

**WSNA Local Unit  
ISLAND HOSPITAL**

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**Local Unit Officers**

Jayne Norton	Chair
Kathy Corrion	Co-Chair
Traci Thompson	Secretary
Bonnie Abraham	Treasurer
Cathy Wood	Grievance
Barbara Brunisholz	Grievance
Toni Thompson	Grievance
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**WSNA Web Site**

www.wsna.org

*The Oldest and Largest Union  
Representing Registered Nurses  
in Washington State*



**Our NEW Nurse Practice/Patient Care Committee**



The Nurse Practice/Patient Care Committee is a WSNA contract negotiated committee. This is a joint staff nurse and management committee. It provides a mechanism for ongoing communication and problem solving relating to

professional practice and patient care issues between representatives of the local unit and representatives of management. General purposes of the committee include discussing matters which affect the quality of nursing service and patient care, fostering communication between nurses and administration and nurses and other health care employees, as well as enhancing communication among nurses and improving and/or increasing job satisfaction.

It has come to our attention that many of the nurses on the Nurse Practice/Patient Care Committee were appointed by management. According to our contract, the nurses on the committee are selected by the Association. The contract reads, ***This committee shall include at least 5 Registered Nurses selected by the association (that's us!)*** and at least one representative of the employer.

In order to rectify this, we are calling for an election of nurses to represent the Association on this Committee. Any Nurse may run for the position. It would be beneficial to our Local Unit to have a nurse from each department. Then each department can have a voice.

The Association did elect two new members to this committee in our last election, Greg Marshall from the ER and Bette Finn from Labor and Delivery. Those positions will remain in place at this time. I strongly encourage any person on the committee now to run for the position you now hold through appointment. We all appreciate the work you have done. **Thanks to all members** of the committee for their hard work.

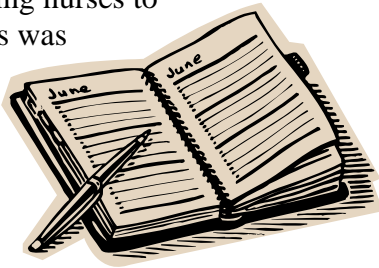
If you are interested, please contact Tracy Thompson in L & D to enter your name on the ballot. We would like to have the ballot out in the mail by August 11<sup>th</sup>. Hurry, time is short!



## Labor & Deliver Update

On Tuesday, August 8, 3:30 p.m. at Island Hospital (room TBA), the Labor & Delivery meeting will reconvene to discuss the end of the pilot program. This pilot introduced a new staffing plan for the department.

Rather than equally rotating nurses to work in the department as was past practice, the pilot program introduced a system of assigning nurses a number on the schedule, i.e. 1, 2, or 3, determined primarily by seniority. A "1" nurse would be the first to work in the department dependent upon the census needs, etc.



The pilot program also introduced the LDS (labor and delivery support) position, primarily filled by one RN to do department checks, outpatient assessments, and provide breaks and lunches to nurses working in the birth center. As the pilot program comes to a close, the department is also seeing staffing changes with the introduction of 2 traveling nurses who will only take assignments in labor and delivery, and who will work primarily evening and night shifts for a 3-month period.

Please plan to attend this meeting to discuss Labor & Delivery staffing, as well as other concerns or ideas you may have.

## Victory for Nurses in Rest Break Arbitration

The Washington State Nurses Association (WSNA), who represents nearly 1,300 Registered Nurses at Sacred Heart Medical Center (SHMC), won an arbitration decision against SHMC for not providing 15 minute rest breaks for the nurses. The collective bargaining agreement clearly provides for 15 minutes of

rest every four hours. Due to the recent restructure and inadequate staffing at SHMC, the nurses have not been getting their rest breaks.

According to the arbitrator's decision, the collective bargaining contract "provides that 15-minute breaks *shall* be provided during each four-hour work period. The arbitrator is at a loss to see how that language could be any clearer. The word *shall* is mandatory; it allows for no managerial discretion whatsoever."

In addition, the decision stated that "in order to provide quality care, the nurses need occasional rest breaks that allow them to attend to personal needs. Simply drinking a glass of water or quickly using the bathroom does not suffice."

The decision orders SHMC to:

1. comply with the collective bargaining agreement and provide the required 15 minute breaks for the nurses.
2. compensate each RN for missed breaks since August 3, 2004.

"The average nurse in Washington is in her late 40's and we simply cannot work 8 or 12 hours without a rest break and practice safely. This decision sends a clear message to employers that they must provide for adequate staffing in order to ensure that nurses are able to take the rest breaks," said Barbara E. Frye, RN, WSNA Director of Labor Relations.

Rest Break Language in our contract is as good as Sacred Heart. **YOU ARE ENTITLED TO A 15 MINUTE UNINTERRUPTED BREAK FOR EVERY 4 HOURS OF WORK.** It is the hospital's responsibility to provide enough staff so that you can take your breaks.



If you are not getting your breaks, the hospital is getting “free” overtime work from you.

I did a simple calculation of what this means monetarily... that may help put this in perspective: If a nurse at Island Hospital has a 0.8 FTE, is working at the starting rate of pay, then he/she is due approx. \$8.08 for each missed break, or \$16.16 a day if both breaks are missed (1 ½ pay for ½ hour). Working 4 days a week, that equals \$64.64 a week, or \$3,361.28 a year! This is in Section 7.7 of our contract.

If you are not getting your breaks, notify and document it to your supervisor. If you have questions, contact your Local Unit Officers.

### **Want to take your Break?**

We will be having a Local Unit Meeting to share information on

- *Rest Breaks*
- *Assignment Despite Objection (ADO)*
- *What is a Grievance.*

DATE: August 23, 2006

TIME: 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

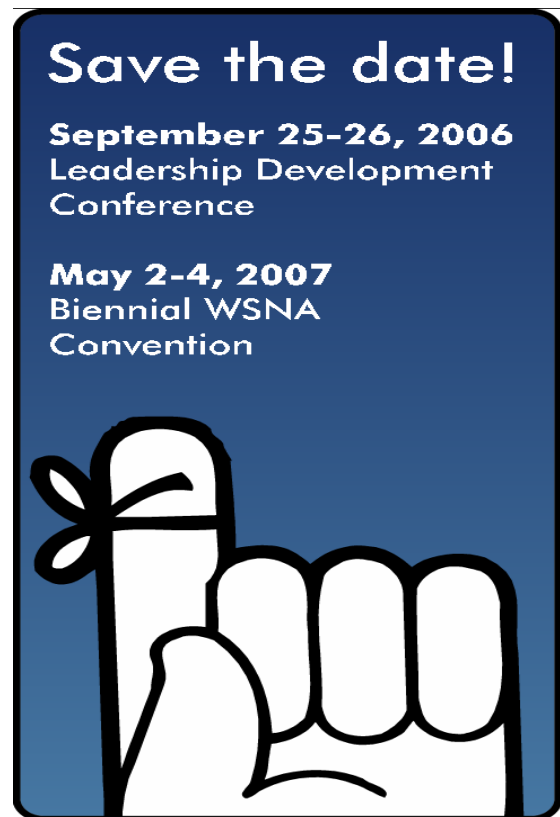
OR

4:00 pm – 5:00 pm

LOCATION: Conference Rooms 1 & 2

*Brought to you by your Local Unit Officers and Executive Group:*

*Jayne Norton, Kathi Corrion, Traci Thompson, Bonnie Abraham, Cathy Wood, Barbara Brunisholz, Toni Thompson, and Nancy Stanek.*



**See Enclosed Registration App.  
for  
2006 Leadership Development  
Conference**