



# The Pulse

Newsletter of the CUPE Health Care Council

August 2006

## Hubick receives activist award

**“There is not much that makes me speechless, but I think you’ve done it,” Debbie Hubick told CUPE convention delegates as she received the 2006 CUPE Saskatchewan Activist Award and given a standing ovation.**

Debbie, a laboratory service worker in Weyburn and member of CUPE Local 5999, was one of two CUPE members to receive the award at this year’s CUPE Saskatchewan Convention. Karen Carle, a former local union president and education activist in Prince Albert, was the other recipient.

Debbie has been active in CUPE for 25 years, serving as president of three health care locals, each one successively larger due to health reform. She also served on many union committees including the provincial bargaining committee for two rounds. She is a member facilitator for CUPE and the Canadian Labour Congress and is on the executive of the Weyburn and District Labour Council.

“Debbie has always been a ‘leader’ you could count on,” says CUPE Saskatchewan President Tom Graham. “She’s hardworking, active in her community and in touch with the membership. She also was instrumental in CUPE’s success

during the representation votes,” he says.

“She has been a great role model and mentor for me,” says Vicky O’Dell, who succeeded

Debbie as local union president in 2004. “I’m really pleased she received the award. She really deserves the recognition.”

Debbie got involved in CUPE shortly after moving to Weyburn in 1977 and getting a job in the hospital’s dietary department. “I started going to union meetings and the rest is history,” she laughs.

Debbie attributes her activism to her upbringing. “I was taught that ‘life is participatory.’ If you were a member of a group, you needed to get involved.”

Former CUPE staff representative Jim Holmes was instrumental in keeping her involved in those early years while CUPE activists such as



**Debbie with CUPE National President Paul Moist**

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**“I was taught that life is participatory. If you were a member of a group, you needed to get involved.”**

**Debbie Hubick**

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Pearl Blommaert and Tom Graham were a source of inspiration.

“I’m really proud to be given this honour,” Debbie told convention delegates. “It means a lot to be recognized in this way by your union sisters and brothers.”



# Message from the President

## Gordon Campbell

I hope that the summer months have been safe, happy and that you had some time to be able to relax and enjoy some time with members of your family

and significant others in your life.

Here are some highlights of the council's work in recent months:

### **CUPE Health Care Council 2006 Convention**

In excess of 160 delegates attended the CUPE Health Care Council Annual conference held on May 17 and 18 in Yorkton. The first day of the convention delegates received presentations from Phil Miller (CUPE Sask) on contracting out, privatization and public private partnerships in health care field, and a great presentation by Julie White (CEP) about the need for a National Pharmacare program - one that would cover all Canadians from coast to coast.

Delegates participated in workshops after each presentation discussing what their Local and Council could do to make members in the workplace aware of these issues and how best to implement a strategy for both.

The second day involved amendments to the Council Bylaws and elections for the Council Executive for the next year.

Thanks to CUPE Local 4980 for hosting this year's convention. The next Annual Conference, the 10th annual, will be held in Regina on May 16 and 17, 2007 and will be hosted by CUPE Local 3967.

### **Collective bargaining update:**

After 16 months and countless face-to-face

bargaining sessions with SAHO, the CUPE Health Care Council bargaining committee achieved a new agreement with SAHO on January 7. Members voted 97% in support of ratifying the agreement. To see the entire agreement, go to our website at: [www.cupesaskhcc.ca](http://www.cupesaskhcc.ca)

CUPE, SEIU and SGEU embarked on a number of joint efforts in this round of bargaining and dealt with monetary issues and the Extended Health and Dental programs at a common table with SAHO.

The solidarity of the three unions and their membership enabled the coalition to achieve good collective agreements for all 25,000 health care providers represented by these three unions.

Unlike previous bargaining rounds, we achieved an agreement without third party intervention or job action.

At this time, the Council and our health locals are in the process of implementing the new language in the agreement.

### **Joint Job Evaluation**

The CUPE Health Care membership along with the other two provider unions awaits the finalization of the Joint Job Evaluation program and the implementation of the maintenance process to ensure the plan remains viable in the future.

The reconsideration process is now completed and new job descriptions (with the new rates of pay attached and effective October 2, 2005) were forwarded to the employers and unions for roll out to the membership.

A number of classifications were forwarded to a third party dispute tribunal for adjudication and resolution.

Those hearings were held from March to June of this year. We have heard the results of the "Cook Family," but await the outcomes of the

remaining classifications.

It is important to recognize the work of the subcommittees of all classifications that were heard at the tribunal but we certainly need to say a big "Thank You!" to Sister Jacquie Griffiths who has worked very hard since the fall of 2005 on this issue.

Members that may not have been placed correctly into a classification during the reconsideration process, or as a result of bundling issues, were placed into a number of newly created jobs.

The newly created jobs will be reviewed by the Maintenance Committee.

With the reconsideration process now complete, the JJE process moves into a new stage, the Maintenance Process; reviewing jobs submitted by the membership(s) and the employers along with their annual review of the classifications.

Sister Rhonda Oneschuk and Brother Stan Adcock have been appointed as the CUPE members on the Maintenance Committee.

