

April, 2007

*"It's only free
speech when
you use it."*

McKell:
Writes of Spring
pp. 1-3

O.C. Report:
Marisa Vera

*On Power &
Character:*
Janice Mallard
p.5

à la Board
Wendy Stegeman
pp. 6-7

R & R:
Paul Landshof
pp. 7-8

Health Tips:
Bill Mustanich
p. 8

Summer Plans:
Marie Milner
pp. 9-10

STAR Test Prep:
p. 10

ESTA Classifieds:
p. 11

*Pro Patria,
pro Mendacio:
The Backside:*
P. 12

The President's View by Don McKell

Ah, spring! The hills are green. Flowers are blooming. Pollen wafts on the breeze. The Giants are off to a slow start. Insects stir as the temperature rises, and trout season is open. Taxes are due. Don Imus is job hunting. The annual cycle of renewal is upon us.

There may be slightly more reason to be hopeful this spring than in the recent ones. For the first time in many a year, our Congress seems to be stirring from its sycophantic stupor and fulfilling its historic duty of checking and balancing within the federal government. That's a good thing.

Congress has much to do. It is hard to escape daily reminders of the ill-conceived and trumped-up conflict in Iraq that has already resulted in more US military deaths than Americans killed in the attacks on 9/11. But even if the deaths and injuries of that misadventure could somehow miraculously come to and end, the other costs of the war will linger for years.

Our children, our students, and *their* children will be paying the bills for this mess for a very long time. Imagine a war costing a billion dollars every three days and lasting longer than WWII that is fought without raising taxes – a war waged on credit. Lucky for us the Chinese are pragmatists, and continue to buy US Treasury bonds; think about what might happen if they were to stop.

It has been estimated, right now in 2007, that if the bill to retire the \$7.3 trillion national debt were to be distributed evenly to every man, woman, and child in the country, each of us would have to pony up a little less than \$25,000. Please write your check today.

The costs of this quagmire are incalculable. Far more than the conflict dollars and the enormous unpaid debt, which are surely staggering in themselves, are the costs that *inaction* on other domestic needs will wreak when we find we can no longer ignore, marginalize, or politicize them. Needs such as energy, health care, education, Social Security, immigration, and the environment. Little stuff like that.

On the education front, Congress has the opportunity (and just possibly the fortitude) this session to revise some of the more onerous provisions of the ridiculously-named No Child Left Behind act. Many federal politicians, including those we might consider friends of public education, were duped in 2000 into passing the current iteration of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act with a combination of bad science, cooked books, and lockstep mentality.

Is there any reason to assume the thinking that went into writing NCLB is any less flawed than that which allowed the likes of Donald Rumsfeld, Rod Paige, Michael Brown, Alberto Gonzales and Karl Rove to roam the corridors of power for as long as they did, or have?

To be sure, educational leaders were not and are not without blame in either creating or tolerating the conditions that led to the Congressional embrace of NCLB. When high school valedictorians need to enroll in remedial English courses at the university, it isn't heresy to question how your educational dollars have been spent.

But NCLB has taken the quest for school system accountability far beyond constructive and useful criticism into a realm of seemingly vindictive punishment. If the performance expectations (on a single one-size-fits-all examination) are allowed to continue unmodified and unabated, all but a small number of East Side high schools are sure to be characterized as failing well before ESEA comes up for its *next* reauthorization. Because no matter how well a school performs, the bar is continuously raised. Our schools, and every subgroup of students within them, must all be above average by

2011.

Here's a little exercise for the definitionally challenged: pick two numbers that are both higher than their average. Congress might just as well have passed laws requiring sea levels to decline, or people to remain healthy or to obey laws. The chances of success are just about as great. Plus, the added bonus is that that the neocons will be able to continue to bash the schools, the teachers, and their unions for failure to thrive.

I think there may be an analogy in here somewhere to compare the sending of our troops into harm's way without adequate body armor and planning with mandating sweeping changes in our education system without providing the resources to accomplish them, but I'm not smart enough to devise it. Maybe all we need is our own aircraft carrier and a "mission accomplished" banner.

NCLB has three primary flaws. First, it sets impossibly high performance standards and measures the achievement of those standards with a single assessment tool. Second, it fails to provide anything near adequate levels of funding to achieve those standards. And third, it seeks to deprive the admittedly inadequate funding to schools that fall too far behind for too long. Where do you suppose those schools are? What characteristics do you suppose the students at those schools might share with one another? Might those students somehow appear, well, *different* than the average federal legislator?

Compassionate conservatism. Now there's an oxymoron. On that note, I will change the focal point of my essay from the United States Congress to an idea promoted by the Governor of the State of California.

For a couple of consecutive months earlier this year, I wrote about the sorry status of health care in the Golden State, and about how it is going from bad to worse. The good news, if there was any, was that lots of politicians were picking up the banner and touting various plans to fix the broken system. The bad news is that all but one of these plans would leave the wrong people in charge of setting parameters for coverage and

seeing to it that all Californians had access to quality health care.

