

What's **NU**?

COURAGE TO **LEAD** • CONFIDENCE TO **CHALLENGE** • COMMITMENT TO **CARE**



NSNU Members Loud and Proud at Solidarity Rally

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Going live with the new MyNSNU App!
- Moosheads Nurse Appreciation Night - December 2nd
- Hundreds of workers trek to Province House to oppose anti-union law



President's Notebook

Janet Hazelton, BScN, RN, MPA

Unions Rally to Have Labour Bill Repealed



On August 22, the provincial government proclaimed Bill 148, the *Public Services Sustainability Act*, which imposes a wage package and freezes a negotiated benefit known as the retirement allowance or long-service award. This benefit is eliminated for all new hires post April 2015.

The Act defines a wage package for 75,000 public sector workers, including members of the civil service and health-care workers. It imposes a two-year wage freeze, followed by a one per cent raise in the third year, 1.5 per cent at the start of the fourth year and 0.5 per cent at the end. These increments fall behind basic cost-of-living increases, estimated at about one per cent per year in Nova Scotia.

Also on August 22, the government referred a portion of the legislation to the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal for review, namely the wage package. The government did not include the unions as parties to the proceeding even though the members we represent are directly affected by Bill 148. The Unions, NSNU, CUPE, NSGEU, SEIU, NSTU, CUPW and

NSNU Board of Directors

| | |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Janet Hazelton, President | janet.hazelton@nsnu.ca |
| Christine Van Zoost, Vice President | christine.vanzoost@nsnu.ca |
| Lillian Fynes, VP Finance | lillian.fynes@nsnu.ca |
| Gerri Oakley, VP Eastern Region | gerri.oakley@nsnu.ca |
| Jen Thiele, VP Central Region | jen.thiele@nsnu.ca |
| Ann Marie Murdock, VP Northern Region | annmarie.murdock@nsnu.ca |
| Michelle Lowe, VP Western Region | michelle.lowe@nsnu.ca |
| Sheri Gallivan, VP Long Term Care | sheri.gallivan@nsnu.ca |
| Maria Langille, VP LPN/Grad | maria.langille@nsnu.ca |
| Jennifer Chapman, VP Community Care | jennifer.chapman@nsnu.ca |
| Jayne Fryday, VP IWK | jane.fryday@nsnu.ca |

NSNU Contact

150 Garland Avenue
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia B3B 0A7
1-800-469-1474 / 902-469-1474
fax 1-902-466-6935
www.nsnu.ca

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NSNU Staff

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jean Candy, RN (Retired) | Executive Director |
| Cindy Herbert, CA | Director of Finance and Operations |
| Cindy Wagner | Accounts Payable/Member Payroll Services |
| Verna Harrie | Accounts Receivable/Union Dues Services |
| Lilo Wessels, RN, CCNP | Labour Relations Representative, Mental Health and Addictions Consultant |
| Chris Albrecht, RN | Labour Relations Representative, Chief Negotiator |
| Patti Humphries, BScN, RN | Labour Relations Representative, Professional Practice Advisor |
| Shannon Wark, RN | Labour Relations Representative |
| Carl Quinlan, B.Comm | Labour Relations Representative, Respectful Workplace and Diversity Consultant |
| Carol Crane | Paralegal, Professional Practice Liaison |
| Paul Curry, BA, MA, PhD | Researcher, Educator, Government Relations Advisor, Occupational Health & Safety Consultant |
| Justin Hiltz, MSc | Research Associate |
| Coleen Logan, BPR | Communications Officer |
| Christie Blotnick, BPR | Communications Assistant |
| Lorna Myers | Executive Assistant |
| Debbie Grady, BA | Labour Relations Assistant |
| Nancy MacDonald | Receptionist |

On the Cover: NSNU members come out in force for the Bill 148 Solidarity Rally on September 21st

Unifor have now asked the Court for permission to participate in the proceedings. If we are not present, the interests of our members may be compromised. Party status will enable us to give evidence regarding the potential impact of the wage portion of Bill 148.

Although only the wage package is before the Court, the unions continue to press for the entire bill, including the retirement allowance or long-service award, to be reviewed and tested for its constitutionality.

Since its inception in 2015, this bill has seriously impaired the prospect of fair and successful collective bargaining. The damage created by this bill, and others before it, will be expensive and will far exceed any short-term cost-savings to the government. Meanwhile, retaining and attracting skilled workers in Nova Scotia is sure to become much more difficult.

This legislation is particularly discouraging considering that, up until now, Nova Scotia had been doing a good job of retaining graduate nurses. 96% of new RNs and 95% of new LPNs are employed in our province within one year of graduation.

However, the good work being done by the Provincial Nursing Network, namely the Nova Scotia Nursing Strategy, is likely to erode due to the proclamation of Bill 148.

We anticipate that close to 7000 of the province's nurses will be over age 55 in the next 5 years. The high number of retiring, experienced nurses is expected to continue until at least 2020 with clinical specialties seeing the highest number of retirements.

Where wages are concerned, Nova Scotia is below the national average for RN wages, but had been on par with the Atlantic Canadian average—this will change based on Bill 148. Nova Scotia is below both the national average, and the Atlantic Canadian average with regards to current LPN wages.

With regards to the retirement allowance, the NSNU is filing grievances within all sectors for those affected in the event this legislation is overturned so nurses can recoup any losses. We plan to file policy and individual grievances depending on the circumstance of each case.

In light of the Act we will now face greater obstacles in retaining and recruiting nurses. Our goal has always been to remain competitive with other provinces in order to attract and keep nurses in our health care system. This legislation will impede our goals and has the potential to put public safety at risk.

In a recent MyNSNU App poll, we asked members to name, in their view, the most detrimental outcome resulting from Bill 148. Respondents, NSNU members, could choose between the following options:

1. New graduates and experienced nurses will choose to leave the province for better wages and a continued retirement allowance / long-service award
2. Fewer people will choose to enter the nursing profession in Nova Scotia, adding to nursing shortages
3. Nurses will begin to refuse overtime because they feel disrespected by the government



Janet Hazelton participated in the original anti-Bill 148 rallies when the legislation was first introduced in 2015

4. Senior nurses will choose to retire early
5. A compromised bargaining process will hinder our ability to negotiate work-life improvements for nurses

While all five options were seen as disconcerting, members chose number 5 most often. Nurses see work-life issues as very important and this legislation will make it even more difficult to negotiate improvements in their workplaces.

