



Q2  
2008



## Message from the President

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- MCMA Membership Update
- Estate Planning
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Have questions or suggestions regarding this newsletter? Contact any member of the Newsletter Committee below

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March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb. This old saying is about the weather, but since it is budget season one might say it could apply here as well. All the talk about budget cuts has each of us worried about how the budget will affect "me". Will there be huge reductions or will our years of preparation for this very situation help us through an economically slow period? Obviously, the City Council has the difficult job of making decisions about how and where the COM spends money but the employees still have to get the job done. So, while we continue to serve the citizens of this community with pride, dedication and commitment, the Association Board is working hard to represent you.

Will there ever be a newsletter that doesn't talk about the Classification and Compensation Study? Hopefully. But for now, here's the update: We are in the final stages of reviewing the classification internal alignment proposed by the City. This is the middle stage of the 3-part classification, alignment, and compensation process. After meeting with many of you, we presented the City with a letter outlining your concerns and have a meeting scheduled for March 14 to review these concerns. It is our hope to address these issues as quickly as possible and move to the Compensation Study. The response from you has been tremendous! You've done a great job of researching your issues and we are confident that we will be able to represent your concerns effectively.

Another topic of great interest is Retiree Health. We continue to move forward on this issue and talks with the City have proven to be productive. As we hammer out the final details of a retiree health program, we remain focused on our goal of obtaining enhanced retirement. You

will hear more soon about both of these issues.

And since we're talking about negotiations, believe it or not it's already time to begin negotiations for the MOU. Really!! You will recall that last year we agreed to a short-term MOU (11 months). The purpose was to address increases in health care premiums and obtain a cost of living adjustment, while we continued to work on the classification and compensation studies, retiree health and enhanced retirement. So here we are moving in on April and gearing up for negotiations. Stay tuned for more information on this at our next membership meeting.

**Mark this date on your calendar.** On May 1<sup>st</sup>, the COM recognizes retirees and employees for outstanding service at the Annual Retiree and Recognition Luncheon. This year the lunch will be held at the SOS Club from 11:30 to 1:30 p.m. If you are a MCMA member, your ticket is free! Just let the staff in Personnel know you are a MCMA member and the Association will cover the cost! Now THAT's a benefit!

Finally, our Treasurer, Yvette Ramos, is working hard to prepare an annual budget for your review and approval. We expect this document will be ready for our April general membership meeting.

The next general membership meeting is scheduled for April 17 at the MPD Theatres. As always, lunch will be provided in addition to updates on everything covered here and more! I look forward to seeing you there and bring a friend!

Laurie Smith

## MCMA Membership Exceeds Board Goal!

Congratulations! MCMA can now proudly boast to a new all time high membership of 153! This exceeds the Board's unofficial goal of 150 members. Currently, there are approximately 226 represented positions, which means 73 employees are NOT receiving the benefit of Association membership. As we continue with the classification and compensation study, retiree health and enhanced retirement negotiations as well as negotiations for a new MOU in July, membership in MCMA is more important than ever. So, if you know one of those 73 people who are not dues paying members give them the application in this newsletter. If you **ARE** one of those 73 people, fill out the application and give it to a Board member. Joining now will give you an opportunity to have your voice heard and represented. **And remember, our goal is to leave no employee behind!**

## “In My Other Life...”

(Things you may now know about members)

### MEMORIES ON TRAVEL TO SOUTHEAST ASIA

By Yvette Ramos

Last Fall I had the amazing opportunity to travel to Southeast Asia where I visited Rebecca Redin, former Assistant City Clerk. The memories that we made in South East Asia will be unforgettable.

#### **First Stop: Hong Kong**

Hong Kong is a city that is old and modern at the same time. There are high-tech video screens on top of many high rises and old world Chinese medicine shops and temples underneath. Executives in the city travel by helicopter. The sky is filled with helicopters buzzing from one skyscraper rooftop to another.



Something new that I learned is that bamboo is very strong and it is used for many things including scaffolding.

#### **Second Stop: Singapore**

Singapore is amazingly clean. I could almost say that it is so clean that it has a sterile feel to it. In a city that is just over 250 sq miles with a population of over 4.5 million people, it is amazing that the streets, sidewalks, walls are spotless.

Rebecca and I have a tradition of going for high tea at the Ritz-Carlton. So far we have been to 3 in California, 1 in England and now 1 in Singapore. It was a great time to spend time and catch-up.



#### **Third Stop: Thailand**

While we were there, we took a 3-day trip to Thailand. The beaches were amazing. The water is a clear turquoise blue and as you look down into it, hundreds of colorful “Nemo”-like fish are dancing in the water. One of our side trips included a speedboat ride out to the Phi-Phi Islands. Some of the islands where we stopped are uninhabited and covered in rainforest.

