

# General Council Times

A publication of the CSUEU Communications Committee

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Pre-GC issue • October 2007

## Podcasting and photoblogging at CSEA's 64th General Council

A podcast is a highly compressed audio file that can be downloaded from the Internet and listened to on a portable MP3 player or any PC computer with the appropriate technology (iTunes, etc.). We are using this cutting-edge technology to share GC happenings with interested state employees.

Please note: All candidates and affiliate leaders are invited to interview, and roving reporters will be available throughout GC.

### To be interviewed:

At your convenience, go to the CSUEU booth, or locate the GC Times office, or stop a roving reporter.

### To listen:

Go to the CSEA Web site: [www.calcsea.org](http://www.calcsea.org).

### To see the photoblog:

Go to the CSEA Web site: [www.calcsea.org/blog](http://www.calcsea.org/blog).

## Schedule-at-a-glance

### Thursday

- 9 a.m.: CSEA BOD
- 5 p.m.: Fiscal Committee
- 6 p.m.: Rules Committee
- 7 p.m.: Local 1000 Sergeant-At-Arms Orientation Dinner
- 8 p.m.: CSUEU BOD

### Friday

- 8 a.m.: Rules Committee
- 9 a.m.: Resolution Hearings
- 10 a.m.: Benefits Fair; Local 1000 Council
- 7 p.m. ACSS BOD & Delegates; CSEA Retirees, Inc, Delegates; CSUEU Delegates meetings
- 8 p.m.: Local 1000 Celebration

### Saturday

- 8 a.m.: Tellers & SAA Orientation; Resolutions (if necessary)
- 8:30 a.m.: Credentials
- 1 p.m.: GC begins
- 7:30 p.m.: CSUEU dinner

### Sunday

- 6:30 a.m.: Non-denominational Service; Mass
- 7 a.m.: Voting
- 9 a.m.: GC resumes
- 10 a.m.: Election report/runoffs
- Noon: Luncheon
- 1:30 p.m.: GC resumes
- 3:30 p.m.: Affiliate breakouts
- 9 p.m.: GC Dance

### Monday

- 9 a.m.: GC resumes
- Noon: Luncheon
- 1:30 p.m.: GC resumes
- 3 p.m.: Roll Call/New Business
- 4 p.m.: Adjournment

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# Does CSEA have a future?

Committee meets over last seven months to attempt an answer

By Kevin Glasson, CSUEU Northridge

General Council veterans know a thing or two about controversy. After all, CSEA's massive conference (its 64th in a 75-year history) has seen its share. Ask many a veteran and you will hear a similar tale: "hold on to your hat, the ride can get rough" they are known to say in as many different ways this sentiment can be expressed. Well, this year—if CSEA's leaders get their way—may come as a pleasant surprise to the over 1000 delegates sent from the four affiliates up and down the state. A semi-secret committee of 20 met over the last seven months to attempt, what some would say, the impossible: put the usual discord of GC, and, more importantly, the internal in-fighting going on continually throughout the time between conferences, behind us.

In August 2006, as part of a mediation settlement between two of the warring factions, it was decided to set up a group to examine the future of CSEA and to make recommendations on how to best make the association successful for all of its affiliate members. This temporary, not-so-well-known committee was called the Committee On the Future of CSEA. The committee was made up of the four CSEA officers and four representatives from each of the affiliates, namely, the CSEA Retirees, Inc., CSUEU, ACSS, and SEIU Local 1000. CSEA President J.J. Jelencic explained the group's charge. "This was a group to try to resolve the internal conflict," he said, adding, "to stop the internal strife."