Details of the Governor's plan have emerged in recent weeks, and it is no better for the passage of time. It is true that, under Arnold's plan, all Californians would have access to health care, but only because it would statutorily *require* all Californians to purchase health insurance. There now, isn't that better? The solution to spotty health coverage in our state is to make it a crime not to purchase health insurance. Problem solved!

Now why didn't someone think of this sooner?

Can you imagine the growth potential in the insurance industry if this silly idea is enacted? Why do you suppose the very same industry is solidly behind the notion, and is perhaps the single biggest contributor to the governor? If you think that the Medicare prescription drug plan has a lot of confusing choices, well, we'll all be in for a fantasy of phony feel-good insurance scams if Arnold's idea becomes law.

Recall that one out of six Californians currently do not have health insurance, and nearly thirty percent are seriously underinsured. In the wake of the passage of the proposed Schwarzenegger plan, people of limited means who choose not to become criminals will seek the least expensive health insurance policies available. What makes an insurance policy cheap? Limited coverage, high deductibles, and huge copays.

I continue to maintain that Schwarzenegger's concept, like those of Dom Perata and Fabian Nunez, are at best short-term band-aids for a sick system, and *only* a single-payer health care system such as that proposed by Senator Sheila Kuehl's SB840 offers a reasoned way out of the madness of for-profit insurance that all other plans seek to perpetuate.

Please do yourself and your society a favor. Write or call your State Legislators and the Governor and ask them to support SB840. And while you're at it, write or call your federal legislators (again?) and demand the overhaul of NCLB prior to its reauthorization this session.

PANORAMA
MARTIN BRANDT, IHS
EDITOR

Panorama is a monthly publication of the East Side Teachers' Association,
888 S. Capitol Ave. San Jose, CA.

Panorama is a forum for ESTA members, and welcomes all member contributions. Submissions must include author's name, position, and school site. Those with fewer than 250 words will be printed in the "Letters" section. All submissions may be edited for length or clarity.

Letters, articles, columns, queries, or classified ads (for ESTA members only) should be emailed as **Microsoft Word Attachments** to brandtm@esuhsd.org. Deadline for all May submissions is **Friday, May 11, 2007**.

Disclaimer:

The views expressed in *Panorama* are those of individual members and may not represent the official views of the East Side Teachers Association, California Teachers Association, or National Educators Association. *Panorama* will not publish ad hominem attacks, personal insults, or racially provocative imagery.

HHH 1910-1993

Organizing Committee Report

By Marisa Vera

POWER

Foothill High School

At this time next year, the ESTA negotiation team will begin bargaining a new contract. We need 2-4 people *per school site* to join the Organizing Committee, whose job it will be to keep ESTA members informed of progress in bargaining. To this end, the committee will begin collecting information such as home email addresses and phone numbers from the sites. ESTA would like to have this committee in place before we leave for summer vacation. Email me at veram@esuhsd.org if you are interested in joining the Organizing Committee.

I would like to hold the first meeting on Thursday May 3, at 4:00 pm at the Mt Hamilton CTA office. Please email me by May 1 if you plan to attend.

My third set of site visits went very well. I had the opportunity to meet many ESTA members. Here are a few things members shared:

- 1) If you *and your spouse* have Kaiser, you do not have a co-pay for visits and for prescriptions. It is important that you combine your plans.
- 2) If you *and your spouse* both have VSP, *do not* combine these plans; this will ensure that you are eligible to use each plan to the fullest on alternate years.
- 3) Family members on your Delta Dental plan each need to visit the dentist *a minimum of once a year* in order to maintain his or her current coverage. If this requirement is not met, the coverage will revert back to 70%.
- 4) If you do not have 100% coverage with Delta Dental, because you are new to the district, then each family member must use the plan once a year to reach 100% coverage.

We have a lot of “new” in our district: new teachers, new administrators, new in union positions, new board members. New can be a good thing—as in new ideas, fresh energy, new perspectives. But the advantages “newness” can bring are countered by the potential problems that come with a lack of experience. Experience builds a reservoir of wisdom to be tapped both individually and collectively.

In one of our programs, teachers teach a unit on leaders like Mother Teresa, Eleanor Roosevelt, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Cesar Chavez. I’m sure, being human, each of those people had imperfections. But the thing that strikes me is that power didn’t go to their heads. They didn’t become petty tyrants. They didn’t abuse the responsibilities given them. They didn’t go Hollywood on us simply looking for adoration. Their leadership was of the lasting kind, the “real thing.” And we have all been enriched and uplifted by their nobility of spirit.

Now and in the days ahead, we are at a crossroads in leadership in ESUHSD—East Side “Union.” Like it or not, we are in this together. It can’t be about someone’s ego or giving favors to friends. Not only are those kind of people in power forgotten as soon as possible, their chance to do some good in the world for all is lost.

It was a leader at a crossroads who said: “Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man’s character, give him power.”

He would have known. His name was Abraham Lincoln.

