



AGM 2013 - Say YES to Workers' Rights

A World Without Unions

NSNU LRR Retires

Scholarship recipients and opportunities

President's Notebook

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A world without unions

It's not news that unions and the labour movement are under attack. However, the attacks are becoming more vicious and inflammatory. Across North America and around the world unions are under siege from those who do not understand our objectives and those who see unions as an impediment to their goals. We, the NSNU, as a labour organization, are tasked to dispel the myths that are being perpetuated by those who wish to diminish our purpose.

Recent media commentaries have accused organized labour of driving Nova Scotia into economic ruin. According to some politicians and a faction within the private sector, paying a decent wage with the promise of a decent standard of living in retirement will be the ruination of our province.

Quite frankly, I have not yet met a unionized worker – not a nurse, not a teacher, not an x-ray tech, not a shipyard worker – who ever got rich on their union wage. We do not live opulent lives of excess. We do not retire early on our stock options. We work our shifts, we pay our dues (both literally and figuratively) and we help support and build our economy.

I was more than thrilled to see that 71 NSNU AGM attendees were participating for the very first time. We had 71 new activists at the meeting and that's what we plan to build on. The NSNU has increased funding for more members to attend our AGM and Eastern Labour School. We have increased the number of participants we send to the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour Biennium. We have increased the size of our delegation at the CFNU Biennium ~ all in an effort to education and nurture leaders within our organization.

These new leaders will stand shoulder to shoulder with "seasoned" activists as we share our message with co-workers, employers, friends, neighbours and government representatives that we are not prepared to go back in time ~ to a time when our futures were unstable and uncertain; to a time when pensions and benefits were non-existent; to a time when the person working next to you, performing the same job, might be earning more or less than you; to a time when gender dictated what you earned; to a time when anyone could take your job from you without cause; to a time when unions didn't matter.

I believe that unions matter more now than ever and that your leadership will make a difference in how people view the labour movement. We have the ability to inform others about the good that we do as professionals and unionists. We make a difference in our workplaces and in our communities.

In this country we have minimum occupational health and safety standards in large part because of unions and responsible employers who believe in accountability and ethical operations. But global tragedies like the collapse of a

nine storey factory in Bangladesh which killed over 1000 innocent workers, are becoming more common. The high cost of low prices results in a lack of protection for workers who, on top of the risks and harm they endure each and every day at their workplace, earn a measly 14 cents an hour.

I can't imagine this sort of thing ever happening in this country but the erosion of workers' rights, the devaluing of unions and the deterioration of labour laws is the slippery slope where all workplace degradation begins.

So, how can we help prevent our workplaces - and ultimately of lives - from regressing to a time and place where workers and their well being were secondary to profits and cost cutting? We need to stand up and speak up!

We need employers who understand what a union has to offer, and are willing to invest in the people who work for them and with them. As nursing and union leaders, you can help employers see the value in this investment.

I encourage you to visit our website at www.nsnu.ca to view our video - **A World Without Unions**. Join us as we develop leaders and continue to make positive strides for nurses and our patients across this province.



Johnson Inc.'s 2013 Scholarship Program

Building on our History of Supporting Customers and Communities

For many Canadian students, the jump from high school to post-secondary education signals a thrilling transition into adulthood. Along with the excitement and independence, however, come new responsibilities like paying for tuition, textbooks and basic daily essentials.

At Johnson, we understand the challenges faced by students during their pursuit of higher education, and we are proud to offer scholarships to help them achieve their dreams. Since 1998, Johnson has awarded 1400 scholarships valued at more than \$1 million to support young Canadians coast to coast in pursuing their post-secondary education.

This year, we are pleased to offer 50 scholarships worth \$1000 each to children and grandchildren of Johnson's affinity group members and home and auto insurance clients.

Students must be completing high school in 2013 and beginning post-secondary education this fall.

Completed application forms must be submitted by September 15, 2013 and must contain an official school transcript of final year credits.

For more information, or to apply for a Johnson Inc. scholarship, please visit our scholarships page at www.johnson.ca or call 1-877-328-7878.



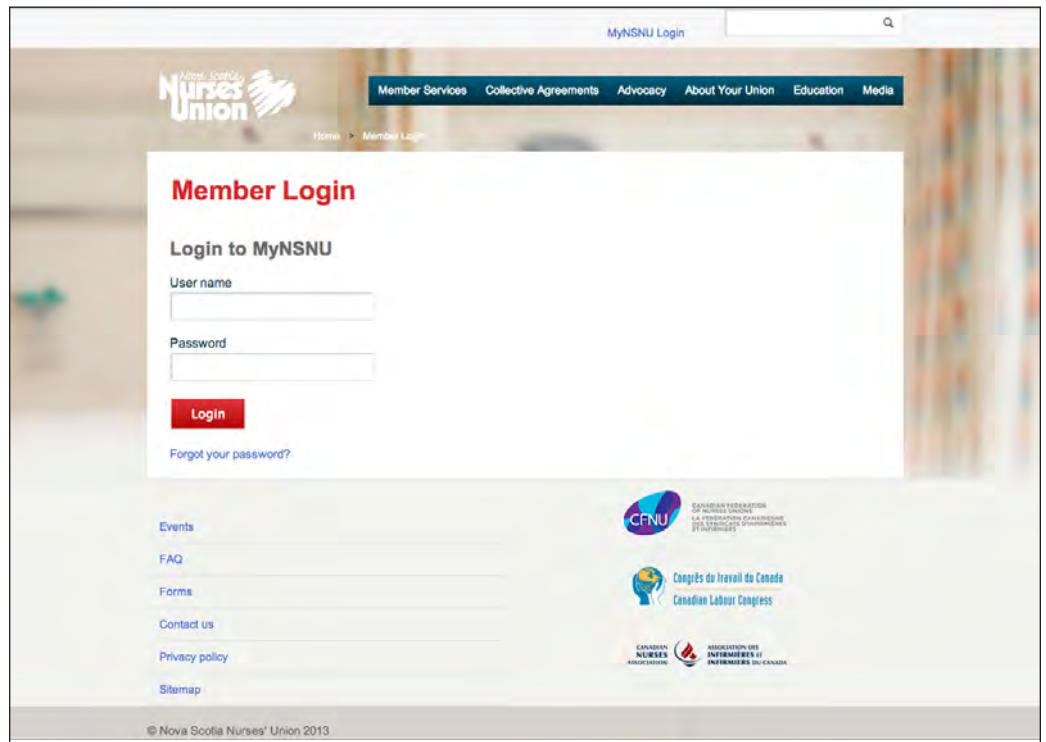
Fresh look ~ Updated login credentials on the horizon

By mid-summer, users of the NSNU website will notice a revamped format and refreshing new look. The changes should make it easier to navigate our site as you search for information.

