PONDERINGS OF THE PRESIDENT
By Laurie Ordin

AS I SIT DOWN TO WRITE this month’s Ponderings, our Collective Bargaining team is hard at work trying to hammer out an agreement with the District to improve our contract. At the same time all of us, as faculty members, are putting the finishing touches on our courses for our students. Many of us are looking forward to summer vacation. Others will teach for 6-8 weeks, but still have some time off to relax.

These things lead me to think about the many wonderful faculty members who work part time to serve the students of Marin County. The first thing I’d like to address here is that, because part time faculty members do not have reasonable assurance of future employment, they are eligible to collect unemployment insurance benefits during any weeks when they are not teaching. Part timers should apply during finals week because it takes a week before you can collect benefits. If you have a problem and people at the unemployment agency claim that you are not eligible for benefits, cite Cervisi vs. Unemployment Insurance. If you need more details you can do a search and get all the information you will need. My experience talking with some of our members is that all you have to do is cite Cervisi and your claim will be granted.

Beyond these practicalities I ponder over how our part time faculty members are part of a growing segment of our country’s college workforce. They are contingent faculty members and it is on their backs that most colleges balance their budgets. At most colleges and universities they can be hired and fired on a whim and they are paid a fraction of the amount that full time faculty members are paid. At most colleges and universities they do not have any benefits. Did you know that across the country part time faculty members are paid on average $2700 for a 3 unit course and that the average adjunct earns $17,000 per year? Most adjuncts around the country live at or below the poverty level. >>>
Here at College of Marin, UPM has successfully raised the bar and has one of the best pay and benefit packages for part timers in the country. As our Bargaining Team works toward our next contract, we are asking for 100% pro rata because we believe in equal pay for equal work. Our part timers also have better benefits than those in almost any other district. Still every penny is a struggle for UPM. On the bright side we seem to be making headway in bringing our non-credit instructors a higher level of pro rata pay, but so far the faculty-at-large have been offered only 1% per year for 2 years on our salary schedules, with a small off schedule bonus. This is after years of receiving practically nothing in terms of pay raises. On the other hand, on the management side, our vice presidents just received raises in the 30% range. There have been some adjustments to our salary schedule, but we have a long way to go.

The argument goes that raises for our managers are necessary to attract talent, but it seems that this is not as much an issue when it comes to attracting talented faculty members. We hear this same argument when corporate CEO pay is somehow justified at somewhere around 350 to 400 times that of the average worker. Then we learn of tax breaks and loopholes for the very wealthy and capital gains tax rates at 15%, while the average worker in these companies pays close to twice that rate. Things seem way out of balance.

At College of Marin, there is always talk about how valuable our talented faculty are. And much has recently been done to try to create good feelings between management and our faculty. But is this just lip service? Nice words don’t pay the bills and when we see such discrepancies between the way management and faculty are treated, good feelings tend to seep away. To make matters worse, there have been some not very veiled suggestions that the resources that enable UPM to exercise our collective bargaining rights are being attacked. I have been assured that this is not the tone President Coon wants to set and we will be working hard to be certain that our ability to bargain collectively is guaranteed. Your UPM bargaining team, executive council and I are ready to “go to the mattresses” to be sure that our talented members, both part time and full time, receive a fair contract.

Don’t forget that we can’t do this alone. An informed, united membership is the only way we will prevail. So while I hope all of you get a little extra “mattress” time yourselves, and that you will refresh yourselves this Summer with whatever activities enrich your lives, I hope you will, as always, stay informed, stay in touch and stay involved. Have a wonderful Summer!

“MUCH OF WHAT WE TAKE FOR GRANTED--THE 40-HOUR WORK WEEK, THE MINIMUM WAGE, HEALTH INSURANCE, PAID LEAVE, PENSIONS, SOCIAL SECURITY, MEDICARE--THEY ALL BEAR THE UNION LABEL... EVEN IF YOU'RE NOT A UNION MEMBER, EVERY AMERICAN OWES SOMETHING TO AMERICA'S LABOR MOVEMENT.

SO I'M READY TO TAKE THE OFFENSE FOR ORGANIZED LABOR. IT'S TIME WE HAD A PRESIDENT WHO DIDN'T CHOKE SAYING THE WORD "UNION."

 - BARACK OBAMA
EDITORIAL

IT'S OFTEN THE CASE that when new managers are brought into an organization, they feel the need to enhance their sphere of authority by shaking up the status quo with a new organizational structure; one that often results in the dismissal or demotion of veteran employees.

And because the newly hired managers have had no prior personal contact with the soon-to-be displaced workers, they often feel little concern for how these employees' lives might be impacted by the changes. It matters more to them that the organization runs ‘efficiently’ (whatever that means) than the effect that their new policies might have on the lives of their staff. And if the employees are at-will workers without contractual protections, they can, regardless of length of service, be eliminated or reassigned with impunity.

