



County Employees Management Association

THE CEMAGRAM

You Can Elect your Bosses

There is a saying that goes, "Politics is Union Business." With that focus, American Labor Unions have helped to enact many social improvements such as the 8 hour day, universal public education, and the minimum wage. For public employees the issue is even more stark because you can elect your bosses. Especially this year with a majority of the Board of Supervisors' seats up for election and two of the seats will have no incumbent running.

All that you have to do is get involved. As you will note on page 3, the CEMA Political Action Committee is gearing up to find and help elect candidates that understand the needs of supervisors and middle managers

and we need you to be part of that process.

What ever level of involvement that you are comfortable with will be welcome. Join the committee, walk precincts make phone calls or even just stuff envelopes. Whatever you can do to help make our presence known will help. Even though California has already had its Presidential Primary,



CEMA Political Action Committee Chair, Amando Cablas, President Edna Esguerra, Supervisor Ken Yeager, Immediate Past President Sheila Stevens, and Political Action Committee member, David Ginsborg at a CEMA political fund raiser last year.

primary, there are still two very important elections left this year. Board of Supervisor candidates will stand for election in June, and, if a run off is necessary in any of the races, it would be in November.

So, roll up your sleeves and join in. Help elect your bosses!

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President's Message



By **Edna Esguerra**
President

As we get into 2008, we are faced with a lot of challenges – challenges that each one of us need to deal with.

We have the on going (now 7 years) county budget deficit. The county revenue line is way below the expenses line to a tune of \$ 170 million for the upcoming budget year. All county leaders are looking for ways to slip through this hurricane in one piece. Over the years, we all have participated one way or another within our respective departments - adopted measures to increase revenue, maximize utilization of resources, and increase efficiency, and productivity. Individually, we have seen the expansion of our work loads due to the elimination of positions; henceforth, working those long hours to finish the job.

I want to share with you a “nugget of wisdom” which I got after listening to Pete Kutras at the recent Professional Development luncheon. Amidst this budget “storm”, we, CEMA employees and leaders, as captains of our ship whatever part of the county this may be, need to always keep in mind the value and the “humanness” of our staff and to take care of our

own personal being and health. We need to recognize and acknowledge the contributions our staff continues to provide the best way they can under the circumstances they work.

For CEMA as an organization, there are pivotal challenges – the upcoming Board of Supervisors election where three seats will be vacated due to term limits, the CEMA board election at the end of the year, the dues increase requested by OE3, the business representative transition brought about by the upcoming retirement of our current business representatives, preparation for the 2009 contract negotiation, orientation and training of the new and tenured board members, all of which need to be dealt with thoughtfully and strategically as these will have a lasting impact on the organization as a whole.

It is important that the elected Board of Supervisors understand the roles CEMA employees play, their issues and concerns and be our advocates for these in the bigger picture. In the past, we have been able to move things on issues affecting our members because of the support of our *continued on page 8*

A Word From the Superior Court



by **Mary Mitchell**
Superior Court Executive Board
Member-at-Large

I want to start by wishing all of you a Happy New Year! I hope that the Year of the Rat will be a good one even though it sounds kind of strange. I understand that if this is your year, it is going to be incredibly wonderful or awful year so beware!

As you know that the County CEMA members explored the possibility of changing the STO situation and what the County offered was voted down. You can catch the detailed information on the CEMA web site.

There was also some kind of rumor going around that the Court was going to give us 2 years for Golden

Hand Shake. Please note: it is not true. I am always striving to bring you information as quickly as I receive it. Please do not listen to unfounded rumors.

As you know, spring is here and that means some of your children will be graduating high school and going on to college. This is the time to be thinking about scholarships. Both OE3 and CEMA have scholarships available. Please check the CEMA web site for the information as well as applications. For the last several years, I have found that the CEMA members from Superior Court have not applied for any of the available

scholarships.

I think that it is time to have a General Membership Meetings to discuss your concerns, ideas, and anything that you might have questions on. I will make sure that Tom lets us know when the meeting has been set so you can all attend.

As usual, if you have anything that you want to discuss, please feel free to contact me via e-mail or by phone. I will be moving to Santa Clara Court in May so as soon as I do so, I will let you know of my new phone number.

Enjoy the spring!

Superior Court Membership Meeting Announcement

A membership meeting will be held for all members at Superior Court on Wednesday April 9, 2008 from 12 noon to 1:15pm in room 950 at 111 North Market Street. The Agenda will include a report from the Business Representative on recent representation issues and a discussion from the membership on concerns and issues you want CEMA to address.

All members are urged to attend.