One of our stops included a bay on an island called Monkey Bay. When told that we were stopping there I figured that the island had just been given that name due to the population of monkeys in Asia. But as soon as the boat started approaching shore, I saw hundreds of small longtail monkeys running toward the boat and around the beach. The island is full of wild monkeys! The tour guide gave us watermelon to feed the monkeys.



## “In My Other Life...” – cont’d

The Phi-Phi Islands are the islands that were most severely hit by the Tsunami on December 2004. The tour guide told us that the morning of the Tsunami; he was on his way to take a group of tourist to the Phi-Phi Islands, just like he was taking us. They had some mechanical troubles and were delayed by one hour. Because of the delay they were out on the ocean when the Tsunami hit and were unaware of what was occurring. Upon arriving to the islands, they saw the catastrophe. He said that he got off the boat and tried to help as many people as he could, but there were so many. One of the saddest parts was that our speedboat driver lost 5 family members in the Tsunami (His parents, wife, and 2 children). His house was gone, his family was gone and he was left with nothing. The driver was not able to drive a boat for a year.

I love to travel because I think of myself as an amateur anthropologist. Observing and being part of how people live, what they eat and what they wear. After experiencing all of the differences, we realize that the similarities are much greater. We are all people who are living in the same world, feeling the same emotions, expressing a welcome with a smile that can overcome every language barrier.

## Transportation Sale Tax – Measure K

Once again this November, the City of Modesto and Stanislaus County will be asking us to vote on Measure K, which enacts a ½ cent transportation sales tax. This would be a ½ cent increase in the sales tax we pay on goods purchased that would be used to improve our infrastructure, namely streets, roadways and traffic corridors. The funds can be used to obtain matching loans from State and Federal programs.

Every one of us who drive, bike, walk or otherwise use the streets and roadways around the Stanislaus County area knows the need for repair/maintenance of our infrastructure, as well as traffic planning to reduce congestion. Unfortunately, due to the downturn in housing, decline in the job market, talk of recession and general poor state of the economy, the tax dollars are not there to assist in this need. Is there a cut and dry answer to this puzzle? No. Do we all feel that we pay too many taxes? Yes, probably. Conversely, how many of us will notice ½ cent per dollar added to our purchases? With the climbing prices of daily needs, probably not many.

So, why should we consider voting for Measure K? Because unlike the gasoline taxes, which are tied to the State to be disbursed, Measure K funds would be spent directly in our community for specific needs, namely traffic safety and road maintenance programs within Stanislaus County, overseen by an independent Citizen’s Advisory Committee. This Measure also contains a finite time period for the ½ cent tax, a maximum of 20 years.

If the above is not enough to convince you that we need to pass this measure, consider this: the price of oil also influences the price of construction and asphalt needed to make the repairs. In 2002, the City of Modesto would have needed \$15.5 million to fully fund our pavement maintenance program. Today the figure is estimated to be closer to \$20 million. The City of Modesto currently spends approximately \$5 million a year on road maintenance. This is just to maintain the roads, not to make the required improvements.

This ballot proposal was last presented to the voters in November of 2006, and although the Measure did receive a majority vote, 58%, it was not the 2/3rds required to pass the Measure. It is obvious that a majority of the citizens see the need for this minor tax. The influx of funding would allow the City of Modesto and County of Stanislaus to apply for State and Federal loans that require a matching system. This means that the City or County would need to provide anywhere from 10 to 50 percent of the total of the loan. Without Measure K, those funds are not available.

Mark Murphy & Joanne Azevedo

### IMPORTANT EVENT NOTICE!

Please make plans to attend the  
**ANNUAL RETIREE  
AND RECOGNITION  
LUNCHEON**

Thursday,  
May 1, 2008  
11:30 a.m.  
SOS Club in  
Modesto

**As a MCMA member,  
your ticket is FREE.**

Let the staff in Personnel know you are a MCMA member and the Association will take care of the cost.



### General Membership Meeting Notice!

When: April 17, 2008  
Where: MPD, Theatres  
Time: 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.


*Lunch Provided!*

## Welcome to New Board Member – Mark Murphy

Mark Murphy is the new BOD Director at Large for your Association. Mark is filling the vacancy created by the resignation of Tami Dodge. Thanks to Tami for her contributions and hard work as a Board member and we look forward to her continued membership in MCMA.

