



MORAY MATTERS

AUGUST 2003 NEWSLETTER

“LET’S MAKE IT EVEN BETTER”

“Let’s make it even better” writes Dave Anderson, UNISON President, in the July edition of *Focus*. He says we are now members of the most progressive force in the labour movement. We have the most diverse membership of any union in the UK. We are acknowledged as *the* voice of the public services workforce.

“We move forward into our second decade with confidence and pride – and with a determination to make things even better.”

“MORAY UNISON – FIRST IN SCOTLAND”

- ❖ So stated the headline in the May edition of the Moray Matters newsletter – & what has happened between then and now in the branch?
- ❖ Our monthly Branch Committee meetings bring members together to discuss current issues and matters arising from discussions. Stewards and contacts welcome!
- ❖ Our Branch Development Days enable us to formulate the way ahead for the branch.
- ❖ Look out for our Single Status Roadshows in October & November this year – **a reminder of the dates appears later in this newsletter.**
- ❖ We continue to have meetings with members of the Council over the PPP consultation. We have had considerable press coverage on this issue – I’m sure you have all read the local newspapers! *Onward with the fight!* You might be interested to know that Audit Scotland found that in six PFI school schemes, the actual set up and construction costs were £464 million – but the finance costs were a staggering additional £414 million! A PFI project to computerise the country’s Magistrates’ Courts – after ten years of development, costs have doubled, it still isn’t working, and the tax-payer not the contractor is picking up the bill!
- ❖ We are still involved in the ongoing Single Status/Job Evaluation process – watch out for an update in our Single Status Bulletin due out soon.
- ❖ Several of our Executive Officers attended the UNISON National Conference in Brighton last month. Did you all see the photo of Maureen Anderson, Moray College Branch Secretary, on the front page of the July edition of the *Labour Link News* magazine?
- ❖ After many years of dedicated service to UNISON, and the branch in particular, Jean-Anne Goodbrand has stood down as Treasurer for the branch. Her commitment to the branch is recognised and greatly appreciated by all. You should have received notification that we are trying to fill this vacancy. Anyone willing to take on this very important position please get in contact.

- ❖ John Barrett, Retired Members Officer, will attend the Retired Members National Conference later in the year. Meanwhile he has written a very interesting article on Prostate Cancer. See the article further down this page and continued on the next.
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WORDSEARCH WINNER

Congratulations to **MARY HINDES** of Moray College, who won May's Moray Matters WORDSEARCH competition.

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ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS

Do people understand the job you do? Are you or your service/section constantly portrayed unfairly? Would you like the opportunity to put the facts across? If so please contact the Unison office on 01343 563170 and it may be that there will be a space for your comments in the next newsletter.

DON'T DIE OF EMBARRASSMENT

Members who read carefully the final agenda for Annual Conference (and who among us has not!) will have noticed motion 13 **Prostate Cancer**.

This is, of course, the point at which most of us men will turn the page or rush away to do something more important – anything, in fact, to avoid thinking about our giblets and plumbing.

In England and Wales in 1990 (and Scottish figures are no less frightening) 12,423 men younger than 75 died from prostate cancer. Risk of getting the disease rises progressively: from the age-group 50-54 with a death rate of a mere 8 per 1000; to 23 per 1000 in the age-group 55-60; 68 by 60-64; 140 by 64-69; and 260 by 70-74. Scary stats!

The good news is that many (perhaps most) deaths could be prevented by early diagnosis and treatment. The bad news is that men would rather die than get checked and as a result there has been no campaign for a national screening service along the lines of, say, breast cancer screening.

The lack of adequate screening is a national disgrace – but not an excuse for men to ignore the warning signs (you know what I mean – difficulties with the equipment). And it is not a reason for men – at an age and even when feeling perfectly well and free from tackle problems – from asking their GPs to make the appropriate tests.

Of course, the prospect of undergoing the most basic test (the fundamental one) is enough to make all but the bravest of us clench up, reach for another beer, turn the music up loud and think of something (anything) else. Any yet that briefly eyewatering test can save our lives.

On the other hand, there is the prostate specific antigen (PSA) test. This is a simple blood test that (a rare thing in cancer diagnosis) can accurately show the existence of a cancer and how active it is – even in men who feel fine and show no symptoms. And early diagnosis, followed by early treatment, can save lives. **But still there is no national screening programme.**

The message we take from all this is twofold. Firstly, individuals and organisations must support Unison’s policy of campaigning for prostate cancer screening, especially of men aged 50 and over. Secondly, men should not wait for the NHS to put a card through the door inviting them to a clinic. Go to your GP. Go today. Get checked. Better a little discomfort – and any amount of embarrassment – than ending up dead.

John Barrett
Retired Members Officer




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Happy Birthday, UNISON

UNISON, Scotland’s largest union, celebrated its 10th anniversary on 1st July. The union which was created in 1993 by the merger of COHSE, NALGO and NUPE, has become the main representative of Scottish public service workers.

