BARGAINING ON MAY 23 and 24

This month, our association is preparing for bargaining with our employer. We have consulted with our members and continue to solicit your input. Jeri Lang and Katie Singleton, our Klamath County bargaining leaders, have developed proposals for our negotiation sessions on May 23 – 24. Please thank them for their effort to improve patient care and safe working conditions for all nurses.

Meet KLC’s New Labor Relations Representative

Gary Aguiar, BA, MS, Ph.D. is a former political science professor and researcher who joined the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) in 2015, after gaining extensive experience in contract negotiation, teaching and researching women’s community-level participation, engagement and political organizing.

Born and raised in Hawai’i, Aguiar walked his first strike line at the age of eight and canvassed for a state legislative candidate when he was 16.

He’s a small town boy, who thoroughly enjoys the intimacy found in rural communities and the cultural activities available in college towns.

Aguiar and his wife, Cecile, a food safety microbiologist, have a freshman-aged daughter, who is an avid volleyball player and camping-loving Girl Scout. The family has chosen the Eugene/Springfield community, near Sheldon High School to live.
Vital Labor Signs

Our regular review of labor activities in our area

Local 49’s first SH contract includes 8 percent across the board wage increases

On April 26, 98 percent of SEIU Local 49 members ratified a historic first contract with Sacred Heart Medical Center in Springfield. The Register-Guard reported an 8 percent across the board pay increase and a standardization of wage scales for CNAs. Earlier, Local 49 voted to reject SH management’s last offer and also authorized the bargaining team, at their discretion, to give a 10-day notice for an informational picket.

ONA and Sacred Heart Begin Negotiations

ONA and PeaceHealth Sacred Heart (SH) met in three bargaining sessions in April to renew their contract that expires June 30, 2016. As PH’s flagship hospital, Sacred Heart’s contract often serves as a benchmark for many area hospitals.

Other Labor Unions at Sacred Heart

The hospitalists at Sacred Heart, represented by Pacific Northwest Hospital Medicine Association, an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, next meet with their employer May 14.

On April 22, Operating Engineers Local 501, representing 60 facilities and biomed technicians, met with SH. Their next session is scheduled for May 11.

SEIU-MCW Update

At McKenzie Willamette Medical Center in Springfield, SEIU represents 346 CNAs, technicians and other employees whose contract expires July 31, 2016. SEIU Local 49 elected a bargaining team in March and they were trained for bargaining April 6. Their first bargaining session was held May 9.

ONA Locals Bargaining in Our Area

Congratulations to ONA nurses at Tuality Community Hospital (TCH) in Hillsboro, who turned out in record numbers to vote to ratify a new two-year contract April 21! The new contract includes significant wage and step increases, additional education funds and new language around floating and census procedures. Their new agreement offers the most significant wage increases ONA has ever seen. Early career nurses will see an 11 percent increase in their wages; midcareer RNs will earn 5 – 6 percent more than in the previous contract.

On April 28, nurses at Providence Newberg Medical Center (PNMC) voted to approve a first contract that increases nurses’ input in patient care decisions, and improves workplace protections and compensation. Local nurses voted to affiliate with ONA in May 2015 and have been working for nearly a year to finalize their first contract. Congratulations to the nurse team at PNMC!

At Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center in Corvallis, the
Vital Labor Signs (Continued from page 2)

11-member bargaining team most recently met with the employer’s team April 29. Topics being negotiated include elimination of the two-tier benefit system, strengthened language around seniority, and the employer’s proposal to reduce total PTO hours earned.

At Cascade Health Solutions, a nonprofit home health and hospice service in Eugene, the ONA bargaining team presented proposals to the employer April 18. Our team proposed adding a third part-time on-call position to join the existing two on-call benefited position. The employer will present modest changes April 29. Both sides met again May 9 to hear from the on-call nurses directly.

ONA negotiating teams are also currently bargaining with Mercy Medical Center in Roseburg, Marion County Public Health Department in Salem, and Klamath County Public Health Department in Klamath Falls.

IP 69: Supreme Court Releases Final Title

The fight against Oregon workers has reached a new level of urgency.

Because we won victories like an increase in Oregon’s minimum wage and universal paid sick days, wealthy special interests are striking back against Oregon workers with ballot measures designed to limit workers’ ability to advocate for improved workplace policies.

One initiative, Initiative Petition (IP) 69, is one step closer to being approved to circulate petitions statewide, moving forward on the path to Oregon’s November ballot. Like other anti-worker initiatives filed in Oregon, IP 69 will make it harder for workers to come together and advocate for fair wages and safer working conditions.

It is the 5th attempt from the forces behind IP 69 to get an anti-worker initiative on the Oregon ballot. Dissatisfied with ballot titles received in the past, this group will apparently stop at nothing until they get a title they believe will garner enough support from voters.

This latest, extreme attempt mandates union vs non-union discrimination as a means of avoiding free-rider-centric ballot language.

IP 69 actually forces employers to discriminate between union and non-union employees when it comes to determining employee pay and benefits.

This would ultimately create two classes of workers, and would lead to a race to the bottom for working people, giving us all lower pay, fewer benefits and less workplace safety.

The specifics of the initiatives may vary, but our plan remains the same: We will continue to stand with our coalition partners and fight this, and any other attack on Oregon workers, tooth and nail.
From the ONA Bookshelf


Union stewards (or unit representatives) are the key cog in labor unions. Their yeoman effort is the foundation on which the edifice of our organization stands. For without basic job security protections, a labor union cannot bargain contracts and lobby for legislation.

This slim volume offers a hands-on guide for novice unionists with bite-size chapters. Schwartz, the dean of labor law, provides unit reps with an essential tool that should be read by all union members. It delivers easy-to-understand explanations of important topics, including:

- the special status of union stewards
- the grievance process
- right to information
- Weingarten rights
- the duty of fair representation

If you are looking for a one-stop shop for answers to your labor law questions, this is the book to consult first! Each chapter ends with a question-and-answer section that breathes life into the legal concepts with real-world examples.

Accompanying the clear language and often-humorous discussion are delightful cartoons that exemplify key principles.

Given the challenges we face, ordinary workers can build power by standing up for their fellow workers in regular conversations with managers on workplace issues. Unit representatives perform noble and altruistic tasks by advocating for workers’ rights. This book provides the basic tools to help them in particular—often complex—cases.

We provide a free copy of this book to RNs who complete unit representative training. Contact your labor representative for more information.

Pete Moore Hospice House

The 14-bed Pete Moore Hospice House, under construction in Eugene, is scheduled to open this fall. At full capacity, the inpatient clinic will add 14 additional members to ONA’s bargaining unit, increasing our size by more than 50 percent.