

■ ■ The Saskatchewan Federation of Labour

LABOUR REPORTER

THE VOICE OF SASKATCHEWAN'S WORKING FAMILIES SINCE 1956



FALL
2017

• WORKERS LEADING THE WAY •



SFL TEAMS WITH HILLBERG & BERK TO SUPPORT SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

THE SASKATCHEWAN FEDERATION of Labour and Hillberg & Berk, a Canadian jeweler based in Saskatchewan, have partnered to exclusively offer Burgundy Sparkle Ball™ Earrings to End Domestic Violence.

The earrings, which cost \$70, will be sold by the SFL and all proceeds will go to the Provincial Association of Transitional Houses and Services of Saskatchewan (PATHS) for the services they provide to survivors of domestic violence.

"This is a unique partnership, and indicative of our labour movement's commitment to finding new solutions to ending domestic violence," said Lori Jobb, secretary-treasurer of the SFL.

Jobb also Co-chairs the SFL OH&S Committee and Chairs the SFL Women's Committee.

The soft launch of this initiative took place at the SFL's annual Occupation Health and Safety Conference in Saskatoon to highlight the fact that domestic violence is also a workplace safety issue.

"Domestic violence is a workplace safety issue," said Jobb, "we know, from a groundbreaking study conducted by the Canadian Labour Congress and Western University, that 82 percent of those who experienced domestic violence said it negatively impacted their ability

» continued on next page

CONTENTS

Letter from the Editor P.2

PHOTO FEATURE: No matter who forms the government, workers lead the way

RDLC partners with alternative schools P.4

Backpack program a huge hit

Cuts to CBO scrapped P.6

Workers pressure gov't to halt cuts

Canadians need pharmacare P.7

Labour leaders send message to premiers

The Labour Reporter is published by the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour.
Editor: Kent Peterson, k.peterson@sfl.sk.ca.
Mailing address: 220-2445 13th Avenue, Regina, Sask. Phone: 306-525-0197 Fax: 306-525-8960
Website: www.sfl.sk.ca Email: sfl@sfl.sk.ca
This newsletter is written by members of CUPE 4828 and designed by Michelle Houlden, GSU Local 5.



» continued from page one

to do their job.

“Almost 40 percent of those said the violence kept them from even getting to work,” she added.

The study also found that:

- 41 percent of domestic violence survivors said they would get abusive phone call and text messages at work;
- 21 percent reported stalking and harassment near the workplace;
- In nearly 20 percent of all cases, the abuser physically came to the workplace, and;
- Large numbers of survivors reported receiving abusive emails at work, and that the abuser was contacting co-workers and the employer.

“Our partnership with Hillberg & Berk is just one way to support the immediate needs of survivors,” said Johb.

“Going forward, I call on the provincial government to do more for survivors – such as legislating paid leave from work so survivors can seek help, get legal counsel, or otherwise get themselves or their children to safety,” she added.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

NO MATTER WHO FORMS



BY KENT PETERSON

THROUGHOUT SEPTEMBER, the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour’s Own it!

campaign will be holding 11 days of action across the province: North Battleford, Prince Albert, Saskatoon, Weyburn, Estevan, Yorkton, Moose Jaw, Regina, Tisdale, Swift Current, and Kindersley.

Each day will feature a rally, a petitioning drive, and a public town hall. All events will be focused around keeping our Crowns 100% public, and stopping the Sask. Party government’s cuts.

It’s another example of workers coming together and leading the way – leading the fightback against a Sask. Party government



All black and white photos show labour protests against the provincial NDP and federal Liberals governments in 1975.

THE GOVERNMENT, WORKERS LEAD THE WAY

that wants to sell our Crown corporations, hack away at our public services, and blame everyone but themselves while they do it.

The labour movement is the largest, most democratic social movement in Saskatchewan and in Canada.

If we didn't lead the way in defense of our schools, our healthcare system, good jobs, and Crowns that were built by Saskatchewan people, who would?

And while it's easy to find Public Enemy #1 in the Sask. Party government (and it is really, really easy) it's worth remembering that work-

ers have lead the way no matter what political stripe the government was.

