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Message from the President

Hard to believe Dec/05 is here and Xmas cheer is in full swing. The units are very busy and I know many staff are working above and beyond for safe patient care- nursing is that kind of caring profession- keep up the great work you do and call us if you have concerns.

First of all I would like to say Thank You to the many people that attended the Local Annual General Meeting. Congratulations to the newly elected Executive and Committee members: Bruce Chatterton re-elected as 1st Vice-President and Diane Mak-Kaplan elected as Secretary & my re-election as President. We have a great team of enthusiastic and hard-working members.

We've received many calls about Overtime. Yes, you can request your overtime be paid in pay or time banked. Clear wording in the contract exists about this and your manager cannot make any special conditions. Call our office if you have any questions or concerns.

Vacation Planner time again and the planner will be POSTED on your unit on January 1- March 15/06. It is important to request all your vacation requests for the entire year from May 1/06-May1/07 inclusive of December.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a safe Christmas season, and a happy and healthy New Year. Thank you for your continued support and confidence.

Michelle M. Senkow RN, BScN
 President
 UNA-Local 115

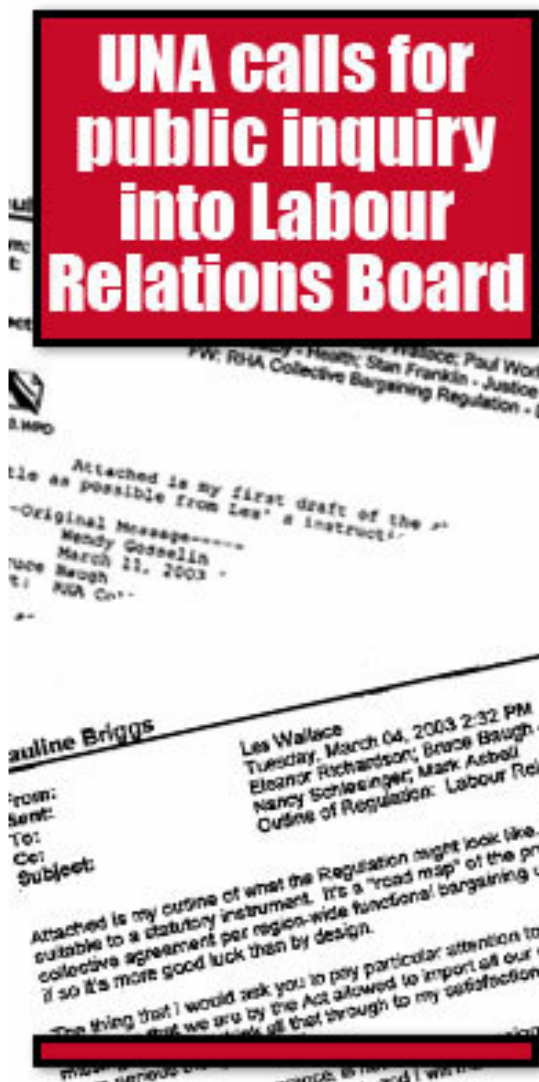
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SENIORITY REQUEST:

To submit your seniority request to the UNA Local 115 President, please include a Cover Letter making your formal request and then providing the necessary documents. Necessary documents include a letter of portability, etc. from the previous employer or a **Statutory Declaration UNA for the purpose of Seniority Calculation** form. This form must be endorsed by any commissioner of Oath. This form is available on the UNA Local 115 web site: (<http://local115.una.ab.ca>) or through the UNA Local 115 Office. Completed documents can be sent to UNA Local 115 via mail, fax or in the UNA Local 115 Mailbox. ❖



Board's conflict of interest was real not just apparent

Documents made public in news reports today show that the Labour Relations Board was in a real conflict of interest when it was administering Bill 27, says the United Nurses of Alberta.

"What has come out is that the Board collaborated with law firms who represent health employers and with the government in drafting Bill 27," notes David Harrigan, UNA's Director of Labour Relations.

"Then the same Board chaired the hearings and made the rulings on how to interpret that law. It was a blatant conflict of interest," he said.

"The Labour Relations Board is supposed to be an impartial referee that fairly resolves disputes, but when they are obviously collaborating with employers, it makes the whole process a farce," he said. The provincial government's appointed Health Regions are the employers for the vast majority of the province's health workers.

