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***ES**Prit News*

Do you know the people on this page? You might not recognize the faces, but you should know the names. The Ventura Classified Employees Association will be the 'hub of activity' in nationwide Education Associations' social meetings. VIPs invited to the last Ventura Classified Employee Association (VCEA) Council Representative meeting in June 2008 are:



Reg Weaver

David Sanchez, President of the California Teachers Association
Paula Monroe, Executive Board Member of the National Education Association
Reg Weaver, President of the National Education Association
All three VIPs have responded and indicated their participation in the VCEAs' Year-end Representative Council meeting June 4, 2008.



Paula Monroe

At the last Council Representative meeting we honor our Retiree members, present VCEA's Scholarship Awards and recognize our dedicated Council Representatives. VCEA's Leaders and Rank-and-File members are excited to have these three Associations VIPs at our celebration. *(Read excerpts from our visitors' bios on the next page)*



David Sanchez

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VCEA Professional Growth Applications Hit a New High

The Professional Growth Committee met at the ESC last month. We took action on 37 applications. There was one increment earned as of this meeting. We had 6 brand new applicants. One application was returned for documentation. One submission was denied because it was a mandatory training. One new applicant had several classes they could have claimed, but they missed the time line.

Remember, you must submit your application within one year of the date of completion of your class or conference. You must be employed by the district for 2 years before you may earn your first increment.

You may submit as soon and as often as you want. Points will be tallied and

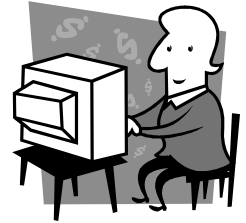
accumulated towards your increments.

You may earn up to five increments of \$150 each, but there has to be two years between each one.

Refer to your contract to see what courses qualify towards Professional Growth. You may submit for anything you like, but if it is questionable, it will be discussed and a decision will be made to allow or disqualify the submission. The application form is on the VCEA website. If you can't access the website and need an application, please call me at 641-5000, ext. 1302.

If you have any questions about Professional Growth, you may contact the members of the Committee:

Susan Metzner (Grounds), John Chilton (Trades), Pam Medina (Transportation), Gudrun King (Clerical), Lupe Gallegos (Facilities), and Terry Penquite (Para-Ed) or myself, Mary Jane Davis (Child Nutrition), Chair.



The committee meets two or three times a year as we receive applications. We will meet again in the Spring.

Mary Jane Davis

Chair, Professional Growth Committee

Continued from page 1, VIPs visiting at Year-end Rep Council meeting

Reg Weaver is serving his second term as president of the 3.2 million-member National Education Association (NEA) – the nation's largest professional employee organization. As a middle school science teacher and 30-year classroom veteran, Weaver has been a lifelong advocate for quality public schools. He served as president of his local in Harvey, IL., president of the NEA affiliate in Illinois, and now leads one of the most influential education organizations in the nation. His commitment and contributions to public education haven't gone unnoticed. He has been named one of *Ebony* magazine's '100 Most Influential Black Americans' for his national influence. Weaver's recent honors include the 2007 MALDEF Excellence in Leadership Award; the 2006 Chairman's Award for Educational Leadership presented by 100 Black Men of America Inc.; and the Congressional Black Caucus Education Braintrust's 2006 Great Points of Light Award.

Paula Monroe, a high school secretary in Redlands, Calif., was elected to the National Education Association's (NEA) Executive Committee in July 2007 for a three-year term. With two decades of education experience, Monroe has been a champion for public education and school employees at the state and local levels. Before being elected to the NEA Executive Committee, she served two

full terms on the NEA Board of Directors as well as eight years as president of the Redlands Education Support Professionals. She also served as president of the California Education Support Professionals. Monroe is a native of Colorado and has attended school in North Carolina, Colorado, and North Dakota. She was a parent volunteer in her daughter's kindergarten class, which led to her start in Redlands Unified School District as a computer lab paraprofessional at Mentone Elementary School, where she worked for eight years. (*Editor's note: We are fortunate to have Paula as a longtime friend and supporter of our Association and numerous individuals in our ranks.*)