This committee, after meeting for two days at a time each month since March (plus many hours of sub-committee work away from the table), created a whole package of CSEA Bylaws changes (see sidebar summary of B&P 8/07 on page 2) that the official statement calls their "best effort at compromise and vision" (see box on this page). This package will be presented to the delegates (already sent to the delegates in a special mailing and posted to the CSEA website) and voted on during this GC. Like all Bylaws changes it must pass by a two-thirds majority. What's different than other Bylaws resolutions is



Photo by Josie Mooney

The Committee On the Future of CSEA (left to right): Back row: Richard Duarte, J.J. Jelencic, Arlene Shriner-Espinoza, Frank Luna Jr., Russell Kilday-Hicks, Frank Ruffino, John Williams, Annel Martin, Jim Hard, Christine Thomas; Front row: Hylah Jacques, Barbara LaPlante, Olin King, Tim Behrens, Yvonne Walker, Marc Bautista, Cathy Hackett, Roger Marxen; Missing: Patricia Busby, Donna Snodgrass

the committee urges the passage of this package in its entirety. (The committee sent a letter to the GC Rules Committee, composed of all the living GC past presidents, for an exception to the rules to allow it to be considered as a set that cannot be broken up.)

According to committee members, because many of the provisions are based on

compromises across different issues—to pick it apart would endanger the entire, precarious agreement. "If you pull on one string, the whole thing is in danger of unraveling," Jelencic said.

Pat Busby of Chapter 6, CSEA Retirees, Inc., weighed in on this point. "Each bylaw change depends on the other," she said. "Each Affiliate officer and the of-

ficers of the association knew what their jobs were," she said. "I accepted the appointment to the committee because I felt at that time, and still do, that the success of the committee was one of the most important events that would happen to CSEA now and in the future," she said. "In our wisdom we cut a big giant into four parts  
See "CSEA's future" on page 2

## Dear GC delegates and all concerned with CSEA's future

The statewide leadership of CSEA and its four affiliates, for the first time in far too long, collectively believe that CSEA has a bright future—a future where the four affiliates and CSEA leaders have clearly defined roles and pledge to work together on achieving all our goals. The Committee On the Future of CSEA has been meeting since March 2007—over 100 hours sharing the same table—plus many more of sub-committee work, putting forward a tremendous, painstaking effort to ensure CSEA can move forward as an organization that can make a difference in the lives of working Californians.

The Committee On the Future of CSEA has reached agreement on several critical issues, creating a streamlined and more cohesive CSEA, including: autonomous and coordinated political action, smooth rollovers of members between affiliates, a more cooperative CSEA committee appointment procedure, clarification of dispute resolution options, clearly defined employee-employer roles, and a new CSEA business model providing for growth and financial security.

This committee has crafted an entire package of Bylaws changes that represents our best efforts at both vision and compromise. (It is enclosed for your review.) This package allows for the needs of the association to better function and serve the affiliates while providing the affiliates the autonomy and support they need to carry out their respective programs. Because the package is so carefully constructed, we collectively ask for your support in its entirety.

Thank you for your continued support for CSEA's future. CSEA has re-discovered the power of unity! With your help, we can all proclaim proudly—we are CSEA!

In solidarity,

The Committee On the Future of CSEA

Committee members; J.J. Jelencic, Hylah Jacques, Donna Snodgrass, Frank Luna Jr., Tim Behrens, Olin King, Frank Ruffino, Arlene Shriner-Espinoza, Barbara LaPlante, Roger Marxen, John A. Williams, Patricia Busby, Christine Thomas, Richard Duarte, Russell Kilday-Hicks, Annel Martin, Jim Hard, Cathy Hackett, Marc Bautista, Yvonne Walker

## Region VII holds 'mock GC' Billed as 'last one' by RD Lease

By Russell Kilday-Hicks, CSUEU SF

CSEA Region VII Director Gus Lease, a long-time activist, opened his 2007 "mock GC" with an ominous statement, "This is probably our last regional meeting, depending on how you vote at GC," he said. Gus was speaking to about 30 people hearty enough to show up on an early Saturday morning on Sept. 22, in Santa Clara. Some were there to present on a GC topic. A few others were on the campaign trail, speeches at the ready. Maybe more than a few came with the desire to actually understand what



Photo by Russell Kilday-Hicks

Dave Hart, RD Gus Lease (standing), RD David Okumura, and CSEA President J.J. Jelencic, part of the head table at the "mock GC" in Santa Clara

to expect when CSEA opens its 64th General Council conference in San Jose the first week of October.

