

News Bulletin FALL 2017 VOLUME 41, NUMBER 3



WHYJOINING MAKES SENS

RCMP issues directive on 'Form 10 Patients' PAGE9

CFNU pushes for pharmacare, mental health funding

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UNA is bargaining, working to improve health care nation-wide, and preparing for our 40th AGM



■ Summer is fading away, the leaves are turning yellow throughout Alberta, and the cooler days and nights of autumn have already arrived.

With the fall weather, bargaining for our new Provincial Collective Agreement resumed in early September. Your bargaining committee submitted a comprehensive settlement proposal at that time to the employer's bargaining representatives. In the fan-out communication I sent you on September 8, I noted that more talks are scheduled for September 20 and 21.

I expect to update delegates on the state of bargaining for this important, pattern-setting agreement and, through them, all of the membership of United Nurses of Alberta, at our 40th Annual General Meeting in October.

The AGM will run from October 24 through October 26 at the Northlands Expo Centre in Edmonton. The theme of the AGM is 40 years, at your side and on your side. UNA formally came into being on May 6, 1977.

I am very pleased to be able to tell you one of our speakers at the AGM this year will be Madam Justice Sheila Greckol of the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench. Before her appointment as a judge in 2001, Justice Greckol represented UNA as a lawyer during major legal challenges that helped shape our union into what it is today. In 1999, she and other members of her legal team took an important case for gay and lesbian rights to the Supreme Court of Canada.

As I noted in my last NewsBulletin President's Message, I expect Alberta Health Services and Covenant Heath to launch new resources this fall to foster a more collaborative and consistent approach to applying PRC processes in ways that will identify best practices for supporting safe, high-quality patient care in a just-culture environment.

Finally, UNA continues to work enthusiastically to support the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions' ongoing efforts to bring a national pharmaceutical drug plan, commonly known as pharmacare, to Canadians, and to improve the quality and availability of mental health services throughout Canada.

Pharmacare and mental health services were highlighted in CFNU's recent pre-budget submission to the federal government, along with a call for Ottawa to create apprenticeship-style programs to support the recruitment of nurses everywhere in Canada.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the AGM and I expect we will all be very busy this fall and winter.

In Solidarity,

Heather Smith

President, United Nurses of Alberta

Front cover photo: UNA First Vice-President Jane Sustrik takes part in a rally calling on Canada's premiers to agree to a national pharmacare program and more funding for mental health services during mid-July's Council of the Federation meeting in Edmonton.

Bargaining for important Provincial Collective Agreement continues

■ Bargaining with Alberta Health Services, Covenant Health and other employers for a new pattern-setting Provincial Collective Agreement was continuing as UNA NewsBulletin went to press.

In a fan-out message to members on September 8, UNA President Heather Smith noted that after bargaining dates on September 7 and 8 at which the union tabled a comprehensive settlement proposal, new bargaining dates with the employers' representatives were scheduled for September 20 and 21.

Modest progress had been made in bargaining before the first September

bargaining dates, cleaning up contract language and dealing with minor issues. The tone of the management team has been respectful, noted David Harrigan, chief negotiator for the UNA bargaining team.

Work also continued in early September on negotiations for essential-services agreements in the workplaces covered by the Provincial Collective Agreement. Essential Services agreements are required by Bill 4, the *Act to Implement a Supreme Court Ruling Governing Essential Services*, which was passed by the Alberta Legislature in late May and immediately received Royal Assent.



David Harrigan

UNA AGM set for OCTOBER 24-26

■ United Nurses of Alberta will hold its annual general meeting on October 24, 25 and 26 at the Northlands Expo Centre in Edmonton.

Speakers at this year's meeting will include Canadian Nurses Association Chief Executive Officer Michael Villeneuve and Madam Justice Sheila Greckol.

Before her appointment as a judge of the Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta, Justice Greckol represented UNA as a lawyer during major legal challenges that helped shape the union into what it is today.

This year, UNA celebrates its 40th anniversary. As we look ahead to the future, we are taking a quick look back at how we have celebrated in the past. Here are a few photos from the UNA archives of members celebrating the union's 10th anniversary at UNA's 1987 annual general meeting.