If the government is hurting communities and families, workers will have something to say about it.

As we watch and hasten along, the dying days of the Sask. Party government, let's commit to keep on going.

After the next provincial election when we have a different government, let's keep pushing. Let's make sure we never stop; that we are always on the frontline in the fight for justice building a better world.



Rally in Weyburn to protect SaskTel, 2016.



Rally at the Legislature, 2017.



Rally in Saskatoon in support of Crowns and public services, 2015



SUN members at a rally for workers' rights, 2014



Larry Hubich encouraging workers to vote in the 2016 provincial election.

RDLC'S PARTNERSHIP WITH ALTERNATIVE

“ The backpack filled with supplies makes them confident to start school and many kids are able to take the supplies with them when they move on to a new high school.

— MONICA GARINGER

BY CAROL MULLANEY

REGINA & DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

AS THE SUMMER comes to an end, many families are getting ready for the first day of school. For some folks, it is an exciting time and for others it can be very stressful.

We, the Regina and District Labour Council (RDLC), are eager to be entering our 6th year partnering with Cornwall Alternative school, by supplying the students with a backpack filled with all the supplies needed to start the school year off right.

With the help of our affiliates, some non-affiliates, and individual donations we can ensure that the students attending Cornwall are fully equipped to start the school year off on the right foot. This venture is very exciting to us at the RDLC as well as for the teachers and students of Cornwall Alternative School.

Over 40 years ago, it was recognized that there was a need for an alternative learning environment for some of Regina's youth that were not attending the regular school system for a variety of reasons. Initially, the school began as a drop-in center where "street kids" could enroll in correspondence classes and make gains both socially and educationally through the school's unique program. The program quickly evolved into a more formal middle school facility, and to-date offers classes for students in grades 7 to 10, who are having difficulties in a regular school setting.

Cornwall works to create a learning environment to aid in stimulating the social, emotional and educational growth of the students, they teach the educational and social skills required to re-enter mainstream education and facilitate life-long learning. The school also provides direct support services to individuals and families including counselling, information and referrals, assessment and therapy. Also offered is a Nutrition Program which provides a nutritious breakfast and lunch. Along with the Nutrition Program, students can work in the kitchen to obtain knowledge in preparing food, budgeting and food safety.



In communication with the school Principal, Monica Garinger, she relayed the following comments regarding the difference that the RDLC Community School Program makes for the school and students:

“Receiving the backpack donation from the Regina District Labour Council has made an incredible difference to the well-being of our

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL



Volunteers fill backpacks with supplies for students at the Cornwall Alternative School.

students. Our students come from all over Regina and many do not have school supplies when they start at Cornwall Alternative School. When we give each student a backpack neatly filled with all the supplies on their first day you see a face of excitement and gratefulness.

“Prior to the backpack program our staff would go out and buy basic supplies for each

student like pencils, erasers, and pens. The RDLC Community School Program allows each student to have their very own backpack, pens, pencils, markers, binder, memory stick, water bottle, etc. Our students don't have that sense of worry and stress about buying school supplies. They don't have that feeling of being the only one without a backpack. This is huge for a child's self-esteem and fresh start to the school year. The backpack filled with supplies makes them confident to start school and many kids are able to take the supplies with them when they move on to a new high school.

“Cornwall Alternative School is grateful for this program because we are able to give students more educational opportunities that they may not have experienced in their lives. Over the past few years we were able to put more funds toward and plan additional and more exciting Outdoor Education trips as well as offering more classroom field trips for our students. This donation makes a difference to every student attending Cornwall Alternative School and we are sincerely grateful for the support. The donation shows the importance of fulfilling a need in our community and making sure our students can be all that they can be without the worry of not having supplies to start the school year. We appreciate the continuous partnership.”

Knowing how much our donation is appreciated by the students and staff at the school, certainly confirms that the RDLC is working towards – ‘Putting Unity in Our Community’, and we would like to express our thanks to all of our affiliates, the non-affiliates, as well as individuals that help us promote this important work.

