

Ponderings from the co-President  
September 2010

Trepidation, anxiety, worry, nervousness, concern! Is that the way you are feeling about the school year ahead in our district? Well you certainly are justified to feel that way as you wonder how we, as a staff, and you, individually, are going to accomplish all that is required/expected as we face budget cuts, furlough days, less time, and less pay for the 2010-2011 school year. While I can't as co-president of BOTA, produce the magic potion that will make it all better, both Joe and I want you to know we are still working hard on your behalf to insure your working conditions comply with the contract.

Our association also, is dealing with less income (dues) because of fewer members, but we are still **setting objectives and planning events** which we hope will support and inspire you during this challenging time. The BOTA Executive Team met last Saturday morning and identified some goals and planned a few projects so that you will continue to get benefits from the hard-earned dollars that pay your NEA, CTA, AND BOTA dues. First, and most exciting on the list is the upcoming **visit of our CTA President, David Sanchez**. When Joe attended the President's conference this summer, he invited David to visit Brea and he said yes! He will be our guest of honor at a **reception on Oct 19** at the BOTA/NOCUT offices. It is quite an honor as he is the CTA president of the entire state of CA. We are excited and hope you will be able to attend or be part of his **welcoming committee**. We also hope to have two **TGIF parties** this year, just to encourage and support each other during this difficult economy and could use a **party planner** to make this a reality. A **seminar on legal issues** that educators face is also on the horizon. Last year's training on special ed. issues provided teachers with so much valuable information that we would like to continue this kind of service.

Specifically, another goal is larger **member involvement**. Our local chapter can only be as strong as our members want it to be. We are in desperate need of **additional site reps at BOHS and BJH** because several of your long-time colleagues have stepped down to fulfill other obligations. We also have an opening for a **grievance chair at the secondary level** (training provided by CTA). This office has been vacant for several years, ever since John Zoeckler retired, and has become a necessity as our professional duties have multiplied. Or simply show up and attend a monthly meeting (**the second Tuesday at 3:45**) and find out what BOTA does. We will always welcome you with a cup of coffee and a smile. Our new office on Brea Blvd. is a beautiful facility and not far from any of our school sites.

In addition, 2010 is a **school board election year** and we would like to have some fresh faces serve on BOTA's **endorsement committee**. This is a one-time job and involves 3 or 4 hours, one afternoon after school. It is an important position as we try to elect or re-elect citizens who support us as teachers and also further our goals. This is a chance for you to have input and make a difference in BOUSD. Contact Joe, myself, or your site rep if you want to find out more about any of these jobs. The 15 members of the Rep Council can't reach all these goals by themselves and we need you!

**Finally, take care of yourself as an educator this year.** Teacher burnout is a real possibility as each of us strives to do our best by our students with so much less in supplies, help, time, funds, personnel, classified staff, etc. etc. etc! You name it! Everything is in short supply this time around and you will feel the effects, both physically and mentally. Look out for your colleagues. Encourage, support, and sustain each other. Stay united as a staff, a department, or a grade level and we will get through this year together.

I said it last year and I will repeat it. You can't do it all, do it the same way, or work any harder than you have in the past. **This year will feel different and be different** than other years. **But we can still make a difference in an individual child's life.** And that's why we entered this profession in the first place! My best to each of you as you begin the new school year.

Celeste