



LESLEY BELL FROM ONTARIO NURSES ASSOCIATION



JAN CIBART FROM THE SASKATCHEWAN UNION OF NURSES



MARY FERGUSON-PARÉ FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



ROBERTA DUGAS FROM THE NEW BRUNSWICK NURSES' UNION

CFNU PRESIDENT LINDA SILAS GREETES 800 NURSING DELEGATES FROM ACROSS CANADA



Welcome to Winnipeg Nurses wield important power in Canadian health care

After a warm welcome to the convention from CFNU President Linda Silas, the opening plenary session Tuesday morning tackled the topic of leadership in Canadian nursing.

Four nurses brought very different, and very personal, perspectives: Lesley Bell, from ONA, Roberta Dugas, from the New Brunswick Nurses Union, Jan Cibart from the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses and Mary Ferguson-Paré from the University of Toronto.

All the nurses highlighted the importance of nurses

to the sustainability of our health care system. Nurses need to speak out to keep a high level of health care accessible to all Canadians.

Lesley Bell said nurses' persistence will make a huge difference in the debate on the sustainability of our health system. If you feel you are not being paid attention to, keep making your points anyway, she said. "Keep putting it out." It is the dripping water technique that will get results in the end.



Healthy Walk



MONDAY NURSES ARRIVED FOR THE CONVENTION AND KICKED IT ALL OFF WITH A VIGOROUS WALK AND SOME ZUMBA ZUMBA EXERCISE.



Education Days



SEARCH
WEEK IN WINNIPEG
ON FACEBOOK

New Internet social media Workshop grapples with huge potential and with pitfalls

Is it rude to use a smart phone in a meeting? In a conversation? What if you're using it as a diagnostic tool?

These were some of the questions considered during a lively conversation Tuesday afternoon during the CFNU's workshop on the use by unions of such on-line tools as Facebook, Twitter and Youtube, "Social Media, the New Tools for Change."

The answers to these questions? They are not clear yet – and will likely have to be driven by a process of social consensus, suggested seminar facilitator Dave Cournoyer from the United Nurses of Alberta. But in the meantime, he argued, it's important for trade unionists to cut others some slack, and assume they're using social media tools to tune in, not out.

Unions need to aggressively use social media tools, Cournoyer argued, to counter the social

media successes of forces in society who are opposed to unions and aim to obstruct the rights of working people. "It's worked for conservative organizations," he commented. "Why not progressive organizations like unions?" Used effectively, he concluded, they offer new ways for unions to connect with members, persuade non-members of our positions and generally go where Canadians want to be.

Not everyone is ready to embrace social media and all it has to offer. Many do not look at it as getting "live" information to take back to the members. And constantly tapping on a smart phone may seem rude to some. But many others see this as not as a disrespectful form of communication, but rather as being "connected."

Nurses' unions need to be where our members are. Whether at home or just coming off a shift, they can check out the latest news through new media. Utilizing Facebook and other types of social media is not only an important part of online presence, using these channels can engage members and turn already engaged members into online activists.

Members are driving the conversation. More communication is being generated by the members themselves. They want to be heard and want to hear what is going on around them. This can get a conversation going that might otherwise have never been discussed.

Summing up the workshop: the online conversations are happening, and if we are not participating with social media, these conversations will happen without us.



INSTRUCTORS TIM GOUGH AND DAVE COURNOYER, BOTH FROM UNA, CONSULT THEIR SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS.



Education Days



HORIZONTAL VIOLENCE WORKSHOP

LEFT TO RIGHT: LINDA FINCARYK, SUN; ERICA PINKSY, WORKSHOP FACILITATOR; WENDY WOOD, MNU; AND DEIRDRE WOODWARD, UNA

Bullying in the workplace

Peer-to-peer bullying in the workplace is an unfortunate reality among nurses and health care workers. On Tuesday, delegates took part in a workshop examining this issue titled Horizontal Workplace: Peer-to-Peer Bullying in the Workplace.

Erica Pinsky, a respectful workplace solutions expert, author and consultant, facilitated the informative and interactive session that examined the effects of horizontal violence on the individuals involved, the working environment, and patient care. Delegates learned strategies to respond to horizontal violence with empowerment and respect, and were given practical ideas to promote a respectful and connected workplace.

