

Guardian



SPRING 2001 • VOLUME 19 NUMBER 1 • THE VOICE OF THE HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION



ELECTION TOOLBOX

Everything you need to help you decide who is really on your side.

SPECIAL PULLOUT SECTION

At long last, one contract for all

Bill 23 makes this round of bargaining the last in which the community and facilities subsectors will bargain at separate tables.

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More spaces for seniors

Five pilot projects given go-ahead.

PAGE 5

Breakthrough developments for LPNs

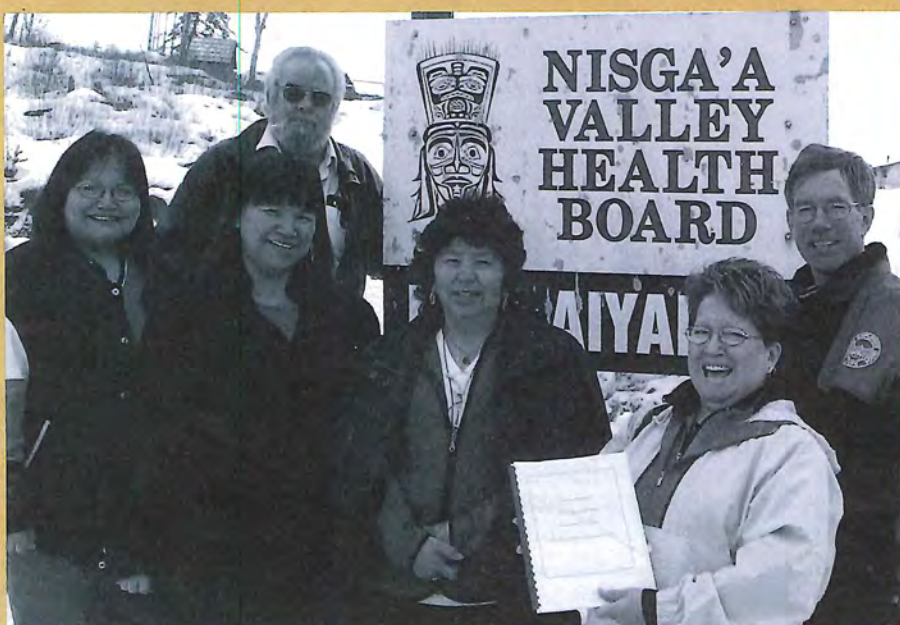
Government announces 89 new training seats.

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We're voting on a tentative agreement in the facilities, we've got a community settlement and legislation that says next time it will be one contract for all.

PAGES 8-9



Milestone agreement signed

It took more than two years for HEU and the Nisga'a Valley Health Board to iron out this distinctive collective agreement that recognizes Nisga'a beliefs and customs while protecting the rights of Nass Valley health workers. **PAGE 5**

COMMENT

It's time to make some choices

by Chris Allnutt

THESE ARE momentous times for health care workers in British Columbia. We're voting on two tentative agreements in the community and facilities subsectors, there's a new law that takes down the wall between facilities and community, and we are going to the polls on May 16 to elect a new government. It's a time to make choices.

The results of these votes will affect HEU members and all workers in this province for some time to come.

While these two collective agreements are not all we wanted, we have good reason to be very proud of them.

The new community agreement guarantees parity with the facilities subsector. B.C. is the first place in North America where it is acknowledged that health services and support workers in community health should be paid the same as workers in acute and long-term care. This is such an important achievement, one that this union and its members have fought for persistently over many years. Along with this recognition, there is a process set in place to correct this injustice, with real wage increases that will eventually bring these health care providers up to the same wage level as their counterparts in the facilities.

In hospitals and long-term care facilities, our new contract renews employment security provisions and ensures the continued operation of the joint union/employer-run Healthcare Labour Adjustment Agency and the Occupational Health and Safety Agency.



We made a breakthrough with the agreement to add up to 300 more Care Aides, LPNs and rehab assistants in extended and long-term care and with new contract language on no more unsafe manual lifting. Coupled with effective organizing among our nursing team members, we will be able to make our workplaces safer. Both contracts contain no concessions or rollbacks and provide important pay equity and benefit improvements.

On the wage front, the general wage increases are indeed modest. The key question facing your Provincial Bargaining Committee and Provincial Executive was whether higher increases were achievable, even if we escalated job action. Our assessment was that more job action would have put the rest of the package at risk.

And it is the entire package, won in the last few weeks of the current NDP government, that we can be very proud of.

HEU members have another vote to cast in the provincial election. For HEU members the choice is between those who will represent our interests in Victoria and those who won't.

I recommend a vote for the NDP candidate in your area. Although it is unlikely that the New Democrats will form the next government, it's of utmost importance to have diversity in the legislature.

The likely winners, Campbell's Liberals, will be acting for the province's business interests. That's why we'll need effective advocates for workers and the public health care system.

Although this round of bargaining for our two collective agreements was tough, we were able to hammer out a couple of contracts we can be proud of. But a government that has no strong opposition may try to clawback some of the gains we have made.

So, again, I strongly recommend a vote for the NDP.

'The choice is between those who will represent our interests in Victoria and those who won't'

voice/mail

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Campbell said right things, but ...

I read the interview done with Gordon Campbell in the latest issue of the *Guardian*, where he answered the questions like a finely tuned NDPer. But when you read between the lines, the true Campbell slithers through. For example, asked about short and long-term plans, he responds about making sure services are there, but then talks about the doctors knowing the nurses are "behind" them to provide support. Not beside, behind. Hierarchy at its patriarchal best! No change there!

In regard to funding, Campbell's plans to reduce personal income tax and lift corporate tax would mean a 34 per cent cut to the health care budget in B.C.

You don't have to be an accountant to see that the numbers just don't add up. He claims he will not cut the health care budget, but he certainly makes no commitment to increase it, either. He'd support public services by an "active, vibrant private sector and investment in private sector jobs." That

means non-union, minimum wage jobs. Again, no change there.

Those jobs are not the ones that support families or communities. It is fairly-paid union jobs which support our public services. It's my union dollars that enable me to support charities, my children's sporting events, pay a mortgage and have some income left over to spend in community businesses. They are also the wages that support taxes that pay for health care and education and I have no problem with that!

Gordon Campbell did not tell the truth when he states he never said he would tear up the employment security agreement. He did. He was very clear about that!

If he truly believes that HEU front-line workers are necessary, it is because our union and our members have educated him. Unfortunately, his labour critic Kevin Krueger clearly hasn't gotten the message. He stated we are all "over-paid toilet cleaners". That doesn't sound like the Liberals "value" us!

Lastly I want to comment on his statements in regard to patient care in the public sector and privatizing "hotel-type services" — our jobs.

Read very carefully his response to privatizing seniors' care. He says, "I just don't agree with them that we need to privatize it all." Key word being all! So, be careful, sisters and brothers, that snake who shed his skin is still poisonous when he bites!

BARB BURKE,
Penticton

HEU website draws raves

I want to compliment HEU's communications staff for the timely postings to the union's website during job action.

Last Wednesday night (April 4) at 10 p.m. I phoned the human resources coordinator for the Capital Health Region to tell him that because progress was being made at the bargaining table we had scaled back job action at the Royal Jubilee Hospital for April 5.

The HR guy told me he was at that very moment confirming the same information on the HEU website.

The HEABC site didn't come near to HEU's in specific, detailed and timely information.

Way to go!

ARLETA KEPPLER,
Royal Jubilee Local

Extend equity principle

Pay equity principles are at the core of the union movement. As a 10-year HEU member, I stand behind these principles. If a woman is doing the same work as a man and is not being paid the same then that is something that needs to be rectified immediately. When community sector health care workers are making less than their counterparts doing the same work in a facility, they need to be paid the same as well. This is not just an issue of wage equality but is also an issue of justice and social equality.

The problem is that these principles seem to apply to everybody in

HEU except for those of us employed in maintenance.

HEU maintenance personnel are among the most highly skilled anywhere in North America. As a certified multi-skilled tradesperson I not only need to know all aspects of the installation and construction of the systems and equipment that I am responsible for but I also need to know every aspect of the servicing, repairing, troubleshooting and maintenance.

It has taken many years of training and education to acquire these skills. Add to this the understaffing of most maintenance departments and you have severe workload issues.

My counterparts doing similar work and with less training and a lot less responsibility are making 20 to 30 per cent more with benefits superior to those offered in health care. A critical shortage of tradespersons and engineers will soon become even more severe than that experienced in nursing. If this wage disparity is not addressed then the health care industry will be losing its most skilled and experienced maintenance personnel.

The B.C. Hospital Maintenance and Trades Workers Association provided the HEU bargaining committee with evidence of this wage disparity and skills shortage. We are not asking for special treatment just equal treatment. After all, is that not the guiding principal of our union?

DAVID PELLERIN,
Plumber, fire sprinkler fitter,
gasfitter, crossconnection specialist,
Surrey Memorial Hospital

Guardian

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

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The *Guardian* is published on behalf of the Provincial Executive of the Hospital Employees' Union, under the direction of the following editorial committee: Fred Muzin, Chris Allnutt, Mary LaPlante, David Ridley, Dan Hingley, Colleen Fitzpatrick, Julia Amendt

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What we're up to

Arbitrator just said yes!

HEU members in the Capital Health Region fought the good fight against unjustifiable parking rate increases at the region's facilities since the fall of 1999.

Finally, in January 2001, their efforts were rewarded when arbitrator James Dorsey, after listening to the CHR's argument for higher parking fees, ruled that only minimal price hikes at some locations would be allowed.

Dorsey also ordered the employer to reimburse employees for any overpayment of parking rates retroactive to May 12, 2000.

The CHR had defended the increases – some as much as quadruple – saying they were necessary to partly defray the cost of the new \$8 million parkade, a public/private partnership, they were set to build at Royal Jubilee Hospital.

HEU members from across the region used very creative tactics to protest the employer's increases such as rallying at the health board offices sporting "Just Say No" buttons. And the Victoria General local used their website to urge hospital workers to take up the employer's offer to get free parking by car pooling, flooding the parking office with more than 1000 applications.

"This is the way to fight injustice," said HEU secretary-busi-

ness manager Chris Allnutt. "On the ground, members waged an extremely ingenious campaign to gum up the works. Congratulations to them!"



The lucky winner is ...

Congratulations to Jin Min Shu, a health worker at Royal Ascot Care Centre in Vancouver, on winning a coveted HEU winter jacket as a result of the union's fall 2000 campaign to

connect with as many members as possible via e-mail.

