

The Sentinel

Voice of the ECC Faculty Association
Local 3791/IFT www.eccfaculty.org



March 2011

CTL+CLICK
In this issue

- ❖ [Tutorials Assist Faculty with WtR Messages](#)
- ❖ [Board Candidates Appear at Local Forums](#)
- ❖ [Faculty Weigh in on Unity](#)
- ❖ [Senate Backpage](#)
- ❖ [SOS Sign \(Suitable for Display\)](#)

President's Report: A Personal Reflection

Sarah Dye



Truth is, everybody is going to hurt you; you just gotta find the ones worth suffering for.

Bob Marley

I found the quotation attributed to Bob Marley on a friend's Facebook page recently, and it made me think about the situation we find ourselves currently facing at ECC. I have come to realize how naive I am. We have all experienced disappointments in our professional lives. In fact, one does not have to have taught in two year colleges since 1973 as I have to have suffered professional disappointments. But because I have taught so long, I really believed that for the last three years or so, that I had reached a point in my career that I was a part of a college that valued its teachers and welcomed us into a shared governance environment. How very wrong I know I am about that today. The negotiation path the faculty has been on since October has proved that faculty has little value in the eyes of the current ECC Board of Trustees and administration.

Allow me to share some examples. I served as co-chair of the Grievance Committee when the current president of the college arrived on campus. Within a week, I and a colleague were sitting at his office conference table to present and file a grievance with him. That turned out

to be the beginning of a less contentious approach to solving grievances before they became formal adversarial issues that we had experienced before the new president's arrival. He gave the then-HR director the power to solve the issues through informal discussions, an approach that lasted through Dr. Spahr's term at the college.

Another example occurred when Dr. Pelletier became interim vice-president for TLSO. That first summer, I, representing the ECCFA, was invited to each meeting of the Deans, Associate Deans, and Directors (DADDs). Though soon enough I was asked to leave when the Deans themselves had high level conversations which they wanted to remain private, I still was asked to the biweekly meetings. Recently under the new vice-president the atmosphere has changed and no longer is an ECCFA representative invited to any of the meetings because the deans are "uncomfortable." So much for the shared governance we had experienced with the academic side of the house of which we teachers are a part.

Currently we find ourselves vilified by a board in the press and through offers passed across the negotiation table. The administration led by the president appears to ignore the same teachers who helped bring the college glory through every initiative we were asked to assist with including Achieving the Dream, the Alliance for College Readiness, the successful referendum campaign, as well as dozens of other initiatives and programs the college loves to tout to the public.

Now to the Board's involvement in this fiasco: Where are those board members who have guided the college for many years? In fact, we have a board member who is the longest serving board member at any community college in Illinois. Granted that board member spends the winter months at his Florida retirement home coming home once a month for scheduled board meetings. And then there is the board member who after the upcoming

election will be retiring from her position; she is one member who has spent countless hours working alongside faculty on the Equity Action Team and Achieving the Dream. The chair of the BOT's focus is running for re-election which allows her many opportunities to be quoted by the local media. Finally there is the new board member who calls our students "the children" because she seems unable to make the transition from her own professional experience in the K-12 arena and appears to be among those who believe that ECC faculty deserve no respect for anything they have ever done for students, let alone for the college. Surely it is time for the more experienced, rational-minded board members to speak up and defend our students. The SOS buttons students are wearing around campus do not mean to faculty to "save ourselves" but rather to "SAVE OUR STUDENTS" and "SAVE OUR SEMESTER."

So this is why I have lost faith in this sham of shared governance and those very same people alongside whom I and my faculty colleagues have worked to make ECC notable as a good college in Illinois. The first year, the current president invited leaders from across the college, including from both unions, to be part of book discussions on [Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap... and Others Don't](#) by Jim Collins. We are not making any leaps toward greatness as a college right now; we are falling back on mundaneness instead. I fear that the president and one of the board members going to national conferences to brag about how financially sound the college is not how an educational institution is going to become great. The only way that will happen is for administration to return to the stacks of unsigned papers on their desks and for faculty to get back to our classrooms where we do help students achieve greatness most importantly through their educations. I guess that was what Bob Marley was referring to as worth suffering for.

Work to Rule Tutorials Available

Sarah Dye

One strategy the ECCFA Negotiating Team has suggested that we faculty members use right now is Work to Rule (WtR) notification on our ECC emails accounts to alert our students and others about how WtR may affect them as they communicate electronically with each of us. To help you set up an appropriate message on your email accounts, Tammy Ray has created three tutorials for us to use. Many thanks, Tammy, for teaching us how to master out of office kinds of messages through email.

The first one is for accessing and setting up the message on Outlook from our offices on campus. The second tutorial explains how to set up the message from Webmail if that is how you log in and get your emails either from off-campus or from classroom computers or from some shared office computers. The third and final tutorial teaches you how to set up the WtR message on your Gmail or the @student.elgin.edu accounts which many of us use through D2L.

