

## MEA SEPTEMBER 2005 NEWSLETTER

**Happy Labor Day!** The United States is perhaps the only country that celebrates workers on the first Monday in September as opposed to May 1. For many of us Labor Day is the watershed date separating summer and fall. For many MEA members it also marks a quickening in the work pace as budgets have been approved and coworkers, colleagues, and clients return from vacations.

MEA's Board and staff hope this newsletter reaches you in time to mark the occasion. In addition to the time off, we hope you take a minute to think about the conditions and issues of MEA members and other working people around the world.

**SF HOUSING AUTHORITY** – The bargaining team has met twice to consider our position regarding negotiations for the successor contract. The HA is basing its position on an assumed 11% reduction in the operating budget as well as reductions to the Section 8 Program. MEA has been advised that approximately 28 Authority positions will be eliminated from the budget. While a few of those positions are vacant most are filled. As of this moment it is believed that two MEA-represented employees will be laid off and one vacant MEA position eliminated from the position.

The bargaining team is calling a meeting and inviting all members to attend. **The meeting will take place Tuesday Sept. 13, at 12 noon in the Commission Room at 440 Turk Street. Please try to be on time. Mr. Charlie Francis - the newly appointed SFHA Finance Administrator - will make a presentation and respond to questions regarding the SFHA's budget and financial situations.**

**COURTS** – Although we have not received official notice from the Courts, based on conversations with other California Court Units, we estimate that the December 1, 2005 Negotiated Salary Increase will be between 3- 4%. Remember this is an estimate, and more information will be provided when received.

Ms. Pat Hammermaster, who has served on the MEA Board for approximately one year, has left the San Francisco Courts to accept a position with the Courts in Santa Cruz County. Best wishes to Pat in her new job.

**CITY** – As we prepare for negotiations, members' concerns about the MCCP process that allocated their class to a new MCCP class become increasingly important. As of today, 838 positions have been allocated. This number is higher than the number of positions in the bargaining unit as employees have left, retired, or been promoted. 135 members have requested reconsideration. Most of those requested reconsiderations have been completed. Lastly as of today, 9 members have appealed their allocation to the Civil Service Commission. Does this mean the vast majority of members are pleased with their allocation?

MCCP, when implemented, replaces a salary plan that has a 20% range from step 1 to step 5 with a salary plan having a 45% range. The MCCP range A has a 30% range which calls for 5% increments(steps) until the top of the range is reached. Ranges B and C are each 7.5% ranges, but the criteria to receive these has yet to be negotiated and ratified by the City and MEA. The task of reaching that agreement will be addressed in this year's negotiations for a new MOU.

The contract questionnaire you will receive in late November will seek your input for those negotiations. Your thoughts about MCCP in specific and general will direct our strategy. Please consider the issue.

**NOVEMBER ELECTION** - State Proposition 75 would make it extremely difficult for Unions representing public employees to make contributions to candidates or ballot measures. It is perhaps the most important measure on the ballot. Make no mistake about it, the supporters of Proposition 75 are the same individuals who want to eliminate "defined benefit" pensions for public employees, allow for more contracting out of work performed by public employees etc. These individuals believe that California's problem is not tied to underfunding but rather to public employees being overpaid. Proposition 75 should be rejected by the voters.

There will be an election in San Francisco this November regardless of whether or not there are State measures on the ballot.. In San Francisco there are races for Assessor-Recorder, City Attorney, and City Treasurer. Additionally there 9 Ballot Measures – Two are bond measures (Prop. A \$246 million for the community college, Proposition B \$208 million for pedestrian safety and street paving). Proposition C would require the Mayor to submit the Ethics Commission budget as prepared by the department. (So the Mayor could reduce DPH, SFO, PUC, but not Ethics?). Proposition D would allow the Board of Supervisors to appoint members to the MTA Board. Old Proposition E gave that authority to the Mayor. This year's proposition E would move the Public Defender and Assessor-Recorder Election to the November general election. Proposition F requires that the Fire Departments service levels be maintained as they were in January 2004. Proposition G limits automobile traffic in Golden Gate Park. Proposition H bans the manufacture, distribution, and possession of firearms in SF. Proposition I would make it official policy to oppose military recruiters in the City's public schools. These issues should give San Francisco voters something to think about.