He is one of more than 600 people who sent in their e-mail addresses to our ever-growing list of wired HEU members who are now receiving the latest union news as it happens.

You can still connect electronically by visiting the Act Now section of HEU's website at <www.heu.org>.

Party's not a good idea

The Sunshine Coast Community Health Council cancelled a staff appreciation dinner recently after HEU members from different locals told them the money could be better spent on buying equipment for one of the health care facilities.

Plans for the event took shape when the acting health CEO sent an invitation to HEU members at Shornecliffe, Kiwanis and St. Mary's Hospital

locals. Because health workers are under such workload stress, the council wanted to do something to acknowledge all their hard work, but Sunshine Coast HEU members felt there were better ways to address the workload problem.

Bargain better say NSAMH members

In March, HEU and BCNU members at the North Shore Association for the Mentally Handicapped solidly rejected an inferior deal they'd been forced to vote on because the employer had termed it a final offer.

The no vote sent a clear message to the boss to return to the bargaining table and negotiate a fair collective agreement that would meet the standard at other HEU social services agencies.

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The wall tumbles!

PREMIER Ujjal Dosanjh made good on his commitment to tear down the labour relations wall that segregates community caregivers from their counterparts in hospitals and long-term care facilities as the NDP passed the required legislation on April 10, against the opposition of Gordon Campbell's Liberals.

"This is a proud moment for HEU members," says secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt. "For the last six years, our union has fought hard to eliminate all the barriers imposed to maintain the community as a low wage ghetto with second class treatment for caregivers in this important sector.

"Combined with the breakthrough on parity in the community," says Allnutt, "the legislation adopted by the NDP means that we've cleared the way for full justice, dignity and respect for community caregivers.

"Let's also be clear that support and solidarity from the BCGEU and UFCW over the last 18 months was a critical factor," he says. "The legislation is good

public policy that sets a new framework for more effective delivery of health care services for British Columbians," Allnutt adds, extending his thanks to health minister Corky Evans and former health ministers Mike Farnworth and Penny Priddy who were both strong supporters of the change.

'The legislation is good public policy'

However, Allnutt says he was particularly disappointed with the response of the B.C. Liberals to the NDP's legislative initiative.

When the bill to tear down the wall – Bill 23 – was introduced last week, Liberal health critic Colin Hansen was quick to shoot it down. He claimed the move was strictly a political "payoff" to HEU which would waste tens of millions of dollars in taxpayers' money.



HEU DELEGATES at the 22nd Biennial Convention last October applauded Premier Ujjal Dosanjh's commitment to combine the facilities and community sector bargaining units, a commitment he made good on April 10, 2001.

But after meeting with a delegation of front-line community caregivers from HEU and BCGEU in Victoria on April 9, and after having had a chance to actually read the legislation, Hansen scaled down his criticism, admitting his "payoff" remarks were intemperate. In debate in the Legislature the following day, Hansen acknowledged Bill 23 was a "measured approach" to change. Yet despite his new tune, and his "respect" for community caregivers, Hansen, Gordon Campbell and all 31 other Liberal MLAs present for the debate voted against it.

More training seats for LPNs announced

HEU says the provincial government's announcement of 89 new training spaces for Licensed Practical Nurses is a positive move that will help ease B.C.'s chronic nursing shortage.

"We're really pleased with the initiative," says Zorica Bosancic, the union's assistant secretary-business manager. "Expanded roles and training opportunities for LPNs are clearly part of a broad-based team approach that includes Registered Nurses and Care Aides that will result in better nursing care in B.C."

Bosancic says the new seats for this fall mean that government has almost doubled LPN training posi-

tions in two years.

"Our union has argued that there's no single magic solution for dealing with the shortage," she said. "Ensuring that we have enough nurses at the bedside means government, employers and unions need to work together to develop a variety of solutions relying on the skills and potentials of all the members of the nursing team."

LPNs complete a 12-month training program compared to a two-year RN diploma program. An LPN's scope of practice or skills base overlaps 60 per cent with that of an RN.

Terrace LPN Mary Nicholls was particularly

pleased that 32 of the additional training spaces will be allocated for a new program at the College of New Caledonia in Prince George.

"Health care facilities in the North rely more on LPNs in their nursing mix than other parts of the province," she said. "So the fact that there will be a new training program in Prince George will benefit all communities in the region."

Bosancic says HEU will continue to work with the Ministry of Advanced Education to get new LPN programs up and running at colleges in Victoria, Terrace and Dawson Creek for the 2002 academic year.

WHAT WE'RE UP TO



Just before construction started, financial secretary Mary LaPlante, president Fred Muzin and assistant secretary-business manager Zorica Bosancic visited HEU's new building site. Keep track of building progress at <www.heu.org> - click on Members.

continued from page 3

The unions had proposed bargaining dates in March, but were turned down by the

employer because one of its negotiating team was out of town. The unions have once again suggested meeting dates

in April and, as we go to print, are still waiting for the employer to respond.

This will be the first collective agreement for the more than 200 HEU community social services members at NSAMH who work at residential homes and in a wide variety of vocational programs that support persons in the development of life skills through employment training, support, placement, recreation and other therapeutic opportunities.

Contracts blossom at for-profits

HEU members at several independent, private for-profit seniors' housing and care facilities have just wrapped up bargaining or are in the midst of talks. Newly certified members at Langley Gardens began negotiations at the end of March for their first contract. HEU care providers at Arbutus

Manor in Vancouver began bargaining in November 2000 for a new agreement and are still at it, while health workers at Surrey's Bear Creek Lodge are moving to a strike vote, the first they've had to take since they unionized nine years ago.

Also in Surrey, HEU members at Imperial Place, a facility with a history of fractious labour relations, began mediation for a new collective agreement in February after members voted 100 per cent in favour of job action - something that's likely to occur if the process lags and the employer remains uncompromising. And 55 HEU care providers at Courtyard Gardens in Richmond have a new contract as a result of a settlement handed down by an interest arbitrator early in March.

While some independents are small operations, some are part of large corporations. Langley Gardens is owned by C-PAC,

one of British Columbia's largest and fastest growing private, for-profit companies, and Imperial Place is operated by Oregon-based Holiday Retirement Corporation.

What's that you say?

When a management-type at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital used a less than respectful title for one of the local's executive members, the local faced the issue head on.

HEU Nanaimo local chair Darrell Pinkney promptly penned a letter to the employer with a reminder that the proper title of one of the local officers was vice-chairperson/chief shop steward, not "your little union lady," and a request that the perpetrator of the condescending remark, and other management team members, be instructed to avoid the use of offensive language immediate-

Shepherd's staying put for awhile

by Dale Fuller

MAUREEN Shepherd considers herself lucky to be living in the sunny Okanagan and working as a transportation worker at Cottonwoods, Kelowna General Hospital's extended care site. And she's so proud of the achievements of the Kelowna local during her 16 years as chair that she's postponing her retirement until the current round of collective bargaining is a done deal and a new nursing team utilization initiative at Cottonwoods is up and running.

She's been working at KGH since she arrived in Kelowna from Great Britain 26 years ago.

Trained as a registered nurse, Shepherd headed straight to Kelowna General to apply for a job. They hired her to work at their Strathcona Manor, not as an RN but as a Care Aide. "In those days you had to go to Vancouver to do some upgrading if you'd been educated elsewhere," she says. "I had two small kids. It was out of the question."

When the hospital opened Cottonwoods in 1978, Shepherd started working there.

One day, very soon after beginning at Strathcona, she was bathing a resident when someone came around and said, "Come on, we're having a sit-in." The issue? The unfairness of orderlies getting more money for performing the same work as Licensed Practical Nurses. This was Shepherd's initiation

into trade unionism. "I was petrified," she remembers. "But I saw HEU's strength, and I knew I wanted to be part of that. It was exciting once I got over the fear."

And she is indeed fearless. She has garnered the respect of union members and management alike. But it's been a long road and a lot of work between there and here.

With encouragement from her local's executive, she became part of the essential services committee and before long she was serving as a shop steward.

Shepherd has high regard for the education that HEU offers to its activists. "I learned that I was not by myself, and that gave me all the courage I needed," she says.

One thing she is very proud of is the improvement in labour relations at Cottonwoods during her tenure as chair of the Kelowna local.

"It was scary when I walked into my first labour/management meeting. We were dealing with 400 grievances," Shepherd recalls. "Now I can even call up Murray Ramsden, the CEO of our regional health board and say, 'Murray, we need to have coffee.' And he'll come over and we'll talk."



KELOWNA LOCAL CHAIR Maureen Shepherd enjoys her job of driving Cottonwoods residents around on their outings in the Kelowna area.

BALANCING



IT ALL

A hard-working local officer, Shepherd expects a lot of her executive. "I tell people, 'Be prepared, your time is not your own when you stand to be elected.' We are a good strong local and what makes us strong is the dedication of our members and our executive," she says.

Her plans to retire after 26 years as a B.C. health care worker and 16 straight years as chair of her local, were put on hold because she decided that there are just too many exciting things happening right now.

"We've been working for a long time on expanding utilization of the nursing team and it looks like that is about to happen," she says. "Nancy Kirkpatrick, the new director of residential services at Cottonwoods, has some great ideas about our LPNs and Care Aides. I want to be part of that when it finally gets going."

To make that happen, talks are pro-

ceeding between the facility, the unions, the College of LPNs and the regional health board.

"We've got a good rapport with Nancy," laughs Shepherd. "I just tell her she doesn't work fast enough - get on with it. I have to retire!"

There was also no way she was going to retire in the middle of negotiations for a collective agreement. "The bargaining association was depending on the locals to mobilize around the bargaining demands. I know how to do that. Couldn't leave with that coming up."

When she does finally retire, she wants to get involved in advocating for women who traditionally have had no union to represent them - those who stay home and raise kids.

In the meantime, she is happy to be a member of HEU. "I wear my union jacket with pride. To me it means we are all working together."

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

WHAT WE'RE UP TO

ly. Pinkney also asked for an apology in writing.

Upon receipt of the letter, one of the hospital's director's apologized and agreed to follow up on the inappropriate behaviour. The written response said there was "no recollection of such a reference."

Lots are joining HEU

HEU welcomes 71 new members to our union.

Our community sector gained the most members of late. In February, 15 health workers at the Family Respite Centre and Adult Day Care in Vancouver joined, followed in March by 16 mental health workers at the Country Squire Villa in Osoyoos who moved from CUPE to HEU. And in April, six staff working at L'Chaim Adult Day Centre in Vancouver came on board.

