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Local 229**

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**Director of Women's Issues**  
Cherie McEvoy

**CAW Council**  
Marg Arnone  
Katha Fortier  
Andy Savela  
Amy Rubino  
Jason Cummings

## Bargaining at Versa Care and Roseview Manor

Below: Over 75 members from Versa Care and Roseview Manor participated in information pickets last fall to highlight declining conditions *information inside.....*



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VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:

[www.caw229.com](http://www.caw229.com)

CAW CANADA LOCAL 229  
101 N. Syndicate Ave. Suite 512  
Thunder Bay, ON P7C 3V4  
(807) 474-4229 ext. 5

EMAIL US AT:

[caw229@tbaytel.net](mailto:caw229@tbaytel.net)

**Versa Care and Roseview Manor/** April 26, 2004

Bargaining committee members, Reggie Davis, Mona Hurd, Jason Cummings, and Linda Waaganer, along with Local 229 President Andy Savela and National Staff Representative Tom Murphy, are in Toronto this week, bargaining as part of a larger group of thirteen CAW homes owned by CPL/Versa.

Latest reports from Savela indicate the bargaining is progressing well and all of the local issues have been completed. "We are working on central issues now, and we are cautiously optimistic we will have something to bring back to the members in the very near future."

**Thunder Bay City Council Votes Unanimously to NOT Rebuild Two City Homes for the Aged/** April 2004

City Council voted unanimously on April 19<sup>th</sup> to not build two new homes for the aged.

Grandview Lodge and Dawson Court are considered Class D homes, meaning they don't meet the requirements of the Ministry of Health, and that the expectation is that they will be rebuilt by 2006. Construction was slated to begin this year.

Conflicting stories have appeared in local press about if the City is actually interested in rebuilding these facilities at all, even if a better funding arrangement could be struck with the government. Options suggested include the city giving these homes back to the province, who could then in turn, award the beds to the private sector, either for-profit or not-for-profit. There has been some indication that the city wants to continue operating them, but this may not be their decision, if they don't meet the standards.

What is certain is that the City will be ratifying this decision on Monday May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2004. Local 229 President Andy Savela has indicated that we will be there to meet the Mayor and Council to send a message of support for rebuilding our publicly accountable, not-for profit homes for the aged. "The citizens of Thunder Bay have said on more than one occasion that this is what they want."

Savela, has written the following letter to Mayor Lynn Petersen in response to the news.

I am writing today out of concern related to recent Council decision to not rebuild the City Homes for the Aged.

Our Local Union represents approximately 600 members who work at these facilities, all of whom are immensely proud of the calibre of care delivered in these municipally-run, not-for-profit, homes for our seniors.

This community has showed overwhelming support in having the City operate these public long-term care facilities. Our Union has recently facilitated a campaign "Dignity is a Minimum Standard" that saw over 7,000 post cards signed locally, advocating for appropriate care for our Senior Citizens. In speaking with the public throughout this campaign it was abundantly clear that the citizens of Thunder Bay know without a doubt that the standards of care provided in these city-run homes far surpasses that in for-profit facilities. The decision not to rebuild could mean these homes will be taken over by that sector. When you consider the large population of aging citizens in our community it is the duty of our Council to ensure that the resources and facilities are in place to continue to provide the exceptional care that our senior's deserve.

I would like to arrange to meet with you and any Council Members you feel it is appropriate to include, to discuss these issues with you, and I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

In closing I want to pledge the full commitment of our Union to ensure that our Community's Seniors are cared for in an appropriate manner, and look forward to working with you on this important issue

Savela maintains it's crucial that we get the real story from the Mayor and Council. "I am optimistic we will hear from them, and I'd like to think we, along with the members of the public who are concerned about this, will have some influence in changing this decision." He continued, "Giving operations over to the for-profit sector will not be in anyone's best interest."

Local 229 members are asked to spread the word to anyone they know who may be concerned about this decision, and ask them to join us on Monday May 3, 5:00pm at Patterson Park for a march to City Hall to send a message of support for rebuilding our homes.

## **CAW Meets with Registered Practical Nurses Association of Ontario (RPNAO) and College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO)**

/April 19, 2004

CAW National Office has been arranging meetings to discuss RPN utilization with interested parties. The first of these meetings, with CNO and RPNAO took place April 19<sup>th</sup>, attended by Bob Chernecki, Assistant to the National President, Corey Vermey, National Staff and Katha Fortier, President of the CAW Ontario Health Care Council. Below are reports submitted by Fortier.

### RPNAO

We met with Gabrielle Bridle, President, Joanna Young-Evans, ED, and Don Gracy, Policy & Public Relations Advisor from CG Group.

The overall tone of the meeting was productive, and they seemed to genuinely welcome the opportunity to meet with us. We reviewed our document "Building a Practical Future: Sustainable and Effective Nursing Care" in detail and while they did have a few minor suggestions, they were overall very impressed and pleased to see that our union had taken this initiative.

They also noted that there is currently a research project underway at McMaster University on decision making which should be available in 12 to 18 months. RPNAO does have access to provincial research dollars, but as of yet did not have the staffing to prepare proposals, but they would certainly consider a joint effort with us in the future. Most research available is US based, and often not relevant or applicable.

