

"The boss doesn't listen when one guy squawks, but s/he's gotta listen when

THE UNION TALKS

MSJMC UNION MEMBERS UNITE TO ENFORCE CONTRACT AND SAVE JOBS

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This is an MHS employee-produced monthly newsletter. It will report union activities and issues from facilities represented by SEIU Local 250.

Letters and suggestions are welcome—
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Information and photographs of Sacramento union events can be seen at <http://dillingertoons.net>

Most MSJMC employees know the meaning behind "give them their pickle" due to the mandatory CHW Corporate Integrity Agreement (CIA) training they had to attend this year. But for those at the other Mercy Sacramento Hospitals who missed the MSJMC spin on this subject, the phrase "give them their pickle" means "give the customer what they want." It means to "Go the extra mile," "Do unto others as you would have done to you" and the importance of making people feel valued. Well, our SEIU Local 250 union representatives at MSJMC felt it should go both ways, that those ideals should be

how we all are treated. This was not the case when two well-liked, loyal and long term couriers requested to go to full time status. There was a vacancy in their department in June 2002. The union notified the HR director and CSPD manager of that request, and that they needed to post the vacant position. Instead, they did not give the couriers the hours they requested and did not post the vacancy. But they did subcontract the position and hours to outside workers. They refused to meet with the Union and answer their inquiries. Finally a petition



was started and circulated regarding the couriers' unfair treatment and the blatant contract violations.

Over 300 MSJMC employees signed the petition. Interestingly, within 48 hours the HR director called to offer the couriers their full time positions. It had been three months since the initial request. And then, it took another 6 weeks of management canceling meetings to set a meeting to discuss terms and conditions. Over four months total of non-cooperation and disrespect. The posting/subcontracting issue is still not settled.

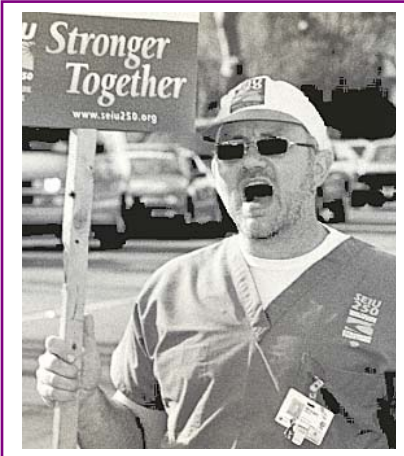
We have a right to perform job actions such as peti-

tions and call attention to dishonoring of our contract and unfair treatment of our fellow employees. The HR director and the CSPD manager need to be held accountable for their decisions.

It took a lot of hard work and persistence to get what the couriers deserved. Special thanks to SEIU Local 250 representative Mary Hillman, Sherri Macias, Susie Boedecker and Sandy Smith.

---Written and submitted by Shop Stewards at MSJMC

An injury



Chief Shop Steward Bill Watson, Mercy General Hospital

“Once again, the employees and our issues were put on the back burner....Problem is, the burner wasn’t turned off, and we’re beginning to simmer.”

“Why this hold-up and need to know whose ticket is whose when we’re not even on the time clock anymore...”

**From the Chief!
Grievance Day**

As of this writing, it has been seven calendar days since Mercy General’s Field Rep, Chief Shop Steward and the newly dubbed “Vice-Chief” met with CHW representatives in an attempt to clear some of the ever-growing number of grievances off the contractual table. An agreement to hold a “Grievance Day” was reached in an effort to resolve some of the outstanding issues between employees and the hospital. Although this is not the manner in which our contract dictates a grievance should progress, we, in a cooperative effort, participated in good faith to reach a settlement on the problems discussed. Some of these were very longstanding, and others, severe in nature. There were three grievances reviewed that involved the termination of employees. Others had to do with the changing of job duties in specific departments, departmental reor-

ganization, unequal and biased disciplinary actions and even an example of a full-blown abuse of power.

All in all there were three arbitrations discussed. We also met on five Step II Grievances and three Step I Grievances. Due to time constraints, it was agreed to not hear one of the Step I Grievances. The meeting, scheduled for 09:00 began late. It also ended early due to scheduling conflicts of the H.R. Representative. Seems he had to be somewhere else before our meeting was supposed to end. He also had an agenda different from the one previously discussed with another member of the Human Resources staff. All three employees had the same agenda but his was different, even though we were at the meeting to set the agenda, and he wasn’t. It seemed to upset him that “his people” had to be re-scheduled. By the way, did I mention that we had a meeting to set the meeting, and a meeting to set

the agenda for the meeting, and then the meeting itself? And we wonder what they do!