Mark is an Associate Traffic Engineer in Public Works and has worked for the COM for over 23 years. He lives in Sonora with his wife, April, and two children, Megan and Ryan. April works for Stanislaus County. In his spare time, Mark loves to restore old cars and was featured in the 2007 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Newsletter article, "In My Other Life."

Mark brings a great deal of experience, knowledge and energy to the Board and we look forward to having him as a Director.



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**ESTATE SECURITY and**  
**PROTECTION SYSTEM™**

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Goyette & Associates, Inc. has developed the Estate Security and Protection System™ as a means of providing our clients with estate planning security in the most beneficial, efficient and cost-effective way possible. We offer our clients personalized service with attorneys and trained assistants. We will analyze your individual needs and goals to provide you with a logical and effective process to achieve security and peace of mind regarding your assets and estate planning.

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We offer a free face to face consultation to assess your situation and determine which estate planning tools best suit your needs. The following is a guide to our fees and services. As with any legal issues, additional fees may be required depending upon complexity. Association members and their immediate family (parents, siblings and children) receive a 30% discount for all estate planning services.

Durable Power of Attorney w/notary	\$125	Advance Healthcare Directive w/notary	\$125
Simple Will—Individual	\$500	Revocable Living Trust*—Individual	\$1500
Revocable Living Trust*—Joint/Married			\$2000 (\$1400 w/association discount)

\*Trusts include related documents, pour over will, deed transfers, advance healthcare directive and durable power of attorney. Additional fees may include consultation with experts, lengthy research and multiple or out of state deed transfers.

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**FOR OUR ASSOCIATION MEMBERS: 30% DISCOUNT FOR ALL SERVICES**

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**For more information: Rafael Ruano (916) 851-1900 or**  
**[rruano@goyette-assoc.com](mailto:rruano@goyette-assoc.com)**  
**[www.goyetteassociates.com](http://www.goyetteassociates.com)**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



## 2008 Upcoming Calendar of Events



### Board of Directors

*President*  
Laurie Smith

*Vice President*  
Linda Boston

*Secretary*  
Polly Findlen

*Treasurer*  
Yvette Ramos

*Directors at Large*  
Leslie Curtin  
Tami Dodge  
Aaron Trott  
Mark Murphy

April 15	12:00 p – 1:00 p	MCMA Board Meeting
April 17	12:00 p – 1:00 p	General Membership Meeting Lunch provided
April 24	8:00 a – 4:00 p	New Employee Orientation
May 1	11:30 a – 1:30 p	Annual Retirement and Recognition Luncheon SOS Club, Modesto
May 20	12:00 p – 1:00 p	MCMA Board Meeting
June 9		Blood Drive
June 17	12:00 p – 1:00 p	MCMA Board meeting
June 26	8:00 a – 4:00 p	New Employee Orientation

There are many class opportunities in the upcoming months. Please contact the Training Division at extension 75490 for a complete list or to sign up. To make an appointment with the ICMA representative or CalPERS representative, call extension 75481.

**MODESTO CONFIDENTIAL & MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION  
APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**

**Membership:** Membership in the Association is open to all employees of the City of Modesto employed in designated management and confidential positions and retirees therefrom. Regular (voting) membership is restricted to those employees of the City of Modesto who are actively employed in a classification represented by the Association.

**Objectives:** The objectives of the Association are to represent and secure for all members adequate compensation and working conditions through collective bargaining; provide for the common welfare of the membership; engage in labor-management relations for the benefit of the members; and to secure professional assistance to further pursue these objectives.

**Non-Discrimination:** The Association does not discriminate against any member on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, marital status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, medical condition or physical condition.

**AUTHORIZATION FOR DEDUCTION  
OF VOLUNTARY PAYMENT OF EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATION FEES**

**TO: City of Modesto – Director of Finance**

I hereby authorize you to withhold from my regular pay a total of \$16.92 per bi-weekly pay period, as dues for the Modesto Confidential & Management Association (MCMA) and direct you to transmit the established sum to the Association. I understand that \$4.46 per pay period will be directed to the Association's general fund and \$12.46 per pay period will be directed toward professional representation provided through the Association. Further, I consent to the adjustment of such deductions to reflect any change in fees or dues of which the Finance Director may be advised by MCMA. This authorization shall be effective the next pay period following receipt of the authorization by the Department of Finance and shall continue in full force and effect until revoked in writing.

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Print Name	Dept/Division	Job Classification
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Home Address	City/Zip Code	Home Telephone
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Signature	Date
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**RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION TO MCMA PRESIDENT OR  
ANY BOARD MEMBER**

Original: Finance Department

Copy 1: MCMA Treasurer

Copy 2: Member