



CEMAGRAM

County Employees Management Association

Pete Kutras on the State of the County

by **Randy Johnese**
Business Representative

Santa Clara County Executive, Pete Kutras, spoke to the Professional Development Luncheon sponsored by CEMA and the County on December 3rd. In his comments he reviewed the year past and outlined some of the challenges facing the county in the year coming.



Officer and the controversy of moving that appointment from the judges to the County Executive's office; the General Services Administration staff for assisting in dismantling GSA and seamlessly creating a new Procurement

Department; the Information Systems Department for creating an award winning County Website; Public Health for how they dealt with the flu vaccine disaster and County Communications for keeping the Emergency Response System functioning.

Pete also outlined the challenges facing the County in the coming year. On the federal front, the Bush Administration is not California friendly. At the State level the state budget is still not balanced. However the passage of propositions 1A and 63 will help. 1A will prevent the (see **Pete Kutras** on page 3)

Mr. Kutras began with a couple of humorous stories that highlighted the need to be flexible in difficult times. He then commented on how well County Managers and staff handled a very difficult year last year. In particular he cited: Health and Hospitals response to the closing of San Jose Medical Center; the Registrar of Voters handling of multiple elections with a record turnout in November's general election; the Probation Departments poise in dealing with transition to a new Chief Probation

a look inside

Pete Kutras - State of the County
 PAGE 1

President's Message
 PAGE 2

Clerical Office Supervisor Reclassification
 PAGE 3

Business Representative's Report
 PAGE 4

A Word from Superior Court Become A CEMA Liaison STO Cash Out Reminder
 PAGE 5

Political Action CEMA Application Reminder What's on the CEMA Website?
 PAGE 6

CEMA Elections
 PAGE 7

CEMA Executive Board

President
Edna Esguerra
(408) 494-7461

1st Vice President
Richard Hobbs
(408) 792-2340

2nd Vice President
Richard Rappachietta
(408) 918-7028

Treasurer
Peter Pham
(408) 423-0778

Secretary
Consuelo Collard
(408) 928-3805

Members-at-Large
Barbara Lang
(408) 885-5904

Greg Monteverde
(408) 299-5301

Mark Hand
(408) 885-6347

Mary Mitchell
(408) 808-3483

Immediate Past President
Sheila Stevens
(408) 928-3131

Staff

Business Representatives
Tom Starkey
Randy Johnese

Administrative Assistant
Rachel Martinez

(408) 289-9691
1654 The Alameda, Suite 110
San José, CA 95126

President's Message



by **Edna Esguerra**
President

The spirit of Christmas is everywhere one goes – the malls are full with goods and alive with people shopping. Christmas carols soothe the weary mind and the heavy heart. The stores are full of various decorations some flashy while some are not.

I would like to share with you some of CEMA's accomplishments as we end this year. CEMA has made tremendous leaps and improvements in a lot of areas. CEMA successfully restructured its relationship with OE3 making CEMA stronger as a bargaining agent, developed and ratified more comprehensive and updated by-laws, improved on the content and appearance of the CEMAGRAM, developed a detailed and wide-ranging communications plan and established different active and working committees. The Professional Development committee also made numerous improvements in process to make the service more accessible to all members. CEMA also created and added committees designed to look at processes within CEMA's operations and strengthen service delivery by identifying strengths and improvements needed by CEMA's business representatives. CEMA successfully went through the realignment process; extended the contract with some members taking advantage of the 2-year service retirement program offered

by the county; and worked with the county on Measure C. All of these were accomplished because of the leadership, commitment and hard work of all members of the Executive Board and CEMA membership from around the County. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to all the Executive Board and to all members who participated in the various committees.

But there is more to do; and the year ahead presents its own challenge. For us middle managers, that of creative leadership, efficiency, resourcefulness and making do with very limited resources. Together, we will continue to support each other; to advance CEMA members' needs at the county, state and federal levels. This may not be easy, but, "Where there is a will, there is a way". Accomplishing things may take time – but it can and will be done.

I want to wish all of you a blessed, peaceful, and safe holiday season-full of love!!!!



