We’re excited to announce that we are about to begin negotiations in the next month with Legacy Silverton, our new employer. But we need your input first! We need every active Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) member to fill out the bargaining survey to give us your unique insight into your workplace. The survey takes time to fill out, but it’s worth it to have a voice in your workplace!

Click here to go directly to the survey.
You may also go to OregonRN.org and under Find Your Bargaining Unit choose Silverton. The link to the survey will be at the top of the page. For those that don’t fill it out we’ll be sending out reminders and making phone calls to make sure we reach as many people as possible.

Your new bargaining team has been nominated—and with no contested positions—the following people will be representing ONA members at the bargaining table: Jeanna Thurston, Aaren Brown, Jenny Huff, Paul Prough, Jaime Conkey, Virginia Smith and Connie Anderson.

We are still in need of representatives from ICU and day and night shift in the Family Birth Center. If you’re interested in what that would entail, please contact Amber Cooper with questions (cooper@oregonrn.org).

The next big tasks of your bargaining team are to take part in an all-day training on collective bargaining, to review survey results and to help develop proposals to take to the bargaining table. They also are tasked with staying in touch with all of you in each of their departments to make sure our entire hospital is included in this collective process. So be sure to take some time to chat with them about what is important to you in our next contract!

### Bargaining Q and A

**If Legacy is our new employer, do we still have a union?**

The answer is YES! If Legacy wanted to disrupt our union they would need to lay off more than 50 percent of the RNs at the hospital and start over with a majority new workforce. But one of the most important reasons Legacy purchased Silverton is because they value our nurses and are willing to negotiate a fair collective bargaining agreement with us because they value our voice in our workplace and the high quality work that we do. Even though Legacy does not (continued on page 2)
Bargaining Q and A (continued from page 1)

have unionized nurses at their other hospitals, we will not be the first union they’ve negotiated with, as they have other types of workers at their hospitals recognized in other unions like Service Employees International Union (SEIU). Legacy recognizes unionized workers and is willing to negotiate with them, including ONA. They value our nurses and are willing to reach a fair agreement with us.

Will we just get benefits and working conditions passed on to us set by whatever they have for nurses at other Legacy hospitals?

These things are up for negotiation! Legacy has said both that they don’t want to swoop in and destroy all the good things we have at Silverton, and they’ve also said they have some pretty great resources to share. That means that wages, health insurance, retirement, differentials and all our other working conditions are up for negotiation just like they are with every new collective bargaining agreement we’ve reached, except this time we negotiate those things with a new employer. That can mean there are new resources available and also others that remain constrained. The positive part of this merger is that we have a union in place to have a voice and a say in negotiating what the new agreement will be.

Will my work change with the merger?

Just like with any other year that you’ve worked at Silverton, your employer maintains the right to reorganize departments and services. BUT that doesn’t mean you have no say in such things. Any major change to your working conditions is a subject of bargaining. For example: If a department is restructured due to transfers of patients or staff between Silverton and another Legacy hospital, and that restructuring means your hours, workload, breaks, etc. are changed, you have a right to have a voice through your union to negotiate over those changes. If you hear of any unilateral changes happening that effect your working conditions and that have not been negotiated, you should let your union leadership know ASAP! It doesn’t mean that those changes won’t happen, it just means that you and your fellow ONA members get to have a voice in negotiating how those changes affect you. Also, at the moment ONA has not heard of any major restructuring planned by Legacy. In fact, we’ve heard the opposite; they love our hospital and how we do things here and aren’t looking to do any massive restructuring of our hospital.

Importance of Nurse Participation in Bargaining

Bargaining a contract is not simply a matter of our team meeting with management and hammering out a deal. The team drafts proposals based on nurses feedback and current policy/practice. Then management responds by either accepting, rejecting or making a counter proposal. And this process takes time but is incredibly important.

Moreover, this process cannot happen in isolation. Solid lines of communication are vital. For example, many nurses complete a bargaining survey to communicate our priorities to the bargaining team. Team members talk to nurses in their units about what they were seeing and proposing.

As we move forward with bargaining, this two way communication will continue. For example, if management proposes something that affects a particular department, our team will reach out to those nurses to have them weigh in on our response at the table. This will include requesting that nurses come to the table to share their perspectives. This accomplishes two main objectives: 1) demonstrating solidarity and 2) nurses taking ownership over decisions that affect their work.

If nurses sit and wait to see what our team comes up with, it won’t be much. In order to motivate management to accept proposals that are beneficial to our practice, nurses must demonstrate support for the team and visibly participate in bargaining. This means wearing a sticker of support on bargaining days and filling out a membership application. At the end of the day, this is our contract. It will be as strong as we make it.
Now is the Time to Become an Active Member!

With bargaining beginning, this is the perfect time to become an active member of ONA. Becoming an active member means that you want to take part in collective negotiating over the terms and conditions of your workplace. If you are not an active member, you still pay a fairshare representation fee, receive a fairshare of benefits negotiated and receive protections under our collective bargaining agreement, but you specifically do not want to take part in collectively negotiating over your wages and working conditions.