While it's hard to predict what exactly will happen, a few of the presenters did come with advice on how to make it not so overwhelming. To begin with, Lease reminded people that the first task on arrival is to register (bring your photo ID; this year is different than year's past). Lease recom-

mended assigning friends to cover the various committee meetings and compare notes so you don't miss something important. He advised to check the seating chart so that you can be back on the floor on time for votes. He also said it helps to organize your folder so you can be prepared to follow along when resolutions are considered.

CSEA President J.J. Jelencic talked  
See "Mock GC" on page 2

## GC 101

By Ray Finnell, CSUEU Bakersfield

As you arrive at the California State Employee Association's 64th General Council, take a moment to look around at this year's delegates: of every three people you see, chances are only two of them have been delegates before. Many of us know how our own particular affiliates are structured and how they operate, but some of us may be a bit shaky on the big picture. For new delegates, and for experienced delegates who want a refresher course, here's an overview of the Association's organizational scheme and the operating principles of General Council.

CSEA has a 75-year history. Started modestly in 1931 (after a number of years of organizing by the founders) to create a public-service retirement system (CalPERS, now one of the largest in the world), CSEA is made up of four affiliates, each incorporated separately: the Association of California State Supervisors (ACSS), with about 6,000 members; CSEA Retirees, Inc. with about 30,000 mem-

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## CSEA's future ...

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[incorporation], that giant could not survive without some major changes to its body. The charge, in my opinion, was to save the giant at all cost, and I believe we did," she concluded.

Retirees, Inc. Executive VP Roger Marxen believes the delegates will support the package because of who was in the room and his faith in the process. "This resolution was the product of the CSEA officers and the affiliate leadership. Because of this and the intense debate on all the issues, it needs to be accepted in toto," he said. "There are portions of the package I would have drafted differently. I was but one of twenty reaching a consensus decision," Marxen added.

Many committee members said it wasn't easy getting this agreement. "Because they were devoted people, they were suspicious of the intent of the other persons in the room," Busby said. At the beginning professional labor mediator Larry Fox, hired by SEIU to assist the discussion, asked each member to briefly describe CSEA. The description ranged from Edsel and Ford Fiesta, to horse drawn buggy, and a lumbering tank, implying that CSEA was falling short of expectations and doing damage to boot.

Russell Kilday-Hicks, Chapter 305 president from SF State in the CSU system said, "Getting to where we are has not been easy. The committee had some rough times. Probably all of us started out not believing that anything good would come of it. But we also knew that it had to be done if CSEA were to have a future."

A key element was building trust. "The wonderful part about the sessions was sitting and watching each person start trusting the other," Busby said. "The atmosphere was tense, productive, harsh, chaotic, loving, frustrating, but most of all, giving. When we began to trust and understand, then compromise occurred and with compromise came success."

Kilday-Hicks attributed success to the mediator and SEIU's commitment to see a resolution through. "This whole positive outcome would not have been possible without SEIU's commitment and resources," Kilday-Hicks said. "They assigned us two pretty tough cookies to herd the cats, so to speak, and to stand up to challenge us and to prevent us from falling into all too familiar patterns of antagonism. The mediators always had the goal of 'getting to yes,' of making sure the committee reached a compromise that everyone at the table could live with," he said. Also assigned to the process was labor veteran Josie Mooney from SEIU.

Kilday-Hicks continued, "There were a few times when I wanted Larry and Josie to just close the door, hold back the food, turn off the air, etc. to force people used to being at each other's throats, or directing each other's lawyers on the offensive, to focus on finding common ground—it was that important." Kilday-Hicks said. "But, to their credit, they

helped us work through the issues just short of drastic measures."

Marxen also praised the facilitator brought in by SEIU, "We were provided with an excellent facilitator leading to a polished product." And Busby, too, said they were key. "I have a deep respect for all of the members who served on the committee and a special thanks to the mediators. We would not have succeeded without them," Busby said.