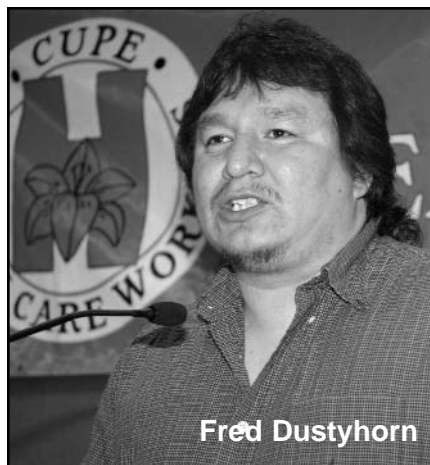
I want to acknowledge and thank Sisters Cherise Huculak, Heather Cugnut, Rhonda Oneschuk and Brothers Ed Engel, Stan Adcock and Jim Carr for their hard work over the last few years as members of the Steering Committee and Reconsideration Committee.

### **Representative workforce training**

Brother Fred Dustyhorn has been hired as the Aboriginal Education Co-ordinator. He has been working very hard to provide CUPE members with the training they require.

Fred's understanding and expertise of Aboriginal issues have benefited our membership

greatly in the time he has been with the Council. The Council has secured funding to continue this



Fred Dustyhorn

position until March 31, 2007.

In addition, a number of CUPE members in the province have been trained to assist in the delivery of the four hour training module, but a number of barriers have been established by the employer, which impede the ability of our members to utilize their skills. We will work hard to alleviate those barriers and hopefully in the near future we will see our members trained and providing the training jointly.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our members, your Health Council Executive members and staff reps. They have made sure that your concerns have come to the Council's attention and worked hard to resolve these issues.

## **Agreement Highlights**

### **Article 6.03 Work of the Bargaining Unit**

Ensures that persons outside the bargaining unit will not be doing our member's work except in emergent situations.

### **Article 17.01 Harassment**

The addition of bullying to the examples of harassment provides further protection for our members against workplace harassment.

### **Article 15.09 Workload**

Failing resolution of a workload concern, a mandatory mediation process will be set up and cost shared between the Employer and the Local.

### **Article 27.15 Shift Differential**

Effective April 1, 2006 shift differential will be increased to \$1.15/hour.

### **Article 27.16 Weekend Premium**

Effective April 1, 2006 weekend premium will be increased to \$.60/hour.

### **Wage increase**

A general wage increase of 2% in each of the four years, effective April 1; 2004, 2005, 2007 and 2007. This wage increase is in addition to any equity adjustments as a result of JJE and is in addition to any market supplements for classifications that receive them.

# Employment strategy looks at education

The Provincial Employment Strategy Committee's (PESC) mandate has changed as a result of new language in the current contract.

The purpose of the PESC is to develop and implement educational strategies for training, retraining and re-employment of employees to meet current and future human resource needs and to provide employment security. The committee is made up of equal numbers of CUPE members and employer representatives and is funded by the EI rebate.

The committee has two responsibilities:

The first responsibility is the Representative Workforce language contained in Article 23.04 titled: Aboriginal Workforce Training.

In addition to the language the committee has agreed to fund the employer's Train the Trainer Initiatives and the CUPE Health Care Council's Aboriginal Education Co-ordinator. The committee's financial support for these two undertakings will ensure the CUPE membership continues to receive Aboriginal Awareness Training.

The second responsibility of the committee is to provide ongoing education funding for our members. We are also embarking on a new area of work: providing literacy training to members who want to improve their skills. With the assistance and the expertise of Sylvia Sioufi from CUPE National the committee spent time reviewing literacy initiatives throughout the country. With Sylvia's help, we have applied for a government grant that may allow us to do needs assessment of literacy skills within our membership. Once the needs have been determined we will again call upon Sylvia's excellent advice on how to meet those needs.

For further information, please visit the Provincial Employer Security Committee website at: [www.pescsahocupe.com](http://www.pescsahocupe.com)

Committee members are:

Vickie Angell-Scheler, Local 5111;

Debbie Steinhilber, Local 4777

Mary Wuschenny, Local 4980

Jim Carr, Local 3967

Vicky O'Dell, Local 5999

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## Awards to recognize work of CUPE dietary staff

# Good food is worthy of recognition!

The Council's Provincial Good Food Committee plans to recognize the work of dietary staff who are preparing good quality food as well as improving the quality of life of long-term care residents and hospital patients.

That's why the committee has produced the Good Food Certificates.

The certificates are going to be "awarded" this fall to recognize and promote health facilities where dietary staff are still allowed to prepare food "from scratch," support the local economy and go the extra distance for patients/ residents.

Locals and individual members are encouraged to nominate a facility deserving of recognition in one of the three categories.

- Food that is prepared fresh daily on site
- Health facilities that buy their produce locally
- The people's choice award for going the extra distance to improve quality of life for residents and patients.

The CUPE Good Food Committee will select the winners and present certificates to these "award-winning" facilities and a pin to dietary staff members. All the certificates and pins will be presented on October 5th - Communities Day - in a public forum.

