

# AAUP NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 4

Montgomery College Chapter

February, 2004



## President's Corner

By Harry Zarin

### Welcome Back...I think

After a restful break with an opportunity to relax, to visit with family and friends, and to rejuvenate ourselves, it was nice to return to work, or so we thought. The College experienced snow and ice which disrupted initial classes. Facilities did a great job of readying the campuses. Whether we should have opened on the first day of class is a moot question. Let's hope the ice and snow stays away so we can resume the business of educating.

### The Budget:

The Board of Trustees has proposed a conservative FY2005 budget that includes a modest increase of 4.1% over the current FY 04 operating budget. The request supports the increased costs of operating the College's new health sciences center and includes a tuition increase, increased enrollment demands and tries to take into consideration shrinking state aid. The tuition

increase is proposed at \$3.00/credit hour (to \$89.00) for in-county residents, \$6.00/credit hour (to \$183.00) for out of county residents, and \$9.00/credit hour (to \$236.00) for out of state residents.

Now we must wait to see what will happen at both the State and County levels. Fortunately, for community colleges in the state, Governor Ehrlich's proposed budget includes a restoration of the Cade/BCC (Baltimore City Community College) formulas. According to Tony Kinkel, Executive Director of the Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MCAA), "These formulas are used to calculate the state aid appropriation for community colleges. This adds approximately \$3.9 million to the operating budgets of the Cade funded college for a 2.7% increase....To fully restore the operating budgets in FY '05 would require an additional \$4.8 million for Cade funded colleges...." Fully funding the Cade/BCC formulas would minimize tuition increases needed at each community college and increase current and prospective students access to higher education.

To support the proposed 2005 budget, you should send a letter to the Governor and Maryland General Assembly members that represent your district, asking them to approve both the proposed budget and necessary revenue enhancements. More information regarding the MCAA position paper is available on the Chapter website where a copy is posted.

### Negotiations:

This year the Chapter entered into negotiations with the representatives of management with the goal of completing the salary portion of negotiations prior to when the Board submitted its proposed budget to the County Council. The Chapter has always felt it was critical for the Board to have this information in order to develop a proposed budget that includes more accurate salary information.

This year, however, negotiations were delayed due to the untimely death of Dean Dale Johnson. Our team is meeting with management representatives on Friday afternoons in order to work toward a tentative agreement. We are hopeful that the salary portion of the negotiations will be completed within a relatively short time. As in the past, specifics remain confidential, not to be revealed to the public until a date agreed

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### Vulnerable Faculty

By Stephen Newmann

Recently, faculty and staff have raised concerns about the potential for Identity Theft due to Social Security numbers and bank account numbers being displayed on direct deposit payroll statements. The Office of Business Services (OBS) has known about this concern for some time and claims to be working to remedy the situation. According to OBS, "The vendor who provides the software for such printing has been contacted and the programs are being modified to remove the bank information as well as masking the first five digits of the social security number." OBS says that "Once these programs have been implemented and tested, employees will be notified of the changes. A target date for completion is for the first pay of December."

It's now half way through February, and our stubs still contain this sensitive information.

Perhaps whoever is responsible for effecting the necessary changes doesn't realize the seriousness of this situation. Identity theft is an increasing problem throughout America with ten million victims last year alone. Experts say that the number of victims has been doubling every year since 2000. Once a person has had his or her credit ruined as a result of identity theft, the damage is done. The news is full of stories of people who have been unable to restore their good credit after having had their identity stolen and misused. This high-profit, low-risk, low-penalty crime always involves the misappropriation of names, social security numbers, credit card numbers or other pieces of personal information for fraudulent purposes.

HR or IT or "The Vendor" needs to get this serious problem corrected immediately—or sooner. Don't leave us vulnerable any longer. ♣

### Who's Who in 2004

President	Harry Zarin – (G)	353-7767
Secretary	Rose Sachs – (R)	279-5077
Treasurer	Bill Talbot– (R)	279-5014
VP – G	Tammy Peery –(G)	353-7768
VP – R	Judith Prask –(R)	279-5126
VP – TP	Marcia Bronstein –(TP)	650-1369
Past President	Ken Weiner – (R)	279-5203
Governance Liaison	Jim O'Brien --(R)	279-5233
Grievance Officer	Don Day – (R)	279-5235
At-large Member	Joe Thompson (G)	353-7751
At-large Member	Trudy Cohen – (TP)	650-1412

upon by management and the Chapter. We hope that a tentative agreement will be reached in time for our spring meeting so that a full faculty vote can occur.

