

# MEMBER UPDATE



## RESIDENTS GET THEIR DAYS IN THE SUN, THANKS TO AUPE

Dozens of residents at Points West Living in Cold Lake are going to have a better summer thanks to AUPE members who work at the site.

The residents will soon be able to relax in the shade of a beautiful gazebo after the members of Local 047 Chapter 010 stepped in when they saw an unfulfilled need.

“The residents had expressed an interest in having an area outside that would be covered ... and so they thought that maybe they could look for a gazebo, but they didn’t know where the money would be coming from,” said Amanda Whillans, vice-chair of the chapter and a health-care aide (HCA) at the facility.

Chapter chair Lianne Dumais and fellow AUPE member Donna Bartlett came up with the idea of holding a garage sale and barbecue to raise funds. The union paid for all the food (hot dogs, hamburgers, cookies, juice, hot chocolate and coffee) and donated their time to work with the resident and run the garage sale.

A total of \$1,900.06 was raised and donated to the residents’ council. It’s more than enough to cover the cost of the gazebo, which the residents picked out for themselves.

If you’ve ever been to a care facility, you’ll know how hard the staff work. Why go to all the extra effort of volunteering and fund-raising?

Simple. It’s because they care.

“You form relationships,” said Whillans, who has worked at the facility for a little more than five years. “So, when they want something as simple as a gazebo, like an outdoor structure so that they can get outside in the sunshine ... eventually you just come together and be like: Listen, we’ll get them their ... gazebo.”

Points West was unable to provide the gazebo for the residents, but Whillans said the union was grateful that the employer allowed them to use the facility for the fund-raising event held on June 15.

Two years ago, AUPE members at Points West were locked out for more than six months while trying to negotiate a first contract. The number-one issue for workers was to improve the quality of care for residents.

It’s clear that this commitment to their residents is as strong now as it was then. Residents and staff become almost like family.

As Whillans said: “I haven’t had grandparents since I was 15. Now I have over 50.”