Part of the group's success can also be attributed to the ground rules of how the committee would operate. Jelencic felt one rule in particular was critical. "We agreed early on that we wanted a candid conversation," he said. "We decided that outside the room the members could talk about the content but without saying who said what. Nothing would be attributed to anyone but the issues could be discussed. The intent was not to keep it secret, but confidential," he concluded.

While the other affiliates for the most part involved their top officers, CSUEU took a slightly different tact when it came time to name their members to this important committee. CSUEU President Pat Gantt chose people with local chapter experience and, notably, not himself or any of the other three statewide VPs to represent their interests. While this may have riled some of the other committee members, it also insured the participation of a wider, more diverse group. (See the statement box on page one for the committee members.) CSEA president told his team he would abide by whatever they agreed to. Kilday-Hicks was thankful to be appointed, even though he was not an officer. "It was an amazing thing to be part of," he said.

Some of the members thought it shouldn't end here, that the process should continue. "Many of the committee members expressed the desire to hold a mediated exercise like this with CSEA's leaders from time to time to refocus our efforts on a shared vision," Kilday-Hicks said. "When you add up the numbers, a healthy CSEA can grow by 130,000 members just in these four affiliates, essentially doubling our size. We all wanted to figure out how to go there, or even beyond," he concluded.

Jelencic wants the delegates to consider the measures carefully and hopes he can believe in the process. "If entered into in good faith, it's an improvement on the organization's ability to function. But I feel like St. Thomas Aquinas, 'Lord give me faith,'" he said.

Marxen, though confident it would pass, said, "I hope this is not an opportunity lost!" Busby, too, felt it must pass. "If the delegates reject the package I hope they have something to put in its place," she said. "To leave things as they are will be a disaster for CSEA and the affiliates."

Long-time veteran Busby was also thankful to be involved. "I have served CSEA for 54 years, and I consider this as my most important contribution," she said. "I feel very blessed to have been a part of such a momentous time in the history of CSEA."

*I've served CSEA for 54 years, and I consider this as my most important contribution.*  
—Pat Busby

## Committee On the Future Bylaws changes summary

Art. 3, Sec. 4—Allows an affiliate to organize employees of BUs or other employee organizations not represented by any affiliate and to organize non-state public employees.

Art. 3, Sec. 6—Defines special members as employees of the State of California who desire to participate in any CSEA benefits programs, with their dues set by CSEA's BoD.

Art. 3, Sec. 11—Affiliates will take the steps necessary to transfer members within the assoc. and that the Retirees affiliate will take over those employees who retire from state employment and CSEA will not create a separate organization for retired or excluded state employees.

Art. 4, Sec. 1—Removes the regional directors and adds two affiliate officers to the BoD, allows the BoD to create subsidiaries to market products and services to outside entities.

Art. 4, Sec. 4—Removes all duties from Regional Directors (RD) and Assistant RDs (ARD).

Art. 4, Sec. 8—Deletes RDs and ARDs from language requiring their attendance of basic representation training courses.

Art. 4, Sec. 9—Repeals the authority to elect or replace RDs and ARDs beyond GC in 2009.

Art. 5, Sec. 1—Changes the term of office from 2 years to 3 years for officers of CSEA after 2009.

Art. 5, Sec. 2—Repeals the election of RDs and ARDs.

Art. 5, Sec. 3—If an affiliate has no provision, as of 2009, changes the term of office for affiliate officers from 2 years to 3 years.

Art. 7, Sec. 1—Removes the requirement for each region to be represented by a RD and an ARD.

Art. 9, Sec. 5—Obligates the affiliates to indemnify CSEA from the actions of any CSEA staff assigned to the affiliate.

Art. 9, Sec. 8—Expands the ability of CSEA to cancel the charter of an affiliate for not meeting its financial or other obligations to CSEA or for not complying with arbitration or court orders or for creating unreasonable risk of liability for CSEA. Also changes the procedure for requesting the canceling of an affiliate's charter and provides for a majority vote of the BoD to determine whether grounds do or do not exist for cancel-

ation. Establishes the burden of proof for all charges shall be with CSEA. Provides for a neutral arbitrator to preside over these hearings and to submit a decision subject to the approval of the BoD. Also provides for a mediation process.

