

Danbury Nurses' Union Local 5047

UPDATE 47

AFT Nurses' and Healthcare Professionals, AFTCT AFL-CIO

JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER

Volume 19, Number 3

To the Nurses of Unit 47:

I am concerned about so many things lately and I want you all to know that we must stand together and demand better nurse patient staff ratios. I have been reviewing all of the unsafe staffing forms with Senior leadership at the Hospital and I feel the hospital just does not care. They are working us to the point of exhaustion and the patient is suffering. Please email your manager every day you have more than the appropriate patient ratio with regards to acuity and need for educational needs of your patients. We need to include the manager now because I want the ability to hold the Hospital accountable for this poor staffing plan. Nurses are becoming bitter and are unhappy with the current situation.

I also want all nurses to be aware of our contract. This is your responsibility as a professional to know your rights. I have received so many calls about the PTO and short-term disability. I want each of you to please go to page 17 in your contract and review section 3: use of PTO Days and read section "C". This is so important. We all need to be aware of what is in our contract.

I am doing the best I can to keep up with the changes the Hospital is trying to impose on us and our contract will protect us from the many things others cannot get this protection from. There is going to be so many more changes with the Nu Vance system and I want us to remain solid in our profession as nurses.

I value our role and we continue to do the best we can in terrible circumstances. I feel the Senior Leaders of the Hospital are not maintaining the patients at the forefront and profits as well as budgets have surpassed real, live patients.

The Grievance Team currently cannot keep up with all the disciplines that are occurring. What are you all willing to do to keep our union strong???? We all need to realize that each of us pays union dues and each of us is trying to balance work and family life while caring for the vulnerable patients in the Hospital.

Please come to the union office on June 18th anytime between 8 am and 4pm to learn from the AFT organizer. Let's keep doing our best.

Thank you,
Janice Stauffer RN, BSN

Dearest colleagues,

I had the privilege to attend The Professional Issues Conference April 25-27 2019, held in Washington DC. As we are all aware, healthcare is challenging with corporations and consolidation. Healthcare consolidations and corporatization can mean vital services may be closed, patient care and job security threatened, and access reduced while costs go up. Decisions about our care move into private board rooms further and further from the communities we serve. At the same time, AFT members and community allies are fighting for new ways to protect and improve care: from setting conditions on mergers and consolidations to advocating for state and national solutions to our fractured healthcare system (AFT 2019).

Many topics were covered: Violence prevention, facing challenges, 2020 and the Fight to Invest in Public Services, Healthcare Corporatization and the impact on Care, Our Work and Our Bargaining Power, Moral injury or Nurse Burnout, Solving the Staffing Crisis in Healthcare, "Power to Heal: Medicare and the Civil Rights Revolution" (documentary of the historical struggles to secure and equalize access to health care for all Americans). Building a Health care System for all: State and National Strategies for Health Access and Equity.

Most enjoyable was the visit to Capitol Hill. I was able to share our concerns about workplace violence with Senate Legislative Correspondent Kara Pitts (D-NY). She was very attentive and states H.R 1309, Sponsored by Rep. Joe Courtney (D-CT) is favored by Senator Charles Schumer. I attended workshops, very enlightening and obtained 12 CEU. Bargaining Strategies for Challenging Corporatization led by John Brady, Vice President, AFT Connecticut and Following the Money: Untangling Hospital Finances where invigorating.

Please come together, attend meetings/ gatherings, and stay engaged! **2020 negotiations** will be here before you know it...

Respectfully,
Michelle Ruvolo RN,BSN

Health Care Conference

I recently had the privilege to travel down to Washington, D.C. with two other co-workers as AFT provided a three-day conference on the challenges of health care and consolidation. There were excellent speakers and C.E.U.'s provided. One goal of the AFT conference was to connect us with our delegates in Congress so we could meet with them to tell them how important the safety bill is and why we support it. Even though Congress wasn't in session, we still met with our delegate's teams to discuss why we as nurses support the "safety bill". We will continue to monitor this bill which will hopefully get passed.