--Janice Mallard

**Deadline for all submissions
to the May issue of Panorama is
Friday, May 11, 2007**

And yet another twofer of board meetings...

Just for the record, future scheduled meetings are 4/26, 5/24, 6/14, 6/21, and 6/28. 6p.m. at the district office. Recently, attendees are home in time for most of prime-time TV.

March 27, 2007

First, the part of the program that causes most adults to have slightly benighted smiles as they watch students recognized for great honors: The National Merit Scholarship Finalists from ST, EV, PH and SC were recognized. This included twelve students – one of whom was unable to attend and his beaming dad accepted his award and stood in line showing it along with a small herd of 17 year olds! It was a real Awwwwwwe moment.

Then Maryann Haggerty showed off her YB kids who had completed the We The People program and participated in constitutional competition in Sacramento! Great kids, great teacher, great community support. They looked so proud!

And then Heidi Black who put together Sciencepalooza, with awards for AH, JL, HIS, and OG. These kids work hard on the Science Faire. No volcanoes allowed, I understand...

Student board rep night for PH and EV.

Public Hearing on idea of rolling over AFT contract. Negotiations to open.

Approved second interim budget report. It is a positive report – and expected to remain positive for at least two years out. There may need to be some reallocations in the future to account for ending one-time monies (Quimby land sale, etc.). Passed.

Dan Moser presented info on five schools that qualify to apply for SB1133 funds. Probably only one will be chosen (state lottery). WCO and YB placed 1 and 2 in the ESUHSD priority list. JL, LC Prep, and MACSA fill out the dance card. WCO passed.

Contract with MACSA continued—Biehl abstained as wife works for a non-related section of MACSA. Passed.

Bill Jakel, Internal Auditor, brought forth the plan for all ASB and other funds to go through Wells Fargo. The board hopes for a bit more community participation since they get all the business. (Be careful, Bill! A lot of us got audited last year because we had dealings with Wells Fargo in 2003 – when much personal

info was compromised and false interest statements sent out. IRS has them—and their customers—on the radar.) Passed.

Amendment to policy relating to Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) bonds that are used to pay for retiree benefits like annuities, etc. presented by Kurr. Passed.

Having read last months *Panorama*, your board voted in Week of the Teacher (May 7-13, 2007)—and, also approved, Classified School Employee Week (May 21- 27, 2007). Comcast may be involved in an appreciation gesture!!!

Mr. Lincoln's birthday will be recognized on February 21st of 2008. If only I had known a school district could move your birthday! I could have started school a year sooner! But this makes our President's Week/ Winter Break work. Legal *i's* and *t's* to be taken care of...

Board adopted a resolution in support of Bob Nunez cooperating in and coordinating articulation between our feeder districts and ESUHSD. Maybe we can get students here on the flat-of-the-valley who can read above primary level when entering high school! The current levels in our feeder schools make Valdes Math Institute even more critical than when Jose Valdes and Jaime Escalante were telling students in poor and under-performing schools (before there was such a term or expectation) that they COULD achieve and go to college! The Board should look again at some of the programs that are serving children in amazing ways and are already here. Open invite to see IB and AP classes at work. Just like the hit Fox show: *Are You Smarter Than a Fifth Grader?*, we offer: *Are You Smarter Than An IB or AP High School Kid?* You can see the prizes from these programs on Graduation Day at Everschool in ESUHSD!

Retreat was positive—board seems more cohesive. Lan Nguyen felt that they had a meeting of the minds that will make the board more proactive and effective.

Garcia is now Prez of Latino Leadership Alliance. Congrats—and feel free to read the above entry and bring Latino Leadership to see our kids in action, *Presidente* Garcia!

George Shirakawa announced a Safety Summit with Police Chief Davis, Gang Task Force, Madison Nguyen (City Council) and the community at Andrew



á la Board, *continued*

Hill on April 22. Safety is a major issue throughout the district this year. Stay tuned for time, etc.

Frank Biehl attended the Band Festival and singled it out for kudos! He commended Steve Barnhill and his performing arts folks. The Choir fest is eagerly anticipated. (There is also some fine theatre going on all year at our schools—including credible Shakespeare performances!)

Manuel Herrera would like to revisit the combining of the PE and Health (HCDE) SAC that was done in the dark days to cut money. They are very different subjects. (With new State PE standards coming, this is truer than ever.)

Bob Nunez reminded folks that the Master Plan group has ID'd what is needed to make all schools Schools of Choice – destination schools – and reports are on the district website.

Consent calendar passed.

Closed session report: District agrees to pay damages on two litigations. Thirteen student expulsions upheld—one suspended expulsion. Personnel: Donna DeMartini had the “Interim” removed from her title of SpEd Head, Rich Uribe is going to Adult Ed, Traci Williams as principal of PH and Bettina Lopez to be principal of AH. Congrats to all (except the students who have obviously made some very large errors).