It is our hope that this legislation will be repealed, restoring fair and free collective bargaining and workers' constitutional rights.

At this time, the health care unions, under the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour, have not filed a Charter Challenge but that has not been ruled out.



Janet Hazelton joins leaders from several labour organizations for the press conference on September 6th

Unions Hold Press Conference to Respond to Bill 148

On Wednesday, September 6th leaders from seven unions joined together with the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour for a press conference to announce their intention to file for Party Status to intervene on behalf of unionized workers at the Court of Appeals where Bill 148 is concerned.

The press conference received a great deal of media attention, with most local news outlets in attendance. In particular, the concerns voiced by NSNU president, Janet Hazelton, created waves that caught the attention of national news media, showing that the ramifications of Bill 148 are far reaching, and affect more than just the 75,000 workers who stand to lose wages and benefits through the Act.

During the press conference, Janet Hazelton took some time to speak directly to the detrimental outcomes the Act could have on nursing and the provision of health care in Nova Scotia, specifically with regards to recruitment and retention of nurses while the province is already in the midst of a nursing shortage. She also spoke to the real potential for nurses to refuse to work overtime, which could cripple Emergency Rooms and other units if left understaffed.

The labour organizations involved in the press conference and ongoing action against the Act include the NSNU, the Nova Scotia Government and

General Employees Union (NSGEU), the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Unifor, the Nova Scotia Teacher's Union (NSTU), the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

On Friday, September 8th the NSFL officially filed for Party Status. The unions are currently awaiting a ruling on the matter from the Court of Appeals.



Hazelton shares the perspective of the Nurses' Union during a Bill 148 press conference on September 6th

NSNU Members Raise Their Voices at Bill 148 Solidarity Rally

Close to 75 NSNU members mobilized based on their contempt for Bill 148 (the *Public Services Sustainability Act*), joining several other unions in a show of solidarity at a rally Thursday, September 21st at Province House.

NSNU members from across the province participated in the event which brought together hundreds of workers affected by Bill 148, as well as supporters from other unions and groups showing their solidarity. Some came by bus, others carpooled, while some walked from their place of work over their lunch breaks to voice their concerns.

With their union colours on full display, wearing their union logos and carrying flags and banners, workers conveyed their strongly held views on collective bargaining, their rights and their value in the province.

Led by Danny Cavanagh, president of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour, the rally brought together leaders from numerous local labour organizations, as well as national presidents from NUPGE (NSGEU), CUPE and Unifor. There were also several unions

not affected by Bill 148 that were represented, demonstrating the strength and solidarity of the Nova Scotia Labour Movement.

Aidan McNally, Chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students-Nova Scotia perhaps said it best: "An attack on one worker is an attack on all workers." A poignant message that gets to the heart of what it means to be a labour activist.

When given an opportunity to address those gathered, leaders from each of the affected unions

expressed their opinions and called on the Liberal government to reconsider their continued attacks on unionized workers – public sector employees – before our workforce is weakened beyond repair.

NSNU president, Janet Hazelton had a strong message for government and workers:

"Once again, health care workers, teachers, nurses and so many others have been forced to protest at Province House because of yet another attack on unionized workers. The lack of consultation and consideration, the lack of respect government continues to demonstrate is an insult."

"Mr. Premier, for me, respect means rewarding workers with the wages, benefits, and consideration they have earned and rightly deserve."



NSNU members stand amongst hundreds of workers to fight against Bill 148 - *The Public Services Sustainability Act*.



Janet Hazelton addresses those gathered, speaking about the need for government to respect workers



NSNU members from Yarmouth, Cape Breton and everywhere in between travelled to Halifax for the Bill 148 Solidarity Rally



Janet Hazelton with 80 year old nurse and rabble-rouser, Gail Berry



A Record of Anti-Labour Legislation

Since 2014, the Liberal government tabled the following bills, taking aim at unionized workers in Nova Scotia:

Bill 19 - December 2013

Trade Union Act amendments made it harder for workers to exercise their right to unionize and secure first collective agreements.

Bill 30 - February 2014

The *Essential Home Support Services Act* directly interfered in the collective bargaining of home support workers.

Bill 37 - March 2014

The *Essential Health and Community Services Act* limits job action rights of more than 40,000 workers in acute care, long term care, group homes, home support, child protection and other sectors.

Bill 1 - September 2014

The *Health Authorities Act* restructured the health care system, unnecessarily reduced the number of bargaining units, and attempted to assign union representation rights.

Bill 69 - March 2015

Amendments to the *Health Authorities Act* rules that the four health care unions will maintain current membership and collaborate on collective bargaining within the new amalgamated DHA structure in Councils of Unions.

Bill 100 - April 2015

The *Universities Accountability and Sustainability Act* allows universities to override collective agreements during five-year "revitalization" periods.

Bill 148 - December 2015

The *Public Services Sustainability Act* freezes and limits wage increases, sets the term of collective agreements and puts an end to long-service awards.

Bill 75 - February 2017

The *Teachers' Professional Agreement and Classroom Improvement Act* imposes a collective agreement on teachers after they rejected the contract terms three times.



NURSE APPRECIATION NIGHT



Mark this on your calendars. On **December 2**, the Halifax Mooseheads will welcome NSNU members at a Nurse Appreciation Night as they take on Val-d'Or in QMJHL play. It's exciting hockey with a twist as the fans and the franchise show their gratitude to nurses. A first for Halifax!

Special rates will apply for nurses and up to five family members or close friends. An exclusive Promo Code has been emailed directly to you. If you have not received yours, please contact the union office at 1-800/902-469-1474 and we'll send it by email. Tickets are \$12 per Adult (17 years and up) and \$8 Youth (under 17). As per any ticket purchase, service charges are extra.

From the puck drop, the national anthem, and intermission hijinks, the NSNU nursing theme will be front and centre.