#### Distance Learning:

The side letter agreement between the Chapter and management that speaks to faculty pay for developing a distance learning class and distance learning class sizes expires this summer on June 30<sup>th</sup>. The original letter, available for viewing on the Chapter website, <http://users.erols.com/aaup-mc/>, was developed in May, 2001, a time of far fewer distance learning offerings. At the request of management, a committee of chapter members and administrators are discussing distance learning issues that are contractual in nature. Tammy Peery-English G, Samantha Veneruso-English R, Ron Liss, and Kathy Wessman comprise this joint committee, which began its work earlier this month with a goal of resolving issues prior to the expirations of the current agreement. At that point, the Chapter's executive committee and management will review the agreement, adding any final revisions to the current side letter agreement.

#### Chapter Needs:

The MC AAUP Chapter has served faculty for over 20 years. Believe it or not some early leaders are still helping to manage its affairs: Don Day, Grievance Officer for over 10 years; Ken Weiner, current Past President; Jim O'Brien, Governance Officer and recent Newsletter editor. The Chapter calls on faculty, especially those with committee or leadership experience, to contribute their energy to Chapter leadership needs. If you have previous experience from elsewhere, if you can write articles for our newsletter, if you want to work with a dedicated group of colleagues, contact any member of the Executive Committee. Your participation will secure the present and shape the future of MC's AAUP Chapter.

#### Summer ESH Limitations:

Last semester, I sent an e-mail to the administration voicing our concern about summer ESH limitation, stating, once again, that faculty has been identified as the only group of employees at the college whose income has been limited. We all know that summer work is not contractually obligated; however, when the College faces a budget crunch, one of management's first responses is to limit faculty income. In the mid-1990's faculty and management reached a nuanced agreement regarding summer ESH limitation. Limitation was not imposed until the 55/45 ratio of full-time to part-time ESH was exceeded. We will continue to discuss these issues and

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will keep the Chapter informed.

**Counselor Issues Committee:**

Several years ago, four newly created joint labor/management committees met to continue negotiations in some critical areas. One committee examined counselors' work issues. Over a year ago, the committee completed its work and submitted a final report to the Executive Committee and management. The Executive Committee was pleased with the final report. However, management sent recommendations to the Committee asking for a review of one of the recommendations. Last fall the Committee submitted a revised report to management. This semester, we are persuing proposed recommendations in the hope that an agreement can be reached for implementation in the fall of 2004. ♣

**Opinion: A Rube Goldberg Route**

by Jack Suruda

Besides all the other problems out there— budget hemorrhaging and cutbacks and wrangling politicians—we also face another nagging worry, an embarrassment actually, the fear that we will not be able to complete negotiations, the agreement between faculty and management, before the end of spring semester. (Unfortunately, the same reality has happened more than once in the past.) This year, the negotiations cover several issues including a salary increment (cost of living plus salary adjustment).

The process sets up a simple enough procedure. Faculty negotiators for our AAUP Chapter and representatives for management meet with one another, usually bi-weekly; both thoroughly address the issues; then, the faculty and management teams come to a tentative agreement that must be fully ratified by chapter membership and the board of trustees. Ideally, the full chapter vote occurs at the collegewide meeting in May. Yes? No, not necessarily.

Something quite different can, unfortunately, easily occur. Consider this possibility. Negotiations string out through the spring. The pace slackens. Somebody gets cold feet. The management team exhibits a case of the jitters; then, the old habit of conflict creeps out of the closet to replace interest-based bargaining. Everything sputters to a stop. Anger ensues. Finally, we run out of time.

Eventually, after a pause, a deus-ex-machina-politico combo determines our fate. Bob Ehrlich, Senate President Mike Miller, House Speaker Busch, the Montgomery County delegation, Douglas Duncan, the county council, and whatever happens with slots, taxes, and appropriations fuse into a spectacular Rube Goldberg-esque creation. Their various entwined energies save our lunch.