Long story short, we were supposed to hear from the representative on the Wednesday immediately following the meeting. We met on Monday, November 18. He would discuss solutions with other HR people and let us know Wednesday, November 20, what their decisions were and we would then discuss timelines for any undecided issues. Today is Monday, one week later, and not a word has been heard from these folks. Four days after the promised deadline and still no call. I feel like I’ve been “dated” and the promised “ I’ll call you” is long over due.

The deadline was missed. Once again, the employees and our issues were put on the back burner. Only problem is, the burner wasn’t turned off, and we’re beginning to simmer.

IF IT ACTS LIKE A TIMECARD...

We’d like to welcome the new parking garage people. It’s been a pleasure getting to know you while the lines back up waiting for the names and extension numbers of homeward bound employees to be put on their parking tickets.

Why are they doing that? We’ve never had to have our names

and work numbers on a parking ticket before. New policy? Why weren’t we informed? Don’t you have to tell employees when policy and procedures change? Oh, and by the way, are the names of patient visitors being put on their tickets? Why just employees? Why this hold-up and need to know whose ticket is

whose when we’re not even on the time clock anymore... or are we? That’s right! The time in and the time out are on those tickets, aren’t they? And now, so are our names and telephone extension numbers. Sounds like a time card, huh? Hummmmmmm. Couldn’t somebody let us know before doing this stuff? SHEESH!

UNION MEMBER REPORTS FROM POLITICAL ACTION FRONT

On September 23, 2002, I took a Union Leave to work on the Fall Election Campaign with SEIU. It was truly an enlightening experience! I covered Mercy General, MSJH, and Kaiser North and South. I met many of our fellow Union members, recruiting them to register to vote, walk precincts, and telephone other Union members throughout the Sacramento area about election issues.

We worked on Governor Davis' re-election campaign, and for Donna Gerber, a former R.N. who was running for State Assembly in the 15th district. We campaigned for measures G and H (utility and hotel taxes) and against T. I spent a day at St. Joseph's Hospital in Stockton, where we registered Union members to vote and recruited people to work for candidates Beeman and Cardoza. I worked hard, but had fun meeting new people and forming new friendships.

While working the Kaiser Hospitals, I was welcomed by Union members and management alike in a most friendly, calm manner. I never once felt any hostility from management or tension among members while conducting Union business. I look forward to the day when all our CHW hospital administrators, management and supervisors can work with "us" to form a partnership even better than Kaiser's!

It was quite a learning experience—reaching out and talking to other Union members about the issues we believe in—"Working People" issues. I learned that without political action, we would not have OT after 8 hours, paid family medical leave, a safer workplace, and the right to organize. I know from this experience



Election night celebrated at the Sheraton Hotel by Edna Hollins (field rep), Assemblyman Darrell Steinberg, Josie Summers (field rep), Ellen Dillinger, and Sharon Martinez (in SEIU 250 shirt). The party was given by re-elected State Treasurer Phil Angelides.

how many of us care and are willing to give our time to elect the "right" people to help us. I also learned that it takes perseverance to get people to vote and become a part of the political process.

It's important to give some time for the strength of our Union. We all stood together, united, after 9/11, and we need to stand together, united, for working people everywhere, for ourselves, our families and our patients. I'd like to thank every member who gave of themselves to walk and talk together, sharing a vision. With political action, our vision will become a reality. I'd also like to thank my husband for his encouragement and our Union field reps for their help and to Josie Summers and Morgan Gay, who believed in me and helped me to believe in myself.

--Sharon Martinez, Shop Steward
Pulmonary Rehab, MGH

"I learned that without political action, we would not have OT after 8 hours, paid family medical leave, a safer workplace, and the right to organize."



"My husband informed me that he was careful not to ring his call light unless it was an emergency because he felt sympathy for the staff assigned to him. It should have been the other way around!"

UNDERSTAFFING: PATIENT CARE COMMITTEE STAT!

My husband was recently a patient in the Neuro Care Unit at Mercy General Hospital for about two weeks. 95% of the time, RN's assigned to my husband were travelers and they were very pleasant, but you could tell that they were extremely busy: "I just have so much to do" was a common response from the staff.

Regular staff such as Care Assistants were busy taking vitals, setting patients up for meals, answering call lights, changing bed linen, and if time permitted, a patient would be fortunate enough to have a bed bath.

I discovered later that Care Assistants who work in Neuro had an average staff to patient ratio of

1:17 or even more. I knew there were many complaints from regular staff in that department, but to see it first hand made the whole scenario clearer. My husband informed me that he was careful not to ring his call light unless it was an emergency because he felt sympathy for the staff assigned to him (it should have been the other way around!).

