

May, 2007

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

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## **The President's View** *By Don McKell*

School district budgets in California are strange things, and seem destined to remain that way forever. School boards must adopt a budget each year in time to present it to their county office of education by June 30. The budget is not supposed to be a work of fiction. It is supposed to take into account all credible data available and show that the district has a plan to meet its financial obligations in the coming year without going broke.

Meanwhile, it has proven to be a rare year indeed in which the state legislature approves a state budget by the constitutional deadline of June 30. Aside from public ridicule and other meaningless sanctions, there is of course no penalty assessed to the legislature or governor when they fail to approve a state budget on time. Not so for school districts.

Nearly every year, each of the nearly 1,000 school districts in California must by law adopt an annual budget before knowing with any certainty its revenue stream or what new requirements might be passed along by Sacramento or Washington. To accommodate this nutty situation, school districts employ a lot of people – at great expense – to make educated guesses and assumptions.

School boards pretty much go along with the flow and approve the budget presented to them by their local experts. As rare as it is for the legislature to pass a budget on time, it is even rarer to find a school board member who is really adept at understanding the intricacies of the district budgets brought to them for approval. The conscientious ones surely try, but budget documents that run to 50 or more pages are often just beyond the grasp of ordinary people. This fact has given rise to a lot of mischief over the years.

When school boards bestow a naïve presumption of competence on their business office people and superintendent without some sort of skeptical oversight, bad things can happen. Right in our own back yard, we need only look at Oakland, Richmond, and East Palo Alto to see the potential outcome of such misplaced trust. Everybody loses: students, parents, certificated,

classified, management, even retirees. Everybody.

So the tendency in many districts has been to adopt a more conservative stance and hope that any mistakes being made will result in too much money remaining at the end of the year, rather than too little. But of course it is not the business of school districts to hoard money; taxpayers expect it to be spent. Wisely.

Eight years or so ago, ESTA and the District bargained a contract that provided for three consecutive years of our usual automatic pass-through of new state money, plus an additional two percent. We called that “COLA plus 2”, and it was pretty good. By chance, that contract spanned the pre-9/11 year in which state revenues soared and the governor agreed to a state budget that would completely pay off the deficit in school finance that had been invented by one of his predecessors.

COLA that year, the way we define it in our contract, was 10.95%. We got that, plus 2% more. The world was looking pretty good back then, prior to the DotCom bust and a pack of evil men flying stolen airplanes into buildings just to make their obscene point.

In retrospect, the three years of “plus 2” were probably a mistake. Initially, at a time that the District had spending patterns that left a comfortable surplus at the end of each year, it made perfect sense to do away with the silly posturing of bargaining absolute raises from scratch each time and agree to a plan in which the district agreed with us that we would automatically get a fair share of every new dollar. It still does. But the extra 2% over a three year period carried the makings of a structural district budget deficit that took several years and some unforeseeable external influences to become apparent.

By the time it did, East Side was in the process of switching superintendents. We also had a school board that showed increasing difficulty getting along with one another. Then, state revenues tanked in the wake of Wall Street setbacks and other factors. A bunch of FCMAT auditors came in and found exactly what they were told to find, namely, that the sky was falling and it was someone else’s fault. All of this made its way by way of a self-serving insider to a scrofulous little worm at the newspaper, and the next thing we knew our “crisis” was plastered all over the editorial page.

It was a nearly perfect storm.

In fact, there was a problem. But it was never as bad as we saw in the paper and it was not the school board that eventually solved it, nor the superintendent, nor the newspaper, nor the County. It was us: ESTA. We solved it. We used the courts to reach a point at which some surplus land sale money could be used as a stop-gap budget balancer. We took on three extra students in our academic classes for one year. We signed a contract that gave back the “plus 2’s” in three consecutive years and exposed us to the possibility of having to pay some fringe benefits costs.

We are now nearing the end of the second year of that three-year contract. Next year, whatever the COLA is, we will still get it, less 2%. *For the last time*, I hope.

