

CONTRA COSTA

The Department celebrated Black History Month with a series of luncheons at the Field Offices and in the Institutions.

The Negotiating Team is preparing for contract talks to begin with the County within the month.

The Chief scheduled a series of "Brown Bag" meetings with staff in order to provide them with a report on the Department's budget and the outlook for remainder of this fiscal years as well as next year's financial situation. Probation Peace Officers could be directly impacted by this, either through layoffs, demotions or displacements.

Congratulations go out to the latest recipients, Pete Neef (Probation Counselor) and Maura McGettigan (Probation Officer), of the Association's "P.R.O.P.S" (Peers Recognizing Outstanding Probation Services) Award winners.

The Association's Executive Board, Shop Stewards and Goodwill Committee mixed a little business with pleasure, when they attended State Senator Mark DeSaulnier's 4th Annual Crab Feed fundraiser on January 28, 2011. It also gave those representing the Association an opportunity to meet with local legislators and address various concerns as it pertains to Probation.

The Association successfully coordinated with the County Election Department to continue to permit eligible Probation Peace Officers to have their voting information remain confidential. This is pursuant to Senate Bill 506 and Election Code 2166, which will be in effect for two years before having to renew this option.

On February 2, 2011, the PPOACCC Membership ratified a revised version of the Association's Bylaws.

According to recent news reports, the Board of Supervisors voted that top managers in the county would no longer be able to convert vacation into cash payments. It was also reported that this move saves \$950,000.00 a year and will also reduce future pension costs as some employees sell back vacation by means which they boost the salaries used to factor their retirement payments. This decision involves only non-union managers. Not every county employee is eligible for the benefit.

However, in a somewhat related story, it appears that some high-level positions at the Contra Costa Employees' Retirement Association seem unclear on the concept of shared sacrifice. The retirement association board is preparing to give its CEO a 4 percent raise and its in-house attorney and chief investment officer 6 percent raises. It's also going to exempt its employees from any pay cuts county workers must endure and

protect them from having to pay more toward their own pensions. And it's going to protect managers from having to give up the right to spike their pensions by selling back unused vacation, and as previously mentioned, a reform which is being implemented for county managers. At the same time that they are being asked to make large sacrifices, taxpayers and workers are paying to protect the salaries and benefits of the employees of the pension system. It's unfair to workers; it's unfair to taxpayers.

In an effort to increase Peace Officer safety, Probation Officers who never received updates, are currently being trained on the use of handcuffing, OC spray and basic self-defense.

Congratulations to the Court's "The Know Nothings", who proved to have the most trivial memory in the 26th Annual Contra Costa County Employees' Trivia Tournament, held on March 5th. "The Know Nothings" bested 25 other teams, before taking the championship by defeating the Library "Infomaniacs". Participating Probation Department teams included "Thirsty 4 Knowledge", "Random Awareness", "The Rookies", "Got Trivia" and the "Scrambled Eggheads". Proceeds from the one-day event were donated to the Juvenile Hall Auxiliary.

FRESNO

FCDPOA is currently negotiating its next labor contract with Fresno County. Although we remain optimistic on reaching a favorable agreement, with current budget projections in Fresno County and uncertainty in the State budget, it appears to be gloomy for employees. Lines of communication with management continue to be open, and we are always willing to meet to resolve any issues that may arise.

MADERA

All is quiet in Madera for the time being. Everyone is anxiously awaiting the new budgets County and State-wide. We continue to work and strive together as a team.

SAN BERNARDINO

There is really not a lot of new information from a few weeks ago. We are in the process of putting together a proposal for a contract since we still don't have a contract that will hopefully be cost neutral for the county. The county sent a letter to our association president stating that there will be significant cuts to unrepresented employees, pointing directly to our association, stating due our refusal to accept the previous county proposal. It should be noted that there has not been a formal proposal from the county in over a year. Their proposal is as follows:

>Elimination of Medical Plan Contributions and conversion to Medical Premium Subsidy and no opt-out and waive amounts.

- >Eliminate county pick-up of employee contributions for existing employees and new hires. To establish a new formula to reduce pension contributions.
- >Establish step advancements at 2.5% for new and existing employees.
- >Establishing a cap on certain leave accruals.

Our chief put out an email out to staff that state we are ultimately facing a loss of up to 148 positions within our department. The Division Directors have stated having meeting with their offices discussing this point.

This being said, the department is also preparing for the state parole realignment, and the chief also announced that she would be promoting a new Division Director II to plan for this. This will add to the already top heavy administration, as line level staff are preparing to get laid off.

SAN JOAQUIN

We have been working on several issues in recent months. One issue, was the revision to our arming policy; specifically that of POs being armed in the office. Once the Chief made the decision to give armed POs the discretion to be armed in the office, the Department worked on a revised set of policies that would be affected as a result of the change in practice. With some minor tweaks, we agreed on a set of policies that works for the Department and our members. Thanks again to those who responded to my email request, it was most helpful in gathering relevant and timely information.