In late June, the NSNU will mail a new username and password to each member. This change will ensure added security for members and ease of use. We ask that you please retain your credentials.

The current usernames consist of a random series of numbers which members find cumbersome. In the interest of making usernames meaningful and therefore memorable, we are returning to the system of deriving each username from proper names ~ last name, first initial, and middle initial, (a numerical suffix will be added if required to insure uniqueness – if two or more Jane Smiths exist in the database).

Each member will be provided with an initial randomly generated eight character alphanumeric password (ex. aS3frU12) which should be personalized during your first MyNSNU logon.



Once the new system is launched, your old username and password will no longer work.

How to select a new password:

Complicated passwords for online websites are a new pesky reality. But creating a mnemonic can help. Just think of a sentence you won't forget then make a password using the first letter of each word. So, "Nursing is good for me and you" becomes Nig4m&u. A mix of symbols, letters, numbers as well as capital and lower case letters creates a more secure password. You'll still need to record it but this trick can make it easier to remember.



Union Calling ~ VBS now offered



Union Calling (UC) is dedicated to strengthening Unions through the innovative use of telecom and online technologies. Union Calling pioneered new, union-friendly applications of voice broadcasting. They developed lightning fast polling of the general public and union members. They made virtual union “town hall” meetings easy for union leaders to conduct.

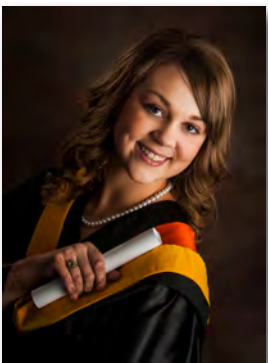
NSNU members are familiar with the system which we use from time to time to convey important Union related messages. We used the town hall system to conduct information sessions prior to our 2011 tentative agreement voting.

Now NSNU is offering Voice Bulletin Service or VBS through UC.

NSNU has established a hotline that will play the most recent voice broadcast message. If you missed the call or you want to listen to the message again simple dial (902) 812-1044. This new feature will make accessing valuable information easier than ever before. Please retain this number for future reference.



Nova Scotia Federation of Labour Bursaries



Kelsey Aucoin

The Nova Scotia Federation of Labour (NSFL) is pleased to offer six bursaries of \$1000 each to full-time students who are going to university, trade school or community college in 2013/2014 for the first time or as a returning student. For more information about the bursaries please visit www.nsfl.ns.ca. The deadline for application is Friday, July 12, 2013.

Last year Kelsey Aucoin, daughter of NSNU member Darlene Aucoin (RN, Cape Breton Regional Hospital) received the Joe Gannon Memorial Bursary Winner from the NSFL.

Patient plays greater role in *The Fifth Estate* series than in the health system



April 15, 2013

The results of CBC's *The Fifth Estate* "Rate My Hospital" series echo what the health-care community has been saying for decades. What is now needed but has yet to happen is fundamental change and a collective effort at the system, provider and bedside levels.

"Nurses care deeply about the quality of their care and the health and safety of their patients," said Barb Mildon, Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) president. "This series shows nurses are concerned with their ability to provide that safe and competent care in today's workplace. And their workplace situation is a microcosm of what is happening with many different provider groups in all care settings. For the sake of the patients, action must be taken on all fronts."

About 60 per cent of registered nurses (RNs) who responded to CBC's online survey (including numerous NSNU members who were invited to participate) said there was not enough staff for them to properly do their jobs. Nearly 40 per cent of respondents said they suffered from a high degree of burn out. Many of the problems hospitals face are the result of our overreliance on the already overburdened hospital system.

The first step in fundamental transformation is to look outside the hospital for solutions. Expanding support and resources to community health centres, nurse practitioner-led clinics and home care will help relieve the backlog of hospital patients, allow RNs and other care providers to focus on the serious and complex hospital cases, and ultimately, help Canadians access the care they need.

"Governments and hospital administrators are constantly asking nurses to do more with less — less budget, less staff and fewer supplies even," said Linda Silas, Canadian Federation of Nurses Union (CFNU) president. "They too have a responsibility to address and resolve problems when the quality of care we can provide to patients suffers. They must make allies of nurses — the largest

group of health-care providers and the best frontline resource — because we are a voice for patients with insights into the issues and ideas for the solutions."

According to the Canadian Institute for Health Information, the number of RNs in management positions has been on the decline since 2010. This decline is especially concerning given the fear voiced by nurses during *The Fifth Estate's* program. Some respondents feared reprimand, bullying and even job loss for speaking out against employers. An essential next step in transformation is for employers to foster an environment where nurses feel comfortable bringing forth problems, since that would give them a chance to offer solutions.

"Individual RNs are leading change every day in their own workplaces, yet without a voice at management levels or in government policy it's very difficult to effect wide-reaching change," said Mildon. "Pockets of success are encouraging, but Canadians will continue to face inequities in care until we transform the kind of local innovations nurses can provide into national solutions."

"I sincerely hope the federal government paid close attention to this series," said Silas. "Canada's health-care system is lacking leadership from the current government, and Canadians are being put at risk. When the health and safety of our nation is at stake, they must take an active role in health."

CNA and CFNU are determined to ensure that *The Fifth Estate's* series will reignite important discussions and compel governments, providers and Canadians to work together for change. Further, both organizations ask that the CBC's complete research be made publicly available so it can be examined against other data, such as overtime hours, part-time and casual employment rates and staffing levels.

To view this episode of *The Fifth Estate* visit CBC.ca

Right to Refuse Work

There are appropriate steps that a nurse must take when trying to determine when or when not to refuse work based on a reasonable presumption of concern for patient and worker safety. You must have “reasonable grounds” to believe your work is unhealthy or dangerous to you or a co-worker.

