



MVEA Advocate

The Official Publication of the Moreno Valley Educators Association

MVEA's Accomplishments

By Janet MacMillan, MVEA President

June 2011

Volume 21
Number 9

2010-2011 has been another difficult year, primarily because of the state's budget situation. Despite that, together we have accomplished much for our members and our students.

Our Political Action Committee led the race to elect education friendly School Board members. We succeeded in helping to seat CJ Johnson and Jesús Holguin. Your MVEA leadership team meets regularly with School Board members to share your perspective with them. Anne Prows, Katherine Underwood, Omar Tinoco, Pat Fulgenzi, Eligio Rangel, José Alcalá and Denise Chavez were on this team. Ann Adler, our Executive Director, and Conrad Ohlson, our emeritus Executive Director, brought CTA's expertise to the fight.

The Human Rights, Political Action and Bargaining Support/Crisis committees met together to keep members involved in supporting our bargaining efforts. They arranged for letter writing and email campaigns to the legislators, speakers at School Board meetings and outreach to the community during Open House activities. Anne Prows, Danny Alvarez, Denise Chavez and Pat Fulgenzi spearheaded these projects. Their success depended on each of you who participated. Thanks also to Katherine Underwood, Pat Fulgenzi, Anne Prows, Danny Alvarez, Jeri Lane, Angie Cruz-Trujillo Gary Doubleday, Bill Kalogonis, Brian Lively, Eulaine Melanson, and Judy Rosenberg who spoke on behalf of valued programs at School Board meetings.

The Grievance Committee met monthly and suggested problem solving solutions to many grievances. Harold Acord, Eric Viebach, Clement Young and Roseann Reynolds participated in these discussions and in the process learned more about the Contract and the history behind many of the Articles.

CTA required MVEA to submit updated Bylaws and Standing Rules. Rep Council has final approval on new documents that were recommended by the Bylaws Committee of Corey Moore, Gabriel

Vega, Carol von Mizener, Amar Samet, Paulette McDole and Connie Pruett.

MVEA worked with the District on a survey to ascertain what you thought should be offered through the Professional Development department. Amy Hall, Susan Cook, Juanita Quiroz, Sylvia Taylor, Mike Sorter and Omar Tinoco were the MVEA representatives to this committee. Thanks to those who responded.

Many of you took the time to participate in Subject Advisory Councils and their sub committees. Thanks to those of you who worked to resolve issues involving pacing guides and benchmark tests. MVEA appoints members to these committees. Your Site Reps or the MVEA office staff can email you application forms. The goal is to have committees in place before the end of this year.

The Election Committee has had a record number of meetings this year to deal with counting votes as well as responding to challenges. It takes hours to count ballots and verify election results. Peggy Murphy, Bill Martin, Eulaine Melanson, Theresa Buggage, Denise West, Felicia Heck, Amy Hall, Craig Givens and Laurie Russo have always been available for this important task. Thanks to all of you who expressed your views at the General Meeting and voted on the Tentative Agreement. Seventy-five percent of our membership, or 1,230 people cast votes. It was great participation.

Our major challenge, once again, was in responding to the situations created by the state budget. There is hope, at this point, that the budget for 2011-2012 will not include major cuts for education. However, the legislature has not come to consensus on this topic as yet. Changes will occur as our legislators deliberate on what will be approved as law. The extension of the current taxes is still a controversial issue. In addition, your CTA officers and staff are working to stop any attacks on permanent status or the inclusion of test scores as part of the evaluation process. I urge you to provide your home

Inside this issue:

MVEA's Accomplishments	1
"Fighting"	2
2011-12 MVEA Exec. Board	2
Educator of the Month	3
MVEA's Voice Was Heard!	3
Friends Remembered	4
Important Dates	4

Visit us on the Internet!
MVEAinfo.com

email address to your Site Reps so that we can contact you over the summer with updates, and let you know when your voice is needed to convince our legislators to do the right thing. Together we can be part of the process to ensure that our schools have adequate funding and that our professional standards are maintained.

