

Memorial Fund Benefits Families of Helicopter Crash Victims

At the request of the Department of Fish and Game, CAPS acted quickly to establish a Memorial Fund in the aftermath of the January 5 helicopter crash near Madera which killed two DFG biologists, a scientific aide and the pilot. The crash was especially hard because the DFG workforce is part of an extended "family." The crash left everyone numb and deeply saddened.

The three biologists killed in the January 5 crash will long be remembered. Clu Cotter, 48, was an accomplished Wildlife Biologist, avid cyclist, outdoorsman, devoted husband, father, brother, and friend to many. A graduate of Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, he dedicated his professional life to studying the wildlife of California's wilderness areas and working with the public to ensure balance between wilderness needs and the public. He will be remembered for his caring nature, easy laugh, and his ability to find humor in stressful situations. Clu doted on his two sons, Ren and Jamie. He shared his passion for cycling with them

continued on page 2 »

The tragedy is very hard for those left behind, made worse by the financial hole created by the loss. So CAPS established the Memorial Fund to benefit the DFG families. Contributions earmarked for a specific family will be honored, and general contributions will be appropriately distributed in a few weeks. Your contribution, which is not tax deductible, can be sent to CAPS as follows:

State Biologists Memorial Fund
c/o CAPS
455 Capitol Mall, Suite 500
Sacramento, CA 95814

Governor Proposes Another Beat-Down

Rather than come up with fresh new ideas for the 2010-2011 budget year, Governor Schwarzenegger instead wants state employees and the federal government to bail him out. His budget proposal for the coming fiscal year has already been deemed unrealistic by the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst Mac Taylor, and there is every reason to think it will be dead on arrival when it gets to the state legislature for consideration.

With a budget deficit estimated to be over \$20 billion, the problem again begs for a bipartisan solution that requires budget cuts and new revenue, even if temporary. Yet in his final budget proposal, all the Governor could do was threaten Californians with even deeper cuts to public safety, education and social programs. On the state employee front, he said he plans to end the mandatory unpaid furloughs as scheduled next July.

The bad news far outweighed any benefit of seeing Furlough Fridays phased out. The Governor plans to implement a 5% pay cut AND a 5% increase in the retirement contribution for all state employees immediately upon the end of the furlough program. He has also directed every state department to IMMEDIATELY implement an additional 5% cut to personnel costs. This could, according to his Finance Director, result in some layoffs.

In addition, the Governor proposed ANOTHER 5% salary reduction in the event he doesn't get the subventions from the federal government he is asking for. In a January 8 "Open Letter" to all state employees, the Governor mentions the first pay cut

continued on page 2 »



Clu Cotter



Kevin O'Connor



Tom Stolberg



Dennis (Mike) Donovan

MEMORIAL FUND BENEFITS FAMILIES OF HELICOPTER CRASH VICTIMS

continued from page 1

and rarely missed reading nightly bedtime stories. He married his college sweetheart, Marni. They built a life together in Fresno County for the past twenty years. Abraham Lincoln Clu James Cotter is survived by his immediate family, his sister Gay, brothers Rhett, Doak and Zip, and their families.

Kevin O'Connor, 40, was a passionate biologist, devoted father of four, a loving husband, and a steadfast friend. He passed at a time when he was content and satisfied with his life. Those who knew him will miss his laughter, sense of humor, and his never-ending optimism. This is a great loss to the biological community, his family, and to all who knew him. Kevin earned his degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology from UC Davis in 1993. He then conducted a variety of field studies for the U.S. Forest Service in Central and Northern California. He brought this experience to DFG in 1997 when he was hired as a Wildlife Biologist. In 2005, Kevin became the Senior Wildlife Biologist Supervisor for DFG's Central Region, responsible for nine counties in the San Joaquin Valley and southern Sierra Nevada. He led 15 staff in wildlife management, lands management, public education, and providing hunting opportunities. Kevin was admired for his energy, enthusiasm, field skills, leadership and dedication to public service. Kevin is survived by his wife Keri and four children, Michelle, McKenna, Kayleigh, and Aidan.