United Nurses of Alberta NewsBulletin Fall 2017 Volume 41, Number 3

REMINDER TO LAPP MEMBERS:

You can purchase time spent on leave

By Richard West UNA Labour Relations Officer

■ Members of the Local Authorities Pension Plan (LAPP) have the right to purchase inclusion in the pension plan for up to five years of leaves of absence, not counting three maternity leaves.

It is usually good value for members to do this at least for their first year of leave because by doing so they will require the employer to pays its share. In addition, the purchase adds to the number of years of pensionable service used to calculate the employee's pension upon retirement.

The cost of purchasing LAPP coverage for time spent on leave is calculated based on the regular percentage of LAPP contributions the member would have paid at their normal hours of work and rate of pay.

After the first year of leave purchased by a member, for which the employer is required to pay its share, the employee will have to pay both portions for the second and subsequent years.

This can also be a good value for members, but a cost and value analysis should be done. In addition, it is possible to buy a portion of a yearly leave.

Leaves of absence for pension purposes include normal leaves recognized under Article 22 of United Nurses of Alberta's Provincial Collective Agreement, including:

- General Leave
- Bereavement Leave
- Maternity Leave
- Adoption/Paternity Leave
- Education
- Court Appearance
- Personal Leave
- Terminal Care Leave
- Military and Public Affairs Leave

In addition, they also include time spent on Short Term and Long Term Disability.

Members who have taken leaves that span more than a single calendar year may choose to delay the purchase until after the entire year has ended.

Members who are resigning or retiring may purchase leave outside the normal time frames, but the application to purchase the leave must be made before the employee's employment ends and must be paid within 30 days of the costing.

Leave-of-Absence notices for LAPP members who took leaves in 2016 have not yet been processed as a result of computer problems that led to the April 30 deadline being missed. Notices of leaves available for purchase should be received by members during August this year, after which there will be a 90-day period during which members can choose to purchase this service. There will be no additional costs to members as a result of the processing delay.

Members who have taken leaves that span more than a single calendar year may choose to delay the purchase until after the entire year has ended.

Joining LAPP makes sense ...

EVEN IF YOU DON'T EXPECT TO STAY ON THE JOB FOR A LONG TIME



■ United Nurses of Alberta members newly employed by Alberta Health Services or other public employers often wonder if it makes sense for them to join the Local Authorities Pension Plan (LAPP), the province's public-sector pension for employees of boards and agencies.

But joining the LAPP usually makes sense – even if you don't plan to stay on the job with a LAPP employer for a very long time.

That's partly because government-sponsored retirement system in Canada is not sufficient to fund the future retirement that most employees envision. It's also because the LAPP and other public pensions provide secure, indexed monthly payments as long as you live.

Yet only about half of employees working 14 to 30 hours per week for Employers

that participate in LAPP exercise their right to join the plan.

UNA believes far too many employees decide not to join LAPP based on a partial or inadequate analysis of the facts. Often, those who decide not to join focus on the costs of being part of LAPP, but not the benefits.

Yet there are valuable benefits to paying into LAPP even when an employee is only there for a short time.

Consider these points:

Employees currently pay about 11.5 per cent of their before-tax income and the Employer pays about 12.5 per cent of the employee's income into LAPP. The Employer's contribution to your retirement savings is money you would not receive if you do not join LAPP.

UNA believes far too many employees decide not to join LAPP based on a partial or inadequate analysis of the facts.

□ CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

- The payout is a defined benefit pension – secure, indexed monthly payments as long as you live.
- Payout can start as early as age 55.
- If a member under 55 years old has two calendar years of enrollment in LAPP and leaves their employment or moves to casual, they can withdraw the commuted value (CV) of their pension. (The CV is the calculated value of the earned future pension. This ensures you get value for your and your employer's contributions to your retirement. The rules require most of the CV to be transferred to a Locked-In Retirement Account, with the balance paid out in cash. In some cases, it may also be possible to transfer your CV to another pension plan.)

Because the minimum payout is more than double an employee's contribution, this is an excellent return on investment in the short term. But if you continue to pay into LAPP for your career, though, there is also excellent value.