Special Meeting April 5th

The primary reason for this meeting appeared to be a series of small, common-sense boundary changes designed to decrease the numbers of kids crossing major roads or freeways. Not everyone was happy, but it appears that a section including about 28 students will get another look. The board went out on a field trip to see the affected areas. Good job, guys. People aren't pieces of paper or dotted lines. The preparation included a workshop on the 2nd and more than 100 people with something to say. The board took decisive action—which included discussion and sound reasoning—a good sign. Whodathunkit?

Jim Zito of the Planning Commission suggested a 10 day workshop—or 10 days of workshops—and more meetings.

The City appears to be 5-7 years away from final decisions on housing that might necessitate another school.

HOWEVER—and this is serious—Zito also questioned Alan Garofalo's estimate of .02 students per

unit in the around 1700 units in north San Jose. Garofalo estimates an impact of 56 students on IHS. The usual multiplier is .2, creating 560 students according to Zito. I don't have handy facts, but I remember hearing about this during Zendejas' tenure. The info given to the city and the EIR folks was essentially no impact on schools with all of these units. It was crazy then, and there is no reason to assume that has changed. People are watching and wondering if the misplaced decimal point that plagued Jack Mahrt may be back as a systemic illness... Oh: when questioned, Garofalo confirmed his unusual multiplier.

Board denied Bay Area Technology Charter School Proposal, as it doesn't serve all ESUHSD grades and lacks community support (people in board room when presentation was made were not ESUHSD residents or parents). There were questions about teacher signatures, and more work on curriculum, facilities and budget is needed.

There was a substantial discussion of the continued relationship with CCOC. Bob Nunez explained that the contract is up for renegotiation in a year. Apparently one of his staff erroneously sent out a notice about a drastic cut in seats for this year. (Upset people [teachers?] had contacted board members...) Bob explained that there are many programs that can work for kids—including CCOC. He has been in discussions with many partners. Some programs may be able to come to campuses near you! Everyone agreed that “what's best for the kids” is the goal.

But a new picture of board relations may be forming. Process-oriented Manuel may be offering a counter balance to George's “bottom-line-now” approach. Manuel would see a move from CCOC as years away, approached slowly. George and Bob are beginning the process now. Frank Biehl and Eddie Garcia, by virtue of their business backgrounds, may see the opportunity in new partnerships. This will be worth watching in the future. And balance in the conversation is not bad.

In a major coup, Bob convinced Glen Vanderzee to become the next occupant of Bill Rice's saddle shoes. James Lick receives many of the kids from Lee Matson Middle School, Vanderzee's current place of Alum Rock employment. He comes with great credentials! Now, the question is how long he will be at a site before he comes to the DO to share his skills equally....

Next Board meeting on April 26th at 6pm at the DO. Come see for yourself.

RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

*“Time for you and time for me
And time yet for a hundred indecisions,
And for a hundred visions and revisions,
Before the taking of a toast and tea.”*

T.S. Eliot

Or there might be time for a hundred visions and revisions before leading an Integrated Math 2 class through correction of homework; we are all zealous about those minutes we spend in our arduous profession—especially as the spring days beckon us to ballgames, bicycling, house repair, and other obligations.

In the interest of making sure you spend your time wisely and kept to its rules, it’s always a good idea to revisit Article 14 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement to remind ourselves of what our workday requires and what it does not.

Article 14.1 defines our workday as “Seven (7) hours, exclusive of a duty-free lunch. These seven (7) hours include fifteen (15) minutes before and after the students’ school day.” That means your workday should last seven hours. Should the students have an early release on days when you have professional development, as a 1.0 Full Time Employee your day is still...seven hours. The important thing to remember if you are not working 1.0 FTE (but rather part-time) you are **then** obligated to work the *corresponding percentage* of seven hours; those employees working 80% are accountable for 5.6 hours. If you are a 40% employee? Then you are obligated to work 2.8 hours.

This obligation extends into the fifth section of Article 14, which concerns prep periods. In recent months, prep periods and their use have become an issue for discussion and controversy, so it’s important to remember the intended use for your prep period. Article 14.5 states: “All full time bargaining unit members for whom the high school principal is the immediate supervisor shall have a preparation period. The bargaining unit member’s preparation period is

intended to be used for professional purposes which may include but not be limited to the preparation of lessons, meetings with students, for carrying out other duties as assigned by the principal or designee when the need arises.” What does it all mean?

It means that you should use your prep period preparing for your responsibilities as a professional: preparing lessons, grading papers, telephoning or e-mailing parents, researching content standards, or (in short) the hundred different visions and revisions that teaching require. As professionals, we are granted a great deal of leeway how we use our prep period. To paraphrase Spiderman, with great leeway comes great responsibility. The provision of the contract implicitly states that all activities should be directly connected to providing instruction.

The article explicitly states that your prep period still places you under the supervision of the principal, who might elect for you to do some of the following: proctor a test, provide substitute coverage (for which you will be paid as provided by our contract), attend an IEP meeting, and any number of additional administrative support items. The key issue here is two-fold: we are responsible for professional courtesy in providing additional service on occasion; and administration is responsible for requiring additional services “as need arises”.