Art. 9, Sec. 10—Provides that affiliates may establish their own PACs and that CSEA and the affiliates have the right to oppose or support any candidate or ballot measure.

Art. 10, Sec. 2—Removes RDs and ARDs from being GC delegates.

Art. 10, Sec. 4—Removes RDs and ARDs from delegate elections and provides for 3-year terms for GC delegates after 2009.

Art. 10, Sec. 12—Repeals qualification requirements for RDs and ARDs.

Art. 10, Sec. 13—Removes RDs and ARDs from being installed.

Art. 11, Sec. 2—Changes the makeup of the Fiscal Committee of CSEA to include the CFO of each affiliate and will be chaired by the CSEA sec'y/treasurer. Defines alternate committee members and their ability to substitute for regular members.

Art. 11, Sec. 4—Allows the CSEA president to appoint or remove anyone from a committee. Appointing from an affiliate-provided list. Removal is subject to BoD approval.

Art. 11, Sec. 5—Changes the Election Tellers Committee to remove RDs and add affiliate presidents.

Art. 14, Sec. 3—Establishes an operating reserve in CSEA at no direct cost to any affiliate.

Art. 15, Sec. 2—Allows affiliates to assume responsibility for hiring and firing of staff assigned, but mandates that CSEA is still the formal employer. Provides for binding arbitration in the event of disagreements over employee conduct.

Art. 15, Sec. 3—Authority to represent CSEA in Collective Bargaining with its employees will now be a committee of two representatives from each affiliate and two selected by the CSEA president.

Art. 17, Sec. 3—GC will meet every three years after 2009.

Art. 17, Sec. 9—Removes ARDs from being able to attend closed BoD meetings.

## Mock GC ...

Continued from page 1

about the budget process. The delegates are tasked with setting a budget until GC meets again. He called the process of guessing what things will be like in two years "SWAG" (making a "wild scientific ass guess"). He said if we are off then the CSEA Board can move money around without increasing the budget. He was happy to report that of the \$10,000 given to the CSEA Women's Committee to put on their recent successful conference, most of that money was returned. (CSEA Secretary/Treasurer Frank Luna offered the exact figure of \$8,600 returned.) Jelencic explained that the budget process this time was pain-

less, adding that the agreement the Committee On the Future came to was that there would be no budget floor fight. "Which would be nice," Jelencic said.

He mentioned one major bylaws resolution to affect the budget in coming years. The Committee On the Future agreed to move GC conferences from every two years to every three after the next scheduled one in 2009. This was a money-saving compromise for those who wanted the ratio of delegates-to-members, currently at one for every 100 members (or greater part thereof), to be changed to one for two hundred. While all felt the need to reduce costs was important, it was also felt that reducing the delegates would significantly

change the event itself. Actually, it wouldn't be the first time that this was done. Former CSEA President Perry Kenny served a three-year term when GC was moved to fall on an odd year.

CSEA Retirees, Inc. President Barbara LaPlant spoke passionately about the responsibility of delegates. "You have the most important job; remember: you are voting for 100 people," she said.

Lease's pessimistic opening statement was addressed by a number of speakers: Jelencic, LaPlant, and Dave Hart, candidate for CSEA president, who all seemed to agree that the regions will still exist and something like a regional political coordinator could fill a need. "There is no reason not to have regional

CSEA meetings," Hart said.

There was some confusion about and resistance expressed to the bylaws changes proposed by the Committee On the Future of CSEA, but after some clarification it seemed easier to take. Retiree Marilyn Ferrasci said, "Change is hard to accept, but deep down I realize it's got to happen," she said. "If it doesn't work we can always change it again in two years."

While Region VII's mock GC was not the only one held in the state, Jelencic said that there were far fewer of them this time around than in the past. Hopefully, these are not the last for CSEA. There is always the possibility the regional role could be clarified and strengthened.