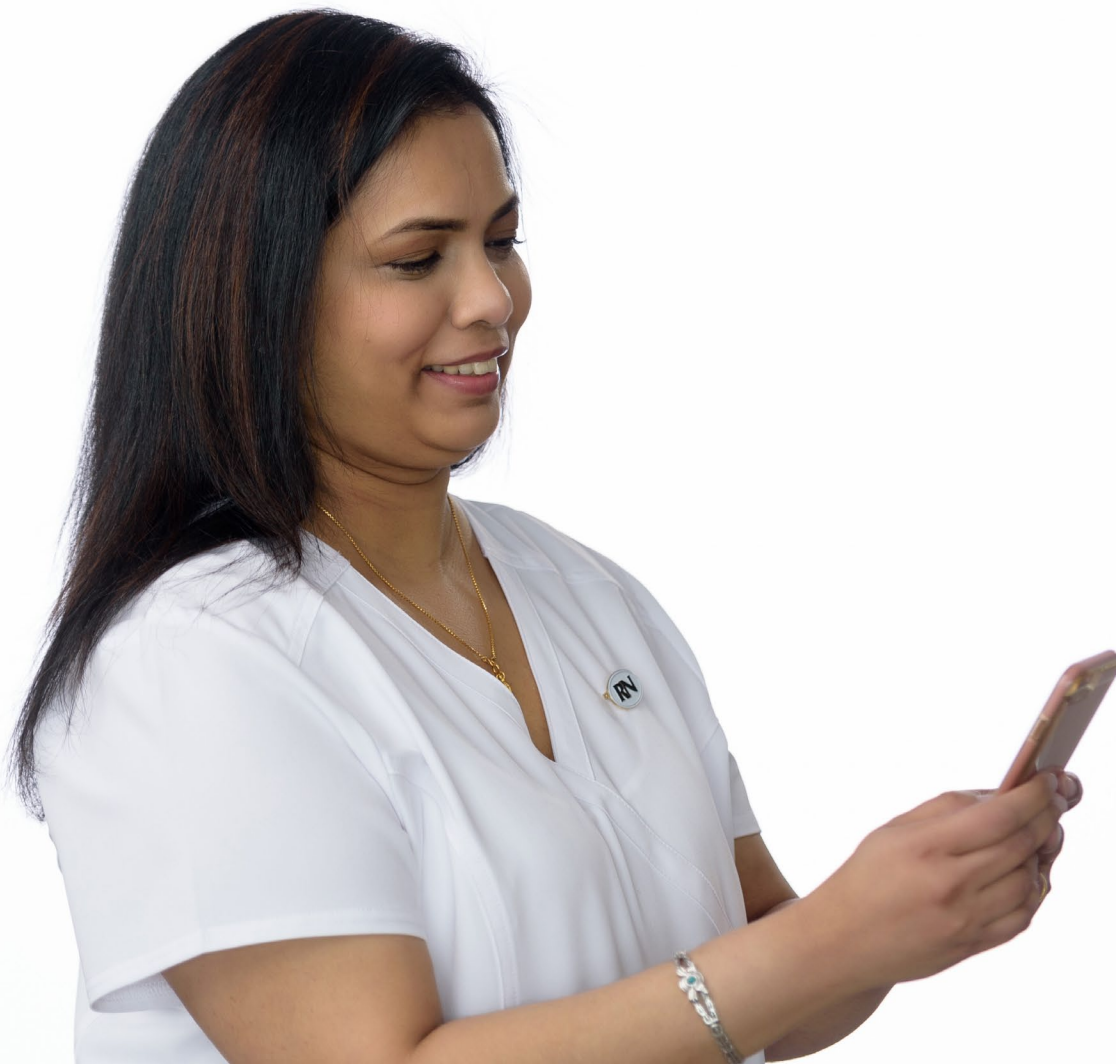
The game starts at 7pm. Be sure to get your tickets for a fun night before they're sold out.

Show your NSNU and Moosehead Pride – December 2nd!



#GOMOOSEGO   

halifaxmooseheads.ca/nurses



THE WAIT IS OVER The NSNU App is Ready to Download!

Make room on your device for the new MyNSNU App!


On Friday, September 15, the MyNSNU App became available to all NSNU members. With valuable, functional features, the MyNSNU App ensures easy access to collective agreements, news and information, participation in polls, and up-to-the-minute discussions on issues that affect you. The MyNSNU App is designed

to connect members with Union news, resources and other members.

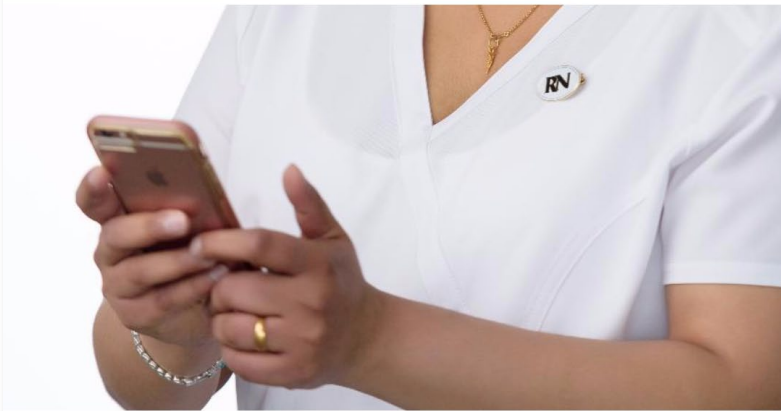
The App will work on your phone (Android and iOS/iPhone), tablet, and desktop/laptop computer. To download the App, visit either the Google Play Store on your Android phone, the App Store on your Apple device, or go online at nsnu.itacit.com.

To login, use the same username and password you currently use to log into the members-only portal on the NSNU website. If you require your password, contact the NSNU office at 902-469-1474/1-800-469-1474, or nsnu.office@nsnu.ca.

The first time you log in, you will be presented with the Terms of Use for the App. This outlines the



Welcome to the MyNSNU App!



September 5, 2017

Welcome to the MyNSNU App – your hub for up-to-date, exclusive content directly from the Nova Scotia Nurses’ Union. Here are a few of the features of the MyNSNU app for you to enjoy:

Fresh Content ...

4 COMMENTS **16 LIKES**

April 27, 2017

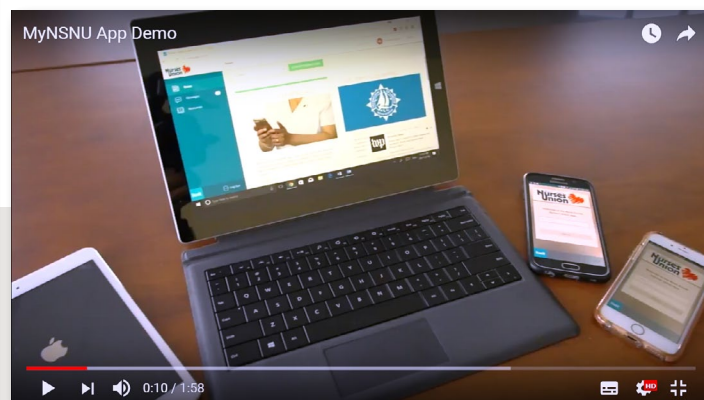
I believe that online education offered by NSNU will be valuable for our members

100% **Yes**

0% No

102 responses

You responded on August 8, 2017.



