

# local unit Newsletter

WSNA Local Unit  
SOUTHWEST  
WASHINGTON  
MEDICAL CENTER

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### Local Unit Officers

Shayne Yokum	Chair
Madeleine Ormond	Co-Chair
Patricia Moeller	Vice-Chair
Mary Oster	Treasurer
Terry Joyce	Grievance
Marcia Bryan	Grievance
Eileen Higbie	Grievance
Virginia Lee	Grievance
Christie Riley	Membership

### WSNA Nurse Representative

Deby Neiman  
(206) 575-7979, Ext 3111  
dneiman@wsna.org

### WSNA Web Site

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

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



**WASHINGTON STATE  
NURSES ASSOCIATION**



## **From the Desk of . . . Deb Neiman, RN WSNA Nurse Representative**

As the time for contract negotiations draw near, your Negotiating Team had some conversation about membership being a requirement to be employed at Southwest Medical Center. There was really an in-depth discussion as to the rights or wrongs of requiring nurses to belong to Washington State Nurses Association. Everyone knows that WSNA is the professional organization for the Nurses in Washington State. WSNA is also your collective bargaining agent.

The concern over the cost was brought up by a few of the team members. That brings me to a point that many of the other members brought up, "Why should some nurses pay and others get the full benefit from our dues without paying a dime?" That is like going to a potluck and not bringing a dish. The dues are predicated on the amount of time you work each month. Unlike other Unions there is no initiation fee.

If all the nurses at SWMC were to become dues paying members of the Bargaining Unit, do you know how much strength you would have as a Unified Voice? If all of you were dues paying members, I can assure you, your management would pay much closer attention to the contract and the rules that are outlined there. Both parties sat at the negotiating table to work out an agreement that is supposed to be fair and equitable for all of the staff nurses at SWMC. It doesn't play favorites or discriminate or intimidate. It also addresses your yearly salary raises. Potential members certainly do not refuse the wage increases or the benefits that are bargained for. If you were all dues paying members, your voice at the bargaining table would carry so much more weight.

## **United We Bargain, Divided We Beg!**

Isn't it time to join your fellow nurses at SWMC? Being a member of the State wide organization also makes you a member of the American Nurses Association, The National Association.

Don't forget, WSNA represents you in the legislature. We work to improve the health and safety of the nurses in Washington State. We were instrumental in the implementation of the "NO MANDATORY OVERTIME LAW, SAFE NEEDLELESS SYSTEMS AND SAFE LIFTING."

Currently, we are working on a SAFE STAFFING BILL. It would require all hospitals to implement a Staffing Committee with Staff Nurses having an equal say in what it takes to staff a unit SAFELY. Doesn't it make sense for the people who are doing the work to have input into what is needed to get that work done?

**We will be having a Local Unit meeting on Friday, February 1<sup>st</sup> from 5 PM-8 PM in Auditorium B.**

PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND AND BRING ANY ISSUES OR CONCERNS. PLAN ON BECOMING A DUES PAYING MEMBER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. You may do that on line at [www.wsna.org](http://www.wsna.org), or come to the meeting or call WSNA 1 800 231-8482 and ask for membership, or ask an Officer.

Remember, if you are not a dues paying member in good standing, you can not vote on your own contract. Why would you not want to vote on your wages, benefits, and working conditions? Join today.....

## **Results From WSNA Survey, Fall 2007**

The goal of the survey was to determine RNs' priorities and issues for the upcoming contract negotiations. We want to truly represent you and your needs.

Thank you for a great response: 28% of the surveys were returned to us, that is an unusually good response. We grouped the results by age: 20-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51+ years of age. The youngest age group made up 17% of the respondents the oldest 41%, the other 2 age groups each made up 21% of the returns.

Not surprisingly, financial and health insurance concerns were high on the priority list, but almost as much of a concern were staffing levels. We compiled

17 pages of written comments, many of you were very vocal and we value your input and suggestions. We will use that information when we go into negotiations in March.