## GC 101

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bers; California State University Employees Union, representing approximately 16,000 employees (about 8,000 members) in the 23-campus state higher education system; and SEIU Local 1000, formerly known as the Civil Service Division of CSEA, representing about 90,000 current state employees (about 60,000 members). Altogether, the four affiliates give CSEA approximately 140,000 members (if you are a member of one of the four that makes you automatically a CSEA member).

Since CSEA's modest beginnings in 1931, its role has slowly evolved to where we are today—and continues to change with the times. CSEA is the organization's services and administrative provider. All four affiliates (ACSS, CSEA Retirees, Inc., CSUEU, and SEIU Local 1000) support CSEA financially, receive services from CSEA, and provide governance input. This is where you, the GC delegate, come in.

The real governing authority in CSEA, and in each affiliate, is entrusted in the General Council Delegates. In CSEA's 75-year history the General Council has met 63 times previously to this meeting. In between these meetings the authority and responsibility for most issues is transferred to a Board of Directors, and day-to-day

operations is entrusted to a general manager, who works closely with the elected CSEA president. (In addition, each affiliate has its own Executive Board, led by an affiliate president.) The three major duties of the GC delegates at this conference will be to elect CSEA's statewide leaders, pass a multi-year budget to last until the delegates hold their next scheduled meeting in 2009 (including affiliate budgets that are in harmony with the statewide budget), and consider any changes to the Association's Bylaws and Policy File, the two governing documents for CSEA.

Regarding the election of CSEA officers, the CSEA Executive Board will shrink by one member this year; delegates to the 2005 GC voted to eliminate the office of executive vice president following the current term. Therefore, the officers to be elected this time are president, vice president, and secretary-treasurer. (The president is the only officer whose position is funded for full release time from his or her state job, paid by CSEA.)

The CSEA Board also goes through a major make-over, again decided in 2005, where each affiliate adds a board member (from two to three) and the regional directors are dropped from the board. With the three CSEA officers, the board goes from 26 members to 15. (Many of the Bylaws changes asked for in the Committee on the Future of CSEA package reflect the

new board composition.)

In addition to the ByLaws and Policy files (designated by the "B&P" prefix) proposals, delegates will likely be voting on a number of motions that affect its Fiscal affairs (FIS), and Benefits (BEN) areas. Each of these areas has a committee, which can bring items to the floor for action. We may also see items from the Legislative, Human and Civil Rights, and Women's committees.

As a delegate, you are part of a body of over 1,100 who come to GC to represent their fellow employees. The affiliates are represented as follows: Each Chapter/DLC is automatically entitled to one delegate, regardless of the number of members. Each Chapter/DLC that has in excess of 100 members is entitled to one delegate for the greater part of every additional 100 members (51 or more). So a Chapter/DLC with 149 members would only be entitled to one delegate, while a Chapter/DLC with 351 members would be entitled to four delegates. Each affiliate can also bring their elected alternate delegates to fill in as needed. Affiliate presidents and other officers are entitled to vote as delegates as well. There promises to be close to 1,100 delegates at this year's conference.

As delegates are voting on the various programs of CSEA, it's a good idea to understand their structure. CSEA's operations are

classified into eight categories:

- Program Review and Policy Development (for guidance of CSEA's internal operations and guidance)
- General Administration (oversight of all programs, services, personnel, facilities and equipment, etc.)
- Legal Services (legal staff, consultation, legal fees)
- Communications (website, newsletter, press releases)
- Governmental Relations (lobbying, legislative affairs)
- Administrative Services (day-to-day operations)
- Printing Services (hard-copy printing services, free-market print services)
- Member Benefits (insurance plans, legal fee discounts, theme park discounts, etc.)

Part of the Association's income is derived from the Member Benefits Department (via insurance marketing reimbursements) and the Print Shop (from free-market services).

Also at GC, CSEA traditionally bestows honors and recognition to deserving individuals for service to the organization.

General Council 2007 will be strenuous and exhilarating, most likely. Rest up, exercise when you can, and eat for health. In any case, remember that your responsibility is to represent your fellow affiliate members the best you can and to enjoy the experience as well.