Phooey. We deserve better than this possible Goldberg route. 1979 enabling legislation gave faculty the empowering ability to negotiate salary and working conditions. That includes a responsibility on our part to bring issues to closure. Then, the College forwards consequent budget data to the County.

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**AAUP  
Newsletter  
Montgomery  
College Chapter**

Co-editors:  
Steve Newmann  
Jack Suruda

Artist:  
David Carter

## Good Mojo

By Jack Suruda

On Friday, January 23, 2004, with the temperature outside dipping to 20 degrees, the Administration stepped up to the plate and belted out a home run, honoring 168 faculty, staff, and administrators for their years of service at MC—7 35's, 12 30's, 30 25's, 30 20's, 36 15's, and 53 10's.

Smiling in a bright multi-colored jacket topped with a black collar, President Charlene Nunley described the Length of Service Award as, "one of my favorite events." She tabulated the honorees' total effect as "3055 years of service." Then, President Nunley added, "If everyone here impacted one person each day, you will have affected three quarters of a million students...I thank each of you for what you do every day."

The award ceremony proceeded smoothly, presided over by a mixture of tri-campus administrators: Judy Ackerman, Paula Matusky, Marshall Moore, Bob Wirth, Lynda van Barga, Karen Bass, and Vivian Lawyer.

Award winners included a remarkable medley of college personnel: admissions staff, biologists and physics professors, security workers, electricians, plumbers, math and English teachers, counselors, health personnel, sociologists, business and economics instructors, media experts, office aides, co-ordinators, celebrated artists, music director, athletic coaches, psychologists, librarians, wrestling coach, director of Macklin, student advocates, deans, sheet metal workers, graphic design artists, video experts, web gurus, environmentalists, safety officers, statisticians, transfer staff, IT specialists, art teachers, aquatic experts, and others, too. Add to the list AAUP's presence: Bill Patterson, perennial activist (35); Jeff Schwartz, recent treasurer (30); Jack Suruda, newsletter co-editor (25); Rose Sachs, chief negotiator (20); Marcia Bronstein, Executive Committee (10); Judith Prask, Executive Committee (10); Harry Zarin, current president (10); and numerous members.

After a celebratory roast chicken luncheon, everyone enjoyed dessert choices: lemon vanilla cake, German chocolate cake, pecan pie, and freshly brewed coffee or tea.

Presenters didn't lack words in honoring either experienced pros at the 35 year level or first time 10 year award winners.

Award givers referred to winners as everything from "jack-of-all-trades," "humorist," "excellent team member," "a special jewel," "ardent student advocate," to "positive," "dependable," "enthusiastic," "up-beat," "eager to work," "creative," "outstanding in service," "totally loyal."

The yearly program in the Theatre Arts Arena closed with cheers, whistles, and genuine applause—all within an 11:30 until 1:30 time frame—short, sweet, and sincere—a home run event. ♣

## Alter-Union Info (AFT)

By Jack Suruda

On Thursday evening, February 11<sup>th</sup>, over 200 faculty filled a renovated lecture hall on the Essex campus of CCBC. The occasion, the 7:30 P.M. monthly board meeting in the Administration Building, was presided over by state senator Francis X. Kelly (D), chairman, and Irving McPhail, chancellor of the college.

Agenda item number three focused everyone's attention—collective bargaining. Regina Shea, Professor of Accounting, addressed the room full of faculty, deans, and board members. The tenured fifteen-year faculty union president covered the bases: faculty support, reasons for a union, and empowering state legislation. She cited 260 signed cards (77% of the faculty) endorsing AFT as the union representative. She described faculty discontent, "77% want fairness, input, and respect...Only unionization provides a legitimate structure to settle issues. It allows us to speak with one voice." Shea explained that faculty were not interested in hauling in a laundry list of demands before the board. Noting that the union was intent on "changing the culture," she offered the Board the opportunity "to recognize our union voluntarily." Then Professor Shea informed the audience of two bills pending in the Maryland Assembly to recognize AFT as the sole bargaining agent: Senate Bill 391 and House Bill 530.