Steps to follow:

- ✓ Immediately report your concern to a supervisor
- ✓ Remain at work but go to a safe place away from the hazard
- If the problem is not resolved to your satisfaction-report it to your Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC)
- If no action-report to the Occupational Health and Safety division of Dept Labour and Advanced Education

During the investigation:

- The employer may reassign you.
- The employer may assign another nurse to the work you have refused as long as they tell that nurse:
 - ✓ about your refusal to do the work
 - ✓ the reason for the refusal
 - ✓ that the assigned nurse also has the right to refuse
- The OH&S Act does not specify a time frame for work refusal to end.
- You may continue to refuse until:
 - ✓ the employer has taken remedial action to your satisfaction
 - ✓ JOHSC has investigated and has unanimously advised nurse to return
 - ✓ an OH&S Officer has advised you to return to work
- If your employer does not pay you or reassign you, the nurse may file a discriminatory complaint.
- The employer may not take action against you if you refuse work under these grounds.

Union Dues Rebates

If you are working at more than one facility and paying union dues more than once in a pay period, you are eligible to receive a rebate of the additional dues you have paid over and above the regular bi-weekly rates.

If you are a casual member who has been paid “less than” 7.5 hours (applicable to acute care members) or 8 hours (applicable to long term care members) in a bi-weekly pay period you are eligible for a union dues rebate. If either of the above applies to you, please contact Verna Harrie at 1-800-469-1474/469-1474 (ext. 304) or verna.harrie@nsnu.ns.ca.



CFNU Scholarship Winner – Essay Submission

By Luc Cloutier

This scholarship is awarded to an unlicensed student enrolled in an accredited nursing education program in Nova Scotia. It is hoped that the recipient of this scholarship will one day show leadership within the CFNU and affiliate member organizations such as NSNU. All applicants must submit a 1000 word essay on the following topic - Why is it important for a nurse to practice within a unionized environment? The Following essay was submitted by this year's recipient of the scholarship.

Just a few generations ago, nursing was a women's profession and people saw them as handmaidens to the doctors, working long hours with little pay. It was a hard and dirty job, with little autonomy or respect. It all changed with the establishment of the nursing unions.

I think it is important for a nurse to practice in a unionized environment for several reasons. I think people that are not nurses or a part of a union believe that its purpose is solely to negotiate better wages, benefits and a contract with employers. This is an important part of the responsibilities of the NSNU, but it is not its sole mandate.

Negotiating a fair contract is very important as this directly impacts the daily lives of nurses and their patients. A solid contract helps protect the rights of the nurse and provides pay equity and benefits with her/his peers within the province. Wage parity within the country is also an important consideration. This adds to job satisfaction and a fair contract impacts quality of life and this in turn directly relates to the quality of care that can be provided for the patients within the health care system. Improved quality patient care equals better patient outcomes and improved health of the population being served.

Protecting the balance between work and home life is also an important job for unions. As the child of a nurse, I was never allowed to answer the phone if my mother didn't want to be mandated to work overtime. With that clause removed from the contract, my mother

doesn't have to worry about answering the phone anymore. I recognized this has improved her home life and is a direct example of what a unionized contract can do to promote the well being of its members.

Also within the contract are clauses related to a fair and safe work environment. This is very important to the nurses as it impacts how they can care for their patients. It also helps decrease nursing burnout. Many nurses report feeling "burnt out" for several reasons; understaffing, heavy patient assignments, increasing patient acuity and not being able to provide the level and quality of care that they want to provide for their patients. By addressing these issues within the nursing contract this will help to recruit new nurses and keep skilled nurses at the bedside.

A union contract also provides its members with stability and job security. It makes it an attractive job to have and may promote people to the profession. Members have comfort knowing that they not only belong to their hospital or unit, but to the greater union as a whole. This gives them the flexibility to work in other institutions. If more people want to join the profession, this can only elevate the quality and practice of nursing. A union also provides educational opportunities to its members regarding work life and union issues.

Belonging to a union also gives the nurse legal representation if he/she needs it with regards to any allegations by her employer. This is a service provided by your union for the protection of their members.

Everyone knows that there is strength in numbers. By having a professional union that represents only nurses of our province, we can have a greater voice and influence. The NSNU is a union created by nurses for nurses and it makes it uniquely qualified to represent the voices and interests of the nurses of our province.



The NSNU is there to promote the causes and values of the nurses of Nova Scotia in government policy and within the media to the public. Nurses together have a strong voice and want to help shape our government policy in regards to the work that they do and policy that affects our health care system. To advocate for patients and nurses so they can provide high quality health care to their patients. As primary care givers in the health care system, we must promote excellence in quality care of a publicly funded health care system. The union helps nurses' voices be heard within our government by lobbying for and against bills that affect our health care system. They arrange rallies, organize advertising campaigns in all levels of media: like radio, television and newspapers. They keep their members informed of pertinent issues in health care within the province and let them know what they can do to add their voice to the cause. The NSNU also promotes a positive image of nurses in the media and this benefits nurses and the entire profession.

I think having a union that represents only nurses adds to the professionalism of nursing in general. Many steps have been taken over the years to elevate the educational preparation and professional status of nursing. All of this adds to making it an attractive career choice. As a man embarking in this profession, I look forward to seeing what a difference I can make by excelling in school and my professional practice and I feel it would be very interesting to be involved in the union on some level too.

When I started doing a little research to write this essay, I asked my mother and her friend who is a nurse, what positive aspects they thought they gained by belonging to a union. They chuckled and quoted how much they paid for their union dues, but then, in all seriousness, they said that they counted on their union to represent their interests with their employer and that because they were members of a union they had the ability to grieve any decisions made by their employer that they felt were unfair and against their contract. They felt that by being unionized, it elevated their profession by promoting their practice and a positive image of nurses.