As bargaining starts, it is the perfect time to chose to have a vote and a say in these negotiations by becoming active. It also means you’ll be in the loop and included on our listserv and get updates throughout bargaining—including opportunities to be involved and help contribute toward improving your workplace. Now is the time to join! Questions about joining? Contact Jenny Huff our membership chair or email Amber Cooper at cooper@oregonrn.org.

Inspiration from Virginia Smith

Below is a letter from your outgoing unit chairperson and longest active ONA member at Silverton Hospital, Virginia Smith. What a contribution she has made to our hospital, her patients, and ONA over these past 42 years! And she’s not done yet, as she is still the chair of our PNCC and a steward on our 2016 bargaining team. We are so honored to have her with us and asked her to write a bit about her experiences here and why she’s been involved with ONA as she passes the torch on to Jeannie Thurston our new unit chairperson. Please enjoy this wonderful letter.

Dear ONA members,

Hi, my name is Virginia Smith. I work at Silverton Hospital. I’ve worked here for 42 years. I have belonged to ONA since I was hired. Silverton Hospital nurses have belonged to ONA since 1940-1950s. I had minutes written by the nurses during their meetings at Silverton Hospital, but unluckily they were destroyed by flooding in one of the nurse's basement. So, they are gone!

ONA consists of two parts the professional organization and the bargaining units. Not everyone belongs to the bargaining units. Many nurses that are teachers belong to the professional part of the organization. They do this because they are professionals and want to belong to their professional organization and in order to belong to ANA they need to belong to ONA. All other professionals belong to organizations, such as the Bar association, the medical association and the dental association, just to name a few. We are also professionals and I am proud to belong to my professional organization, ONA. I believe in taking part in this organization. I personally want to know where my dues go. So, this is important to me. ONA does a lot of things for nurses. Nurses run this organization. It is not run by an unknown boss. We make the decisions about how the monies are spent. When you are involved, you find out these things. Our hospital is part of ONA’s CA #3, which means you either work or live in this district, which includes Marion, Polk and Linn County. The Health departments in these counties also belong. Our CA is a place where I can connect with nurses outside our hospital and help improve the profession of nursing across the state and country.

ONA pays for a lobbyist; also ANA has a lobbyist which represents us in Oregon and in the national level. We have sponsored the safe staffing laws that are very important to hospital nurses. When I first started nursing I sometimes had between 8-15 patients to care for and this was far from safe. This law not only helps nurses but keeps patients safe, but also nurses cannot give good care when spread this thin. Over the years my patient load had decreased to 4 patients at Silverton Hospital. I feel a lot less stressed when I go to work. I no longer wake up in a sweat at night, worrying about my patients and the care I give. I like working at Silverton Hospital and feel very loyal to the Silverton Hospital organization. Just because I am loyal to ONA doesn't mean that I'm not loyal to Silverton Hospital, but the opposite. Being active in ONA means that I help make Silverton one of the best hospitals in the state. I know that you are all professionals and I hope that you will continue to support ONA.

—V. Smith
As part of ONA’s ongoing efforts to best serve our members and every nurse in Oregon, we are excited to present OCEAN (Oregon Continuing Education Activities for Nurses) online continuing education. It is available at: www.OregonRN.org

This new learning environment provides continuing education (CE) opportunities to ONA members and nurses across the region, in a convenient and user-friendly format. The OCEAN system features:

- Self-paced, independent learning modules, covering a broad range of topics and encompassing all levels of nursing practice
- CE that is conveniently accessible 24 hours a day
- The ability to house each learner’s CE history for easy access and retrieval

You can find out more about using OCEAN online CE by visiting the ONA website, www.OregonRN.org.

We encourage you to enjoy the courses currently available and be sure to check back regularly as more courses are added.

Update Your Contact Information

Throughout the year it is critical the bargaining unit team and ONA labor relations representatives are able to communicate openly and efficiently with nurses. It is even more critical during contract negotiations. The ONA website, mail at home and emails at home continue to be the best methods of getting negotiation updates to all members as quickly as possible.

Unfortunately, many members aren’t getting the most up-to-date information because ONA doesn’t have a current mailing address or home email address on file for them or the email address on file is a work email.

ONA is often restricted when sending out mass emails to employer-based email addresses and if we don’t have a current mailing address or home email address that results in many members not receiving the critical information they need as quickly as they should. To remedy this situation, ONA is encouraging all members to go to www.OregonRN.org and click on — Update Your Contact Information, to update their information on file to include a personal (non-work) email address to ensure the messages get through in a timely manner.

Together we can make sure everyone is involved and stays informed!

SAVE THE DATE!

ONA 2016 ANNUAL BARGAINING UNIT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Portland Hilton, 921 SW 6th Ave., Portland, OR 97204