Enjoy your summer break. Take time for relaxation and renewal.

“Fighting” Isn’t What it Used to Be

By Ann Adler, MVEA Executive Director

Recently, an MVEA member expressed frustration with the tentative agreement and exclaimed, “It doesn’t seem like MVEA fights for us like it used to.” I applaud this person for speaking these thoughts. It seems to me that if one person is thinking this, then so are others.

My first response to anyone who feels this way is, “**YOU ARE MVEA.**” So if you are someone who feels MVEA needs to modify its program or change its agenda, I invite you to become involved and work toward an MVEA that better meets your needs and the needs of its collective membership. After all, MVEA is a democratic organization that bases everything it does on surveys, Rep Council discussions, and motions. In terms of bargaining, members vote on the final agreement or it does not go forward. When MVEA does act on issues, it is with member input and not the decisions of a few. Who you elect as Site Reps and MVEA officers is critical because it is your Executive Board and Rep Council that vote and make policy.

Perhaps, MVEA does not toot its own horn loud enough about the many advocacy positions we take for you. Let me give a few examples.

Your MVEA leadership advocates for you day in and day out. Whether it is a grievance or a “griefance” (something that is not a

violation of the contract, but needs attention because it gives our members grief) your MVEA problem solving team is “Johnny or Joanie on the spot.” Janet MacMillan, Harold Acord, Connie Pruet, and I meet weekly to discuss member concerns and issues, and to strategize on how to support our members while adhering to the Contract. Connie and Harold meet with the District to resolve issues at least once per month in addition to regular phone calls and emails to Human Resources and other District entities. Your Executive Board members also field calls and issues daily.

In terms of bargaining, your MVEA team has spent the equivalent of 43 hours since February at the table to negotiate the best agreement possible given the state’s financial situation. For the past three years, we have taken 2 budget cut days while many districts around us were taking 7 or more. This year, because we were so successful in the past, we had to make harder choices. All decisions your Negotiation Team and Executive Board made in bargaining were based on surveys, talking to members and gathering input at Rep Council.

Prior to bargaining and during the year, our MVEA leadership has met with the District repeatedly in an attempt to place fewer people in temp positions for the 2011-12 school year. We have used CTA legal services’ time and energy to research the law. The

District is following the Ed Code. However, because of MVEA working with them on this issue, the District is lowering the number of temps for 2011-12.

MVEA has advocated for those who received lay off notices. We have painstakingly researched each and every concern from those who were “rif’d.” I personally spent many hours reading and briefing the CTA lawyer about our issues, answering emails and calling people who had specific concerns. Bringing people back has been the same. Your problem solving team has spent hours and hours working with Human Resources to make sure we have a consistent and fair process that follows the Contract.

These are but a few examples of some of the major issues that your leadership deals with on your behalf. MVEA does “fight” for you -- daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly. MVEA may not always get the response you want from the District in employee/ employer relations. Whether it is in curriculum, contract, Ed Code, administrator/unit member issues, or other things, MVEA does “fight” for you just like it has done in the past and will continue to do in the future.

An injury to one is an injury to all. Together we are stronger. If you are not involved, think about it for next year. Make a difference for yourself, your colleagues, and your collective membership...

2011-2012 MVEA Executive Board

The MVEA Executive Board is responsible for seeing that the mission and goals of the Association are implemented. Usually the Board meets once a month, but Bargaining has resulted in many extra meetings being scheduled with little notice. The commitment of the Board has allowed us to move forward quickly on critical issues.

There will be some changes as we begin the 2011-2012 academic year. Mike Sorter, the current Middle School Director and the previous Director of Membership, decided not to run again. Mike has been on the Executive Board for more consecutive years than anyone else. He could be counted on to speak up for member rights and identify where consensus might exist as the Board deliberated on issues. He will be missed. Also leaving the Board is Cathy Fulgenzi. For the past 4 years Cathy has ensured that the Advocate included information important to our members and went out to the sites in a timely manner. The job is a difficult one since on many occasions articles came to her late. Hopefully Cathy and Mike will assist us next year on committees.

