

## GC election yields a few surprises

### *Best delivered speech sees its reward*

By Kevin Glasson and Russell Kilday-Hicks

There were a few surprises yesterday, at CSEA's 63rd General Council elections, including no run-off votes, an awesome speech, and a long-shot victory.

Hylah Jacques, elected to the office of executive vice president, gave a rousing speech (see speech reprinted on page 3) that was apparently reflected in the vote results (603 to current Executive Vice-President Paul Gonzalez-Coke's 324), the second-largest total of the day.

The long-shot was Donna "it sucks" Snodgrass from Bargaining Unit 1, DLC 703, elected as CSEA vice president by a wide margin after apologizing for not having the opportunity to campaign much. The "it sucks" refers to an answer given in response to the CSEA election commit-

tee question on the difference between a defined contribution pension vs. a defined benefit pension plan.

J.J. Jelincic was re-elected to a second, two-year term as CSEA President by a narrower margin of 486 votes to 286 for challenger Blanca Rodriguez, CSEA's current vice president, who ran on the "Change to Win" platform made up exclusively of Local 1000 members.

CSEA President Jelincic said "The delegates made a real choice, that there is real value to the Association. The real message of the election was that destroying the Association does not help anybody. I think it is a repudiation of the effort to breakup CSEA.

"We're changing and evolving. I think everyone recognizes that, and we'll continue to do that. Hopefully, the leadership of 1000 got the message that they don't get to dictate the



Photo by Steve Sloan

*Hylah Jacques thanks GC delegates for electing her to CSEA's Executive Board*

change, that we'll have to sit down and work it out with everybody, because everybody has to have a seat at the table."

Current CSEA Executive Vice President, Paul Gonzalez-Coke, received 324 votes in his losing bid for a second term. "The members spoke," Gonzalez-Coke said. "The power of the members is that they have to hold their leaders accountable for what they do and what they fail to do.

"J.J. for the last year has been bashing local 1000," Gonzalez-Coke continued, "and basically undermining

ACSS, so (where) the relationships are ... it will be very difficult to heal these wounds.

In response to a question whether he thought the election results reflected any division in Local 1000, Gonzalez-Coke said, "I don't see any division in Local 1000. We had a lot of new delegates. The new delegates didn't know a lot of the history behind this organization."

When asked if he thought Local 1000 would seek to break away from CSEA, Gonzalez-Coke said, "No.

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### *Revenge of the nerds*



Photo by Steve Sloan

2006 California Democratic Party candidate for governor and hopeful "Conan the Barbarian" slayer Phil Angelides delivers his message to the GC delegates and guests. Angelides said he hopes to star in a movie of his own called "Revenge of the Nerds" where he can restore the state employee public image and bring back deserved honor to the working people in the state.

## Bag story again

By Kevin Glasson

Rumor has it that some Local 1000 members liked the CSEA leather backpacks so much, that they took the letter from Jim Hard back to the registration counter to get more than one. The desk reported that they ran out of bags even though they had more requests. So, apparently, some members of CSEA had to

go without.

The registration folks would only say that they exchanged the letter for the leather backpack, meaning each Local 1000 member only got the single one they were entitled to.

But, I spoke to several people who had heard of people going and getting more than one.

# Staying or leaving

*Editor's note: Yesterday the GC delegates rejected MB 3/05, a resolution against the war in Iraq, submitted by Samuel Rosen, Chapter 31. The attempt to amend from the floor after the committee rejected it failed. I think it's sad that this delegation cannot put out a combined statement on this issue because it affects the war on working Americans at home so much. This essay was sent out to the U.S. Labor Against War listserv.*

*By Rep. Ron Paul (Republican, 14th Dist., Texas)*

October 8, 2005—Supporters of the war in Iraq, as well as some non-supporters, warn of the dangers if we leave. But isn't it quite possible that these dangers are simply a consequence of having gone into Iraq in the first place, rather than a consequence of leaving? Isn't it possible that staying only makes the situation worse? If chaos results after our departure, it's because we occupied Iraq, not because we left.

