



Q1
January 2009



Message from the President

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Have questions or suggestions regarding this newsletter? Contact any member of the Newsletter Committee below

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Visit us on the web:

www.modestocma.com

It seems odd that I'm writing a New Year's message...again. Where did the year go? Same place as 2007 I suppose. It's behind us now leaving a memory of a pretty tough year. But, in spite of how difficult things have been we do have some things to celebrate: our accomplishments for 2008. Here they are in no particular order:

Retiree Health Coalition:

This coalition, made up of all six COM bargaining groups, is one of our best efforts of collaboration. Although the COM is not an official member of this coalition, we consider them a partner in working to resolve the unfunded liability for retiree health, which will result in saving the COM a considerable amount of money that can be used to enhance the retirement benefit for miscellaneous employees. The poor economy may impact the timeline on this effort; however, we remain committed to finding a solution. In the meantime, we plan to work with the COM on immediate retirement incentives for employees retirement age and older.

W2W Classification and Compensation Study:

It's wonderful to report that Phase 1 of the W2W Classification and Compensation Study was approved by the City Council and will be implemented on January 6, 2009. We negotiated this study more than 2 years ago and I can say without hesitation that Aaron Trott, Kim Gillingham and I worked very hard to review, analyze, discuss, debate, and consider every classification, internal alignment and market study issue brought to our attention, plus some. In addition, I'd like to thank Barbara Santos, Jill Peltier and Cherree Platt for their hard work and commitment to this effort. And in case you wondered, **32 positions and 39 employees received**

salary adjustments ranging from 2.5% to 5% in Phase 1 implementation! Since MCMA did not receive a COLA this year, this salary adjustment is good news! Implementation of the rest of the study will be negotiated in 2009.

The Newsletter:

This newsletter comes to your home every quarter and gives you information about Association activities, upcoming events and information about other members that you may not know. And let me tell you, it isn't easy writing a newsletter. So, kudos to our Newsletter Committee: Linda Boston, Polly Findlen, Karen Rabb, Joanne Azevedo, Dorothy Tuggle and me. Next time you see one of them, or all of them, let them know you read the newsletter and you like it! And, if you have something you'd like to see in the newsletter or something you'd like to contribute, let anyone on the committee know. We're always looking for articles.

Association Meetings:

MCMA member attendance at general membership meetings has grown so much in 2008 that our average attendance is more than 75 members at each of our 4 meetings. Our record high was the MOU ratification meeting, attended by about 104 members! That's outstanding. Thanks so much for being active members and participating. It means everything to the success of MCMA.

Board of Directors:

I could not be more grateful and proud of the MCMA Board of Directors. These Board members dedicate their time every day to represent you. You know them, but I'm going to list them anyway: Linda Boston, Polly Findlen, Aaron Trott, Cheryl Hollingsworth, Leslie Curtin and

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Message from the President – cont'd

National “DO NOT CALL” Registry

REMEMBER: Cell phone numbers go public next month. **REMINDER:** all cell phone numbers will be released to telemarketing companies and you will start to receive sales calls.

YOU WILL BE CHARGED FOR THESE CALLS

To prevent this, call the following number from your cell phone:

888-382-1222

It is the National DO NOT CALL list. It will only take a few minutes of your time. Calling this number blocks your number for five (5) years. You must call from the cell phone number you want to have blocked. You cannot call from a different phone number.



Mark Murphy. We have one of the best teams I've ever had the pleasure of working with and you can be sure that the interests of MCMA are well represented.

The MCMA Website:

The MCMA Website has been around for a while, but we have been slow to maintain it. This year we entered into an agreement with a former COM employee, Mike Blevins, to redesign and maintain the site. Take a look next time you're browsing the web, www.modestocma.com. Also, let us know if you have any suggestions.

The Annual Holiday Open House:

The 3rd Annual Holiday Open House was a **HUGE** success this year. After 2 years at Dewz, we moved our party to Fuzio's, which allowed more people to stop by on their way home from work. And boy did they! Over 60 people joined us for some great food and drinks, excellent company and a relaxed atmosphere. Thanks to Leslie Curtin and Dorothy Tuggle for a job well done. Also, thanks to Luce Beltran and Goyette & Associates for a beautiful basket for our raffle. I'm looking forward to next year.

Partnership:

We talk about this a lot and we work on it constantly. This year, we continue to develop our partnerships with the other bargaining groups, with the COM and with you. It isn't easy and it's hardly ever fun, but it's so worth it. We want to be on the same page as our partners and we want to work together. We want the COM to be healthy and successful so employees can have a stable place to work with a competitive salary and benefit package. All that requires partnership. We appreciate the partnerships we have developed in 2008 and we look forward to the new partnerships we'll develop in 2009.