To learn more about the strategies reviewed during this session, visit www.ericajpinskyinc.ca

Violence in the workplace: Everyone needs to report it

The anguish felt by the Dupont family on hearing of the avoidable death of their daughter at the hands of a former partner and co-worker, Dr. Marc Daniel, turned a wrong into a “right.”

In the wake of the Coroner’s Inquest which followed and a grievance filed by the Ontario Nurses’ Association (ONA) in 2007, Lori Dupont’s death sparked a vigorous campaign by ONA which led to significant amendments to

the *Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act* regarding

violence in the workplace.

With 365,000 cases of violence in the workplace in Canada annually, provincial unions across Canada need to lobby governments to enact similar legislation to protect workers against all forms of violence in the workplace.

Ontario’s legislation is not perfect, but it’s a step forward.



BEAUTIFUL HARP MUSIC GREETED DELEGATES ON THEIR ARRIVAL ON MONDAY.



Fun night at The FORKS



ABOVE: JANET HAZELTON, PRESIDENT OF NSNU AND LINDA SILAS, PRESIDENT OF CFNU WITH A TALL GUY AT THE PARTY. BELOW: NURSES PERFORMING A GREAT VERSION OF STAYIN' ALIVE.



TOP: A PIPE AND DRUM BAND STAYED AFTER THEIR PERFORMANCE. ABOVE: MENACING CLOUDS PRODUCED ONLY A SHORT SHOWER DURING THE FIREWORKS.

HUNDREDS OF DELEGATES TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE BEAUTIFUL WEATHER TO JOIN IN THE PARTY OUTDOORS AT THE FORKS TUESDAY EVENING. RIGHT: DANCING UP A STORM TO THE GREAT COVER BAND.



International panel

Ireland and Australia Trade unionists say nurses hold key to safe staffing levels

The more places in the world where health care unions win safe staffing ratios, the more places that can achieve the same thing, Brett Holmes, General Secretary of the New South Wales Nurses Association, told delegates to the CFNU Convention Wednesday morning.

“What is the best way to get a decent staffing level and have it protected, preserved and mandated?”

Starting in 2009, Australian nurses in New South Wales “took the government on, fought hard and won” to see mandated staffing levels imposed designed to ensure safe patient care.

Australian nurses took action: delivering 100,000 flyers in their own neighbourhoods, unleashing a powerful television advertising campaign, and sending postcards to politicians. They also “closed” hospital beds as patients were discharged, leaving a leaflet that stated “this bed is closed until additional nurses are available.”

Finally nurses had to strike in defiance of the state’s restrictive labour laws, the first strike by the membership in a decade. Nurses in New South Wales were aided in their campaign, Holmes noted, because enforceable, legislated staff-to-patient ratios were already in effect in the Australian state of Victoria. A key advertising slogan was, “If Victoria can do it, why

not New South Wales?”

In the end, he concluded, thanks to the courage of the union’s members, the NSWNU was able early this year to negotiate a 9.7-per cent pay raise for its members, plus an agreement for the public health care system to hire new nurses to fill 1,400 full-time-equivalent positions.

“I urge you all to take this on,” he concluded.

David Hughes, Deputy General Secretary of the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organization, drew hope from the struggle of his union’s members against the draconian measures taken by the Irish government in the wake of the 2008 recession and banking crisis.

Through solidarity, he said, INMO members “will stay ahead and protect what we have.”

Lee Thomas, Federal Secretary of the Australian Nursing Federation, inspired delegates with her description of the group’s campaign to improve staffing levels in Australia’s long-term care facilities.

Members made it clear through opinion research conducted as an initial stage of the campaign that they didn’t want fights with individual employers, but saw the need for a national campaign to ensure that Australian seniors are treated with dignity and respect.

The 15-month campaign for quality care for older Australians, while not achieving 100 per cent of its goals, has forced seniors’ care onto the Australian federal government’s agenda and made the union more relevant to both members and the general public, Thomas said.

“Our campaign continues and it will continue until we have won,” she said.



DURING THE HEALTHY WALK MONDAY JUST SOME OF THE 800 DELEGATES TOOK TIME TO POSE ON THE STEPS OF THE MANITOBA LEGISLATURE.