While we certainly don’t want principals appropriating our prep periods on a regular basis for the school’s need, we are employees reporting to our principals at all times during the seven hours day (or percentage based on our employment status). That means we cannot, in clear conscience, be absent from campus or our work location during our prep period. It is human nature that you will occasionally need to run an errand during your prep period—oftentimes to support your instruction (whether it be obtaining instructional materials or dealing with outside agencies or vendors supporting your classes). You shouldn’t, however, need to do so everyday. Nor should you (if your prep period

Paul Landshof
Grievance Co-Chair
Piedmont Hills H.S.

falls on the first or last teaching period of the day) consider driving to school or beating the commute to be part of your professional activities covered by Article 14.5.

Teachers tend to guard their work hours with a ferocity approaching that of a mother bears defense of her cubs. It's logical that administration should similarly guard the assurance of seven hours of service (excluding our 30 minute duty-free lunch) from its teachers. These two goals should rarely (if ever) have to collide or conflict with one another.

When disputes do arise and your supervising administrator questions how you spend your prep, they cannot dock you pay, they cannot dock you sick leave hours, they cannot touch any form of your compensation...period. What they can do, however, is observe your presence or non-presence at your work site, at which point you enter the domain of disciplinary action concerning belatedness. That is matter for polite discussion and prudence on both sides. If you or your coworkers continue using your prep period for decidedly non-professional uses and your supervisor observes it, and warns you to alter your behavior, it constitutes insubordination. Then you are sailing into dangerous waters and away from the support and sympathy of ESTA.

We are bound to protect our members in all cases, but Article 14 (and specifically 14.5) points out our other equally important responsibility: the integrity of our profession. We are hard-working professionals who can both extend and receive trust and respect. When our members habitually use their prep periods as personal time and liberty to pursue other interests, they are committing a type of theft from our commitment and promise of a seven hour work day. Violation of that trust by one can be seen and interpreted as a violation by all of us.

Be A Winner in the Marathon of Life

A Total Wellness Tip
Submitted by Bill Mustanich,
ESTA Benefits Chair

Imagine running a marathon. You may picture a tiring, tortuous event you don't believe you can complete. Now, imagine the professional runners who complete marathons many times each year. What's the difference? It's the amount of training and practice put into it. Marathoners run daily, envision themselves completing races and devote themselves fully to being the best they can be. Just as in overcoming the strain of finishing a marathon, you can overcome the stress and anxieties in your daily life with the proper training and practice. Here's how:

Divide and conquer. Separate stressors into two categories: those you can control and those you can't control. Then, do something about those you can control and learn to live with the others.

Create healthy habits. This can be as simple as eating meals at the same time each day or exercising each day. Emphasize these "rocks" of stability when everything else may appear out of control.

Indulge yourself. Most people go through life doing things for others while rarely, if ever, doing things for themselves. Change this tendency in your life.

Organize your life. Make lists of what you need to accomplish and check items off so you know what needs doing next.

Let others shoulder their own responsibilities. Encourage others to face up to and solve their own problems. Avoid trying to take on the problems of others.

Consider alternative treatments. Biofeedback, aroma therapy, massage and other relaxation methods may help alleviate your stress load.

Take good care of yourself. Properly maintained nutrition, physical activity, weight and prescribed medication keep your body in top condition to succeed over stress.

Release stress through exercise. Regular exercisers who are physically fit withstand and conquer stress much more efficiently.

Prioritize your life. Focus your energy on activities which promote personal and professional growth.

So What Are You Doing This Summer?

“I feel as though someone is about to take away my antidepressants.” Under most circumstances, having someone say this to me might have broken my heart. However, because of the context in which I was hearing this statement this past summer, I laughed and shared my colleague’s sentiment. I understood what she was trying to convey, albeit in rather strong figurative language.

We were reaching the conclusion of what had been a four-week intensive summer program offered through The San Jose Area Writing Project, a chapter of the hugely respected National Writing Project which had its inception at U.C. Berkeley many years ago. I was a returning participant, having had such an exceptional experience the previous summer in this Invitational Summer Institute at San Jose State University.

I am an English teacher at Andrew P. Hill High School, who years ago had abandoned any dreams I once had of pursuing my own writing. Yes, I frequently wrote with my students and valued the opportunities I had to do so, but I had long decided that I had nothing much to say in print that anyone would particularly want to read. This was quite ironic, considering how much time I invested trying to build the confidence of my own student writers.

Dr. Jonathan Lovell, the Director of SJAWP had many times approached me when he was supervising student teachers at Andrew Hill, asking me why I did not complete an application to attend the summer institute. In earlier years, like many of my colleagues in the English field, I always had very realistic excuses, such as the fact that I needed the income I would receive from teaching summer school instead, or that I had summer travel plans. As years went on, however, I recall offering very vague excuses because I simply had no idea what I was missing by not becoming involved in the institute.