We spoke in depth about the nursing education initiative fund, which nurses and employers can access to enhance their practice. They noted that no employers have ever been denied funding. They also noted that currently there were several people accessing funds to upgrade from an RPN to RN, but this would soon fizzle out and more dollars would be available. One barrier they had encountered was if individual nurses applied, they might have difficulty paying the hundreds of dollars for a course up front, even knowing they would be reimbursed. We asked if it would be possible for Unions to access the funds in areas where employers were not apt to do this, and

they agreed to find out. Bob even suggested we could potentially access this fund to offer courses through our own CAW Education Centre in Port Elgin.

We went on to have a discussion about workload and compensation, including full time employment and job security. While RPNAO does not deal directly on these matters, they recognize their overall importance to nursing, particularly as it affects people leaving, or just not entering into this field; and do try to point out the connection when talking to appropriate levels of government and employers.

Finally we talked about their membership, which is about 5000 out of a possible 34,000 RPN's in Ontario. The membership costs \$175.00 a year and can be paid in a variety of methods, including monthly bank deductions. This membership covers RPN's for malpractice insurance, a necessity in this day and age. Many RPN's believe they are covered by their employer but in most cases, if it involved a nursing error, they are not. We discussed promoting RPNAO membership through our union.

RPNAO can be reached at 1.905.602.4664 or toll free 1.877.602.4664 or on the web at [www.rpnao.org](http://www.rpnao.org)

### CNO

At this meeting we met with Elizabeth Bildfell, RN practice consultant, Janet Anderson, RN practice manager and two other women, whom did not provide their cards, but upon being asked, neither were RPN's or RPN practice consultants. We were told they weren't available that day. They were certainly not as welcoming at this meeting as they were at the first, though they listened politely to our presentation and made little comment.

Towards the end of the meeting they were somewhat more communicative, and they tried to sound very impartial as far as RN/RPN utilization is concerned. They stressed their mandate was to protect the public, not represent nurses, but they did agree that utilization (along with workload and compensation, and job security) affected job satisfaction which in turn affected the number of nurses continuing to work in the field (or even enter it), and that nursing shortages would indeed be a public concern.

### **CAW Council Report/April 04**

CAW Council was held in Port Elgin April 16 to 18, 2004. The highlight of the event was guest speaker, Jack Layton, Federal NDP Leader. Evidence of his ride to Port Elgin, with Natalie Mehra from the Ontario Health Coalition was very apparent in his dynamic speech which focused on many health care issues. Jack even talked about not only stopping private for-profit operators from expanding, but also taking them back into the public fold.

A resolution on stopping the P-3's and privatization of health care was put forward by Local 199 (non-health care local) and several speakers, including many of the health care council supported this important resolution, which received unanimous support.

Jim Pare, the new Director of Organizing, was appointed Director of Communications, and will do both jobs for a time. An organizing resolution for involving more support from local unions in organizing drives, received unanimous support.

Nick DeCarlo (H&S dept) outlined a new campaign to take back Workers compensation for workers, not the boss. The campaign includes a push for reinstating the former name WCB, 90% of net income for all workers, mandatory coverage for all Ontario workers, and several other improvements. Petitions, pamphlets and postcards will be circulated.

The Auto Locals have developed a campaign for buying domestic automobiles in response to the growing concern about the sector's loss of market share to off shore producers. The contribution of the big three automakers, cannot be understated in value to our province and country; every auto job produces 7 spin-off jobs. Even Toyota and Honda who do some assembly in Canada, contribute minimally to our economy because most of their parts are imported. For more information, go to [www.buydomestic.cawlocal200.org](http://www.buydomestic.cawlocal200.org)

Delegates were urged to support Air Canada members who are undergoing extreme pressure with increasing workload and demands for pension concessions. CAW members are encouraged to use Air Canada, and express support and solidarity to their members.

Julie White, Director of Women's Issues spoke about encouraging the "woman to woman campaign", designed for women to speak to other women to educate themselves about election issues, and party positions, before the federal election.

### **CAW Ontario Health Care Council Report/ April 04**

Both the Executive and the General Health Council met on April 14th. The executive covered an extensive agenda. Jenny Ahn, NEB Member and President of CAW Local 40 in Toronto attended as a guest, and is considering joining the Council, as she has several health care related units, that provide care for people with developmental disabilities in community residences. Marilyn Lesperance National Staff Rep spoke at both meetings regarding the new educational workshop on worker/patient abuse, which will be offered at the Local 229 Executive Council, and the Health Care Conference. We discussed the LTC campaign, and keeping up the pressure by joining the Ontario Health Care Coalition campaign, and participating in the LTC public forums across the province. The Council's position statement on LTC was updated to reflect post-election changes, and to include whistle-blower protection. Notice of motion was served that elections of council executive will take place at our next full meeting in December 2004.

### **Support Apparent at Public Meeting for City to Rebuild Homes for the Aged/ April 27, 04**

Over 60 people concerned about the state of long-term care in the province attended a meeting at the Thunder Bay 55Plus Centre. Hosted by the Ontario and Thunder Bay Health Coalitions, the meeting was the second of several scheduled across the Province to hear from caregivers, residents, and advocates about what they would like to see happen with long-term care and home care. Many participants raised concerns about the City Council's decision to not rebuild two nursing homes, Dawson Court and Grandview Lodge. Everyone was urged to contact their Mayor and Councilor's regarding this important issue. A full meeting report will be available from the OHC in the coming weeks.

