

THE UNION TALKS

SEIU LOCAL 250/MGH MANAGEMENT LEARN FROM TRAINING SESSION

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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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Ellen Dillinger, Editor

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An online copy of this newsletter as well as information and photographs of Sacramento union events can be seen at
<http://dillingertoons.net>

A joint training class for shop stewards and management at MGH was held on November 11th. It was a great day. I fully enjoyed the time spent with management on an even playing field!

Union shop stewards and MGH management were joined by MGH President Denny Powell, Renae Bugge (Labor Relations), Labor Specialist Phil Moss, Lynda Gregory (HR) and Cyndi Kirch (HR). Present from SEIU staff were VP John Borsos, Morgan Gay, Field Rep. Josie Summers, and SEIU Local 250 Executive Board member, Sherrie Macias.

The goal of the class was to promote better understanding between management and shop stewards as to what the rules are under both hospital policy and the union contract. If we are all better informed, we may be able to handle issues before they reach the grievance stage.

With the better relationship that I hope has emerged from Part I of this class, Union members should be able to handle issues in their own departments with the help of a



Local 250 staff and MGH management met in disguise for an exercise designed to demonstrate the different roles we play in a Union workplace.

shop steward.

Part of the training session focused on the misperceptions Union members and management have about each other. People need to realize that a few bad apples should not give the perception that all the apples are bad, even if they are in the same basket! During class exercises, we learned that we have quite a few similarities: we watch the same movies and share some of the same values.

Marti, the arbitrator was great! She kept everyone in line when needed and got people involved when they wanted to hang back. She got both sides to just let it out. No holding back! Everyone was

on an even playing field.

The arbitrator stated that managers should feel lucky to have a shop steward in their department to handle Union issues such as staffing and changes to improve patient care. Shop stewards should appreciate being able to help to enforce the contract that improves our workplace. I heard all around the room that morale is a major factor in job performance!

Departments that do not have a shop steward need to get one, both to lessen the load for other shop stewards and to improve Union contract compliance in their department. Since any change has to be bargained, it is ben-

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An injury

IMPROVING PATIENT CARE THROUGH EVENT REPORTS

The members of the patient care committee at MGH have been discussing several items concerning patient care during the last several months. At one of these meetings, the use of event report forms (formerly incident reports) and their outcome came up. In the course of this discussion, it was apparent that many employees questioned their efficacy.



The event report is intended to correct problems that arise when hospital policy is not followed. The events should be communi-

When trends are noted to occur regarding a particular category, the manager is called and a follow-up plan is requested by Risk Management.

The information on the form is considered confidential, but Ms. Sano stated that an employee can call QPIC to inquire if the report was received by them. The extension is X4089 for Mercy General. Employees in other hospitals should be able to contact their respective department.

It seems that there is some confusion over how event reports are handled, and if indeed they really do resolve problems that arise in our daily work. Some employees have also commented on not "wanting to get a coworker in trouble" or that they "don't have time to fill it out." The event report form, as it is now referred to, has undergone some changes to help make it easier to complete and compile data. After speaking with Sharon Sano from Risk Management, we now have a better understanding of the process that occurs after a report has been filed and of the importance that this form can have in improving the care we give to our patients at this hospital.

cated so that processes in place can be reevaluated and improved upon if need be. It can also be used as an opportunity to reinforce those policies and regulations for all staff. It can include categories such as falls, medication errors, procedures in surgery and other departments, security issues and equipment problems.

The event form is not to be copied. It is to be handed to the department supervisor or manager where the event occurred. It is then forwarded to the other department managers involved and then to Risk Management. It is not necessary to sign the form, although that can help if they need to speak with the employee for clarification.

We are more aware now of how important this form can be to improve the care of our patients and to make us more educated in how we do our jobs. There are videos available to departments to instruct employees on the new form and how it can make MGH the best place for patients to receive care. It can also make it a safe place for the employees who care for them and anyone who is a part of our hospital.

Lorenza Clausen, MRI tech
Mercy General Hospital

UNION DATES TO REMEMBER:

1-28-04: Shop Stewards workshop, Local 250 office, 1911 F St, Sac. CA, 5:30 PM to 8:00 PM.

Subject: This workshop will prepare stewards to plan and lead effective meetings. The workshop will cover practical suggestions for agenda planning, facilitation, and involving meeting participants. *It is open to stewards who have completed both Part 1 and Part 2 of the Core Shop Steward Training Program.*

1-31-04: Shop Stewards Council, Local 250 office, Oakland, 10 - 2 p.m. Subject: 2004 contract

2-14-04: Shop Stewards training, Part I 9 - 3 p.m. at Union office, 1911 F St, Sac. CA

2-21-04: Professional Council, SEIU Local 250 office, Oakland

3-20 -04: Shop stewards training, Part II. Location/time TBA.



ASK JOSIE:

1) What are Weingarten rights?

- A. The legal right to make wine in your basement.
- B. Employer rights to hire registry.
- C. The right of an employee to request union assistance.
- D. Federal law concerning national minimum wage levels.