The App demo shows you how to download and use the App on your computer or mobile device, and shows off a few of the great features included

guidelines for using the App, and you will need to agree to the terms if you wish to use the App.

Every Wednesday, in addition to periodic polls for emerging issues, members will be presented with survey questions. These questions will allow members to give feedback on a variety of issues at the forefront of nursing and labour. For the most part, you'll be

able to see the results instantly; for more in-depth polls, a more detailed account of the results will be posted in the News section of the App at a later date.

Still to come... as the App evolves you will be able to access online educational modules for premium points, alerts will notify you when new items have been posted, and a possible calendar option to

assist you in tracking your shifts and Union-sponsored events. Our Contact Us feature is still in the works as well – stand by!

For a video demo of the MyNSNU App, visit nsnu.ca/mynsnuapp.

If you experience any difficulties or if you have any feedback for us regarding the App, please reach out to us at your convenience.

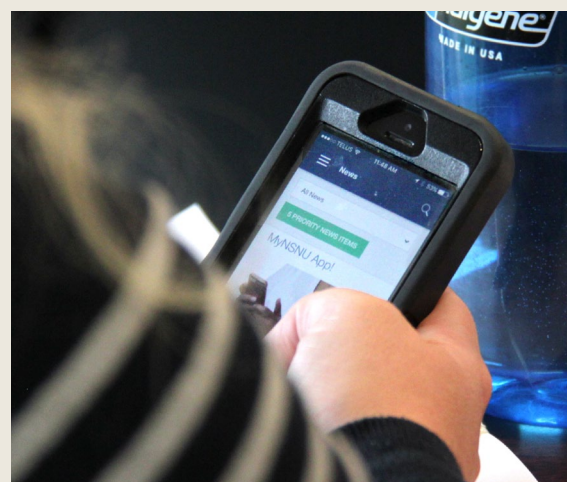


Justin Hiltz presents on the CCR process

Paul Curry discusses workplace violence during the Western Region session



Janet Hazelton addresses members during the session in Dartmouth



A member takes the new MyNSNU App for a test drive

Hitting the Road for the NSNU Regional Education Tour

In September the NSNU embarked on a regional education tour of the province, bringing insightful and informative courses to members in each of the four regions, with events in Yarmouth, Halifax, Truro and Sydney. Regional education is just one of the ways the NSNU is bringing more educational opportunities to our locals than ever before.

The NSNU was pleased to see a great turnout at all of the events. The rooms were packed full of members ready to take what they learned in the sessions back to their workplaces. Members who attended regional education received practice premium points for each of the courses, excluding

the App presentation, and certificates of completion.

Each regional education day consisted of five courses: Violence in the Workplace, Respectful Workplaces, The NSNU App, Clinical Capacity Reporting/Safe Staffing Process, and Nursing and Social Media

When she was available, NSNU president, Janet Hazelton joined the sessions to discuss violence in the workplace and provide updates on issues presently facing the Union. Other staff members on the tour included Researcher, Educator, Paul Curry; Research Associate, Justin Hiltz; and Labour Relations

Representative and Respectful Workplace and Diversity Consultant, Carl Quinlan.

The sessions were highlighted by great questions and conversations amongst the nurses gathered. The Union benefits as much as our members from these discussions, as it brings new topics and perspectives to the forefront.

Thank you to close to 300 members from around the province who helped make these regional education sessions so successful. Because of the excellent turnout and feedback from members, the NSNU plans to schedule more regional education sessions like these in the future.



Reminder: Deadline for Practice and Leadership Premium Submissions is October 31st

We would like to remind all NSNU nurses that the submission deadline for practice and leadership premiums is October 31st. Points can be collected up until that date. The premiums are open to all nurses in all units and sectors – NPs, RNs, LPNs, in acute care, long-term care and community care. Each premium is worth \$850 (pro-rated) and is paid out as a lump sum in late November or early December.

Nurses require 70 practice premium points to receive the practice premium. Activities include certification in a specialty (e.g. palliative care), courses in a specialty area, workshops/conferences (e.g. labour school, conflict resolution course), hospital in-services (e.g. lunch and learn sessions), university education and e-learning. Note that shorter e-learning courses can usually be combined to count towards points. Workshops and seminars offered by NSNU staff (e.g. Safe Staffing and CCRs, and Violence in the Workplace) also count towards your practice points, and members are encouraged to contact the Union any time they are interested in arranging such education for their local.

Nurses require 60 leadership activity points to receive the leadership premium. Activities include being involved on a committee or task force, being

involved in the professional association, publication in a journal or presentation at a conference, being involved in a research study, acting as a resource person (e.g. breast feeding champion), accepting special responsibilities (e.g. preceptorship), or being involved in special projects.

Please consult your collective agreement (Appendix B of most contracts) for further information and restrictions. If you are unsure about the point value of an activity you may wish to consult your manager. The NSNU has also produced a helpful video explaining the premiums which can be found on our YouTube channel, or in the Resource section of the new MyNSNU app under Online Education and Tutorial Videos.

Submission forms are available under the Education tab on the NSNU website. Follow the link on the left to 'Education Premiums' and you will find links to the forms at the bottom of the page.

Practice and leadership premiums are a means of recognizing the value of professional development which benefits nurses, employers and patients alike. We encourage all nurses to take advantage of these premiums whenever possible.

Council of Unions Convenes to Discuss Bargaining Status

You will recall that Bill 1, the *Health Authorities Act*, restructured the health care system, unnecessarily reduced the number of bargaining units, and attempted to assign union representation rights. That Bill was abandoned after much scrutiny in favour of a Council of Unions – Bill 69 – which, as of 2015, has the four health care unions (NSNU, NSGEU, CUPE and Unifor) working collaboratively on collective bargaining within the new amalgamated DHA structure.

On September 19, representatives from the four unions met at the NSGEU office in Burnside to review the Council Constitution, Essential Services, and Bill 148 – The *Public Services Sustainability Act*.