David A. Sanchez, CTA President, brings a commitment to seeing that all of our public schools – where the 340,000 members of CTA work every day – get the resources they need to continue to provide a quality education for every student. Sanchez has a strong record of accomplishments over his 27 years in the teaching profession. The first Latino president of CTA, Sanchez's leadership skills caught the attention of *La Opinión* newspaper, which named him one of 80 Latino "Leaders of the Future" in California in 2006. David Sanchez's CTA leadership experience includes serving four years as the union's statewide secretary-treasurer and four years as vice president, plus several years on the Board of Directors. Since 1980, he has been a kindergarten

teacher for the Santa Maria-Bonita School District in Santa Maria, Santa Barbara County. He still calls Santa Maria home.

Robert Hill

National Council ESP Treasurer

Union Code

Of Conduct

I will not criticize any union colleague except to the individual directly.

If any union colleague is being criticized in my presence, I will confront the criticism and ask that it stop.

I will not participate in any conversations with management that criticize, or negatively speculate about, any union colleague.

I will settle my differences with colleagues within my union.

I will engage in debate, offer others every opportunity for debate and respect minority viewpoints, but I will observe and support the majority mandate of my union.

What is a Grievance?

A grievance is not to be confused with a gripe. A gripe is usually based on something a bargaining unit member (members) might disagree with, although it has nothing to do with contractual rights. A bitch is something that the eternal grouser looks for to complain about and, of course, s/he does this in the lounge/break room or staff work room and tells everybody that s/he is upset. S/He just keeps things stirred up at the worksite. S/He should be told to either do something about the situation or forget it!

In the simplest terms, a grievance is a claim by an employee, a group of employees or the Association that the employment contract has been violated. In more detail, a grievance may be an alleged violation, inequitable application, misapplication or misinterpretation of the collective bargaining agreement (contract), a change in established past practice, or a decision by management that is alleged to be arbitrary, capricious, unreasonable or discriminatory.

Whenever an employee feels unjustly treated despite the fact that the source of the grievance is not contractual, the matter should be considered a possible grievance. That does not mean that every gripe and petty spat should be considered as a grievance. It does pay to check the treatment out because sometimes what might seem to you as a frivolous point could be a serious violation in disguise. Contact your Association Grievance Committee for more information at 644-0795.

A good grievance procedure provides a method of:

- *resolving employee-employer problems,
- *appealing administrative decisions without fear of reprisals,
- *determining the workability of an agreement,
- *resolving differences quickly and inexpensively,
- *forcing both parties in a dispute to think through their positions.
- *taking concerns to the upper levels of administration,



- *resolving problems at the level closest to the allegation,
- *relieving the frustration of the aggrieved,
- *highlighting problems within the District or at a site,
- *strengthening the Association in the eyes of the members,
- *enforcing rights and
- *improving the contract.

Michael Musser

NEA Director ESP At-Large

11th Annual California Paraeducator Conference



The Association is pleased to announce the upcoming Paraeducator Conference in Los Angeles, CA. The conference is co-sponsored by various groups, including the California

Department of Education, CSU Long Beach, ACSA, CSBA and CSEA. The courses at the conference are designed to sharpen your skills and enhance job performance. Workshops cover ELL, health, math, music, reading, writing, special and general education and much more. Any paraeducator interested in honing their skills should contact the

VCEA office and leave their name and message with our office manager, **Shelly Diaz @ 805.644.0795**. Ms. Diaz will forward the names, messages and pertinent information to Teri Roots, VCEA President for review.

