



*HSAS 37th Annual Convention  
Hotel Saskatchewan Radisson Plaza  
2125 Victoria Avenue  
Regina, SK*

*- Friday, November 20, 2009*

On November 20, 2009 I was pleased to serve as a delegate for the Cypress Health Region to the 37th Annual HSAS Convention. The day started off with an excellent presentation from Brad Garvey who is the CEO of the Saskatchewan Healthcare Employees Pension Plan (SHEPP). Mr. Garvey acknowledged that the SHEPP plan that serves over 32,000 healthcare workers has been affected by the economic downturn however he demonstrated how the plan is very safe and secure.

Throughout his presentation, Mr. Garvey spoke about the importance of defined benefit pension plans like SHEPP. The most striking contrast between defined benefit plans and other pension plans is who assumes the risk. With SHEPP the plan itself assumes the risk whereas with other plans, the individual assumes all the risk. Mr. Garvey noted that many employers are attempting to eliminate defined benefit pension plans. HSAS along with other healthcare unions act as joint trustees with SAHO, which ensures the SHEPP plan cannot be altered without the consent of the unions.

Peter Barnacle who acts as legal counsel to HSAS spoke about his international work as a labour lawyer particularly in Uganda. Mr. Barnacle was clear that the struggle of working people to exercise their collective rights is an international issue. He was passionate and reminded members that the right to organize, have a collective voice, to strike, to better oneself, and to have hope as a worker, is a basic human right. All too often the media attempts to portray unions as mere “special interest” groups and that meaningful labour standards

are unaffordable said Mr. Barnacle. This has led to an erosion of basic rights and has led to unions being forced to pursue remedy under the Charter of Rights.

After lunch, Allan Blakeney former Premier of Saskatchewan gave a moving testimony to the history of labour legislation that has improved the quality of life for many in Saskatchewan and throughout Canada. Mr. Blakeney emphasized that the commitment to shared values for all Canadians is a complex arrangement, but it is one that has made this country what it is. Blakeney also touched on the tendency by some governments and industry to refer to Medicare as being “unsustainable” over the last 37 years and that Medicare can easily be sustained in the future if it is funded and managed effectively. In summing up the convention, our President Chris Driol described the day as “challenging and encouraging”.

This years convention will be held in Saskatoon on November 5, 2010. We strongly encourage all members to consider becoming a delegate for your Region at our next convention. Watch for the call for Delegate Nominations coming out in the spring and join us for what will surely be another educational and motivational event.

Ralph Aman  
Cypress Health Region



*Warren Chykowski presents Ted Makeechak with the Roberta Ekberg*



*The Honourable Allan Blakeney poses with EMS Rep Darcy McKay*

## *2009 Annual Convention*



*President Chris Driol welcomes delegates to the 2009 Convention*



*Delegates*



*Sheila Kerr, Karen Wasylenko, Cathy Dickson and Chris Driol prepare to present their reports*



*Karen Wasylenko presents the Treasurer's Report*



*Bill Craik Executive Director, delivers his Report to the Annual Convention*



*Peter Barnacle, Legal Counsel from Saskatoon was a guest speaker.*