The NSNU Provincial Negotiating Committee, consisting of eleven members, was on hand for

those discussions including our president, Janet Hazelton (Chair of the Council of Nursing Unions), and staff, Chris Albrecht, NSNU Chief Negotiator/Labour Relations Representative and Jean Candy, Executive Director; as well as the members of the Nursing Bargaining Unit Council (seven Nurses from NSGEU, one from CUPE, one from Unifor). The Lead Union for the Nursing Council Negotiating Committee for collective bargaining on behalf of the Constituent Unions representing employees in the Nursing bargaining units is NSNU.

At the September 19 meeting, the groups were provided with an update on the status of Health Care Council bargaining, as that team is the only Council that has been to the table to date. These talks have been slow to make

meaningful progress. However, both sides continue to meet and have come to resolution on some issues. The parties have now held 18 bargaining dates with another eight scheduled for the fall.

The Council meeting also included an overview of the model Health Care collective agreement, options and limitations under essential services, an opportunity for the sectors to break out into their respective Councils for group discussions.

We will keep you updated as bargaining progresses for the Health Care Council through newsletter updates and other communiques around bargaining, particularly if there is new information on the status of the Nursing Council.

Members of the NSNU acute care provincial negotiating committee, including NSNU president, Janet Hazelton, join with PNCs from other unions and bargaining groups for the September 19th meeting





NSNU Board Participates in PTSD Consultation Group

On September 5th, the NSNU Board of Directors had the opportunity to participate in a Department of Labour focus group concerning work-related post-traumatic stress disorder. The Nova Scotia government plans to introduce a new law in the coming months. The legislation could mean that if certain classifications of workers develop PTSD, it will be presumed to have come from stresses related to working conditions.

Presumptive legislation currently exists in many Canadian jurisdictions for a variety of conditions. For example, if firefighters develop one of the cancers related to smoke inhalation, it is presumed that this was caused by their working conditions.

NSNU Board members impressed upon the Department of Labour consultants the need to specifically name the nursing profession – including LPNs, RNs and NPs – in the presumptive legislation. Other Canadian jurisdictions have introduced presumptive PTSD legislation that only covers traditionally male-dominated professions. Nurse unions across the country have been lobbying governments and compensation boards to recognize the reality of PTSD in nursing and the obligation to provide appropriate care and compensation to those affected. The Board also recommended that NPs and family physicians be added to the list of professionals who can provide a PTSD diagnosis in order to reduce wait times and improve access to care.

Nurses' Union President Asked to Weigh in on Issue of Domestic Violence

Victims of domestic or sexual violence in Nova Scotia may soon be permitted to take a paid leave from work, allowing victims to seek safety with the help of their employers. Legislation that will give domestic violence victims the right to time off work is seen as a step in the right direction as far as the Nurses' Union is concerned.

On July 5th, the Community Services Minister, Kelly Regan announced her plan to move forward with the legislation that was first announced last spring.

Currently in Ontario, workers receive a minimum of ten days leave to seek out psychological help, support from victim services organizations, alternative housing, medical attention, legal or law enforcement assistance.

Nova Scotia is considering a five-day leave with pay, which Hazelton says is not enough and out of step with the severity of the problem and the fallout from domestic abuse.

Hazelton was grateful to have the opportunity to voice her opinions and concerns on this legislation, which follows a recent contract agreement by employees at the Nova Scotia Elizabeth Fry Society that offered staff there a similar provision.





Workplace Safety Action Plan

Last year AWARE-NS began the process of developing a five-year Workplace Safety Action Plan, in coordination with the Departments of Health and Wellness, Labour and Advanced Education, and Community Services, the Nova Scotia Health Authority, IWK Health Centre, and the Worker's Compensation Board of Nova Scotia. The intention of the Workplace Safety Action Plan is to improve occupational health and safety outcomes in home care, long-term care and community service sectors. Workers in these sectors endure some of the highest rates of injuries and violence, leading to expensive WCB claims and lost time.

The process of developing the Workplace Safety Action Plan began in 2016 with five committees being formed to tackle specific OHS issues, including safe handling and mobility; workplace violence; slips, trips, and falls; mental health and wellness; and stay-at-work/return-to-work processes. These committees included over 90 individuals working in health and community services. Their task was to provide new strategies for dealing with these common concerns in the workplace.

In addition to the committees being struck, AWARE-NS completed consultations, focus groups and an online survey of over 1,200 stakeholders. Members of the NSNU may remember being asked to participate in some of these research endeavours. All of your contributions were taken into consideration as the committees prepared their final recommendations.

Now that the first year is over and so much data has been collected, consultations held, and leaders in the field tapped to provide their expertise, AWARE-NS is moving on to the next stage of the process: developing the final plan to be put into action. To learn more about the Workplace Safety Action Plan and to keep up to date as the plan begins to take shape, visit awarens.ca.

Thank you to all NSNU nurses who took the time to participate and lend your experienced voices to this important process. The Union is eager to see how the new Workplace Safety Action Plan will look and how it will affect OHS processes in your workplaces.

NSNU JOHS Representatives Election Deadline Approaching

At the 2017 AGM members debated and voted on resolutions submitted by locals and members of the Board. One resolution that passed now requires each union local to elect a Joint Occupational Health and Safety (JOHS) representative to their local executive.

This measure will go a long way in funneling information, facilitating education and ensuring accountability with regard to occupational health and safety in our workplaces.

In order to adhere to this commitment, we ask that each local hold elections prior to November 1, 2017 if they have not already done so. Once this process has been completed, please email Lorna Myers at lorna.myers@nsnu.ca with the names and contact information of your new JOHS rep and alternate. This will allow us to reach out to the new reps once we are able to schedule a training session.

Those interested in the position(s) should seek out their local president or executive members for more information.

CFNU Negotiators Meet in Nova Scotia



Negotiators from nurse unions across the country meet in the NSNU office on September 14th

Negotiators from across the country met in Dartmouth on September 14 and 15 to discuss nursing issues and share bargaining strategies and data from national and provincial perspectives.

The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union welcomed representatives of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions counterparts from far and wide at our office in Burnside, bringing together some of the best and brightest negotiators in Canada.

Their collective experience and knowledge made the meetings informative and constructive. These are difficult times for the labour movement as governments continue to make cuts and concessions at the expense of hard working and dedicated employees. It is comforting to know that our nurse unions take a collaborative approach to bargaining, and have such skilled professionals at the bargaining table.

The CFNU negotiators meet twice annually to compare collective agreements, the political climate and will, work-life issues that impact nurses, and bargaining tactics.

