

the Pulse



The PSNA Newsletter

April, 2007

Negotiations

By Mark Whitehurst

Nurses have been stopping me lately at work or at meetings. They all want to know one thing. "How are negotiations going?" This is not the easiest question to answer for various reasons.

One of these reasons is an agreement with the Medical Center not to discuss specific topics or proposals. It's not a good idea to negotiate the contract in public or in the media. Miscommunications and rumors can slow or completely halt positive movement towards a final contract.

Another reason it's hard to answer, is that with each session the talks change in tone and context. Just because things may have been negative last session doesn't mean they can't become positive during the next. Giving a summary or telling members details of each meeting could seem like a John Kerry campaign, full of flip-flops.

All right, but how are negotiations really going? Well, we are finished with non-economic issues (anything that doesn't have a financial cost). Three years ago at this time, we were just starting negotiations. So for now we are ahead and

discussions have gone well. Now we start talking dollars, and talks may slow down.

We as a team are committed to work hard and negotiate a contract that will make all of the membership happy. Meetings to fill you all in will start in May. We will bring straight talk. You can ask questions and give feedback to the negotiations team. Our power comes from all of us standing united as one. Show up and have a voice.

Stand with us,
Mark

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All PSNA members!

Informational meetings are scheduled on Monday, May 7. The Negotiations Team will be available to answer questions and to hear your opinions. We've tried to arrange sessions around every shift. Please plan on attending one of the sessions. Come early, stay late, and bring a friend.

DATE: May 7th

PLACE: Laborers Local Union 894

TIMES: 0815
1330
1630
1800
2015

**720 Wolf Ledges Parkway
Akron**

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Barb's Blurbs

A collection of fine points and little known facts

by Barb Probert

Contract time savvy:

- Stop the rumors. They only serve to make you anxious. PSNA and the hospital are still negotiating in good faith. You will hear from the PSNA officers when there is any news.
- Do not tell anyone in authority what you think, feel, or predict with this contract. Do not share whether you think there might be a "S-word" or what you would do if there were. This is

information gathering, and it is not in your best interests.

- Keep informed. Put the PSNA website on your favorites list. Watch the bulletin boards by the cafeteria and on the bridge. Go to member meetings. Get involved!

Floating and PRN's :

It has come to my attention that some of us don't know the rules about PRN's and floating, so here goes:

Scenario: One unit has more staff than it needs, including PRN staff. Another unit needs more staff. No one from the first unit volunteers to float.

- If a PRN is part of the staffing and has designated the "needing" unit as one of the units she is willing to work on, she is reassigned to that unit. If the "needing" unit is not one of the PRN's designated units, the PRN is asked to float to that unit.
- If the PRN does not want to go to the "needing" unit, and it is not one of her designated units, she goes home. No staff RN needs to float **instead of** the PRN.

Nag, Nag, Nag

- Remember to watch your PTO hours. They can only be 1½ times your annual amount. After that you don't earn any. Read Article 22 Section 1.
- If you work during your lunch – get paid! Read Article 13 Section 2. You are entitled to 30 minutes for lunch. If you work during that unpaid 30 minutes, you are giving your time for free. If you make \$24.00 an hour and work during one lunch a week you have given away \$624.00 a year. You can't take that off your taxes. Get paid for what you do!
- If your manager wants to talk to you in her office, or she wants to have a "little conversation" about some "incident" in the hall,

drop the conversation and call the PSNA office. You can do this politely. You can ask that the conversation continue when you have representation Do not get any kind of written warning without representation. It's your right!

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*There are talented
professionals who dedicate
themselves to the care of
others...*

*From the constant
attention of patient needs
to the sensitivity of the
human spirit.*

*We call these people nurses
and little can repay them
for their countless deeds
except, perhaps, one's
thanks.*

*With deep gratitude for all
that you do,*

Happy Nurses Week

*Professional Staff Nurses
Association*

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The good old Days

By Barb Probert

I was cleaning out the PSNA office, when I came across the first contract. It brought back fond memories.

We were pioneers! Women, in 1977, did not form unions. Nurses were "called" to their "vocation." Nurses should not care about

money or benefits. Nurses should not care about "practice" or the profession of nursing. As a matter of fact, at that time we as nurses were struggling to be respected as a profession. Nurses should just do their job and be happy they had one and be happy with what they got. Nurses certainly did not go on strike.

Our base pay was \$4.76 an hour, which was the same rate that maintenance workers got. There were merit raises, but the raises were not given uniformly. We were handed a slip of paper and told "here's your raise, don't tell anyone how much!"

But...we organized, we negotiated, we went on strike and we got a contract. We got a voice in our practice. We got a grievance process. We got self-respect.

We got these other wonderful benefits:

Pay \$5.35 an hour to start, \$6.71 max.

Vacation 1 week to start, 4 weeks max.

Retirement \$5.00 a month per year of service. If you worked 30 years, you earned \$150.00 a month pension. Hey! Don't laugh, this was a big improvement over what we had.

We've come a long way, haven't we! That contract was the first, and we are in the process of negotiating our 10th.

30 years, 10 contracts!

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