We will have done our share. We will have given the District a three year period to get its financial house in order. And at the end of that three year period, we will have left something like *ten million dollars* in the district’s hands as a result of those “minus 2%” years. As I have told the Superintendent and many of our school board members, don’t expect us to make this sort of gesture again.

Our board will have to adopt a budget once again before June 30—a little more than six weeks from now. That budget will coincide with the third and final year of our current contract. I keep hearing that the District is still deficit spending, but I really don’t know that to be the case. However, if it turns out that three years isn’t long enough to fix the structural deficit that existed prior to ESTA’s remarkable concessions to keep the wolf from the door, it will be time for a change.

I leave it up to our members and ESTA leadership to figure out what that change will have to be, or even whether it will have to be made. But when I retire at the end of this year, I will be leaving an Association that will be well positioned to implement that change. Because of the enlightened concurrence of the ESTA Assembly over a four year period, we’ll have a huge reserve in our PAC fund a year from now. Ideally, in a benign application, that money could be used in conjunction with some motivated volunteers to try to influence the voters of this District to pass a much-needed Parcel Tax. But if need be, that money could also be used in other – more personal – electoral issues.

Think about this: We work in a public school district, and every penny our District spends has to be allocated through a political process run by politicians.

Whether we like it or not, as long as we are publicly funded we are participants in politics. We can sit on the sidelines wringing our hands and hoping that someone else comes along to help us, or we can act in concert to try to change our environment. I don't want to be a victim. Neither do you.

ESTA has a Political Action Committee, chaired by Wendy Stegeman. At most meetings this year we have only had a handful of people show up. But these are relatively peaceful times. About a year from now, our PAC could absolutely be as important to us as our Bargaining Team or our Organizing Committee. But a year from now it will be too late to implement a well-conceived process efficiently. Those discussions need to start early in the year and be ongoing. Stay tuned for announcements of meeting dates, and be ready to do what patriots and scoundrels have been willing to do

## Vice President Report

By Marisa Vera

May is open enrollment for benefits, so I wanted to remind you how important it is to keep up with your yearly check ups. Let me share with you what happened to me two years ago.

I always have my eyes checked once a year. Since I was 7 years old, I have worn glasses. I asked my eye doctor once how would I explain my vision to someone, and he said, "You are blind as a bat" and then he added. "You have a high index, 5/500 in one of your eyes."

I started wearing contact lenses at age 14. I was told since I had an astigmatism and that in order to have 20/20 vision I would have to wear hard contact lenses. Over the years, I have switched to gas permeable, which for me are just fine although many people tell me soft lenses are much more comfortable. I have always been afraid of lasik surgery because of the small chance of blindness.

On April 18, 2005 my worst fear became a reality; I went completely blind in my left eye. I had retinal detachment. Warning signs can only be detected with having your eye dilated when you have an eye exam. So, even though I'd had a check-up six months before, it was not noticed that I had a thin layer that would tear six months later and lead to blindness.

Within a few days of my surgery at Santa Clara Kaiser, my sight began to return. Over the next six months I continued to heal and my site returned to nearly the same vision I had before the surgery. I wore glasses only during the first few months of my recovery.

I have learned a lot about retinal detachment. Feel free to ask me about it if you think it could happen to you. (By the way, it is more likely to happen to someone who is near-sighted.)

Some of you still need to learn how to use our vision plan, VSP, which is how we get glasses, so makes sure to drop by that booth or send me an email to learn more. Don't forget that the district Benefits Fair is May 22<sup>nd</sup> 10:00 am –5:00 pm at the District Office. This is your chance to meet our vendors of benefits. You can also change medical plans during this time as well as add a spouse if you recently got married.

### 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 June submissions is **Friday, June 1, 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

**LIFESTYLE CHOICES**

**Organizing Committee Report**

*By Marisa Vera*

**“A Health Tip”**

**Submitted by Bill Mustanich, ESTA Benefits Chair**

**HERE’S THE SKINNY ON WEIGHT CONTROL**

In healthy adults, acceptable levels of body fat range from 18 to 23 percent in men and 25 to 30 percent in women. Stepping on the scale, however, tells little about how close you are to an acceptable level.

