



NEWSLETTER

Hi UESF Retirees! Make sure to RSVP for the upcoming and final membership meeting of the year. It will be on **Thursday, May 15th**, at the **Scottish Rite Masonic Center**. The meeting will run from **10:30 am till 1:00 pm** (10:30a for the business meeting about the dues increase, approx. 11:15/11:30a for the celebration of Dennis Kelly's life) and lunch will be provided. Street parking is available with limited parking under the building.

RSVP HERE.

upcoming membership meeting

Thursday, May 15th

10:30 AM TO 1:00 PM

 **Scottish Rite Masonic Center (2850 19th Ave, San Francisco, CA 94132)**

*Street parking and limited parking spots under the building



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LISA FOR LABOR (PAST...)

Back in November, when Dennis Kelly tragically died, I took the position of Interim Chair of the UESF Retired Division ("Retired Division") because I was the Vice-Chair, and that was my responsibility. In January, you were kind enough to vote me in as the permanent Chair, and I have tried to do my best. Let me give you a bit of a background about who I am before I update you on pertinent issues affecting our union.

First and foremost, I am 100% for the working class. Also, I'm a native San Franciscan from several "races" and ethnicities. My dad was from the Philippines, and his relatives were not only Filipino, but Chinese, African-American and Spanish, all of whom were from working-class backgrounds (Buffalo Soldiers and guerilla fighters, office workers, housewives, etc). My mom was Caucasian and "two parts Blackfoot Indian." Her dad was a railroad worker who took his family to California shortly after the Depression. My parents were upholstering and clerical workers here in S.F.

As a college student, I got involved in a long student strike at S.F. State and had numerous clerical jobs, primarily in the medical field, to put myself through college. Most of my jobs were nonunion until I got to a hospital in S.F. that was unionized.

I always wanted to be a teacher, but I didn't have the opportunity until my own children started attending Buena Vista Spanish Immersion School. I was a parent activist who was later hired as a paraeducator. As a para, I found out about programs for bilingual paraprofessionals to become teachers. After only six weeks of starting the pre-teacher academic courses, I was plopped into a classroom as the teacher because there was such a shortage of bilingual educators. This was all while studying at the university and raising three kids with my husband. That was in 1988, a year before the AFT/CTA merger.

Besides being a rank-and-file UESF member at Junipero Serra School, I started getting more and more involved with the union at the citywide level. Soon, I was running for the Executive Board and won as an at-large member, bilingual and elementary reps, and then secretary under Dennis and later, under Lita Blanc.

I retired from SFUSD in 2013, but I didn't really feel "retired" since I was still an officer of the union. However, I did start attending most of the Retired Division meetings when Diane Doe was Chair and even some of the Executive Board meetings since I was used to that from my active days. I felt completely retired when I left office in 2018.

When Diane stepped down as Retired Division Chair, I remained as an at-large member under Rudi Faltus who I am pleased to say is on the current E-Board. When Dennis ran and won as Chair of the Retired Division during his first term, I worked closely with Mary Anne Ahtye to secure the locations and get the food for our meetings and activities. At the May 2024 meeting, when nominations were open for the next term, Dennis nominated me to be his Vice-Chair. The rest is history....



...AND PRESENT #1

All UESF-R (certificated and classified) are invited to our last Retired Division meeting of the year on 5/15 at 10:30 a.m. (Scottish Rite Masonic Center at Sloat Blvd. and 19th Ave.). **The Executive Board has decided to have the debate and vote about the dues increase first.** Please participate in and listen to the debate, but **only paid members of the UESF Retired Division will be allowed to vote.** If you are only coming to Dennis Kelly's celebration to follow, but are not a member of the Retired Division, you will sign in as a guest. All members will have their names checked off the membership lists provided to us from the UESF office. If you have any doubt on whether you're a member or not, please ask Amanda Saiz, UESF Membership Specialist, at the union office. Contact her at asaiz@uesf.org or call 415-956-8373. Please take care of this at least a week before the meeting so that we can correct any mistakes on our part and/or so that you can pay your dues, if applicable...

We are proposing a dues increase because we are starting to dip into our reserves since we don't get sufficient amount of money to function. The Retired Division only receives \$0.46/mo./per certificated member out of the \$4.00/month or \$48.00/year we currently pay for dues. Certificated members constitute 95% of our membership. Because the classified members (only 5% of our membership) pay half of the amount of the certificated-currently, \$24.00/year-their contribution goes towards other expenses.

If we continue only charging our current dues, we'll have to cut out all of our meals, including our holiday luncheon. Plus, we won't be able to actively try to recruit the new retirees we get every year. (Over 300 teachers are retiring this year. We don't have the numbers of the paraeducators as of today.) Also, we'll have to cut back on our participation in the CTA and NEA conferences and conventions and even some of the AFT and CFT activities.

Please come to the short presentation of the amendment **(it was debated in full at the March meeting and is below as amended)**, debate and vote about this important issue for our livelihood as a union retired body. There is lots of parking beneath the building, or if you take public transportation, there are stops nearby. We will start as soon as we have a quorum (5% of our meeting membership) and end this part of the meeting as soon as we have voted. The votes will be counted as we start the next part of our important day.

If you have another solution to our financial problem, please be prepared to write your amendment up on the flip chart paper that will be available and/or bring 40-50 copies for us to see your alternative proposal as required in our bylaws.

