

October, 2016

PRC Newsletter: Southern Alberta

By Deb Kosteniuk, Southern Alberta Geographical Representative, Prairies Regional Council, PSAC

Here we are just past Thanksgiving with Halloween less than a couple of weeks away!!! It has been a busy summer and fall for Area Councils, Human Rights Committees and Regional Women's Committees.

There were a lot of activities this spring, summer and fall for our members to participate in!

A Look at Events that happened across Southern Alberta this spring to fall:

PSAC members in Southern Alberta strongly supported the June 8th National Day of Action:

Some pics from Calgary (Harry Hays), Bowden and Drumheller, Lethbridge, and Calgary Airport

Calgary participated in Aboriginal Day on June 21, 2016. Sister Vicky Norris organized a great event.

Lethbridge District Area Council had a PSAC team in the Dragon Boat Races June 28, 2016.

Some of the great signs made for, and members participating in, the August 8th Day of Action.

Sister Kristy Munns in the Lethbridge Parade promoting the Labour Day Family Picnic.

Labour Day BBQ in Calgary on the top, and Labour Day Family Picnic in Lethbridge on the bottom....look at those bouncy castles.

Calgary 2016 Pride Parade – which happened the day before the Labour Day BBQ!!! Premier Notley attended and was a vibrant presence.

Sisters in Spirit Vigil. The shoes below are FOOTPRINTS: An Art Project. Each pair of shoes represents a murdered or missing indigenous woman or child. The two teenaged girls in the last picture on the bottom right organized it, and were hoping to get 1200 pairs donated – they got over 1300 pairs! PSAC women in Calgary, Red Deer and Bowden contributed 200 pairs of shoes.

Awo T'aan Healing Lodge is the organizer of the Vigil. These are some of their community leaders drumming and singing (with support from the Raging Grannies) as they lead a parade to Olympic Plaza. This was the largest gathering yet for the Vigil.

Last Meeting of the Prairies Regional Council (PRC)

The PRC last met February 19 to 21, 2016 in Saskatoon. The Council usually does not meet over the summer, but the committees do have telephone conference meetings to deal with priority matters. As at every PRC meeting, the five PRC Committees gave their reports: By-Laws, Communications, Education, Finance and Health & Safety. All were approved by the Council; these reports are regularly posted to the website for your reading enjoyment!

A theme was chosen for the PSAC Regional Triennial and plans for the gala evening have been made and I think the delegates and observers attending will take part in a very meaningful evening. The Triennial will be as exciting and action packed as ever!!! Remember, it's being held in Winnipeg from April 21, 2017 to April 23, 2017. There was discussion about bringing back Webinar Wednesdays. Some topics discussed were:

Strike preparation ; e-learning and intro to the website; your contract is more than just your pay scale; occupational health and safety – what are your rights?; where do I fit into the PSAC structure (mobilizing members), what it takes to be a shop steward; how to plan an event; chemical sensitivity in the workplace; your rights as a member; members with disabilities and ergonomics; I am a term – do I have rights?; bullying and harassment, just what is the difference?; cultural identity and respect in the workplace; duty to accommodate and return to work.

Upcoming Events for PSAC members

A volunteer evening at the Calgary Drop In Centre is being organized by the Calgary Human Rights Committee. Look for it to be held in November or very early December.

The Calgary and Lethbridge Regional Women's Committees are working on a joint project related to the need for a National Childcare Program. It's hoped it will kick off on November 20th, which is the International Day of the Child.

CLiFF is happening in November and the Calgary Area Council is working on setting up a showing of these labour themed shorts.

The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women is December 6, 2016 and I am sure both Calgary and Lethbridge RWC's are planning events.

Lastly: please check the PSAC website for upcoming dates for meetings of the Lethbridge & District Area Council; Calgary Area Council; Calgary Human Rights Committee and the Lethbridge Regional Women's Committee as well as the Calgary Regional Women's Committee. If your committee is going to be sending resolutions to the Triennial, you need to be at the meetings to put forward your thoughts on resolutions you would like to see go forward to the Regional Triennial.

I really want to hear from you! Whether you are a committee or a Local, If you are planning an event and want me to get the word out, or if you would like to let Southern Alberta know how your event went, please contact me at kdebkosteniuk@shaw.ca or at kostend@psac-afpc.com

The Prairie Region Convention call was issued on Sept. 6th and in accordance with our bylaws, each HRC, RWC and RAPC is entitled to elect/select one delegate to attend. Some things to note include:

- Only committees in good standing are entitled to send a delegate to convention. To be in good standing, committees must have 4 meetings during 2016 and minutes must be available (either on the website or by email to the REVP). Any committee who does NOT have 4 meetings in 2016 or if minutes for 4 meetings are not provided WILL NOT RECEIVE A DELEGATE SEAT.
- A meeting notice indicating the committee will be electing/selecting their delegate should be sent out no later than 2 weeks prior to the meeting.
- Delegates from committees are fully funded by the Prairie Region so it is not necessary to have the delegate selected by the subsidy deadline. However, in order to ensure that appropriate hotel rooms are booked and travel arrangements made, please ensure that your delegate is finalized by **January 31, 2017**. Only delegates from outside of Winnipeg will be booked into the hotel.
- for committees that operate on consensus, the delegate may be 'selected' versus elected by secret ballot (in accordance with the Constitution change made at the last PSAC convention to include selection). However, if as a committee, you normally operate by the rules of order, a secret ballot election is required and you should ensure a staff member is available to assist with the vote if possible. An election for a minimum of one alternate should also be conducted in the event the delegate is unable to attend.
- for voting purposes to elect the delegate, just a reminder that for RWC'S and HRC's (including RAPC), each member of the executive may vote and for the general membership that attend, each local is entitled to one vote. If there is more than one person attending from a local they need to decide before ballots are distributed who will be voting on behalf of the local.
- After the meeting where the delegate was elected, the delegate should go online and register. The committee should also send a copy of the minutes indicating the results of the election to Sister Alison Davis at davisa@psac.com. Minutes can be sent in draft form even if they have not been presented for approval at the next meeting.

Education:

Please visit the PSAC Prairies Website Education Page at <http://prairies.psic.com/events>

The education calendar for fall 2016 is posted and there are some good courses coming up for Calgary, Lethbridge, Red Deer and areas. Please take a look.

Hot Topics:

There is much talk amongst PSAC women about the fact that under the PSHCP we are only able to access one type of birth control: the Pill. For many women, the Pill is not workable option for them, and they need an alternate form of birth control such as an IUD or Depro Provera. A change to the PSHCP cannot be handled by way of a resolution to the Regional or National Triennials. But there will be a call out for changes members would like to see happen with the PHSCP. Perhaps we need to organize an awareness campaign directed at those in charge of the PSHCP so that these changes can be made now.

Next Meeting of the Prairies Regional Council (PRC)

The next meeting of the PRC will be held November 4 to 6, 2016, in Calgary.

Check out these Web sites:

- PSAC Prairies Regional By-Laws: <http://prairies.psic.com/our-organization/prairie-region-council/prairie-region-bylaws>
- PSAC Prairies Website: <http://prairies.psic.com/>
- Alberta Could: <http://albertacould.org/>
- Rabble: News For the Rest of Us: <http://rabble.ca/>

Let's hold Mr. Trudeau to what he said about things being different for the public service and let's see bargaining in good faith really happening for federal public service employees.