Small changes in weight typically reflect fluid changes. Your body retains fluid depending on the amount of salt you eat, your activity level and even changes in the weather.

Doctors at the Mayo Clinic say people shouldn’t place too much emphasis on weight alone. The best way to determine whether you need to lose weight is to evaluate how “healthy” your weight is.

**Take This Test:**

**Do you have a health condition that would benefit from weight loss? Some are high blood pressure, diabetes, osteoarthritis, high blood cholesterol and high triglycerides.**

(Yes/No)

**Are you at risk for these problems later in life? If these conditions are in your family history, you are more likely to develop them.**

(Yes/No)

**Is your weight higher than the acceptable range on weight charts? The highest risk is for someone who was obese as a teenager.**

(Yes/No)

**Do you overeat, smoke, have more than two alcoholic drinks a day, or live with uncontrolled stress?**

(Yes/ No)

If you answered “no” to all the questions, there’s no health advantage to changing your weight. If you have more than one “yes” response, shed those extra pounds.

The Organizing Committee met on May 3, to discuss plans for next school year. Many good ideas were suggested. As you know, at this time next year we will be in the midst of bargaining. It is critical that we have a committee in place to help support the bargaining team. This committee plans to begin implementing their ideas when school begins in August.

The next meeting of the Organizing Committee will be on May 30, from 4:00-5:00 pm, at Mt Hamilton CTA, 888 South Capitol Avenue. We still need more people to join this committee. Also, the Organizing Committee Chair position is still open. This position includes a two period release. Contact me at [veram@esuhsd.org](mailto:veram@esuhsd.org) if you are interested in learning more about becoming the Organizing Committee Chair or if you plan on attending the meeting on May 30<sup>th</sup>. There will be a light snack and drinks provided at this meeting, so don’t forget to RSVP by May 29<sup>th</sup>. I hope to see you there!

**Deadline for all  
submissions  
to the June issue  
of Panorama is  
Friday, June 1,  
2007**

## **Hypocrisy at its Best: A Side-by-Side Comparison Between Iraq and No Child Left Behind**

**By Brent McKim  
Jefferson County Teachers Association  
Louisville, Kentucky**

On Friday, March 23rd, 2007, President Bush discussed the Iraq War Emergency Supplemental Funding Bill. In reviewing the transcript, there are remarkable similarities between his criticisms of the actions of Congress regarding his emergency war spending bill and educators' criticisms of his actions with NCLB. It is amazing how the President and his spin-masters like Karl Rove fail to see the parallels. As you're reading below, you'll find actual comments from President Bush's speech on the war spending bill located on the left side; you'll find the educator's perspective using almost identical language on the right side.

### **President Bush's Commentary re: Congressional Mandates for the Iraq War**

- "Brings us no closer to getting our troops the resources they need to do their job"
- "[Congress] voted to substitute their judgment for that of our military commanders on the ground"
- "Abdicated its responsibility by passing a war spending bill that has no chance of becoming law"
- "The Purpose of the emergency war spending bill I requested was to provide our troops with vital funding."

### **An Educator's Reality: President Bush's NCLB**

- Brings us no closer to getting our teachers the resources they need to do their jobs.
- Congress voted to substitute their judgment for that of our education professionals in the classrooms
- President Bush and Congress abdicated responsibility by passing an education bill that has no chance of improving education.
- The purpose of NCLB should have been to actually provide our schools, students and teachers with vital funding.