Seven years ago, CCBC failed in its union aspirations. Since those fitful days back then, the present leadership seems more on track to achieving past and present faculty goals. ♣

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We want a salary increment. If others from Annapolis pile on at the end after we've finished, so be it.

But we want to come to a closure on our own terms, with our own version of the future, not by giving up and not by accommodating some other Goldberg route.

With courage and determination, both faculty and management should carry negotiations to closure. ♣

### New Members

Since our last update on membership, 29 new members have joined the MC Chapter of AAUP. Germantown has 8; Rockville, 16; Takoma Park, 5. Below are the new members' names along with their campus and discipline. Congratulations to all of our new members on making a wise and useful choice, and welcome to the organization. Now you should start thinking about how you might most effectively serve the MC Chapter.

Aronne	Maria	RV	Math
Avery	Dawn	RV	Music
Baca	Alberto	TP	Health PE
Bernier	Sharon L.	TP	Nursing
Bontems	Susan	G	Chemistry
Cosgrove	James	RV	Biology
Crowley	Anita	G	Student Development
Cutter	Paul	RV	Chemistry
Escobar	Alyson	RV	Hospitality Mgmt
Feeney	Patrick	RV	Sociology
Folwell	Denise	RV	English
Hill	Audrey	G	Counseling
Jean-Juhen	David	TP	Student Services
Johannseu	Patricia	RV	VCT
Katiraie	Farajollah Fred	RV	Math
Levitas	Tulin	RV	Reading ESL
McCullough	DJ	RV	Counseling
Middleton	Jacqueline	G	AC/BA/MG/LA
OKane	Deborah	TP	BMIS
Sagasti	Alessandra	G	Biology
Sallie	Jack	G	Advise/Counsel
Siegel	Efstathia	RV	English
Smith	Zeporia	RV	Education
Stearns	Deborah	RV	Psychology
Stone	M. Kevin	RV	Criminal Justice
Subedi	Ram	TP	Math
Taylor	Karen	G	WDCE
Thai	Gary	G	Computer Science
Twombly	Charlotte	RV	Sociology

## Snow Jobs

By Jack Suruda & Stephen Newmann

On January 26, 27, 28, the whole college community faced treacherous amounts of snow and ice and responded commendably. Information from the College, however, varied in helpfulness and timeliness.

Monday, when nearly everything else in Montgomery County was closed, MC opened at noon. However, by 4 P.M. the College realized the wisdom of the rest of the County and closed at 5 P.M. The College took too long to make an initial decision and then took too long to make the second (and correct) decision. Twice too long.

Common Sense score: C-  
Timing: C

Tuesday, the College won big time, swiftly informing MC personnel of the school's closing. (At 5:40 A.M., on both voice mail and email, workers learned of the decision to close school. Wow!)

Common Sense score: A+  
Timing: A+

Wednesday, along with some additional snowfall, the big freeze re-emerged. Unfortunately, information disappeared: no College news on TV or radio, no voice mail, no email—only a black void. For those of us trying to catch a clue, it seemed like some giant brain somewhere had lost its way, straining to make a decision.

Common Sense score: F  
Timing: F

Final icing, Friday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, classes started at 10 A.M., but building doors didn't open until 10 A.M!!!! Commendably, at 5:13 A.M., the College informed all personnel by both e-mail and College website.

Common Sense score: C  
Timing: A+

Suggestion: Many faculty live more than 5 minutes from MC. (Yes, faculty reside in Frederick, Thurmont, Damascus, Silver Spring, Columbia, D.C., Baltimore, Falls Church, Olney, and elsewhere.) These faculty need timely information. Fortunately, we do have alternatives. In fact, we have THREE wonderful, super-efficient methods of dispensing status information: the College website, personal email, and voice mail!

Finally, where they function within the college community, snow trees—informal telephone communication grids in departments and divisions—

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work quickly and efficiently to alert staff to decisions, but only when actually initiated by chairs or deans. Where operative (alternative #4), they also include an early morning personal touch, “Terri, no school today....”

When successful, the College relied on on e-mail or voice mail or the website or combinations of these. Why not rely on them always? ♣



\* The term "fog of war" originated during the Napoleonic era when black-powder weapons produced miasmatic clouds that quickly obscured battlefield vision. By extension the phrase means the inability to discern reality.