PONDERINGS OF THE PRESIDENT

By Laurie Ordin

As I WRITE THIS MONTH’S ARTICLE, UPM members have just ratified a new contract. I cannot think of a single constituency that will not see significant gains. At the same time, we had to give up absolutely nothing. It has been a long time since we have felt this good after negotiations. I am pleased to report that the UPM Executive Council wholeheartedly recommended a yes vote to ratify the contract that our bargaining team, expertly led by John Sutherland, had brought to you, and the motion carried unanimously by the members present at the general ratification meeting.

And thanks to the wonderful efforts and talents of our UPM Social Committee, Vaughan Ariano and Tom Behr, we had a fun celebration after the vote.

So are things perfect? They are much improved, but, well no, they are not perfect. Before the ratification meeting, we had had several general meetings to explain the tentative agreement, and we heard of some things that our members were disappointed in. Here are a few:

- There are no added steps to the Child Care Center salary schedule.
- Part time faculty still max out at the same step as they did in the last contract.
- Full time faculty who teach an overload are still paid at 95% pro rata.
- Full time faculty who teach an overload still max out at step 20 for their overload assignments.

Indeed, we were not able to improve our contract with regard to these items. And, in truth, we didn’t try.

What? We didn’t try? Why not? You may be thinking that because we have an excellent bargaining team, how is it that they didn’t even try? Aren’t they supposed to do everything for our UPM membership?

Well, no. We can’t know what to bargain for unless YOU ask us to bring the articles that you wish to amend, forward. This is called ‘sunshining’ (revealing to the District what we wish to bargain). And there is a legal time limit for this part of the collective bargaining process.

Before we know it, we will be ‘sunshining’ articles for the next round of negotiations before this contract expires on Dec. 31 2016. So how will we know what to ‘sunshine’ so that we can make our contract even stronger?

Well, I happen to know. Here’s how. You will tell us. >>>
At some point before we have to go to the District with our articles to sunshine, UPM will send out a request to all of you, (as we have in the past,) asking you what issues you would like us to address. It is up to you to tell us what you want and need. As far as I know, none of us has ESP, so if you don’t tell us, we can’t know.

I hope you all had a wonderful, productive year, and that you will get some well-deserved rest and relaxation over the summer. Some of you will take your retroactive pay and go to Fiji while some will pay for braces for the kids. Maybe you will put some of it in a 403b for your retirement. Whatever you do with it, remember that your UPM Collective Bargaining team worked hard to get that check and the other improvements in the contract for you. But we can’t do it alone. We need you to let us know what you need, to support our efforts, and to come together to maintain union solidarity and power. It was our solidarity that gave us the power to get a great contract.

So stay informed, stay in touch and stay involved. Have a great vacation!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

- A Sampling of Letters from our Faculty -

To John, Laurie and the Rest of the Negotiation Team,

I AM A PART-TIME NON-CREDIT INSTRUCTOR In the ESL department and I am writing to express my appreciation for all you have achieved on behalf of all faculty in the new contract. In particular I wish to express my gratitude (and, I’m sure that of my other NC colleagues as well) for the gains made for NC ESL.

All too often what NC faculty do has been misunderstood and under-appreciated, and while the workload adjustment and health benefits are truly significant for NC faculty, many of the initial reactions I heard from colleagues focused equally on the feeling of being respected for what we do. It's also important to note the advocacy for all unit members you demonstrated in negotiations with the District by insisting that the workload adjustment be applied to both FT and PT.

That's what a Union is all about.

In Solidarity,
Michael Kaufmann
Non Credit ESL

Dear Laurie and John,

I WANT TO TAKE A MINUTE to thank you both personally for our new contract. I can't even imagine the amount of work it took from the two of you, to get us such a great one. I also want you to know that I greatly appreciate it and know it would have been much easier for you guys to just walk away.

THANK YOU!
Jamie Deneris
Life and Earth Sciences

THANK YOU FOR THE WORK you have done and the achievement of this amazing new contract, which benefits part-timers as well as full-timers.