Also in March, the seven office staff of the Northern

Interior Regional Health Board (St. John Hospital) in Vanderhoof, and three health workers at the Logan Lake Medical Clinic joined.

Plus in HEU's independent sector, 30 health workers at the private, for-profit long-term care facility, Berwick-on-the-Lake in Nanaimo have boosted our membership. And one new member at Williams Lake's Jubilee Care House has joined HEU's nurses sector.

Checking out the hotel myth

For the last 18 months right-wing groups and the media have trotted out a flimsy study done by the Fraser Institute to "prove" HEU members are over-paid compared to hotel workers who perform the "same" work.

Now HEU is set to fight back with a comprehensive 10-month study by SFU professor Marjorie Cohen. Her report



On January 25, dozens of front-line caregivers, representing more than 1,000 of their co-workers, formed part of HEU's delegation at a hearing into their exclusion from the union's historic pay equity/comparability settlement. Arbitrator Stephen Kelleher directed the parties to resolve the matter at the bargaining table, and ultimately it was part of the new facilities agreement.

points to inaccuracies in the original Fraser Institute "study." And she presents detailed find-

ings on the nature of "non-medical" work in hospitals, strongly refuting claims that

the work of HEU members in housekeeping, laundry, food service and trades is comparable to that performed in hotels. Look for a feature article on Cohen's study in the next *Guardian*.

He's our pick

At its February meeting, HEU's Provincial Executive endorsed the candidacy of Claude G  n  reux to replace Geraldine McGuire as CUPE's



G  N  REUX

national secretary-treasurer. McGuire will be stepping down at the labour organization's next national convention in November 2001. She has served in that capacity for 10 years. G  n  reux is currently president of CUPE Quebec.

New regulations are roadmap to change, says HEU

While the public may be increasingly focused on health care bargaining, HEU says health care professions regulatory changes proposed at the end of March in a government report shouldn't be overlooked because, if implemented, they will have a positive impact on efforts to ease B.C.'s nursing shortage.

"This is a road map for government to follow to break down the professional boundaries that prevent trained care providers from working to their full capacities," says secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt. "It will also promote greater cooperation among health professionals and open the door to improved access to a broader range of health care services for British Columbians," he says.

Allnutt points to specific recommendations made in the B.C. Health Professions Council report covering Licensed Practical Nurses, which he says will be "a catalyst for broad-based solutions to help ease our acute shortage of nursing staff."

For the first time ever, the report calls for the legal recognition of procedures that LPNs are trained to perform including patient assessments, administering medications, sterile dressing changes, tracheostomy care and urinary catheterization. Another breakthrough, says Allnutt, is the recommendation that LPNs would no longer have to work under the direct supervision of a physician or a registered nurse.

Allnutt says HEU will continue to press government and employers to increase utilization of LPNs as a practical solution to the nursing shortage.

The Health Professions Council – an independent government advisory body – released the report after six years of study to implement recommendations from B.C.'s 1991 Royal Commission on Health Care.

HEATHER STEVENS and Lydia Stephens add their signatures to the historic collective agreement between HEU's Nisga'a Health Care local and the Nisga'a Valley Health Board on Feb. 19, 2001.



MIKE OLD PHOTO

Nisga'a, HEU sign contract

HEU's new collective agreement with the Nisga'a Valley Health Board is an important milestone in the maturing relationship between organized labour and First Nations.

Reached after more than two years of bargaining, this first agreement blends traditional contract protections with others that recognize unique Nisga'a beliefs and customs.

"This is a proud day for our Nisga'a members and for our entire union," says HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt who went to New Aiyansh for the signing ceremony. "We've not just signed a col-

lective agreement, but also demonstrated that unions can play an important role in both supporting the treaty process and working with First Nations to strengthen health care and other public services."

HEU has been a strong supporter of the First Nations treaty process.

Nisga'a leader Joe Gosnell spoke at the 1998 convention. HEU also represents First Nations health care staff who work for the Gits'xan Health Authority, the Skidegate Band Council and the Moricetown Health Centre in northwestern B.C., and the St. Mary's Band in the East Kootenays.

Announcement of 600 new non-profit beds welcomed

HEU applauds Victoria's announcement giving the go-ahead for pilot projects for five new non-profit seniors' care facilities around the province, thereby creating 600 new beds and reducing the long waiting lists for seniors to receive the care they need.

"We're extremely pleased that this long-awaited announcement has finally been made," says secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt. "Together with seniors and community groups, our union has worked hard to press government to expand the role

of non-profit organizations in developing and operating seniors' care facilities in B.C..

"Three years ago," says Allnutt, "government almost made a tragic mistake by relying on private, for-profit corporations to build and operate all new long-term care facilities in the province. So the go ahead for the projects represents an important victory for non-profit organizations and for our seniors."

Allnutt says HEU supports a bigger role for non-profit organizations in providing seniors' care.

"There's real value in these groups being more involved because they build a sense of community and they offer a wealth of ideas," he says.

HEU, notes Allnutt, engaged in the lobbying effort because it's strongly opposed to for-profit seniors' care. He also says one unexpected outcome of the debate on the issue is that the B.C. Liberals have also embraced the not-for-profit model for development of new seniors' care facilities over reliance on for-profit corporations.

PRESIDENT'S DESK



Democracy goes beyond voting day

by Fred Muzin

ALTHOUGH democracy is an extremely difficult system to establish and maintain, it is far better than the alternatives. The democratic system only works well when people participate and ensure that elected leaders are continually accountable. Given the complexity and variety of issues that politicians have to juggle, if we want decisions to reflect the collective will, our lobbying and activism must continue beyond voting day.

This spring we are experiencing several models of democracy that require us to study the detail behind the headlines and news bytes and express our opinions.

HEU members and our bargaining partners are voting on the proposed terms of settlement for our community and facilities collective agreements. We get to hear full reports directly from the members of our Provincial Bargaining Committee and Provincial Executive, who are recommending acceptance, to ask questions, to challenge assumptions, to study the consequences and to cast an informed ballot regarding our terms and conditions of work over the next three years. 2001 is not an election year for HEU, but this ongoing accountability is fundamental to our union remaining strong.

'Remember the events in Florida during last November's U.S. presidential election'

In the provincial election in May, we get to elect the members of the new B.C. legislature. If we value democracy, which is

extremely fragile at the best of times, we have a tremendous responsibility to put in the effort to become knowledgeable and to get out and vote. That means attending all candidates' meetings, reading this month's *Guardian* carefully and dialoguing with our co-workers.

If you believe the media and the polling firms, the election is already over. A low voter turnout only guarantees that result. We must elect a government that best represents our issues, not the media's. People who feel that their ballot cannot make a difference should remember the events in Florida during last November's U.S. presidential election!

Another important element of democracy is the right to assemble and protest. Demonstrations across the country on April 21 against the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) meetings in Québec City provide an alternative to a world run by and for multinational corporations. In conjunction with the provisions of NAFTA, under the FTAA we are losing the ability to protect our environment, our water, public services such as health care and education, and accountable governments.

The Peoples' Assembly supports fair trade that includes social justice, not unfettered free trade whereby we are only valued as consumers and pawns in a corporate globalization plan. That's why we cannot allow Jean 'pepper spray' Chrétien and his cronies to silence us. From APEC in Vancouver, to the MAI in Indonesia, to the Battle in Seattle, to the WTO in Washington, to Québec and beyond, we must be committed to action if we are to leave our world better than we found it.

Democracy is a matter of choices. Solidarity is a matter of working together for the betterment of all. Freedom is our ability to build on this to make a difference.



ENTHUSIASTIC HEU MEMBER Dawn Greer stands outside Para-Med's Vancouver office where she works as a client services coordinator.

From airport to ballot box

by Dale Fuller

Dawn Greer knew that a strike vote was imminent when she flew to California to be with her ill father. She booked her return flight without knowing when the vote would be held, but as luck would have it, HEU members were voting on the very day she returned.

And yet, her plane landed leaving her with just barely enough time to grab a cab and say, "Take me to the Biltmore Hotel!" She ran in, cast her vote and went home.

"I come from a union family," she says. "I know how important it is to stick that piece of paper in the ballot box."

And Greer was active in SEIU (Service Employees' International Union) Local 250 as an organizer and steward. She worked at Kaiser Permanente hospitals in Vallejo and Martinez as an x-ray technician.

She moved to Canada six years ago and she began working with mentally-challenged adults. Last November she began work as a client services coordinator for Para-Med Home Health Care (Vancouver).

At Para-Med she is responsible for coordinating the needs of clients who require varying levels of care.

"I do a lot of juggling," says Greer. "Some of the seniors, disabled or men-

tal health patients we service may need just two hours a week of personal care or help with housekeeping and some may need as much as two hours a day seven days a week."

She organizes the schedules of the home support workers, making sure they work their full allotment of hours and that they don't get assignments too geographically separated from one another. She has a list of regular full-time and part-time workers and casuals. Casuals submit the hours they are available

every three months, and the regulars have a set amount of hours they work. She matches up the clients' needs with the home support workers.

"And things can change for a client; they may not need us anymore, or may not need us one week," says Greer. "And that can cause a whole chain reaction." She has to know which clients are more flexible, who doesn't mind having their schedule changed.

That's when she calls on the experience and knowledge of the home support workers, who usually know their clients very well. "They know all their idiosyncracies. I rely on them, and they rely on each other, too. You have to be a team player here — absolutely necessary."



ON THE JOB

VOICES

Why lock chaos into place?

by Marjorie Griffin Cohen

Deregulation of electricity markets in California and Alberta has resulted in brown-outs, huge price increases for electricity users, and possibilities of future shortages that could send prices sky-high. Are people in B.C. prepared for the same? There are mighty forces that want to see an integrated electricity market for the continent — a move that would mirror what has happened to natural gas prices. Unless Canadian governments take strong and firm action to prevent this, we could lose the advantages of having B.C. Hydro in the public sector.

While the current focus in B.C. is on gas prices, there are good reasons to worry about a similar pattern developing for electricity prices. The main difference between these two industries now is that gas markets are controlled by the private sector in B.C., while electricity production and distribution are still a regulated public monopoly. This has ensured stable, low prices — an asset that could draw businesses looking for a predictable energy supply to B.C.

