

*In this Issue - Dental plan billing, AGMs, hockey player wanted, history: sweatshop disaster, President's message, YEU people, and more ...*

## Agreement raises hope, questions

**An agreement reached on Medicare by the first ministers at this month's conference offers hope for stable, predictable funding for health care in Canada.**

What is missing according to the Canadian Labour Congress is a progressive, national vision for our public health care system.

Key elements of that vision are a recognition of the need for a full continuum of care delivered with public dollars that pay only for health services delivered on a public, non-profit basis.

The Ottawa agreement does mean that nearly \$100 million in additional federal health care funding will be provided to the Yukon over the next five years.

Here in the territory, Yukoners need assurances from the premier that full public consultation will occur about how and where the funds will be distributed. Input must be sought from caregivers and health professionals, not simply from high-level administrators and finance officers.

Yukoners must demand that this new funding will be spent *in addition to* existing health dollar allocations. It must not be used to replace money presently set aside for health care, so the current budget can be diverted to pay for pet projects such as a bridge in Dawson.

Health areas that to date have not received appropriate attention should be targeted. The treatment and prevention of FAS comes to mind.

Funding and delivery problems with emergency medical services should be resolved. Availability of improved health care will only benefit

Yukoners if they have access to it. At the same time, the Yukon's ability to attract and retain nurses and doctors must be enhanced.

New dollars can be used to eliminate the need for fundraising to support medical service delivery. Taxpayers should not be expected

to donate money toward the acquisition of essential medical equipment. Government reliance on such donations is nothing more than a hidden tax.



Y010, YEU, YFL and PSAC sponsored the annual *Feed the People Barbecue* in Rotary Peace Park this Labour Day. Union members served Yukoners a free lunch to thank the community for supporting our workers.

Finally, we need assurances that privatization of health care will not be introduced into the Yukon through the back door. This would occur if Yukoners needing medical care outside the territory are required to use private, for-profit facilities paid for by Yukon taxpayers.

**\* Want to play hockey with the NHL Legends? Deadline Oct. 15th. Call YEU for details.\***

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## Dental Plan Billing

Many union members have expressed concern about the requirement to pay up-front for dental work covered under the Orthodontist Plan. Some do not have the cash resources to pay in advance and await reimbursement.

YEU is bringing this matter forward to the Joint Management Committee with a suggestion that direct billing for orthodontic services be instituted. Over the last few years, numerous employers offering dental plans have opted for direct billing without negative impact on any of the clinics.

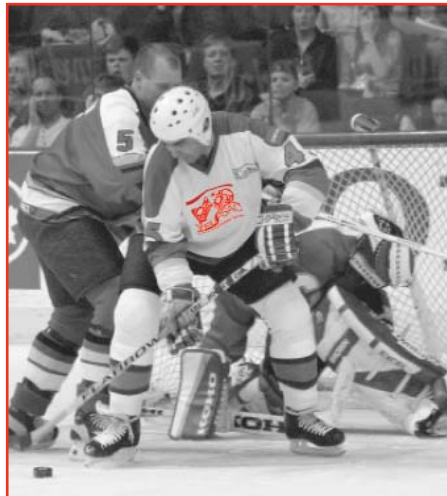
We will provide an update on this issue in the near future.

## Y010 AGM to be held October 27th

Local Y010 will hold its Annual General Meeting at the union hall on Wednesday evening, October 27th at 6:00 p.m. Refreshments and snacks will be served at 5:30.

## Union Hockey Player Wanted

This year YEU is again a sponsor for the **Legendary Hockey Heroes vs. Yukon Select Celebrity Hockey Team** event. Proceeds from the game help fund programs at Whitehorse General



Hospital. The puck drops on Tuesday, November 16th at the Takhini Arena in Whitehorse.

Union members interested in representing the YEU on the ice should submit their name and

phone number to the YEU office. A draw will be held on **October 15th** to select a player.

## KVA holds AGM

On Sunday, September 12th, Klondike Visitors Association Local Y018 held their Annual General Meeting in Dawson City.

Although PSAC negotiators successfully established a new collective agreement for KVA employees this summer, many challenges remain. We congratulate the newly elected executive, and look forward to working with them in the coming year.

- President: Wray Auger
- Vice President: Joseph (Ben) McGrath
- Secretary/Treasurer: Cara McAdams
- Chief Shop Steward: Clint Brickner

## YEU Observations

For aficionados of propaganda-speak, words like “freedom” and “sovereign” are golden. Applied to the Iraqi reconstruction effort, they seem more relevant to the U.S. corporations active there, than to the people living there.

For example, in the first months of Paul Bremer’s tenure as the U.S. Administrator in Iraq, he took radical action to facilitate the care and

feeding of US corporations blessed with the opportunity to pillage the country. His actions?

- He privatized 200 state-owned oil companies;
- lowered Iraq’s corporate tax rate from approximately 40% to a flat-rate of 15%;
- allowed 100% foreign-company ownership of non-resource Iraqi assets; and

*“Let freedom reign” - Words of George W. Bush to National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice, handwritten on her memo advising him that Iraq was now “sovereign”.*

- permitted 100% of corporate profits to be removed from the country free from U.S. tax, without reinvestment requirements.