A new contract with clear improvements in compensation and working conditions is our goal and we will work hard to attain that.

Thank you for your support.

Please e-mail your questions to your Local Unit Co-chairs at: [wsna.swmc@yahoo.com](mailto:wsna.swmc@yahoo.com), we will answer you promptly.

*Your Local Unit Co-chair,  
Madeleine Ormond*

## **WSNA Professional Organization Membership**

As we enter a new year and prepare to negotiate a new contract, I am concerned about the membership of RNs in their professional organization and bargaining unit at SWMC. Each time I am approached by a nurse with a problem, I am tempted to ask if they are a dues paying member, but I don't. Most often, I learn somewhere along the course of dealing with the problem that they are not and I wonder why not. I know money is an issue for many people, but we don't hesitate to purchase insurance or lottery tickets. This is directly related to our personal and professional health and well-being and shows regular and consistent returns, yet so many do not join. If you are a dues-paying member, it is your responsibility to educate and recruit those who are not. When we sit across the bargaining table from the Administration, we need numbers and strength to successfully negotiate for fair and equitable treatment, wages and benefits. We cannot do this if we are divided. That sends a clear message to the hospital that we are satisfied with what we

have and don't care enough to support the organization that is bringing our requests to the table. Step up to the plate! We need membership to be the strong force that is required for this challenge. Don't sit back on the sidelines and watch...Join us!!

I was recently asked to explain why I belong to WSNA and ANA. I believe that these organizations make a difference for me and my career because they are my professional organizations. I receive information about what is happening in nursing and healthcare across the country through ANA. This information is vital in keeping me current and knowledgeable when making decisions in my state and locally. It is important that we, as nurses, understand the big picture and serve as activists for our patients and our fellow nurses. Who is better prepared to direct healthcare in this country than professional nurses? If we don't make the decisions related to how we care for our patients, we're effectively giving that responsibility to someone else...we're saying that we agree with whatever decision the politicians and other authorities make. I do not want them making choices for me and my patients, so I can make my voice heard through ANA.

I need to stay as informed as possible about healthcare, but considering the activities of my life, I don't have the time to research national and global issues. ANA does that for me and then provides it to me in valuable mailings and information on the website. Joining and belonging to my professional organizations keeps that stream of information coming to me.

By being active in lobbying for valuable legislation at the state and national levels, these organizations effectively help me care for my patients in a safe and efficient fashion. These lobbyists provide insight to the legislators to help facilitate the passage of laws that directly affect my clinical

practice. Without this insight, how can a politician truly understand blood-borne pathogens, needle-stick dangers, repetitive lifting concerns and other issues when their lives don't include any of them? I rely on WSNA and ANA to educate these law makers in order for them to make informed decisions that are evidence based.

Nursing is more than a job or a career; it's an identity that we assume when we qualify for the title. It's a profession and we need to take on the duties that accompany it. Physicians and Attorneys have professional organizations and they belong nearly 100%. What is it that keeps nurses from actively belonging to their professional organization? If we want to be treated like professionals, we need to start acting like professionals. Nurses are different than clerks, secretaries, teachers, or truck drivers. We don't punch out at the end of the workday and become less than a nurse. It is a 24/7 identity and one that everyone around you is aware of, from your family members to the neighbors and your kids' soccer coach. Professionals belong to their organizations and membership is a proud achievement. I belong, do you?

*Shayne Yocum, BSN, CEN, SANE  
WSNA Local Unit Chair*

## **Dues Rate Schedule**

Effective 1/1/08 – 12/31/08

### **District 11**

#### **Category I**

Annual - \$762.72, Installment – \$255.57

Monthly – \$63.56

#### **Category II**

Annual – \$579.36, Installment – \$194.45

Monthly – \$48.28

#### **Category IV**

Annual – \$396.24, Installment – \$133.41

Monthly – \$33.02

Please go to [WSNA.org](http://WSNA.org) for the application and more information!