



United Nurses of Alberta

Local 115 Newsletter

Issue 1

December 2003

2003 – 2004 Local 115 Executive & Committees

Elections for local 115 occurred on November 19th, 2003. Michelle Senkow has been elected as President for our local. See page 5 for all elected Executive & Committee positions.

Message from the President



Michelle Senkow

Hello my name is Michelle Senkow, I am a Foothills Hospital Nursing School graduate from 1981. I've participated as an active union member for over 20 years as Ward Rep, PRC member (Professional

continued on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 2003-2004 Local 115 Executives & Committees
- 1 UNA Negotiations News
- 2 UNA Media Release
- 3 Spotlight on your UNA Contract
- 3 UNA Net
- 4 PRC Committee
- 4 Local 115 Meeting
- 5 Local 115 Contacts



UNA and PHAA met November 24, 2003 to continue negotiations. PHAA provided a complete proposal. PHAA proposal was similar to the Mediator's Recommendations except it contained even more rollbacks, e.g.: Employer once again proposing deletion of nurse in charge provisions, decreases to health care benefits, rollbacks to layoff & recall, etc.

The Employer proposal is slightly less offensive than their last proposal of April, but certainly less acceptable than the Mediator's Recommendation, which was rejected by 98.8% of Alberta nurses.

The Employer has been careful to ensure they will not be found guilty of bad faith bargaining, but at the same time, send a clear message as to their interest in reaching a negotiated agreement.

The Employer did indicate this proposal was not their bottom line.

UNA again reinforced to PHAA that we will NOT be participating in Compulsory Arbitration.

Further dates set for December 10, 2003.

Bill 27 Fan-out

The UNA negotiating committee met with the PHAA negotiating committee November 25, 2003 for the commencement of negotiations as mandated by Bill 27. (The legislation requires the parties to meet and negotiate changes to the receiving agreement.)

Through discussion, it became clear there are many overlapping issues between the Bill 27 negotiations and the Provincial negotiations.

The parties had good discussion regarding process,

continued on page 3

Responsibility Committee), PRC and Staffing Committee Chair, Grievance Committee Member, Local Vice – President and Local Secretary. Having lived and worked in Edmonton, Grande Prairie and Calgary as a staff nurse I can appreciate and speak to nursing work-life issues.

For 6 years I participated as an AARN Provincial Councilor, by voicing the concerns of the staff nurses at the AARN table.

Having worked FT, PT, casual throughout my career I understand and can empathize with the current issues facing nursing. Like many nurses I have taken pride in my profession while raising a family of 5 children with my husband of 25 years.

I have participated in Provincial and Local Nursing Committees to advocate for the nursing profession and nurses.

I believe that through my strong ability to educate, motivate, listen and work with others, we can improve our nursing workplaces. My dedication is to involve nurses in every aspect of their union.

I am a true Nursing advocate that will go the mile to improve working conditions for nurses at Local 115.

I believe in UNA as a membership driven, democratic organization. As we begin the New Year together I look forward to the challenges and commitment of our local. Our executive is committed to involving you in every aspect of our union. Together we can make a difference and make great strides for our nursing profession. Best wishes as we prepare for the holiday season. I look forward to meeting you and working with you to make this local a great place to be. ❖



Court says Foothills must allow independent mould testing to check on clean up.

Nurses working on the mould-contaminated unit at the Foothills Hospital were relieved today with the court decision on testing and clean up at the hospital. "Our nurses are pleased to have their health concerns finally validated," says Michelle Senkow, Vice President of the Foothills UNA Local. "The court recognized there

has been a six-year history of legitimate health concerns at this Foothills unit. Now we can have more confidence the contamination will be dealt with."

Madam Justice Karen Horner of the Court of Queen's Bench gave her decision on November 12, 2003 ordering that UNA's technical expert, Ms. Karen Rollins will be allowed to enter Foothills Medical Centre and observe the implementation of the Action Plan to clean up contamination. With notice, she can take samples and have them tested and preserved.

Previous testing and tests earlier this year found toxic mould contamination on the dialysis unit at the hospital. Nurses and other Employees have experienced a range of health problems including nose bleeds, rashes, respiratory problems and other symptoms. Over 60 Registered nurses working on the unit have experienced health problems.

"The judge agreed it is reasonable to have an outside expert in to take samples and preserve evidence," Michelle Senkow says. "We need to know what's there for nurses' and patients' protection. Taking samples now gives us a record of what's been found."

Senkow points out that this was an interim decision to have a monitored clean up begin on the unit on November 24. The nurses' main court motion to allow air quality expert Professor Tang Lee in to test the building comes up January 12, 2004.

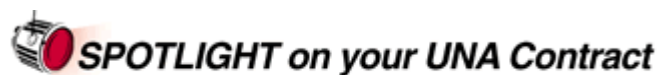
"In this six year history the CHR has conducted many investigations without resolving the problems. We want Professor Lee to come in to make sure that the building is safe," Michelle Senkow says.

The judge also awarded costs of fees and expenses plus \$5000 against Alberta Workplace Health and Safety and the Calgary Health Region. ❖

The mould investigation on Unit 27 at the Foothills Medical Center will commence on November 24th, 2003. Please call OH & S and report symptoms that you are experiencing on your unit. Please call us with any of your concerns if you are not feeling well while at work. ❖

and the confusing and conflicting positions the two processes create for both parties. Further dates set for December 11, 2003.

