and a Registered Respiratory Therapist helped in the town’s clinic, which is run by a single South African nurse, who works day and night. “He is responsible for the whole town, timber mill staff and the children.”

“We helped in the afternoons trying to make a dent in the cleanliness and organization of the clinic,” Amero recalled. “We did our best. We cleaned and cleaned, putting together cables for the ECG and cardiac monitors with the correct machines and replacing dirty supplies with clean equipment. ...We made up sterile trays and attempted to autoclave them the best we could.

The clinic did look a lot better when we left, but my heart was broken knowing how much more we could have done with more time.”

Amero commented that “we here in Canada take so much for granted as we work in our beautiful units, I was reminded of how much the ward aides, housekeeping and service workers do for us as nurses in the running of our units every day. Neilla said she’d left a piece of her heart in Bulembu.

The Vancouver-based Bulembu Foundation works as the principal fund-raising body for Bulembu International, which organized the trip by Canadian medical professionals. More information can be found at bulembu.org. 🍷

Town of Bulembu



Bulembu Clinic after organizing



Below: Neilla Amera in the pharmacy with Bulembu Nurse – Wiseman and Sarah Rivera.





By Dewey Funk
Occupational Health & Safety Advisor

OH&S efforts in UNA this year focused on employee security, especially in remote locations

APRIL 28 was marked throughout the world as the International Day of Mourning for workers killed or injured on the job.

April 28 each year is a day when we reflect on those workers who have lost their lives, as well as those who have lost their jobs due to physical injury, the walking wounded, and those who have been injured psychologically.

This year in United Nurses of Alberta, there is a focus on the security services that our employers are required to provide.

As part of this effort, a survey on security was done by UNA for Alberta Health Services locals, receiving an 80-per-cent response rate.

Questions asked included how members report incidents of violence, if they have been trained how to report, and where they report. It is clear from this that there has been a lack of training on policies and procedures.

Questions were asked about whom to call when health care staff need help. Some sites have been informed by the RCMP that the force will not act as a security service for AHS.

What are typical response times? Sometimes it can take more than an hour to get help.

What do you do when you are waiting for the police to arrive? Responses included such suggestions as hide, pray, cope as best you can, protect other patients.

Below is the legislation from the *OH&S Code*:

Part 27 Violence

Hazard Assessment

389 Workplace violence is considered a hazard for the purposes of Part 2.

Policy and procedures

390 An employer must develop a policy and procedures respecting potential workplace violence.

Instruction of workers

391 An employer must ensure that workers are instructed in

- (a) how to recognize workplace violence,*
- (b) the policy, procedures and workplace arrangements that effectively minimize or eliminate workplace violence,*
- (c) the appropriate response to workplace violence, including how to obtain assistance, and*
- (d) procedures for reporting, investigating and documenting incidents of workplace violence.*

Response to incidents

392 (1) Sections 18(3) to (6) and 19 of the Act apply to an incident of workplace violence.

392 (2) An employer must ensure that a worker is advised to consult a health professional of the worker's choice for treatment or referral if the worker

- (a) reports and injury or adverse symptom resulting from workplace violence, or*
- (b) is exposed to workplace violence.*



UNA needs front-line nurses who have been subjected to incidents of violence to report those incidents.

I understand that nurses are very busy in a workplace that has ever-increasing demands, and that having another form to fill out is the last thing you need to do. This is the culture that has been allowed to develop.

Nevertheless, when nurses do not report incidents of violence, employer representatives can legitimately say they do not have a record of such incidents. This means no one is reporting.

The employer then has the right to say if there is no one reporting everyone must be satisfied with the status quo. A different term for employers placing roadblocks in the way of reporting is called gate keeping.

Employers are obligated by legislation to provide the education you as nurses require.

So UNA needs you to start reporting incidents of violence against health care workers to your Occupational Health and Safety Committees so that records of these incidents can start be tracked and employers can be encouraged to provide safe workplaces.

Only when nurses have safe workplaces can you feel safe – thereby giving you the ability to advocate and provide safe patient care. 🍷

**Always take a moment and ask yourself:
Am I safe at work today?**



UNA and AHS team up to develop response to traumatic psychological injuries

By Dewey Funk
Occupational Health & Safety Advisor

UNITED Nurses of Alberta is now working with Alberta Health Services to determine what resources are available to members who sustain traumatic psychological injuries in the course of their work and how they access the resources they need.

This effort grew out of the work done and the questions asked by UNA Occupational Health and Safety Representatives on the Joint Workplace Health and Safety Committee in the case of a front-line nurse who sustained such injuries at work.

Noting that UNA's Provincial Collective Agreement allows for an escalation process to move concerns forward to the CEO of AHS or the CEO's designate, the injured nurse's local decided to use the process.

AHS President and CEO Vickie Kaminski appointed Brenda Huband, vice-president and chief health operations officer for Central and Southern Alberta as her designate.

Through this process, it was agreed a committee would be formed with UNA representation to “discuss, review, inform and potentially revise/ update the Alberta Health Services psychological safety action plan and workplace violence program in partnership with UNA.”

This is a proactive approach illustrates the recognition by both parties that victims of such injuries belong to both AHS and UNA.