One of the mission statements of CHW is "Healing with Compassion." When was the last time that department managers actually provided direct patient care? I challenge the department

(See "Understaffing" page 6)

LOCAL 250 CONTRACT FIGHT CONTINUES AT SUTTER-ROSEVILLE



Healthcare workers represented by Local 250 at Sutter-Roseville Hospital took a strong stand on November 14th by going out on a one day strike when Sutter bargainers refused to move on important contract issues. Sutter Roseville employees are trying to gain the wages and benefits that, thanks to Local 250 contracts at Kaiser and Mercy Hospitals, are becoming healthcare industry standards. Remember, only a year ago, we at Mercy

were far from Kaiser in wages and didn't have paid dependent health care benefits! Now, thanks to our contract, we're close or equal to Kaiser in these areas.

The goal of meeting healthcare industry standards isn't shared by the administration's bargaining team at Sutter-Roseville, however, and they responded to the Union strike with a 5 day lock-out. Then, when bargaining resumed on November 26th, Sutter issued a "last, best and final offer" below industry standards and refused to hear any more proposals from the Union. The Union members at Sutter-Roseville must now decide whether to accept Sutter's offer or continue to insist on winning what the rest of us have. To influence their decision, Sutter is doing what they did in 1999 to get their way: offering Union members one-time cash bonuses to sign a substandard contract. It may seem like a good

deal on the day you get the money, but workers ultimately lose over the lifetime of the contract. The alternative: If employees choose to continue the fight, another strike may occur in December for a better contract.

How does this affect us at Mercy? In at least two important ways: 1) As we've seen during bargaining in the Service and Technical Units here at Mercy, what happens to one group sets the standard higher for subsequent groups. For reasons of both sympathy and economics, it is in our best interest to see Union employees at Sutter-Roseville win their contract fight. 2) If the Union goes on strike at Sutter-Roseville, Sutter management will be trying to recruit strike-breakers from our hospital. Don't sell out your fellow Union members by breaking their strike!

---by Ellen Dillinger w/info supplied by S-R Union members

to all.

INTRODUCING NEW FIELD REP EDNA HOLLINS.....

Hi—My name is Edna Hollins and I'm the new Field Rep. for Mercy Folsom, Mercy San Juan, Woodland Clinic and Woodland Hospital.

The employees at Woodland Hospital on October 17th, 2002 voted in SEIU Local 250 as their collective bargaining representative. Employees held their first bargaining session on Wednesday, November 20, 2002. The next bargaining date is Tuesday, December 10, 2002 to be held in the Surgery Center Conference room. Other dates are tentatively scheduled as Thursday, December 19, 2002; and Friday, December 20th, 2002. All bargaining sessions will be held at 3:30 p.m. For the location of the other sessions, contact your SEIU representative. All employees are encouraged to come and support your bargaining committee.

Woodland Clinic steward meetings are held the 3rd Friday of every month from noon to 1 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Friday, December 20th, 2002.

I can be reached at (916) 321-2322 (direct line), or (916) 326-5850 office line.



New Field Rep Edna Hollins (standing) using the occasion of the last Tech bargaining session to announce a Union victory at Woodland Hospital on October 17th.

NOTE FROM EDNA: We encourage all employees to make an appointment with Human Resources and request to see their personnel files!!! This should be done at least once a year.

WE NEED MORE SHOP STEWARDS!

CHIEF SHOP STEWARDS

MGH: **Bill Watson**
Home: 455-9310
Work: 4534810
METH: **Chris Kurpies**
Work: 423-6176
Bruceville Terrace:
Christine Thomas
684-9265
MSJH: **Sherri Macias**
Home: 971-0654
Work: 537-5037

SEIU Local 250 Field Representatives:

Josie Summers: 275-6342
(MGH, METH, BVTERR)
Edna Hollins 321-2322
(MSJH, FOL, WOOD)

A Short Message from Sal Roselli, Local 250 President

To Members of Local 250:

The Supreme Court has ruled that an employee is entitled to have a Union representative present during any interview which may result in discipline. These are called your Weingarten Rights.

- 1) You must request that a Union rep (or shop steward) be called into the meeting.
- 2) You must have a reasonable belief that discipline will result from the meeting.
- 3) You have the right to know the subject of the meeting and the right to consult your Union rep prior to the meeting to get advice.
- 4) Do NOT refuse to attend a meeting if a steward is requested but denied. We suggest you attend the meeting and repeatedly insist upon your right to have a Union rep present. If this fails, we suggest that you not answer any questions and take notes.

EVERY GIFT HAS A PRICE ATTACHED.....

John Borsos, SEIU Local 250 VP speaking out on the Day of Action against Wal-Mart's anti-employee practices

During the Holiday Season, we are often treated to renditions of Dicken's "A Christmas Carol", in which a wealthy miser, Scrooge, is forced by the Ghost of Christmas to observe the harm caused by his harsh treatment of others. Scrooge is then given a look at what the future will be if he continues down his selfish path, and seeing the disaster of it, decides to mend his ways.