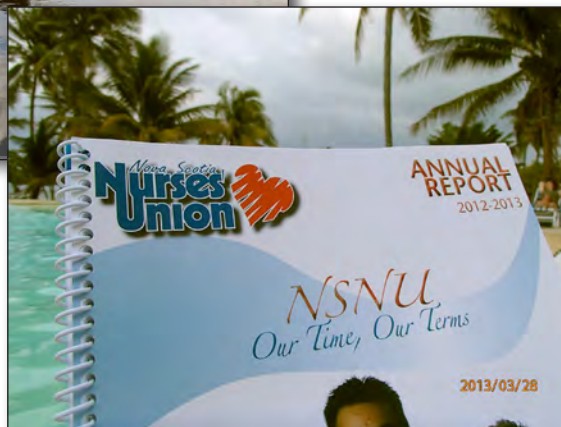
I don't think I realized what being in a union meant, but I now understand that I have benefited from my mother having a secure job with a union behind her, supporting her to provide her patients with quality care and a safe work environment and supporting her family with a equitable income and a positive role model. So much so that I have chosen and to follow in her footsteps and become a professional nurse as well.

NSNU ~ In plain sight

NSNU Vice President, Chris Van Zoost and friends were far from home but the NSNU was not far from their minds in while in Kinderdyke, Holland. Chris, centre, is photographed with an unidentified nurse from Calgary, and Sandy Nelson an RN at the Cobequid Community Health Centre.



Maria Campbell, Colchester Regional Hospital took her NSNU Annual Report to Cuba this winter – now that's dedication!



Gwen Busby (Cobequid Community Health Centre) couldn't resist taking a quick snap of her "almost summer" salad which looks positively scrumptious next to the NSNU mousepad!



Meeting with AGM First-timers and Nurses Under 35

The 2013 NSNU AGM saw a record 71 first-time delegates and observers in attendance. There were also many younger nurses present as well as nursing students from Dalhousie, St.F.X. and the NSCC Marconi Campus. The union has been actively promoting the participation of younger and previously less active members. For example, at the 2012 AGM, delegates passed a motion to sponsor five first-timers and five nurses under 35 to attend the AGM, Education Day and Labour School. NSNU President Janet Hazelton organized a special open meeting with first time attendees and younger nurses during the AGM. The purpose was to help the members become better acquainted with the union and the AGM process and to seek their input on how to encourage further participation among the membership.

Janet reminded the nurses that she and the NSNU staff are there to help them and can come to their locals when necessary. She also reminded them that it is the Union's policy that any member can provide notice and sit in on a NSNU board meeting.

The nurses present claimed the AGM was an uplifting experience and that they were proud to see the strength of their union and learn what can be accomplished when they work together for common goals. Many nurses working in community care and long-term care expressed a desire to wear the same uniform as their counterparts in acute care. Attendees also posed many labour relations questions and received some guidance on how to deal with workplace issues.



Support growing for standardized nursing uniforms in Nova Scotia and beyond

In 2011, on behalf of its members, the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union negotiated an allowance for a standardized uniform for nurses working in acute care institutions across the province. The distinct uniform would help Nova Scotians easily identify the nurse providing their care to get the support needed.

"We worked with nurses and suppliers to ensure our members achieved a professional image," said Janet Hazelton, President of the NSNU. "Through ongoing feedback and collaboration over the past year, we've now got a collection of white and black uniform options that are comfortable, look great and are functional for our nurses."

In the year following the gradual roll out of the uniforms, both Nova Scotians and NSNU members say the change to a white and black uniform has helped patients to better identify nurses. Even though some hospitals only received and started to wear their uniforms at the end of 2012, surveys confirm people have noticed a difference.

In January, the NSNU commissioned a survey of hospital visitors in the province in order to understand their attitudes on distinguishing health care providers, and nurses in particular, by what they wear. Participants were asked whether they have noticed the uniforms; what impact, if any, they have had; and the perceived importance of being able to identify a nurse.

Nearly two thirds of visitors say they strongly support a standardized uniform for nurses; and one third of visitors could recall having seen the white and black uniforms during their visit. Interestingly, there was greater support and recognition of the standardized uniform among the participants who were over the age of 55 – a group increasingly needing healthcare support as they age.

Those surveyed agreed with the statements saying standardized uniforms minimize patient confusion, distinguish nurses from other health care providers, and create a professional image for the nursing profession.

"Wearing distinct uniforms has always been a clear system for identifying professionals, and I'm happy the public agrees with the rationale for nurses to adopt this system as well," said Hazelton.

In April, 2013 the NSNU conducted an internal poll of its acute care members to understand their perspectives of the uniform policy and its effect on nurses and patients. Echoing the public opinion poll, a majority agreed nurse uniforms have increased the visibility of nurses to the public.

Nova Scotia is the only Canadian province to have a province-wide nurse uniform policy; however, support is growing across the country and beyond. In May, Janet Hazelton will address the attendees at the International Council of Nursing conference in Sydney, Australia to talk about the NSNU's experience with the uniform policy; the value of nurses campaign; and helping the public recognize the disappearance of nurses in the workplace.



Province Takes Action to Better Protect Nova Scotians in Care

The province is clarifying and strengthening legislation so families with loved ones living in provincial care facilities can have more peace of mind.

Amendments from the Departments of Health and Wellness and Community Services were introduced, April 26, to update the *Protection for Persons in Care Act*, and support best practices.

The changes will help prevent abuse, giving ministers the authority to issue directives to address problems found by staff during investigations.

"This important legislation allows the province to hold administrators of these facilities more accountable for resident safety," said Community Services Minister Denise Peterson-Rafuse. "Amending the *Act* will allow government to direct administrators to make constructive changes."

Josie Ryan, executive director of in-care living at Northwood welcomed the changes.

"As a provider of continuing care, Northwood considers resident safety a top priority," said Ms. Ryan. "Working in partnership with government and Capital Health, providing education and awareness for staff to respond to challenging behaviours associated with dementia is essential to creating a safe environment for residents."

"Families want to know that their loved ones are living in a safe and supportive environment," said Health and Wellness Minister David Wilson. "The changes will help prevent abuse, clearly identifying the ministers' authority to issue directives to address problems found by staff during investigations."

The *Protection for Persons in Care Act* was proclaimed in 2007. It applies to patients and residents age 16 or older, who are receiving care from Nova Scotia's hospitals, residential care facilities, nursing homes, homes for the aged and disabled persons, group homes or residential centres under the *Homes for Special Care Act*.