Remember:

- LAPP provides a pension based on years of pensionable service and the highest five years' average salary.
- A defined benefit pension means a secure, indexed monthly payment as long as you live.
- The pension is increased each year at the rate of 60 per cent of Alberta's inflation rate.
- A staff nurse aged 55 with 30 fulltime years of LAPP service who retires in 2017 will receive a LAPP pension of almost \$4,000 per month.
- A staff nurse with 35 full-time years of LAPP service who retires in 2017

- will receive a LAPP pension of about \$4,600 per month.
- By comparison, a 60-year-old woman buying an annuity to provide herself with an income of \$4,600 per month, which would not be indexed, would currently require cash of about \$1.1 million to give to an investment company.
- Since administration and investment costs are spread over thousands of people, your LAPP retirement income is both less expensive to administer and more secure.
- Unlike people who must manage their own retirement savings, the security of your LAPP pension is not tied directly to your own investment decisions and to interest rates when you invest and when you retire.

Who is eligible to join LAPP?

- Full time and some part-time and temporary employees of Employers that participate in the LAPP including Alberta Health Services, Covenant Health and other publicly funded health care providers.
- LAPP defines full-time as an average of 30 hours per week or more

 full-time employees are required to join LAPP.
- LAPP defines part-time as 14 to 30 hours per week – participation in LAPP is optional.
- Eligible temporary positions must be for six months or more, and require
 30 or more hours per week – participation in LAPP is optional.

For more information, UNA suggests members visit the LAPP website at lapp.ca.

Because the minimum payout is more than double an employee's contribution, this is an excellent return on investment in the short term.

PRC success at

Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital

■ Members of United Nurses of Alberta Local 32 at the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital have made several recommendations to improve working conditions following staffing mix changes introduced by Alberta Health Services in 2013.

Local 32 members met with AHS CEO-designate Deb Gordon late last year to discuss the changes on three units at the Edmonton hospital.

An evaluation conducted by AHS in 2016 identified the changes in the staff mix, which included a decrease in professional nursing staff, as potentially having a negative impact on patient outcomes, staff safety and satisfaction, and an increased financial burden for the facility.

UNA members raised a number of concerns, including role clarity issues, particularly concerning health care aides, missed breaks, decreased morale, lack of professional nursing staff, orientation issues, baseline staffing not being maintained, and overall quality-of-care issues.

Actions taken by AHS on recommendations made by UNA to improve the situation include:

- An increase to Registered Nurse staffing by 1.0 FTE for one of the units
- UNA participation in a Staff Mix Working Group created for the site.
 RN education sessions around leadership were completed, HCA education sessions are ongoing, and LPN sessions will commence in the fall.
- A common patient assessment tool is being looked at to enable consistent practices and reduce ambiguity between the units.
- Central intake for Geriatrics and Transition Services in the zone taking a more active role in the referral process to the Glenrose.
- Changing the practice around narcotic co-signing where an independent double check policy was implemented across the site.

- A staffing decision tool was created to assist units in augmenting staff above baseline based on increases in patient complexity.
- Implementation of a patient satisfaction tool for the site with results shared transparently with UNA.

Although not all of the recommendations presented to AHS have been implemented, UNA acknowledges that significant work has been done to address most of the concerns raised. Local 32 also acknowledges the transparency and professionalism displayed by the employer by meeting with UNA members on a regular basis to provide updates and sharing information that is relevant to the concerns that were raised.

The Local is continuing to work collaboratively with the employer to monitor the progress of the outstanding commitments.



An evaluation conducted by AHS in 2016 identified the changes in the staff mix, which included a decrease in professional nursing staff, as potentially having a negative impact on patient outcomes, staff safety and satisfaction.

UNA raises concerns with labour minister about cytotoxic drug exposures

■ United Nurses of Alberta continues to have concerns about Cytotoxic Drug Exposures that are not directly addressed in Alberta's Occupational Health & Safety legislation.

UNA has raised concerns about this issue with Labour Minister Christina Gray and we have pointed out to the minister that the province of Saskatchewan has had legislation regulating this issue for many years.

The Government of Alberta has recently published a document with information related to Cytotoxic Drug Exposures. All UNA members are encouraged to familiarize themselves with this document and ask questions if their site has not been addressing cytotoxic concerns.

A link to the document can be found on the UNA website.

Alberta Government launches review of OH&S laws and enforcement

■ The provincial government has announced a review of Alberta's occupational health and safety laws, including compliance, enforcement, education, engagement and prevention efforts, with the goal to "improve workplace safety and better protect Albertans." The OHS Act has not been thoroughly reviewed since 1976.

The process is now under way with a short public input phase drawing to a close on October 16, 2017.