Belmac - Your Exclusive Uniform Supplier

The NSNU is very happy to report that Belmac Uniforms, a Nova Scotia company, will be the exclusive supplier of uniforms for our members from one end of the province to the other.

In the past, the Cape Breton business worked with a supplier from New Brunswick to outfit nurses in the white and black standardized uniform – a policy and practice that has garnered accolades and recognition across the globe.

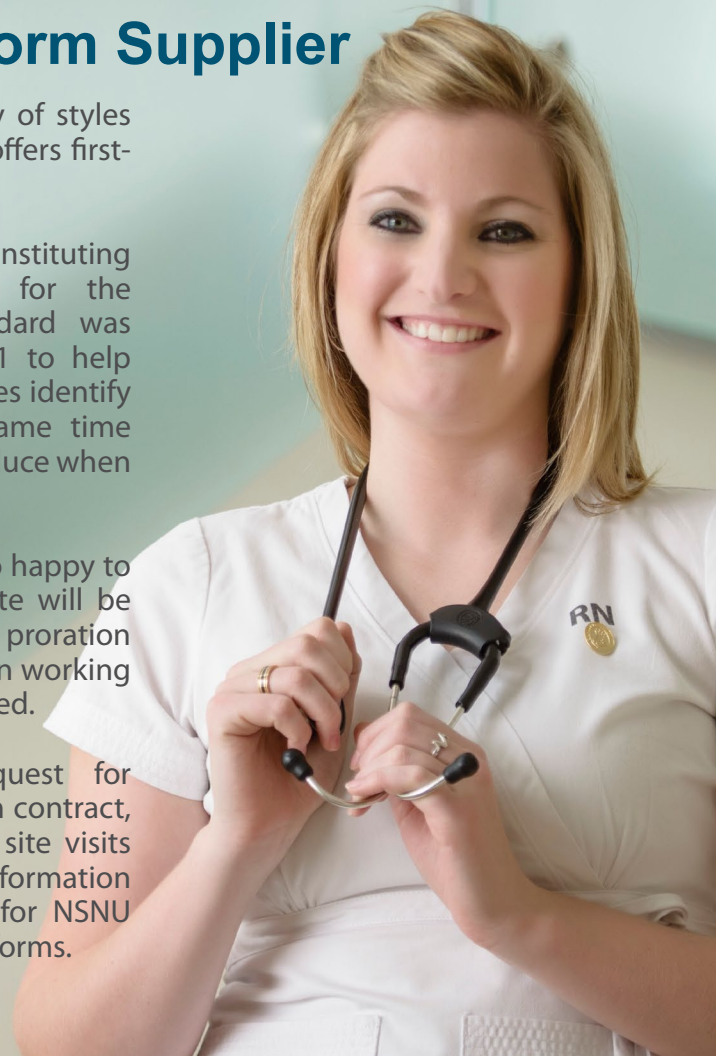
Many of you will be familiar with Katherine Van Nostrand, a former nurse who is now the owner/operator of Belmac, from her exhibits at our Annual General Meeting and site visits in some regions of the province.

She carries a wide array of styles and brand names, and offers first-class customer service.

The contract language instituting a uniform allowance for the white and black standard was first introduced in 2011 to help patients and their families identify nurses, while at the same time making it obvious to deduce when low staffing is occurring.

The Nurses' Union is also happy to announce that a flat rate will be applied to all nurses – proration of an allowance based on working status has been eliminated.

Belmac won the request for proposal for the uniform contract, and will be scheduling site visits soon and circulating information that will make it easy for NSNU members to acquire uniforms.



Don't Let NAFTA 2.0 Stand In The Way Of Pharmacare

By Linda Silas, President, Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions

This article was originally published by Huffington Post Canada on September 22, 2017

Canada is closer today than ever before to achieving a public prescription drug plan for everyone. Provinces, cities, labour unions, businesses, doctors, nurses, health-care workers, economists and patient groups have come together to form one of the broadest coalitions in Canadian history — one in favour of a national pharmacare program. Nevertheless, NAFTA poses an existential threat to the dream of establishing such a program. After two rounds of NAFTA 2.0 negotiations, the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) is calling on federal negotiators to defend Canada's interests and protect our country's pathway to pharmacare.

If the Trump administration has its way in NAFTA 2.0, Canada will be forced to lengthen lucrative monopolies to Big Pharma giants for costly and life-saving biologic medications. Billions could be added needlessly to yearly medication costs in Canada.

This wouldn't be the first time Canada has conceded to Big Pharma in a trade deal. Two years ago Canada made concessions on patent terms in the free trade agreement with the European Union. Some estimate this will raise prescription drug costs in Canada by nearly \$1 billion per year when fully implemented. If NAFTA 2.0 generates yet another unnecessary spike in prescription

drug prices, Canadians will pay — either with their pocket books or with their health. Adding salt to the wounds, rising costs could also dissuade the federal government from finally introducing a Canada-wide pharmacare plan.

The math isn't hard: spend \$1 billion to save \$8 billion!

Pharmacare is a common-sense solution to excessively high prescription drug costs and the financial barriers to accessing medicines.

As nurses, we know the lack of coverage and high prices continue to force millions of patients in Canada to reduce dosages or avoid taking prescriptions altogether. Patients become sicker, lives are threatened and, too often, avoidable tragedies occur. In fact, nearly one in four Canadian households report members not having the money to take prescription medicines as prescribed.

Pharmacare also holds the key to unlocking billions in health-care dollars currently being wasted by the inefficient multi-payer system. A recent CFNU-commissioned report, penned by economist Hugh Mackenzie, found that Canada wasted \$62-billion health-care dollars between 2006 and 2015, because a pharmacare program wasn't in place.

Despite the broad consensus across civil society in favour of pharmacare, and the evidence base to support it, the federal



Linda Silas

government remains the last major holdout. Similar to most good policy ideas, the buck stops at the dollar sign. The federal government's reluctance seemingly stems from the (estimated) sum of \$1 billion required to launch the program. However, peer-reviewed studies have found that pharmacare would save patients, businesses and, ultimately, governments upwards of \$8 billion per year. For once, the math isn't hard: spend \$1 billion to save \$8 billion!

As Mackenzie put it: "Politically, [pharmacare] is a no-brainer — eliminate waste and deliver better services."

It's long past time for Canada to expand medicare to include public coverage for medications for everyone — let's not let NAFTA stand in our way!