St. Martha's Alumnae Dinner planned for October

St. Martha's Annual Alumnae Dinner will be held Thursday, October 3, 2013.

The reception starts at 6:00 pm with dinner to be served at 7:00 pm at St. Ninian Place.

Please contact Winnie Lane, 735-2337 or Peggy McVicar, 863-3643 prior to September 27th, 2013 regarding tickets.

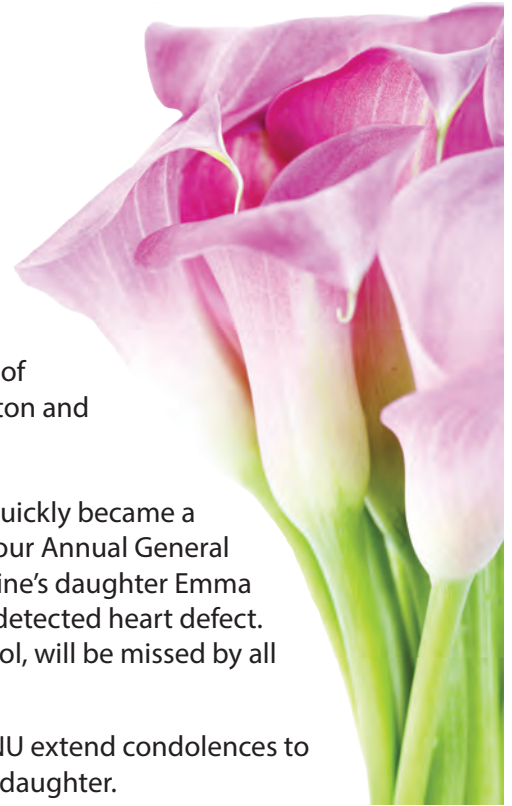


NSNU extends deepest sympathy

Belmac Uniforms has long been a familiar shopping location for most nurses in Cape Breton. With the introduction of the distinctive uniform in Nova Scotia, Belmac became a subcontractor/distributor of Maritime Textiles of New Brunswick to supply uniforms to NSNU acute care members in Cape Breton and the eastern region of the province.

Katherine van Nostrand, a former nurse and the owner of Belmac Uniforms, quickly became a recognizable face to many at the NSNU for her attendance as an exhibitor at our Annual General Meetings and her numerous uniform site visits. Tragically, on May 5th, Katherine's daughter Emma collapsed while running in the Toronto marathon. She died that day of an undetected heart defect. Emma, an 18 year old athlete and scholar who attended Riverview High School, will be missed by all who knew her.

With deepest sympathy the Board of Directors, Staff and members of the NSNU extend condolences to Katherine and the van Nostrand family on the profound loss of their beloved daughter.



Day of Mourning

On April 28, Nova Scotia joined the rest of Canada and more than 80 countries worldwide to remember those who died, were injured or became ill at work. The Day of Mourning offers employees and employers the opportunity to publicly renew their commitment to improve health and safety in the workplace.

In 2012, nearly 26,500 Nova Scotians were injured on the job, with almost 6,400 of them injured seriously enough to lose time from work. Sadly, there were 32

workplace fatalities in Nova Scotia last year. To date, there have already been thirteen fatalities in 2013. This figure does not include the many others who died away from work due to unrecognized or undiagnosed occupational related illnesses.

NSNU president, Janet Hazelton joined representatives from other labour organizations, The Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour and Threads of Life at a ceremony at Province House on April 28.

All workers, regardless of where you work, are reminded to Mourn for the dead, fight for the living, now more than ever!



NSNU 2013 Scholarship Awards

The Education Committee of the NSNU selected the recipients of the 2013 NSNU Scholarships via blind selection while in attendance at Annual General Meeting in late April. The winners are:

NSNU Scholarship: \$1500 each

The Dolores Chase Scholarship is awarded to a Member enrolled in a Nursing degree program. It was awarded to Debbie Doyle, Post RN BScN program, St. F.X. University. Debbie works with VON Antigonish.

The second \$1500 scholarship is awarded to a Member enrolled in a Nursing degree or diploma program. This scholarship was granted to Elaine Nicholson, MScN or NP program, Dalhousie. Elaine is employed at Inverness Consolidated.

The third \$1500 NSNU scholarship is typically awarded to a Member enrolled in a certificate program. However, no applications were received this year in this category therefore the scholarship was awarded to Charmaine Boudreau, Post RN at St. FX. Charmaine is employed by St. Anne Nursing Care.

Family Scholarships: \$500 each

The LPN family scholarship was awarded to Emily Mills who will be attending NSCC Cumberland Campus. She is the daughter of Lisa Mills who works at the South Cumberland Community Care Centre.

The RN family scholarship was awarded to Andrea Neary, a BScN student at CBU. Her application was submitted by her mother, Catherine Neary who is employed at the Glace Bay Regional Hospital.

CFNU Scholarship: \$1000

This scholarship is awarded to an unlicensed student enrolled in an accredited nursing education program in Nova Scotia. It is hoped that the recipient of this scholarship will one day show leadership within the CFNU. Luc Cloutier, who will be attending Dalhousie University in the fall, is the recipient of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions Scholarship.

Retirement Allowance Calculations

NSNU has been successful in its quest to get a significant change in the way the Cape Breton District Health Authority has calculated the retirement allowances payable to members on retirement.

It is recognized that the method of calculation was not inconsistent with the collective agreement language as written but was inconsistent with the process used by all other DHAs. This difference meant that no member who had worked part time hours at any time in their recognized service with the Employer could receive the full allowable amount in the Agreement.

Through an NSNU policy grievance filed last summer, all staff at the CBDHA will benefit from the change in method of calculations to match the Provincial approach. This can have a significant impact on the amount received on retirement.



NSNU Charity Draw



The NSNU would like to thank those who contributed to the charity draw for the AGM banquet, April 30, 2013. All proceeds from our charity events are donated to a deserving organization or service within the province.

This year the AGM/Nominations Committee selected The Canadian Foundation for Animal Assisted Support Services as the recipient of the fund. The NSNU raised \$3268.00 this year.

