

## President's Message

Welcome to the new school year. It's great to see everyone and face a new year!

I will try to use this space to tell you what's most important on my mind, union-wise, and to help you stay up to date with your fast-moving GCFA. This next few weeks we'll be in a discussion period regarding the Tentative Agreement that the union bargained with the district. There's some good news for all faculty—i.e., we preserved FT faculty benefits, and part timers are getting some rehire/seniority protections—not total security, alas, but enough to hang on through hard times. Read the summary or the whole Tentative Agreement (which includes the 2013-14 Academic Calendar for those who plan ahead) at <http://www.gavfaculty.com/Negotiations.htm>. And discuss! Our bylaws require two weeks of debate, so have at it in the hallway, at the mailbox, by phone from the couch, or online via email. If you see Robb Overson, Marlene Bumgamer, Lindsay Padilla, Kimberley Smith, or Ken Wagman, thank them for sticking with it. They're working hard for you and it was not easy. You will enjoy the fruits of their persistence. Election Chair Jen Roscher will be in touch soon with the election timeline.

When you get your ballot, you'll also probably be asked to vote on a GCFA-wide stance on two important propositions that will be decided by voters Nov. 6, as discussed at our meeting on Staff Development Day. You've probably heard of Prop. 30, which will fund education in California to avoid much deeper cuts. Should GCFA take a strong YES position on it? Educate yourself on the GCFA Advocacy page: <http://www.gavfaculty.com/Advocacy.htm>.

And what about Prop. 32, which allows free speech benefits to corporations while removing unions' ability to do political advocacy work? Again, we've got some info for you on the Advocacy page—please make the time to look it over, as this is our professional future under discussion. What do you think? You'll be able to let us know. Whatever you do think, it's in everyone's interest to help students register to vote and get educated about issues. If you want to register students in your classroom, we can get you some forms (or you can do it with a laptop online), and the postmark deadline is October 22. Contact me or Mark Fuzie ASAP!

Finally, we're putting together an advocacy team again this year, and several great volunteers have come forward. At the very least, we plan to do some informational tabling about the above props, and voter registration. Can you help? Whether or not you go for that, we have a lot of other work we'd like to involve you in. I've never seen a more urgent climate for supporting your union and your colleagues. Not everyone can step up. If you can, please practice old fashioned solidarity and volunteer. A strong union helps us all.—

Leah Halper [Part-Time Vice president's message](#)

Welcome to Fall Semester!

A special welcome aboard to all new faculty members and a happy reunion greeting for returning faculty. I hope your summer provided what you wanted and needed, be it a teaching assignment, some time off, a class or conference, or a chance to travel. As we begin fall semester, remember that the faculty association is here to help with issues pertaining to workplace situations, and I want to hear your concerns and will work through the executive board to resolve them.

Contract vote approaching!

Watch for opportunities to know what is in the contract and when to vote. LOTS of good stuff for part time faculty in it! It will be soon.

Did you know you have paid sick leave?

Thanks to the GCFA negotiations last year, your accumulated sick days have been totaled and are now included along with your

load, salary, required flex hours, and other information on your teaching assignment that was mailed to you in mid August. These days are based on what you have accumulated since 2005 or your date of hire if you came to Gavilan after 2005. Sick leave is based on your percentage of a full time instructor's load (if you taught 30%, you earned 30% of a full timer's sick leave, and full time faculty earn 5 days sick leave per semester). If you are a STRS member, remember that all sick leave from all institutions should be added together before retirement, which will increase your service credit. A big THANK YOU to Human Resources staff who have worked hard to bring records up to date! GCFA will continue to work with HR to smooth any wrinkles as we implement the accounting system.

Important fall election information:

As we all know, California's cuts to education keep on coming. Educators need to educate themselves about the potentially HUGE consequences of Propositions 30 and 32. For more information and resources on these important propositions, visit CTA's website: <http://www.cta.org/en/Campaign.aspx>. As always, feel free to email me with issues, questions, concerns.