That seems to be what is happening here at College of Marin, where several unrepresented employees who have worked here for many years, are being “reorganized” out of their jobs; not because they are inefficient or incompetent, but rather because some newly hired manager has come up with a new reorganization scheme.

That’s why unions are so important – to ensure that employees are protected from arbitrary dismissals or demotions or changes in working conditions that some new manager takes a mind to establish.

Of course some reorganizations are necessary and appropriate. But consider how many management and organizational changes there have been during the past decade at CoM. I count dozens of them – a revolving door of administrators and new organizational charts, all of whom and which have had impacts on our faculty and staff, but with few of them improving our school. Some, in fact, have been disastrous for staff morale and for student enrollment and for community relations and for school finances. And many have been calamitous for the personal lives of the individuals who have been dismissed or demoted or forced to resign.

Organizations, including college Districts, should show greater consideration for the effects that their restructuring plans will have on the lives of their workforce. Employees are not disposable widgets.

Fortunately our faculty has a union contract (thanks to UPM) that helps protects us from egregious District restructuring schemes, and from managers who feel a need to establish their “turf” and make changes that negatively impact our lives.

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UPM MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I hereby apply for membership in the United Professors of Marin, AFT Local 1610

Name: ______________________ SS#: ______________________

Address: _____________________ City: ________________ Zip: __________

Date: ______________________ Email: ______________________

Home Phone: __________________ Campus Ext: ______

Check the appropriate category:

_____ I am a permanent credit or non-credit employee or leave replacement

_____ I am a temporary credit or non-credit employee on the semester system

_____ I am a Community Education instructor

Return to the UPM mailbox or to the UPM Office, TB-124.
And please make sure you have completed the UPM payroll deduction option, in Human Resources.

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Please Note: Unless you have filled out the above UPM Membership Application, you are only paying a representation fee and you are not a member of UPM and entitled to UPM’s full membership benefits.

UPM Newsletter 3

May 2014
Collective Bargaining Update May 2014
John Sutherland
UPM Chief Negotiator

At our May 9th CB meeting, the District and UPM continued discussion of Articles under consideration, both sides giving on some and taking on others. But now that we’re in the opening stages of Wages and Benefits, things are getting, uh... interesting.

While we have had some movement in certain areas pertaining to Wages, the District’s recent proposals/counters reveal an attitude we have seen before. Now, it’s important to remember that proposals are only proposals and that NOTHING has been written in stone (or in our Contract)... yet. Essentially, District proposals reduce our resources by decreasing Coordinator and Chair units, adding duties for all unit members and controlling Overload—all at a wage increase that is well below any cost of living adjustment. You might recall that the District recently increased VP pay by $30,000.

We should point out the District’s reasoning for controlling overload and total semester/year units is “quality of instruction.” The mystery remains, however, as to how we can increase our workload, in spite of reduced resources (diminished Chair and Coordinator units), with little increase in salary and still maintain the quality of our instruction. That just doesn’t jibe!

At our April meeting, the District Interim VP attempted to withdraw an earlier District proposal on office hours (UPM is arguing that we should be able to be recognized for doing 50% of our office hours “virtually”) until your Bargaining Team pointed out that withdrawing its previous proposal and reverting back to status quo was “regressive.”

More egregious, however, was this month’s attempt by our Interim VP to squeeze in an Article that had not been approved and publicly “sunshined” by the Board at its July 2013 meeting. The nature of this proposal warrants attention: Take away ALL units from UPM and make us buy them in the future to bargain on your behalf, represent you and ensure your rights. This would effectively break the UPM bank and quite possibly in doing so, destroy UPM.

Given the District’s reluctance to award unit members with an adequate raise and its proposal to increase our workload, while at the same time reducing the resources that enable us to provide quality instruction, the District’s attempt to do away with Union units is, to say the least, disturbing. Please note that UPM and the District have NOT yet begun to bargain fringe benefits. Please see UPM President Laurie Ordin’s communiqués on your marin.edu email for more details.

We will keep you posted as to future developments.

“ONLY A FOOL WOULD TRY TO DEPRIVE WORKING MEN AND WORKING WOMEN OF THEIR RIGHT TO JOIN THE UNION OF THEIR CHOICE.”

= DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

UPM Newsletter  4  May 2014
"FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER"
Myth, Mirth and Miscellany for the Union Faithful

LABOR HISTORY
The Origins of MAY DAY

MAY DAY, (INTERNATIONAL WORKERS’ DAY) is celebrated annually on May 1st to honor the memory of the Haymarket Martyrs and their struggle for an eight-hour work day. It is an official holiday in 70 countries around the world, but because of our government’s attempts to hide, silence or rewrite American labor history, many people don’t realize that the May Day holiday is not some foreign, leftist import, but has its origins in the indigenous struggles of American workers to work under humane conditions.