- 
- “They set rigid restrictions that will require an army of lawyers to interpret”
  - “They set an arbitrary date for withdrawal without regard for conditions on the ground”
  - “This bill has too much pork, too many conditions, and an artificial timetable for withdrawal”
  - “It delays the delivering of vital resources for our troops”.
  - “The majority in the House has shown it is willing to undermine the gains our troops are making on the ground”
  - “Democrats want to make clear that they oppose the war in Iraq. They have made their point.”
  - “These Democrats believe that the longer they can delay funding for our troops, the more likely they are to force me to accept restrictions on our commanders, an artificial timetable for withdrawal, and their pet spending projects”
  - “If Congress does not approve the emergency funding for our troops by April the 15th, our men and women will face significant disruptions”
  - “Our men and women in uniform should not have to worry that politicians in Washington will deny them the funds and the flexibility they need to win”
  - They set rigid restrictions that will require an army of lawyers to interpret.
  - They set an arbitrary date by which all students must reach proficiency regardless of conditions in the classroom.
  - This law has too little funding, too many unreachable mandates, and an artificial timetable to achieve student proficiency
  - It delays the delivery of vital resources to our public schools.
  - President Bush and Congress have shown they are willing to undermine the gains our teachers and students are making in the classroom.
  - President Bush and Congress want to make clear that they oppose funding public education. They have made their point.
  - President Bush believes that the longer he can withhold funding for public schools, the more likely they, along with their students and teachers, are to fail and be replaced by his pet voucher, charter school, and privatization projects.
  - If President Bush and Congress fail to provide significant funding for our public schools, students and teachers will face significant disruptions.
  - Our public school students and teachers should not have to worry that politicians in Washington will deny them the funds and the flexibility they need to succeed.

The point of this article is not at all to question those who align themselves with the Republican party, or to bolster those who identify as Democrats. It’s not to make a statement about the Iraq war and what should or should not be done. The point is that we have an awful education law that is undermining public education as we know it – it doesn’t matter to which party you belong. It is an absolute double standard for the President of the United States to make the claims he is making regarding Congress’s actions on funding the war while he does exactly the same things to public education. We have a law that sets out unreachable goals. We have a law that sets up artificial timelines. We have a law that fails to provide adequate resources. We have a law that lacks funding to even attempt to achieve what has been set before us. We expect the President and Congress to do their duty and fund our schools. How would the President expect Congress to act considering the example he has set?

# RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

*“Always be smarter than the people who hire you”---*

*Lena Horne*

As we approach the end of the school year, teachers prepare students for final exams—whereby we attempt to illustrate what things were covered, what things were learned, what things were worth knowing; these things are not always the one in the same. Students begin making note cards, outlining, re-reading cramming; they try to boil things down to the essentials—the one thing, the best thing, the true thing worth knowing or worth learning which will enable success or avert failure.

We, as teachers, do the same for ourselves, though our lessons are different and our “grades” at the end of each year are often self-designated. We could, like many seniors at present, head for the beach hoping that sunlight, sand, and the sonorous sound of the surf will obliterate the moments of suffering and boredom or illuminate and recapture our moments of enjoyment and success.

We could, however, bring along a little summer reading—reminder of the essential thing, the one thing, and perhaps the best thing for making our job a better one next year: your contract. Underlying that contract is something fundamental and overlooked or presumed and sometimes forgotten. England has a Magna Carta, America a Declaration of Independence, Bruce Springsteen had Born to Run, and we have the Rodda Act of 1975 which transformed the profession of teaching in California. Its provisions are the backbone of ESTA’s success now and for the future—but only so far as we uphold it.

Key provisions of the Rodda Act are the requirement of school boards to negotiate a contract with teachers in the form of an exclusive bargaining unit and that the purpose of negotiation is creating a binding agreement for a minimum of one year and a maximum of three years. Prior to this, school districts negotiated contracts individually with employees and often changed agreements with teachers based on the economic fortunes of that particular year. There was

no exclusive bargaining unit and employees could be hired at different wages for the same work based on date of hire, conditions at the time, or the fickle finger of fate. Those contracts could have specified a different evaluation timetable and procedure, they could have provided a different salary level, and they could have

sacrificed each and every teacher’s control over their work environment. Divided among ourselves, we could have been subject to year-to-year school planning based on uncertain

budget provisions as well complete lack of incentive by school districts to plan on a three-five year cycle. We are beneficiaries of a law that forces school districts to plan with a more deliberate and professional focus.

