



## RED CROSS BARGAINING BEGINS



SEIU Local 1 Canada commenced bargaining for the 3000 home care members who work across Ontario for the Red Cross on April 29th.

Cathy Carroll, SEIU Local 1 Canada's Secretary-Treasurer in her opening remarks to the employer said, "Home

care is the forgotten part of the health care sector. Personal Support Workers have been the forgotten caregivers. They lag their counterparts in nursing homes and hospitals by as much as 4 to 5 dollars per hour. They don't even get paid for travel time between clients." Carroll went on to say that these negotiations must produce a fair deal. Our members' expectations must be met.

On negotiating committee selected in March are:

- Diane Anderson - Simcoe
- Theresa Clapham - Peterborough
- Claire Dahms - Owen Sound
- Anne Fisher - North Bay
- Joan Gray - Sarnia
- Lucy Lavrinenko - Toronto
- Madeleine LeBrun - Cornwall
- Pam Sulyma - Niagara

## AGREED TO AT THE BARGAINING TABLE

The union and the employer signed off on all of the non-monetary issues that were tabled by the parties during the first two days of bargaining except for language pertaining to scheduling and health and safety. Agreed to issues include: union leave (Article 14.02), meeting with new employees (Article 7.12), probationary period (article 11.01), loss of seniority Article 11.04, discipline (Article 8.02 and 8.05). The employer agreed with our proposal that allows an employee to carry their service and seniority in all cases when transferred or realigned to another branch. We are making good progress at this point in the negotiations. Our biggest challenge will be when we start to address the monetary proposals when we return to the bargaining table on May 13<sup>th</sup>. We have three days scheduled and a further three days planned for the last week of May

## NOTES FROM THE BARGAINING TEAM

*"Bargaining is very interesting. It is exceptionally educational. I am learning -learning- learning. Every aspect must be considered for the betterment of all Red Cross workers."* Joan Gray

*"We are doing good so far. I was on the bargaining committee the last two rounds and I feel this time with Cathy Carroll on our team we have the confidence to achieve something that will be better for all."* Madeleine LeBrun

**MAY 27<sup>TH</sup> IS BARGAINING ACTION DAY**  
**WEAR THE STICKER PROVIDED ON THAT DAY IN**  
**SUPPORT OF YOUR BARGAINING COMMITTEE**

## HOME CARE PROJECT ON THE MOVE

On May 21<sup>st</sup> Frances Gelinis, MPP and health critic for the NDP will be following a home care worker around Sudbury to gain a better understanding of a home care worker's job. The media will be following her and a Red Cross PSW and bring the story of how important home care is to our health care system to the public. SEIU is committed to raising the profile of home care workers. SEIU Local 1 has submitted petitions, held a public forum in Sault Ste. Marie, led a lobby day at Queens Park and attended town hall meetings with the Ontario Health Coalition as part of our campaign. The "Walk a Day in our Shoes" is one more event of many more to come. A public inquiry sponsored by SEIU in partnership with the Ontario Health Coalition is being scheduled for June. More details will be available in the next bargaining update.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT FROM RON COLLIE SEIU LOCAL 1 -WSIB Specialist



I have been requested to provide you with an update regarding health and safety and WSIB issues presented to the employer at our recent bargaining session. The two issues stand out: the right to refuse unsafe

work under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, (OHSA), and the modified work program for WSIB purposes.

Section 43 of the OHSA allows a worker to refuse work they believe is unsafe. We are trying to get that right included in the Collective Agreement. My advice is that you as workers protect yourself from an injury as it is clear from the employer's response to our proposals they will not protect you. If you find any work to be unsafe please exercise the right to refuse as outlined in the OHSA.

We want to develop a proper modified work program with the employer. They tell us their existing program is sufficient, including the component know as "home study". In my opinion home study is nothing more than an elaborate hoax designed to prevent payment of WSIB benefits and enhance the employer's lost time injury statistics. I believe this is fraud and I am having the WSIB investigate the practice.

## SCHEDULING



The bargaining committee spent one full day concentrating and formulating language on scheduling. After traveling the province and meeting with Red

Cross members it is evident that scheduling of clients is a huge issue for the workers. The one thing I heard time and time again were complaints around split shifts and working every other weekend. We have put forward a proposal that addresses both of these issues and will enhance the quality of life for members. Scheduling is one of the most difficult issues to find a solution to that will work for the majority of the membership. It is never an ideal outcome for everyone but we are trying to amend the language to recognize some of the major concerns.

## MPP LOBBY DAY AT QUEENS PARK

On March 27<sup>th</sup> chief stewards from Red Cross and other home care agencies joined in meeting with MPPs at Queens Park to explain to them the issues they face as home care workers each day and the effect that competitive bidding has had on their working conditions. It was a great experience for our home care members and an eye opener to many MPPs regarding the work you do as part of the health care team.