OPINION: Gov't plan for health care is wrong-headed



BY SANDRA SEITZ

CUPE HEALTHCARE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

FROM BUDGET CUTS, privatization, proposed wage rollbacks and the looming merging of all of the province's health regions, it is clear that the Sask Party's approach to health care is causing uncertainty for patients, families, and front-line health care providers.

Nowhere is this more obvious than the government's determination to continue implement Lean initiatives – despite the vocal public backlash and poor track record of the program.

CUPE recent uncovered several documents through a freedom of information request that show that the Saskatchewan government is still spending millions on Lean initiatives, even as they try to publicly distance themselves.

The documents show that there are 17 continuous quality improvement offices across the province that employed 175.4 FTEs in 2016. Salary and benefits for these teams from 2012 through to December 31, 2015 was a total \$54.24 million.

Many thought that the government got out of the Lean business when they cancelled the costly contract with John Black consultants.

This FOI shows that the government is still spending millions on Lean.

This is money that could be invested in more front-line staff in acute care and long-term care centres across the province.

It is money that could be invested in public solutions for wait lists, and for building a provincial emergency medical response system that works for all Saskatchewan people.

» continued on back page



SEIU-West workers stand up for CBO against the Sask. Party government this summer.

GOV'T SCRAPS CBO CUTS AFTER PRESSURE FROM WORKERS

SUBMITTED BY SEIU-WEST

IT IS WELL-KNOWN that the most recent provincial budget has caused much pain to everyone in Saskatchewan – well, except for corporations. Vulnerable communities have been especially hard-hit – one example is the massive cut to community-based organizations (CBOs).

The Saskatchewan government is asking health regions to cut their \$16 million spending on CBOs by 10 percent overall, a reduction of about \$1.6 million. These cuts will threaten programs that help those with mental health and addiction issues, people with disabilities, and many more vulnerable communities.

Gutting CBO funding means potential cuts to organizations such as the Canadian Mental Health Association, Sask Impaired Drivers Treatment Centre, Mobile Crisis Services, the Métis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan Inc. (MACSI) and other support services. Yet recently, the Saskatchewan government made a commitment to a 10-Year Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan for Saskatchewan; adequately funding mental health and addictions services is a great place to put that plan into action. Saskatchewan already lags behind other provinces when it comes to mental health funding and it is vital we adequately fund these services.

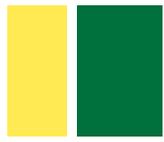
When critics opposed the government's cuts to CBOs, Min-

ister of Health Jim Reiter says the government wants to get back to core services. Yet preventative services, community support, and mental health and addictions services should be considered "core services". By cutting funding to these services, we will only see higher costs in the health care system via emergency care.

In response to Minister Reiter's heartless view of community care, members of SEIU-West and SGEU 'greeted' Minister Reiter at his annual cash-for-access golf tournament at Sask Landing Golf Resort in July. These members rallied to voice their concerns over the vicious cuts to CBOs and called on the Minister of Health to reverse the cuts.

SEIU-West and SGEU also launched a campaign in response to the CBO cuts, called Stand Up for CBOs. The website www.standupforCBOs.ca serves as a hub to learn more about the work of CBOs and the valuable services they provide to their communities. This campaign page also offered a petition and a letter to the Minister of Health demanding a reversal to the CBO cuts. We are happy to say that the pressure to stop the cuts has made gains because as of August 17, 2017, Minister Reiter made the announcement that the cuts to CBOs will no longer take place! The efforts of all those who are keeping the pressure on this government to reverse the cuts is working, and we encourage you to keep the pressure up! With our collective voices, we can stop all the cuts.

HEALTH CARE IS FOR EVERYONE



LABOUR LEADERS TELL PREMIERS: CANADIANS NEED PHARMACARE

MEETING IN ALBERTA concurrently to the Council of the Federation in July of this year, labour leaders from across Canada urge the premiers to lobby the federal government for a national Pharmacare plan to ensure all Saskatchewan people and Canadians have access to life-saving medications, and to bring down the costs of the current system.