In the early nineteenth century, it was common for people to be forced to work 12 to 16 hours a day. But starting in 1860 American workers started agitating for a shortened work day, and in Chicago on May 3rd, 1886, thousands of workers at the McCormick Reaper Works walked off the job in support of an 8-hour day.

In response, hundreds of police and Pinkerton agents with clubs attacked the striking workers. The attack escalated into rock throwing by the strikers and the police responded with gunfire. Four strikers were killed and at least 200 were wounded.

A public meeting was called the following day in Haymarket Square to protest the police attack, and as speeches wound down, the police charged the crowd. A bomb exploded and four policemen were killed. Enraged, the police fired into the crowd which included women and children, killing eight civilians and wounding more than forty.

Eight known members of a local anarchist group were arrested and charged with the bombing. Three of them, however, were not even present at Haymarket Square during the demonstration but were miles away. The rest were in full view of all when the bombing occurred and were clearly innocent. A jury of business leaders, however, convicted all eight, and on November 11, 1887, after many failed appeals, four of them were hung. It was the start of an anti-red, anti-labor campaign that has continued through the McCarthy andHUAC years, through Governor Scott Walker’s attack on public employee unions in Wisconsin, and into the current attack on teachers’ unions. Its purpose is to weaken the labor movement and undermine worker solidarity.

May Day is a celebration of labor activism and the struggle that workers endured (some of whom died at Haymarket Square) to achieve the eight-hour work day and a humane workplace. We are all the beneficiaries of their struggle and their sacrifices.

UPM ELECTION RESULTS

IN AN UNCONTESTED ELECTION for UPM Executive council, John Marmysz, (27 votes) Arthur Lutz, (25 votes), and Michele Martinisi (25 votes) were re-elected for two year terms, starting July 1.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PAC COMMITTEE REGARDING SUMMER TRAVEL REQUESTS

IF YOU PLAN TO TRAVEL in June, July or August, please submit your request(s) before June 17th, (our last PAC meeting until the fall semester).

Please include the following with each request:

• Brochure of published material describing activity
• Completed CEU Waiver
• Completed Substitute Form (if needed.)

Your requests cannot be processed without the above.

If you submit your request less than 15 days before the event, you must include a statement explaining why your request is late.

PAC meetings will resume on Tuesday, August 19th.

PAC Faculty Members:
Rinetta Early & Toni Yoshioka Wittenmeier.
WILLKOMMEN, BIENVENUE, 欢迎

College of Marin has always been receptive to foreign students. Our International Students Program is alive and well. As it should be. We encourage international students to attend CoM because we want to foster ethnic, cultural diversity at our this goal, Dr. Lau and have just trip to China for the purpose of recruiting Chinese students to attend CoM.

But, of course, there were other motives for their trip; pecuniary motives. Foreign students pay tuition fees of $208/unit as compared with California residents who pay only $46/unit.

There is nothing wrong with having non-residents pay higher fees. CoM is financed by local tax revenues and our residents should enjoy the benefits of their tax burden. And foreign students are getting excellent value for their money, even at $208 per unit.

But if cultural and ethnic diversity is part of the reason we recruit international students, then besides going all the way to China, perhaps our administrators might also take a trip eight miles down the road to Marin City to recruit African American students, who also are taxpayers, and who also have much to offer our school in the way of cultural and ethnic diversity, and who also would benefit from what we have to offer.

HAIKU

An old union song says all that one needs to know “Which Side Are You On.”

TRASH TALK

At a recent meeting of our Academic Senate, Vice President Greg Nelson spoke about the recent ECHO TIMES article that charged “Green Washing” at CoM, i.e. disinformation by an organization so as to present an environmentally responsible public image.

Apparently, despite the belief that our campus recycle bins are sorted and disposed of appropriately, in fact, such may not be the case. According to the ECHO TIMES, the majority of the trash bags collected from our buildings are sent to land fill, contents or the bundled together and regardless of their markings on the bins.

Aside from the what some of us disturbing was VP Nelson’s suggestion that the blame for this lay with the janitors and with their union. What Nelson did not say was that his office never issued a directive to the janitors to sort the trash appropriately.

Nelson also suggested that it would be better if students and faculty did not track how our trash is being routed. Kudos to biology instructor Joe Mueller for ignoring. Nelson’s suggestion. Perhaps Joe’s determination to pursue this matter will speed up our administration’s willingness to correct the problem.

LABOR HUMOR

There was a two-car accident involving a union president and a well-known union-busting attorney. Both cars were totalled but the drivers were unhurt. While the union shrieked ruined car, the union president said, “Calm down. Here—this bottle of scotch I had in my car is unbroken. Have a drink and calm yourself.” The union buster grabbed the bottle and took a few hefty swigs before handing it back to the union president, who put the cap back on the bottle. “Aren’t you going to have any,” asked the attorney? “No” said the union president, “I think I’ll just wait for the police.”

