

# WSNA/CHILDRENS HOSPITAL

Washington State Nurses Association

## LOCAL UNIT NEWSLETTER

January 2006

### *From the Desk of . . .*

*Becky Dawson, BSN, RN  
WSNA Nurse Rep*



### *Demystifying FMLA*

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) can protect your job if you need to take time off from work because of personal illness or family responsibilities.

At the least, all covered employers must provide eligible employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid FMLA leave during any 12 month period. The Family and Medical Leave Act was enacted in 1993. Since then, the FMLA has provided eligible workers with unpaid time off to meet family responsibilities, such as caring for a new baby or an adopted child, or for looking after a sick child, spouse, or parent; or to take medical leave when you are unable to work because of a serious health condition. Some employers define a serious health condition as an illness or injury that prevents you from working for three or more days. Your employer must give you your job back when you return from FMLA or give you another job with equivalent pay and benefits.

An FMLA eligible employee is an employee who has been employed by the employer for at least 12 months and worked at least 1,250 hours. The 1,250 hours must be worked hours; low census hours, annual leave and sick leave hours do not count toward the requirement.

### Additional Information:

- FMLA may be taken on an intermittent basis allowing the employee to work on a less than full-time schedule.
- If you are covered by health insurance, your employer must maintain that coverage while you are on leave.
- You may be required to use your paid sick leave or annual leave if you have no accrued sick leave while on FMLA.
- FMLA protects your job.
- You cannot be disciplined for using FMLA.
- FMLA runs concurrently with other contractual health and family leaves.
- Nurses not eligible for FMLA may be able to access other types of leaves of absence.
- Since the employer is obligated to offer FMLA to eligible employees, they may require you to use if for qualifying events.

*For further information surf to  
[www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla/](http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla/)*

### Retirement



Congratulations to Carolyn Taylor, RN and a WSNA member from the Hem/ONC clinic. Carolyn has retired after many years as a nurse. The article in Child says she graduated from nursing school in 1953. I didn't get a chance to ask her if this is correct when I attended the party in her honor last week. If this is correct, she is the youngest 53 year nurse veteran I know. Enjoy your retirement.

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## Leadership Conference

A September weekend in Lake Chelan- what could be better? This past September, I had the opportunity to attend the WSNA Leadership Conference at Campbell's Resort on Lake Chelan. The conference brought together nurses from across the state to discuss current issues, learn from one another, acknowledge the works of fellow members and plan for the future. As a new member of WSNA, I was unsure of how I would fit in at this conference, after all it was a "leadership" conference and I had been a member for less than a month at the time. My misgivings were quickly put to rest as Edna Cortez and Jean Pfeifer began introducing me to fellow members and WSNA staff. (I soon discovered that Jean knows everyone) Everyone was very welcoming and even excited to see such a new member at the conference. I'm pretty sure I broke a record for the newest member.

Day one of the conference was highlighted by a session with Jane Neubauer, a prominent local nursing leader, whose presentation served to remind us the importance of taking care of one another. She discussed the stress and anxiety inherently involved in nursing and how we must prioritize care for ourselves and for our fellow nurses. Only then can we reach our full potential as care givers. We then had the opportunity to break up into groups and learn about such topics as bargaining, organizing, grievances and accepting or rejecting an assignment. All of which were new to me and very informative. Little did I know how much work went on behind the scenes of a union? The evening culminated with the awards banquet, an opportunity to recognize and applaud the works of fellow WSNA members over the past year. The night was filled with good food, good company and inspiring stories. The playing of the new WSNA DVD ended the evening with great applause and cheering. Nothing

like a midnight swim under the stars to cap off a great day.

Day two brought with it information about the United American Nurses- our national union. We also had the pleasure of hearing from Mary Walker, Dean of Nursing at Seattle University. Mary eloquently discussed leadership and what it is to be a good leader. As the conference wrapped up I felt I had gained a new understanding and respect for unions in general and WSNA in particular. We are always caring for others and it is nice to know WSNA is there to care for us. I also was honored to have met and learned from many excellent and inspiring nurses.



Finally, I want to thank Tina Morey. Edna Cortez, and Jean Pfeifer for inviting me and for the excellent company. I believe fun was had by all. Jean- thank you most of all for the stories, hearing the history behind WSNA and Children's from someone who has made that history was inspiring. We have come a long way and I hope to be involved in going even farther.

*Larissa Yalon, RN, PICU/CICU*

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## A Little History Lesson.....

This movie has nothing to do about Nursing...only about women who have fought for something we all need. That is the right to vote.

*Iron Jawed Angel* is about a group of Suffragettes, led by Alice Paul and Lucy Burns, who band together to wheedle the U.S. into adapting a constitutional amendment guaranteeing the right to vote. This is a powerful movie starring Hilary Swank. These events took place between 1912-1920 and as the result of these events, the League of Women Voters was formed. Enjoy this movie, it is powerful.