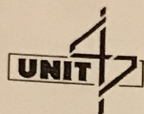
During the conference there were many seminars that we could attend. One which I found to be very interesting was on "Disaster, diseases and despair and the impact of climate -change". There were so many interesting points and discussions. For example, due to global warming, for the first time ever, Alaskans are dealing with ticks and fleas as within the last two years they are surviving the cold winters. All the problems that the ticks bring with them the people of Alaska are now dealing with. Another interesting example is the kissing bug which has traveled from South America and is now living in the States. Once they bite you, they are leaving their larva in the bite. So, the public is dealing with new diseases and illnesses. Bugs and insects are able to easily travel with the public and now are surviving in other areas that they normally wouldn't survive. The new affected populations are not aware and ready for the illnesses and diseases that these new bugs bring.

The second half of the discussion was how we can make a difference with decreasing our footprint. There were so many great ideas and discussions on what we could do and what other hospitals were doing. In Alaska, one of the nurses spoke of how her hospital teamed up with Enterprise to help decrease emission's. A carpool spot was selected a half hour out from work. To help give incentive to staff for carpooling, the hospital gave back money to those that participated. Could we have three areas half hour out from the hospital and provide a carpool? We would save on gas, be able to rest before driving the rest of the way, and more parking spots would be available. Other examples of making a difference include using locally grown food service, doing a better job recycling, and harnessing natural energy.

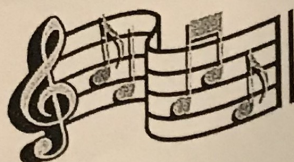
One other point that was discussed is "burnout". We shouldn't be using the term burnout, but moral injury. When we are placed in constant strain as health care workers it will lead to moral injury. The strains can be from trying to keep up with computer work, poor staffing, lack of breaks and meals, quick turnover of patients, injuries, dealing with difficult patients/families, etc. We have just so much of a reservoir before we reach our breaking point which leads us to moral injury. We need to fix the system. If you have a chance, please watch the quick clip by ZDoggMD on YouTube called "Stop Saying Burnout".

I am very thankful and really appreciated the opportunity to attend the conference AFT put on and would greatly encourage others to attend next year.

Irene Jagde



DANBURY NURSES UNION



CONCERT ON THE GREEN

family fun and picnic

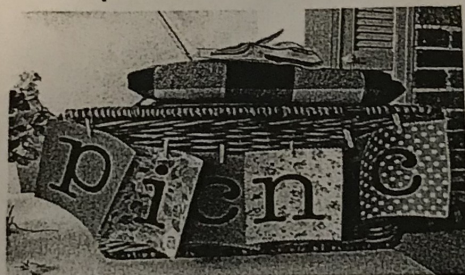
JUNE 23

6pm to 8pm

Redding Town Green

37 Lonetown Road, Redding, CT

5:30-7pm come and do blood pressure screenings for
your clinical ladders



Bring chairs, blankets and be comfortable

Arrive at 4pm, BYOB alcohol can be consumed

Girl scouts will be selling burgers, hot dogs and snacks for
those who do not want to bring their own food

With heavy heart---I write this:

Dear Union Colleagues,

In 1979 I came back to hospital nursing at Danbury. I had worked here one summer as a new grad and worked for one year at Yale and several years at ECF's between having two children.

From 1979 to 1995 I worked here on several units—all as staff: 1 year on 9 Tower; 1 year on 6 Center, then Rehab; 1 year on 10 West as surgery, 3 years in Nursing Ed as an IV instructor and 10 years in between on the IV team, where I obtained the skills I utilize today.

A lot of people are not aware of how I became a multispecialist. While I worked in Nursing ED, Unit 47, decided to grieve our positions, reason? We were basically doing the same tasks as we did in IV therapy and IV therapists were bargaining unit positions. I do believe history was made the December of 1994 and January of 1995. Unit 47 won that grievance and I agreed to it. I was to be cross trained as a multispecialist and placed back in a bargaining unit position.