The deregulation and privatization of electricity are occurring rapidly throughout North America, and many argue that B.C. must



'B.C. and Quebec are in a prime position to make energy deregulation an issue'

move in the same direction. But a debate about whether electricity should be deregulated could become irrelevant if a U.S. proposal for the international treatment of energy succeeds at the World Trade Organization's negotiations on services, the General Agreement on Trade in Services.

The U.S. submissions to the WTO simply assume that deregulation is beneficial to everyone because it lowers prices and ensures a reliable supply, a false assertion as the California experience shows. In B.C., where electricity supply is reliable and costs are low, any international regulatory changes that could force the disintegration of the public monopoly should be a high political priority.

The U.S. proposals specifically call for measures that will provide secure access to energy outside national boundaries by creating rules that would extend and lock into place the deregulation agenda — including having all government energy monopolies eliminated.

The federal government appears to have little interest in heeding provincial concerns on energy — B.C. and Quebec are in a prime position to make energy deregulation an issue. They should seek to protect their citizens and industries from locking in U.S.-style deregulation. B.C. must also re-examine its electricity export policy — the hunger for export markets is clouding its vision of how to manage energy in the public interest.

• Marjorie Griffin Cohen is a research associate with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and was formerly on the board of B.C. Hydro.

care issues

Health care? Or tax cuts?

The Liberal promise to protect health care while slashing taxes doesn't compute. Even the Liberals' business backers acknowledge that cuts to public services like health care would result from massive tax cuts.

With the economy on the mend and the province's finances in good order, we can't afford to gamble health care on tax cuts that favour corporations and the wealthy.

Privatization

British Columbians reject two-tiered medicine and that principle has been reinforced with legislation and a strong record of public health spending over the last 10 years.

The Liberals have a checkered past when it comes to the principle of public health care delivery. And they're backed by drug, insurance and other health-related corporations.

Caring for seniors

Responding to calls from seniors' organizations and health unions for better long-term care, the government has provided more beds and funded five public, non-profit pilot projects we can build upon.

But the Liberals and their business backers know that seniors' care and housing are growth industries, already proven profitable. In fact, some party members say that market forces should drive costs when it comes to health care.

Health reform

During the last decade, health care workers won a voice on health boards and councils. And recent legislation administratively merges facilities and community health services delivery — strengthening the entire continuum of care.

The Liberals are toying with the idea of dividing up the Ministry of Health and they'd review health care governance at the local level.

According to pundits, the B.C. Liberals have this election in the bag and Gordon Campbell will finally assume the premier's mantle. A Liberal landslide is guaranteed — right? But there's more at stake for HEU members and for Medicare than just who wins and loses the May 16 vote. Rather, the outcome needs to be looked at in terms of how many strong voices are elected that will support Medicare and advocate in the legislature for the needs and views of front-line health care workers.

HEU members play a pivotal role in any provincial election. We bring to the campaign trail a strong record of activism to improve conditions for health care workers and a passion to defend and improve our public Medicare system. We've been able to link our own brand of activism with support in the political arena. We've made gains because we've elected politicians who share our vision for change.

But if we believe the pundits, there aren't going to be many strong political voices speaking out with us. So before you vote, let's look at the last 10 years of NDP government. Let's balance that against what's ahead under a Liberal regime.

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Gordon Campbell's Liberals, backed by every major media outlet and the entire business community, are determined to win. Ujjal Dosanjh and the NDP are committed to building on 10 years in office. Ultimately, it comes down to a simple question. Which leader — Ujjal Dosanjh or Gordon Campbell — do you consider best suited to advance the needs of working families? We believe the choice is clear. We're supporting Ujjal Dosanjh and the NDP."

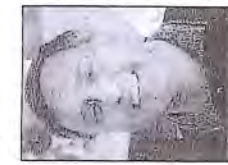
Jim Sinclair, president, B.C. Federation of Labour

They're off and running

Electing strong voices for Medicare the best outcome

"I wasn't happy with the Health Labour Accord [employment] in 1995. That's just the way it was. I am not tearing up any agreements."

LIBERAL LEADER,
GORDON CAMPBELL



"For me, there is no room for private health care in B.C. The Liberals don't believe in that. That is the defining difference between us and them."

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HEU/CUPE members are proud to run



Colleen Fitzpatrick
North Coast
HEU's 3rd VP's record of union activism makes her a strong NDP contender in a solid labour riding.



Erda Walsh
East Kootenay
This incumbent NDP MLA and HEU member from Cranbrook Regional Hospital, was a city councillor before moving to provincial politics.



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Kishi is a dedicated HEU member and social justice advocate who's active on several municipal committees.



Ruth Adams
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Hospital member and NDP candidate Adams is a local shop steward and a member of the hospital's Diversity, and Health & Safety committees.



Joanna Grant
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HEU Care Aide Grant is eager to use her extensive labour background to represent working people as an NDP MLA.



Kimberley McIvor
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McIvor, an HEU member and cook supervisor at Quesnel's G.R. Baker Hospital, is running as an independent.



Ken Landgraf
Coquitlam-Maillardville
NDP candidate Landgraf is a long-time CUPE activist/leader and community volunteer in the Tri-Cities area.



Simon Challenger
Fort Langley-Aldergrove
As the NDP candidate, CUPE local 23 president Challenger will use his trade union experience and knowledge.

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Let's go back seven years and remember the unparalleled employment security provisions that B.C. health care workers won. It helped us avoid the upheaval, job losses and wage roll-backs our counterparts elsewhere in Canada faced.

You won't read this in your local newspaper, but over the last decade, our NDP government has been the strongest defender of public Medicare and the harshest critic of privatization anywhere in Canada.

Will there be strong voices to defend Medicare post-election in the Liberal camp? Campbell and crew learned their lesson in 1996 when the Liberal leader's health care policies contributed to his electoral failure. Remember the attacks on our employment security agreement? Or the musings about funding cuts and the filtration with private health care?

All that's changed now. With the more middle-of-the-road approach that's taken recently, the Liberal leader is singing a different tune. He says he's committed to maintaining health funding, is now opposed to private clinics and speaks respectfully about the roles played by HEU members. He says we don't have to worry about privatization, and his line on training for LPNs and Care Aides sounds progressive.

Get registered to vote

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is called. They will be set up in shops and other convenient areas. After the eighth day, registration is permitted only in conjunction with voting. Qualified voters may register while casting their ballots. To register while voting, a voter must provide two pieces of personal identification showing their name, current address and signature.



Pay equity

Close the gap
Women have lobbied tirelessly for pay equity and the government's listened.

The new pay equity legislation makes it illegal for private and public sector employers to compensate women and men differently for work of equal value. It's a positive step for women.

The Liberals have been very critical of the legislation but silent when it comes to putting forward their own solution. And private industry claims it can look after its own. Who do you think the Liberals listen to, women or industry?



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The B.C. government has taken important steps towards a child care guarantee for every B.C. family. The Child Care

B.C. program provides before and after-school care for kids from kindergarten to age 12. Parents save up to \$1,100 per child per year.

But is access to child care and family bonuses for low and modest income families at risk from the deep tax cuts promised by the Gordon Campbell Liberals?



Education

Everyone's right
Reduced class sizes in grades K-12, 6,000 new teachers, frozen tuition fees for post-secondary students, expanded

student financial assistance — these important investments in British Columbians will pay off in the new economy.

The B.C. Liberals won't commit to the union freeze and encourage "vouchers" and charter schools that would undermine public education. And with a dramatic tax cut being the Liberals' first priority, how secure is our education investment?

plus another 6 that matter to HEU members

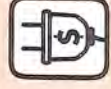


Land Claims

Make it right
More progress has been made on settling the long-standing land claims of B.C.

First Nations in the last 10 years than in the previous hundred. The landmark Nisga'a Treaty and many more framework agreements are about justice and respect for First Nations while delivering economic stability to many parts of British Columbia.

But Gordon Campbell's Liberals fought tooth and nail against the Nisga'a Treaty and even went to court to stop it. Can we afford to throw out 10 years of progress?



Hydro

Power for the people — not profit
As a publicly-owned crown corporation, B.C. Hydro has protected consumers

from the massive price hikes affecting Albertans and Californians in their deregulated markets. In fact, hydro prices have been frozen for seven years while \$2.5 billion in electricity profits have been used to offset federal cuts to health and education.

The Liberals have back-pedalled on their plans for B.C. Hydro privatization. But they can't decide — or won't say — what plans they do have for B.C. Hydro.



Environment

A healthy future?
Balancing environmental sustainability with economic growth is a tough job but

over the last 10 years, the NDP government has taken many measures to achieve a healthy future. B.C. has doubled its parks and protected areas safeguarding 12 per cent of the land base. Fresh water exports are banned and legislation protecting drinking water passed. The Liberals' business backers want to gut the Forest Practices Code and reduce environmental assessments for new mining.

Good for business. Bad for the environment.



A SPECIAL PULL OUT SECTION: HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

election toolbox

2001

Health care workers have a huge stake in the outcome of the B.C. election. We've prepared this "toolbox" to pinpoint issues, compare positions and offer analysis so that HEU members have all the tools when it comes time to vote. Read on, and check out our comprehensive election site at www.heu.org.

- four key health care issues
- six other key issues
- comments from Ujjal Dosanjh, Gordon Campbell, Jim Sinclair
- critical ridings
- HEU/CUPE candidates
- how to register
- tall tax tales
- HEU video on tax cuts
- post-election health care agenda
- links
- in their own words

2001
Election
Toolkit



why this election is important



Chris Allnutt
HEU secretary-business manager

Setting the post-election agenda

With B.C.'s major media having all but sworn in Gordon Campbell as premier, many union members feel they have no say in the election outcome.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Between now and May 16, we have an opportunity to make our mark on the post-election agenda.

Our assessment is that a re-elected NDP government would best protect Medicare and the interests of working people. But whatever the outcome, we must use this election to make the new government responsive to challenges on health care's front lines.



Fred Muzin
HEU president

Examine the record – carefully

The Liberals would like to reduce this election to the NDP record on fast ferries.

But the record is a lot longer and it includes a decade of increasing health care funding, employment security, a progressive labour code and a unified bargaining unit for all facilities and community-based workers.

The Liberals promise deep tax cuts that will compromise health care spending. They oppose employment security, the labour code and recent legislation that brought down the community/facilities "wall." Examine the record carefully – and make your vote count on May 16.



Mary LaPlante
HEU financial secretary

Ten years of progress for working women

A decade of NDP government in B.C. has been a decade in which women have made broad social and economic progress.