These days I often try to imagine what my life and career would feel like if *not* for the SJAWP summer program. I now view the teaching of writing through a newly polished lense; I have regained the motivation

to write on my own time as well as with students; and I feel the support and respect of colleagues to an extent I never could have imagined a few years ago.

The summer invitational runs four days a week from approximately 8:30 until 3:00, and first part of the day is filled with an opportunity for the participating teachers to teach the other participants.

The philosophy of the National Writing Project is that teachers should teach teachers. Well, duhhhhhhh, some of you are no doubt thinking. Depending on the collaborative environment at our respective schools, many of us may feel that we are teaching in isolation. Granted, we value the autonomy that we have once the classroom door closes. At the same time, with whom can we share and from whom can we learn, if collaboration time is taken up by the daily minutiae of the teaching day or the innumerable calls to relinquish department-wide collaboration in the interest of school-wide meetings or “important business?”

Instead, during the summer program, I watched fellow teachers blossom into professional presenters as we supported each other while learning from the authentic “experts” in pedagogy—not the canned professional “purchased” dogma from external sources and in-service providers—but our own colleagues. These are people who come to the summer institute with either a wealth of knowledge gained from many years in the classroom or with a sincere interest in improving the writing of their own students. In general both of these factors were in place. For the first time in my teaching career, I was able to collaborate with and learn from teachers at the primary, secondary and college levels. I was humbled to learn how much we all have in common.

Likewise, for the first time in a very long time, I was invited to do my own writing in a thoroughly non-threatening environment. The afternoon portion of the summer institute is devoted to smaller writing “response” groups working on their own writing. These response groups are led by other teachers, generally “veterans” of earlier summer institutes. I enjoyed this process

Marie Milner
Andrew Hill H.S.

so much that I was happy to return for a subsequent summer to the program, not only as a participant, but as an afternoon writing group facilitator. I so enjoyed this experience that I was reluctant to leave each afternoon as the 3 o'clock hour approached. The participants in my group expressed the same sentiment. We enjoyed each other's support and writing so much that we have remained in regular, supportive contact over the year.

When the summer participants reflected on their summer experience at the end of the summer during our farewell party, there were common themes expressed by each of the participants. Where else could one feel so encouraged, supported, validated, respected, and even admired? Where else would we feel so inspired, challenged, invigorated, awed, amazed and (my personal joke) so well-fed. (Daily snacks abound.) Where else have we been granted such potent access to our own "voices," both as writers and as educators with something to share?

Did I mention that we were each paid \$1,000 to attend the institute? Yes, you read that correctly. We did not pay for all these good times. We were *paid* to attend.

We were valued, not only in the professional sense, but in a monetary sense as well. The SJAWP provides each participant with a "scholarship" to honor our commitment to improving the writing of our students and for our willingness to embrace the notion that, as I prefer to phrase it, why would we ask our students to do something that we ourselves are not willing to do? For how much more confidence may our students gain if we can share with them not only our own writing processes and products, but our own insecurities and willingness to improve as writers and students of life?

If any of the above intrigues you, please contact Dr. Jonathan Lovell at San Jose State University through the writing project at www.sjawp.org. If you find yourself a changed person in many respects, don't say I didn't warn you! Your mood-enhancing medication may have to be tossed!

Are you ready for STAR?

T.S. Eliot was right: April is the cruelest month. The Confederates firing on Fort Sumter? April 12, 1861. San Francisco Earthquake? April 18, 1906. The Titanic collides with an iceberg? April 14, 1912. (She actually sank on the fifteenth, but the fearsome income tax deadline now claims the infamy of that date). And of course there's now STAR test prep every April. To see how well prepared you are to participate in your own degradation and doom, the staff of Panorama has prepared this easy quiz. We recommend that you read it repeatedly to get yourself into the right frame of mind for another "successful" Testing Season!

- _____ 1. The STAR test is designed to
 - A. lead to the eventual state takeover of your school.
 - B. enrich test-publishing companies.
 - C. help politicians claim for themselves the coveted mantle of "school reformer"
 - D. SHUT UP AND PASS OUT THE PAPERS.
- _____ 2. The questions on the STAR test are frequently
 - F. flawed, but you are legally forbidden from discussing this fact in detail.
 - G. designed to expose your flaws as a teacher.
 - H. designed to facilitate an eventual state take-over of your school.
 - J. WHO IN THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, ASKING QUESTIONS LIKE THIS?
- _____ 3. As a teacher in the state of California, you are the STAR test's
 - A. scullery maid.
 - B. indentured servant.
 - C. boot licker.
 - D. WE SAID: SHUT UP AND PASS OUT THE PAPERS!
- _____ 4. The speciousness inherent in STAR testing is the notion that
 - F. it is somehow fair for entire schools to be graded on the efforts of even their least interested students.
 - G. schools should be punished for trying harder and harder and harder.
 - H. teachers don't have enough to do yet.
 - J. WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? A CITIZEN OF A FREE REPUBLIC OR SOMETHING? STOP ASKING QUESTIONS LIKE THIS. SHUT YOUR MOUTH AND PASS OUT THE PAPERS!