Welcome new Board members Denise Chavez and Erica Ness. There will be run off elections to fill the remaining positions on the Board. Thank you to all who ran. Please stay involved.

Educator of the Month: Nancy Reinhiller

Nancy Reinhiller was the April Educator of the Month. She is a veteran teacher with 30 years of experience at the K-8 level. Currently she is assigned as Serrano's reading/language arts coach. Her colleagues recommended her for this recognition because she is truly a master of all things related to elementary education. Her BA includes a specialization in math education and her Master's is in reading.

Nancy's primary role is to improve learning for our students by supporting teachers as they work to strengthen their instructional strategies. This occurs through group presentations, joint planning meetings with grade levels, and individual sug-

gestions. Coaching can be difficult, but Nancy has quietly convinced the staff at Serrano that she is on their team. Her colleagues report that she is knowledgeable about current trends and best practices, and her willingness to share this information has contributed to making Serrano a leader in curricular areas and in the use of technology.

Nancy contributes far beyond her coaching position. She works with students who are struggling with reading, as well as teaching writing strategies in each classroom. She has regular contact with all of the 580 students at Serrano. When an assignment for second graders was to write a friendly letter, she responded to each one personally. The students thought that was

really cool.

Nancy works with the community to secure much needed supplies for Serrano. Recently, she contacted a program called donation.org to get reading backpacks for kindergarten students. Parents could then help these beginning readers to practice in a fun way. Nancy always goes the extra mile through activities such as this.

Nancy has a life away from school. She and her husband, Mark, enjoy traveling and cooking. She is a University of North Dakota hockey fan, but her focus now is on planning her daughter's October wedding. Congratulations to Nancy Reinhiller, a support and friend to the staff at Serrano Elementary School!

MVEA's Voice Was Heard in Sacramento!

By Connie Pruett, MVEA Vice-President

Four MVEA leaders heeded CTA's State of Emergency call, May 9th-13th in Sacramento – Harold Acord, José Alcalá, Amy Hall, and I.

Harold and I were there from Monday through Wednesday noon, while José was there Tuesday and Wednesday and Amy spent the entire week. We lobbied numerous legislators by handing them information regarding the amount of cuts that each school district within their area has suffered. Some of us actually met with the legislators while others met with staff.

On Tuesday, we were joined by parents as we returned to legislative offices with more information on how much education has been cut in the last three years.

The Senate Education Committee held a hearing on Wednesday to discuss the onerous Dutton, Huff, and Runner bills which you received on a hot pink Action Alert earlier this month. We packed the hearing room to listen to these bills being presented and discussed by the authors. The Runner bill was withdrawn and not even discussed. We testified at the hearing and urged a "no" vote on these two remaining bills.

Both were defeated in committee! We like to think the appearance of about 100 teachers and educators in that hearing room had an effect.

On Thursday, a press conference was held with State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson. Events were held in the Capital and culminated in the arrest of the "Sacramento 27." A huge rally was held in Sacramento on Friday afternoon as we held our own rally in San Bernardino at the National Orange Show.

On Wednesday, May 18th I traveled back to Sacramento for Presidents' Lobby Day. I was able to talk to our Senator Bill Emmerson along with five other local leaders. He gave us assurances that education would not be cut next year; that we would have more money than this year. We all shared devastating budget cut stories from our locals and explained that public education cannot survive any more cuts.

I attempted to meet with Paul Cook, our Assemblyman, but he was tied up in committee all day. I spoke to his staff and left information for him.

On Friday, the "Sacramento 27," as those who volunteered to be arrested have been called, included sev-

eral CTA Board members and CTA President David Sanchez. They remained outside of two prominent Republican leaders' offices after the Capital closed. They were arrested and spent the night in jail while other CTA members kept a vigil outside the building. Most State Police were sympathetic to our cause as they have been victims of budget cuts too. However, they had a job, and so did we.