Clerical Supervisors Finally Get Reclassified

by Tom Starkey,
Senior Business Representative



CEMA has been working with Clerical Office Supervisors (COS) in the Department of Mental Health for over four years to get them reclassified appropriately. The final resolution, which was not forthcoming due to stalled out negotiations, took CEMA endorsed Board of Supervisor member Jim Beall Jr. to intervene and direct new talks between Mental Health, CEMA and the Employee Services Agency. The outcome, while not exactly what CEMA and the members wanted, is acceptable. The new classification will be titled Mental Health Office Supervisor.

Members will see their pay increase by 5.5%. Members Gloria Flores and Sue Valdez were part of the CEMA committee that met with Management.

Members in the Mental Health Department brought the issue of reclassification to CEMA's attention over 4 years ago. CEMA immediately got the Department to support an Executive Management initiated reclassification study. No action

occurred until 2002 when desk audits and questionnaires were filled out. CEMA assisted members with this process. It then took over 2 years for the Employee Services Agency (ESA) to release the study to CEMA. This occurred only after CEMA pressured ESA and members met with the Mental Health Director to force ESA to complete the study.

The COS classification is the lowest paid among the County's clerical supervisors. Improving the salary for the COS has been a priority for CEMA since members brought the issue to our attention. In salary realignment negotiations in 1999 and 2002 the COS classification received 13% in special wage adjustments which CEMA advocated

for as part of the solution to address the reclassification issue.

The significant time delay in getting the COS reclassification completed is totally unacceptable to CEMA. It is one of many examples of how insensitive the County is towards resolving

classification issues in a timely manor for CEMA represented employees. The fact the County took four years to complete the COS reclassification study will be used to justify stronger rights regarding reclassification when we bargain a new contract in 2006.

Pete Kutras (Continued from p. 1)

State from hi-jacking County revenues and 63 will provide thirty-five million dollars for mental health programs. However, Pete cautioned, the State can still cut County funding and there are still cuts that need to be made in the County budget.

Speaking of the State of the County, Mr. Kutras stated that there has been a steep reduction in the County's deficit but there is still a deficit and the forecast is that there will continue to be a deficit for at least the next five years. Early retirements reduced that deficit by thirty million dollars in fiscal years '05 and '06 but the deficit in fiscal year '06 is still \$127 million. Some of this will be handled by using one time funds but there is no way around reduction targets for many County departments. According to Mr. Kutras, we will get this done because we have to but he cautioned each of us in these difficult time to, "...take care of yourselves, your co-workers and colleagues."



Negotiating Team members Gloria Flores and Sue Valdez review the final agreement with Business Rep Tom Starkey

Business Representative's Report



by Tom Starkey
Senior Business Representative

As we approach the end of 2004 I would like to share the significant events of this year. CEMA focused on improving communication with the membership and this activity insured members were involved in the many issues that affected them in 2004. Member involvement in CEMA is the best it has been in the past 10 years. I believe members will look back on this year as being very important in the history of CEMA.

In January Pete Kutras the County Executive addressed the new Executive Board of CEMA regarding the upcoming budget deficit and shared ways managers may have to deal with fewer resources.

The Executive Board formed a Restructuring Committee to focus on the new affiliation agreement with Local 3 and to address ways CEMA can be more powerful and effective at representing members.

The Executive Board formed an Advisory Committee on processes and procedures within CEMA which was charged with the task of making recommendations for changes to the CEMA by-laws.

In March CEMA negotiated an extension to the County Agreement to 2006 that provides for 1% of base wage for realignments in 2004 but no across the board salary increase and a 3% increase in 2005. Members also received the 2 year service credit for early retirement. It was overwhelmingly ratified by members.

CEMA launched the CEMA Liaison Program and recruited and trained over 45 CEMA Liaisons to improve communications at each work site where CEMA has members.

In June over 50 members were affected by layoffs due to the serious budget deficit. Only one member was actually laid off and the rest were either transferred to vacant positions in the same class or claimed previously held positions or were in placed.

In July approximately 100 CEMA members took advantage of the early retirement incentive and left county service leaving many departments with leadership gaps.

Realignment negotiations were completed and ratified by the membership in July in the County

Chapter. Over 550 bargaining unit employees or 40% of the bargaining unit received at least 1% realignment.

In August, CEMA negotiated an extension agreement for the Superior Court Chapter of CEMA that was ratified by members. This agreement extended all current benefits to 2007, provided the 2 year service credit for early retirement, and provided one time bonus payments for the two year period totalling \$3,250.

CEMA launched a Political Action Committee to build member involvement in CEMA's Political Action Program.

