



# The Union Advocate

VOLUME I, ISSUE 3

FEBRUARY 17, 2009

## Inside this issue:

CCFT Financial Status	2
Support Surrounding Unions	2
Faculty Friendly Board Trustee	2
What is "Past Practice"	3
CFT Leadership Conference	4
The Budget Storm	4
Part-time Faculty	5
Peace & Justice Art Contest	6
COPE fund report	6
Announcements	6

## Celebrate Cesar Chavez Day

By June Beck, Editor

In the 60s Cesar Chavez recognized that, without a union, laboring farm workers might never drink fresh water. He led the UFW with a passion for fairness and equality.

The community college system remains unfair and unequal. Here at Cuesta, some faculty members have blamed the administration. Some administrators blame the legislature. Some legislators blame the governor. Some Republicans blame the



Cesar Chavez Day  
March 31, 2009

Democrats and vice versa. The rest just get to work.

Blaming does nothing to change the system yet it has been done to death. The days of shaking baseball bats at some perceived enemy have yielded us no lasting change to a system that depends on outside funding and an expandable, expendable part-time pool.

## Negotiation Notes

From the Team

Update: CCFT and the District are currently meeting all day every other Monday to negotiate. Since all articles of the contract are open, the process has been slow but steady. Look for regular negotiation updates to the CCFT listserv after each session or review them at [www.CCFT.org](http://www.CCFT.org).

**Rumor Control:** CCFT has been asked if we have entered into discussions with regard to a percent pay cut to help mitigate pending budget cuts – We have not. CCFT has not participated in any pay cut discussions with the District. The current

*We HAVE NOT  
entered any  
negotiations  
regarding salary  
cuts!*

negotiation team feels very strongly that we could not enter into such discussions without an overwhelming mandate from the faculty.

Resource: The All Faculty Association (AFA) at Santa Rosa Junior College has published the final version of the 2009 Statewide Salary Survey. See *Negotiation Notes* Page 3



**Costs continue to rise as income remains stable, or worse decreases.**

## CCFT Financial Status

By Mark Tomes, CCFT Secretary-Treasurer

Our current treasury balance, as of February 1, 2009, is \$7636.19. The treasury balance can fluctuate between \$6000 and \$22,000 at any one time, depending on whether we have received our dues income from Cuesta College faculty members' payroll deductions and when we pay our monthly legal bills, affiliate dues, and other bills.

I am concerned about our organization's financial health. Basically, without sounding alarmist, we are on the brink of plunging into debt each month, we have no

backup income or reserve, and we have not been able to build back up our reserves. Costs continue to rise as income remains stable, or worse, decreases.

The statewide budget crisis is forcing Cuesta College to cut courses. This means a loss of income to many part-time faculty members, which is alarming enough, but it also means we lose union dues and fair share fees to CCFT (about \$1500 per month). While a cut in faculty also means a reduction of dues owed to affiliates (about \$100 per month), other costs remain the same and even increase, such as legal bills, stipends, and travel costs.

The Executive Board takes our  
See *CCFT Financial Status* page 4

## Support Surrounding Unions

Announcement

### San Luis Firefighters Association

The San Luis Obispo city firefighters are fighting to keep binding arbitration in their contract. The City of San Luis Obispo will be discussing this issue and the possibility of a special election to eliminate binding arbitration at their Tuesday, March 3, 2009 meeting. The firefighters are holding a large rally at the meeting and would like us to join them. The meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. Come out in support of fellow unionists!

See *Need Support* Page 4

## Help Elect a Faculty Friendly BoT

By Andrea Devitt, COPE Chairperson



**Districts  
3 and 4  
will be up for  
re-election in  
2010**

It's critical that we increase the COPE fund in order to elect a faculty friendly BOT member in 2010. Coast Federation of Teachers spent nearly \$210,000 in 2008 in order to get a faculty friendly BOT member elected and a long-time incumbent defeated. They ran a successful campaign and helped elect Lorraine Prinsky, a university professor at CSU Fullerton. Remember, the more money we raise locally, the more money CFT will contribute to our cause.

District 3 and 4 will be up for re-election in 2010; please contact me if you know of anyone who is interested in running in the next election. HELP SUPPORT OUR CAUSE and fill out your COPE deduction form.

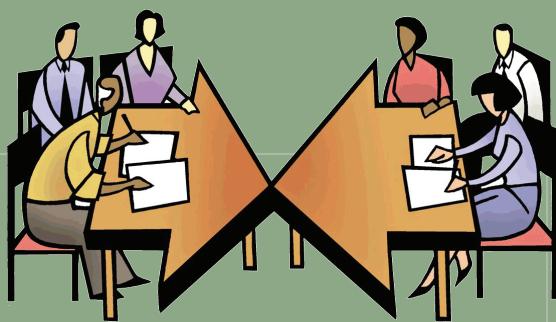
# Negotiation Notes . . .