Membership:

This year MCMA membership has reached an all-time high of 173 members! Wow! That's fantastic. Membership is strictly voluntary, so your participating says a lot about the work this Association has done over the last 6 years and the possibilities for the future. Thanks so much for all your support and participation. I cannot stress enough the value of your involvement.

Memorandum of Understanding

In August of this year the Negotiating Team came to an agreement with the City of Modesto for an 11 month MOU that increased the City's contribution to the health care coverage. In addition, the MOU provided for implementation of Phase I of the Wall to Wall Classification and Compensation Study effective January 6, 2009. Although the agreement did not call for a cost of living adjustment, we believe this was a necessary concession given the serious economic climate. The agreement also provided for continued talks on retiree health which include enhanced retirement.

So there you have it. MCMA has been working hard this year and will be working even harder in 2009. Things are going to get tough. I can't predict what is going to happen except this: MCMA will represent all members to the best of our ability. We will work closely with the COM management and elected officials to identify problems and solutions. We plan to be the best partners we can be in 2009 to you, to the COM and to the community.

Happy Holidays and Happy New year.

Laurie Smith

Status Update on Retiree Health Trust and Enhanced Retirement

As you will recall, our Association is part of the Retiree Health Coalition along with the other five City bargaining units. This has been a very solid and successful Coalition! Let's start by reviewing the actions that have been completed on the Retiree Health Trust front since our last General Membership. As most of you know, our Coalition has been working with the members of the Central Valley Retiree Medical Trust ("CVRMT"), which is an existing retiree medical trust. The goal is to join the CVRMT, along with other cities and jurisdictions, to create a multi-agency Trust that will satisfy both City requirements and the requirements of the Internal Revenue Service – our "favorite" agency. You really haven't lived until you work to satisfy IRS regulations as it relates to medical trusts. However, we want to give major kudos to Kim Gillingham from Goyette & Associates for her excellent expertise in this arena.

As a result of our Coalition meetings, on October 28, 2008, the Modesto City Firefighters Association ("MCFFA") successfully negotiated with the City to receive approval to enter into the CVRMT. The MCFFA and the City have agreed to cash out all unused vacation hours into the Trust's Individual Account upon separation from City employment. Their Individual Accounts will be used to pay for their retiree medical health costs. In addition, the MCFFA will have a mandatory employee contribution into the Trust of \$100 per month to be made by all active employees.

This approval is the first step in having all employees joining the CVRMT. We are entering into the final phase of the Retiree Trust negotiations for the remaining five bargaining units. As you may recall, there are two funds of monies in the Retiree Trust, the Individual Account and the Pooled Account. The plan for the remaining Coalition members will look somewhat different than MCFFA's plan, but it functions in a similar way to fund the health costs for retirees.

We fully expect success and look forward to following our fellow Coalition members into the Trust. As we get closer to the final proposal, we will continue to keep you informed.

Modesto Police Officers Association (MPOA) Negotiations Update

The City Council approved a new MOU for the MPOA earlier this month which has lead to questions and concerns. The City and MPOA commenced negotiations late this summer amidst a worsening economy, a growing budget deficit and the widening of the market gap for Police Officers. Consistent with the attempts of all City bargaining units, MPOA sought to close the market gap for their members and provide for increases in the City's contribution for medical.

It became obvious in fairly short order that no increases had been budgeted for FY 2008/09 leaving no funds available this year to gain any ground in the market where they found themselves 23% behind.

Therefore, MPOA sought a multi-year agreement to ensure gains on the market in FY 2009/10 and 2010/11 and focused on improvements to retention in the FY 2008/09. The approved agreement is a 2.25 year MOU. The retention improvement provided this fiscal year is by way of an increase to Master Officer pay for officers with ten years or more service at a cost of \$30,000.00. The focus on retention was in keeping with the City's retention increases for the Engineering and Operations miscellaneous employees this past spring.

In the FY 2009/10, the agreement provides two separate increases, several months apart which are 2% and 3% respectively, bringing MPOA members within 18% of market, still 3% behind the 15% of market commitment in the miscellaneous agreements. Two additional increases of 3% and 2% will be given in FY 2010/11, bringing members to 13% of market at the end of the contract. Lastly, the City agreed to increased contributions for health of approximately 10% per year, increases that are fully expected to be provided to all City employees.

Kim Gillingham

There are a number of upcoming classes through the Training Division. Listed below is just a sampling. Call extension 15857 for more information or to sign-up for these or the others courses that are being offered.