Members ratified significant changes to CEMA's bylaws and supported an increase in dues to fund two Business Representatives, an increased CEMA operating budget and membership dues in the South Bay Labor Council and International Union of Operating Engineers Union.

In November the new CEMA Executive Board was elected to serve 2 year terms. An Election committee

Continued on Page 6

A WORD FROM SUPERIOR COURT MEMBER-AT- LARGE



by Mary Mitchell

First of all, I would like to congratulate all of the CEMA retirees. You have all worked hard and long, and given us your best. We, who are remaining thank you.

On November 4, 2004 at 9:30 a.m., Tom Starkey, Kimberly Henderson and I met with the Court Executives. We had quite fruitful discussions and were able resolve many issues. This was our first of quarterly meeting that we are hoping to have. I will let you know when the next meeting date will be so you can e-mail me with any concerns and questions.

Please remember that if you have any grievances, you need to contact me and Tom Starkey immediately so we can assist you. The quarterly meetings are designed for clarification, readjustments of job classifications, clarification of job specifications and other issues.

This year, the negotiation committee will meet more frequently and I intend to have more CEMA membership meetings so that we are all tuned into your needs.

Have wonderful holidays and see you next year.

Make CEMA Stronger- Become a CEMA Liaison

CEMA continues to urge members at each major work location (VMC, SSA, County Government Center on Hedding, Burger Drive and Superior Court) to volunteer to become a CEMA Liaison for your work area. The major role of a CEMA Liaison is to inform CEMA members about important CEMA issues and events and to approach non members to join CEMA. The CEMA Liaison will also keep members informed about Professional Development events and may be a ticket seller. CEMA Liaisons are not expected to function like a union steward and will play a vital role to improve communications with the membership. If you are interested in becoming a CEMA Liaison please contact Tom Starkey at the CEMA office. Your actions will make CEMA stronger!



STO CASH OUT REMINDER

For those County of Santa Clara and Superior Court members who did not use any sick leave from approximately Dec. 22, 2003 to Dec. 19, 2004, (specifically, the start of pay period 04/01 to the last day of pay period 04/26 in 2004), you are entitled to cash out 40 hours of STO with an option of cashing out up to 80 hours of STO maximum. To receive this MOU benefit, County of Santa Clara members must submit their request for 40 or 80 hours of cash-out to the Labor Relations Office in January. Superior Court members must also submit their requests to the Superior Court Human Resources Office during the month of January, 2005. Payment will be made during the month of February, 2005.



Political Action

by Sheila Stevens

The Political Action Committee has been meeting monthly at the CEMA office on the third Thursday from 12:00 to 1:30 PM. All members are always welcome to attend. The main focus of the committee has been to finalize a work plan that guides the work of the CEMA PAC. After that is completed the committee will develop the specific plan for CEMA political action efforts for the 2005-2006 period. A component of the plan will be a membership survey to determine specific political action goals for the period based on needs identified by the members. Also the committee has begun to plan out how CEMA will become involved with the South Bay Labor Council and the OE3 District 90 Political Action Program.

The committee has also discussed how the CEMA PAC will be involved in a Library Parcel Tax increase that may be voted on in the Spring 2005. Our members at the County Library will be severely impacted if the voters do not continue paying the parcel tax for library services that county residents receive from our great county library system.

The defeat of Measure C which was the Binding Interest Arbitration Measure was a real victory for the Board of Supervisors, The South Bay Labor Council, SEIU Local 715, SEIU 535 and CEMA OE3 who were the primary organizations that fought the measure. CEMA and OE3 contributed \$6,000 to the campaign which was significant contribution among all the donations that were received

What is on the CEMA Website

If you visit the CEMA website at www.sccema.org, you will first find yourself at the CEMA home page. Here you will find the most recent CEMA news. There is a lot more on the CEMA website though.

At the top of any page on the CEMA website is a blue header. Within the blue header are several 'buttons': "Who are we?", "Professional Development", "CEMAGRAM", "Important Documents", "Executive Board", "Executive Board Minutes", and "Join CEMA Now". Each of these buttons will take you to a new page on the website.

"Who are we?" This button will lead you to a page that introduces the CEMA staff and their assignments.

"Professional Development" will take you to a page that announces the next Professional Development Luncheon and provides a link to the flyer for that luncheon. This page also lists all of the Professional Development Ticket Sellers.