The committee intends to have a provincial impact on the process of dealing with traumatic psychological injuries among AHS employees. Committee members recognize that research shows when early intervention is easily accessible by a victim of a traumatic event, the victim will recuperate sooner.

AHS is a signatory to the Mental Health Commission of Canada's National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. 🍷

Members who left work after 2013 may be eligible for lump sums and retro

UNITED Nurses of Alberta members whose employment has ended for any reason before the new Provincial Collective Agreement was signed are still eligible to receive retroactively any increases they would have been eligible for in the agreement if they'd remained on the job.

Under Article 1.03 of the new contract, they must make a written application to the employer by June 15, 2015.

The latest Provincial Agreement – which runs from April 1, 2013, to March 31, 2017 – was signed on March 17, 2015. This means any Alberta Health Services, Covenant Health, Lamont Health Care or Bethany (Camrose) employee who worked in 2013 and has since left their employment is entitled to the 2013 lump-sum payment.

If they also worked in 2014, they will in addition be eligible for retroactive pay.

Eligible former AHS employees should send their letters informing the employer that they were eligible employees during 2013 and/or 2014 and are eligible to receive the lump-sum payment and retroactive pay to the following AHS contacts, for whom an email address is also provided. Please also send a copy to UNA.

- Doris Stewart – Corporate Zone –
Doris.Stewart@albertahealthservices.ca
- Rhonda Fletcher – South Zone –
Rhonda.Fletcher@albertahealthservices.ca

- Deb Jacobsen – Calgary Zone and Cancer South –
Deb.Jacobsen@albertahealthservices.ca
- Helen Olfert – Central Zone –
Helen.Olfert@albertahealthservices.ca
- Reagan McKay – Edmonton Zone and Cancer North –
Reagan.McKay@albertahealthservices.ca
- Courtney Mury/Adele Morrison – North Zone –
Courtney.Mury@albertahealthservices.ca
- Jim Burger – Lamont Health Centre –
Jim.burger@albertahealthservices.ca

Former employees of Covenant Health should send in writing their request for retro pay to any Covenant Health Human Resources Office. At the Grey Nuns' site, the contact person for retired/terminated members to contact about retro payments is Rebecca Carchidi – Rebecca.carchidi@covenanthealth.ca.

Former employees of Bethany Care (Camrose) should send their letters to their respective CEOs.

UNA members who are aware of former employees who may qualify for these payments are encouraged to contact both UNA, 1-800-252-9394, with the name and their former co-worker with the information if possible. ♥

Any Alberta Health Services, Covenant Health, Lamont Health Care or Bethany (Camrose) employee who worked in 2013 and has since left their employment is entitled to the 2013 lump-sum payment.



Know your Rights

Report from Director of Labour Relations **David Harrigan**



Court rulings ensure big changes to labour relations are coming for public-sector unions

RECENT legal decisions by the country's top courts, including the Supreme Court of Canada, are certain to have a dramatic effect on what Alberta's labour laws look like in near future, as well as on the way unions like United Nurses of Alberta represent their members.

This would have been true whether or not the government had changed on May 5.

But the election of an NDP government in Alberta does mean it may be easier for all parties involved – employees, unions, the government and employers – to work collaboratively to make the changes to labour legislation that are required by the court decisions.

UNA members have been fighting for changes like those the Supreme Court has mandated since 1984, when premier Peter Lougheed's Conservative government passed a blanket ban on strikes in public health care. What's different now is that for the first time since that year, we are dealing with a government that is not by its nature anti-union.

Still, the labor-relations landscape throughout Canada, regardless of what kind of government is in power in each province, will have to change dramatically.

The courts have significantly restricted the ability of governments to impose blanket bans on strikes, or to use "essential services" laws to do the same thing.

Even before the election, Alberta's previous Conservative government had agreed the court rulings meant members of health care unions have a constitutionally protected right to strike required it to rewrite the province's labour laws.


UNA members have been fighting for changes like those the Supreme Court has mandated since 1984, when premier Peter Lougheed's Conservative government passed a blanket ban on strikes in public health care.

UNA has suggested that Alberta Health Services work with health care unions to draft joint court-compliant proposals to protect essential services during labour disputes. We are waiting for a response. With an NDP majority government in the Legislature there is

more hope all parties can collaborate to find a mutually satisfactory approach to present to the government.

UNA believes aspects of its traditional approach to guaranteeing essential services during labour disputes will be helpful to the government in drafting new legislation that protects the public and patients at the same time as it respects the rights of employees.

UNA intends to propose a framework for consideration by all parties on new *Charter*-compliant essential services legislation. We will draft a series of specific recommendations to the *Alberta Labour Relations Code* that would safeguard the rights of working people while ensuring deliver of essential services at all times.

While it is not yet clear what the new labour relations regime in Alberta will look like when the dust has settled, it is guaranteed it will be dramatically different. 

It's time for
Wear White Wednesdays
to be replaced by
**WEAR WHITE
EVERY DAY!**

UNA members' "Wear White Wednesdays" have been a huge success showing patients, clients, residents, their families and the public what professional nurses mean to their health and wellbeing.

Registered Nurses across Canada are now wearing white so the public will understand the implications for them and their families when they don't see a white uniform.



UNA
United Nurses of Alberta