



Lanzinger elected
 >> PAGE 2
**Also inside: NS Health to
 arbitration>> PAGE 4**



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uniforum



Delegates to Ontario Council rallied at Queen's Park in support of public health care.

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

>>Continued on
 page3

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

>>Continued on
 page3

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.

>>Continued on
 page3

#unifor



Here's a selection of tweets about @UniforTheUnion

@cherriprobinson

Benoît 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/3aCcqlw6b>

In brief

Local 4270, RA Centre

Members of Unifor Local 4270 have ratified a new two-year contract with RA Centre that improves job security, lay off language and order of lay-off for the 35 members.

There are also wage increases, including an extra bump for lower-waged part-time workers.

The RA Centre is a private, not for profit recreation and leisure facility in Ottawa with more than 22,000 members. It has been in operation for more than 70 years. 

Local 324-14, Princess Court

Unifor Local 324-14 members at Princess Court in Dryden, Ont., have ratified a two-year contract that provided 1.7% annual wage increases in each year of the contract as well as improved benefits and the elimination of some pay grids for newly hired workers with previous experience.


The 120 members include personal support workers and registered practical nurses working at the long-term care facility operated by the District of Kenora Homes for the Aged. The previous contract expired May 31, 2014. This new contract is retroactive. 

Photo spotlight

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PHOTO BY MIKE ARMSTRONG

The RA Centre bargaining team mark a new contract: Gary Scott, Gerry Mathers, Jack Tremblay, Local 4270 President Garrick LeBlanc and Sylvain Yager.



PHOTO BY GORD GRAY

NDP MP Joe Comartin, with wife Maureen, received the Charles E. Brooks Community Service Award recently. Jerry Dias and Windsor Labour Council President Chris Taylor attended the ceremony.

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,



Bill 377 is back before the Senate

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


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

>> Continued from
**"Women's committee
pioneer..."** on page 1

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*

>> Continued from
**"Quebec Council
meets"** on page 1

Michel Ouimet, Quebec Director urged members to take an active part in fighting the policies of the Couillard government. His appeal was unanimously approved by the local unions present.


In speaking of the union's main activities over the past few months, Ouimet reminded members that "the creation of Unifor is one of the greatest achievements by a union in this country." He also said that "we can look to the future with confidence, because together we will be able to meet the many challenges ahead, including that of defeating the Harper government in the 2015 federal elections."

Unifor National President



Quebec Council delegates rallied against austerity.

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. 

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."

>> Continued from
**"Regional councils
commit to defeat
Harper"** on page 1

in its first year and to make the defeat of the Harper Conservatives a priority.

"Our first year was about building this union," said Jerry Dias, Unifor National President. "And now we are about to go into the fight of our lives during the next federal election."

"The Stephen Harper Tories have betrayed seniors, working class people, young people, women – all of us," said Dias. "The Tories are a disgrace."

For delegates in Ontario, Michael Harris, author of Party of One, a damning critique of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, detailed the ways Harper's attacks

on veterans, union members and anyone who cares about the truth will result in the creation of the coalition that will defeat him.

With so much at stake, Unifor is ready for the battle ahead, stressed Dias. At both regional councils, presentations were made about key elements of Unifor's plans related to the upcoming federal election.

Unifor will be not only be participating in the Political Action Conferences held by the Canadian Labour Congress, but also holding its own election training workshops across the country and establishing regional working groups to guide regional efforts.

"Our campaign will be one fought strategically, by engaging with our members and neighbours on the



Susan Spratt and Desiree Gill at BC Regional Council.

ground and by offering ideas that connect with people emotionally," said Roland Kiehne, Unifor's Director of Political Action and Mobilization. "We know, in their hearts, people in this country are compassionate, decent people and want a government that will create jobs and build strong, inclusive communities."


In Vancouver, outgoing BC Federation of Labour President Jim Sinclair said the labour movement represents the interests of most Canadians, and needs

to mobilize to defeat Harper.

"We are the majority, and we need to act like we are the majority," Sinclair told BC Regional Council.

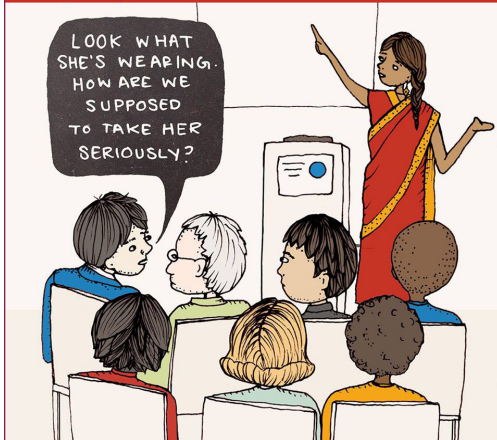
Harper can be defeated, Dias told BC and Ontario delegates.

"We are going to fight," he said. "If we do to Harper what we did to Hudak we won't have to worry about attacks on working people for years to come."

"And, with the might and determination of our members, we will succeed. Our time is now," he said. 

Can you spot the sexism?


Can you spot the sexism?



UNIFOR Life can be full of sexist interactions. If you spot one, speak up.

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. 

Can you spot the sexism?



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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




Nova Scotia healthcare workers want a council of unions.

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. 

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.

"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. 