Jane Rekedal Part Time Vice President [jrekedal@gavilan.edu](mailto:jrekedal@gavilan.edu) [Grievance Officers](#)

Please join us in welcoming Jane Edberg as GCFA's new Grievance Officer. Jane will partner with Leslie Tenney to address grievance questions and concerns and represent members in cases that result in formal grievances. Please feel free to contact Jane at 846-4946 or Leslie at 846-4951. As a reminder: a grievance results from one or more violations of specific articles of the GCFA contract. Please become familiar with the contract and know your rights!

### Did you know?

Per article 32.3.2 of the GCFA contract, "students presenting complaints should follow the process as outlined in the Student Handbook for the appropriate student grievance procedure." This procedure requires students to first present their complaints to the involved faculty member. If resolution is not achieved, the student may then present the complaint to the appropriate Department Chairperson. Please do not refer students with complaints directly to deans or other administrators—doing so corrupts the student grievance process and can jeopardize a faculty member's rights. The goal is always to resolve complaints and disputes directly rather than to involve administrative supervisors. For full details of the student grievance process, please refer to the Student Handbook and/or the Gavilan College catalog. Leslie and Jane are also available for troubleshooting with the process.

[Cope with stress with dr. O](#)

Would your students benefit from some better strategies to cope with stress for academic success? Just in time for fall, our own Dr. Carlton Oler has produced just the book to help them—and maybe their teachers as well. The Book, *Coping with Stress for*

*Academic Success*, is intended to help students, educators, and parents understand and work to relieve the multiple stresses students undergo. The book intends to "provide students, from high school to college, as well as graduate and professional school, with insights and strategies to prevent, eliminate, or reduce the stress in major student-relevant areas that can undermine academic performance and satisfaction. This book is unparalleled in breadth and depth because it covers the stress dynamics in such areas as poor self-discipline and organization, procrastination, time-consuming and/or unhealthy relationships with significant others and peers, low self-worth, poor assertiveness, poor communication skills, alcohol and other drug use, excessive use of technology and television, poor diet, lack of exercise, inadequate sleep, not knowing and respecting your limits, worrying and pessimism, grade perfectionism, and poor money management. All the above is approached from a refreshingly practical and spiritual perspective." You can get your copy from Amazon.com, and let students know about this great resource!

[Bookmark](#), [Bookmarking](#), [Bookmarked](#)

Did you know that the GCFA website tells part time faculty exactly how to apply for unemployment benefits that almost all of them qualify to receive during breaks from school? That it outlines what to do if you are summoned for a scary talk with an administrator? And that it has the entire union contract at your fingertips in case you need to look up exactly how jury duty leave works, or what to do to qualify for part time conference funds? It's all there at [www.gavfaculty.com](http://www.gavfaculty.com); Bookmark this site, and visit often—content changes frequently.

Did you know: say no to locking up?

If you work at the Morgan Hill or Hollister offsite, you may be asked to stay after all classes end to lock up. You may be justifiably concerned about safety or late hours, as many faculty have told us they are. After much discussion with the district last year, and consultation with our CCA staff, we learned that faculty are under no obligation to say Yes to such a request, which is above and beyond the scope of their duties. Faculty who feel safe and comfortable doing lockup, and who are willing to stay, are certainly welcome to make such a commitment. But no one can or should be pushed or intimidated into locking up, and in no way is a refusal to lock up connected to the offer of future contracts or one's evaluation.

Have a question about this? Contact GCFA president Leah Halper.

Pssst – Want to negotiate?

That is, are you possibly the kind of person who might want to bargain on behalf of GCFA members with the District? If this is even remotely of interest, please consider going to the Community College Association (our parent org) Fall conference, which has a strong focus on bargaining and advocacy. It's October 12-14 and GCFA or CCA may be able to pay your way; the conference is in San Jose this year, so it's not far for most Gavilan faculty. Check it out [http://www.cca4me.org/news\\_events/cal\\_conf.html](http://www.cca4me.org/news_events/cal_conf.html); contact Leah Halper asap to get in line for all-expenses paid.