"Alberta workplaces and the nature of Albertans' work have changed significantly during the past 40 years," Labour Minister Christina Gray said in a press release on August 16. "We need to make sure the province's laws and best practices are helping keep Albertans safe at work."

The government press release also said the review will clarify employer and worker responsibilities, improve worker engagement and maintain a focus on illness and injury prevention.

Gray said at that time the review would focus on the Alberta Labour Relations Code, which governs working relationships in unionized worksites, and the Employment Standards Code, which sets minimum standards for employment relationships in non-union worksites.

Particular topics of interest were to include clarifying employer and worker responsibilities in legislation, improving worker engagement in OHS and a renewed focus on illness and injury prevention

UNA members and members of the public are encouraged to complete a survey and provide their views through the website set up for this purpose – www.alberta.ca/ohs-system-review.aspx

The review will also include direct engagement with stakeholders.



"FORM 10 PATIENTS"

must be conveyed to designated facilities: RCMP

■ Alberta Health Services has informed me that RCMP K Division on July 20 put in place a directive regarding concerns by UNA members about RCMP officers bringing "Form 10 patients" to facilities not designated under the province's Mental Health Regulations.

Addressed to District Commanders for front-line law enforcement, the directive is summarized as follows:

"K" Division Criminal Operations forwarded direction to responsible District Commanders to direct that all persons apprehended under Section 12 of the Mental Health Act were to be conveyed to the authorized designated facilities.

The following is a listing of Designated Facilities as per the Mental Health Regulations

- (a) Alberta Hospital Edmonton;
- (b) Centennial Centre for Mental Health and Brain Injury;
- (c) Peter Lougheed Centre;
- (d) Foothills Medical Centre;
- (e) Misericordia Community Hospital;
- (f) Royal Alexandra Hospital;
- (g) University of Alberta Hospital;

(h) Grey Nuns Community Hospital;

- (i) Chinook Regional Hospital;
- (j) Medicine Hat Regional Hospital;
- (k) Northern Lights Regional Health Centre;
- (l) Queen Elizabeth II Hospital;
- (m) Rockyview General Hospital;
- (n) Claresholm Centre for Mental Health and Addictions;
- (o) Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre;
- (p) Southern Alberta Forensic Psychiatry Centre;
- (q) St. Therese St. Paul Healthcare Centre;
- (r) Villa Caritas;
- (s) South Health Campus

UNA is now entering into discussions with AHS regarding the process going forward should RCMP bring Form 10 patients to undesignated facilities.

Should a Form 10 patient be brought to an undesignated site, UNA members can discuss the directive with the RCMP. You should phone your site director or manger on-call to advise them of the situation and ask what supports will be put in place for assistance.

AHS will notify UNA of the process to document occurrences on MySafetyNet (MSN) so that WHS Zone Directors are aware. We will forward this information on to you when it becomes available.

Please let me know at dfunk@una.ab.ca or by calling the UNA Provincial Office at 780-425-1025 or 1-800-252-9394 to document and record instances involving Form 10 patients to enable education on the RCMP directive so we all have safe workplaces.

By Dewey Funk UNA Occupational Health & Safety Advisor



UNA is now entering into discussions with AHS regarding the process going forward should RCMP bring Form 10 patients to undesignated facilities.



By Julien LeGuerrier



Over the past decade, Canada's nurses have called for a universal pharmacare plan as a prescription for reducing health care costs and helping Canadians.

The leadership and members of United Nurses of Alberta along with their colleagues in the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions played a key role in these discussions with political decision makers, and in helping the country get to the strong position we are now in to make universal pharmacare reality. CFNU has pressed hard for a national pharmacare program, as well as for increased mental health funding, within the labour movement and at the political level in Ottawa and at the July Council of the Federation premiers' meeting in Edmonton.

CFNU now has the support of the Canadian Labour Congress and the nearly 3.3 million workers Canada's unions represent in this fight for pharmacare.

In May, more than 3,000 delegates at the 2017 CLC Convention in Toronto heard the report of the Economic and Social Policy Resolutions Committee, which included a resolution calling for a campaign for a national, universal, single-payer, public prescription drug plan for everyone living in Canada.