The AGM/Nominations Committee would like to thank the following sponsors and friends of the NSNU for their contributions to the charity draw:

<i>National PR</i>	<i>The Nova Scotia International Tattoo</i>	<i>CBC Television</i>
<i>Pink Larkin</i>	<i>Rona</i>	<i>Holiday Inn Harbourview</i>
<i>Credit Union Atlantic</i>	<i>The Best Western Glengarry</i>	<i>White Point Beach Resort</i>
<i>Pro Cresting Ltd.</i>	<i>Super City</i>	<i>Andrea's Jewelry Design</i>
<i>Ultramar</i>	<i>Global Television (Shaw Media)</i>	<i>Pat Jamieson</i>
<i>Staples</i>	<i>CTV</i>	<i>All participating NSNU Locals as well as NSNU staff</i>

Reclassification of Clinical Nurse Educators and Clinical Resources Nurses

Through a policy grievance initiated in 2011 and finally resolved just last month, those NSNU members working in the identified classifications of Clinical Nurse Educator and Clinical Resource Nurse have been reclassified from RN2 to RN6 retroactively to date of hire in the position or April 1 2008, whichever was applicable. This was a huge win for the NSNU and for those members who for some time now have been working at less than their counterparts in other DHAs.



NSNU Annual General Meeting 2013

It's hard to believe that the NSNU Annual General Meeting has come and gone for another year! The 2013 meeting was attended by 132 voting delegates and 93 observers from Nova Scotia Nurses' Union Locals, province-wide. NSNU is proud to say that there were 71 first-time attendees to the meeting. For those who did not attend the meeting, here is a brief overview of the three days we all spent together in Truro.

Monday April 29

On Monday, April 29 the meeting attendees gathered for an open forum style discussion. NSNU Researcher/Educator Paul Curry delivered the results of the Long Term Care Survey that was conducted via an online poll accessible through MyNSNU in February 2013. Through the survey, a literary review and anecdotal information from nurses, it is apparent that front-line staff feel there are too few nurses providing care for patients, and that providing adequate care is becoming increasingly difficult. Reinforcing one of the organizations objectives for the promotion of the highest standards of health care, the NSNU leadership discussed ways to advocate so that safe staffing levels are legislated and adhered to.



Paul Curry

Paul also presented the results of the Uniform Survey that was conducted in April 2013. This survey was applicable to Acute Care Nurses wearing the distinctive white and black nurse uniform. The member discussion was largely based on the importance of nurse identity in the workplace.

Kyle Buott from the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour and Tony Tracy from the Canadian Labour Congress were guest speakers at the Monday forum. They both spoke passionately on the topic of 'labour under attack' and the anti-union sentiments emanating from governing conservative voices across North America.

Coleen Logan, NSNU Communications Officer, produced a powerful video, *A World Without Unions*, on this topic that was shown throughout the AGM. Kyle and Tony reminded members that we need strong, active membership to ward off advances on diminishing what unions have fought so hard to achieve.



Tony Tracy

In addition to the Open Forum, each region and component also had an opportunity to hold their meetings following the morning meeting.

In the evening, members enjoyed a hospitality event at The Ponderosa. Every year at 'The Pond' as the locals affectionately call it, NSNU members gather for food and laughter as they dance the night away with karaoke. There were a lot of smiling faces that night as members returned to the Glengarry, many still singing their favourite tunes from the night.



Kyle Buott



Tuesday April 30

Tuesday, April 30 marked the business day of the Annual General Meeting. The meeting began with our bagpiper, Hugh Murray, piping in the procession which included NSNU President Janet Hazelton and the NSNU Board of Directors. This year we were fortunate to have Premier Darrell Dexter, as well as the Honourable David Wilson, Minister of Health and Wellness, address the members. Both the Premier and Minister Wilson spoke about the contributions of nurses to Nova Scotia healthcare, safe staffing ratios and the looming provincial election.



Premier Darrell Dexter

Also joining us that morning were local media representatives from CBC, The Chronicle Herald and local radio stations, who questioned the Premier, Minister Wilson and Janet Hazelton in a media scrum following their presentations and the member Q&A.

President Hazelton gave an overview of the past year for NSNU, the finance committee presented the proposed budget, and the NSNU delegates voted on various constitutional changes via the resolution process. All resolutions were passed quickly, with little additional discussion from the members in attendance.



Calvin Jordan

Following the adjournment of the business day, Calvin Jordan from NSHEPP met with over 90 nurses to discuss the pension plan and take questions from the floor.

Although there were no superheroes (and heroines) in attendance this year, NSNU members dressed to impress at this year's banquet themed 'Our Night to Shine.' NSNU AGM Committee arranged for comedian and former RN, Meg Soper, to perform after dinner. Meg entertained the members, guests and NSNU staff for an hour, diving into such topics as work-life balance, intergenerational workplaces, and the



Meg Soper



Doreen Charman

importance of a positive attitude. Meg's performance was both entertaining and inspiring. Many of those in attendance might still have sore cheeks from laughing at her jokes and observations of everyday life.

As always, we announce our honorary member at the AGM banquet. This year the NSNU was pleased to induct former VP of Long Term Care, Doreen Charman, presenting her with her gold NSNU pin as a symbol of her long time affiliation and commitment to the Union. Doreen retired last year but promptly reminded us that since she is now a honorary member, NSNU will have to 'continue to listen to her'. We are happy too, Doreen.

Mom and daughter attendees included first time attendee Cathy Berkvens (St. Martha's Hospital) and her daughter Laura Berkvens who works at Colchester Regional as well as Jessica Duncan (Dartmouth General Hospital) and her baby daughter Kayla.



Kayla Duncan



Congratulations to the AGM/ Operations and Nominations Committee Chair, Ann Marie Murdock, VP Northern Region (Aberdeen Hospital) and committee members Vivian Starkey and Carmella Gellately on a job very well done!

Mother/Daughter Attendees Cathy Berkvens and Laura Berkvens











Wednesday May 1

The Annual Education Day was held on Wednesday, May 1 and was a full day of learning, listening and fun for members. Cheryl Barker, VP Central Region (Cobequid Community Centre) and Chair of the Education Day Committee along with committee members Jen Thiele (IWK) and Debbie Doyle (VON Antigonish) did a fantastic job of orchestrating the event.

