Our current collective bargaining agreement (Agreement) expires on September 30, 2013. Bargaining for a successor Agreement will begin in the spring of next year. Before we begin to develop proposals for our new Agreement, we want to know what you think we should be proposing. Do you want us to know what issues are most important to you? Do you have ideas about how our Agreement could be improved? Please take our online bargaining survey. To take the survey, go to www.oregonrn.org. Select OHSU / AURN under Find Your Bargaining Unit. Then, click on the survey link. Or simply click here.

One Voice. The validity of our survey – and the proposals we will eventually make - depend upon the participation of our nurses. We need a high participation rate so that we can speak with assurance about what nurses at OHSU want in their Agreement. So please don’t hesitate. Take the survey today!

On October 3, 2012, we received a copy of OHSU’s new Flu Vaccination and Masking Policy. The policy requires that all OHSU healthcare personnel, including nurses, attest as to their vaccination status and wear an identifying sticker on their badge when they get vaccinated. Those who decline vaccination must wear a mask within six feet of a patient during flu season or be subject to possible disciplinary action.

While Oregon Nurses Association strongly supports flu vaccination and is in the forefront of efforts to encourage nurses to be vaccinated, we do have a number of concerns about the policy. First of all, the vaccination status of nurses and health care workers should be protected health information, as it is for our patients. Any requirement for health care workers to publicly identify their vaccination status violates the confidential nature of health information. Second, the policy puts nurses at risk of discipline for removing a mask, even if they are unaware of a patient’s presence in the hallways or at the nurses’ stations. In addition, the
Now Recruiting Bargaining Team Members

AURN nurses’ current Agreement with OHSU expires on September 30, 2013. It’s time to start thinking about bargaining a new Agreement! We’re hoping to get to the bargaining table in February or March of next year. That will mean selecting a bargaining team this fall and starting preparatory meetings in November or December.

AURN’s bargaining team is selected from willing participants by the AURN executive board, with a commitment to having the broadest possible representation. By broad, we mean that all nurses, whether experienced or new, resource or FTE, critical care or ambulatory, single and/or parent, have someone on the team that understands and can represent their interests. Once we know who is willing, we will be able to make those selections.

Are you interested in being on the bargaining team? Please let us know now if you have an interest. Bargaining is interesting, rewarding, and at times exciting, but also requires some time commitment and flexibility. Generally, the team meets for eight hours every other week until bargaining begins and then weekly for bargaining and/or preparation. When negotiations come close to completion, some longer and more frequent meetings occur. Bargaining team members are expected to be prepared and to participate in bargaining related membership meetings, rallies and/or work actions.

If you are interested in joining the bargaining team please notify us by sending us a completed Consent to Serve form by Friday, November 6.

A Message from the Executive Team

You may have heard a low hum around the OHSU hospital and clinics lately. It’s the sound of nurses here and there in the hallways, lounges and nurses’ stations talking seriously about issues that need to be addressed in the upcoming contract negotiations with OHSU. The current Agreement expires September 30, 2013. This year the simmering frustration with insufficient staffing, micromanagement, unreasonable workloads, and a sometimes hostile work environment was like dry grass waiting for a summer bolt. In July, OHSU provided the needed spark by un-closeting its desire to reduce pension contributions for all employees in the Public Employee Retirement System (PERS). That got the hum started. More recently a new influenza and masking policy raised concerns about nurses having to reveal personal health information. Then the ONA bargaining survey became available online last week, and nurses began thinking seriously about what matters most to them at work, and what they are willing to do to be taken seriously.

What is this? ONA’s QR code. A QR code (abbreviated from Quick Response code) is a type of matrix barcode (or two-dimensional code) that you use with your smartphone.