The original reasons for our preemptive strike are long forgotten, having been based on false assumptions. The justification given now is that we must persist in this war or else dishonor those who already

have died or been wounded. We're also told civil strife likely will engulf all of Iraq.

But what is the logic of perpetuating a flawed policy where more Americans die just because others have suffered? More Americans deaths cannot possibly help those who already have been injured or killed.

Civil strife, if not civil war, already exists in Iraq—and despite the infighting, all factions oppose our occupation.

The insistence on using our military to occupy and run Iraq provides convincing evidence to our detractors inside and outside Iraq that we have no intention of leaving. Building permanent military bases and a huge embassy confirms these fears.

We deny the importance of oil and Israel's influence on our policy, yet we fail to convince the Arab/Muslim world that our intentions are purely humanitarian.

In truth, our determined presence in Iraq actually increases the odds of regional chaos, inciting Iran and Syria while aiding Osama bin Laden in his recruiting efforts. Leaving Iraq would do the opposite—though not without

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## First Person Commentary

### Bullies in the union workplace

A few years back I was selected to attend a California Labor Federation convention in San Francisco as part of CSEA President Perry Kenny's delegation. I was relatively new to California labor and CSEA politics so I felt excited to be chosen. I knew there were tensions between CDU and Kenny and I was trying to get the story so I could make up my own mind. At the time CSEA was not paying SEIU per caps so it was ironic that

we were there as part of the SEIU delegation. However, the way I learned this was extremely uncomfortable for me: an in-my-face screaming Cathy Hackett, who was offended that I was sitting with Kenny and CSEA Executive Vice President Steve Alari. After her scene I talked to cooler heads who were with her and explained I was trying to figure Kenny out, not a loyalist (it was odd to me that on just about every floor vote we took, I was voting the opposite of the rest of my delegation) and said this was no way to bring allies to their cause. I didn't know Cathy then, and she certainly didn't know me.

At this conference I've heard many disturbing stories of abusive behavior like this and there was an actual physical altercation. This would not be tolerated in a workplace and it should not be tolerated here. That is why I wrote what I did in the second issue of this paper. Also, I've been disturbed by people who I thought were friends, and certainly comrades in the labor and social justice struggle, turning and walking away from me when I brought up "uncomfortable" topics. I guess that's better than being yelled at but it still hurts.

As I sat listening to the campaign speeches on Saturday I had an epiphany. Speaker after speaker said basically the same thing: to solve CSEA's problems they would put the parties in a room and make them work out their differences. Then it hit me, this is the classic response a

manager gives when two co-workers are having a perceived "personality conflict," make them sit down and "work it out."

In addition to my duties as a state employee, chapter president, commu-

*As I sat listening to speaker after speaker say basically the same thing, it suddenly struck me: we have a classic workplace bully situation.*

nications committee chair, steward, and chief bottle washer I chair the City of Berkeley's Commission on Labor. This commission has been working on raising awareness to a national workplace epidemic: bullies in the workplace. For months we have conducted interviews with targets and experts (including Gary and Ruth Namie, who some of you may remember delivered the "best of conference" presentation at CSEA's Woman's Conference a few years back).

Workplace bullying is the repeated, health-impairing mistreatment of targets driven by the bully's need to control others, that undermines legitimate business interests. Bingo!

Even with good union contracts, the protections are weak at best because they don't seem to take into account the dynamic of the relationship. One party is being unreasonably violent. The common reaction is to have the two parties sit down and talk out their differences. It never works.

Until we can get federal, state, and local legislation to create some protections (like we do for other forms of harassment, and countries like Great Britain, Canada, and New Zealand have already) the best way to protect the target of the abuse is to educate him or her so he or she can stand up to the bully. This is the answer J.J. gave when I asked how you deal with bullies at our affiliate dinner on Saturday evening. His answer: You stand up to them.

The vote yesterday can be read as a majority of CSEA delegates standing up to bullying. We stood up to Kenny and his controlled information, censorship, and other abusive

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## News from CSEA

*(Message to the CSEA listserv csea@lists.calcsea.org)*

Members of the California State University Employees Union, an affiliate of CSEA, are trying something new -- they're publishing an on-site newspaper at the 63rd CSEA General Council in Anaheim; recording digital audio interviews with members and posting them on the Web site for you to hear; taking photos of various events and putting them online too.