These tutorials are attached to this newsletter's email as PDF files. If you need extra help, many of your colleagues have already gotten the WtR message set up and may well be able to give you in-person help as you do the same.

Board Candidates and Others Appear at Local Forums

March 9, 11-1p.m. ECC ATC Auditorium—Sponsored by ECCFA, SSECCA, and Student Government

ECC Board of Trustees Forum
Candidates:

John D. Dalton
John Duffy
Eleanor "Ellie" MacKinney
Richard L. Geary
Robin M. Lisboa

March 15, 6:00 p.m. -9:00 p.m.—Church of the Brethren, 783 W. Highland Ave., Elgin—Sponsored by Elgin Township Democrats

6pm-7pm—Meet the Candidates;

7pm-9pm--Candidates will have 3 minutes to present campaign platforms. No questions from the audience.

ECC Board of Trustees

School District U-46 Board
Gail Borden Library Board
City of Elgin Council
City of Elgin Mayoral

March 20—2:00-4:30 p.m. Gail Borden Library, 270 North Grove Ave., Elgin—Sponsored by the League of Women Voters

ECC Board of Trustees Candidates

School District U-46 Board of Education
Candidates

March 24—6:30-8:30 p.m. Gail Borden Library, sponsored by the League of Women Voters

Elgin Mayoral Candidates
Gail Borden Public Library District Trustee
Candidates

March 29-- 6:30-8:30 p.m. Gail Borden Library, sponsored by the League of Women Voters

Elgin City Council Member Candidates

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sentinel,

I had a conversation with a co-worker today. We go to lunch now and then because we were friends in high school and he works at ECC now in what I think is an administrative position. At one point, he was spouting all sorts of “facts” designed to help me see the error of my union’s ways in this negotiations period.

I don’t like to be talked to that way, but I don’t blame him. For all I know, he believed what he said. For all I know, what he said may be true. That doesn’t bother me either. I believe in the people who represent us and I believe in the importance of collective bargaining to insure fair treatment of workers.

But something bothered me about the exchange and I couldn’t put my finger on it.

I thought about it more as I drove home when my thoughts were interrupted by the voice of Johnny Cash on the radio. He was singing a Tom Petty song he recorded near the end of his life. His voice was weakened and weary, but his resolve was strong.

Well I won't back down
No I won't back down
You can stand me up at the gates of hell
But I won't back down

No I'll stand my ground, won't be turned
around
And I'll keep this world from draggin me down
gonna stand my ground
... and I won't back down

I knew then what bothered me so much about that conversation. Johnny Cash always reminded me of my dad who was a carpenter who worked very hard all his life. I don’t come home from work physically exhausted like my dad did, but I work hard. And I think hard-working people ought to be taken seriously. I think hard-working people shouldn’t be told they’re asking for the world when they ask for

respect. I think hard-working people deserve to sit down at a negotiations table with other hard-working people and work out an agreement in a reasonable amount of time. This is what I believe and I won’t be turned around.

I thank all of you who have worked so hard for all of us these last several months. I am proud to be a member of such a fine group of people.

In Unity,
Carrie Gorr
Counseling
Elgin Community College

Dear Bill: Oh Si Yo

I seldom mention or discuss Cherokee Nation affairs or concerns with my colleagues and friends at ECC. Explanations and differences are usually irrelevant, long and complex. However, here is on time I feel I must share something.

In the tradition of my clan, I will tell a story (a short one, I promise. There are friends who say this is impossible). It centers on the expression GA DU GI. Pronounced ‘gah doo gee.’ The ‘g’ is hard as in ‘gate’ with the accent on the second syllable.

In a council of the Healers of the Seven Fires, there was much discussion on many subjects. On that night I was grousing a great deal about certain tribal political matters. Several nights ago, a friend whose name translates as ‘God is the judge of my soul’ emailed a flyer to all of us, reminding us all of GA DU GI. I translated and simplified the flyer and copied it below.

GA DU GI

Pronounced: (gah doo gee)

[Northern Cherokee Dialect]

The 6th Teaching of the Seven Fires

Definition: 'Cooperative labor' or 'Cooperative effort.' Anciently and traditionally, all peoples pooled their skills and efforts for the good of each other and for their Nation.

It was a one for all and all for one so they could all live and work together in harmony and balance. No more contention, dissension, division and conflict.

This was and is the way the Creator wanted us to walk and the first step on the White Road!

This term does not mean a 'group think' or regimentation. It is often used in times of planting or harvest, when we all work in the fields for the benefit of us all. It simply reminds us that we, in English language terms, work together for our common welfare. It also has a military context as well, which I will not go into at present.

