



Dial ogue



March 3, 2005

• An Open Forum for Faculty at Santa Rosa Junior College •

THE AFA *Dial ogue* HAS BEEN CREATED TO AIR CONCERNS OF ALL FACULTY. THE AFA *Update* WILL CONTINUE TO BE THE FACTUAL VOICE OF THE AFA, WHILE THE AFA *Dial ogue* WILL ENCOURAGE CONVERSATION AND PUBLISH OPINIONS ABOUT WORK PLACE ISSUES AND POLITICAL CONCERNS. WE INVITE ANY FACULTY MEMBER TO SUBMIT LETTERS, ARTICLES, OR OPINION PIECES. AFA RESERVES EDITORIAL PREROGATIVES.

Young Leaders Inquire Within

*by Ann Herbst, AFA Secretary/
Treasurer, Executive Council
Member, and Regular Faculty
in the Mathematics Department*

AFA's brain drain has begun. Currently, all of the 11 regular faculty and 5 adjunct faculty representatives on the AFA Executive Council are over 50 years old. While they all think more and more about retirement and health issues, they also can recall what it is like to have children, be new, have technology change, etc., during any teaching year. Since the AFA Council represents all faculty, it is important to have newer faculty members on the Council to articulate the needs of the newer faculty.

The AFA Council has begun to plan for a transition from the current older council, negotiating team, and grievance officers to a younger team of leaders in the next three years. We need 30-something and 40-something faculty to step up to the plate to begin to plan for where you want SRJC working conditions, salaries, and benefits to be in 10 or 20 years.

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VOTE!

*by Marsa & John Tully, Adjunct
Instructors in the ESL Department*

The act of voting implies a process: studying the issues, discussing them with colleagues and, finally, making a decision. The study and discussion create interest—the more interest the better.

Right now the AFA and College representatives are negotiating a new contract which will affect all of us. The negotiators aren't deaf. The interest shown and the discussions engaged in educate and guide both groups.

Prepare to vote. You have to register as a member of AFA. This can be done easily by downloading the form from the AFA web site or asking the staff at the AFA office to send you one, so you can fill it out and return it. But before you vote, involve yourself in the process. It is in your best interest.

Join AFA!
Membership Form

www.santarosa.edu/afa/
or call 527-4731

Some Sobering Thoughts

*by Marsa & John Tully, Adjunct
Instructors in the ESL Department*

If the following possible scenario doesn't move you to make your voice heard, you're dead.

Suppose your adjunct medical benefit plan ends on June 30, 2005. Not to worry: COBRA kicks in, and for the next 36 months you pay twice what you're paying now. After that, you're on your own. If you are older or have a pre-existing condition, finding a medical plan may be next to impossible. If by chance you do discover one, you may have considerable trouble affording the premium. Let's look at some figures as an example:

A couple is now paying a 50% cost of \$239.22/month for Kaiser. After COBRA runs out, they will have to pay \$801/month for a less favorable plan with similar co-pays. For what is called the Individual Endowment Plan, for which they must answer a health questionnaire, and for which they may be turned down if they have pre-existing conditions, it would

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Young Leaders *(continued)*

In Fall 1988 I joined the SRJC faculty. I was in my late 30's. Within two years SRJC was unionized, and I was doing small jobs for AFA. I gave input into the writing of the original leave policy, namely I spoke of sick leave and bereavement leave for people living in your household who were not necessarily relatives. Next I decided that domestic partners' health benefits was important to me and to SRJC, so I began a seven-year process of working to get them. I began by telling AFA through their annual survey what was important to me. Next I ran for the Council. I volunteered to serve on the District-wide Fringe Benefits Committee. Eventually I ran for Vice President of AFA and then President, where I worked on the negotiation team. The Board of Trustees finally granted Domestic Partner benefits the semester

I was on sabbatical. At the Board meeting where it was finally approved, four of the five AFA Presidents who had worked for that benefit were there.

What will it be like to serve with the "old folks?" For a year or two you will get to work on small projects the Council has or work on large projects you care deeply about, but others may or may not know about. Your colleagues will learn about you, the kind of work you do well for AFA and SRJC, and your SRJC passions. You will be asked to do more and/or back-up a soon-to-be retiring officer. Then, when a major AFA officer retires, you will find yourself being asked to be a leader.

So, come join me on the AFA Council as we work to keep SRJC a place where faculty are respected and valued for the important work we do.

Meet Noreen Evans on St. Patrick's Day

Thursday, March 17
5:15 pm – 6:15 pm
Newman Auditorium

Set aside St. Patrick's Day, Thursday, March 17 from 5:15 pm to 6:15 pm, in Newman Auditorium, to meet Noreen Evans, our 7th District Assemblymember to the California State Legislature. Noreen plans to let us know her thoughts and hear our concerns about four items in the proposed 2005-06 State budget: the Adjunct Medical Benefits Program, adjunct office hours, adjunct parity pay, and changes to the CalSTRS Defined Benefit Plan. She will take questions as time permits.

Sobering *(cont.)*

cost \$723/month for similar coverage. Of course, these are current costs. Who knows how high they might have climbed by 2008 when their COBRA coverage expires?

This is why you must let the District and the State know how much these benefits mean to you and why you must lobby, write letters, and VOTE when the time comes to make a decision on whether or not to ratify the AFA agreement with the District.

FACCC Lobby Day Monday, March 14

Join the Faculty Association
of California Community
Colleges (FACCC) in
State Capitol Room 112

Speakers include:
Senators Jack Scott
(D-Altadena) and
Robert "Bob" Dutton
(R-Rancho Cucamonga);
and Assemblymembers
John Laird (D-Santa Cruz);
Sam Blakeslee
(R-Santa Maria); and
Lori Saldana (D-San Diego).

Lobby Day is free. See the
Lobby Day Agenda
at www.faccc.org.

Call (916) 447-8555
for more information.