Tom Stohlberg, 31, was an Eagle Scout and worked with the Boy Scouts of America, was a Certified Wilderness EMT and river guide before earning his degree in History from CSU Humboldt, in 2003. Tom joined DFG in 2004 as a Scientific Aid in Fresno. In addition to dispensing public information, Tom assisted with wildlife habitat projects, capturing deer for telemetry studies, and managing public hunts. Everyone enjoyed Tom's intelligence, wit, work ethic and the many fine results from his culinary skills. He is survived by his parents, Larry and Martha, sister Sarah, and brother Buck.

The pilot, Dennis (Mike) Donovan, 70, of Landells Aviation, had thousands of hours of flying time and by all accounts was an outstanding pilot. His wife has requested that all donations go to the other families.

Death on the job for a scientist is infrequent but isn't unprecedented. On January 11, 1992, a helicopter crash in an eerily similar incident killed two biologists, Greg Cook and Sonia Hamilton, from the DFG Office of Oil Spill Prevention and Response. That copter hit a power line and crashed. They were surveying an oil slick on the Carquinez Strait. Like those killed in the most recent crash, fond memories of Greg Cook and Sonia Hamilton, two fine biologists, will linger for years to come among families, friends and colleagues.

GOVERNOR PROPOSES ANOTHER BEAT-DOWN

continued from page 1

but not this one. He said he wants all Californians to know how "proud" he is of "your hard work, dedication and commitment."

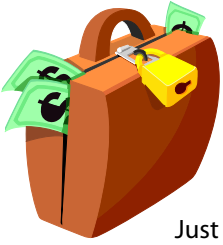
The Governor will be asking the Legislature to allow him to implement the pay cuts and retirement contribution increase unilaterally, without negotiating with CAPS or any of the other unions which represent state employees. He will do this as part of the negotiations in adopting a state budget for the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

The Governor's other budget proposals give some guidance to his intentions. He proposes to contract prisons out to the private sector. This WOULD save billions of dollars, but only by paying private prisons far less for guard salaries and benefits than are currently paid to state-employed correctional officers. No doubt he would do the same with the state's scientific programs if he could.



CAPS Vice President Valerie Brown comments on the Governor's State of the State Speech

Legislative leaders have said they both oppose the Governor's latest proposals to cut state employees' pay and increase retirement contributions, because these issues belong at the bargaining table. CAPS will continue to pressure all state lawmakers to stand up to the Governor and force him to bargain. You can help by urging YOUR state Assembly and Senate representatives to do the same.



More of the Same

By Patty Velez, President

Just when I thought Governor Schwarzenegger couldn't be any more disingenuous, he surprises me. His letter to all state employees told us how proud he is of our service. Then he pledged to replace three days of unpaid furloughs with a ten percent pay cut. Half would be in the form of a direct pay cut, and half in the form of an INCREASE in what we pay to CalPERS for retirement. This would of course partially relieve the state of its obligation in this regard. Now that's PROUD!

What he failed to say was that he also wants the legislature to approve ANOTHER five percent pay cut in the event he doesn't get the federal subventions he's asking for. Given the state of the federal budget, wholesale handouts to California are unlikely.

On top of all that, during the whirlwind of activity surrounding release of the state budget in early January, Governor Schwarzenegger's chief negotiator, DPA Chief Deputy Director Julie Chapman, said that the Administration would "bargain" these for permanent pay cuts. This is another way of saying that DPA will propose these cuts with a gun to our head. That is, if we don't agree to them, he will do as he's always done and pressure the legislature to implement them as part of the summer budget deal--without collective bargaining.