Sheila Reilly
Non-Credit ESL

INDEED...
Thanks for all your hard work!
Sandy Boyd; Career Education

To Newsletter Editor,

OUR RATIFICATION MEETING on Wednesday was made even more successful because of the part played by UPM's Social Committee. Tom Behr and Vaughan Ariano outdid themselves. They made the meeting extra celebratory with barbecued hot dogs, salad, homemade apple pies, chocolate raspberry whip-cream cake and drinks. They created a delicious environment for our faculty community, and we were the beneficiaries of their generosity. Thank you Tom and Vaughan.

Deborah Graham
Performing Arts

Dear Members of the UPM Executive Council and Bargaining Team,

THANK YOU FOR ALL THE GOOD and thoughtful effort you put into the negotiations to reach a new contract for the College of Marin faculty. I appreciate that you not just focused on the financial aspects of the contract, but you also made sure that faculty was treated in a respectful and equitable manner by the District.

Fernando Agudelo-Silva
Life and Earth Sciences
ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2015, the United Professors of Marin ratified the new UPM/MCCD Contract. This vote concluded two years of negotiations and brought benefits to all UPM members. Details of the agreement (still tentative until the District ratifies) are available on http://www.unitedprofessorsofmarin.org.

In all, the agreement substantially increases Wages, expands Benefit coverage, improves Working Conditions and allows for greater teacher-student flexibility for all UPM members. These were the goals of your UPM Bargaining Team when we set out on the long road of collecting information, organizing and “sunshining” it, meeting with the District, and arguing for the membership. We are pleased with the results in that this new agreement benefits everybody.

Still, the new agreement is not perfect. So in addition to the above improvements, UPM agreed to implement a new UPM/MCCD Labor Management Committee, the purpose of which is to tackle ongoing contractual inconsistencies and problems and to update Articles where necessary. This committee will convene in the fall and will meet monthly to wrestle with issues that need attention so that we can continue to improve our Contract without having to wait for the next round of Bargaining.

Some thanks are in order: First and foremost, I’d like to thank UPM President Laurie Ordin for her unwavering commitment to the membership. Laurie has been available 24/7 to UPM members, has mediated countless discussions to find resolutions, has attended Bargaining sessions so that she could accurately inform and update UPM members, has met with President Coon on items of concern, has attended Board meetings, and so much more—all while teaching a full load of classes. Thank you, Laurie!

The UPM Bargaining Team likewise deserves recognition for the numerous hours, often unpaid, it has put into preparing Bargaining information, listening attentively to and planning rebuttals for District arguments, scrupulously examining documents and reports—all while teaching classes and performing duties. Arthur Lutz, Bonnie Borenstein, Byron Ramey, Deborah Graham and Michele Martinisi have been invaluable in making this Contract beneficial to all UPM members. My deepest thanks go out to all of you.

Lastly, President Coon and HR Director Kristina Combs warrant praise for recognizing, respecting and rewarding the work we do at College of Marin. Without them, we might still be at the table. Without them, we might still be on the battlefield of old. With them, we’re looking at a new environment of respect and appreciation that, I hope, will continue long into the future.

So the next time you see one of your UPM brothers or sisters, please remember to thank him or her for your improved wages, for the greater flexibility in your working conditions, for increased PAC funds, etc. But most of all, thank them for the respect and appreciation they have ensured for your profession.

Congratulations all!
Editorial

When Jim Dunn was honored by having our Fine Arts Theatre named after him, we all cheered. No one is more deserving than Jim to receive such an accolade. Jim has served our college, our students, and our community for over 50 years, building a drama program that has achieved national recognition and acclaim.

Contrast this well-deserved tribute to Jim Dunn, with the District plan to pay homage to CoM’s financial donors, by posting their names on a monument-sized billboard located in a prominent location on our Kentfield campus – donors who, unlike Jim Dunn, may have no real CoM or pedagogically related credentials – whose only qualifications are the size of their donations, and the possible wish to increase their charitable offerings for tax purposes?

So will the District be posting the names of the Koch Bros, or Chick-fil-A, or Hobby Lobby, if they donate to our college? Shouldn’t there be some criteria other than the size of a donor’s contributions, in order to be recognized?

What we call “philanthropy” has a long and sometimes checkered history. For hundreds of years, until 1967, the Catholic Church raised money by the selling of indulgences – a means by which sinners could buy their way out of purgatory by donating money to the church. Now, here at CoM, we seem to be reviving the selling of indulgences, so that wealthy donors, who may have few educationally-related or socially-commendable values, can buy their way into heaven, (or at least onto a billboard on our heavenly Kentfield campus.)