Speaking for the resolution, CFNU President Linda Silas reminded delegates that 3.5 million Canadians do not have access to any drug plan, and many must choose

"In 2017, as
Canadians celebrate
what we have
accomplished
together over
150 years of
Confederation, we
need to think too
about the next 150
years."

Linda Silas,
 CFNU President

AND MENTAL HEALTH CARE at Edmonton premiers' meeting in June



between feeding their family, paying their rent, or filling their medically necessary prescriptions.

"We could not be happier to have the enthusiastic support of the Canadian Labour Congress in our fight for universal pharmacare," Silas said after the vote. "To put forward a resolution on behalf of nearly 200,000 unionized nurses in Canada and feel the support of our friends and allies on the floor was extremely motivating as we continue this critical work."

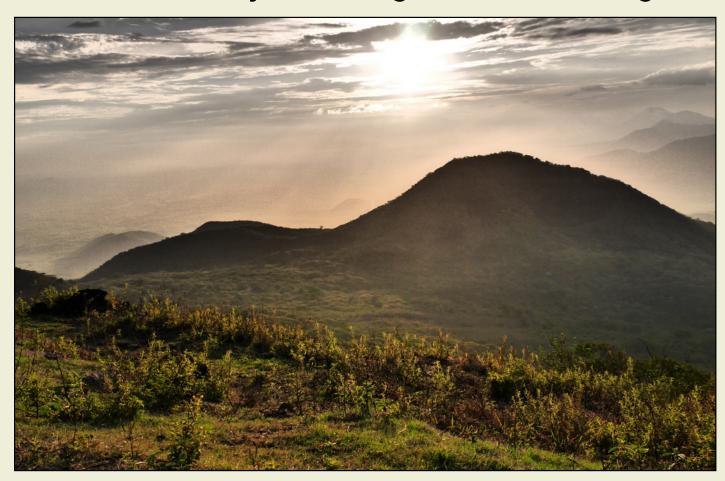
In 2016 and 2017, CFNU hosted breakfast briefings for Parliamentarians in Ottawa and provincial premiers at the mid-July meeting of the Council of the Federation in Edmonton. In December last year, a report researched for CFNU by economist Hugh Mackenzie – *Down the Drain: How Canada Has Wasted \$62 Billion Health Care Dollars without Pharmacare* – showed how much Canada could have saved in health care costs over a decade by investing in a national pharmacare program.

In 2017, as Canadians celebrate what we have accomplished together over 150 years of Confederation, we need to think too about the next 150 years, Silas said.

"A national universal pharmacare plan is a missing piece of our publicly funded health care system," she stated. "Working together to accomplish this would certainly be something to celebrate for the next 150 years."

YOUNG NURSES TAKE ACTION

mission to rural Nicaragua was 'immensely fulfilling and rewarding'







■ In April and May 2017, Edmonton-based Young Nurses

Take Action brought two groups of eight volunteer

Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses to

Nicaragua to partner with a rural clinic providing accessible and affordable health care to the people of the Central

American country's Tola District.

In two weeks as volunteer co-leader of the second group at the Roberto Clemente Clinic, wrote Amy Edwards, a member of UNA Local 301 at the University of Alberta Hospital, she participated in walk-in clinics, an organic gardening program, in-school health education, and child nutritional assessments.

In addition, Edwards wrote in her report to UNA after receiving a \$1,000 Humanitarian Fund grant to assist with the mission, her group of YNTA volunteers collaborated with the public health clinic in the town of Las Salinas.

"The health clinics appeared strongly integrated into this community and seemed to collaborate extensively with their community to meet the population's health needs," Edwards wrote. "It was incredible to see the staff work tirelessly to achieve immense involvement in the Tola District and take so much responsibility in caring for their community as a whole."

"In addition to the routine responsibilities required of me, both in preparation for and during the trip, it was necessary for me to expand upon my leadership and mentorship abilities as well," she recalled. She described the experience as "immensely filling and rewarding."

YNTA is a non-profit foundation focused on leadership, mentorship and global citizenship in young and new graduate RNs/RPNs.

Edwards joined YNTA two years ago when she was selected to participate in a volunteer mission to Peru, which took place in the spring of 2016.

More information about Young Nurses Take
Action is available at YNTA.ca, or by email at
nursestakeaction@gmail.com. UNA Provincial Board
member Jennifer Castro is president of the organization.











What would you do if you were concerned about a colleague's mental health?