Continued on next page

(Tom Starkey continued from page 4) was formed per bylaws to oversee all aspects of the election process.

This has been a very busy and productive year for CEMA. The Executive Board and all the members of CEMA who participated in the various committees are to be thanked. There is a renewed commitment from the members of CEMA to make CEMA more responsive and powerful. In 2005, we will continue to build on this momentum to get a strong contract in 2006. Member involvement will continue to make the difference. CEMA will only be as strong as members make it.

REMINDER TO UPDATE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Now that CEMA members are also members of the Operating Engineers Union Local 3 we need to have **all** members fill out a revised OE3/CEMA membership application. This is a reminder that, if you have not filled out the new application and beneficiary card information, you are encouraged to call Rachel Martinez at the CEMA office. Without your OE3 membership you are not entitled to the \$2,500 death gratuity benefit that is offered to all OE3 members. Also the updated membership application ensures we have updated information on your address and other important membership information.

CEMA Elections

by **Randy Johnese,**
Business Representative

Nominations for the CEMA Executive Board closed on November 17th with no contest for any office and with no candidate for three offices. Pursuant to the by-laws, the Elections Committee has made nominations for the offices for which there were no candidates. Since there were no contested offices, there will be no election. Therefore, the CEMA officers for 2005 - 2006 will be:

- President - Edna Esguerra
- 1st Vice-President - Richard Rapacchietta
- 2nd Vice-President - Mark Hand
- Secretary - Consuelo Collard



Greg Monteverde

- Treasurer - Peter Pham
- Immediate Past President - Sheila Stevens
- County Members-at-Large - Carole LaBarbera, Dolores Morales, and Marie Munley
- Superior Court Member-at-Large - Mary Mitchell



Richard Hobbs

We would like to thank the outgoing executive board members; Richard Hobbs, Barbara Lang and Greg Monteverde, for their efforts on behalf of CEMA and the CEMA membership during the last year. In addition to his Vice-Presidential duties, Richard Hobbs headed up the CEMA Restructuring Committee which was instrumental in redefining C E M A ' s affiliation with the Operating Engineers. Greg Monteverde chaired and Barbara Lang was active in the C E M A Communications Committee which oversaw the redesign of both The CEMAGRAM and the CEMA website. Again, thank you for your time and effort!



Barbara Lang

Web continued

“CEMAGRAM” links a page that gives you access to an archive with descriptions of the contents of current and past issues of the CEMAGRAM and provides links to PDF copies of those issues.

“Important Documents” takes you to a page with links to the CEMA County Chapter MOU and extension, the CEMA Court Chapter MOU and extension, County salaries on the County website,

the Professional Development Reimbursement Form, the Tuition Reimbursement Form, and the CEMA Bylaws.

“Executive Board” is a page that lists the members of the CEMA Executive Board and their contact information.

“Executive Board Minutes” provides an archive of the minutes of the CEMA Executive Board.

“Join CEMA Now” links a printable application for membership in CEMA.

In addition to the above, in the darker blue band below the header are three buttons which take you to the home page, and the home pages for the County and Court Chapters of CEMA.

Along the left side of every CEMA webpage is a gray border. This also contains important links. First is the “Contact CEMA” section which lists the CEMA business representatives and their email addresses, as well as CEMA’s office address, phone and fax numbers.

As you browse further down this border you will find a number of icons which will link you to web pages or PDF documents. First there is the “CEMA Calendar” which lists all CEMA meetings and events for next few months. Next is a link to the list of Professional Development Ticket Sellers. After that is a link to the “Union Plus” web site where you can learn about Union Privilege benefits. Then there is a link to a list of CEMA Liaisons. Next are additional links to the Professional Development Page, Important Documents Page, and the Executive Board Minutes Archive. Finally there is a form to submit your email if you wish to be added to CEMA’s “Email Alert” mailing list.

Please visit the CEMA website and, if you have any questions, comments or criticisms, email the webmaster at rjohnese@sccema.org or just click on the “webmaster” link at the bottom of any CEMA webpage.



1654 the Alameda, Suite 110
San Jose, CA 95126

FIRST CLASS MAIL
US POSTAGE

PAID

SAN JOSE, CA
PERMIT NO. 2730

cemagram

December 2004



Happy Holidays

From the Officers & Staff of
CEMA