We all recognize the need for our college to raise funds in order to fulfill our mission, but many of us think that mercenary considerations should be a lesser criterion when our college decides who to honor.

Jim Dunn was justly saluted for his pedagogic contributions and commitment to CoM. Let’s hope the District applies the same standards when they choose other individuals whose contributions they wish to acknowledge.

Will the District be honoring the Koch Bros. or Hobby Lobby if they donate to our college?
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ELECTION RESULTS

IN AN UNCONTESTED ELECTION for Permanent Seats on our UPM Executive Council, the following incumbents were re-elected:

Bonnie Borenstein
John Sutherland
Nadia Sanko
John Erdmann

Laurie Ordin was re-elected to fill the At-Large seat (uncontested,) and Kofi Opong-Mensah was elected to fill the part/time seat. Deborah Graham was appointed (as per UPM By-Laws) to fill the remaining vacant part/time seat resulting from a resignation.

PART-TIME FACULTY CAN RECEIVE UNEMPLOYMENT PAY DURING BREAKS

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, it is not a ‘reasonable assurance of employment. Therefore your unemployment benefits may NOT be denied.

As a result of the 1989 Cervisi Decision, you are eligible to receive unemployment compensation during winter and summer breaks, or for a semester during which you are not offered employment, if you are not employed elsewhere and if you do not have "reasonable assurance of returning to work with an education institution following the period without employment” (Code 1253.3). Since College of Marin part-time employment is contingent upon enrollment and NOT guaranteed, no "reasonable assurance" of re-employment can be guaranteed. Thus, CoM adjunct faculty are eligible for summer unemployment pay. The fact that you might have a history of being re-employed at the end of a summer or holiday recess between terms, is irrelevant. Applying for unemployment benefits is your legal right.

How to Apply for Unemployment Benefits:

1. On your first day of unemployment, or as soon as possible thereafter, call or go to an Employment Development Department (EDD) office. You do not have to wait for your paychecks to stop to file your application. You will be given a form to determine if you are eligible (i.e. actually unemployed and paid qualifying wages during the required base period).

2. Bring a copy of your current contract which specifies the beginning and ending date of your employment. It is also wise to bring a copy of the class schedule and/or official campus calendar.

3. Upon receiving your claim, EDD will contact COM to confirm your employment status and ask them if you have "reasonable assurance" of returning to work. If perchance someone in HR reports to EDD that you will be rehired, then EDD is likely to deny your benefits. If this happens, you should file an appeal. You will prevail. The Cervisi decision assures your right to unemployment benefits during the summer.

YOUR COMMENTS ARE ENCOURAGED

IF YOU HAVE COMMENTS OR COMMENTARIES for or about our Newsletter, please send them to: arthur@unitedprofessorsofmarin.org.

We value and encourage suggestions and submissions.

KEEP CALM!

SUMMER IS ALMOST HERE

SAY, DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE DEAN who spent extra hours in his office writing notes of appreciation to his faculty?

No, of course you didn’t.
MAY DAY(S)

ON MAY 1ST OF EVERY YEAR, people around the world celebrate “MAY DAY.”

Actually, there are two “May Day” observances on May 1st. The older of the two, (still celebrated in the Northern Hemisphere) is a festival commemorating the arrival of spring. Ostensibly.

It is, however, really a festival that was contrived by feudal lords to offer a palliative to the arduous labors that peasants were forced to endure – so they would temporarily forget their travails and passively accept the inhuman social order under which they were forced to live. It was a day of wine and dancing and revelry and Bruegel-esque carousing.

But only for one day. For the peasants, the remaining 364 days remained “nasty and brutish and short.”

The more recent May Day observance, however, is different. It is called “International Workers’ Day” and it celebrates the struggle to reform the exploitive relationships between lord and serf, master and slave, employer and employee – an attempt to alter the oppressive conditions that reduce workers to chattel.

The newer May Day celebrants demand a fairer share of the profits of their labor and a say in their conditions of work. It is an attempt by workers to have a voice in their destiny.