“Canada’s piece-meal multi-payer drug system is expensive, inefficient, and doesn’t ensure people receive the life-saving prescriptions they need,” said Larry Hubich, president of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour (SFL), “Canadians – including those right here in Saskatchewan – are spending millions a year on this patchwork of multi-payer funding, paying among the highest prices worldwide for prescription, squandering money that’s needed for other healthcare investments.” Canada’s public per capita prescription drug spending in 2014 was 2nd highest amongst OECD countries, at U.S. \$772, far above average.

The high costs of the current system are also felt by individuals and families. Canadians who rely on prescription drugs simply don’t have the money to cover costs, and instead are splitting pills, skipping dosages, sharing medicines, or going into debt. Almost one in 10 Canadians are going without life-saving prescriptions because they can’t afford them.

“When people skip medications or ignore doctors’ orders because of costs, additional burdens to the healthcare system cost everyone more,” said Hubich.

By adopting a single-payer program, Canadians would benefit from bulk purchasing power, giving them the power to obtain competitively priced prescription drugs. A single-payer universal prescription drug program could save Canadians approximately \$7.3 billion a year based on an additional \$1 billion in public spending.

“Saskatchewan people and all Canadians



know bulk buying is the smart option,” said Hubich, “in public surveys, over 90 percent of both citizens and employers believe a Universal Prescription Drug Plan is important to Canadian healthcare coverage. Pharmacare is the type of smart policy Canadians are looking for from our political leaders.”

Canada is the only country with universal health care that does not have a universal pro-

gram for prescription coverage, despite the stated goal of universal coverage in the 2004-2014 Health Accord.

During events concurrent to the Council of the Federation, presidents of provincial and territorial labour federations will urge premiers from across Canada to re-commit to a single-payer, universal prescription drug plan to save lives and money.



BREAD AND ROSES ... AND TWITTER:

If you want your union's handle, or your handle, added to this list simply tweet as such to [@SKFedLabour](#).

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| @ATULocal615 | @LHubich | @Shobna Radons |
| @Bymoan | @LJohb | @SKFedLabour |
| @CanadianLabour | @MCWalker64 | @SUNnurses |
| @CanLabourMedia | @MSHladun | @Thebaud |
| @CLCSask | @OwnYourSask | @TracyZam |
| @COPE397 | @PrezCape | @TriaDonaldson |
| @CUPEsask | @PSACprairies | @UFCW1400Women |
| @DeniseLDick | @PurpleWorksSEIU | @UFCW649 |
| @DLafleurCLC | @RankAndFileca | @UFCWCanada |
| @Hassan_Yussuff | @Regina_DLC | @UFCWCanada1400 |
| @JoieWarnock | @SameOldKent | @UniforIS |
| @JudyHenley1 | @SaskSpark | @UniforTheUnion |
| @jx5yak | @SGEU | |
| @KLQbn | @SGEUMary | |

Gov't plan for health care is wrong-headed

» continued from page 5

It is money they could be bringing to the bargaining table – instead of asking for concessions and rollbacks.

Last year, a study by the School of Public Health at the University of Saskatchewan said for every dollar saved by Lean, the government has spent \$1,511. The report also showed Lean had a negative impact on staff morale.

It is atrocious that the government is still spending money on the failed Lean initiative, instead of investing in front line health care workers. How can they justify wasting millions of dollars on Lean initiatives while they are charging patients for more services, laying off frontline workers, and demanding wage rollbacks?

As frontline health care workers, we have the knowledge and the expertise to improve our health care system. We do not need special contractors training in car factory plants to tell us how to save money.

The Saskatchewan government needs to stop funding Lean initiatives and put that money back into front line health care services, which we know are so badly in need of investment.



It is atrocious that the government is still spending money on the failed Lean initiative, instead of investing in front line health care workers.

– SANDRA SEITZ

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Oct 1	International Day of Older Persons
Oct 18-20	SFL 62nd Annual Convention (Saskatoon)
Nov 16	Louis Riel Day
Nov 20	Transgender Day of Remembrance
Dec 1	World AIDS Day
Dec 3	International Day for Persons with Disabilities
Dec 6	National Day of Remembrance & Action on Violence Against Women
Dec 10	International Human Rights Day

Follow the SFL on Facebook and Twitter! SKFedLabour | @SKFedLabour