The first presenter of the day was Laura Archer, a Registered Nurse originally from Prince Edward Island. Since graduating from University of Prince Edward Island in 2001, Laura has travelled the world doing what she loves, nursing. After working in American hospitals and augmenting her skill set with advanced courses, Laura began working with Doctors Without Borders in Africa. For seven years Laura worked on malnutrition, vaccination and low-resource funding programs in some of the world's most vulnerable populations. Laura spoke to the NSNU members about her experiences nursing in other cultures, telling stories about the people she met and the lessons she learned from them – including her kidnapping, a harrowing tale of survival in a volatile land. It was a very moving and inspiring session. Laura's passion for nursing certainly resonated with many members.



The second session of the day was delivered by Dr. Margo Watt, a clinical forensic psychologist and adjunct professor at St. Francis Xavier University as well as Acadia University in Wolfville. Dr. Watt specializes in anxiety, sensitivity and related disorders. Dr. Watt delivered a very informative presentation on conquering fears and dissolving anxiety that is aligned with the labour movement. This was a timely and appropriate presentation as unions continue to be poorly characterized by some media outlets and various governments.

After the second session, the president of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Union, Linda Silas, addressed the members and echoed our guests from Monday about the importance of solidarity as adversaries continue their attack on labour with anti-union legislation such as bill C-377. This bill imposes new and unnecessary financial regulations that will add steep compliance costs and time-consuming administrative requirements to the normal activities of representing trade unionists.

Linda also spoke about the upcoming 2013 Biennial Convention in Toronto and reminded the members that the following convention in 2015 would be hosted by the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union in 2015.

Linda received a cheque from the NSNU for the International Solidarity Fund which supports initiatives that foster solidarity with the disadvantaged, whether by natural disasters or an unfair economic and social order. The CFNU International Solidarity Fund supports worker to worker exchanges, provides humanitarian assistance, and strengthens the capacity of workers to advance the right to health.



Back by popular demand for the third and final session of the day was Barb Fry. Barb presented an education session at our 'Mini Labour School' at the 2012 AGM. The reviews of Barb's session were so overwhelmingly positive that we invited her back for the 2013 event so all the AGM attendees could enjoy her stories, experiences and teaching. Having worked as a nurse for over 30 years, she is now a business owner and adult educator. Barb brought a fresh perspective on worklife and creating healthy workplaces for everyone to enjoy.

Dr. Margo Watt

The NSNU Education Committee worked tirelessly to make sure the day went off without a hitch, and what a success it was.

The AGM is always an exciting time for members and Union staff and this year did not disappoint. The NSNU staff has just finished unpacking the boxes from this year's event and plans for 2014 AGM are already being brainstormed. The AGM Committee, NSNU staff and member volunteers spend many, many hours planning, scheduling, coordinating, decorating, setting-up and tearing-down to ensure that all the meetings are successful. Thank you to everyone helped make our 2013 AGM a hit!



Barb Fry and Cheryl Barker



Education Committee members, Debbie Doyle and Jen Thiele

Special thanks to Education Day contributors Maritime Textiles, Belmac Uniforms, Signature Resorts, and Goodlife Fitness



Laura Archer



Janet Hazelton and Linda Silas, CFNU President

Saying Goodbye

When Carol O'Neil first started at the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union she reportedly stated that it would be a 'short stay' in that role. Now 15 years later, Carol has decided to retire from the NSNU and her position as Labour Relations Representative.

Carol came to work for the NSNU in 1998 from Soldiers Memorial Hospital in Middleton where she was a Lab Technician. Her knowledge of the health care industry and involvement with her Local union certainly helped build her portfolio and knowledge in labour relations.

Carol has worked extensively with Locals in Cape Breton and the Annapolis Valley while with the NSNU and nurses in that region will be sure to miss her sage wisdom, calm demeanor and strong backbone.

In retirement, Carol plans to expand her role as grandma, spend more time with her growing family and continue traveling, trekking and exploring new cultures around the world.

From everyone at the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union, we wish you the very best, Carol.



Carol O'Neil, LRR is feted at the 2013 AGM Banquet by her co-workers and friends on her upcoming retirement

SUN welcomes a new president

April 26th, 2013 marked an important day for the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses' (SUN) as long time president Rosalee Longmoore stepped down after her 15 year tenure and the Union welcomed Tracy Zambory as their new president.

Rosalee looks back on her time at the helm of the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses with great pride, as she remembers all the achievements that members fought so very hard for.

"I have had the privilege of witnessing true solidarity when overworked and underpaid Registered Nurses chose to fight for their rights and the rights of their patients in the strike of 1999," said Rosalee. "I have also seen the evolution of collective bargaining from being adversarial to the collaborative approach we are seeing today."

The incoming president, Tracy Zambory, graduated in 1987 from the Kelsey Institute of Applied Arts and Science as a Registered Nurse and worked at a long

term care facility in the province until 2010. She has been very active in the provincial union, serving as Local president, SUN district council chair, regional representative and most recently First Vice President of the SUN Board of Directors.

SUN represents almost 9,000 Registered Nurses (RNs), Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RPNs), Nurse Practitioners (NPs) and graduates in that province.



Tracy Zambory and Rosalee Longmoore

Passion for fitness

Being a sport enthusiast and avid lover of exercise and physical activity, NSNU president Janet Hazelton decided to take her passion from personal to professional by becoming a Group Exercise Instructor in order to teach her favourite program, BODYPUMP.

BODYPUMP is the original barbell weight-training class developed by Les Mills International (LMI), a fitness company from New Zealand. LMI programs are taught worldwide by over 90,000 licensed instructors at over 15,000 fitness clubs. After her first experience with this class, Janet fell in love with this type of workout. But when one of the only two BODYPUMP instructors left her local gym, Janet was no longer able to attend the class since it was no longer offered in the evening slots.

"I knew a lot of members at the gym wanted this class, but there weren't enough instructors, so I thought I would just teach it myself since I wanted to take the class," said Janet. "A friend of mine who was teaching indoor cycling said she would take the training for BODYPUMP too, so we applied and got accepted."

After the first step in becoming a certified instructor, a grueling weekend-long training seminar which pushes you past your physical and mental limits, Janet returned to her home club to begin a three month process of team teaching with a certified instructor.