Matt Smith, UNISON’s Scottish Secretary, said “UNISON’s success is built on organisation, members involvement in their union, and ensuring we deliver what our members want.”

❖ **Why don’t you get involved yourself? Phone us on 01343 563170.**

REMINDER OF SINGLE STATUS ROADSHOW DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

The following second phase of road shows are planned for:

Tuesday 28 October 2003	Elgin Library – Gallery	12 noon to 6 pm
Thursday 30 October 2003	Forres House Community Centre	12 noon to 6 pm
Tuesday 4 November 2003	Buckie Town House	12 noon to 6 pm
Thursday 6 November 2003	Keith Resource Centre	12 noon to 5 pm

UPGRADE YOUR SKILLS – LEARN WITH UNISON

UNISON offers members many FREE opportunities to learn new skills including how to organise a workplace!

Get in touch with your branch.



WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS QUESTION PAGE

Q. How is activist education and training organised and what about time off for training?

A. The union's learning and organising services unit co-ordinates education and training for UNISON activists and members. It works with regional education officers and groups across the union to:

- develop and deliver training for national service groups and self-organised groups;
- produce course materials for national, regional and branch based courses;
- develop and encourage lifelong learning in branches;
- co-ordinate UNISON's lay tutor training programme;
- deliver a national programme of courses for activists.

Stewards, health and safety reps, lifelong learning advisers and union learning reps, and branch officers have the right to paid time off for training in their union duties, including part-time activists. UNISON advises activists to give several weeks notice to employers and to provide managers with information about courses as required.

Q. What is the difference between the general political fund and the affiliated fund?

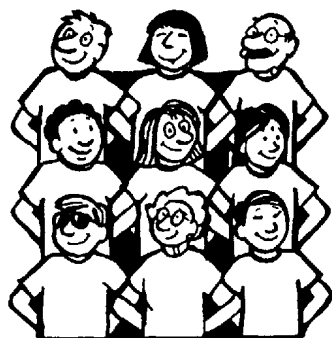
A. Like most unions, UNISON has a political fund to enable it to campaign. There are two aspects to UNISON's political funds. The UNISON Labour-Link fund is affiliated to the Labour party. The general political fund is used for UNISON political campaigns that are independent of any party link.

Members of the union can choose to pay part of their subscription to either, both or none of the two funds.

UNISON Labour-Link members in the branch can affiliate to the local Labour party and send representatives and motions to party meetings to win support for UNISON's aims. They can also elect a branch UNISON Labour-Link officer who can act as the key point of contact to ensure that UNISON members remain informed. UNISON branches with APF members can affiliate via their region to the appropriate constituency Labour or district Labour Party.

Q. Is it easy to find the Moray UNISON web page on the Moray Council Intranet site?

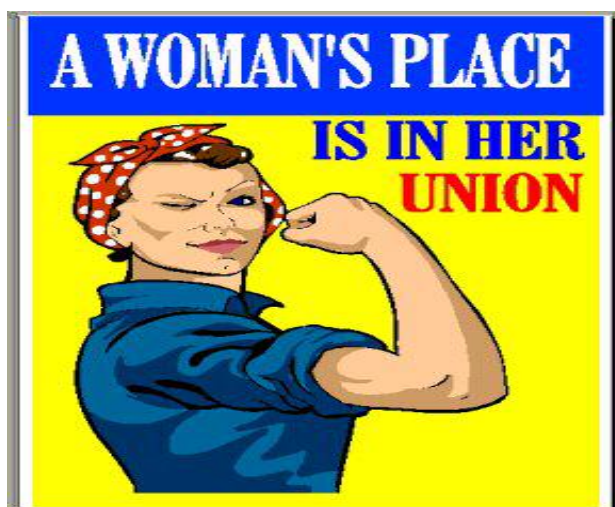
A. Yes it is. On the Intranet home page (on the left hand side) you will find **Reference** – click to open and stroll down to find MORAY UNISON.



The Branch is anxious to get members' views on any aspect of UNISON whether it is related to the Branch itself or to do with national issues.

Please contact Linda Magill, Communications Officer, by post at UNISON Moray Branch Office, Council Offices, 12/14 Greyfriars Street Elgin IV30 1LF or e-mail linda.magill@moray.gov.uk OR unison@moray.gov.uk

Whilst all members views may not be published, the Branch undertakes to respond to them all.



YOUR BRANCH NEEDS YOU



STEWARDS & CONTACTS

We are looking to fill vacancies
locally within the Moray branch

Are you :

☺ a good listener?

☺ Active?

☺ Forward thinking?

☺ A good team worker?

Do you :

☺ Have a sense of humour?

☺ Have loads of enthusiasm?

Is this you?