## **KNOW YOUR CONTRACT:** **9.7 CERTIFICATION PAY**

Over 30 RNs in the ICUs are currently preparing to take the CCRN exam. Upon passing this exam, not only will their specialized knowledge, skills and experience as pediatric or neonatal ICU RNs be validated, but their pay will increase by \$1.00/hour (\$1,872.00/year for a 0.9 FTE). They will join at least 50 other RNs at Children's who have turned in documentation of specialty certifications they have acquired.

### **Compensation for specialty certifications was achieved with our last contract.**

Surveys from members made it clear that it was a priority for them that those who chose to validate their skills, knowledge and experience in specialty areas of nursing via certification should be financially compensated. The negotiating team also chose to pursue this goal because certification not only is an indicator to patients, families, and employers that a nurse has met rigorous requirements to achieve this expert credential, but it also imparts a keen sense of personal

achievement and professional accomplishment to the RN.

Contract Language states:

*9.7 Certification Pay. A nurse certified in a specialty area by a national nursing organization and working in the area of the certification shall be paid a premium of one dollar (\$1) per hour, provided the particular certification has been approved by the Nurse Executive or designee, and provided the nurse continues to meet all educational and other requirements to keep the certification current and in good standing. A nurse is eligible for only one (1) certification premium regardless of the number of certifications the nurse may have. The certification pay will be effective the first full pay period after the date a copy of the original documentation is received by the Nursing Professional Development office.*

Two certifications that are not granted by national nursing organizations but by other health care organizations, transplant nurse certification and a diabetic nurse certification, have been deemed valid after discussions that took place in Conference Committee (with representatives from WSNA and Children's.)

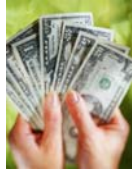
Although the nursing department at Children's no longer pays for certification testing, Susan Heath stated at a Conference Committee meeting last fall, that individual units/departments, via their Shared Governance structure, can choose to use their educational funds to pay for certification fees. The ICUs have chosen to do so, as have some other units.

For information on over 40 certifications offered by the ANCC (American Nurses Credentialing Center) go to [www.nursecredentialing.org](http://www.nursecredentialing.org).

## Pay Practice Highlight

Are you being paid for all your work???????

**If you are requested to work for the hospital, the hospital is obligated to pay your regular rate of pay.**



Any work you do on a hospital committee (i.e. Shared Governance Committees) is considered paid time, no matter if you volunteer or are asked to do the work.

Do you volunteer to teach a class? This may be considered paid time. Some nurses volunteer to do this for their own professional enhancement and do not expect to be paid.

The most important thing is to check with your Manager **prior** to doing the work. Your manager needs to be clear with you, that what you are doing is paid time or not. Then you can decide if you want to do the work

If you are denied payment for work you believe should be paid, contact one of the WSNA officers to discuss the situation.

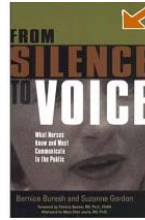
Thank you,  
**Jean Pfeifer, Grievance Officer**

## Local Unit Officers

Bill Berko	Co-Chair
Sonja Kvamme	Co-Chair
Edna Cortez	Secretary-Treasurer
Jean Pfeifer	Grievance Officer
Jeremy King	Grievance Officer
Molly Ruddy	Membership

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## ***Silence to Voice: What Nurses Know and Must Communicate to the Public***



This is the first comprehensive guide that gives nurses the information and encouragement they need to make their important work recognized and respected by the public.

No matter where you work or your area of expertise—this book is for you! It's a communication guidebook that will help you understand why nursing so often has been silenced, and silent, about its contributions to the care of the sick and the health of the public. It will provide you with the how-tos of effective public communication that you can use with patients, family, friends and neighbors as well as with journalists, policy makers and politicians.

***Envision how things would be if the voice and visibility of nursing were commensurate with the size and importance of nursing in health care!!***

*Choose to be vocal about what you know- what you do-as a nurse.* Martin Luther King Jr. stated it so well: *"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."* What we do as nurses not only matters; it is vital to the delivery of quality health care.

If interested in learning how we as a profession have chosen to be silent – but more importantly- how to end that silence, give this book a try. It's well worth your time.

Our Local Unit has a couple of copies available to borrow. Contact Sonja Kvamme if interested.



