

**WSNA Local Unit  
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL**

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**Local Unit Officers**

Sonja Kvamme	Co-Chair
William Berko	Co-Chair
Edna Cortez	Secretary/ Treasurer
Jeremy King	Grievance
Jean Pfeifer	Grievance
Molly Ruddy	Membership Coordinator

**WSNA Web Site**

[www.wsna.org](http://www.wsna.org)

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



**WE NEED YOU!**

Your local unit officers are looking for current local reps as well as new ones that would like to be more involved with WSNA and your local unit. We are in search of people with questions, concerns, ideas, etc. so that we, your local unit officers, can make all of you happier, healthier and wiser for the coming years to come.

We are also looking for fellow members to help us out in negotiating the new contract for the summer of 2007. Yes, it is that time of our contract!!!

Please contact me or one of the officers if you have any questions if anyone is interested.

**DUES, DUES, AND MORE DUES!!! WHERE DOES MY DUES MONEY GO AND WHAT'S IT DOING FOR ME?**

This is always the question, and a good and fair question it is. In this article, I would like to help you understand more clearly where and how your dues money is used. First, it is important to mention that 4% of your dues comes back to you in what is called your local unit funds. WSNA is the one of the few unions that does this. Each facility represented by WSNA has a local unit fund, and that money is managed by your local unit officers and is used for the local unit. A few examples would be:

1. Mailing costs such as newsletters and postcards announcing meetings, and classes.
2. Nurses week -- Your local unit officers decide how to best use the money to celebrate nurses.
3. Meetings or classes: provides food and drinks when we have these activities
4. Educational opportunities: Used by your local unit officers and unit representatives to attend WSNA, ANA and UAN sponsored events.

The other 96% of your dues is divided in many directions. First, as a member of WSNA, you also are a member of American Nurses Association (ANA) and a fee is paid to this organization. ANA is the national division of your professional association and your dues help support their work. One of the important things ANA does is to provide research on various issues affecting nursing today. An example would be studying the effects of nurse fatigue created by working 12-hour shifts or overtime and the increased potential for medication errors.

ANA also lobbies the federal government to protect the rights and safety of patients and nurses. An example of this would be the regulations put in place to prevent needle stick injuries. This is but a snapshot of all the work ANA does, but for more detailed information, please go to their website at [www.ana.org](http://www.ana.org) and learn how you can be involved.

Being a member of WSNA also makes you a member of United American Nurses (UAN). This is your national union, which is the largest national union of RNs in America. A fee is also paid to this organization. UAN represents over 100,000 nurses nationally.

Together they work towards common goals such as patient safety, and better wages and working conditions. In unison with your state association and the AFL-CIO, the UAN works to organize nurses so that our voices can be heard, louder and stronger. Just imagine how strong we could be if every nurse in America belonged and participated in some way. Please visit their web site at [www.nursingworld.org/uan](http://www.nursingworld.org/uan) to learn more.

A third fee is paid to your district nurses association (King's is District 2). Districts support nursing in their own community by providing scholarships and develop special interest groups. Each district sets its own dues and as a courtesy, we collect that for them. If you are not aware of your district activities, give us a call and we can put you in touch with them. This is another opportunity for nurses to actively participate.

The remainder of your dues goes to support WSNA. It pays the wages of the attorneys who with your help and input negotiate your contracts. The attorneys deal with contract maintenance through the arbitration process. A recent example of this is the Virginia Mason flu shot arbitration that has been in the news. WSNA fought for and won the right for nurses to keep their jobs at Virginia Mason. This decision affects all nurses, even nationally. WSNA lobbies in the state government for nursing concerns, such as the mandatory overtime law. Your dues also pay my wages, and I am always

available to you for help in enforcing your contract, answering your questions, or helping you with any problems or concerns. I can only scratch the surface when talking about all the services that, together, with your voice and participation, we can and do provide for nurses. Please visit the website [www.wsna.org](http://www.wsna.org), or call me at (800) 231-8482, Extension 3035. You can also come to our office at 575 Andover Park West, suite 101, Seattle WA, for a tour. You are always welcome.