Nomination forms are available through all local CUPE offices.

### **Background to the Committee**

The Council's Provincial Good Food Committee was established a few years ago, when health regions began moving towards centralized kitchens and increased cook/chill food preparation, eroding our membership's job security.

Last year the committee conducted a survey of our members to find out what is happening in hospital kitchens and nursing homes across our health regions.

We heard a lot of horror stories. But it was also



**CUPE dietary worker Barb Matheson**

apparent from the surveys there was a lot of good work being done by our members - sometimes in spite of their employers. The committee decided to go on the offensive to promote the importance of good quality food to the health and well-being of long-term care residents and hospital patients.

We also felt it was important to recognize the good food that is being served up by our dietary staff working in health facilities around the province. So we've developed the "Good Food Certificates."

The long term goal is to make it much more difficult for health regions to introduce pre-packaged food systems and centralize and/or close hospital kitchens because of public opposition.

As well, we intend to profile members working in dietary departments through the publication of a special newsletter that discusses the importance of good quality food.

Members of the Committee:

Sherry Richter, CUPE Local 3967

Mark Rochat - Local 5999

Lori Flodell - Local 4777

# Committee to focus on overtime

The Health Care Council's Provincial Workload Committee has been very busy since bargaining wrapped up. The March 6th meeting was held in Saskatoon. The members developed Terms of Reference for the Workload Committee and went over the budget for the year. The project for the coming year will focus on overtime.

The Workload Committee met again in Regina on April 18th and 19th. Preliminary strategies for gathering information on overtime in our sector were developed. We also discussed budget hurdles for undertaking research for our project. The goal of the committee is to conclude a study and have a presentation ready for the HCC Conference in May of 2007.

Jane Fahlman gave a presentation to the Committee on the study done on High Quality Workplaces. This is the study that committee members participated in through focus groups.

Sandra was also part of the KUN (knowledge utilization network made of professionals, unions, Government, RHA's, National groups, CEO's etc.). The "enablers" and "restraints" towards Quality Workplaces were identified through the work of the focus groups.

The Workload Committee planned research fields on overtime for each of the members to pursue before a fall meeting. Andrew Huculak was able to provide ideas for information tracking. The group also shared revised workload forms that could be utilized throughout the different regions. Each member was given the opportunity to bring forward workloads they were having trouble with to enlist ideas from the group.

At the April OH&S Conference in Regina the Workload Committee was able to meet with Jacquie Griffiths our Staff Rep, Anthony Pizzino & his assistant Matt from the CUPE National OH&S Committee.

Committee members discussed their focus for the year with Anthony and Matt. We were given direction on how to best proceed in order to reach our goal of having a presentation ready for the HCC in 2007.

We will continue to work for you throughout the coming year. Workload issues continue to cause stress and injury at the workplace. We hope to focus our efforts to solve the problems facing all of us.

Workload committee members are:

Sandra Seitz, Local 5999

Sharon Lamb, Local 3967

Iris Karapita Local 4980

Sharon Del Frari, Local 5111

CUPE Staff Rep Jacquie Griffiths



**Get our your calendars:**

**Health Care Providers' Week October 30 - Nov. 3**

The CUPE Health Care Council has asked the provincial government to designate the week of October 30 - November 3 as Health Care Providers' Week.

It's one way for residents and the government to recognize the contribution of our 13,000 members in the health sector.

The Council wrote Labour Minister David Forbes, requesting the government to

proclaim this week in honour of all 25,000 members represented by the Health Care Provider Unions.



**Special care aides ...**

**MEMBERS OF YOUR HEALTH CARE TEAM!**

CUPE On the front line | CANADA SEIU Stronger together | SDEU Working Together for Saskatchewan

Josephine Solis and Myrna Paraiso, two CUPE 3967 members featured on last year's billboards, work at Pioneer Village. They also are sisters.



**Participants at CUPE's annual health care council conference**

Clockwise from top left: Laurie Shields; delegates from Sun Country Health Region; Carol McKnight; Mark Rochat; Rebecca Bell



**Local 4980, Sunrise Health Region, joined with CUPE locals in the area to enter a float in the local Yorkton Parade. They won 3rd Prize!**

**Shown here are:**

Judy Henley,  
 Pearl Blommaert,  
 Sharon Salikin,  
 Sharon Dreger,  
 Rae Perih



## **CUPE members take a ride for cancer research**



Seated - Second from left - Carol McKnight (President Local 4777), Third from left - Val Wasden (CLXT - Spiritwood), Fourth from left - Diane Merkosky (LPN - Kinistino)

Prairie Women on Snowmobiles is a group of women who have found an innovative way to raise funds and awareness about breast cancer research.

Each year members of this group, which was formed in 1999, ride snowmobiles across the province, stopping in communities to tell their stories and discuss the importance of cancer research.

Carol McKnight, Val Wasden and Dianne Merkosky (members of CUPE Local 4777) participated in Mission 2006. (Carol has been involved for the past four years.) Together, Prairie Women raised \$133,935.00 this year.