How to Use: With a QR code reader app on your smart phone, take a picture or scan the QR code to open the ONA website in your phone’s web browser. Many smartphones come with the app pre-installed, but others will have to download a QR code reader app.
**RECENT CHANGES CLOUD AURN-OHSU RELATIONSHIP**

In recent years, OHSU administration and ONA/AURN leadership have enjoyed a very collaborative partnership but that dynamic has shifted in recent months. There has been a change in human resources leadership and it seems as if there is no longer a mutual understanding of the interpretation of our Agreement. OHSU has recently taken several actions demonstrating a determination to disregard input from ONA/AURN staff and to weaken the ONA/AURN by interfering with our activities and our ability to communicate with you about training, events and other professional affairs. This article describes several recent situations which have made us question whether OHSU values a partnership with ONA/AURN as they have in the past. Read and decide for yourself.

Article 2.7 of the Agreement allows the ONA/AURN to utilize OHSU's email system to submit messages intended for general distribution to the bargaining unit. This contractual guarantee greatly reduces the cost of communicating with all of our members about ONA/AURN activities. There are guidelines related to what type of messages we can send through their email system which includes messages related to ONA’s social functions, meetings, educational opportunities, elections, appointment, notice of professional affairs and bargaining updates. Yet, during the last several months our email distributions have been censored by OHSU regardless of the fact that the messages that were denied or altered were clearly within these guidelines. Examples include a call for nominees for ONA’s statewide committees, an invitation to a social event for the Young Emerging Labor Leaders a constituency of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) of which ONA is a member, and alteration of notice of an upcoming unit representative training. By interfering with our communications, OHSU is hindering our efforts to function as an association. A grievance is being considered over this issue.

Oregon’s Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act (PECBA) clearly prohibits employer interference with our members’ right to engage in collective action and conduct union business as we see fit. However, in recent months OHSU has openly refused to acknowledge the right of nurses to assist each other in addressing employment issues and even blocked a communication we sent to you regarding training for that purpose. In the past, we have had unit representatives available throughout the hospital to assist in the dissemination of information and representation of their colleagues on a voluntary basis. The Agreement also provides for paid time for a group of 10 nurse representatives who are able to assist their peers with representation including the handling of grievances. OHSU human resources has refused to recognize the role of (continued on page 5)

**NURSE ASSISTANCE NETWORK SEeks VOLUNTEERS**

The Nurse Assistance Network (NAN) is a program of the Oregon Nurses Foundation to organize local "peer advocates" to assist nurse colleagues who are dealing with substance use or mental disorders. NAN coordinates with other health professions to share recovery support resources. NAN's mission is to reach nurse colleagues before substance use or mental problems cause impairment or before impairment becomes a danger to patients, colleagues, and the community.

NAN leaders include nurses in recovery as well as nurses who have expertise with substance use and mental (continued on page 6)
NEW UNIT REPRESENTATIVE TRAINING GRADUATES

ONA/AURN has six new unit representative training graduates (pictured below). Unit representatives are your resource for information about practices on the unit and your rights under the Agreement.

Unit representatives help other nurses navigate employment issues at OHSU and assist nurses with the grievance procedure or disciplinary matters. The Unit Representatives Council meets three to four times per year and provides unit representatives with an opportunity to connect with nurses in other practice areas at OHSU and coordinate ONA/AURN activities.

Check your break room’s ONA/AURN bulletin board for a complete list of unit representatives.

Message from Executive Team (continued from page 2)

Our thanks to the many nurses who have offered to represent nurses on the AURN bargaining team this year. That’s a long hard go with your nose in the books, but it’s important work. There is still time to offer your services if you don’t mind giving your opinion, are a stickler for details, and have the staying power to do what it takes to get through the collective bargaining process.

Sometimes, nurses have to work hard to get a fair contract, as we know from our history here at OHSU. I hope you are all prepared to pitch in and work together toward our common goals. The bargaining survey is a key part of that, so we can establish what those goals are, but we’ll also need your help convincing OHSU that we are united and determined in our quest.

So keep talking. Remember, you have a right to discuss issues of importance to you and your families on the job, so long as it does not interrupt the normal flow of work.

As professionals, we owe it to our patients and ourselves to work together as nurses toward an agreement with OHSU that helps nurses to be the best they can be.
Recent Changes Cloud AURN-OHSU Relationship (continued from page 3)

unit representatives because it is not described in the Agreement despite the fact that it is protected by law.