Standing on the stage and teaching for her first time, Janet soon realized that teaching a fitness class to 25 members was an entirely different leadership role than she has experienced.

"Talking to a conference of over 200 nurses was less nerve-racking than teaching for my first time," said Janet. "There was so much to remember – choreography, timing, tempo, technique – then I had to make sure I was coaching the members effectively too!"

After teaching, Janet also realized how different it is to be an instructor rather than a class participant.

"When you teach the class, you can't stop, not even for a second. You have to keep doing the exercise even when your muscles are screaming at you," said Janet. "It gives you a great appreciation for your own body, when you push your limits like that it's really intense."

In February 2013, after three months of training, Janet received the news that she had passed the certification process and was officially a BODYPUMP instructor.

"I was so relieved to know I passed," said Janet. "I kept thinking about having to do the training again, I was exhausted just thinking about it!"

Janet succeeded in her goal of bringing more BODYPUMP classes to her local gym, she now teaches at 6 am in the morning to a faithful group of 'pumpers' two-to-three times a week.

"Being a group exercise instructor is an amazing experience – it lifts your spirits to know that you are motivating others to stay fit and healthy and make sure exercise is a part of their lives."



Janet Hazelton, NSNU President and Goodlife BodyPump instructor



National Nursing Week Celebrations

Every year, the NSNU allots one-hundred dollars per local for National Nursing Week celebrations. Locals are asked to share their NNW stories so that other locals can be inspired or simply enjoy hearing about other local initiatives.



Queens General Hospital

The nurses at Queens General Hospital Local gave away NSNU swag to the nurses on their team. They also arranged for local massage therapists and estheticians to volunteer their services to treat the nurses. What a great idea!



All Saints Springhill Hospital

Hats off to the nurses, managers and volunteers at All Saints Springhill who took the time to organize weeklong celebrations for National Nurses Week. Patients and volunteers made each nurse a bag decorated with their name, while managers gave each nurse a special name tag, hosted breakfasts and lunches! Local drug stores donated items for gift baskets that

were raffled off each day, and a gift basket was donated by members of the NSNU Local. Nurses also took the time to show appreciation for each other. They all wrote a special comment about one of their coworkers, then gathered together and one by one drew random cards and read the comments. Lillian Rushton, co-president and treasurer of that local says that this was an excellent morale booster for the nurses at All Saints Springhill. Way to go!

Cobequid Community Health Centre

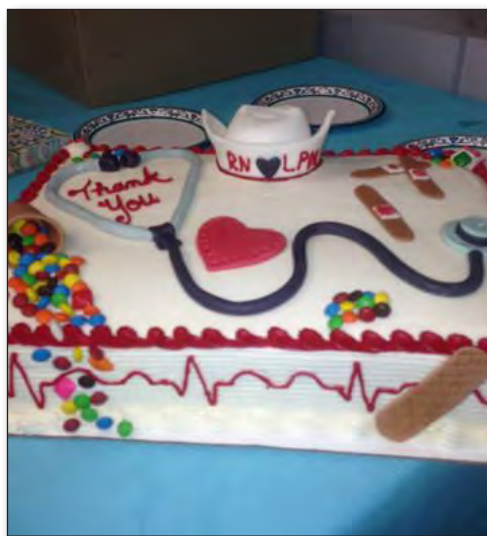
At Cobequid Community Health Centre they used the \$100.00 from NSNU to provide treats and a coffee break on three different days of the week. Members Gwen Busby, Holly Feltmate and Cheryl Barker each volunteered to be in charge and serve coffee during the breaks. Great job!

Photographed are Nurses from the Endoscopic Unit enjoying cupcakes during the May 10th break. Pictured from left to right are: Cheryl Barker, Judy Levy, Tina Nicholson, Misty Piercey and Rosie McDonald.



Aberdeen Hospital

Alaine Halliday and Chanda MacDonald, from the Aberdeen Local, are pictured with their popular Nursing Week cakes. It was a successful week with all the Aberdeen nurses recognized for their dedication and commitment to their profession! Alaine is also seen with the VP of Northern Region, Ann Marie Murdock, at an evening social which was held for the nurses where many prizes were given away. Great job!!



IWK Health Centre

The IWK local held their annual tea for NSNU members on Tuesday, May 7 from 12 to 2 pm. The event, which was well attended, is a great way to honour the more than 950 nurses who work at that facility. The Fran Harper Memorial award was presented at the tea to this year's recipient, Grace MacConnell.

Mountain Lea Lodge

Pam Walker, LPN wrote to the Nurses' Union to say that Mountain Lea Lodge members decided to pool the money from the NSNU with Local funds to cover half the cost of buying travel mugs for all nursing staff. Management at the site wanted to be a part of the nursing week celebrations so they covered the other half of the expense. Congrats MLL!

Elk Court

Patricia Smith RN, Local Secretary at Elk Court wrote to say that the Registered Staff at Elk Court in Brookfield wish to thank the NSNU for the \$100.00 National Nursing Week contribution to local members. The fund will be used to help pay for a dinner gathering of all our Registered Staff at Elk Court to celebrate Nursing Week.

VON Cape Breton

Carol Lahey, president of the VON Cape Breton local reports they will be using their \$100.00 for a pizza party at their next local meeting. Should be a nice treat!



2013 Best Health Magazine Nurse Excellence Awards ~ Johnson Inc.

Johnson is excited to announce that for the 2nd consecutive year, they will be sponsoring the 2013 Best Health magazine Nurse Excellence Awards. Today's great nurses deserve recognition for a job well done, so nominate a nurse today!

Kindness, skill, knowledge, compassion and caring come easily to today's nurses and recognizing their dedication is as easy as nominating them! It will only take a few minutes of your time to nominate, but you'll be doing your part to help us celebrate the special people who touch our lives in so many ways.

Share your stories and upload photos demonstrating why you feel your nominee deserves to be honoured. Three nurses from across Canada will be recognized, and will each receive an award in the form of a \$1,500 cheque donated in their name to a healthcare charity of their choice. The selected nurses will also be featured in the September 2012 issue of Best Health magazine!

Remember, the nomination deadline is June 15th, so visit www.besthealthnursingexcellence.ca for more details.



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