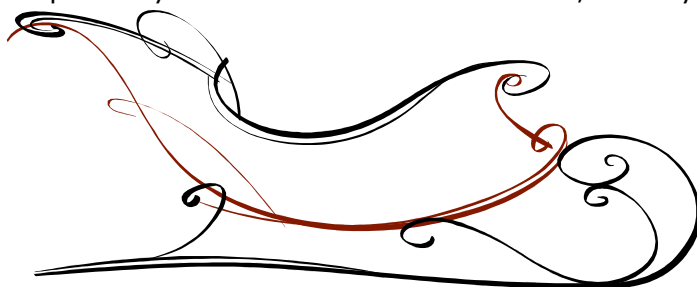
Bill 27 made massive restructuring in the labour organization of the Health Regions, a process that hurt the interests of many of the province's unionized health workers including Registered nurses. "We have had concerns for years that the Board is biased toward employers, now we have what you can call smoking gun evidence of it." Time after time, with the Lakeside dispute, with the recent Finning dispute and in past UNA cases, the Board has taken the employers' side.

"It's been a long time since we have gone to the Labour Relations Board with any expectation of a fair hearing or a just ruling," he said.

"We need a public inquiry into the system problems with the Labour Relations Board," David Harrigan says. "To have a cozy club of employers, government and the Labour Relations Board pretending to fairly administer the province's labour laws should offend everyone's sense of fairness and natural justice."

UNA was one of the labour organizations that forced a judicial review of the Board's Bill 27 ruling. Documents obtained through the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act at that time, showed the Board had been communicating with the government on Bill 27. But the Board had also refused to release and blacked out many of the documents. The judge in the case ruled there was not enough evidence to conclude there was an "apprehension of bias" on the part of the Labour Board.

"This further evidence shines more light on these problems," says David Harrigan. "Now we need a full public inquiry that gets all the details out and fully examines the functioning and impartiality of the Labour Relations Board," he says.





**Merry Christmas from Local 115
Executive Committee members!**



Diane Mak-Kaplan

Our new Local 115 Secretary!

Labour School Draw!

Enter your name into the Labour School DRAW! Funding will include registration, travel, accommodation, wages (for LOA's only) and meals (as per UNA policies). Members chosen must select either the EDLC Labour School or the CDLC Labour School.

- **Edmonton & District Labour Council** (EDLC) Labour School is scheduled for March 3 (6:30 pm - 10:00 pm), March 4 (all day) and March 5 (9:30 am - 1:30 pm), 2006.
- **Calgary & District Labour Council** (CDLC) Labour School is scheduled for March 31, April 1, 2, 2006.

More information about the AFL Labour school at <http://local115.una.ab.ca> .

Please submit your name in as soon as possible if you are interested in attending.

There are two ways to enter your name into the draw:

1. Enter via UNA NET in the South Central District conference, then enter the Labour School Draw (SCD) folder, then click on "Submit name to Labour School Draw" and enter your name.
2. if you have no computer or access to UNA Net, please call the Southern Alberta Regional Office at (403) 237-2377, and ask for your name to be entered into the AFL Labour School Draw.





SPOTLIGHT on your UNA Contract

Overtime

What to do when you are asked to work for free!

Many care managers ask nurses to work overtime at straight rates. They are asking them to volunteer time, to “help out”.

But anyone who is working beyond regular hours is going to be less safe in their work. Working unexpected hours can mean working more fatigued. It can leave nurses resentful or worried about how they have to adjust their family’s life – daycare, even getting dinner ready.

Nursing managers must be encouraged to schedule adequate staffing and be prepared for reasonably predictable absences. If they don’t do it, then the Employers should pay the costs, not nurses and their families.

UNA Collective agreements specifically prohibit “sweetheart deals” or special arrangements between the Employer and individual Employees. Articles in the UNA agreements (Article 3.02) ensure that terms of employment must be negotiated through the union. That protects individual nurses from being pressured into working more, working cheaper or working in a less safe environment.

This solidarity protects nurses from being played off against each other. For example, it helps prevent a manager from saying, “If you don’t want the extra hours at straight time, someone else will.” If no one works for free, managers can’t say this.

What do you say, when a manager asks you to work for free?

It’s simple: **No!**

2003-2006 Collective Agreement



SPOTLIGHT on your UNA Contract

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 eg. 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.
- 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.

Article 17.03 (b)(i) “Where the number of Employees indicating a preference for a specific time period exceeds the number of Employees that can be allocated vacation during that period, vacation time is to be granted in order of seniority.”



United Nurses of Alberta
Local 115
 Foothills Medical Centre & Satellites
Contact Information



Executive Members

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