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Contract negotiations underway

Support staff faces decertification plea

By Linda Kofeldt

The MCCC support staff will vote on whether or not to retain union representation on March 8. The election was scheduled after the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board (PLRB) recognized a petition, following rejection of at least three similar ones, which requested a second election to determine if the support staff desired union representation.

The 137 employees who constitute the bargaining unit presently are represented by the Pennsylvania Federation of Teachers (PaFT), part of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO.

The PaFT became the recognized union of the support staff as a result of an election held February 11, 1983. On that date, continued representation by the MCCC Support Staff Assembly, a bargaining unit without the legal protection of organized labor, was voted down in favor of the PaFT.

The upcoming election is the result of many months of legal debate among the union, the college, the PLRB and the Supportive Staff Assembly Reorganizers, a group of support staff employees that want to return to non-union representation.

According to Steven Choyce, president of the support staff union at MCCC, the PLRB ruled that the original 1983 election was valid and determined that the PaFT was the choice of the MCCC bargaining unit.

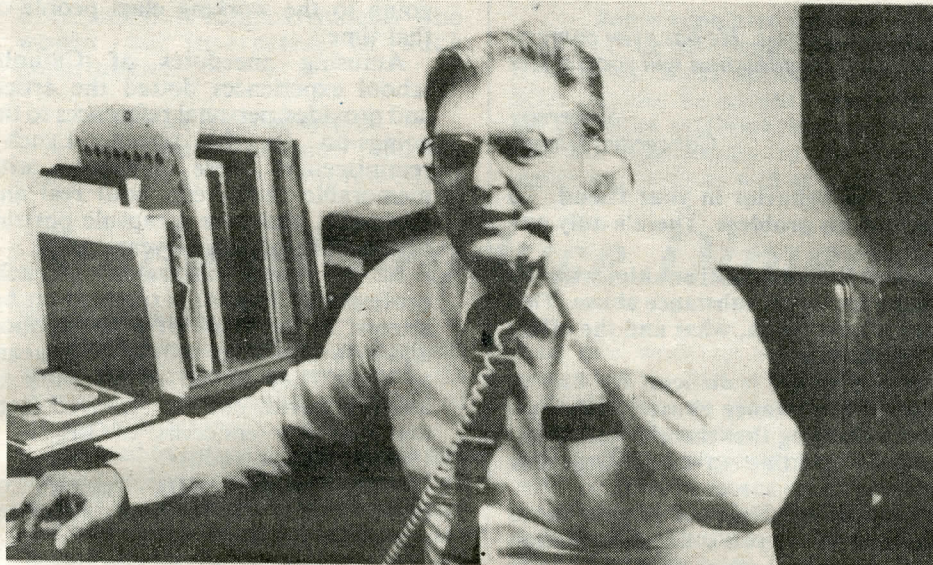
However, within two weeks of the election, Caroline McCloskey, a support staff employee, petitioned to have the PaFT decertified as the union of the support staff. Although the first petition and two follow-up attempts were ruled invalid by the PLRB, they did have an effect on the union's standing and on contract negotiations with the College.

"Delays, such as the decertification petitions, enabled the College to prolong contract negotiations, which resulted in an erosion of the union's base of support," said Choyce.

Although the PaFT was voted in on February 11, 1983, and a one-year contract proposal was submitted to the College in August of that year, the final contract was not ratified by the union until April, 1984.

The MCCC Board of Trustees didn't ratify the contract until December, 1984, and it was ratified with the provision that the contract be retroactive to April, 1984.

In other words, a contract that was to be in effect for only one year took eight months to be ratified by the union and 17 months to be ratified by the College. The petitions for union



James Campbell is the College spokesperson for both the faculty and support staff unions negotiations.

(Photo by Bryan McFarland)

decertification played a large role in the delays.

Also, during this time period, the number of people eligible for membership in the union declined. Two active supporters of the union were transferred from their positions to jobs which changed their status to that of confidential employees. Since they have access to privileged information, confidential employees cannot be a part of the bargaining unit.

In defining her motivation to work for a new election, McCloskey stated that the original 1983 election "just wasn't right." Because of a severe snow storm on election day, the College closed at noon. The PLRB stated that the polls must remain open, and they did remain open.

However, according to McCloskey, "Many support staff members didn't really have the opportunity to vote in the original election. This is an attempt to rectify the situation."

James H. Campbell, spokesman for the College and assistant to the president for human resource development, outlined the College's position on the decertification issue. He stated that, prior to union representation, it had been the policy of the College to provide the support

staff employees with the same percentage raises and the same benefits as those received by the faculty. "It is not in the best interest of the College or the employees to have a union," he said.

On the other hand, Choyce feels differently. "It is in the best interests of all the employees that the option to join a union remain available. Without the benefits and protection that a well-written union contract provides employees would find themselves subject to the selective interpretation and enforcement of ground rules established without their input," Choyce said.

Since no union other than the PaFT has asked to be on the ballot, the vote will determine whether any union will represent the support staff. If the PaFT is voted out, non-union representation will be reinstated at the College.

The difference between union and non-union bargaining units is, basically, that non-union bargaining units do not afford their members the same protection under the law as that offered by organized labor. Negotiations with an organized unit

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Faculty, College discuss teacher's contract issues

By Dave Kline

The College and the teachers union have met regularly for the last few months and will meet every Friday now through March to discuss the issues for the new teacher's contract.

The current teacher contract expires in August, and both sides are working together to create a contract acceptable to the College's and teacher union's terms.

According to James Campbell, spokesman for the college and assistant to the president for human resource development, the two major issues being negotiated are job security and seniority.

Campbell says these issues are important to the teachers because enrollment is leveling off and class sizes are not what they should be.

Citing the fact that the College experienced two strikes (fall 1981 and fall 1982) due to the teachers not having an approved contract when the semester began, Campbell stressed the importance of early negotiations, and

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Faculty union President George Phillips feels both sides are working cooperatively in negotiations.

(Photo by Bill Morgan)

Hospitality management students present nine banquet-style dinners

Nine banquet-style dinners, with menus ranging from Hungarian to French-style, will be presented by students in the Hospitality Management Program this spring.

The first dinner in the Spring Banquet Series will be held at 7 p.m., Wednesday, February 27 in the College

Hall dining room. The dinners are presented by students under the direction of Edward J. Smith, program coordinator. The public is invited to attend.

The banquet-style dinners, each featuring a different menu, will be served on Wednesday and Thursday evenings in the spring semester on the following dates: February 27, 28; March 13, 27, 28; April 10, 11, 24 and 25.

Dinner tickets, which must be purchased in advance, are \$7.50. Tickets must be purchased in person at the bookstore. They will be available one week in advance of each dinner's date. Phone and mail reservations are not accepted.

The first dinner on February 27 will be a "Hungarian" menu featuring cream of mushroom soup, cucumber and onion salad, breast of chicken saute Hongroise of baked flounder and potato, braised red cabbage or

cauliflower and apple strudel. An "American Gourmet--French Style" menu will be served on February 28.

The dinner series concept has been developed as a practical way for students enrolled in the Hospitality Management program to gain realistic experience in restaurant management functions. Each dinner presented to the public has been researched, designed, promoted, purchased, and prepared and served by students.

The two-year associate degree program in hospitality management was introduced in 1974. It is designed primarily to prepare the student for immediate career opportunities in hotel and restaurant management. Graduates of this program can transfer to one of over 50 colleges that offer four-year programs in this field.

Further information, or a master menu, may be obtained by contacting Edward J. Smith, hospitality management coordinator (641-6317).

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The women's basketball team looks forward to the playoffs with record wins -- page 10,11