Low wage redress and pay equity for women on the front lines of health care and community social services, pay equity legislation for the private sector, protected access to abortion services, a universal child care program – these are concrete gains that are worth protecting.

Women make up more than half of B.C. voters – let's make issues of equality and fairness front and centre in this election.

election toolbox

2001

4 key health care issues



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All that's changed now. With the more middle-of-the-road approach that he's taken recently, the Liberal leader is singing a different tune. He says he's committed to maintaining health funding, is now opposed to private clinics and speaks respectfully about the roles played by HEU members. He says we don't have to worry about privatization, and his line on training for LPNs and Care Aides sounds progressive.

But there are three key reasons why a Campbell government may not stack up to be a strong voice defending health care workers and Medicare. First is his campaign to make B.C. income tax levels the lowest in Canada. Despite the contrary analysis of a wide array of economic experts, Campbell claims tax cuts will increase, not decrease government revenues, and safeguard health funding.

Even his business allies acknowledge that deep tax cuts will have to be paid for through spending cuts. It's hard to figure how health care could avoid that axe, especially when other tax cutting premiers like Mike Harris and Ralph Klein have inflicted huge cuts in their provinces.

Second, go down the Liberal bench a few spots. Scratch the surface, strip away the veneer and what do you find? A number of MLAs who have trouble putting Campbell's "respect" for front-line health care workers into practice. Like Kamloops MLA Kevin Krueger and his infamous "toilet cleaner" remarks. Will these MLAs be speaking out strongly for Medicare in the next sitting of the legislature?

Finally, let's not overlook the powerful business groups who bankroll Campbell's campaign. These interests have no trouble spelling out their agenda: that HEU members are overpaid, that health care services should be privatized, key public services downsized and environmental protections relaxed.

No matter which party forms government, HEU members will still be fighting for public health care. But our voices will be stronger if there are MLAs elected on May 16 who have a proven commitment to Medicare, working people and a fair and just economy and society.

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Does your vote matter?

You bet it does! A few votes in

ridings across B.C. can mean the

difference between winning and

losing. We need to ensure that strong voices are elected to speak

out for health care after the election. How close was it in 1996?

Razor thin in a number of contests. HEU member Erda Walsh

won Kootenay for the NDP by 466 votes. And Liberal Kevin

Krueger of toilet cleaner fame won his Kamloops riding by 368

votes. Surf HEU's website election tool kit at <www.heu.org>

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In their own words

What they say at election time is one thing. What they said before is another. Check out these choice bon mots.

"This is strictly a payback to HEU."

COLIN HANSEN, Liberal health critic, on legislation to eliminate the wall between facility and community health workers

"I don't think it's fair to say doctors and nurses should be well paid and everybody else shouldn't be."

MIKE FARNWORTH, NDP, responding to charges that HEU members are overpaid

"Toilet cleaners."

KEVIN KRUEGER, Liberal MLA, referring to housekeepers and cleaners at Royal Inland Hospital

"The B.C. Liberals recognize the importance of HEU workers to the public health care system."

GORDON CAMPBELL, Liberal leader

"I believe health care workers deserve every penny they get-caring for British Columbians."

UJJAL DOSANJH, Premier

Government "has basically given to the union bosses in the HEU a huge wack of taxpayers' money."

COLIN HANSEN on HEU's pay equity plan

THE POST-ELECTION HEALTH CARE AGENDA

The key issues B.C.'s new government will have to take on to modernize Medicare

Here are the top issues that will dominate the post-election debate about health care and the future of public Medicare. Use them as talking points to engage candidates during the election campaign, to find out where they stand.

Keep it public

Post election, Medicare will continue to face threats from proponents of two-tiered care. And Ottawa's upcoming inquiry into public health care could spark more privatization. A new government must move to combat the privatization threat, act to ban private surgical clinics, and reduce out-of-pocket health care costs. Ending doctors' fee-for-service payments is another element in a plan to modernize – not privatize – Medicare.

An affordable drug plan

Prescription drugs are the fastest growing health care cost. And with more care based in the community, people pay out-of-pocket for drugs that are covered during a hospital stay. B.C. needs to shore up our Pharmacare drug plan, and maintain reference-based pricing – which has saved \$200 million in five years – to limit the huge profits of drug companies. And the next government must advocate strongly for a national drug program.

Broad-based solutions to the nursing crunch

Wage increases are only a partial answer to the nursing shortage. B.C. must press forward with an innovative, broad-based

plan to harness the skills and potential of a wide range of nursing staff including RNs, LPNs, Care Aides, and home support workers. It means new roles, expanded training, and erasing barriers for foreign-trained nurses already resident here.

Caring for our seniors

With an aging population, B.C. needs a comprehensive elder care strategy. One that reduces pressures on hospitals and provides seniors with the quality of care they deserve. That means building more not-for-profit care beds, expanding home support, and fast-tracking other progressive housing solutions. It must also recognize that tens of thousands of seniors – mostly women – live in poverty.

Keeping people healthy

Health promotion should be a top priority. That means looking at "health care" in new ways. Where government policies to promote a clean environment, social housing, jobs and decent incomes are just as important as having the latest cutting-edge medical technology on hand. Shifting resources to keep people healthy instead of treating them when they're sick is crucial for the future of Medicare.

Build it up, don't tear it down!

There may be a post-election move to carve up the health ministry. One new ministry would deal with acute care only, the other with continuing and community care. Such a move would be a setback for progressive health care reform. Instead, a new government should press aggressively to break down barriers to more closely integrate hospital and vital community services like home support.

Tall tax tales

Tax cuts aren't all they are cracked up to be

Gordon Campbell and his Liberals are promising tax cuts if they form the next government. They say the economy will flourish to the benefit of us all. Marc Lee, research economist with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, takes a close look at some "tall tales" surrounding the issue of tax cuts.

Tax rage or wage rage? While taxes rose modestly over the 1990s, incomes in Canada were stagnant. From 1989 to 1997, average family incomes declined by 5.2 per cent in B.C.

Personal taxes in B.C. are among Canada's lowest. A family of four with an average income of \$55,000 pays 23.4 per cent of their income in total federal and provincial taxes, less than in every province but Alberta.

Our taxes are in line with other industrialized nations. Canada's tax revenues as a share of GDP are in the middle of OECD countries. And taking

labour markets, social programs and taxes together, most Canadians get a better deal in Canada than the U.S.

Tax cuts are not a very potent tonic to economic ills. While tax cuts do have a stimulative effect, they are likely to be modest.

Tax cuts do not lead to increased government revenues. Tax revenues grow primarily because of economic growth, which tends to boost revenues whether tax rates are going up or down. In particular, tax cuts for the wealthy will have less of a stimulative impact than tax cuts for low and middle income earners.

Tax cuts deliver most of the gains to the well-off. While "tax rage" is being sold to the general public, those at the middle or bottom of the income ladder are unlikely to receive a tax cut of any significance. Moreover, because taxes are the means by which we

support social programs, cuts to these programs will represent the true cost of tax cuts.

HEU video takes on tax cuts, too

The 20-minute video, called *Health care or tax cuts?*, is based on the front-line experiences of Ontario health care workers who have battled against the devastating impacts of Mike Harris' tax cuts, concrete proof that Gordon Campbell's pledge to wield the same axe to tax levels in B.C. has profound implications for our health care system. Call Gail Paquette at 604-742-8814 for your free copy.



Get help at <www.heu.org>

There's even more election-related information available on HEU's website. Just click on the 2001 Election Toolkit icon and you'll have access to voter registration info, full-length interviews with Ujjal Dosanjh and Gordon Campbell and links to political party and other election-related web sites. Check it out at <www.heu.org>.



Jenny tells the story of her name

by Jenny Zhang

On July 5, 1962, a girl was born in Beijing, China, daughter of an army journalist. Her black eyes were twinkling and her lovely face looked like a red apple. The journalist named the girl Xiao-Hong Zhang. Xiao means "little and cute," Hong means "red" and Zhang is the family name. The journalist was my dad and the little girl was me.

One day, I asked my dad why he named me Hong. He said that he was serving in the Liberation Army – the successor of the Red Army. He told me I was the offspring of the Red Army. He also said that Hong means happy. I was quite impressed that my dad gave me so many explanations about my name. From this I could feel how much he loved me and how many expectations he had of me.

After finishing grade 12, I went to medical college. There was another girl in the college whose name was the same as mine. This caused confusion. I asked my dad to change my name for me. He gave me a new name – Xue Hong. Xue means "learn." In my deepest heart, I dreamed of greater knowledge, more education and truer freedom. I was just like a poor little bird born in a cage eager to fly.

After graduating, I went to work in a hospital and went to university to take English courses. There are many nice stories in the



'I dreamed of greater knowledge, more education and truer freedom'

English texts. I was so impressed by those stories that I was encouraged to read more. One of my favourite novels was *Love Story* by Eric Segal. I was so moved by the story that I read it over and over, and each time I was in tears. I identified with Jenny.

As time passed, China started to open to the world. We had more and more foreigners around. I had an opportunity to work for an American company in Beijing as an interpreter. When I met the American manager and his wife, I was trying to introduce myself. I knew it was hard for them to pronounce my Chinese name, and I thought of Jenny in the novel. At that moment I all of a sudden thought of the novel and said, "My name is Jenny."

Now I, the lucky little bird, got a chance to fly. I came to Canada – one of the best countries in the world. My eyes totally opened. For the first time in my life, I got to know the western world and a developed country. I learned the meaning of freedom and human rights. It is necessary for me to have an English name, easier to pronounce. Every time someone says, "Hi, Jenny!" I feel good. In this free country, I am not a "little red girl" anymore. I will be able to do what I want to do. I am working hard on my English, my education and my job. I am looking forward to the day when I get my Canadian citizenship identification with my full name on it. My name is Jenny Xue-hong Zhang. I like my name.

• This is an excerpt of an essay written by Jenny Xue-Hong Zhang for her class in VGH's BEST program. Zhang is a building maintenance worker at that facility.

Health board attempts IS integration

HEU staff working in information systems at Richmond Hospital know how important the union's demand for "one contract for all" is. Their recent experience with the employer's Information Technologies Integration (ITI) project demonstrated how facilities sector workers could find themselves working in the community simply by moving office.

The Vancouver/Richmond Health Board has been working to integrate its information systems with those of Richmond Hospital, a plan that would have facilities sector hospital workers placed under the community sector contract.

"The health board's ITI project illustrates the need for one contract for all workers in hospitals, long-term care facilities or community health," says HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt.