The only economic policies of Saddam Hussein that he failed to change or rescind were those restricting *collective bargaining* and *trade unions*. Corporate sovereignty ... what a concept!

Let freedom reign.

# YEU from the President

**As the YEU Executive begins strategic planning sessions to chart the course leading to next year's Triennial Convention, the challenges immediately before us are rapidly coming into focus.**

Proposed amendments to the YPSSRA (*Yukon Public Service Staff Relations Act*) to bring it in line with federal changes to composition, duties, and procedures are on the table. The changes, while significant, should have no adverse effect on our member's employment relationship with YTG.

The Pension Patriation process continues. Mike Travill is preparing an article for the next newsletter to bring our YTG membership up-to-date on the process.

The failed negotiations between the federal government and its workers can hardly be viewed as a progressive development. And now the potential for more general strike action is very real. YEU is working to stay on top of this issue to ensure the least disruption to our membership, while at the same time providing support to our federal brothers and sisters.

Much background work has been done on the enhancement of the Shop Steward network - with particular attention to the need to recruit and train more activists in numerous work areas throughout our membership. Toward this end,

our Membership Services committee is considering staging a Shop Steward's workshop in the near future.

I remind all locals of the importance of holding elections to select delegates to the PSAC North Convention scheduled for May 2005. The convention will bring PSAC members from Nunavut, NWT and the Yukon together. The Yukon is hosting the event for the first time.

The next 'public' installment of government by the Yukon Party begins with the fall sitting of legislature. Once more we find ourselves the last-to-know in the loop of proposed legislative changes being contemplated by this group of elected officials. Regrettably, the government's failure to communicate removes our opportunity to play a proactive role in the legislative agenda, and relegates our representation to that of a reactive force.

Nonetheless, we're pleased to see that our members are taking a direct, active role by monitoring and questioning the plans this government *has* made public. Such member-action is particularly evident as the minister from the Klondike attempts to cover his bungling with a Dawson bridge over waters troubled by questionable capital purchases, unpaid debts, and various assaults on government workers, senior citizens, unemployed Yukoners and refugees new to the territory.

## Sweatshop disaster remembered

In 1911, 146 young immigrant women locked in a New York factory burned to death.

The fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist factory made public the tyranny and misery suffered in early twentieth century sweatshops. News coverage of the disaster increased demand for labour standards, and led to major union victories and more progressive labour laws.



Today, in the U.S., the anti-sweatshop movement is considered the largest student mobilization since the 1960s.

Anti-sweatshop campaigns target prominent icons of consumer capitalism like the Nike swoosh and Disney's Mickey Mouse, linking corporate images to the brutal treatment of workers in off-shore factories.

*credit: Our Times/CALM*



**Linda Bidrman**

Linda first joined the YEU team in February 1998 as a term employee hired through EI's *Ready, Aim, Hire* program.

## YEU calendar

**Friday, October 8th**

**Application Deadline: PSAC National Women's Conference**

**Thursday, October 21st**

**Local Y023 General Meeting**  
YEU Hall, 5:35 p.m.

**Wednesday, October 27th**

**Local Y010 Annual General Meeting**  
YEU Hall, 6:00 p.m.

**Thursday, October 28th**

**Local Y017 Special General Meeting**  
7:30 p.m., YEU Hall.

**Friday, November 5th**

**Delegate appointment/resolution deadline: PSAC North Triennial Convention**

**Saturday/Sunday, November 6th-7th**

**T.U.B. (Talking Union Basics)**  
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., YEU Boardroom

**Tuesday, November 16th**

**Legendary Hockey Heroes vs. Yukon Select Hockey Team**  
7:00 p.m., Takhini Arena, Whitehorse

Following the 1999 convention, she joined the staff on a permanent basis in the newly established Administration

Assistant position responsible for membership services.

Linda and her parents

arrived in the territory when she was only 3 years of age. She grew up in the Wolf Creek and Mary Lake areas, and spent the summers working at her parent's placer claim near Dawson City. Jana and Zdenek Bidrman are still working their Scroggie Creek claim, no small accomplishment in

today's tough mineral market.

The lessons learned about hard work and dedication have served Linda well during her years with the Union. In a day-to-day workplace environment that demands organiza-

*I find my work in membership services quite challenging. But I always like the feeling I get when the work I do makes a positive difference to one of our members.*

tional skill, adaptability and empathetic communication, Linda has been delivering the goods for years.

These days, Linda makes her home in Copper Ridge with her partner of 13 years, Reese, and her canine companions, Rottweiler "Dozer" and Shepherd-cross "Ginger".

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**Office Hours:**

**Mon-Thurs** 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

**Fridays** 8:30 am - 12:00 pm

1:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Members are reminded to notify the YEU office of any change of address or name changes. Call Linda Bidrman - Membership Services, email [lbidrman@yeu.ca](mailto:lbidrman@yeu.ca) or fax the number above.