Although you might not read this message until after General Council is over, these efforts by union members are making a difference here in Anaheim.

You can read one man's opinions at his Web log here:

<http://csueunionwatch.blogspot.com/>

You can listen to at least one interview at the CSEA Web Site (hopefully more will come soon):

<http://www.calcsea.org/2005-gc-podcasts.asp>

And CSEA Communications has set up its own Web log, where you can get breaking news and photos in a "blog" format:

<http://www.calcsea.org/blog/>

## Stay or leave ...

*Continued from page 1*

some dangers that rightfully should be blamed on our unwise invasion rather than our exit.

Many experts believe bin Laden welcomed our invasion and occupation of two Muslim countries. It bolsters his claim that the U.S. intended to occupy and control the Middle East all along. This has galvanized radical Muslim fundamentalists against us. Osama bin Laden's campaign surely would suffer if we left.

We should remember that losing a war to China over control of North Korea ultimately did not enhance communism in China, as she now has accepted many capitalist principles. In fact, China today outproduces us in many ways—as reflected by our negative trade balance with her.

We lost a war in Vietnam, and the domino theory that communism would spread throughout southeast Asia was proven wrong. Today, Vietnam accepts American investment dollars and technology. We maintain a trade relationship with Vietnam that the war never achieved.

We contained the USSR and her thousands of nuclear warheads without military confrontation, leading to the collapse and disintegration of a powerful Soviet empire. Today we trade with Russia and her neighbors, as the market economy spreads throughout the world without the use of arms.

We should heed the words of Ronald Reagan about his experience with a needless and mistaken military occupation of Lebanon. Sending troops into Lebanon seemed like a good idea in 1983, but in 1990 President Reagan said this in his memoirs: “We did not appreciate fully enough the depth of the hatred and complexity of the

problems that made the Middle East such a jungle ... In the weeks immediately after the bombing, I believed the last thing we should do was turn tail and leave ... yet, the irrationality of Middle Eastern politics forced us to rethink our policy there.”

During the occupation of Lebanon by American, French, and Israeli troops between 1982 and 1986, there were 41 suicide terrorist attacks in that country. One horrific attack killed 241 U.S. Marines. Yet once these foreign troops were removed, the suicide attacks literally stopped. Today we should once again rethink our policy in this region.

It's amazing what ending military intervention in the affairs of others can achieve. Setting an example of how a free market economy works does wonders.

We should have confidence in how well freedom works, rather than relying on blind faith in the use of military force to spread our message. Setting an example and using persuasion is always superior to military force in showing how others might live. Force and war are tools of authoritarians; they are never tools of champions of liberty and justice. Force and war inevitably lead to dangerous unintended consequences.

Find this article at: <http://www.antiwar.com/paul/index.php>

## First person ...

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nonsense two years ago and we are standing up once again.

Next, these chosen leaders have to continue to act responsibly by helping the bullies to contribute without the bullying.

We heard this theme from the candidates as well, that all of us have a valuable contribution to make in this pitched battle against powerful foes within and without the state. Even the bullies.

These behaviors need to change if CSEA is to really move forward (the great leap) together as one body. Stand up to the bullies then embrace them as the valuable colleagues they are and get on with our struggle.

—Russell Kilday-Hicks, GC Times Editor, chair of CSUEU Communications Committee, Chapter 305 president

**“The truth** that many people never understand, until it is too late, is that the more you try to avoid suffering the more you suffer because smaller and more insignificant things begin to torture you in proportion to your fear of being hurt.”

—Thomas Merton  
1915–1968

## Hylah Jacques' speech to GC

This year's theme for our CSEA General Council is “United in Purpose.” At this moment in our history—as an association, and a labor movement—this phrase rings especially true.

As we head into our 75th year as an association, let's reflect on just a few of our milestone accomplishments. In 1931, the first CSEA general council delegates created a retirement system that is now the largest, and strongest, in the world: CalPERS. In the 1940s CSEA gained the 40-hour workweek for state civil service workers. In the late 1970s, CSEA sponsored the Dills Act, and won collective bargaining rights. Then, Skelly rights. Maternity leave. The catastrophic leave donation program. And along the way, numerous successful fights against efforts to make CalPERS a two-tier pension system.