These are steps along the long road to fight for our schools, for our students, and for the future of our profession. But we need your help too! We opened the door to these legislators, and now you, your families, and neighbors need to keep walking through that door with your own emails and letters to your legislators. We have to let them know how bad it is, how much we have lost, and how much our students have lost. Even if every word is not read, the sheer number of letters going to their offices has an impact – an impact that should not, and cannot be ignored. We are making a difference. Our arguments are powerful, and our cause is touching... PLEASE speak up and speak out – LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD IN SACRAMENTO!

Friends Remembered

By Mike Sorter and Bill Kalogonis

Important Dates:

- **June 1** Rep Council mtg. @ 4 p.m.
- **June 2** Pass Out Flyers at Serrano @ 5:15 p.m., at Seneca @ 5:45 p.m.
- **June 10** Last Day of School
- **June 14** School Board mtg @ 7 p.m.
- **June 28** School Board mtg @ 7 p.m.
- **Aug. 9** Prep Day
- **Aug. 10** School Starts
- **Aug 17** Executive Board mtg @ 4 p.m.
- **Aug 24** Rep Council Mtg @ 4 p.m.
- **Aug 27** New Rep Training 10-3 @ MVEA Office

Alfonso "Al" Ferrer, a Landmark Middle School teacher and MVEA Representative, passed away suddenly on January 2, 2011.

He taught social studies at Landmark since the school opened in 1991. He began his teaching career in the Moreno Valley Unified School District just the year before that at Butterfield. As this school year comes to an end, it is just not the same ending without Al. I worked side by side with him for 20 years. Take the time to appreciate your co-workers and friends. We take so much for granted on a daily basis. Life sometimes ends so abruptly, with no explanation or good-byes. Al's infectious laugh and our shared love of history and food will always be remembered. As a teacher, and as a part-time preacher, he served his students, school, MVEA, and his congregation members well. Rest in peace, dear friend.

Ronn Raymond was not only a member of the original Valley View staff, but he was also one of the nicest and most popular teachers I ever met. He was loved and appreciated by everyone, and I never heard anyone ever utter a single negative word about him. To me the most remarkable thing about Ron was his great sense of humor. No one could ever walk past him without hearing one of his wisecracks. He always had a smile on his face, and he was a friend to everyone. He will be greatly missed by the staff and students of Valley View, but will always be loved for his kindness and his ability to lift everyone's spirit just by his presence. May God grant him as much joy in Heaven as he brought to everyone who knew him on Earth.

Darrell Ronto was a good friend and neighbor to me from the very first time I met him when we had rooms next to each other in the portables at Valley View back in 1991. I was honored to have been able to serve him as Site Rep since his father had served in the IBEW as Business Agent for the Electrical Brotherhood in Ohio where Darrell grew up. Darrell was a dedicated professional and an effective Department Chair for a number of years. I know that he always stood by his convictions, regardless of the political ramifications, because he was a man of integrity and honor. He will be missed, but never forgotten, and we will remember him in our hearts as well because Darrell, too, was a giant at Valley View as a champion for his students and colleagues.

MVEA Executive Board:

President	Janet MacMillan	Director of Member Services	José Alcalá
Vice-President	Connie Pruett	Director of Political Action	Anne Prows
Secretary	Peggy Murphy	Co-Director of Elementary	Susan Cook
Treasurer	Tom Weir	Co-Director of Elementary	Omar Tinoco
Executive Director	Ann Adler	Director of Middle School	Mike Sorter
Director of Contract Maintenance	Harold Acord	Director of High School	Juanita Quiroz
Director of Communication	Cathy Fulgenzi	CTA State Council Members	Harold Acord,
Director of Human Rights	Danny Alvarez		José Alcalá, Janet MacMillan, Connie Pruett
Director of Instruction & Prof. Dev.	Amy Hall	CTA Board Rep. District O	Mikki Cichocki
		NEA Director District 11	Katherine Underwood