Robert Hill,

VCEA Executive Board

Dates and Information to Remember for the Upcoming Months

The deadline for **CTA Scholarships** is the coming month, February 8th 2008. The applications link is on the CTA website after you log-on @ www.cta.org/mycta

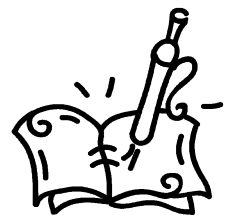
February 5th 2008, is the Presidential primary election and several propositions to be voted on. The VCEA Political Action Committee recommends the following positions: **Vote 'NO' on 91:** The California Legislature has already addressed this transportation funding concern. **Vote 'NO' on 92:** Support the community

colleges, but say 'NO' to this flawed initiative. **Vote YES 'on 93:** We need experienced legislators, not career politicians. **STOP – DON'T SIGN!** Say 'NO' to cutting pensions for new teachers! This measure would gut teachers' pensions and retiree health care. This is still in signature-gathering phase – don't sign the petition.

Mr. Henry Jones, a retired CFO for LAUSD, has been elected by the Retired Members of CalPERS to the CalPERS Board. Jones

will serve a four-year term beginning this year.

Finally, don't forget to check the **NEA, CTA and CalPERS member benefits web-pages** for discounts, freebies and relevant information.



Robert Hill

CTA-ESP 4 State Council Representative

Meet Your VCEA Colleague

Who is Carlene Zook?



Carlene Zook, ASB Clerk at Anacapa Middle School is a remarkable woman.

In addition to caring for her family at home, Carlene takes very good

care of her Anacapa family. Parents, students and staff all receive the same bright-eyed smile from Carlene.

If you come to Carlene with a problem, it becomes hers. She either offers a solution right away, or works tirelessly to find a resolution.

Anyone who knows Carlene will tell you about her contagious optimism. You cannot be near her without coming away in a better mood than when you arrived.

Carol Brock,

VCEA Council Rep



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Newsletter Team Members:

Katherine Marin / Teri Roots /
Carol Brock / Robert Hill

Upcoming Important Dates - Mark Your Calendars

VCEA Council Representative Meeting	Feb. 6, 2008, Mar. 5, 2008
VUSD Board Meeting	Feb. 12 & 26, 2008 Mar. 11 & 25, 2008
Personnel Commission	Feb. 19, 2008 Mar. 19, 2008
Festival of Talent	Feb. 23, 2008
VCEA Executive Board Meeting	Feb. 28, 2008
Read Across America	Mar. 3, 2008
CISCC Meeting	Mar. 16, 2008

The Last Word



Welcome 2008!

With the New Year, come some major changes for VCEA. As some of you may have heard, during the Winter Break, Kevin James resigned his position as VCEA President.

The notice was sudden with Mr. James stating that he wanted to pursue a different path with his life. The job of President is a very large responsibility. Kevin brought a lot of new ideas to the Association which we plan on continuing. Thank you Kevin for your hard work and dedication to our members.

With his resignation, I have been given the opportunity to step up and assume the position as VCEA's President. At first, this was daunting. But as it has "sunk-in", I am really excited! In the 10 years I have been with the District, I have held numerous positions. I have done noon duty, been a Child Guidance Assistant, Librarian, Paraeducator-Special Education,

Attendance Clerk and now, a Secretary of Curriculum and Instruction at Buena High School. With my background, I feel that I have a true understanding of what it is like to be a Classified Employee.

With respect to the vacancy of Vice President, Mike Downey has been appointed and graciously accepted to fill that position.

He is a huge asset to me in my time of transition. As you might know, Mike is on the front line of our VCEA Negotiations team. He is extremely knowledgeable and a huge advocate for Classified Employees.

At first, the idea of assuming the VCEA Presidency was daunting to me.

But now, as it has "sunk-in", I am really excited!

VCEA Council Representatives.....I am pleased to announce that Kim Mina, our CTA staff person, will be presenting Part 2 of her workshop on our roles and responsibilities as reps, and member's rights at our February 6th meeting. I am looking forward to working hard with you to make this the best year ever!

Teri Roots

VCEA President