Labour Day Celebrations Call for Universal Pharmacare

On September 4th Canada celebrated Labour Day. So much more than just a long weekend marking the end of vacation season, Labour Day provides an opportunity to reflect on the successes of the labour movement, and refocus on what still needs to be done to improve life for Canadians in and out of the workplace.

The labour movement has always been dedicated to tackling societal inequities, and this year's Labour Day event focused on something that affects us all – the fight for a national pharmacare program. The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions and its member organizations, including the NSNU, have been calling for universal pharmacare for nearly a decade. This year, we were joined in that call to action by the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), and labour organizations across the country.

There were several events taking place around Nova Scotia on Labour Day, including marches

and barbecues in Halifax, Amherst, Bridgewater, Sydney, Port Hawkesbury, Kentville and Yarmouth. In Halifax, leaders from numerous labour groups were out in full force calling for action on national pharmacare, while NSNU president, Janet Hazelton took that message to the parade in Port Hawkesbury.

The CLC has committed to working with organizations like the CFNU/ NSNU to campaign for a national

program. We hope that with the combined voices of labour groups from across Canada that our provincially and federally elected representatives will listen.

To learn more about the case for national pharmacare, visit www.aplanforeveryone.ca.



Janet Hazelton and Linda Silas promote the pharmacare message at Labour Day events in Port Hawkesbury and Ottawa (above), while other labour leaders march the streets of Halifax (below)



Anniversary Celebration a Very Special Occasion

On September 8th, Janet Hazelton, NSNU president had the distinct pleasure of attending a 50th Anniversary celebration and BBQ at Ocean View Continuing Care Centre in Eastern Passage.

To their backyard and gazebo, the Centre welcomed families, friends and staff to celebrate their long-standing commitment to the senior population of their community.

For half a century it has been home to countless patients and a great comfort to families with loved ones in care at that facility.

The administration and nursing staff at Ocean View are trusted and admired for their dedication to those they serve.

Congratulations!



Janet took a moment for a quick photo with the very proud Administrator of Ocean View, Dion Mouland

Hants Community Hospital Local Helps Out Women and Girls in Need



HCH nurses Susan Burgess, Darlene Rourke, Kim Benedict, and Karen Eldridge show off donations from their local

Four proud members of the NSNU took our new AGM tradition of gathering dignity products for women and girls in need of feminine hygiene products to the local level where their co-workers gave generously. The products, collected by nurses working at Hants Community Hospital, were then donated to their local food bank in Windsor.

These products are not cheap, as many of us can attest to, making these “must-have” items hard for those on a fixed or low income to afford.

For the past two years, the AGM Committee has made the practice of collecting these products part of our event planning with huge buy-in from our members in attendance.

It is encouraging, and heartwarming, to see locals take on this challenge – as nurses do so very well.

Aberdeen Hospital's Nurses Drive Change Through Pilot Project

This article was originally published by New Glasgow News on September 18, 2017

NEW GLASGOW – A pilot project underway at the Aberdeen Hospital is already improving patient outcomes, transforming care and energizing nurses.

"Everyone understands that the goal is to improve patient outcomes and they all want to be involved. Our staff seems more engaged and more responsible for the role they play. Even participation at staff meetings has increased. We've already begun to implement some changes and they've definitely improved how we're operating and communicating," said registered nurse Brittany Heighton.

A first for Nova Scotia, the project is a partnership with the StFX Rankin School of Nursing to become a Best Practice Spotlight Organization. The designation is a health care innovation developed by the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario that's used internationally.

"This pilot represents a planned system change that will be led by our nurses. It's about how nurses build on the knowledge they graduated with. It's a process through which that knowledge is continually updated and put into practice," said Carla MacDonald, the clinical nurse specialist for the Aberdeen Hospital's medical inpatient unit. "This is about

breaking the mould of doing a thing because that's how it's always been done."

MacDonald had been looking for an opportunity for her department's nursing team that would challenge them to play more of a leadership role on the inter-professional care teams on which they serve. The unit cares for all patients in the hospital, other than surgery and maternity/pediatrics. It requires a large team of nursing professionals skilled in nearly every area of patient care.

When implemented, the project will represent a transformation not only in care, but also culture, because the nursing team is leading the introduction of the latest best practice at the bedside.

They learn how to gather evidence, develop a rationale, and facilitate conversations that help the entire team adjust and adapt its approach based on new information. In this way, nurses become patient care innovators.

During the one-year pilot project, the team will be implementing best practice guidelines in two areas: pressure ulcers and managing transitions in care that occur at shift changes. These are areas of patient care and safety that nurses can directly impact. How they communicate, make decisions, and collaborate with other health professionals are key aspects the program addresses.

"This is about breaking the mould of doing a thing because that's how it's always been done."

- Carla MacDonald, clinical nurse specialist



Aberdeen Best Practice champions and NSNU members. Brittany Heighton, RN, Carla MacDonald, RN and Sandi Kennedy, RN (Photo Credit - NG News)



PRIDE 2017

This summer NSNU members came out in force to show their support for members of the LGBT2Q+ community in our province. This year Pride Parades were popping up all over the place, including first-ever events in Amherst and Yarmouth, a Pride and Diversity Parade in Truro, and the always popular Halifax and Sydney Pride Parades.

We thank our members for showing such wonderful solidarity with your fellow nurses who are part of the LGBT2Q+ community, as well as the patients you care for. The NSNU is proud to represent diversity, and it is clear that our members share that sentiment.

Many thanks to the organizers and participants who helped make Pride 2017 one of the best ever. We look forward to doing it all again next year.



Herald Employees Return to Work

In August members of the Halifax Typographical Union and their employer, the Chronicle Herald signed a new agreement that ended a year-and-a-half long strike.

While it is good to see this strike come to an end, the new contract, which was accepted by 84% of HTU members, included major concessions. Of the 61 workers who hit the picket line in January 2016, only 25 returned to work, many accepting buyouts as their positions had been cut. The deal also included wage cuts, reduced benefits, longer working hours and shorter vacations.

Now that these hard-working and talented newsroom workers have returned to their duties, NSNU members who wish to do so are encouraged to re-subscribe the Chronicle Herald and support their work. The Nurses' Union has already done so.

Throughout the long and difficult strike, HTU benefitted from the support of the labour movement, and from the extreme generosity of members of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union. Members of the HTU have asked us to share this message with members:

A Heartfelt Thanks from CWA-HTU

It's been just over a month since Herald strikers returned to work.