We can offer you time off to undertake your duties in attending branch meetings and representing members. You will be given full training locally to deal with your new role. Expenses for this position will be reimbursed.

CONTACT:

<u>Address</u> UNISON Office 12/14 Greyfriars St, Elgin, IV30 1LF	<u>Tel:</u> 01343 563170	<u>Fax:</u> 01343 563437	<u>E-mail:</u> unison@moray.gov.uk	<u>UNISON</u> <u>Direct</u> 0845 355 0845
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Health & Safety is an issue for everyone

Health and Safety in our workplaces is a vital issue for each and every one of us. Your employer has a legal duty to provide you with a safe working environment and safe working practices.

If they do not, UNISON is here to challenge them.

But to be effective in our battle for safe conditions we need people in every workplace willing to act as UNISON health & safety representatives.

Rights for Temporary Workers

- If you are an employee on a fixed term contract you should not be treated less favourably than a comparable permanent employee, unless your employer can justify this treatment.
- If an employer renews your temporary contract when you have worked for a continuous period of 4 or more years for the same employer, the renewal or new contract is taken as a permanent contract.
- Agency workers are not included in these regulations.

Rights for Part Time Workers

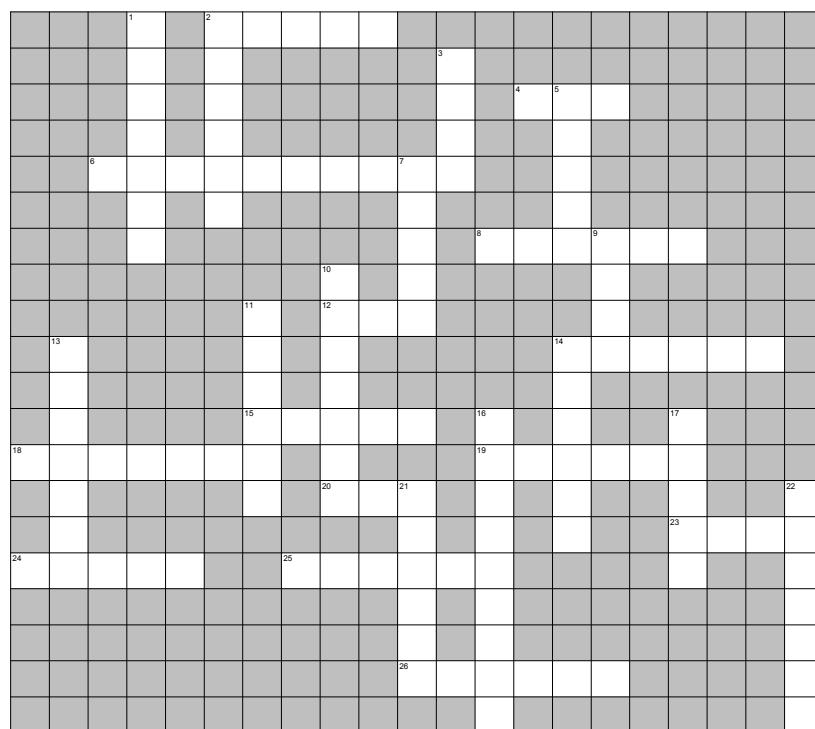
- You have a right not be treated less favourably than a comparable full time worker. This means that you have the same rights, pro-rata, to holidays, pensions, training, sick pay and other benefits.

Join
UNISON
today
Contact:
01224 620624
For an application
form

UNISON Moray Matters is a regular publication by the branch. We would welcome comments/letters/ideas for competitions, etc. Any contribution from members would be appreciated.
Contact Linda Magill, Communications Officer, through the branch office if you can help.

**MORAY
BRANCH
OFFICE**
Council Offices
12/14 Greyfriars
St.
**ELGIN
IV30 1LF**

This month it's a **CROSSWORD** for you, for fun



Created with EclipseCrossword — www.eclipsecrossword.com

Across

2. Make a law (5)
4. Superpower (3)
6. Rural homes (10)
8. Defray expenses (6)
12. Boring tool (3)
14. "Ungreen" petrol (6)
15. Religious belief (5)
18. Coil round (7)
19. Cad (6)
20. Mayday call (3)
23. Woman who sang the song "Orinoco Flow" (Sail Away) (4)
24. Upper air (5)
25. Pedigrees (6)
26. Brave (6)

Down

1. Green jewel (7)
2. Puzzling thing (6)
3. Large vases (4)
5. Neck warmer (5)
7. Praise highly (5)
9. Eyelid swelling (4)
10. Outlaws (7)
11. A popular, dark caffeinated beverage (6)
13. With lunar illumination (7)
14. Missive (6)
16. Puzzle in which you arrange words to fit a grid (9)
17. Zodiac's ram (5)
21. Quick drawing (6)
22. Flair (7)