David Harrigan (Director of Labour Relations) ❖



Fairness in Vacations — Article 17 in our Collective Agreement ensures that vacation time is scheduled fairly

The Vacation Planner

- Your manager must post a Vacation Planner on your unit by January 1st of each year. You submit in writing the time period you wish to take your vacation(s) by March 15th.
- The manager must post the approved Vacation Planner by April 30th.
- Seniority provides the guiding principle for allocating vacations.
- the Employer may not “carve out” a specific time period in which Employees are not able to request vacation e.g. Christmas and New Years. The vacation year includes the whole calendar year and you are entitled to request vacation anytime throughout the year.
- Vacation requests after April 30th must be submitted in writing to the manager. They must respond within 14 days of your request.
- If your vacation request was not approved (or not responded to or delayed) by your manager, you have 10 working days to contact your UNA representative to raise your concerns regarding your vacation request and to file a grievance, if necessary. Resubmit your request if deemed and expect again a response in 14 days.
- Your manager may not cancel or reschedule your vacation unless there is a critical, unforeseen emergency and the Employer can demonstrate that a bona fide attempt was made to address and resolve the emergency situation.
- If your manager does cancel your vacation, you are entitled to receive double time (2X your basic rate of pay) for all shifts worked during the period of vacation cancelled by the Employer. In addition, the Employer shall reimburse all non-refundable costs (e.g. airline or other tickets) related to the cancellation of the vacation.

Vacation entitlement depends upon your years of employment.

- To calculate the amount of your vacation entitlement, please refer to Article 17 of the Collective Agreement.
- If you do not use all your vacation entitlement during the calendar year you may make a request in writing to carry it forward to the next vacation year, which must not be unreasonably denied.❖



Are you on UNA Net?

UNA Net is a private communication system available only to UNA Members. Current information regarding contract negotiations, your local and UNA events is available on UNA Net. You'll also have the opportunity to present your opinions and thoughts about negotiations as well as professional issues. Join us and communicate with your fellow registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses in Alberta.

What to do if you require an account?

Send an email including your name, address, local number, and your UNA ID number to systems@una.ab.ca. They will need to know what operating system is on your computer (Windows or Macintosh) and if you have high speed or dial up access to the internet.

Once your membership has been verified you will be given immediate access to the system.

Logging in with software or a browser

The UNA Net is accessible using a web browser or client software.

To log in with your web browser, go to <https://www.unitednurses.org/login> and enter your User ID and Password.

Even better though, the client software provides a desktop application that is optimized for fast, streamlined access to the FirstClass server. It is easy to install and use, by choosing the software download html link below:

Windows & Macintosh Software Link:

<http://www.unitednurses.org/clientDownloads/>

Technical Support:

The technical support team is available by email systemsupport@una.ab.ca or by phone toll free at (800) 252-8384 during regular office hours. ❖

A Word from the PRC Committee

The Committee is comprised of UNA and management representatives that meet monthly or on an urgent basis to discuss and best resolve issues pertaining to Short-Staffing, Unsafe working conditions, placement in areas not orientated to, harassment issues, safety issues.

This year 50 PRC's have been filed...many short-staffing or unsafe nursing situations....some conditions where safety of staff or patients is in jeopardy...There is NO timeframe in which to file a PRC about a nursing situation which you are concerned about. Call the Local 115 office, email or write up a PRC that you are concerned about and a member of the committee will investigate and present your concerns. ❖



Event: Local 115 Meeting

Date: December 10, 2003

Time: 16:00

Place: To Be Announced

Labour Relations Officer

Donna J. Byrne, Phone: (403) 237-2377.

(If Donna is not available, please ask to speak to the LRO covering at that time).

Merry Christmas from the Local 115 Executive



Left to Right: Front – Michelle Senkow, Laurie Hermann. Back – Bruce Chatterton, Colette Huck, Alice Whitty



United Nurses of Alberta

Local 115 Contacts

(President - Michelle Senkow is ex-officio to all committees. Please call the local office to speak to her about any of these committees or concerns)

Executive Members for 2003-2004

President	Michelle Senkow	msenkow@una.ab.ca
1st Vice President	Bruce Chatterton	bchatterton@una.ab.ca
2nd Vice President	Alice Whitty	awhitty@una.ab.ca
Treasurer	Ross Pambrun	rpambrun@una.ab.ca
Secretary	Laurie Hermann	lhermann@una.ab.ca

Membership Secretary for 2003-2004

Lisa Douglas ldouglas@una.ab.ca

Grievance Committee for 2003-2004

Alice Whitty awhitty@una.ab.ca
Heather Dean hdean@una.ab.ca
Don Richardson drichardson@una.ab.ca
Jan McAdam jmcadam@una.ab.ca

Newsletter Committee for 2003-2004

Al Perreault aperreault@una.ab.ca
Sam Rogers srogers@una.ab.ca

Occupational Health & Safety Committee for 2003-2004

Lisa Douglas ldouglas@una.ab.ca

PRC Committee for 2003-2004

Heather Dean hdean@una.ab.ca
Ross Pambrun rpambrun@una.ab.ca
Laurie Hermann lhermann@una.ab.ca
Charlotte Parkinson charlotte.parkinson@una.ab.ca
Sam Rogers srogers@una.ab.ca

United Nurses of Alberta (Southern Alberta Provincial Office)
Suite 300, 1422 Kensington Road NW, Calgary AB T2N 3P9.
Local 115 - (403) 670-9960

(403) 237-2377, (800) 661-1802. Fax (403) 263-2908. Email: calgaryoffice@una.ab.ca