

HSAS 36th Annual General Convention
Travelodge Hotel
Saskatoon, SK
November 21, 2008

As the delegate for Cypress Health Region, I would like to provide you with a brief summary of events at the HSAS Annual Convention held on November 21, 2008 in Saskatoon. The day was very busy with a number of activities, updates and business. The convention began with an orientation that assisted those of us who were first time attendees in understanding our role and the procedures for delegates.

Following the orientation, Bill Craik, our new Executive Director, gave his report. Bill's experience and passion for the work he does became very apparent. Using the words of Margaret Mead: "A small group of thoughtful people could change the world, indeed it's the only thing that ever has". Bill encouraged members to recognize that as an association we have considerable potential when we work together; particularly at the grass-roots level. Bill also outlined the significant challenges we are facing with essential services legislation and an increasing minimalist approach by management that is resulting in a contraction of rights in the workplace. In closing, Bill encouraged members to become educated about their rights and first and foremost to stand up when those rights are denied.

After lunch, John Nolan from Phantom Poets performed a very moving theatrical production of Tommy Douglas. The production did an excellent job of outlining the struggle towards universalized healthcare and how this struggle continues today.

As outlined in the latest edition of HSAS *Dispatches*, delegates and Executive Council considered the Annual Reports and Resolutions of the Association. The day closed with our President, Chris Driol, receiving the Roberta Ekberg Award. Chris was recognized for his years of work and effort in serving the members of HSAS.

Overall, I was amazed by the amount of work that the office staff, our labour relations officers, and Executive Director do that we often take for granted. Without their efforts and the contribution of numerous members who serve on various committees and Executive Council, we would never reach our goals. I would encourage each of you to become active at both the local and provincial level.

Sincerely,

- *Ralph Aman*
Delegate from Cypress Health Region

Pictures from the 2008 Annual General Convention