Furthermore, the Rodda Act specifies that negotiations will begin with formal proposals presented in a public meeting, which allows for initial public comment or “sunshine” on what’s on the table. This provides us with a window to the public consciousness about what matters to us and why. The Act also specifies that the school board must bargain wages, work hours, benefits, safety conditions, leave and transfer requests, layoff procedures, evaluation procedures, grievance, and class size. This is the business of teaching and we owe it to ourselves to ensure that those specific areas are defined as we would have them, not the district.

The Rodda Act, as it has been revisited, also extends to include the right to “consult” on matters that impacted education such as changes in curriculum, textbook selection, and definition of educational objectives. We can fashion our contract on an ongoing basis to give shape and form to that power of consultation. Having established ourselves as subject area experts, we need to ensure that expertise appears clearly to students and their parents.

Lastly, when significant changes in state and local laws concerning education are made, they cannot be enforced until school boards “bargain the impact” of those laws on existing contract. This provision of Rodda addresses our challenge in dealing with the aftermath of laws such as NCLB—which has made a litany of changes in our workplace. Our ability to

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

bargain our working conditions when they are mined, spiked, and booby-trapped by legislation is pivotal. .

What is the upshot, then, of this information? Knowledge of the Rodda Act and our collective bargaining agreement should remind us what power we currently wield as teachers in shaping our professional fortunes. We can only do so, however, if we are aware of our own contract—what it grants us and what it tasks us with doing. We are entering a contract negotiation year whereby every one of us will be affected. It is imperative to remember what our baseline is, what rights we currently hold, and how much better our position has been than virtually every other comparable school district. But if you need confirmation, look at the collective bargaining agreements of surrounding school districts, especially those negotiated during the last three years.

Comparison in key areas can both highlight compromises and decisions of other district we never want to make. We can, however learn about those innovations in **defining** working condition, curriculum development, assignment of members into positions, material selection, and other considerations to make our district a better place for progressive and dynamic professionals. In promoting stronger rights and defending those we have it is instructive to know more about the contract.

Most importantly, however, for more information on contractual protections and extensions of those protections and rights, go to an even more important source: organizing meetings at your sites and the ESTA organizing committee. This is the time to start pooling information (both internal and external) and disseminating out information. No bargaining unit member (that's YOU) should teach in a classroom with less than an ideal contract, no bargaining unit member should be guilty of ignorance of their rights and contractual protections. Basic knowledge of your contract is the pre-finals notecard, it is the outline, it is the essential knowledge that will help you enjoy summer with the confidence that you will always return to a more empowering and safer workplace.

## SPRING CLEANING

Attention:

There is one more issue  
of Panorama this  
school year.

Please notify

Panorama's advertising

department if you

intend to continue

running your ESTA

classified ad next year.

All ads will otherwise be

stricken for the

September '07 issue.

[brandtm@esuhsd.org](mailto:brandtm@esuhsd.org)

# 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 ESUHSD 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](mailto: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](mailto:big57wave@yahoo.com). References from colleagues at all ESUHSD schools. NOT TAKING ON ANY WORK FOR SPRING OR SUMMER, SCHEDULING NOW FOR FALL OF 07. FISH ARE CALLING.

**CGT Travel,** Contact Marian Dotson, at 831-338-1959 [cgravelpals@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto:big57wave@yahoo.com) or PHHS woodshop#73966.

**Wedding Officiant:** Special offer for ESTA members. Local weddings performed for \$200. Contact [griffinje@esuhsd.org](mailto: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!