Now, let's talk about those dues increases. Unlike most other unions, each member of WSNA throughout the state has an opportunity to vote for or against all increases in your dues. Each quarter, (January, April, July, and October) you receive a publication called the Washington Nurse. In October of 2002, January 2003 and April of 2003, the Washington Nurse published articles explaining the process of dues increases that was to be voted on by the membership. Along with the articles, many informational forums were held throughout the state for nurses to attend and hear this information. In May 2003, a ballot was sent to all members to vote for or against the dues-increase proposal. The measure passed overwhelmingly and the process was put in place.

What is the process? Each year, all the wages at the Step 5 level for each bargaining unit are added together, averaged and a percentage of that amount is what the WSNA base dues will be. Add to that the ANA, UAN and district amounts we pay to them, and you have the total dues package. Remember YOU are WSNA and YOUR participation matters. I work for WSNA, but my union is the Teamsters. As a member of the teamsters, I can tell you I pay \$74 a month to belong. Is it worth it? YOU BET! Not because we have work issues, but because I believe belonging to a union is the most effect means of having a voice regarding my working conditions. Also, I believe in supporting labor as a whole, and we are all labor whether we are educated in a particular profession or not.

We are responsible to you, our members, for the care and stewardship of your dues money. The Board of Directors, elected by you, has fiduciary responsibility for the entire Association. The Board also hires the Executive Director, currently Judy Huntington. Elected officers decide the direction of the Association with input, both directly and indirectly, for the entire membership. It is the responsibility of the membership to actively participate. WSNA depends on its members' input to drive the direction your Professional Association will take.

## **Welcome New Members**

Michelle Asplin	La Vera Light
Olwen Bode	Lisa Macias
Sharon Crawford	Audrey Maines
Nina Frank	Marisa Maricich
Lori George	Brenna McCoy
Laura Hamilton-Gordon	Margaret Meadows
Shannan Harkins	Anne Meyer
Tonya Hill	Kimberly Myers
Jason Hopper Cruz	Katherine Sands
Grace Hostetler	Katie Tolbert
Summer Ives	Heather Trees
Christina Kaufman	Allison White
Shannon Kniestedt	Brenda Zittel
Callie Ledesma	Betsy Zoladz

## **2006 Nursing Legislative Highlights**

### **Mandatory Overtime HB 1371 & SB 5368**

Extends protection of mandatory overtime for nurses to additional settings such as jails, state hospitals, and state veterans' homes and closes loopholes in current law. Long hours take a toll on mental alertness and requiring nurses to work overtime when they are already exhausted can result in serious medical mistakes, medication errors, transcription errors and errors in judgment. Strictly limiting the use of mandatory overtime is an important step toward improving patient safety and nurse retention. The House bill received a hearing and passed out of Commerce & Labor Committee, but did not pass this session. We will be back next year to work on this important issue.

### **Safe Patient Handling HB 1672**

Health care is one of the highest risk settings for musculoskeletal injuries with nurses among the most injured. This legislation will be critical in protecting nurses from musculoskeletal injuries through "no manual lift" policies and other safe patient handling initiatives. It will reduce injuries to patients and enhance patient safety by requiring each hospital to establish a patient care activities program with input from frontline health care workers that addresses safe patient handling. This bill did pass the Legislature, which makes it the best law on safe patient lifting in the country. See article on this issue for more details.

### **Safe RN Staffing HB 1372**

In order to ensure safe patient care, we must have adequate RN staffing in our hospitals. WSNA is advocating for legislation to require hospitals to develop and implement, with input from registered nurses providing direct patient care, a staffing plan for nursing services that is based on the patient care needs and the appropriate skill mix of registered nurses and other nursing personnel. This bill did not pass the Legislature but it is a critical issue that we will continue to work on in the interim.

**Get more information at [www.wsna.org](http://www.wsna.org).** Learn about legislation addressing:

#### Nursing Education Funding

- Nursing Faculty Pilot Project
- Faculty Increments \$1.5 Million
- Health Care Partnerships \$150,000
- High-Demand Enrollments \$140,000
- Part-Time Health Benefits

#### Medical Liability Reform

- BHP Enrollment Expansion \$15,124,000
- Children's Health Program
- Affordable Health Care

Ban on Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers (PBDEs)  
HB 1488 & SB 5515