A Great Big THANK YOU to all your members at the Nurses' Union.

Many times during the strike the members would be so uplifted by the support shown by people from the Nurses' Union and others.

Let us not forget the financial support that came from the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union.

The Herald members came away from this strike with the understanding that Unions like yours are the reason that Unions do work and represent the common good of all.

Thank you.

Member Kits Have You Filled Out Your Forms?

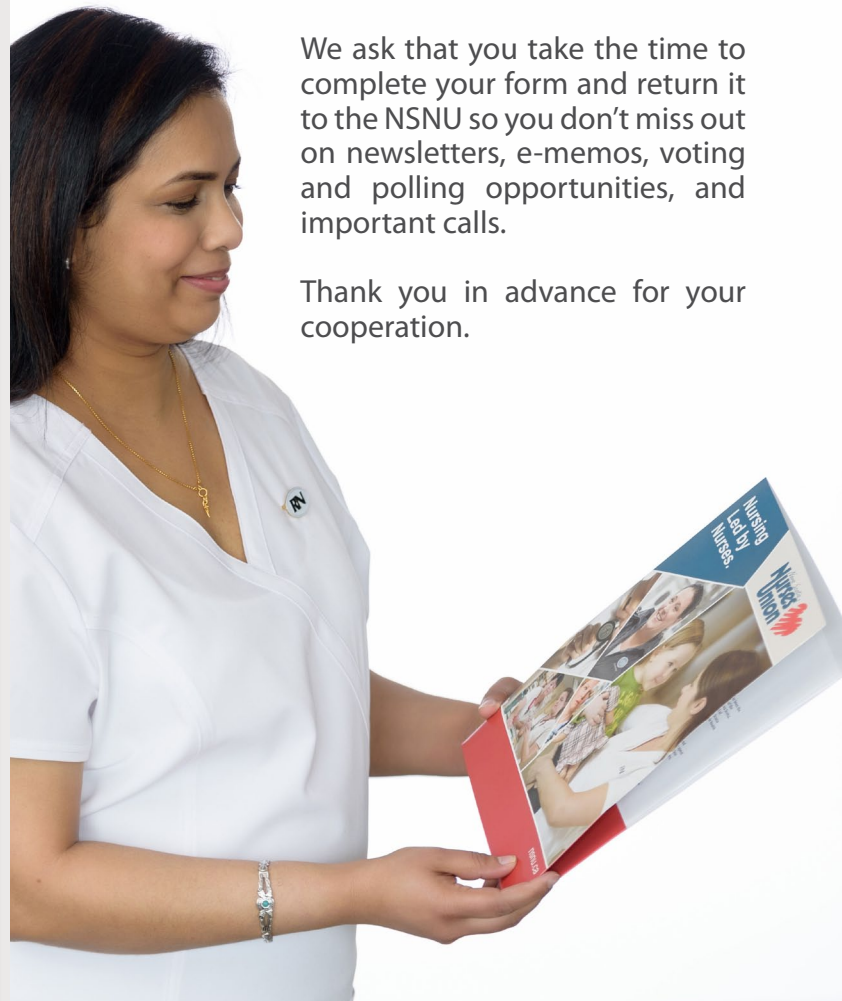
Every time there is a new hire in a facility, the NSNU is notified by the employer enabling us to add that member to our database.

Once we have that information, a New Member Kit is sent directly to you or to your Local Executive for you. That kit contains useful information about our organization and some of our service providers, your rights as a unionized worker, a member card that can be applied for merchant discounts, a FAQ sheet and an application form.

The application form helps us create a more comprehensive member profile of you which in turn allows us to communicate directly with you. Using your member credentials, you can access exclusive voting, polling and communications tools contained within the MyNSNU extranet and App.

We ask that you take the time to complete your form and return it to the NSNU so you don't miss out on newsletters, e-memos, voting and polling opportunities, and important calls.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.





From left to right, Winnie Kattleson, former NSNU provincial president and Labour Relations Representative, Tom Patterson and John Yates

A Tribute to John Yates

By Tom Patterson, Former Executive Director, NSNU

I first met John in 1975 when we hired him as a temporary organizer for the Union. John had been active in the Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers Union as well as the Federation of Labour and the Halifax Dartmouth District Labour Council. At that time, there were many more nurses not unionized than there were who were unionized. John was so successful in recruiting members that we required staff to service the labour relations needs of the new members. John was then hired as a Labour Relations Officer.

John continued to organize new locals and his role expanded to include negotiating collective agreements at the local, regional levels and ultimately at the provincial level. John was also a negotiator for the staff union. I had the rare opportunity to see him in action from both sides of the table. John was one of the best negotiators that I have ever known.

John also developed several courses on labour relations and taught members at the local and

regional levels as well as the Nurse's Eastern Labour School. He was also a strong and effective advocate of the members in the grievance process.

As a representative of nurses, John demonstrated competence, integrity, and determination that gained him the admiration and respect of the members, leaders and staff of the union as well as the broader labour community. He was also very well respected by employers and their labour relations representatives.

John's leadership abilities extended beyond his career with the union. John, and his friend, Rene Quigley, who was the business agent for the Bakery and Confectionary Union, developed and hosted a television program on the local cable network call "Labour Speaks". The goal of the program was to educate the public on how unions work and to discuss current labour matters.

John and his wife, Bonnie, moved to Upper Cornwall, Lunenburg County, in the early 80's to a place that John called his little piece of

paradise. He would have an hour long commute to work each day. He became active in the Cornwall and District Volunteer Fire Department where he became Chief for 23 years as well as holding other executive positions.

John also recognized the relationship between the worker's lunch box and the ballot box which prompted him to seek office twice as a Federal NDP candidate for the riding of Lunenburg County in the 1980's. Although he did not win, he made a decent showing and raised the profile of the party in the riding.

Bonnie told me recently that John did not have a "bucket list". This is because he did everything he wanted to in life. This, in itself, is a rare achievement. John will be missed by all who knew him. I cherish the memories of working with him and considered him to be a true friend. May he rest in peace.

John battled cancer and was 76 when he peacefully passed away in his home on September 7th surrounded by his family.



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In the Next Issue of What's **NU**?

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Women Build 2017

2017 Influenza Awareness Campaign

Occupational Health and Safety -
Front and Centre



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Nova Scotia Nurses' Union
150 Garland Avenue, Dartmouth, NS B3B 0A7
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Email: coleen.logan@nsnu.ca Website: www.nsnu.ca