V/RHB bureaucrats recently put the plan on hold to figure out how to include Vancouver Hospital and Health Sciences Centre in their ITI exercise.

Affected locals are forming an inter-local sub-committee to develop an information alert campaign so impacted workers are involved in any further integration efforts.

Research takes look at foreign-trained nurses

B.C. needs broad-based strategies to solve the current nursing shortage. That's why HEU and others are looking to enable underemployed, foreign-trained nurses to work in their professions. "Underemployed, foreign-trained nurses" refers to nurses educated and registered in another country who are now working in non-nursing positions in B.C.

Many nurses trained in Asia, Eastern Europe and Central and South America, are employed as Care Aides, home care workers, cleaners, cooks or in other non-nursing jobs. For various reasons they've been unable to work as registered nurses in B.C.

Many of them would like to re-enter the nursing profession and, increasingly, employers are recognizing the recruitment potential within the existing workforce. With financial and other support, these nurses would be available in a short time frame to fill nursing vacancies.

With funding from the Ministry of Multiculturalism and Immigration, HEU along with Vancouver/Richmond Health Region employers and the B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union, recently completed a research

project into the underutilization of foreign-trained professionals in acute, continuing and home care settings throughout the Lower Mainland.

It examined the barriers they face and identified potential solutions and opportunities for improved recognition and utilization of their skills.

As a result, HEU and participating employers have proposed a pilot project to the Ministry of Health which would support registration and employment for a group of underemployed, foreign-trained nurses and to lay a foundation for future work in this area.

The proposal for a pilot project was developed by HEU and participating employers from the Vancouver/Richmond and Simon Fraser health regions in collaboration with the BCGEU, the



IMMIGRANTS to Canada like LPN Ellen Chan who are qualified registered nurses in their countries of origin are often not allowed to work in this country as an RN.

Healthcare Labour Adjustment Agency, and educators.

The pilot, if funded by the Ministry of Health, would begin in May and be completed in the summer of 2002.

Watch your union bulletin board or the HEU web site, <www.heu.org> for more information as the project gets up and running.

Privatization saps democracy, says CUPE report

CUPE's third annual report on privatization – *Dollars and Democracy* – looks at the active role played by the federal government in pushing privatization and in so doing undermining democracy. CUPE's research demonstrates, moreover, that privatization does not save the taxpayer money.

It takes a close look at the encroachment of corporate interests into public

services like education, health care, electrical utilities and child care.

The federal Liberals, following in Brian Mulroney's footsteps, have been aggressively pushing the privatization of these public services. The first step on this road was to cut transfer payments to the provinces, undercutting their ability to adequately fund their important public programs without raising taxes – a highly unpopular option, cutting other government services or approaching the private sector to "partner" with them in providing these services. The latter choice accounts for the proliferation of pub-

lic/private partnerships in the health care sector.

Especially vulnerable to private intrusion on public turf is long-term care. Private corporations see the looming bulge in the seniors' population as a bonanza. Those corporations want to get in on the guaranteed stream of public funding that comes with long-term care, says the report, but new research actually shows public, not-for-profit long-term care provides better quality care for patients and better support to their families.

Dollars and Democracy highlights how public services are threatened by inter-

national trade agreements. "Federal negotiators are cooking up trade deals that propel us down the road to ever-greater corporate control of vital public services," says CUPE president Judy Darcy. "They risk destroying the very things that make Canada such an attractive place to live and invest – the services that create the common wealth that makes us a great democracy."

The report contains prescriptions and a plan for action for renewing and strengthening public services and can be downloaded from the CUPE website at <www.cupe.ca> or obtained by calling HEU's Provincial Office.

tentative agreement

After 13 weeks of intensive bargaining, HEU members in the facilities subsector are voting on a tentative agreement, the community agreement has been ratified and legislation ensuring they'll be sitting at the same table next time around



Community health care workers from St. James Community Service Society and their supporters marched from Oppenheimer Park in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside to their workplace to draw attention to the gap that exists between their wages and those of workers in hospitals and long-term care homes.

paid off with the passage of legislation that brings down the community/facilities labour relations wall and puts all health services and support workers at the same table next time around.

On April 5, after three months of intense bargaining that included three days of limited job action in the facilities subsector, a three-year tentative agreement was reached for HEU's 43,000 hospital and long-term care members that includes measures to increase staffing in long-term care, guarantee access to training and make health care workplaces safer.

A week earlier, a tentative agreement reached for HEU's community subsector members includes a parity guarantee and better allowances and scheduling provisions.

And significantly, despite employer attempts to roll back vacation, injury-on-duty leave and the pay equity plan, there are no concessions in either tentative settlements.

"There's no doubt that the 90 per cent strike vote drove employer concessions off the bargaining table," says HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt.

"But more importantly, union members were out in the community advocating for forward-looking measures in the agreement that would deal with the stresses and strains on health care's front lines," adds Allnutt. "As a result, we've made concrete gains meaning better working conditions for our members and better care for the public." Among those gains is \$15 million allocated for 300 new positions in long-term care, agreement on a no-manual lifting of patients/residents policy in the facilities subsector and new language on workload that covers both subsectors.

The agreement also contains a strong compensation package that raises the average hourly wage of a facilities member to more than \$21 an hour by 2003 while providing additional compen-

'We've made concrete gains meaning better working conditions for our members'

During the last few weeks, HEU members have capped years of bargaining history with remarkable new gains that provide economic security, improved caring conditions and equal treatment for union members. In a three-pronged effort, union members reached tentative settlements in both the community and facilities subsector that achieved the goals of wage and benefit equity for 1,600 community caregivers and about 5,000 members from "non-levelled" long-term care facilities. At the same time, hard work by union activists over many years

our bargaining story

2000

Oct. 23-25 Activists set bargaining agenda at HEU's 15th Wage Policy Conference

Dec. 19 HEU and bargaining partners including BCGEU and UFCW present a progressive bargaining agenda called Five Steps Forward as community and facilities workers begin bargaining together for first time

2001

Jan. 10 Talks resume on a three-day a week schedule as both sides begin tabling proposals

Jan. 11 Employers table "retro" concessions targeting vacation, hours of work and benefits for injured workers, but agree achieving a deal before March 31 is a priority

Feb. 8 Testimonials from frontline care providers at the bargaining table open the bosses' eyes about impact of short staffing in long-term care. Later, HEU trades members made special presentations on maintenance standards

Feb. 20 Seniors' and disabled advocacy groups pledge support for union efforts to improve staffing

levels in long-term care

Feb. 24 HEU holds three days of regional job action conferences to take stock of bargaining and plan creative ways to press the boss

March 1 HEABC finally tables compensation offer, but only for facilities caregivers

March 2 Combined community/facilities strike vote called, set for March 8-16

March 9 HEABC tables compensation offer for community

March 19 The verdict: 90 per cent support strike action

March 29 Groundbreaking tentative community agreement won, but strike notice issued for facilities

March 30 Bizarre LRB ruling means unions must re-serve strike notice, site by site

March 31 Facilities contract expires, unions re-issue strike notice for April 3

April 2 Job action starts with leafleting at some hospitals and long-term care facilities

April 3 More job action in selected sites, Supreme Court rejects bosses' bid



to overturn essential service orders to prevent job action

April 5 Limited job action, tentative agreement reached

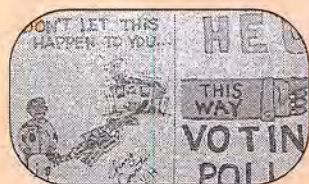
April 11, 17-18 Community ratification votes

April 26-May 3 Facilities ratification votes

kudos for creativity

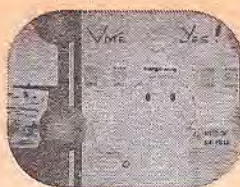
HEU members attending the Job Action Conferences in late February dreamed up all kinds of interesting ways they could get the bargaining message across back in the workplace. No one can say that HEU isn't colourful – and tasteful – in its negotiating tactics!

Voters at St. Vincent's Hospital in Vancouver were sure not to get lost with a



colourful (and big) poster pointing the way to the polls.

A great way to show off stickers is on a royal blue (HEU's colour) sweat-shirt, like this community sector member did for the rally at Oppenheimer Park.



Union members plastered the union bulletin board with all the stickers and union memorabilia they could find to boost the spirits and resolve of HEU members in Penticton Regional Hospital.

Sunwood local members from Langley's Maplewood House baked up a batch of cookies too good to resist and presented these tempting messages

to their manager. They told him he was welcome to take them to the next HEABC meeting, too!

Children's and Women's local activists love those disposable white overalls! They're just perfect to show off all the colourful stickers.

Prince George Regional Hospital members welcomed the regional health board chair,



CEO and a handful of Liberal hopefuls with a healthy serving of "workplace soup" during their specially-arranged tour of the facility. The "soup" was made from ingredients like employment security, compensation, respect and accountability.

sation for ticketed trades and maintenance supervisors. Pay equity adjustments are boosted to 3.7 per cent over the three years. The agreement also increases shift, weekend and on-call premiums and improves prescription and medical transportation benefits.

HEU and its union bargaining partners closely coordinated their efforts at both the community and facilities subsector bargaining tables. And it was this unprecedented solidarity among union members, says Allnutt, that won parity for community caregivers and equity for thousands of long-term care workers who've been subject to a discriminatory pay and benefit regime.

In the end, the bargaining committee won an agreement that provides equity for the latter group including levelled wages (with built-in comparability) as of April 1, 2001 and six months of retroactivity. Full benefits and pension coverage are phased in over the term of the agreement.

"Combined with the parity guarantee for community caregivers," says Allnutt, "it means that workers will have their work valued equitably no matter what their care setting. It also means our province is the only jurisdiction in North America that has a common wage and benefit grid for all long-term care and hospital workers while taking measures to raise the wages and working conditions of community caregivers to the same level.

"It's a significant achievement for 15,000 community caregivers and leaders from all the unions agree that it would not have been possible without the solidarity of HEU's 43,000 hospital and long-term care members," adds Allnutt.

Community parity is achieved through comparability/standardization adjustments totaling three per cent of straight time payroll for the subsector. These equity payments will be allocated annually for wage and benefit improvements for as long as it takes to close the gap between community and facilities health workers. The gap is currently estimated to be about 25 per cent.

The community agreement will set a new benchmark for community social services workers, whose own struggle for parity is closely linked to improvements in the community contract.