As general council delegates, we are united over that 75-year span of accomplishments. Every one of us here today is a steward: we know what it means to represent employees who need the union's help. We are also stewards of this great association.

It is not a cliché to say that we delegates of the 2005 general council, we stewards of CSEA, are at a crossroads. Nor to say that we stand on the shoulders of giants to gain a view of the best road to take.

Now we must protect our pensions from a new wave of attacks—and win that fight once again!

We must also finish the transformation of CSEA begun two years ago. We owe it to those who will carry on the good fight, well into the uncertain future.

We've made some important organizational changes, geared to greater efficiency, better coordination and increased cost effectiveness. We don't have it right quite yet. In a couple of areas we've gone too far, in my opinion, and we need to restore resources to programs like communications and governmental affairs. The United to Win team—J.J., Lisa Flores, Frank Luna and I—will get it right, if elected, and we ask for your vote.

The next two years can be the best of times for us—an opportunity for renewal that 75-year old organizations like ours rarely have. An opportunity we must seize and make full use of. If we don't we risk confronting the worst of times: dissension, dismemberment, disintegration.

Our opponents will tell you that CSEA must change, that “some of us” are living in the past.

Yes, we must change, and we will. But the United to Win team will not abandon tradition to get there. What good is change, without benefit of the valuable lessons learned, the scars earned? It's a false choice. Just as tradition by itself, without change, is a reactionary, dead end.

We must do both. United in Purpose. Through change and tradition.

Incorporation requires greater transparency, accountability and attention to our fiduciary responsibilities—from the inside out.

Consider the recent election problems—confusing ballots, mysterious ballot counts that never added up, protest panels stuffed with cronies—how does my opponent respond to delegates' questions about this failure of fiduciary responsibility? Murphy's Law, he says, whatever can go wrong, will, and if you have a problem with that, take it up with the contractor. Murphy's Law? How about The Buck Stops Here!

CSEA needs a team at the helm with experience, passion, a deep sense of ethics and commitment to union democracy, and that's the United to Win team.

CSEA is a time-honored association of interdependent affiliates united by our common purpose. Let's build on our strengths, and not let our differences defeat us. Let's go forward together, and continue fighting for our members in every corner of the state. Let's fight the good fight together, today and for many years to come.

Our future is together.

United in CSEA. United to win!



## Election ...

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They never said they'd break away. What they said, and what I strongly believe is, that they want a stronger Union." His advice for J.J. is to be flexible, understand compromise, and understand that the best interest of the members is to move the organization forward, not backward."

Lisa Flores, Chapter 772, and on the "Unity to Win" platform with Jelincic, Jacques, and Frank Luna, got 54 votes, losing to Snodgrass, who ran independently.

Frank Luna, Jr. won for secretary/treasurer with the highest total for the day: 649 votes to incumbent Debbie Cotton's 274 total votes.

Marangu Marettte of the "Change to Win" platform, running for vice president, got 296 votes.

Tim Brehens, ACSS president, who ran for CSEA president, got 134



Kevin Glasson

Paul Gonzalez-Coke

votes. And Jerald Fountain, also of ACSS, who was the only nominee from the floor, running for secretary/treasurer, got 27 votes

*Note: All election totals are unofficial, the numbers announced to the delegates on the floor.*

## Floor fight



Steve Sloan

Stephen Hughes from CSUEU Cal Poly, SLO, stands at a floor mike at GC ready to speak on the big fight of the day on Monday, Fiscal 1, the overall CSEA budget.

## Spirited debate



Steve Sloan



Steve Sloan

CSUEU's Kathryn Plunkett (above) speaks at the Fiscal Committee hearing before CSEA's 63rd General Council gets underway. Plunkett is the chair. Behind her is Lori Williams, CSUEU VP for Finance. Together they were two of the hero's for all of CSEA as they battled to restore radical cuts to the Association's programs. CSEA President J.J. Jelincic (left) took some key, tie-breaking votes during the struggle.