January 14
Understanding Your Style

January 21
MS Excel – Beginning

January 22
Communication Skills

January 28
Introduction to Computers

January 29
MS Outlook

February 5
MS Excel – Intermediate

February 11
Writing Skills

February 18
MS PowerPoint –
Beginning

February 25
Time Management

March 5
Innovative Thinking

March 11
MS PowerPoint-
Intermediate

March 18
Teamwork

March 25
MS Publisher



5 Things You Never Knew Your Cell Phone Could Do

For all the folks with cell phones, this should be printed and kept in your car, purse and wallet as it is good information to have with you.

There are a few things that can be done in times of grave emergencies. Your mobile phone can actually be a lifesaver or an emergency tool for survival. Check out the things that you can do with it:

1. Emergency

The Emergency Number worldwide for Mobile is 112. If you find yourself out of the coverage area of your mobile network and there is an emergency, dial 112 and the mobile will search any existing network to establish the emergency number for you and, interestingly, this number 112 can be dialed even if the keypad is locked. Try it out.

2. Remote keyless entry

Have you locked your keys in the car? Does your car have remote keyless entry? This may come in handy someday. If you lock your keys in the car and the spare keys are at home, call someone at home on their cell phone from your cell phone. Hold your cell phone about a foot from your car door and have the person at your home press the unlock bottom, holding it near the mobile phone on their end. Your car will unlock. Saves someone from having to drive your keys to you. Distance is no object. You could be hundreds of miles away and if you can reach someone who has the other "remote" for your car, you can unlock the doors (or the trunk).

Tried it and it worked!

Getting to Know You – Brian MacDonald

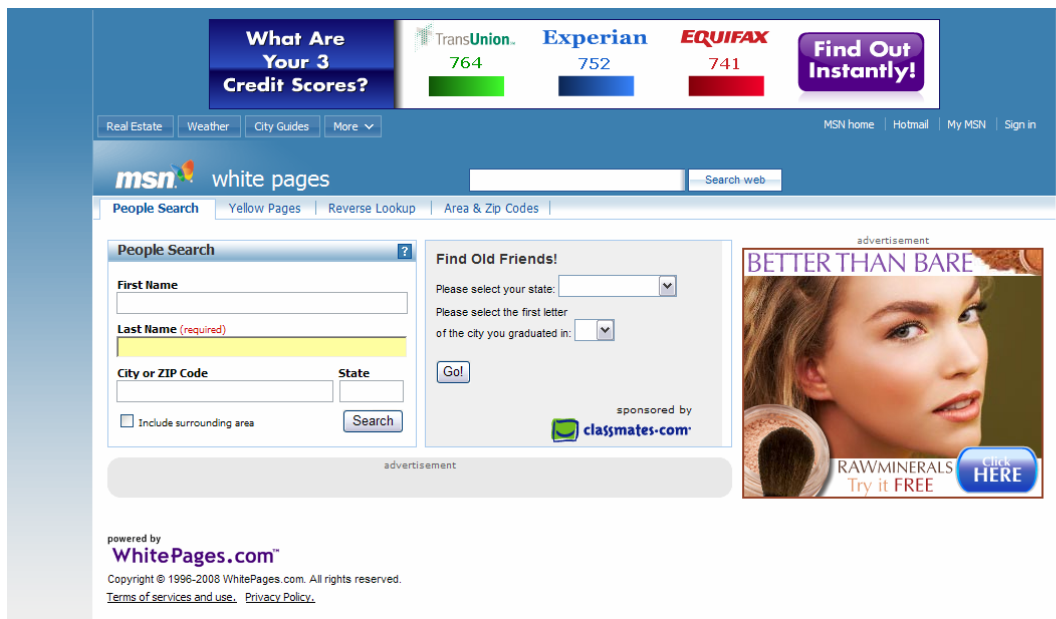
1. **Your Name:** Brian MacDonald, Jr.
2. **Job Title:** Administrative Analyst II – Public Works Administration
3. **How long have you been with the City of Modesto?** Almost 2 years. I enjoy working here at the City and I have met some of the most hardworking individuals in municipal government.
4. **Where did you work before?** San Joaquin County – Human Services Agency
5. **Tell us about your family:** My wife, Stephanie, and I make a great team. We both work full-time but make the best of our time with our kids. My daughter, Madison Josephine, is a 3 year old going on 13. She is full of energy and keeps me on my toes. She is my little sunshine and the simple thought of her makes me smile. My son, Brandon Anthony, is 5 months old and is my "little guy." Everyone says he looks just like me (feel free to check out the pictures at my desk). He loves to wake us up at 5:00 a.m. to giggles and a smile...is there a better way to start your day?
6. **Do you have pets?** No
7. **Where were you born?** Tracy, California
8. **What do you consider your most precious possession?** My most precious possession would have to be my 2 beautiful children. There is nothing more gratifying than being a parent.
9. **What you'll find me doing when I'm not working:** You will find me at home reading to my kids, watching episodes of "Little Bear" and firing up the barbeque.
10. **What cartoon character best describes you?** I never watched enough cartoons as a child to tell you. Since I only know what my daughter watches, I'd have to say Diego from "Go Diego Go."
11. **If you could live anywhere in the world for a year, where would it be?** I would live in Santa Barbara (I received my undergraduate degree from UCSB) because I love the climate, shopping, dining, schools and recreation.
12. **Complete the statement "I recommend..." It can be a show, movie, book, restaurant, website, activity, etc.)** "I recommend at least 30 minutes of exercise at least 3 times a week. This is good for your physical and mental health. I'd also recommend a healthy diet, but that would make me a hypocrite."
13. **If you could have an endless supply of any food (and calories were no object!) what would you get?** If I could have an endless supply of food it would have to be my Mom's homemade pizza.
14. **If you could have lunch with a famous historical figure, who would it be?** It would have to be the Great Bambino (Babe Ruth).
15. **Rolling Stones or the Beatles?** I would have to say Rolling Stones because those guys are STILL ROCKING!

