

Teachers choking in district barbecue

Talks disintegrate as critical day nears

By Wiley J. Ehrke

"If the board doesn't take us seriously, we know what steps we must take." These words were spoken by Bradley Wood, Grossmont College humanities instructor, during a demonstration outside the governing board meeting room on Oct. 3.

One way in which the faculty plans to do this is to hold an "Hour of Concern" this coming Friday at 10 a.m. During this time all faculty members will be encouraged to bring their classes to the Quad for a general meeting and question and answer period. The faculty feels that once this issues are known, they will have the support of most of the students.

About 150 faculty members and students took part in last week's demonstration protesting the adversarial relationship between the Grossmont College Teachers Association, which represents the faculty in collective bargaining, and the Grossmont District Administration.

Wearing "A united faculty" buttons and carrying signs, the demonstrators began massing

about 7 o'clock that evening. The protest was orderly and without confrontation. According to Paul Wheatcroft, president of the GCTA, this was done to "show our desire for conciliation while letting the board know we (the faculty) have strength."

BULLETIN: Negotiations will continue today at 2pm in the Governing Board Room.

The members of the governing board were greeted and handed a leaflet by the demonstrators, which was later read by Clair Runyan, chairman of the faculty's tactical committee, to the four board members present.

It said: "Together this faculty, the instructors and administration, the Governing Board, and the community created a fine college. The events of the next few days will strongly influence the future of Grossmont College. The adversarial position of each side over the past few months has served to weaken this institution.

"We desire to abandon this adversarial relationship and re-establish the position of harmony that made the Grossmont College

environment so special to all of us.

"Now, we hope to re-examine our positions, establish new bonds of understanding, and build on the common goals for the good of the whole staff, student body, Governing Board, and community."

The problems between the administration and faculty go back quite some time. Last month a tentative three-year contract was rejected by the faculty 147 to 146. This followed seven months of negotiation.

In the opinion of many faculty members the rejection was due in part to anger over the earlier elimination of faculty members as department heads. Three new deans were hired to take on these positions at what these same faculty members say is a higher cost to the district.

However, the college administration takes exception to this claim. Trudy Hill, vice-president for instructional services, said, "The new dean system is cheaper and will prove to be more cost effective in the long run."

To get to the bottom of this argument, Kevin O'Hea, a "G" reporter, took cost breakdowns on the new dean system from both sides and took them to an independent accountant.

Continued on Page 3



Supporters of the Faculty Tactical Committee met at Clair Runyon's house on Sunday. From left to right: Dick Lantz, biology instructor; Doris Alexander, English instructor; Ruth Anderson, English instructor and a negotiator for the committee. **Photo by Wiley J. Ehrke**

Negotiations

continued from page 1

The accountant was unable to compare the figures due to a lack of agreement on the type of expenses listed. On this matter Wheatcroft said, "Our figures include all costs, like secretaries and supplies. Theirs do not."

Other grievances were listed in a "fact sheet" passed out by the faculty. In this sheet the faculty claims it has not had a raise since 1976. It also states that while the administrative pay is in the top 25 percent of community colleges in the state, faculty pay is in the bottom 25 percent.

Walter A. Yuhl, the assistant superintendent of the Grossmont College district disputes this statement. He claims the faculty received a 5.5 percent or 6 percent raise along with the administration in 1976-77.

Yuhl also took exception to another item which appeared in the faculty "fact sheet." The sheet states, "the administration and Board went on with the construction of Cuyamaca College without a vote from the taxpayers."

"This is true," said Yuhl, "but we were restricted by law from putting such a measure on the ballot. A new law that becomes effective in January will allow us to, but then such a law didn't exist."

Both sides were still arguing over the issues up to last Friday when contract negotiations resumed. The administration and faculty representatives met for over eight and one-half hours but were still unable to come up with a new contract.

Wheatcroft felt the negotiations had completely broken down. "We couldn't agree on anything that made any difference," he said. "They wouldn't agree to binding arbitration and a request for the equivalent of a 3 percent pay hike."

However, according to an article in the San Diego Union, Yuhl claimed agreement had been reached on several issues, including the teachers' demand for peer evaluation and transfer notices.

But Wheatcroft was still very disappointed with the talks. "After eight and one-half hours it came down to them (administration) telling us (faculty) that they didn't have the authority to deal with us anyway." Wheatcroft said, "No date was even set for future negotiations. It was a 'don't call us, we'll call you' attitude."

In an effort to get the Administration back to the bargaining table, the faculty plans to inform students of their position in these negotiations.

Some students have already joined with the teachers in support of their cause for a new contract. Last Wednesday a meeting was held in Room 304 in which some students discussed the possibility of setting up a phone committee. Other organization meetings will be held at later dates.

But some students, especially ones who hoped to transfer to other colleges in the spring, are very worried about the possibility of a teachers strike. Lamented one such student, "If something can go wrong, it will."