Answer: C. The right of an employee to request union assistance during an investigatory interview and the right of a union representative to counsel the employee during the interview.

2) What is the expiration date for the collective bargaining agreement between SEIU Local 250 and CHW, Sacramento?

- A. May 30, 2005
- B. May 30, 2004
- C. June 30, 2004
- D. April 30, 2004

Answer: D. April 30, 2004

3) Is it true that Department Managers are receiving bonuses for staying under budget?

- A. YES
- B. NO

Answer: A. YES, YES, YES.

4) Must management bargain with the Union before implementing new work rules, schedules, job assignments, and staffing grids?

- A. YES
- B. NO

Answer: A) Under the NLRA (National Labor Relations Act) if an employer wishes to adopt a new policy that affects employees or to make a change in a past practice, it must notify the Union of the proposed change, and allow the Union adequate opportunity to bargain prior to implementation. Policies implemented without notice or bargaining are called unilateral changes.

5) Can the employer utilize CAL-STAF (subcontracting agency) to perform our bargaining unit work?

- A. YES
- B. NO

Answer: B) NO!!! There will be no subcontracting of bargaining unit work performed by employees. According to the contract between SEIU Local 250 and CHW if no agreement is reached between the Employer and the Union regarding the decision to subcontract and its effects within ninety (90) days after the Employer has provided the Union notice of its intent to subcontract, the Union may suspend the No-Strike/No-Lockout provision of the Agreement with regard to Subcontracting. SEIU members, it's up to you to enforce your contract or else Job Security may become a thing of the past.

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WE NEED MORE SHOP STEWARDS!

CHIEF SHOP STEWARDS

MGH: TBA
Home:
Work:
METH: Chris Kurpies
Work: 423-6176

Bruceville Terrace:
Daryl Bell
Work: 423-6025

MSJH: Sherri Macias
Home: 971-0654
Work: 537-5037

Woodland Clinic:
Annette Hendrix
Refer to Union
bulletin board for
stewards' phone
numbers.)

SEIU Local 250 Field Representatives:

Josie Summers: 275-6342
(MGH, METH, BVERR)
Mary Hennigan, 275-2659
(MSJH, FOL, WOOD)

STEWARD MEETINGS

Methodist/Bruceville meets
3rd Wed. 1530-1630 hours.
Location: Methodist Hospital

Mercy General meets 2nd
Wed. at 1630 - 1730 hours.
Location: MGH Green-house

Mercy San Juan meets 3rd
Thursday, 1800-1900 hours
Location: MSJH Conference
Room.

Woodland Clinic and Hospital
meets 1st thursday, 1730-
1830 hours.
Location: DCR 3 and 4

Mercy Folsom meets 2nd
Tues. 1330 - 1530 hours
Location: MHF Conference
Room

Fellow Union Members:

It appears that I have ridden off into the sunset. I resigned as Chief Shop Steward as of Dec 1 when I found myself unable because of personal circumstances to give 100% to fighting the Union's battles.

It really does take a 100% effort--Union members call every day to ask why something isn't being done about various problems. Usually they are right--something SHOULD be done, but it is more than one person (who already has a job) can do. Sometimes they are willing to help fix what needs fixing, but there are other occasions when they feel their Union dues entitle them to a solution and they are not willing to participate in making it happen. When people do actively participate in the solution, it demonstrates the best of what our Union can be.



Ellen Dillinger, editor, but NOT the the Chief Shop Steward.

I look upon this year as being one of the most enlightening in my life. I thank Morgan and Josie, for being wonderful mentors and for believing that "anybody can do anything." I have done much more than I would ever have imagined thanks to both of them. I also want to express my appreciation to all of the shop stewards and people who have volunteered for committees such as Patient Care. Volunteering

for these assignments is what makes our Union work.

As often happens, a person becomes full of advice just as they are leaving the job to someone else, and I am not going to be the exception. My advice is this: The Union is here to stay at MHS. At its most basic, the Union is the best way to achieve the wages and benefits that will attract good healthcare workers for quality patient care. To rise to the next level and make MHS hospitals the best place to work will take something more: a willingness to sit at the table with fellow Union members to work out differences and arrive at solutions for the common good. If we cannot do this, the Union will only be about money, and that is not good enough.

Good luck to all and I look forward to being a shop steward again!

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official for departments to have a shop steward who understands the jobs in the department and knows the contract.

Understanding the contract is central to improving the Union/Management relationship.

You and your department should have a copy of the contract if you attended the membership meeting. Contact your field rep if you

don't have one.

Being a shop steward should not frighten anybody. There are training classes to attend on how to handle issues, file grievances, investigate corrective action, etc.. If we all do our part (including management), we can make this work! The union is new for everyone and we are still in the learning stage.

Thanks to those of you who attended the class. We did our part. Let's stay positive and hope for the best! I am looking forward to Part II and hope we will be joined by some new shop stewards, as well as more managers/supervisors .

Gina Mastergeorge, CPhT
MGH Vice Chief Shop
Steward

to all.