Business Representative's Report



By **Tom Starkey**
Senior Business Representative

The year ahead looks to be very important for CEMA as we begin to build our foundation for contract negotiations in 2009. The first step in that process involves member involvement in our Political Action Process to insure CEMA's endorsed candidates win election to the Board of Supervisors. In the fall of this year we will be selecting a bargaining council which will help CEMA plan the detail of our 2009 Negotiations and begin to assist us with the realignment process which we plan to begin toward the end of the year.

The County Budget deficit situation continues to be a very big concern from my perspective only because the deficits are not getting smaller and continue to be projected out to 2012 at over \$150 million each year. At the mid year budget review it was reported that the deficit for the 2008/09 budget could be between \$171 to \$212 million depending on what happens with the State Budget this summer. This will mean that all County employees including our members in CEMA with low seniority will face lay off threats for some years to come.

On the representation front there are a few items to report. Recently Park

Ranger Supervisors had their schedules changed to avoid overtime payments. (They are among a very small group of CEMA classifications who are eligible for overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act.) CEMA met with the Department regarding the issue and then filed a grievance to resolve the matter. Labor Relations agreed with CEMA and all Park Ranger Supervisors were paid the overtime including premium overtime they would have received had they worked their normal schedule.

As you all know in December the 4% pay raise took affect along with the deduction from your pay of 3.93% to pay for the cost of the 2.5 at 55 PERS retirement improvement. Some members noticed a small reduction in take home pay. CEMA believes the true cost of the benefit is 4.1% and that we were lead to believe the cost to be 3.93% by County Negotiators. A letter was sent to Labor Relations in January asserting that the County misrepresented the issue during 2006 negotiations and that the County needs to make members whole for the real cost of the PERS beyond 3.93%. We are currently pursuing meet and confer sessions regarding the issue and will report the outcome when the dust settles.

Meeting for Members at the Social Services Agency

CEMA members who work at the Social Services Agency are encouraged to attend a meeting to discuss changes the Social Services Agency is proposing regarding the use of accrued vacation right before retirement. The meeting will be held on Monday, April 7, 2008 from 12 Noon to 1:15 pm in the Saratoga Room on the 2nd floor at the 333 Julian complex. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend.

The Agency has informed CEMA that they are proposing a change to the long standing practice within the agency of allowing employees to use accrued STO leave right up to an announced retirement date. We have requested to meet and confer regarding this proposed change . We are holding the meeting to get direction from the membership and to inform you of possible options on how to proceed.



Professional Development Committee

CEMA Scholarship Applications available on the Web



By **Dolores Morales**
2nd Vice President
Professional Development



Pete Kutras addresses CEMA luncheon

The February Professional Development Luncheon was quite a success. More than three hundred were in attendance to hear Santa Clara County Executive Pete Kutras speak.

Our next luncheon will be in April and will feature Board of Supervisor's Chair, Pete McHugh. Check with your ticket seller for date and location.

Applications are now available for CEMA scholarships on the CEMA website; www.sccema.org.

Each year CEMA presents two scholarships to the children of CEMA members who are graduating from high school and going on to college. Two additional scholarships are awarded to the children of CEMA members who are currently enrolled as college undergraduates and will continue as full time students next year.

A fifth scholarship, the Keith Garvey Scholarship, is awarded to the child of a CEMA member who is an undergraduate in college and who plans to work in public service after graduation. This scholarship, which is named for the late CEMA President who died while in office, has not been awarded on a couple of occasions due to a lack of applications. So, if your child has any ambition to work in city, county, state or federal government or in public education, make sure that she or he applies for the Keith Garvey Scholarship.

The final deadline for submitting scholarship applications including letters of recommendation and transcripts is March 31st. Everything must be in to CEMA by the end of business on that date.



Luncheon attendees pictured (clockwise from front left) Ray Cantu, Dora Espinoza, Pam Svrclin, Dawna Mencimer, Wayne Resch, Marianne Smith, Gina Davis, and Donald Hunter.

Political Action Committee

OE 3 Semi-Annual Meeting



by **Amando Cablas**
Political Action Committee
chair

If you would like the opportunity to participate in an OE 3 membership meeting and tour the USS Hornet at the same time, then be sure to attend the OE 3 Semi-Annual Meeting on March 30.

Date: March 30th

Time: Registration - from 9 am
Meeting - 1 p.m.

Where USS Hornet, Alameda, CA

The CEMA PAC Committee has been meeting to plan out a busy 2008 Election season. By the time you read this we will have held our Board of Supervisors Candidate interviews and will be well on our way to endorsing candidates for Board of Supervisors races in the 2nd, 3rd and 5th Districts. Jose Esteves, a member from Superior Court, is running in the 3rd District and Richard Hobbs, a member from the Office of Human Relations, is running in the 2nd District. Both members will be interviewed along with all other candidates running. The PAC committee spent a lot of time developing the questions for the candidates to answer and worked hard to get members to participate in the

interview process.