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## Welcome New Members Joined Since July 2005

Cesar A. Acuna, RN  
DeAnn M. Anderson, RN  
Annie N. Armstrong, RN  
Jill E. Arvai, RN  
Michelle A. Asplin, RN  
Amy E. Barnet, RN  
Elizabeth A. Bartholomew, RN  
Gabriela H. Baska, RN  
Sara M. Blodgett, RN  
Kerry W. Butcher, RN  
Dorothy H. Chao, RN  
Tracie A. Christensen, RN  
Christine L. Clem, RN  
Erica L. Coe, RN  
Jana C. Crane, RN  
Anna K. Dare, RN  
Elizabeth A. Dunn, RN  
Karen K. Dunn, RN  
Katherine W. Eggert, RN  
Jessica L. Emhoff, RN  
Alia M. Fink, RN  
Carol J. Fricke, RN

Maura J. Frith, RN  
Brienne M. Gessaman, RN  
Stephanie P. Grompe, RN  
Jessica L. Herman, RN  
Susan Aurora C. Hoffman, RN  
Maria C.S. Ignacio, RN  
Shawn I. Jones, RN  
Courtney King, RN  
La Vera J. Light, RN  
Laura F. Lindsay, RN  
Alicia M. Loepker, RN  
Connie J. Mantel, RN  
Megan J. McPherson, RN  
Greg M. Morrison, RN  
Sarah G. Munro, RN  
Melanie I. Murdoch, RN  
Sheila M. Nelson, RN  
Andrea D. Othon, RN  
Clarissa A. Peppin, RN  
Heather M. Pfeiffer, RN  
Kelly S. Poore, RN  
Karen Y. Riedl, RN

Ivy B. Riffkin, RN  
Kelly A. Sehring, RN  
Nora M. Servin, RN  
Aleah C. Siebert, RN  
Aleta A. Skaanland, RN  
Amy K. Skjonsberg, RN  
Graeme T. Smith, RN  
Katie E. Steffl, RN  
Priscilla M. Stephenson, RN  
Maricris A. Tanuyan, RN  
Kjelsi C. Tootell, RN  
Sarah E. Turnbaugh, RN  
Sarah R. Villavicencio, RN  
Sara B. Vomocil, RN  
Chelsea J. Ward, RN  
Marsenia P. Wilkus, RN  
Kiflom B. Woldeabzasi, RN  
Abigail L. Woodall, RN  
Larissa A. Yalon, RN

## UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

January 30, 2006 - Legislative Day, Olympia  
February 16, 2006 – “Your Workplace **Healthy or Hazardous?**” Yakima Valley Museum  
February 23, 2006 – “Your Workplace **Healthy or Hazardous?**” Mt. Vernon/Bellingham/  
Farmhouse Inn – Hwy 20  
March 2, 2006 – “Your Workplace **Healthy or Hazardous?**” Spokane/Red Lion at the Park  
March 6, 2006 - Hall of Fame  
March 9, 2006 – “Your Workplace **Healthy or Hazardous?**” Seattle/Renton Community  
Center

*Please go on line to [www.WSNA.org](http://www.WSNA.org) for more information.*

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# Your Workplace Healthy or Hazardous?

Obtain tools to  
reduce your risk in your  
healthcare setting

FREE WORKSHOP FREE WORKSHOP FREE WORKSHOP FREE WORKSHOP

Washington State Nurses Association (WSNA) is a leader in environmental health advocacy and is committed to involving more Washington State nurses in this advocacy voice. You are invited to participate in this free workshop, co-sponsored by the WSNA Cabinet on Economic and General Welfare and "Health Care Without Harm" - an organization dedicated to reducing human and environmental toxicants created by the health care industry.

This workshop will walk you through the steps of becoming an environmental health advocate at work, in your home, and in your community. You will have an opportunity to meet other nurse leaders committed to environmental advocacy.

Complimentary food and beverages provided.

Space limited.

RSVP by contacting Kathryn Macleod at  
206-575-7979, ext 3011

Visit [wsna.org](http://wsna.org) for more information.

## Seattle

Mar 9, 2006 8:30AM to 12:30PM  
Renton Community Center

Learn more about Occupational Hazards and the Control Measures to reduce your risk:

- Biological
- Chemical
- Mechanical
- Physical
- Psychosocial

Contact hours will be awarded for participation in the entire event. There is no fee for the workshop, as this is critical information that needs to be shared throughout nursing.

## Membership Reminder

It is the responsibility of each nurse to notify the Washington State Nurses Association of any change in work status which may include but are not limited to: **name, address, phone number, FTE increase or decrease, leave of absence, medical leave, maternity leave, leaving or joining a bargaining unit.** This change must be done in writing either by using a *Change of Information Card* or sending an email to [wsna@wsna.org](mailto:wsna@wsna.org).

The Cabinet on Economic and General Welfare (E&GW) policy states, when a nurse is on an unpaid leave of absence, the dues are adjusted to the Reduced Membership Category during the unpaid Leave of Absence period. The accumulated dues payment is to begin within 90 day of return to work. The nurse will have up to twelve months to complete payment of these dues. *It is the responsibility of the nurse to notify WSNA of this change in work status.*

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