Regional councils commit to defeat Harper

Regional councils in Ontario and British Columbia concluded this weekend with impassioned members committing to build on the momentum Unifor created.

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Women’s committee pioneer remembered

From almost her first days in the General Motors plant in Oshawa, Bev McCloskey fought for women’s rights.

“Bev was very active in the struggle for women’s rights in our union and fought for the equity that women enjoy today in our workplaces and communities. Her legacy will serve as a standard for activists who strive to create a better society,” said Unifor Local 222 President Ron Svajlenko.

McCloskey passed away November 14. She was 85. McCloskey began at GM in 1949 at the age of 20. She was soon elected to the Local 222 executive as recording secretary, at the time the only position a woman could hold, serving for 17 years.

In 1968, she co-

Quebec Council meets

Delegates to Unifor’s recent Quebec Council took part in a massive protest in the streets of Quebec City against the provincial Liberal government’s austerity measures.

Combined with a protest in Montreal, the rallies drew thousands into the streets on November 29.

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@cherriprobinson
Benoit Lapointe #unifor2002 member is endorsed and unanimously supported by delegates at #unifor quebec regional council...so proud!

@dmcdonald68
Take action to end gender violence whenever or wherever it occurs! #amnestyinternational #canlab #unifor http://fb.me/3aCcqlWw6b

#unifor
Here’s a selection of tweets about @UniforTheUnion
Lanzinger 

BC Fed president

Unifor is thrilled to work with Irene Lanzinger as the new president of the BC Federation of Labour. “BC’s workers have a strong ally in Irene Lanzinger. She will be a terrific leader for our movement to create and protect good jobs and make work safer,” said Joie Warnock, Unifor’s Western Director.

Delegates to the BC Fed’s 56th convention also celebrated the career of outgoing president, Jim Sinclair, who led the Federation for 15 years. “We couldn’t have asked for a more committed and principled leader. He will be missed,” said Gavin McGarrigle, BC Area Director at Unifor.

Lanzinger is the first woman president of the Federation. She got her start in the labour movement as a teacher, where she went on to lead the BC Teachers Federation from 2007–2010. Since then, she has been the BC Fed’s Secretary-Treasurer.

Featured campaign - Bill 377

The Conservative government’s anti-worker bill is back in front of the Senate.

This Bill interferes with Canadians’ freedom of association and the freedom of speech within the right to association, and is a direct attack on unions. If passed, Bill 377 will interfere with unions’ ability to operate.

To learn more about why this Bill would set a dangerous precedent, and to send a letter to your Senator saying that you do not support this bill and urge them to vote against it, go to http://www.unifor.org/en/take-action/campaigns/ take-action-stop-bill-377.

To promote a campaign in your local or region, contact communications@unifor.org

Photo spotlight

UNIFOR COMMUNICATIONS: SARAH BLACKSTOCK, SHANNON DEVINE, KATIE ARNUP, STUART LAIDLAW, IAN BOYKO, SHELLEY BURGOYNE, MARIE-ANDREE L’HEUREUX AND ANNE MARIE VINCENT
Did you know?

From the Constitution
“The Regional Councils and the Quebec Council are a democratic force for union activism, solidarity, and strength. They are forums of accountability and organizing centres which will involve and engage thousands of local union activists in the life of the union.”

Jerry Dias also called on members to make a firm commitment to defeating the Harper government, offering an original presentation of the Top 10 reasons Harper must be defeated.

Local 2002’s Benoît Lapointe was elected chair of the Quebec Council by acclamation. The position had been left vacant with the hiring of Marcel Rondeau as national representative.

founded the first Women’s Committee at the local, and led the fight to end segregated seniority lists and male-only jobs at GM.

In 1970, with the help of Oshawa MPP Cliff Pilkey, the committee pushed to amend Ontario Human Rights Code to include sex and marital status as prohibited grounds for discrimination.

McCloskey lobbied to have inappropriate photos removed from workbenches and walls in the plants.

The Sisterhood Room at Unifor’s Family Education Centre is named in honour of McCloskey and other members of the first women’s committee.

Can you spot the sexism, page 4

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Can you spot the sexism?

As part of Unifor’s attempts to raise awareness ahead of December 6, the Communications and Women’s departments launched “Can you spot the sexism?” share graphics.

Artist Lauren Pirie illustrates a series of everyday scenarios that shed light on the ways that sexism can creep into daily encounters.

They were sent out by social media for two weeks prior to December 6, the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women and the 25th anniversary of the Montreal Massacre.

NS health talks to arbitration

Unifor is disappointed a mediated settlement among the four Nova Scotia health care unions and the acute care employers could not be reached.

“Unifor is deeply committed to building and maintaining a strong voice for the public health care workers that impact our lives in very profound ways,” said Lana Payne, Unifor Atlantic Director.

“We find ourselves in a situation created by a government bent on not only undermining unions, but also the stability and quality of the public health care system on which Nova Scotians rely.”

Despite the efforts of a third party, James Dorsey, the four unions and employers could not reach a solution to difficulties created by Bill 1, to amalgamate authorities and strip employees of their chosen unions.

Prior to mediation, Unifor and other health care unions developed a plan for each union to continue to represent its own members and, in council with the other unions, bargain the four collective agreements the government demanded.

“We went into mediation with this as our goal. We worked hard to get there,” said Payne.

Howard Law said the honour shows the importance of news outlets nurturing original journalism.

“The best journalism comes when reporters have the chance to report on the pressing stories they see around them,” he said.

Nolen urged graduates to use their education to make the world a better place for all.

“Spread your own great good fortune, any way that you can,” she said.

Unifor member gets honorary doctorate

Globe and Mail reporter and Unifor member Stephanie Nolen received an honorary doctorate of laws recently from the University of Victoria in recognition of her years of work reporting on the challenges facing people in developing countries.

“I’m hugely honoured and appreciate very much that the University of Victoria chose to recognize my work for its focus on social justice,” Nolen said. “I always hope that people find my work useful and informative and if it’s also making people think about inequity and our privilege as Canadians, I’m glad.”

Nolen is the Globe’s Latin America correspondent, where she opened an office in 2013. Prior, she reported from New Delhi for five years, where she won a National Newspaper Award (NNA) for coverage of India’s crisis of child malnutrition. From 2003 to 2008, she reported from Johannesburg, where she won four NNAs, including for her AIDS coverage.

“Canada is lucky to have reporters of Stephanie’s calibre bringing the news of the world home to us,” said Sue Andrew, Local 87-M unit chair at the Globe.

Unifor Media Director Howard Law said the honour shows the importance of news outlets nurturing original journalism.

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