Is this going to be a lecture about our employer? No, it is, in fact, a brief discussion of the effects of shopping on our community. On November 21st, Unions and others participated in a Day of Action to inform fellow shoppers about employment conditions at Wal-Mart, the largest privately owned retailer in the U.S. Although Wal-Mart rakes in twice as much in profits as the next 15 retailers combined, the store workers average less

than \$11,000 a year, most with no health care benefits. And, since Wal-Mart doesn't like to pay over-time, workers who don't finish their tasks may be asked to clock out and finish their work off the clock. Then, of course there's the union-busting policy of the store, and the fact that they drive out small businesses wherever they go...

Knowing that the low prices come at the expense of the low wages of Wal-Mart employees, is it good for our community to buy at this store? Do we want Wal-Mart's policies to be a trend-setter for wages and working conditions in the Sacramento area?

The gifts you buy at Wal-Mart have a price attached, and it's not just the one on the tag: it's a price our whole community pays in quality of life.

---Ellen Dillinger, MGH

UNDERSTAFFING: PATIENT CARE COMMITTEE STAT (continued)

manager to provide quality, compassionate healthcare with an average staffing load of 17 patients. The healthcare workers on the front line are facing challenging tasks every day on their jobs. They are expected to take care of more patients with less help, despite the fact that patients' acuity levels are much higher than ever before. This level of understaffing is dangerous for everyone involved. What can healthcare workers do?

1) Document unsafe working conditions/practices using the "Objection to Assignment Form."

2) According to the collective bargaining agreement between CHW/SEIU Local 250, we have the right to form a Patient Care Committee (In the Bay area they went out on strike 3 times to get the Patient Care Committee part of their contract.). Use this committee to make sure that staffing levels are set to allow safe, quality patient care!

3) Work with your Political Action Committee to promote safe staffing ratio legislation, and fight for laws that hold management responsible for unsafe assignments given to caregivers.

--Josie Summers, Field Rep

Attention Local 250 Members:

Did you know that the Shirley Ware Education Center at Local 250 offers **FREE Healthcare Provider CPR Training?**

Get CPR Certified (or Re-certified) for **FREE!**

CERTIFICATION: This four hour training will provide a two year ACLS Provider Certification. Students will receive preparation materials before training and must bring completed assignment / test to conference for entrance into class. CPR cards will be distributed immediately following the training.

RECERTIFICATION: This two hour training will provide a two year renewal of ACLS Provider Certification. This training is only available for healthcare providers who are currently certified but are approaching or have recently (within 30 days) reached the expiration of their CPR certification. Students will receive preparation materials before training and must bring completed assignment / test to conference for entrance into class. CPR cards will be distributed immediately following the training.

Oakland Office Training

Thursday, December 12
Certification: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Recertification: 3 - 5 p.m.

To Register for CPR Training in the OAKLAND office, call

510-587-4598

Sacramento Office Training

Thursday, January 23
Certification: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Recertification: 3 - 5 p.m.

To Register for CPR Training in the SACRAMENTO office, call

1-800-585-4250 x4598

SIGN UP TODAY!

Space Limited - First come, first served.



Tales From the Contract—Part 2

REMEMBER

Shop Steward Meetings:

Methodist/Bruceville meets every 3rd Wednesday at 1530-1630 hours.

Location: Methodist Hospital

Mercy General meets every 2nd Wednesday at 1630 – 1730 hours.

Location: MGH Greenhouse

Mercy San Juan meets every 3rd Thursday, 1800-1900 hours

Location: MSJH Conference Room.

Woodland Clinic meets the third Friday of each month, noon- 1300.



TIME FOR A LIVING WAGE IN SACRAMENTO!

Almost two years ago, the Sacramento Living Wage Coalition (of which our union is an active member) made a proposal to the Sacramento City Council that any firm that contracts with the city must pay their employees a living wage, and must remain neutral should its employees choose to form a union. Now, for the first time, our proposal will be heard by the City Council on Thursday, January 9th at 7:00 p.m. at the Board of Supervisors' Chambers. The proposal calls for a minimum of \$10.00/hour with benefits, or \$12.84/hour without.

Despite Mercy Administration's resistance, we've been able to win increases for ourselves here at Mercy. Now it's time that we help workers across the city win better wages and working conditions by *putting an end to tax dollars being spent for union busting and poverty wages in the City of Sacramento.*

Join hundreds of other union members and community activists at 7:00 p.m. on January 9th, 2003, at 700 H Street and help show the city and local employers that Sacramento supports a Living Wage! ---The Political Action Committee

HAPPY HOLIDAYS