

# 2012: A New Year A New Beginning?

At the end of last year, the SVMH Board of Directors took at least two actions that suggest they may be ready to chart a new path: to work together with us for the future of our community hospital. In short, if the board was able to approve contracts with some of the hospitals highest paid employees, it gives us hope that they may be ready to negotiate a fair contract with us.

## **Board Extends Lucrative Management Consultant Contract with Lowell Johnson**

One recent action the board took that suggests a new beginning is its decision to extend the outside "Management Consulting Contract" for Lowell Johnson through December 31, 2012. According to the contract, in addition to Mr. Johnson's \$10,000 per week (\$520,000 per year) salary, the "Consultant shall be entitled to reasonable expense reimbursement for food, air travel, personal automobile allowance of \$300 per week, housing and other similar travel expenses associate with this Agreement," plus "other business expense reimbursement paid by Salinas to its senior executives." In just six months in 2011 alone, in addition to his \$10,000 per week salary, Johnson received over \$57,000 in "expenses," worth an additional \$2400 per week. **If 2011 trends hold, Mr. Johnson's total compensation in 2012 would be approximately \$650,000, comparable to Sam Downing's compensation in 2010.**

## **Board Approves New Contract With CNA**

A second, even more telling, decision occurred when the SVMH board approved a new contract through 2013 with the California Nurses Association. **In addition to preserving current health insurance, pension, and paid time off and other benefits without takeaways,** the new CNA contract provides for wage increases from a minimum of 10% up to 27.6% from 2011 through 2013. In addition to across the board wage increases for all CNA members, the hospital preserved payment of step increases to all eligible CNA members.

## **SVMH has a chance to chart a new path on January 9<sup>th</sup>**

Next week, we return to the bargaining table with SVMH under the auspices of the California State Mediation and Conciliation Services. The board's willingness to approve these recent contracts with management consultant Lowell Johnson and the CNA, give some hope that SVMH may finally be ready to negotiate a fair contract with us.



United for a Fair contract now!