**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).

**Need to sell one week in Hawaii:** July 7-14, 2007 in Kapaa Shore, Kapaa, Kauai HI 1 bd condo, sleeps 4, \$620 which includes travel insurance, email Marisa Vera at [marisavera@aol.com](mailto:marisavera@aol.com) for more information or call 408 528-0949

**For Sale: 2000 Mazda Protégé** 4 Door, Approx. Mileage: 53,000 Automatic, Four new tires, Alarm system, A/C, Clean Title, Upgraded stereo system, Moon roof/Sun roof, Power windows, Floor mats. \$7,000 / OBO Call cell 394-2943 Tim Mestaz

**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](mailto: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*

## Chaperone admits “freaking” looks like fun

The bass was throbbing. Bodies writhed and sweated on the dance floor. Fueled by deep, Bacchanalian impulses, the tuxedo and gown-adorned students of nearby Alfred Kinsey High School could bear the pretense of formality no longer as they thrust their hips, jiggled their jiggly-bits, swatted each others’ bottoms, and finally began to simulate sexual intercourse on the dance floor.

Watching nearby, English teacher and prom chaperone Fitz Mastile couldn’t help but admit, “It kinda looks like fun!”

“I mean, come on,” Mastile

went on. “They think they’re gonna do this kind of thing forever. They believe themselves exempt from the all the scourges of age: stress, gravity, decreased energy. I say, let ‘em have their fun while they can!”

Not everyone at the prom was so philosophical. Activities director Anita Bucketawata walked over to inform Mastile that it was his duty to stop such dancing “before it gets out of hand.”

Mastile sighed, took a sip from his Shirley Temple, and walked over to the students, saying, “Guys? Guys? OK guys, let’s settle down now. This isn’t appropriate.

Mm-kay?”

The students quickly gathered around him and tried to teach him how to “freak” before he retreated back to his table.

“You know, I read *The Bacchae* in college. I know what happens when you try to interfere with primal, orgiastic ritual. You couldn’t pay me enough to go back out there—at least not without a little Johnny Walker Black.”

Chewing on an ice cube, Mastile added wistfully, “Man, if I were 17 years old today, I’d totally be out there.”

## School runs like fascist state during testing

For local high school math teacher Miss Anne Truppie, there was something different about the way things looked on the first day of STAR testing. Then, she realized what it was.

“For once, every student in the whole school was in class! I looked around campus during my potty break, and the place was deserted! Not a soul anywhere! Oh, it was a beautiful sight!”

Truppie’s reverie was quickly broken when an unfamiliar man drove up to her in a golf cart and asked to see some identification. It turns out he was a private contractor from the security firm Blackwater USA, hired by the school to maintain order during test season.

“Finally the guards are running this asylum!” Truppie sighed with tears running down her cheeks. “Isn’t it beautiful, if only for a week?”

## Stoner forgets to celebrate 4/20

It was supposed to be perfect. Like a joyous bride, area stoner Kent Racaul had planned every detail of this year’s April 20, 4:20 bong-fest: who he was going to smoke with, which Snoop Dogg album he’d be listening to, which salty snack food he’d use to combat “the munchies”.

Then, when the big moment came, he forgot.

“Dude, I was watching *Blind Date*, and I totally spaced out. I mean one minute, there’s this guy and this chick on TV talking about what they’re looking for in a relationship, and the next thing I knew, it was like, 4:22 and I’ve got to wait until next year!”

Describing the situation as “a total rip-off, man,” Racaul could think of nothing which could have caused him to forget such an important moment on the stoner calendar. “I smoke out every day at 4:20, man,” Racaul told *The Backside* from his mother’s basement rumpus-room. “I mean, you know those round things with the arrows that go around in circles and tell time? You could set one of those things correctly by how regularly I smoke.”

“I feel like a kid who didn’t get any toys from what’s-his-name. You know, that big dude in the red suit? Imagine waking up on that day when that dude in the red suit shows up and you don’t get shit. Man, that’s how I feel right now.”

Asked if there was anything he could do to improve his mood, Racaul could think of nothing. “Dude, I don’t know what I’m gonna do. Probably smoke out some more. Maybe if I smoke enough, it’ll improve my memory for next year.”