This struggle first took the form of Union demands for a shorter work week, elimination of child labor, health and welfare benefits, and treatment by employers with respect and dignity. It originated in Chicago in 1886 as part of a strike for an 8 hour work-day and in commemoration of the massacre of the striking workers by the police and National Guard.

Our faculty at College of Marin, and all working people around the world are beneficiaries of this May Day struggle for economic justice. We should honor its legacy.

HAPPY ‘MAY DAY’ – International Workers’ Day! □

COMMENCEMENT NEWS

COM PROFESSOR WALTER TURNER will be the KEYNOTE SPEAKER at this year’s Commencement.

This is a great (and well deserved) honor for Walter and for our faculty; the first time in memory that one of our faculty has been invited to present the keynote address.

Congratulations to Walter, and to the District for the wisdom of their choice. □

AND CONGRATULATIONS TO:

THIS YEAR’S FACULTY RETIREES:
Bill Abright
Oak Dowling
Harriet Eskildsen
Dikran Martin
Mary Piper-Warren
Allen Taylor
Rose Thompson
Larry Tjernell

We wish them all a happy retirement and a joyful and productive future. □

AND IN CASE YOU HAVEN’T HEARD

AFTER 41 YEARS AT COM, CLAUDETTE MULDOWNEY, HR’S FACULTY LIASON COORDINATOR, is retiring. Devon Kinka-Rui has been appointed as Claudette’s replacement. If you have questions about your employment status and/or wish to set up an appointment with Devon, you can reach her at DKinkaRuiz@marin.edu.

We wish Claudette all our best and look forward to a continued great relationship with Devon and Human Resources. □
FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER” (3)

TUBERCULOSIS CLEARANCE

THE CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE and District policy require that all CoM employees provide evidence of a clear TB test every four years.

Human Resources and IT have launched an automatic notification program informing faculty of this requirement. If you have received a notice informing you that you are due for a test, you may be tested at one of our CoM Health Centers (either Kentfield or IVC). Call ext. 7458, or 415-485-9458 for an appointment. Or check the COM Health Center website at: http://www.marin.edu/student_services/health-services/index.html, for locations and hours of service.

Summer dates to receive TB tests are as follow:

KTD: Mon, June 22nd 9-Noon; Follow-up: June 24th
Mon, July 20th 9-Noon; Follow-up: July 22nd
IVC: Mon, Aug 24th 9-Noon; Follow-up: Aug 26th

This is an important requirement. Non-compliance will result in a directive to stay off campus until proof of clearance is provided.

REMEMBERING GUY CARAWAN

FOLKSINGER, FOLKLOLIST, SOCIAL-JUSTICE ACTIVIST and labor champion Guy Carawan, died on May 2nd. Carawan, along with Pete Seeger, was responsible for popularizing the hymn “We Shall Overcome” which became the iconic mantra of the American Civil Rights Movement, and which, along with La Marseillaise and The Internationale, became an anthem of oppressed peoples around the world.

Carawan was music director of the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee, a school that trained labor activists in Appalachia, and which played a critical role in the American Civil Rights Movement, coaching members of SNCC, Martin Luther King, Jr., Ralph Abernathy, Rosa Parks, John Lewis, and other civil rights leaders and activists, in a racially mixed setting.

Carawan performed folk music throughout the country, at social justice gatherings, civil rights marches, in union halls and on picket lines.

But perhaps Carawan’s musical contribution can best be appreciated when in March 1965, in a speech before our U.S. Congress, President Lyndon Johnson said, “…all of us must overcome the crippling legacy of bigotry and injustice, and, WE SHALL OVERCOME.”

INCREASED PAC FUNDING

ONE OF THE CONTRACTUAL BENEFITS that UPM has just negotiated with the District is an increase in professional development funding.

Starting July 1, the PAC professional development fund has been increased from $30,000 to $45,000 per year, and faculty may now apply for up to $1,500 a year – up from $1,000 – to attend a conference or professional meeting.

If you have already applied and have been approved for the former $1,000 limit, you may now apply for additional funds, up to $500, as per our new Agreement.

Please contact our PAC representatives Rinetta Early or Christine Li, if you have questions.
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.
And please make sure you have completed the UPM payroll deduction option, in Human Resources.

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