Continued from page 1

Each year, AFA collects the current faculty salary schedule from each of the 71 California Community College districts. Districts are ranked according to the salaries at the various steps in the highest, non-doctorate column on the salary schedule.

Note two additional items:

- PDF of all California Community College district's regular faculty salary schedules
- PDF of regular and adjunct salary schedules with contract excerpts about the schedules.



Final Version of the 2009

Statewide Salary Survey

View at: [http://www.santarosa.edu/afa/statewide\\_study.shtml](http://www.santarosa.edu/afa/statewide_study.shtml)

## Know Your Rights— What is “Past Practice”

By Allison Merzon, CCFT President

Past practice is any long-standing, frequent practice that is accepted and known about by the union and administration; it is the way things have been done. It does not need to be written into the Collective Bargaining Agreement but must be based on regular action or inaction.

Four factors are used to determine “*past practice*:”

- The practice was clear and applied consistently.
- The practice was not a special, one-time benefit or meant at the time as an exception to a general rule; it occurs repeatedly.
- Both the union and management knew the practice existed and management agreed with the practice or, at least, allowed it to occur.
- The practice existed for a substantial or reasonable period of time.

Changes to past practice, that are not contrary to law, must be negotiated.

For more information on past practice:

[http://www.ueunion.org/stwd\\_pastprac.html](http://www.ueunion.org/stwd_pastprac.html)

<http://www.workrightspress.com/pastprac1.html>

## CCFT Financial Status

Continued from page 2

financial health very seriously. We are watching expenses very closely. Some EB members are personally foregoing stipends and reimbursements until we can build up a reserve of funds. Rest assured that our financial picture will never, ever inhibit us from advocating for faculty and protecting our due process rights. Still, we need to have a solid financial base to do a proper job of representing the faculty at Cuesta College.

Parallel with a discussion of a new Constitution and By-laws will be a discussion of our dues structure. I will be advocating for a change that simplifies and clarifies a faculty member's dues responsibility while protecting the organization's financial health. We have to remember that WE are the union, and as such, we all are responsible for the financial health of our union.

**Buying a home can be scary.  
We can help.**



A Union of Professionals  
**AFT**  
Member Benefits



buy where it counts!  
[www.aftplus.org](http://www.aftplus.org)

AFT has an expense reimbursement and/or endorsement arrangement for marketing this program. For more information, please contact AFT Financial Services at 800/238-1133, ext. 4493; send an e-mail to [disclosureinfo@aft.org](mailto:disclosureinfo@aft.org); or visit [www.aftplus.org/disclosure](http://www.aftplus.org/disclosure).

# Need Support . . .

Continued from Page 2



**Together we can  
make a difference!**

*"It was great to make  
connections with  
other community  
college faculty as well  
as with the CFT  
leadership at the state  
level."*

## The California Nurses Association

The California Nurses Association, which has members at all the local hospitals, is supporting HR 676, John Conyers' single payer health insurance plan, and encourage everyone to help get this legislation passed. Find out more at <http://singlepayernow.net/>

## Employee Free Choice Act

The Employee Free Choice Act needs support. This legislation will prohibit employers and their agents from unfair tactics used to discourage, even prevent, employees from joining unions. Find out more at <http://freechoiceact.org/>

## CFT Leadership Conference

By Andrea Devitt, COPE Chair person

On Friday, February 6, I had the opportunity to attend the California Federation of Teachers (CFT) Leadership Conference in Burlingame, California. The morning began with a budget update from Senior Policy Analyst Scott Graves from the California Budget Project. Although the budget is not in good shape, I learned quite a bit from Scott's presentation. Following the first general session the CFT attorneys spoke on variety of union issues. Bob Bezemek was one of the presenters; I was glad I had the chance to

meet him. I attended two different breakout sessions in the afternoon. The first session focused on how our CFT can help locals and the second was on the challenges of developing contract language. It was great to make connections with other community college faculty as well as with the CFT leadership at the state level. I would encourage all of members to attend this conference in the future.



**Cuesta will need  
“Strong Leadership”  
to weather this budgetary  
storm!**

## The Brewing Budget Storm

By Allison Merzon, CCFT President

As I write this, the State budget situation has yet to be fully understood and the cuts that Cuesta College will suffer are yet to be totally comprehended. What is certain is that in the next 2-3 years, the college will need strong leadership to weather this budgetary storm. CCFT is prepared to play an active and constructive role in meeting the challenges ahead.

Many faculty leaders have been disappointed so far with the development of budget cutting alternatives. In the fall 2008, the Planning and Budget Committee created a list of principles to guide the College as we examine possible budget cuts. Here are the first four:

See **Budget Storm** Page 5

# Part-time Faculty Arise!

By Marilyn Cleeves, Part-time Faculty Chair

Recently the CCFT Executive Board appointed me as Part-time Faculty Chair, Webmaster and Newsletter Layout Designer. I have been a part-time faculty member at Cuesta since 1990 and I am very excited to have the opportunity to get involved. While teaching at Cuesta, part-time employee rights have changed some. We now have longevity rights, and we can now teach a 67% load, but we have a long way to go to achieve economic equality.

