



Local Unit Newsletter

What Is All the Excitement About?

We have many things to celebrate, and many things to look forward to in this brand New Year! We have a dedicated Negotiating Team and a great Membership Engagement Team, too. Together, we will all accomplish more, but we need every nurse's input and help. Each and every one of you is important, and we want to hear from all of you—TOGETHER, or one at a time!

Your Negotiating Team has stepped up and volunteered to represent your professional nursing interests at PeaceHealth SW, and they will soon be sitting at the bargaining table with management. Dates for negotiations have not yet been decided, but we have requested them of hospital administration. Our Negotiating Team has been meeting at the WSNA Field Office, across the street from the Emergency Room, for preliminary discussions, and they are well-prepared to fight the good fight. They have already spent many hours discussing your on-the-job concerns and the results of your electronic Negotiation Survey. The team looks closely at the collective interests of all PHSW Medical Center nurses, and will strive to address the core issues that most affect you all. We intend to publish frequent updates, as negotiations progress, so watch your home email for news. Speaking of home email – do we have your current home email address? Emailing is the most expedient way we can stay in touch with you, and let you know what's going on, so please email us at wsna@wsna.org, and give us your home email address. Your information is kept confidential.



A Successful Solidarity Event

On December 16, 2013, we had a wonderful **Solidarity Celebration Dinner** (photos above). This event was a big success—ask your peers who were able to attend! The venue was in the elegant Vancouver Hilton Hotel, and the food and speakers were great! Many of you were there, and many of you spoke up with concern about working conditions and the need for improvements on your unit, for your patients' sake and the sake of your RN license. Verbalizing and understanding your concerns and issues is the first step we take together to get something done! We heard you loud and clear: staffing, staffing, staffing. Management needs to focus on safe patient care, not just their bottom line. A wise nurse and patient advocate once said, "Nurses' working conditions are patients' healing conditions." One can see deep truth and rational thought in that! You have the support of WSNA, and the support of your community, family and friends—and that is the GOOD NEWS, so take heart and have hope. WSNA is working at your local unit level through labor management meetings, contract enforcement, and member engagement efforts, as well as seeking legislative action and legal remedies to address the unsafe staffing practices currently plaguing nurses in Washington State.

Field Office Opens!

Have you noticed our **Field Office** across from the windows of Hospital Administration? One can walk across the street from the busy ED, and... there we are! The address is 8925 E Mill Plain Blvd, Vancouver, WA.

We have been celebrating the success of the Field Office; it has really been fabulous! We officially opened in November, 2013, and we are getting very busy. The Office is a warm, welcoming place to hold our meetings, drop by for advice, or gather to talk to your peers. Please come over! We would very much like to meet you there, have discussions about current events and issues, and talk with you about up-coming plans. Not a member yet? Listening

and considering are free...come and find out what you can accomplish by just signing up. We have literature to hand out, answers to your contract questions, and lots of information on current nursing practice. Or just drop by and say hello! We know you are very busy and working hard, but come over and have a cup of coffee on us. We hold RN training classes and discussions every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Call and ask about times. They are fun, purposeful sessions, and if you want to help your profession and your peers during this crucial time of upcoming negotiations, come and find out how. Our Field Office number is 360.952.8022.

A GREAT EVENT IS COMING UP

Nurse Legislative Day!

"Make a date with Democracy." The day is Monday, February 24th, 2014. Legislators and the public recognize that our daily experiences caring for the health of our patients and communities give us valuable and unique insight. You advocate for your patients every day. During Nurse Legislative Day, you'll learn how to be a powerful advocate for all patients in Washington.

Three bills being presented to the legislature are very important to us as nurses.

- Safe Staffing Bill – HB 1095
- Uninterrupted Rest Breaks Bill – HB 1152
- Limit Mandatory Overtime Bill – HB 1153

Learn about the critical issues facing nurses, nursing and health in Washington this year. Most importantly, **you'll discover how you can make a difference in Olympia.** Go to www.wsna.org, find "Nurse Legislative Day," and sign up now! Morning education sessions at Great Wolf Lodge will be followed by afternoon visits to legislators & hearings at the Capitol (WSNA will provide shuttles). These are important and exciting times – come and join us!

DOCUMENTING STAFFING ISSUES

We have been hearing an increased number of you voice concerns regarding current staffing levels in your departments. As a nurse, you know that "if you don't document it, it didn't happen." So, please continue to follow the PeaceHealth policy in documenting staffing issues utilizing the "Staffing Concern Forms." Additionally, **please fill out the WSNA "Assignment Despite Object (ADO)" form** and follow the process outlined on the WSNA website. WSNA is committed to addressing your concerns. The ADO form gives us the tools we need to document staffing issues including missed rest and meal breaks. Thank you for taking the time to fill these both out for your patients and for your practice.

🌟 www.wsna.org/labor/ado

MORE NEWS & EDUCATION COMING YOUR WAY

Linda Cushing, AFT National Representative and instructor in our Field Office, asks:

"If you could change one or two things in your unit or department, what would they be?"

"Is it okay when management makes unilateral decisions?"

"Are things getting better or worse?"

If you want to answer these questions and become part of the solution to your concerns, **come to one of our classes** and find out what you can do. As we said before, each and every one of you is vitally important. Can you imagine the power your voice would have if all one-thousand PHSW nurses stood together and demanded safer staffing and better patient care?

WHAT DOES JOINING THE UNION DO?

Many of you have asked us how your union dues are spent; have asked us why you should join the union when you get "benefits for free." First of all, is anything really free? Union members are paying for the benefits you gain; union members in the past have fought, (and some have even died), to bring their co-workers fair and equal pay, breaks, weekends, and medical care. **Your dues are spent on you!** We are nurses for nurses. "The Washington State Nurses Association is the collective and leading voice, authority, and advocate for the nursing profession in the state of Washington."

- Representation on various state commissions, boards and agencies that govern the clinical practice of registered nurses and protect your right to practice nursing
- Access to nursing practice experts on staff who can answer your questions
- Experienced labor relations experts on staff who represent you
- Full-time lobbyists representing you in Olympia and Washington, D.C.
- Automatic membership in ANA, NFN and AFT, with the full benefits each provides
- Subscriptions to *The American Nurse*, *The Washington Nurse*, and *American Nurse Today* magazines
- Free continuing education courses online from ANA and WSNA; discounted or free WSNA live educational events
- Eligibility for WSNF grants and scholarships
- A percentage of your dues come back to your local unit to be used as your officers deem necessary to promote events such as Nurses' Week, Legislative Day, Leadership Conference and for other nursing-related uses that directly benefit you

But there is much, much more, including, but not limited to **solidarity, a strong voice, and professional nursing fellowship!**

COFFEE CART VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Be part of a team serving your hard-working co-workers coffee and cookies. Contact Danielle Coates to volunteer at 360.609.4902!

2014 can be a better year – and we will make it so! Hope and help looks like this: joining together, speaking with one voice, and lending one another mutual strength!