Do your professional responsibilities have an impact on your life outside of work?

When is it OK to take a photo of a client?

Is professional conduct still important when you're on your personal Facebook account?

How do you balance client safety and work fatigue?

Case studies help answer common questions by RNs

■ Learn about your options when you're faced with these practice issues and more in CARNA's short, informative case studies.

Each month, the College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta will introduce you to a new case study which highlights and brings our standards, guidelines and code of ethics to life.

Your role as an RN is to assess, analyze and reflect on the scenarios and strategize a best outcome utilizing your knowledge and experience. We encourage you to discuss the scenarios with your colleagues to enrich your learning. You also have an opportunity to rate the case study and help us improve on the development of case studies.

Case studies are distributed in AB RN Online, CARNA's monthly enewsletter, and are available for reference on the website.

September's case study: Do I need a course for that?

Read this one and more here:

- ABRN Online enewslettter
- CARNA website: nurses.ab.ca
- CARNA on Facebook: facebook.com/AlbertaRNs
- Twitter: twitter.com/AlbertaRNs •

Distribution of 2018 Nurse Planner set for fall of 2017

■ Distribution of the popular UNA Nurse Planner for 2018 is scheduled to take place this fall as in past years.

The pocket-sized planner, which from 1994 to 2015 was produced in partnership with a private-sector company, has been published by UNA on its own since 2016

As users of the publication will be aware, there have been some bumps along the way to in-house production, which have hopefully now been resolved. Special attention was paid this year to ensuring that all notations of special occasions, in all places, fall on the correct date.

UNA's Communications department continues to welcome members' suggestions and comments. Unlike some past years, the 2018 Nurse Planner will contain no commercial advertising.







UNA members and staff were proud to march in the annual Calgary Pride parade on Sept. 3, 2017. UNA recognizes the outstanding contribution of Calgary's LGBTQ community and were proud to stand with them during this year's Pride Week.

Employees must provide 28 days' notice before returning to work after LTD leave

■ Employees receiving long-term disability benefits under UNA's Provincial Collective Agreement must provide their Employer with 28 days' notice when they are preparing to return to work.

According to Article 19.07 (a) (ii) of the agreement, an Employee who has been receiving long-term disability benefits shall provide the Employer with 28 days' written notice of their readiness to return to work.

When the Employer has received that notice, the collective agreement requires the Employer to reinstate the Employee to an existing position in which Employee is capable of performing the work entailed.

This position will not be less than the same step in the pay scale and other benefits that accrued to the Employee prior to disability.



If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your UNA local executive or **Labour Relations** Officer at 1-800-252-9394.

THINKING ABOUT RETIREMENT?

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS ARE AVAILABLE, ONLINE AND IN PERSON

In Alberta in 2017, a Registered Nurse retires almost every day!

United Nurses of Alberta members who are approaching retirement often have many questions. These include:

What do I need to do to get ready for retirement?

Should I inform my manager when I plan to retire?

When should I contact the Local Authorities Pension Plan (LAPP)?

What should I do about my vacation?



UNA is ready to help, and so is the Local Authorities Pension Plan (LAPP), which has valuable online resources.

UNA's pensions expert, Labour Relations Officer Richard West, recommends the following actions and expectations in preparation for retirement:

- Confirm your personal details with LAPP through LAPP's mypensionplan.ca website, or by contacting LAPP
- Pick a retirement date a date at the start of the month is recommended
- Notify your employer if you are still contributing to LAPP
- Give both your employer and LAPP 90 days' notice to ensure they have time to complete your paperwork
- Remember when you give your 90 days' notice that you are also required to give 28 days' notice of your resignation to your manager
- ★ When you receive your Retirement Benefits Statement, read it and choose your pension option
- Use vacation to transition to retirement, but in most cases work your last few days
- Expect your first payment 30 days after your pension start date
- Expect your pension payment thereafter on last last business day of the month (except in December, when it will be before December 25)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT OR CONTACT THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES:

- **☆** lapp.ca/page/retirement-tools
- mypensionplan.ca
- * Canadian Retirement Income Calculator canada.ca/en/services/benefits/publicpensions/cpp/retirement-income-calculator.html
- * Richard West, UNA pensions advisor 780-425-1025 in Edmonton, 1-800-252-9394 throughout Alberta, or rwest@una.ab.ca