Security Alert

Did you know personal information, such as current home address and previous addresses can be obtained at the website <http://msn.whitepages.com>? For an additional fee at this website, **anyone** can obtain information on what your home is worth, background records, criminal records, current phone numbers, liens, bankruptcies, small claims, civil judgments, who else you live with now and previously, detailed information on you and your profile?

If you would like to remove your name and personal information from the list, you will need to do the following:

- In your internet browser, type in <http://msn.whitepages.com> in the URL address bar
- Type in your name under “People Search”



- If your name appears, click on the details button
- Scroll down near the bottom of the page to the “WhitePages.com Privacy Options” section and click on “Is this you? Remove from listing” link.

WhitePages.com Privacy Options

[Learn more about privacy](#)

[Is this you? Remove your listing](#)

Information will be removed within a couple of minutes; however, it can take up to 5 days per the website.

Keep safe!

5 Things You Never Knew Your Cell Phone Could Do - continued

3. Hidden Battery Power

Imagine your cell battery is very low. To activate, press the keys *3370#. Your cell phone will restart with this reserve and the instrument will show a 50% increase in battery. This reserve will get charged when you charge your cell phone the next time.

4. How to disable a STOLEN mobile PHONE

To check your mobile phone's serial number, key in the following digits on your phone: *#06#. A 15 digit code will appear on the screen. This number is unique to your handset. Write it down and keep it somewhere safe.

When you phone gets stolen, you can phone your service provider and give them this code. They will then be able to block your handset so even if the thief changes the SIM card, your phone will be totally useless. You probably won't get your phone back, but at least you know that whoever stole it can't use/sell it either. If everybody does this, there would be no point in people stealing mobile phones.

And finally...

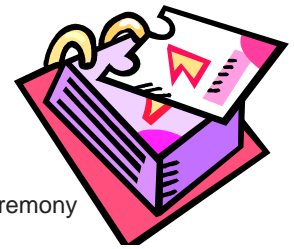
5. Free Directory Service for Cells

Cell phone companies are charging us \$1 to \$1.75 or more for 411 information calls when they don't have to. When you need to use the 411 information option, simply dial 800-FREE411 or 800-373-3411 without incurring any charge at all. Program this into your cell phone now.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



2009 Upcoming Calendar of Events



Board of Directors

President
Laurie Smith

Vice President
Linda Boston

Secretary
Polly Findlen

Treasurer
Cheryl Hollingsworth

Directors at Large
Leslie Curtin
Mark Murphy
Aaron Trott

January 20	11:45 – 1:00 p	MCMA Board Meeting
January 20	11:45 a – 1:15 p	EAP Class – “Why Diets Don’t Work” Call extension 75481 to sign up
January 30	10:00 a	4th Quarter Employee Recognition Ceremony
February 17	11:5 a – 1:00 p	MCMA Board Meeting
February 19	8:00 a – 4:00 p	New Employee Orientation
March 17	11:45 a – 1:00 p	MCMA Board Meeting
March 17	11:45 a – 1:15 p	EAP Class – “Raising Healthy Kids in a Junk Food World” Call extension 75481 to sign up

CALPERS Appointments will be on January 27, February 10 and March 10. Call extension 75481 to make an appointment.

CalPERS Planning Your Retirement Workshop is scheduled for February 18. Session 1 is from 9:00 – 11:30 a and Session 2 is from 1:00 – 3:30 p. Call extension 75481 for more information.