

# CUPE WIRE

Official Publication of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 38  
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## Why We Are Scared of the Dentist

Last fall, the Alberta Dental Association released a suggested Dental Fee Guide for the first time since the late 1990's. Since the fee guide was abolished in the 90's, insurance companies would survey dentists annually and establish what they would call a "usual and customary" fee guide. The insurance companies would then reimburse plan members based upon the fees in their internal guide. If your dentist charged more than the "usual and customary" fees, the extra cost fell onto the individual member to pay. This issue has been a point of contention over the years, as many dentists seemed to charge more than the usual and customary fees of any of the insurance companies' fee guides.

In January insurance companies across the province announced that they will adopt the new Dental Fee Guide released late last fall by the Alberta Dental Association. On its face, many people saw this as a positive move, since the new Fee Guide proposed a drop in dental fees of anywhere from 8% - 12%. The intention is to put pressure on dentists to lower their rates. It was identified by the Alberta Government that dental fees in Alberta ranked as the highest in Canada, and are in many cases, significantly higher than anywhere else.

What was missed by many was that the new Fee Guide is optional for dentists. So, there is no requirement for dentists to adopt a fee guide that would see their rates drop 8% - 12% overnight. Yet, the insurance companies moved immediately to adopt this new fee guide.

In essence, we as the individual plan member will now see our dental bills increase immediately by a range of 8 - 12%. The insurance companies save this amount while off-loading the cost back onto the individual plan member.

*Continued on Page 2*

## An Icon Passes

It's an iconic image of solidarity during WWII that has become an enduring symbol of female empowerment.



The woman who inspired the "Rosie the Riveter" poster, a California waitress named Naomi Parker Fraley, has died on January 20, 2018. Fraley was 96 years old.

The "real" Rosie behind J. Howard Miller's iconic wartime poster, commissioned by the Westinghouse Company's War Production Coordinating Committee, was only recently discovered. It's believed Miller based the "We Can Do It" poster on a 1942 newspaper photograph of a female war worker. For decades, a Michigan woman named Geraldine Hoff Doyle had been identified as the inspiration for Rosie.

Fraley and her sister Ada Wynn, part of a massive influx of women into the U.S. workforce during WWII, went to work at a Naval Air Station in Alameda, Calif., after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, according to the Times. Fraley had seen the Miller poster and thought it looked like her. But it wasn't until she and her sister attended a 2011 reunion of female war workers in Richmond, Calif., that she knew the American legend was wrong. At the event, Fraley saw the newspaper photo of the women at the lathe that the Rosie poster is believed to be based on, incorrectly identifying Doyle as the woman in the photo.

Since its release, Rosie the Riveter has become one of the most iconic images of working women, and certainly one of the most unforgettable cultural icons of the Second World War.

## ENMAX Improves Your Benefits Plan

Many members have been following the recent events and communications regarding proposed changes to the ENMAX Your Benefits Plan. In early January, ENMAX announced via email a number of proposed changes to the Plan. While some of these changes mirrored a proposal before the Benefits Oversight Committee, some of the January changes were different.

We reached out to Local 38 plan members via the newsletter and a town hall session. This generated a significant amount of feedback to us, which we were able to take forward to a series of Benefit Oversight Committee meetings.

The result of all this was a final draft of changes to the Benefits Plan. We are pleased that, after consultation with all stakeholders, the proposed plan will maintain all current benefits, and it will see enhancements in many areas of the Plan. For paramedical expenses, co-pays (the percentage amount paid by plan members on each visit) are maintained for current levels, and a new level is introduced that raises maximum caps with a slightly reduced co-pay. This ensures the integrity of the current plan, and those users who do not meet the current caps will continue to receive the same 100% co-pay. For those plan members that utilize paramedical services in excess of the current caps, a new cap with an 80% co-pay is now available.

The enhanced drug coverage has also been maintained at its current level.

The other changes to the plan are also a benefit, such as increased coverage and maximum caps for dental and hearing aids.

There was some concern expressed about the annual maximums being changed to a lifetime maximum. In particular, the concern was that this change would be retroactive. After analyzing this change, a lifetime maximum versus an annual maximum allows for significantly better coverage over the working life of the plan member. For example, a plan member would have to hit the annual maximum each year for 33 years in order to exhaust the lifetime maximum. No plan member to date has consistently hit the current maximums on an annual basis; and the likelihood of a member hitting such levels is statistically almost non-existent.

Overall, the changes to the Your Benefits Plan are very positive for all plan members. Should anyone have a specific question regarding the details of the plan, please feel free to contact the Union office at 403-233-2700.

## Why We Are Scared of the Dentist

*Continued from Page 1*

The common response we hear from insurance companies is that it is the responsibility of the individual to “negotiate with their dentist.” History has shown that individuals do not view their medical providers as someone you negotiate with, like you would for a car or television. There is a special relationship between a doctor/dentist and a patient. Negotiating price is rarely part of that relationship.

While we welcome the new changes to the dental coverage as announced in the changes to the Your Benefits plan, individual plan members may not see the anticipated reduction in dental bills. It is now up to each plan member to put pressure on their dentist to conform to the new pricing system.

## International Women’s Day

What is International Women’s Day? It is a worldwide event, with a human rights theme, highlighting the economic, social, cultural and political achievements and contributions made by women.

Did you know that International Women’s Day originated in Europe in 1911? The theme of International Women’s Day was expanded by the United Nations in 1975. By 1977, the United Nations had adopted a resolution designating March 8 as International Women’s Day around the world.

The CUPE 38 Equal Opportunities Committee encourages you to celebrate the women in your life. For more information about International Women’s Day 2018, please visit the links below;

[www.internationalwomensday.com/explore](http://www.internationalwomensday.com/explore)

[www.womenscentrecalgary.org](http://www.womenscentrecalgary.org)

[www.ywcalgary.ca/events/celebrate/](http://www.ywcalgary.ca/events/celebrate/)

## THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH



“The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them”

**Ida B. Wells~**  
Journalist, Newspaper Editor  
& Early Leader in Civil  
Rights Leader

# Get involved!

## REGULAR MEMBERSHIP MEETING

*All CUPE 38 Members Invited to Attend*



**When: Tuesday, February 27, 2018  
at 7:00 p.m.**

**Where: CUPE 38 Office,  
1439-9 Avenue SE**

**Business: Regular & Elections**

### **Elections:**

1. Six (6) Eligible Delegates to CUPE Weeklong School, May 28—Jun 1, 2018 in Red Deer.