IF YOU CROSS THE RIVER IN A CROWD THE CROCODILE WON’T EAT YOU.

Madagascar Proverb

[Object Lesson for Union Solidarity]
**SUMMER UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS FOR PART-TIMERS**

If you are a part-time instructor, you are entitled to receive unemployment benefits during the summer break if you are not teaching.

Even if you have a signed contract to teach in the fall, because that contract is contingent on enrollment, etc., it is not a ‘reasonable assurance of employment,’ and therefore your benefits may not be denied.

This right to summer (and intercession) unemployment benefits was established in: *Cervisi v. California Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board* (1989) 208 Cal. App. 3d 654.

In order to apply for these benefits, after your last final exam, call the EDD office (800-300-5616) and provide them with your SS number and the name, address and telephone number of our College. If they suggest that you are not eligible, tell the EDD personnel to refer to Field Directive 89-55UI, which explains the definition of ‘reasonable assurance’ & how Cervisi is to be applied.

**MAKING YOU WHOLE**

Have you reviewed your pay-check stub recently? Are you sure that you are being paid at the correct rate for your appropriate step and column?

UPM has been alerted by some faculty that paycheck errors are possibly being made by Human Resources or Payroll. So please review your pay stub and if you think that you are being shorted, notify our union office as soon as possible.

And if errors are work to see that you are “made whole.” when you first become aware of any discrepancy because there are time limits for receiving retroactive reimbursements and for filing grievances. And if you have other questions or concerns regarding your work-related rights and responsibilities, we are here to advise. But please review our Union/District contract; it governs your employment obligations. A copy is available on our UPM Website: www.unitedprofessorsofmarin.org.

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**PECULIAR LOGIC?**

Considering that Education Code §84362 requires community colleges to spend at least 50 percent of the expense of education on salaries for classroom instructors each year. And District is this mandate; inconsistent of Vice Presidents offer our classroom instructors only 1%? How will that help the District meet the 50% law?

**ANOTHER JOKE**

Dean was filling in for an absent teacher in a physiology class and struggling to give a lecture on the circulation of blood.

"Now students" he said, “If I stood on know, the blood and I would turn red The students all nodded yes. "Then why is it that standing upright in position, the blood doesn’t rush into my feet?"

“Because”, one student shouted, “your feet aren’t empty.”

**CONVENTION DELEGATE WANTED**

The Eighty-Third Convention of the American Federation of Teachers will be held in Los Angeles July 11 – 14. If you are interested in being a delegate from UPM, please contact Laurie by June 4th.

**NEW UPM DIGS**

As part of our College Modernization, the building where our union office is currently located (TB 1) will soon be demolished. Our new UPM office will be in LC 170 (the Library Building). We should be in our new office in July. Come visit.
KUDOS TO US

The California Federation of Teachers Has Awarded our UPM Newsletter FIRST PLACE In the category of Best Six-Or-More Page Newsletter In California

UPM STAFF AND COMMITTEES 2013 - 2014

**PRESIDENT**
Lauris Ordin

**UPM EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**
Bonnie Borenstein, Kenny Buquen, John Erdmann (for John Marmysz, who is on sabbatical), Deborah Graham, Arthur Lutz, Michele Martinisi, Lauris Ordin, Nadia Sanke, John Sutherland

**GRIEVANCE OFFICER**
John Sutherland

**TREASURER**
Michele Martinisi

**BUDGET MONITOR**
Deborah Graham

**WORKLOAD COMMITTEE**
Bonnie Borenstein, Michele Martinisi

**NORTH BAY LABOR COUNCIL**
Christine Li

**PART-TIMER**
Kenny Buquen

**PROFESSIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**
Rinetta Early, Toni Yoshioka-Wittenmeier

**SABBATICAL LEAVE COMMITTEE**
Paul da Silva, Nadia Sanke, Walter Turner

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE**
George Adam, Scott Serafin

**BARGAINING TEAM**
John Sutherland (Chief Negotiator), Bonnie Borenstein, Deborah Graham, Arthur Lutz, Michele Martinisi, Byron Ramsey

**BAY 10 REPRESENTATIVE**
Paul da Silva

**UPMPAC**
Arthur Lutz, Paul da Silva

**CRA TRUST**
Ira Lanting (Chair), Sarah Brewster, Judy Coombes, Bruce Furuya, Lauris Ordin

**HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**
George Adams, Paul da Silva

**SOCIAL COMMITTEE**
Radica Portello, Vaughan Arlano, Tony Behr, Caitlin Escobar, David Patterson

**UPM EXECUTIVE SECRETARIES**
Nancy Faw, Jesette Lambert

**WEB MASTER**
Derek Wilson

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR**
Arthur Lutz