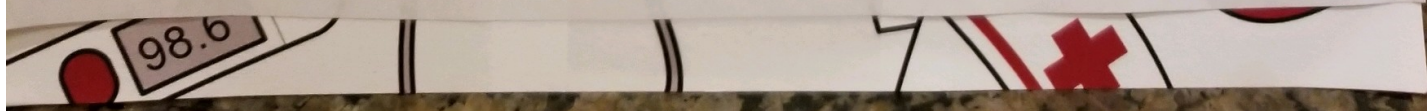
I was cross trained by another multispecialist and 5 years into the new role I did take a critical care course in 2000. The instructor for that course was Laurie Brentlinger. I never had an opportunity to be precepted in ICU clinically because the multi role was just too busy.

Here we are today, 5/6/19, Nurses Week 2019, I have worked a total of 40 years at Danbury: 24 of those years as a multispecialist/troubleshooter/ firefighter/rapid resource team member/ vascular access RN.

You know I would not change this role or the people I have worked with over the past 24 years for anything! In six weeks I will be retiring and I want you all to know something—I love all the nurses at Danbury Hospital and will always cherish and remember all the times we have had especially the nine nurses I have worked with in my department.

Remember to always stand together as union members and be strong and you will all succeed.

Linda L. Najam RN





COME JOIN US TO
CELEBRATE

Linda Najam's Retirement Party

July 11th, 2019

7:00-11:00PM

Anthony's Lake Club

Danbury, Connecticut

\$40 per person
Includes appetizers,
dinner, coffee &
desserts - DJ - Cash Bar

Please send checks to :

Tracey Rullo

52 Old Farm Rd,

New Fairfield, CT 06812

OR

Please give to Sue Jonke, PCT on

10E or any Multi-specialist

RSVP by June 30th, 2019



Housatonic River Brewery

Unit 47 hosted an evening at the Housatonic River Brewery on May 17, 2019. It was an enjoyable evening spent with coworkers from various units. The evening entailed a catered dinner, live music, fantastic beer and great conversation. Some of us played a few various games. Thank you to all who attended. We all work so hard and deserve a break from the everyday grind.

In Solidarity,

Tiina Hawley, RN VP2

Dear Colleagues,

The year 2020 is just around the corner; please keep in mind that our next contract negotiation which starts in February 2020 is also fast approaching. Your Union Leadership has been very busy preparing for this important event. The Negotiating Team has a great deal of work to do and every RN is encouraged to be engaged, show support and make every effort to attend the negotiation sessions. Please send your concerns and suggestions to the union office: email: aft5047unit47@gmail.com

It has been fifteen months since the CERNER launch and we still see different problems every day. I urge you to document by filling out an occurrence report for every issue you come across. This is the best way for us to send an official record of continuing difficulties with CERNER.

Please be aware that the Hospital will provide treatment twenty-four (24) hours a day to an RN's illness or injury while on duty, which interferes with the RN's ability to carry out his/her duties. Such treatment will not be charged to the RN (See Nurses' Contract page 25 Section 3).

Summer is upon us and we are all looking forward to much needed relaxation, vacation, trips, and spending time with family. Please keep in mind that with KRONOS, approved PTO can be rescinded if you do not have enough hours in your bank. In order to avoid this from happening, you are allowed to carry-over up to two weeks of PTO into the following year that can be used to cover vacation or illness during the first few months of the new year. Wishing you all a safe and fun-filled summer!

Best Regards,

Leodie A. Salazar, RNC BSN
Grievance Team

Negotiation Preparation

Here we are again, less than a year to negotiations. Our meetings have begun. I attended a session at AFT CT on hospital financial reporting. I was surprised CT has some of the best laws for hospital and parent company reporting. However, it is a timely process. As a nonprofit hospital revenue must be reinvested in the hospital.

The hospital's financial health will help us making proposals. We can better assess the impact of our proposals and anticipate challenges to realistically gauge our expectations.

The unions best asset is YOU! Each member is the union when we all stand together we show a united front and can accomplish more.

Maryann Milleville

Danbury Nurses' Union Unit #47

Update 47 is the official publication of Unit #47

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TOGETHER WE BUILD AND GROW