ESTA Classifieds

MindsInSight Online Classroom Tools - MindsInSite is a hosted Moodle solution for teachers and trainers of any kind. Allowing us to host your remote learning solution allows you to spend your time developing content rather than managing software and hardware. Cut your time spent on paperwork in half. 10% discount for all ESUHS teachers. Take a look at our services at: <http://www.mindsinsight.com> and/or contact Bruce Selzler @ 347-4936

VACATION RENTAL: Cozumel houses available by the week. One and a half blocks from ocean. Easy walking distance to shopping & ferry to mainland. Three rental units: 3 bedroom, 2 bath \$950; 2 bedroom, 1 bath \$650; & 2 bedroom, 2 bath \$680. All 3 units combined for \$2,052. Ten percent discount for teachers. Summer rates are lower. All have kitchen, A/C, DSL internet, cable, safes, and phone and access to pool, rinse tank for scuba, courtyard, and sundeck on roof. Contact Mike at 251-1584 or cloughmf@msn.com.

Wedding/Event DJ. \$120.00 per hour. We are a husband/wife team that will work very hard to make your special day perfect. Contact Anthony Kudsi (IHS) at (408) 858-4555 for more info or to make an appointment.

Materials for Spanish For Spanish Speakers classes : Books, posters, etc. Sistilio Testa (WCO, OG, ret.) 295-6327.

Joe Sousa, handy service: Remodeling, repair, plumbing, electrical, flooring and tile, drywall. Free estimates. Excellent references. License number 316835. Tel. (408) 234-7428. (Marie Anderson, AH).

LOS GATOS LATTICE: fences, decks, gates, pergolas, arbors, patio covers, retaining walls, automated gates, outdoor projects. Also, general construction/remodelling as well: crown molding, baseboards, doors, windows, drywall, finish work, etc. Call DAVE FREDERICKS @ 347-3966 or contact at big57wave@yahoo.com. References from colleagues at all ESUHS schools.

CGT Travel, Contact Marian Dotson, at 831-338-1959 cgravelpals@yahoo.com CGC Travel cst 2027232-40

Mission Style. CUSTOM MADE CHERRY Entertainment center/cabinet & chest of drawers/cabinet. ENTERTAINMENT CENTER is 7 ft. tall, 64 inches long, 22 inches deep. It has 5 doors, 2 drawers, & an opening with shelves 28 inches wide by 43 inches tall. CHEST OF DRAWERS is 9 ft. long, 67 inches tall, 24 inches deep, has 16 drawers and 2 doors. They are a matching set and were made for a large bedroom. Contact Dave Fredericks: email big57wave@yahoo.com or PHHS woodshop#73966.

Wedding Officiant: Special offer for ESTA members. Local weddings performed for \$200. Contact griffinje@esuhsd.org for info and details.

Intero Real Estate Services Selling or buying a house is very personal....but you can get two great realtors by calling Sam Alvarado (772-7661) or Sheryl Ruth (348-5449). They are Intero people (a great firm) and through their WREATHS Program are donating \$1000 to your school program, department or team for ANY name that results in a sale. It is a no-brainer and seamless!

For Sale: Wurlitzer Organ. Full pedals, 2 keyboards, beautiful walnut finish. Sounds great. \$250.00 or best offer. Contact Nick Shehadi (408) 265-0351.

For Rent: Hawaii Condo. One block from beach at Waikiki. Sleeps four or five. Kitchen, AC, Laundry, pool, TV, near stores, private parking. One week at \$650. Contact Nick Shehadi, (408) 265-0351.

Clean comfortable quiet home for rent in Blossom Valley: 3 Bedrooms & 2 Baths \$2100.00. New carpet, Jacuzzi tub in newly remodeled master bath, large master suite, wood burning fire place, updated appliances, central heat and air, new windows, newly insulated attic, two car garage with storage, washer/drier hook up (gas or electric), 1450 square feet of living space, 2000 square feet of yard newly seeded, lawn mower & trimmer provided, covered patio, privacy fence in back, security system (though not needed), community pool, great open floor plan easy access to Hwys 85, 87 and 101. Available immediately. Sorry no section 8 please. \$2100.00 deposit required, cats are welcome. Call Caryl Selk at 408-973-9325 for more information. Virginia Yenter Yanowsky, (EVHS).

Problem setting up DSL or a wireless network at home? Problem with your computer? I can help. Call Kien-Anh (kin-an) at: (408)206-3898. (AH) I'm proficient in both PC's and Macs.

For Sale: 1. Art work and photography, nautical and Native American. Prices negotiable. Must see. 2. Beautiful large Italian cut glass mirror framed in bronze. \$250 obo. Approx. 2'x4' 3. Rataan mamason rocker that swivels. Very comfortable. With pillows. \$75 obo. 4. Full size futon. Black metal frame, forest green 4" mattress. \$300 obo. All inquiries to Tomas Ferraro at EVHS 77123 or 650-704-0433.