Other highlights in the tentative community settlement include increased benefits for casuals, higher overnight and live-in allowance minimums, and improved scheduling provisions. Casuals will be able to subscribe for benefits and pay for coverage.

The tentative settlement also fast tracks the overdue payment of five per cent in equity adjustments under the 1998-2001 community agreement.

Allnutt says that the timing of the contract settlements was not related to the dropping of the election writ, and the bargaining priorities of health care workers would have been the same regardless of which party was in power. "Could we have made the same gains under a different government? I'll take my cue from the Liberal's cool response to legislation tearing down the wall between community and facilities workers," Allnutt said.



video watch

HEU produced three special videos earlier this year to support member education and mobilizing. Our "new releases" highlighted our past accomplishments, spotlighted efforts to win safer workplaces, and tackled the injury-on-duty concession demand. Thanks to HEU members who had starring roles!

- 1 – The 1990s: a decade of bargaining accomplishments
- 2 – No manual lifts!
- 3 – Adding insult to injury

here's what we accomplished

The tentative community and facilities deals deliver on priorities set by HEU members. And the breakthrough to win legislation to tear down the wall means that next time community and facilities workers will bargain one contract.

Facilities settlement

- three-year term expiring March 31, 2004;
- general wage increases of 39 cents an hour in year one, two per cent in year two, and the greater of 1.5 per cent or cost of living adjustment in year three;
- equity for "non-levelled" union members and for new certifications including wages, benefits, pensions and language;
- pay equity adjustments of 3.7 per cent;
- increases to shift, weekend, on-call premiums;
- improved extended health benefits;
- guaranteed funding for the labour adjustment

and occupational health and safety agencies;

- \$15 million for approximately 300 new long-term care staff;

Community settlement

- three-year term expiring March 31, 2004;
- acknowledges that wage and benefits gap between the community and facilities subsectors needs to be eliminated;
- establishes parity adjustments of three per cent to be paid April 1 each year until the wage and benefit gap is closed;
- additional wage increases of two per cent April 1, 2001, and April 1, 2002; plus a cost of living increase or 1.5 per cent, whichever is greater on April 1, 2003;
- improved benefits for casuals;
- occupational health and safety provisions to make the workplace safer and address workload;
- scheduling improvements for home support workers.

- commitment to a "no manual lifting of patients/residents" policy;
- annual trades adjustment plus progress on apprenticeships.

The wall tumbles down

Another major gain was won on the legislative front to put an end to the low wage ghetto in the community. On April 11, the NDP used its majority to pass Bill 23 to tear down the wall dividing community and facilities workers. Gordon Campbell and the B.C. Liberals were opposed to the move that Premier Ujjal Dosanjh had publicly committed to last fall. But HEU's chief bargaining spokesperson Chris Allnutt says he was disappointed with comments about Bill 23 from Liberal Colin Hansen, who initially said it was a "payoff" to HEU. "On the eve of an election, it certainly was a defining moment," he says. "It sure signals how we might have fared if we were bargaining under a Liberal government."

APRIL 28

International Day of Mourning for workers killed or injured on the job

APRIL 28

May Day dinner, 7 p.m., Maritime Labour Centre, Vancouver, Dr. Manuel Rozental, former deputy minister of Health in Colombia, tickets: \$35, 254-0703

MAY 1

Reclaim May Day!, 11 a.m., Victory Square (Hastings and Cambie), Vancouver

MAY 16

Provincial election

MAY 23-25

PE meeting

MAY 29

Forum, What are the solidarity issues related to China?, 7 p.m., Featured speaker Kent Wong, UCLA, BCGEU, 3030 East Broadway, Vancouver

JUNE 14-16

CUPE B.C. Convention, Victoria

JUNE 19-21

PE meeting

Mother's wish is granted

THANKS TO the efforts of a group of Guatemalan/Canadians – many of them HEU members from Tilbury Laundry Services – 11-year-old Valeria Morales Clavijo of Guatemala will soon be able to walk.

Rolando Figueroa, one of the HEU members at Tilbury, is the president of an organization called the Fraternity to Help Guatemalan Children. Most of its 27 members came to Canada in the 1980s and 1990s as refugees from war and repression. They formed the group to help children caught in the consequences of the conflict in their country.

Since the formation of the Fraternity in 1994, they have been able to fund 19 projects. With limited funds, garnered mostly from membership fees, car washes and garage sales, they have been able, for example, to send school supplies to the village of La Quetzal and help build an expansion to a school in another village in Huehuetenango.

"We receive many petitions for help," says Figueroa. "We study the projects and decide which ones we can help."

In June 1999, they received a letter from Pilar Clavijo. Her daughter Valeria was suffering from a birth defect that twisted her legs inward and was pre-



THE SMILES on the faces of Pilar Clavijo and Valeria Morales speak volumes as they talk to Rolando Figueroa about their imminent return to Guatemala.

venting her from walking.

In Guatemala, says Figueroa, there are good doctors, but no equipment.

Clavijo, originally from Colombia, and her husband are not well off. Not owning a car proved to be an obstacle to Valeria's medical treatment. "When Valeria was small enough, I carried her to the clinic – taking three buses each way. When I

couldn't carry her anymore, it just wasn't possible to continue her treatment," she says.

She began writing to international organizations, asking for help. When Valeria was seven, the Colombian government helped by sending her to Texas for an assessment. The doctors there said they would knock \$30,000 off the hundred thousand the treatment normally costs. "How could we afford \$70,000?" says Clavijo.

She continued her search for help.

One of her letters landed in the Fraternity's mailbox just when Figueroa was leaving for a trip to Guatemala. He was able to personally evaluate the situation, and he promised Clavijo he would try to help.

Following a suggestion from then

health minister Penny Priddy, he contacted the Anastasia Foundation which brings children to Canada for medical treatment. They have the infrastructure in place to deal with immigration, liaising with hospitals, fundraising, etc., and agreed to help.

Valeria arrived with her mother in early December 2000, and doctors Beauchamp and Raleigh operated on Dec. 27

at Children's Hospital.

Doctors say she will probably be walking in about five months.

After four to eight weeks of physiotherapy she returned to Guatemala with her mother, who had learned how to help her daughter once they returned home. Now Valeria is well on her way to being able to run and play with her little brother.

Figueroa says bringing Valeria to B.C. was very gratifying for the Fraternity, but it's not likely to happen again soon. Although the Anastasia Foundation took on the responsibility of arranging everything and paid the money upfront, the Fraternity has committed to raising \$10,000 to help pay for some of the costs. "But the smile on her face was worth it," he says.

'She will probably be walking in about five months'

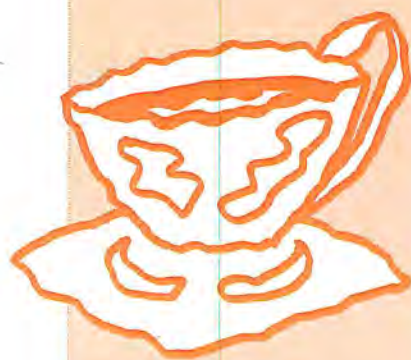
WORKING TV

On the web, now in Broadband: available across B.C. and all of North America, check out the new high quality webcasts by our new Broadband server at <www.workingtv.com>.

On community television: Good news for Lower Mainland viewers. Shaw cable has taken over from Rogers as of Dec. 1, but has agreed NOT to cut programming, including Working TV until September 2001. Watch this space for news on the campaign to keep community access television on Shaw.



Coffee break



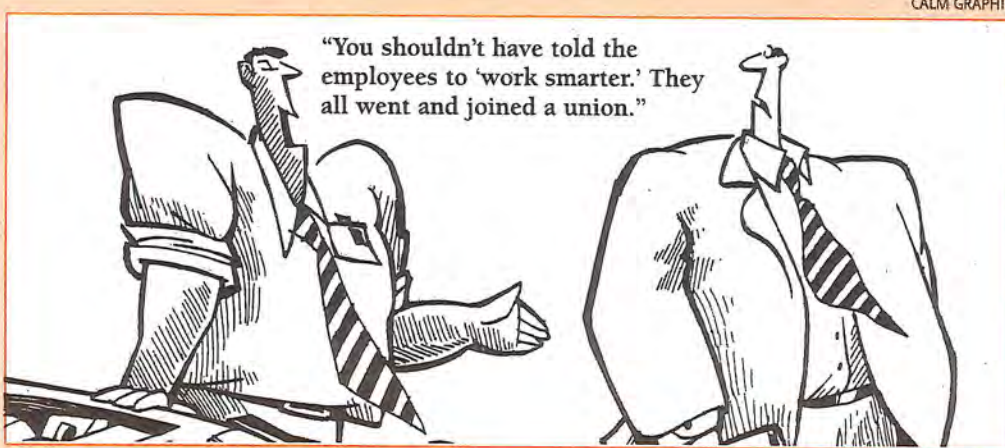
All stories guaranteed factual. Sources this issue: New Internationalist, Georgia Straight

Glass ceilings

Women account for fewer than two per cent of top executive positions and even in these positions they earn less than men. The International Labour Organization estimates that at the present rate of progress it would take 475 years for parity to be achieved between men and women in top-level managerial and administrative positions.

Peppery condemnent

East Vancouver's WISE and Social Club turned down a request to rent its hall for a speech by Jean Chrétien during the recent federal election campaign because it didn't want to risk a riot. "This guy, the prime minister, travels in bad company," said membership secretary Tony Tracy. "He travels with cops who beat up peaceful people who are sitting in the streets, and we don't want that



type of thing happening outside our venue."

A fine role model

With more than \$200,000 in debts, the Credit Counselling Service of Ottawa was placed in receivership.

Not fitting

It was revealed that the 60-year-old Swedes who were

allegedly fitter than 30-year-old Canadians, part of the Canadian government's Participation fitness campaign during the 1970s, were made up by an ad agency and weren't based on any official statistics.

Futility of war

Responding to a U.S. State Department report that criti-

cized Canadian courts for being soft on drug-related sentencing, B.C. provincial chief judge Robert Metzger pointed out that America has more drug problems than any other country, despite its tough enforcement policies. "If I want to listen to anybody, it would be a country that doesn't have a drug problem and that has solved their drug problem."

HEU people

Living in Sooke

Lilly Botting worked as a Care Aide for Sunset Lodge long-term care facility for over 20 years – mostly on the third floor. She has a wonderful sense of humour that kept staff upbeat during some extremely hard times. She's enjoying her busy life in Sooke, where she lives with her husband.