More recently, OHSU asked us to collaborate on a campaign to raise the rate of influenza vaccination among nurses. We wholeheartedly agreed. We informed OHSU that ONA favors vaccination, and even has its own independent vaccination campaign to promote it, but we also strongly defend nurses’ right to decline vaccination and maintain the confidentiality of their decision.

Therefore, we agreed we would encourage vaccination, but would oppose any requirements for masking or identifying nurses who decline.

OHSU ignored us and implemented a policy requiring an identifying check mark on your badge as well as masking for nurses who are not vaccinated. See article on page 1 for more information on what we are doing to address the flu vaccination policy.

As we head to the bargaining table next year, we have serious concerns about how this deterioration in relations between the ONA/AURN and OHSU will affect our ability to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement.

We need every member to diligently report any efforts you witness to control or influence how the union conducts its business affairs.

Please contact the ONA/AURN if you or a colleague experiences interference while disseminating union information, representing a co-worker in a meeting with management, or any other collective action.

These are activities that we all have a right to engage in as active union members!

CONVERT YOUR SICK LEAVE TO VACATION

Our negotiated agreement with OHSU allows benefit eligible nurses the opportunity to convert sick leave hours accrued during the prior calendar year to accrued vacation hours.

Employees with no unscheduled absences during the previous calendar year have the option to convert up to 24 sick leave hours to vacation/holiday leave hours. Employees with only one unscheduled absence have the option to convert up to 16 hours and those with only two will have the option to convert up to eight hours.

Eligible employees must have been employed during the entire prior calendar year at .5 FTE or above. Conversion must be exercised no later than January 31.
ONA Issues a Demand to Bargain  (continued from page 1)

policy overlooks the most efficacious method of transmission prevention, namely, allowing nurses to stay home when they have flu-like symptoms without fear of attendance related discipline.

We are also very concerned that OHSU violated its own rules in putting the new policy in effect. OHSU’s Policy Development and Approval Procedure, Policy No. 01-01-001, requires that all requests for policy adoption shall be submitted to the Policy Advisory Committee when such policy potentially affects more than one unit. The Policy Advisory Committee, which includes representatives from both ONA and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), was not offered an opportunity to review the new policy.

In addition, OHSU may have violated the Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act by implementing the policy without bargaining with ONA/AURN over the impact of the policy on our nurses. Last week our Association sent OHSU a request to bargain over the policy. We will consider legal action, if necessary, to ensure that our nurses’ concerns are addressed.

If you feel that your privacy rights will be violated by the new policy, please contact Sam Gieryn at gieryn@oregonrn.org. ONA also needs your help working with Oregon’s policy makers to create a statewide influenza vaccination policy that protects you, your patients and your privacy. You can view ONA’s Position Statement on Seasonal Influenza Vaccination for Health Care Workers and find out how you can take action at ONA’s Flu Vaccine Action Center.

Nurse Assistance Network  (continued from page 3)

disorders. NAN has a distinguished history in Oregon. In 1991 NAN members assisted Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN) in the development of the very successful Nurse Monitoring Program, which has helped many nurses recover from substance abuse or mental illness while remaining in the practice of nursing. NAN recently worked with other health professions in Oregon to establish the Professional Recovery Network of Oregon (PRN). Initially, nurses and pharmacists initiated a collaboration to expand access by combining the recovery support assets of multiple health professions.

For example, the nurses developed a user-friendly website while the pharmacists opened their local recovery support groups. PRN now includes not only nurses and pharmacists, but also dentists and attorneys. It is an all-volunteer 501 c 3 organization. See: http://www.prnoforegon.org/.

NAN is looking nurses with personal recovery experience and those with expertise to become volunteers. You can volunteer yourself. Or, you can talk with your colleagues who you think may have interest. To be clear, nurses with stable recovery experience can be VERY helpful to a nurse in crisis or who hits a rough patch in their recovery. This recruitment effort also includes all those who demonstrate a willingness to help out. We can make a difference. Please contact Chris O'Neill, at 541-556-3679 or email oneill@oregonrn.org.

By the way, the "crisis line" phone number is 971-563-3893.