Your CAPS leadership and Bargaining Team will continue to oppose all efforts to impose mandatory cuts on state scientists. We were first to file a lawsuit challenging mandatory furloughs, and we will fight these latest

proposals with every resource at our disposal, and every fiber of our being.

I repeat a line then-candidate Ronald Reagan once asked "are you better off today than you were four years ago?" In this instance, the question is: are we better off today than when we were SIX years ago when Governor Schwarzenegger took office and promised to use his considerable political skills to "blow up boxes" and put California back on track. I consider his tenure as Governor a dismal failure, not just for the state's dedicated workforce, but for the people of California. He has treated labor groups as outsiders, he has

refused to bargain, and he has alienated key lawmakers from both political parties. He still talks a good game, but as a lame duck, virtually no one takes him seriously. His proposals are virtually dead on arrival in the legislature. His lack of leadership and failure to

govern effectively means a final budget deal this year will be even harder to obtain. That bodes ill for state scientists and all state employees because the Governor is also seeking to block full paychecks unless the budget is on time.

The Governor's lawsuit seeks to limit payments to state employees to the federal minimum wage (currently \$7.25 per hour) if the budget is late. CAPS is sponsoring legislation (AB 1125 - Hernandez) which would make a continuous appropriation to ensure that state employees get paid in full and on time. For anyone who thought Governor Schwarzenegger was a sound replacement for Gray Davis, this is a hard lesson learned.

"What he failed to say was that he also wants the legislature to approve ANOTHER five percent pay cut in the event he doesn't get the federal subventions he's asking for."

TAKING STOCK



The new year is when many people make resolutions and take stock of their finances. One key element of a sound financial program is a plan for a loss of income. That can happen suddenly, so poignantly and sadly demonstrated by the helicopter crash near Madera on January 5. If you haven't evaluated your financial portfolio recently, this is a good time. Be sure that you have sufficient disability and life insurance to keep your income intact for those who depend on you in the unlikely event something prevents you from working. Be sure to review the supplemental insurance and disability benefits offered at reasonable group rates through CAPS. CAPS provides these benefits as a security precaution for members. They should be coordinated with other benefits provided by the CAPS MOU, CalPERS and other sources unique to each individual. You can learn more about the CAPS insurance program by going to the CAPS webpage www.capsscientists.org.

In This Issue

- ◉ ***Governor Proposes Another Beat-Down***
- ◉ ***CAPS Establishes Memorial Fund for Families of Helicopter Crash Victims***
- ◉ ***CalPERS Election Victory***
- ◉ ***More of the Same, by Patty Velez, President***

Jelincic and Shimada Confirmed Winners at CalPERS



Secretary of State John Chiang will soon formally certify what we have known for several weeks: Joseph (J.J.) Jelincic and Kurato Shimada have been elected to fill two Member-At-Large seats on the CalPERS Board of Administration.

Jelincic won a runoff election for the other seat being vacated by Charles Valdes whose term is expiring. Unofficial runoff results indicate Jelincic won with 51 percent of the vote cast. The other runoff candidate, Cathy Hackett, received 49 percent. Jelincic is an investment officer at CalPERS. CAPS strongly backed his candidacy.

Shimada was easily re-elected with 83 percent of the votes cast during the first round of voting.

Shimada is retired as supervisor of operations for the Oak Grove School District in San Jose. He was first elected to the CalPERS Board in 1987. Both Shimada and Jelincic will serve four-year terms that begin on January 16, 2010.

The 13-member CalPERS Board of Administration sets policy and oversees the administration of retirement and health benefits on behalf of more than 3,000 California public employers and their employees and retirees. The Board also oversees administration of CalPERS pension fund investments. CalPERS has exclusive authority to administer the CalPERS pension fund. CalPERS is the nation's largest public pension fund with approximately \$202 billion in market assets. The pension fund provides retirement benefits to more than 1.6 million state, public school, and local public agency employees, retirees, and their families, and health benefits to nearly 1.3 million members.

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