



# PUGET SOUND QUARTERLY

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# FOLLOW YOUR PASSION

by Margot Hill

PSONS Government Relations Chair

Joseph Campbell, educator, author and editor frequently advised "follow your passion." It is so easy to get bogged down with fatigue and the details of the workday that we forget to see the larger picture. What inspired each of us to become a nurse, especially an oncology nurse? Each of us has issues from our experiences, professional, and personally that stir us. Your passion can be a particular type of cancer, inadequacies of access to health care, managed care, nurse delegation, undignified dying, unrelieved pain, increased smoking in children and/or cancer prevention. Whatever the issue, chances are there is a bill being debated in the state legislature or congress with organizations that are lobbying for and against it.

You cannot read a newspaper today without seeing or reading numerous articles about health care. This is also true with magazines and television. How often have you read or seen nurses quoted or discussed. Where is the nursing voice? Most nurses give direct patient care, others are involved in areas such as research, administration, teaching and utilization review. We have first-hand knowledge and experience in how health care is delivered in the hospital, the clinics and the home. We silently "deliver the goods" and yet decisions are being made without our input. If we are to be respected as a profession and as individual nurses, the community needs to know who we are, what we do, what we think and how we feel about current health care. In other words, we need to define ourselves. Nurses are the only ones who keep the patient's best interest in the forefront.

How often do we articulate to our friends and family exactly what we do at work? Do we explain to patients what our



Margot and Tim Hill with their dog, Coco, relax in their backyard.

role is in their care and how it differs from technicians, aides and assistants? Once, I overheard a physical therapist telling a patient that her job was like a nurse only more specialized. We probably all have such stories. When we teach patients and families how to care for their catheters, they may perceive

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