Shining Stars and/or teachers of the English Curriculum, Do you want to teach half-time next year and are you planning on doing so? I'm probably going to request a half-time assignment next year under the Willie Brown provision. I'm looking for someone willing to teach English one semester only and to turn the other semester over to me. Contact me at Andrew Hill High School or by email. Joy Moriconi

ROOM FOR RENT in private home—to single person. \$575 including utilities. In Rosegarden area of SJ Non-smoker. Included: bed, chair, desk, chest of drawers. Privileges in newly remodeled kitchen with Wolfe Range. Garden plot and garage available. Call Ursula Ramos 408-288-9353 or Marta Kinder 209-586-7078 (MK-AH ret)

House for rent: North San Jose 3 bedrm, 1 1/2 bath. Minutes from 87,880,101. Walk to lightrail & 1st St. Corner lot w/ rv/boat storage & attached covered patio. \$1,600 per month (incl. gardening service, washer/dryer) Very pleasant neighborhood. Call Barbara Uchiyama, STHS at 347-6294 or email uchiyamab@esuhsd.org

Dwelling for single woman. Upstairs apartment in private home. Separate entrance. Complete privacy. No pets. No smoking. Cambrian Park area (near 85). Rent negotiable. Phone for an appointment. 408-377-6822. Karen Matarangas IHS

The Backside

Lying to your face since 1964

Imus inks new deal with Bad Boy Records

Radio shock jock Don Imus, suddenly unemployed and confused after disgracing himself with the same sort of sexist and racist smears that he had used to build his career, has now found a new and unlikely employer: hip-hop impresario P. Diddy, who yesterday signed Imus to a multi-record deal.

Addressing a crowded news conference, Diddy declared that “Don Imus has a special talent, and America deserves to continue to en-

joy his biting racism and misogyny in a more fitting medium: hip-hop music.”

Diddy expressed his confidence that Imus’s image would translate well into the world of hip-hop. “America has a long and lucrative history of pretentious white guys doing weak imitations of black music,” asserted Diddy. “Don Imus is just another in a long line of performers, from Al Jolsen to Elvis Presley to Mick Jagger to Sting.”

“All we really gotta do is change his wardrobe. The Marlboro look has got to go. No more of that dinner-plate belt buckle. In fact, no belt at all. His pants should be at least 3 sizes larger and worn around his knees.”

Area high school students were excited by the news. “When I heard what he said about those girls on that basketball team,” said one, “I was all, ‘Damn, that’s *messed up!*’ But now that he’s going to be doing the same kind of thing for Diddy, I’m like, all right, bring on Vanilla Imus!”

Test publisher foresees big profits in next quarter

Spurred by the upcoming Testing Season, publishers of standardized tests are brimming with optimism about their quarterly earnings.

“Once we pass Easter, we know that we’ve reached high testing season,” said Seymour Bucks, CEO of Execrable Testate Service (ETS). “That’s when the money really rolls in. By the time we finally kill the schools off, we’ll have made a fortune. I mean, we’ve got sweetheart deals nationwide that would make the boys at Halliburton blush!”

Lighting a fine cigar with a crisp C-note, Bucks added, “With the profits we’re making, I’ll be able to send my kid to one-a-them fancy private schools that has art *and* music programs—not like those crappy public schools that have turned their curriculum inside out to serve us!”

Sexual harassment meeting lulls teacher to sleep

Ten minutes into the mandatory annual staff sexual harassment meeting at nearby Adolph Coors High School, longtime geometry teacher Stu Muchadiscrap could keep his eyes open no more.

“I realized that I’d heard it all before,” Muchadiscrap admitted to *The Backside*. “Back when I decided I wanted to teach, I had no idea I’d have to give so much of my time to these stupid meetings.”

Feeling his eyelids growing heavy after having taught five periods of Pythagorean Theory to 150 skeptical sophomores, Muchadiscrap finally assumed the Asleep at Mandatory Meetings Position: his legs crossed beneath his chair and his arms folded across his chest, he closed his eyes, dropped his chin down, and enjoyed fifteen minutes of the most deliciously forbidden sleep he’d ever had.

“I gave it my best. I really did. But I’ve never harrassed anybody sexually in my life. And now just because some damned president or supreme court justice or D.O. bigwig can’t behave himself, I’ve gotta sit through this same B.S. year after year.”

Muchadiscrap’s nap did upset some of his colleagues, however. English teacher Shirley Wright was particularly annoyed. “Personally, I found Stu’s behavior really rude. I mean, there I was, trying to grade this stack of essays, and he’s snoring away as if he were the only person in the room! I mean, have a little courtesy!”

As the meeting finally broke up, Muchadiscrap looked around in a brief moment of confusion. “I was afraid we were going to have to break up into groups and write stuff on butcher paper. Thank God it was just time to go!”

Muchadiscrap admitted that, as much as he hated the meeting, he certainly did appreciate the sleep. “Next year I’ll bring a little bib or something to keep the drool off of my shirt.”