As you read through this newsletter, you will find articles entitled "The Budget Storm", "Negotiation Notes", and "Know Your Rights". When classes are cut, part-time faculty members lose jobs! We are fortunate to have a CCFT Executive Board and a Council



*When classes are cut, part-time faculty members lose jobs!*

of Representatives that are working hard to keep this from happening. It is important that we hear your voice and know you are listening.

Mike Holmes, Part-time Biological Sciences instructor, is on the CCFT negotiating team and we are lucky to have him. In addition to being an excellent part-time faculty member he is working hard to research possibilities for part-time faculty rights. I feel honored to have Mike Holmes, June Beck and Jill Schubert on the part-time faculty committee. We are welcoming any other part-time faculty members. Please let me know if you are interested in being a part of the committee.

## Budget Storm

Continued from Page 4

### Guiding Principles for Planning Mid-Year and Next-Year Budget Reductions

- Protect as much as possible of the core curriculum, programs and services needed to fulfill the adopted mission for the District.
- Maintain student access and service throughout the District as much as possible.
- Protect permanent employee positions insofar as possible by making reductions through vacancies and partial position reductions.
- Reduce or eliminate services, programs, positions, or other costs farthest from students, instruction, and the support needed for student success.

Unfortunately, the budget cuts made so far, and the possibility of cuts to the summer schedule of classes, appear to many to be inconsistent with principles developed by Planning and Budget.

CCFT will continue to strive to insure that:

- The Guiding Principles developed by Planning and Budget are followed;
- The voices of faculty are heard loud and clear;
- And most importantly, that we keep the focus of the college on our core mission—serving our students.

### A Final Note

As I mentioned in an email to faculty last week, no salary reductions are on the negotiating table.



***"Protect our core curriculum, programs and services!"***

## T-Shirts are Here



If you haven't purchased your really cool CCFT t-shirt for the low price of \$10, please do so today. T-shirts are available in The EOPS Office. As an added bonus, t-shirts can also be delivered to your office. They are available in long sleeve and short sleeve and make great gifts. Please contact Andrea Devitt [adevitt@cuesta.edu](mailto:adevitt@cuesta.edu) to order your t-shirt today.

### Payroll Deduction Authorization For Committee on Political Education COPE)

(Type or print neatly!)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (last) \_\_\_\_\_ (first) \_\_\_\_\_ (m.i.) \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security # or Banner ID: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby authorize payroll deduction from my salary for the monthly payment (excluding June and July) to the Cuesta College Federation of Teachers Committee on Political Education (COPE) in the following amounts for each purpose listed:

For Cuesta College Board of Trustees election purposes only : \$ \_\_\_\_\_

For other purposes as determined by the CCFT COPE Committee and Executive Board: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

This authorization shall remain in effect until I revoke it in writing to the CCFT Secretary-Treasurer and the Cuesta College Payroll Office and shall be effective as of my next pay warrant following its submission to the employer.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Note: Payroll deductions to the Committee on Political Education paid to AFT/CFT locals are not deductible for federal income tax purposes.)

Return to CCFT, c/o Mark Tomes, DSPS, Cuesta College, P.O. Box 8106, SLO, CA 93403-8106

CCFT Office Use Only:

Re'd: \_\_\_\_\_ Copy to Payroll: \_\_\_\_\_ Entered on database: \_\_\_\_\_

Notification to COPE Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

## CCFT Peace & Justice 2nd Annual Art Contest

Donate a dollar or two for a most worthy cause! If you can help support this endeavor, please send contributions (cash or check) to Mark Tomes, CCFT Secretary-Treasurer.

Thank you very much from Hedy Carra, Louis Quade, Thomas Patchell, and Lisa Curtis, the Peace and Justice Committee.

## Announcements

**COUNCIL OF REPS.....FEBRUARY 26**  
**FACCC ADVOCACY DAY .....MARCH 1-2**

TO REGISTER GO TO THE WEBSITE  
[HTTP://WWW.FACCC.ORG/](http://WWW.FACCC.ORG/)

**RALLY FOR EDUCATION AT THE STATE CAPITOL**  
**CALIFORNIA LABOR FEDERATION .....MARCH 16**  
**CFT LOBBY DAY .....MARCH 17**

**NOMINATIONS OPEN**  
**CFT CONVENTION .....MARCH 20-22**

All reasonable expenses, including travel, food, and lodging, will be reimbursed by CCFT. Five delegates will be selected on a first-come, first-served basis. Interested candidates contact [amerzon@cuesta.edu](mailto:amerzon@cuesta.edu) or Cuesta ext 2711

## COPE Funds

With 29 monthly contributors, \$68 dollars goes to the BOT election fund.

### WE'LL NEED MORE

If we are serious about electing a CCFT-friendly board member. Fill out the form today!

