

# Sutter RNs United

## California Nurses Association



### THE DAILY JOURNAL San Mateo County's homepage

#### Letter to the Editor: What 'lean' means

May 10, 2012, 05:00 AM

Editor,

"Lean" conjures images of lanky, linen-clad beautiful people, standing on the Riviera overlooking aqua-colored oceans. Audrey Hepburn, Gregory Peck, Jimmy Stewart, Princess Diana. Lean!

When a company takes on the "lean" mantra, beautiful people isn't the image that pops up in an employee's mind. Corporate "lean" usually means more work, fewer resources and fewer financial rewards for those doing the work.

Images of Karen Carpenter come to mind — emaciated, starved, dying! When a hospital adopts the "lean" ideology, it's dangerous. Taking care of hospitalized patients in today's world is harder than it has ever been. No technology can replace the human mind. Split-second decisions that save lives are made by RNs every day. Technology is a tool — an adjunct to, not a replacement.

Mills-Peninsula/Sutter Health has bought into the latest marketing craze: the "KAIZEN" philosophy of care, developed in Japan by Toyota to increase automotive production on an assembly line. This is the "lean" project that MPHS management is trying to sell as the "Hail Mary Pass," designed to increase their declining "patient satisfaction" scores (patient satisfaction scores which are directly tied to monetary reimbursements by the federal government.)

Employee salaries and benefits are a large part of MPHS's budget, but employees are the hospital. No matter how automated management wants it to be, sick people are not car parts. Sutter made close to \$5 billion, yet it tells its staff they won't be getting wage increases. No new jobs will be created. Everyone needs to tighten their belts. Do more work. Work smarter. Processes need to be re-evaluated. Everyone needs to improve the process and streamline the workflow. Mills-Peninsula is now "lean" like Karen Carpenter.

**Luciana Kincer, RN**  
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## MPHS

### Bargaining Update

May 22, 2012

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#### OP-ED: Rumor has it...

May 19, 2012, 05:00 AM

By Mark Wandro



Rumor has it there is a major union-busting action going on at Mills-Peninsula. Sutter is playing hardball with the RNs, taking away the 12-hour shift pay and raising health insurance premiums without negotiation. And the nurses fought back with a one-day strike. The fact is Sutter does not want to pay overtime for time worked over eight hours. It doesn't want experienced RNs earning more than some of their managers. It doesn't want to pay for health benefits, even though its supposed business is providing health care.

**Mark Wandro has worked as an ED RN for the past 30 years at Mills-Peninsula. He has three grown children, three grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.**

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