Another issue was the transportation of direct file youth to and from court. With budget cuts over the last year, the Transportation unit had been dissolved. Recently, it was reactivated due to concerns over workload demands upon members. Just as important, was an agreement between our Department, the Court and other law & justice partners in the county. Now, instead of having members monitor the youth in court, they would only be responsible to transport the youth to and from court; leaving the responsibility for supervision in court to the Sheriff's Office. This frees up our members to complete other duties. The Presiding Juvenile Court Judge was also sympathetic to our request to meet and discuss the issue; which also resulted in freeing up more room on the Juvenile Court Calendar. The result was that some of the direct file cases will now be heard at our Juvenile Justice Center, rather than having to be transported to downtown adult court for all court appearances.

Lastly, we have been struggling with the implementation of evidenced based practices. There is a culture change happening in our field, and an evidenced based practice is part of that change. Granted, program funding and staffing levels can be positively impacted, but the process of implementation can be frustrating and challenging to say the least. The latest example, were the EPICS (Effective Practices in Community Supervision) interviews of the youth by their supervising PO. POs were to interview

youth and record (audible only) the session. After bringing forward concerns over the program, it appeared that the Department and the Association were on the same page. What resulted though, were interviews that ended up being heard by multiple people; instead of the interview being heard only by a program integrity staffer. Furthermore, consent waiver forms were not properly distributed to interviewing POs; which had also been brought forward as a concern due to the potential liabilities involved with the recorded interviews. In the end, the initial round of interviews were completed, but with serious concerns over *any* possible future recordings and the lack of appropriate program oversight. Further discussions over these issues will be taking place in the coming weeks. It is our goal to ensure that members have the best possible protection against any similar issues and their potential consequences going forward.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

In San Luis Obispo County a status quote budget and a budget with 2% decrease in funding will be submitted to the Board of Supervisors. Fortunately through retirements and vacant positions both of the budget do not result in any layoffs. SLOPPOA has a current contract through 2012. So we are safe from opening up for contract negotiations for one more year.

SLO County will be receiving several new caged units with "Probation" clearly marked on both the sides of the vehicles for community based contacts. With becoming more visible within the community it is our hope to educate the county on what Probation does.

SOLANO COUNTY

Greetings from Solano County.

We are pleased to say our decertification election is scheduled for 3/8/11. We have received tremendous support from staff and outside agencies, which has made this process a little easier. For this we are thankful. We look forward to ending this part of the process, and feel confident we will succeed in our efforts.

As a Department, there is great concern over this coming year's budget, and the uncertainty regarding funding. The County is asking Departments to submit a budget with a 10% reduction in costs, and there is great fear of substantial lay offs. There has been some talk of the possible closing of our Boys Ranch, which would lead to the displacement of approximately 20 members. This is of concern to many. We have yet to hear anything official on this matter or on the overall budget, from our management, which has led to speculation, rumor, and anxiety. We do have all staff meetings

scheduled starting next week, so hopefully this will provide members with some information. We are concerned both staff and services will be cut.

The County has offered a supplemental retirement plan (PARS), to those who are eligible, which could ease the burden of layoffs if approved. The County will announce on April 1st whether or not there was enough interest for them to continue with the offer. If the County proceeds, then it is our understanding each Department Head will have to decide to what extent they will participate. Those members, who are allowed to retire through this program, must retire no later than April 30th, and only 25% of the vacated positions (County Wide) may be subsequently filled.

Right now we are treading water, and morale within our Department is pretty low. There is some optimism that having our own Association will improve this to some degree, but we understand change will take time.

Now more than ever we need to stand together, continuing to educate the community and our Board of Supervisors on the importance of our work.

Stay Strong and Stand Committed.

YOLO

The Yolo County Probation Association is scheduled to begin contract negotiations the week of March 21, 2011. Our current contract expired October 31, 2010.

The negotiations team consists of: Jennifer Ellasces, YCPA President (DPO II, assigned to the Juvenile Probation Services Division - Juvenile Court/Intake Unit), Tim McReynolds (YCPA Vice President (DO II, assigned to the Alternative Sentencing/ Work Program Unit), and Ge Vang, DO II, assigned to the Juvenile Detention Facility. Mark Salvo of the Mastagni, Holstedt, Amick, Miller and Johnsen Law Firm will serve as Chief Negotiator. We look forward to positive discussions with the County's negotiations team.

We have not experienced any layoffs of line peace officers as of this report, although we have been furloughed for the past few years.

We would like to take a moment to congratulate the Yolo County Probation Department's Officer of the Year: Dan Fruchtenicht, Supervising Probation Officer.