No Hope at Sunset now

Staff at Victoria's Sunset Lodge miss dietary aide Hope Preiswerck since her retirement in July of last year.

She worked at Sunset for 12 years, but spent a total of 25 years as a food service worker in long-term care. When things went wrong in the kitchen, her co-workers always said, "Never fear, Hope is here."

She's spent a lot of time since retirement volunteering with the elderly. She remains active in the Pacific Rim local and chairs the health and welfare committee.

Circle dancer retires

Care Aide Helen Beirle worked for Sunset Lodge for many years. If Helen ever missed a day of work, no one can recall when. With her full sick accruals intact on the day of her retirement – her 68th birthday, she could still dance circles around most 40-year-olds!

Helen is now busier than ever, exercising daily, enjoying fast-paced walks, and keeping busy with her family. She stays in touch with her former co-workers, who miss her energy and commitment.

Retired after 33 years

Shirley Powers, a nursing ward clerk, at G.R. Baker in Quesnel retired on March 30, 2001 after almost 33 years of service. She served as assistant secretary-treasurer of her local executive.

Also a long-time member of G.R. Baker, medical records clerk Shirley Hong, is set to retire at the end of June. She served as warden in her HEU local.

Goldie enjoying retirement

Nancy Goldie, 20-year member of HEU, recently retired from Richmond Hospital. She was a distribution aide there and served on the occupational health and safety committee.

Goldie always went above

and beyond her job requirements at work and will be greatly missed by her co-workers.

She looks forward to golf, gardening and taking care of her grandson.

Still playing accordion

Gerald Olsen, who worked in housekeeping at Central City Lodge in Burnaby for 21 years, is going to miss his co-workers and the residents, but he's moving to Courtenay.

An avid accordion player, he will continue to play at events in his adopted community, as well as play bridge and keep in shape with an exercise program.

Olsen served as secretary-treasurer of his local for one year, and four years as conductor. He retired on March 30.

Fun, work on horizon

Donna Jampolsky was working as an administration clerk IV when she retired on March 30, after 38 years at George Derby Centre. She plans on lots of volunteer work at George Derby and the SPCA. She also looks forward to traveling in Europe, swimming and just plain having lots of fun!

In Memoriam

Brother Dave Williams, a retired member of HEU and a long-time servicing representative from Vancouver Island, passed away on Jan. 25, 2001.

After joining the staff of Juan de Fuca Hospital as a plumber in 1979, he quickly became involved in the union as a member of his local executive. It wasn't long before he was elected to the Provincial Executive as regional vice-president (1980). He joined the HEU staff after his term on the PE was over, and stayed until his retirement.

He is very much missed by his former co-workers and his wife, children and grandchildren.

Staff

Wendy Wilson has been working at HEU for two years in temporary positions in Provincial Office, and has just been appointed to a permanent position of secretary II. She worked as a casual at VGH in many different positions. Originally from Ontario, she holds a diploma as a health records technician

and another in broadcast journalism.

Susana Esposito has worked as a temporary staff person for HEU's Provincial Office on and off since 1994. She also started at Children's and Women's Hospital the same year as an administrative assistant for Children's telethon fundraising events. HEU recently hired Esposito on a permanent basis as a secretary II.

June Power is the new accounting clerk in the Provincial Office. She comes to HEU from VGH where she also worked as an accounting clerk. She started out in health care in Shaughnessy Hospital's emergency admitting in 1986. Earning her university degree in economics qualified her to work in accounting. She worked as a temp at HEU for six months last year.



ECKERT



WILSON



ESPOSITO



POWER

HEU pay equity expertise to Hong Kong

In September Julie Eckert, HEU's human resources coordinator, will be going to Hong Kong to lend her expertise to their Equal Opportunity Commission's efforts to try and convince their government that pay equity is a good idea. Hong Kong's Hospital Authority – an arm of the government – has given the commission a window of opportunity to make the case that female health care workers in this former colony should be paid the same as males.

Eckert was involved in the creation of HEU's classification system. It took her many years, and she gained a vast store of expertise in doing so. She was invited to participate in this exercise in Hong Kong based on that experience.

"I will be there for two months," Eckert says. "It's going to be interesting. Surprisingly there is some resistance from women in the unions there. They equate it with loss of job security."

She will be looking at ways to apply our classification and pay equity plan to the Hong Kong health care system. "I may even succeed in putting in the pay equity plan we wanted before we had to negotiate with HEABC," she says. "There isn't any equivalent to HEABC there, and I'm being given a free hand."

She's looking forward to the experience and will keep in touch once she is over there.

EQUITY PHONE LINE

1.800.663.5813, ext. 514
Lower Mainland 739.1514

press 1

Ethnic Diversity

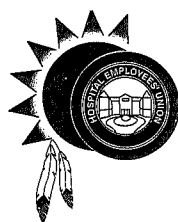
One union, many colours! Working across our differences! To participate, please call and leave us your name!



press 2

First Nations

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



press 3

Lesbians and Gays

For support: afraid of being identified, feeling isolated, want to know your rights? Call for information on same sex benefits, fighting homophobia and discrimination.



press 4

People with disAbilities

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



ALL CALLS ARE CONFIDENTIAL

TALK TO US ... TOLL-FREE!

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

PROVINCIAL OFFICES:

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

NORTHERN OFFICE:

- Prince George
1-800-663-6539

OKANAGAN OFFICE:

- Kelowna
1-800-219-9699

VANCOUVER ISLAND OFFICES:

- Victoria site
1-800-742-8001
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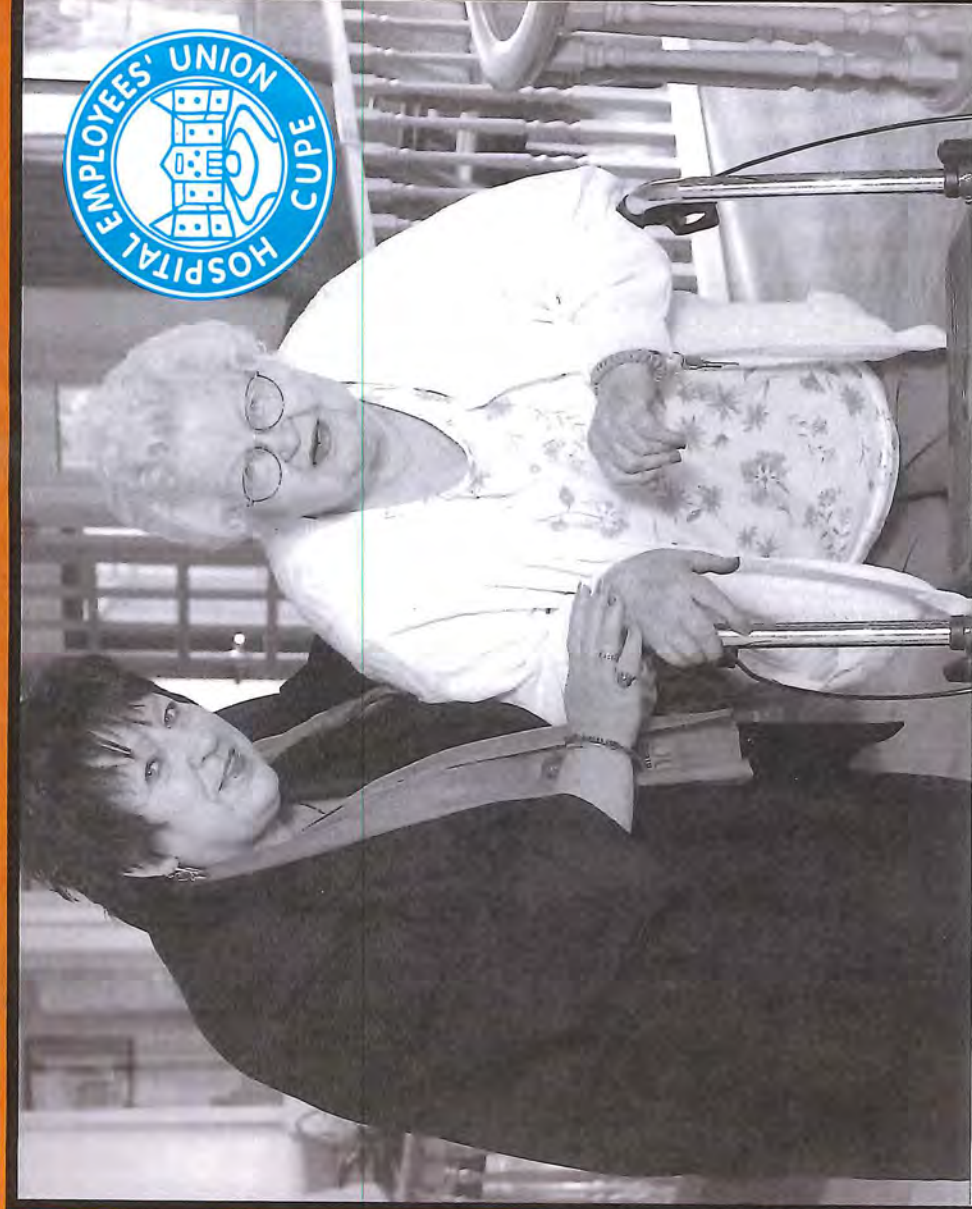
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Better care for our seniors

Three months ago, the 46,000 members of the Hospital Employees' Union made a commitment to British Columbians. When we began contract talks, we pledged to win higher staffing levels at B.C. long-term care facilities to ensure that our seniors received the care they deserve. We're proud to say that we delivered!

Our tentative settlement with government and employers provides for \$15 million to hire 300 more Care Aides, Licensed Practical Nurses and other direct care staff.

It's not a magic solution. But it is a good start that will benefit thousands of seniors and their families. As the union that represents the vast majority of caregivers in seniors centres, we know there's more still to be done. You have our commitment that we'll keep working with seniors and disability organizations to win more improvements – like expanded home support services – in the future.

Guardian



SPRING 2001 • VOLUME 19 NUMBER 1 THE VOICE OF THE HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION



An activist's excellent adventure

Kelowna's Maureen Shepherd reflects on 16 years of grassroot unionism.

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Union roots all in the family

HEU gained labour-savvy caregiver when Dawn Greer crossed the border.



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Foreign nurses are pilots

Research is basis for proposal that may see foreign-trained nurses practicing in B.C.



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Making a wish come true

Thanks to a group of Guatemalan/Canadians, a little girl will walk with her brother.



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