In the next few months the focus of our committee will shift to getting members involved and plugged into the campaigns of our endorsed candidates so CEMA can make an impact in getting our endorsed candidates elected. Members are urged to help out. Contact me or Tom Starkey at the CEMA office if you would like to volunteer.

Members from the CEMA PAC along with members from OE3 attended the South Bay Labor Council COPE Banquet held on March 14, 2008 and the Casino Night fundraiser held on February 22 hosted by the Building Trades Council.

Date Change For District 90 Picnic

The OE 3, District 90 Picnic which is usually in August has been moved up to June 14th this year. So, mark your calendars. The Picnic will still be held in Christmas Hill Park in Gilroy. Tickets are now available at the CEMA office.

Visit the CEMA Website

**WWW.SCCEMA.
ORG**

For
***Late breaking
news**

***Calendar of
Events**

***Important
documents**

CEMA continues Interest Based Meetings with the County

In 2006 County Negotiations, the County and CEMA agreed to convene a Labor Management Interest Based Committee to address: training programs for new CEMA employees, health care cost containment issues, improvements to the CEMA Performance Appraisal and problems with processing CEMA dues. Changes to the performance appraisal were completed in the spring of 2007.

In the fall of 2007, CEMA appointed a committee to address dues issues. The Committee was comprised of Laura Colunga from the Assessor's Office, Trish Haines from Public Health and Edna Esguerra, the President of CEMA. Tom Starkey, CEMA Business Representative and Rachel Martinez, the CEMA Administrative Assistant also joined the committee. The County's committee included the Labor Relations Manager, a Manager that oversees the Payroll Service Centers and a Manager from the Finance Agency.

CEMA outlined several dues processing issues including some suggested changes to the reports CEMA receives from the County that will insure the CEMA membership data base is kept accurate. Another significant area of concern for CEMA was the timely processing of new memberships and membership withdrawals.

After two productive meetings in which we explored all of the problems and developed a greater understanding of how the County creates and generates its reports we arrived

at the following solutions to our dues processing issues:

- When CEMA discovers a member application or withdrawal has not been processed within one pay period CEMA is to notify the Labor Relations Manager who will e-mail the Service Center to insure the application gets processed timely.
- The County will instruct the Service Centers to ask the CEMA member, who comes to them to withdraw membership, to notify CEMA of their intention.
- The County also agreed to include the CEMA application in the packet that all new employees receive and to keep CEMA applications available with all of the Services Centers.
- Through the mutual discussion of the information data that the County provided we discovered ways to sort the data differently to give us useful data for keeping the data base accurate without many hours of effort.

The next area of focus in our interest based meetings with the County will be training for new CEMA level employees. Hopefully the joint committee will be able to identify specific areas of training a new CEMA manager needs to be successful. Such training might include: Performance management, training on how to address discipline issues, County specific processes and basic budget knowledge.

STO / Sick Leave Wrap Up

As most of you are probably aware, the proposal to exchange eight days of Sick Leave for five and one tenth days of annual leave each year was defeated. The vote was 213 to reject versus 86 to accept. None the less it is clear that Sick Leave and Annual Leave / STO will be hot topics for negotiations next year.



STO Committee member, Glenn Payne, explains the math at a membership meeting on Enborg Lane.

We would like to thank the members who put in so much time and effort on the STO/Sick Leave Committee and who did such a good job of explaining this issue to the membership. The committee members were: Edna Esguerra, CEMA President, Dolores Morales, CEMA 2nd Vice-President, Luann Hahn, Sandy Valesteros, and Glenn Payne. The committee was staffed by Randy Johnese.



CEMA

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March - April 2008

President's Report - continued from page 2

Board of Supervisors. The composition of the County Board of Supervisors will determine the future direction of the County. It is important that the board has members who understand and represent the general membership's "unique" best interest. By "unique", I mean the needs and interests of middle managers who are in a bargaining unit.

You have read in the previous article about the requested dues increase by OE3. You can continue keeping apprised of the decisions the board members are making by accessing the board meeting minutes on the CEMA website, www.sccema.org. Many of you have expressed

concerns. The CEMA board will be in communication with all members soon, to be sure we understand your concerns, needs, and hopes for the future of CEMA. I will keep you posted.

To those who may not be aware, Randy plans to retire sometime in the near future and Tom early next year (real early). It is important that the board play an active role in the selection of the new business representatives and will be working with OE3 in accomplishing this. Tom's years with CEMA and Randy's expertise will leave some void in the organization which hopefully can be minimized by an effective transition plan which includes proper

selection of candidates.

It seemed like it was just yesterday; but no, our current contract is due to be renewed in August 2009. You, the members showed us lessons from the past, lessons which we need to adapt to the next one. You will be asked for your participation in this process, so please be on the look out and be ready.

Thank you. Enjoy the beauty and the rejuvenation spring brings and have a blessed Easter.