



# The Sentinel

Voice of the ECC Faculty Association

Local 3791/IFT [www.eccfaculty.org](http://www.eccfaculty.org)

April 2005

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## From the President

### Lobby Day a Success!

On April 13, the ECCFA joined almost 1,000 other IFT members in Springfield, along with several hundred Illinois Education Association members, who swarmed the Capitol building to lobby their state legislators. Ricky Bailey, Cathy Tomasik, Clark Hallpike, and I were able to meet with Senator Steve Rauschenberger, and our message was clear: **protect our pensions and extend the early retirement option.** While there are several other important educational issues, these two are currently of primary importance in higher education. We left business cards and literature for several other legislators whom we were not able to find in their offices.

Afterward, we gathered on the front steps of the Capitol for a rally lead by Chicago Teachers' Union, Local 1. Senate President Emil Jones (D-Chicago) made a surprise visit to the

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rally to reaffirm his strong support for SB 750, legislation that reforms how public education is funded in Illinois.

Next on our journey was lunch at the Governor's Mansion. It was a perfect end to an exciting and successful day!

Lobby day is part of an ongoing IFT lobbying effort to fight for more funding for education and to protect our hard-earned benefits. It is one of many ways we can communicate with our elected officials to let them know what we need in education. Phone calls, postcards, e-mails, and personal visits outside of Lobby Day are other ways to communicate with our legislators so that our pensions, early retirement, and other hard-earned benefits are not lost. The General Assembly is scheduled to adjourn May 27. We must act now!

Commit to e-mailing or contacting your legislators today. It's very simple to look up their e-mail addresses on the Internet.

Here's a simple message you can adapt or use as is:

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_  
or  
Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_

**As a member of the Illinois Federation of Teachers, I urge you to oppose the changes to state pensions that the Governor is proposing that create a two-tiered system. I also encourage you to support extension the current early retirement option that allows protection or "grandfathering" for those already in the pipeline for 2006 retirement.**

Sincerely,

In unity,

Linda

## Springfield Lobby Day Photos



Inside the Capitol Building Filled with IFT Members



Gorgeous View of the Capitol Dome



**Senate President Emil Jones' Office**



**House Chambers (Cathy almost got arrested for taking this picture!)**



**Rally on the steps on the Capitol with CTU**



**Senate President Emil Jones rallying with CTU members**



**Linda, Rick, Cathy, and Clark at the Governor's Mansion for Lunch**

## **Election Update**

Now that the division re-alignment numbers and names have been received from administration, the ECCFA will immediately begin organizing its election. Stay tuned for news on Senate elections!

## Homegrown Art Show Cathy Tomasik

Is everyone aware that the instructors in the Graphic Arts Department are not only graphic artists but also fine artists? As artists, we are always looking for the time to create art as well as opportunities to show what we create. Consequently, Tina Leverenzzi has set up a combined Elgin Community College and Waubensee Community College instructors art show at Campbell House Art Gallery. It runs from May 13th through July 3rd. The opening reception will be on Friday, May 13th from 7-9 p.m. This show will feature instructors from both colleges.

In an effort to create art and to encourage each other, the graphic art instructors at ECC have formed an art group. We have met several times and it seems to be growing each month. As of yet, we don't have a name. Even though we've met several times, we haven't taken the time to discuss a name. For us it's all about art.

Connie is working on acrylic paintings of her granddaughters.

Kevin works in oils, and has completed several portraits which he is also painting for a class he is taking at Northern.

Cheryl is also continuing her education and with time at a premium, she came to help critique.

Marcia is working on a stippling project featuring a female cardinal.

Janice brought in some older work and also a Christlike mixed media

painting of her son, nails and all. If you want to know more about that you need to come to the opening reception.

Jacquene (a current student) brought in quite a bit of work in oil, acrylic and watercolor.

Sandy (a former student) brought in a piece of original art that was scanned and colorized in Photoshop.

Cathy is working on two watercolors in which she uses old photos as reference.

And last but not least, the real critic, Drew, Kevin's son, fell asleep while we were critiquing.

Can you believe that? And we thought we were interesting.

We are inviting all of our fellow instructors to come and take a look at what accomplished artists we have in our midst.

*The true work of art is but a shadow of the divine perfection.*  
Michelangelo

## **Faculty Quality is NOT Determined by Employment Status**

**Alison Knox**

In last month's *Sentinel*, ECCFA members honored Dave Campbell and expressed their gratitude for his efforts in gaining ECCFA membership for part-time instructors. Although I did not know Dave, I, too, have benefited from and am grateful for his efforts. I know that as a part-time instructor, the designation of "unit adjunct" meant not only more pay, but also more inclusion in campus dialogue and a greater recognition of my professional standing in the college. For that, as well as many other advantages of union membership, I am grateful not only to Dave, but to all union leaders from whose efforts I benefit daily.

Over the past month, I have heard tales of Dave's eloquence in arguing for the equal competence and professional standing of full and adjunct faculty members. In fact, I have always understood such equality to be at the root of our union. However, in recent months, several serious adjunct issues have fallen by the way side, leading me to question how fully we are embodying values to which Dave so eloquently spoke.

Local newspapers quoted our college president saying that adjunct instructors were less capable than full time instructors. Did we respond? Although he claimed he was misquoted, no retraction or clarification was ever printed for public consumption. At least two adjunct instructors were denied unit status this semester because of a

misunderstanding of contract language. Have the union and Human Resources resolved the issue? Without documentation of a previous meeting which would have clarified contract language, these instructors cannot become part of the unit for another semester.

Such issues matter. As skilled educators, all faculty members expect and deserve to be treated professionally. The adjunct instructors who make up more than half of our faculty are no exception. We are, first and foremost, teaching professionals regardless of the number of hours we meet with students or the number of courses we teach each semester. Just like any other faculty member, an adjunct instructor's competence and professionalism are essential bricks in the college's foundation. To attract and keep talented faculty members, regardless of the hours they work, we must be sure that we respond to all our members' needs competently and professionally. If our adjunct members do not receive the equal and whole-hearted support of the union, the entire faculty and the entire college suffer.

Dave Campbell put to rest the insulting suggestion that an instructor's qualifications are determined by his/her employment status. Just as I am sure that Tom Youngren lost neither his intelligence nor his professionalism when he retired from full time employment and began teaching here part time, I know that I did not magically gain teaching skills the day I left the adjunct ranks to become a full time instructor here. Because a professional, adjunct work force is and will continue to be a vital part of our community

college, disregarding adjunct issues weakens us as a bargaining unit and as professionals. Therefore, I encourage our ECCFA leadership as well as all individual members to respond to the needs and concerns of our adjunct members with the same diligence and thoroughness that they have addressed the needs of our full time members.