GA DU GI has worked well for us for over 2,000 years. We defeated the Spanish invaders, stalemated the French and English, and held off the Americans for 75 years. Despite loss of Eastern lands and our lands in the West and despite the closing our tribal systems for 50 years, we are STILL HERE and viable as a Nation among other Nations.

I share this.

I will send as an attachment a copy of Daniel's flyer to anyone who wishes it.

GA DU GI

Glenn Turner
Associate Professor I of English
Elgin Community College

Senate Information, 2010-2011

ECCFA OFFICERS 2010-2011

President: Sarah Dye
1st Vice-President: Luis Martinez
2nd Vice-President: Susan Ford
3rd Vice-President: David Lawrence
Secretary: Lori Clark
Treasurer: Linda Hefferin

ECCFA SENATORS 2010-2011

Josefana Aleman, UAF2
Mary Arndt, HP
Elizabeth Becker, MSE
Rick Bonnom, UAF2
Michelle Brynelsen, HP
Lori Clark, CABS
Sumitra Duggirala, UAF1 (on leave)
Sue Ford, UAF2
Clark Hallpike, BUS
Linda Hefferin, BUS
Cindy Hutman, CABS
Crystal Kerwin, UAF2
Dan Kocher, UAF2
Dave Lawrence, UAF2
Marcia Luptak, UAF2
Luis Martinez, MSE
Pat O'Brien, CABS
Gary Norden, SSCT
Joel Peck, LVPA
Mary Peterhans, UAF2
Roger Ramey, BUS
Howard Russo, LVPA
Manuel Salgado, ADLRSS
Cathy Tomasik, UAF2
Glenn Turner CABS
Scott Vazsily, UAF2
Vicki Walker, UAF1

Important ECCFA Dates 2010-2011

SPRING SEMESTER 2011

Wed., Feb. 16, 3:00-5:00 PM, Senate Mtg., Alumni Room
Wed., March 2, 3:00-5:00 PM, Senate Mtg., Alumni Room
Wed., March 16, 3:00-5:00 PM, Senate Mtg., Alumni Room

(NOTE: Spring Break 3/23)

Wed., March 30, 3:00-5:00 PM, Senate Mtg., Alumni Room
Wed., April 13, 3:00-5:00 PM, Senate Mtg., Alumni Room
Wed., April 27, 3:00-5:00 PM, Senate Mtg., Alumni Room
Wed., May 11, 3:00-5:00 PM, Senate Mtg., Alumni Room
Thurs., May 19, Grading Day

(NOTE: Classes end W 5/18)

Fri., May 20, Graduation
Mon., May 23, 8:00 AM, Grades due

Save Our Semester

What is going on right now?

- With an expired contract, and almost no progress during negotiations, there is a very real possibility that ECC faculty will be forced to strike.
- Of the many legal steps that must occur before workers are allowed to strike, **only one remains**.

What are the facts?

- **FANCY, FANCY:** Instead of students, the Board of Trustees (led by chair **Ellie MacKinney**) seems to care about spending money constructing fancy archways and median strips on campus.
- **GREAT FINANCIAL SHAPE:** The college has **been running a surplus every year for many years**. In December 2010, Vice President of Business and Finance, Sharon Konny publicly said that “the college has ... a **healthy fund balance**” (Source: tinyurl.com/62bww6s).
- **REALLY GREAT FINANCIAL SHAPE:** The college’s Fiscal Year 2011 Audit shows a balance in the fund which pays faculty benefits of nearly **\$40 million**, with a **surplus of over \$6 million** in FY2009 and a **surplus of over \$4 million** in FY2010 (Source: tinyurl.com/4ett85r).

BUT...

- **STUDENT TUITION INCREASE!:** The Board of Trustees (led by chair **Ellie MacKinney**) has already authorized a **student tuition increase** of almost 9% for next year.
- **FACULTY PAY CUT!:** The Board of Trustees (led by chair **Ellie MacKinney**) wants to permanently cut some aspects of faculty compensation and freeze base salary for three years.
- **REFUSING TO PAY FACULTY WHAT THEY’RE WORTH!:** The Board of Trustees (led by chair **Ellie MacKinney**) does not want to fairly compensate faculty who will, *or have already*, earned *additional degrees, certificates, and experience*. Pay also remains very low for all adjunct (part time) faculty.
- **Based on the facts, *WHY* should students and faculty accept these measures?**

What can I do?

GET INVOLVED IN THE COMMUNITY:

- **VOTE:** There will be **elections** for the ECC Board of Trustees on **April 5, 2011**.
- For a list of candidates, go to: <http://www.elgin.edu/news.aspx?id=15316>

Stay Informed

- www.facebook.com/eccfaculty
- www.facebook.com/eccstudentvoice
- **BLOG:** www.eccfaculty.org/blog

Contact Board Chair Ellie MacKinney

- **Phone:** (847) 683-4719
- **Email:** epmackinney@yahoo.com
- **Facebook:** <http://on.fb.me/fl7nsA>