...AND PRESENT #2

Dennis Kelly's life was honored by moments of silence and a few informal words at a couple of our events (membership meetings and at the holiday event), and he was honored at the S.F. Labor Council and recently at the CFT Convention (see Ken's description of the convention), but now it's our turn. We are estimating that we might start this part of our meeting around 11:15/11:30. Hene Kelly, Dennis's wife and longtime union activist herself, will be present. We will have a slideshow that was put together by Matthew Hardy, the CFT Communications Director. Matthew was also the UESF Communications Director when Dennis Kelly was the president. So, he has a long history with us.

Besides the slide show, we will have short presentations about Dennis's interests, how he helped the union to form and prosper, about his activities at the state and national levels, etc. by a few speakers who knew him well. (A couple of them will be bringing memorabilia to share, as well. If you have anything you'd like to share with us, please feel free to bring in your item, too. Then, we will open the meeting up to anyone who wishes to share their memories for a couple of minutes.

Lunch will be at 12:15. You must RSVP to let us know that you will be attending as a guest or member and if you request lunch. If we haven't finished people's sharing, we can continue over lunch. We certainly hope that you will make every effort to attend for the dues increase issue (Dennis would be advocating for that if he were still Chair) and to honor our very own Dennis afterwards.



Respectfully submitted,
Lisa
Lisa Gutierrez Guzman
Chair, UESF Retired

PROPOSED AMENDMENT CHANGE TO OUR DUES STRUCTURE

(from the 3/20 Mtg. to the 5/15 Membership Retired Division Mtg. for a vote)

ARTICLE XVI. DUES

Section 1. Effective July 1, 2025, the dues of the Retired Division shall be ~~\$48.00~~ **\$96.00** per year for retired members of the teacher unit or ~~\$24.00~~ **\$48.00** per year for retired paraprofessionals and members of the teacher unit who retire from part-time employment, payable annually to UESF Retired Division or by monthly pension deduction. (Dues will be evaluated annually, by April 1st, to determine any necessary increases.)

Section 2. ~~The combined dues of a retired husband and a retired wife or of domestic partners shall be \$60.00 annually for members of the teacher unit and \$30.00 for paraprofessionals. As of September 2005, this section will no longer be in effect.~~

Section 3. Members whose dues are more than two months in arrears shall not be in good standing and will be notified and dropped by action of the membership chairperson of the Retired Division.

KEN'S CORNER

from Ken Tray, UESF-R Vice Chair



Forty years ago, walking through Balboa's beautiful front entrance, my career in the classroom and my involvement as a union member began. CFT activists, especially Social Studies Chair Anna Bolla, brought me up to date on issues facing educators in the classroom and within SFUSD. Layoffs ended the Balboa position, and soon I became a day-to-day substitute (and drove cabs!). But within a year, I went on to Mark Twain

continuations's great teaching and learning community only to be once again moved, this time to Lowell by the unusual layoffs/no layoffs/transfers of the Spring and Fall '91. In 2003, I was chosen be the UESF Political Director and went on to work closely with the new UESF President Dennis Kelly

I loved being in the classroom, and it was an honor to stand-up in the world of politics for our careers dedicated to young people and their families. After I retired and remembered the importance of our labor family, I knew I wanted to stay active in these turbulent times in the public schools and in the labor movement. I wanted to take my place defending social justice in my new labor family as a retired member on the Executive Board and in the Retired Division.

CFT CONVENTION

Arriving at the CFT Convention last March, I joined-in with hundreds of delegates marching out of the Convention Hall towards a rally denouncing Trump's assault on civil society, including public education. The stage was set for a weekend-long focus on the national situation including a powerful address by AFT President, Randi Weingarten. On Saturday, the Oral History Project Workshop was presented by Bill Shields - AFT 2121 (SF City College), Marcella Norling - AFT 1911 (Coast Federation of Teachers)... and yours truly, representing UESF Retired. A room full of delegates, including UESF President Cassandra Curiel, became enthusiastically engaged as we ran through the basics of establishing Oral History Projects at locals across the state. On Sunday morning, CFT President presented a moving eulogy for Retired Division's own former Retired Division Chair and UESF President, Dennis Kelly, to the assembled delegates. It was a powerful weekend of remembrance of union work and a call to dedicate ourselves to rise up and meet the threat of fascism in our lifetime.

HEALTH CHAIR REPORT

from Rudi Faltus, Executive Board

Two topics of interest to report on: March 13, 2025 Health Service Board (HSSB) Meeting and problems and concerns related to the transition from United Healthcare to Blue Shield.

The main topic of the March 13 HSSB meeting was the presentation and discussion of the rates and benefits calendar and process for the 2026 calendar year. Throughout the next few months the HSSB will be hearing presentations and engaging in discussion regarding the rates and benefits of contracted health plans for active and retired members. The rates and benefits decisions conclude at the June 12 meeting at which retiree health plans (Kaiser and Blue Shield) will be approved. Blue Shield staff presented a rosy picture of a mostly successful transition which was refuted by many members and member organizations.

Many members have experienced difficulties in the transition. The HSSB and HSS staff need to hear about individuals' specific experience. When problems arise:

- document specific issue: date, time, what you did, what happened, who talked to you, result
- send email to HSSB Commissioners and HSS CEO (sfgov.org, departments, san francisco health service, board, main page for all necessary information), Blue Shield
- write a letter, S.F. Health Service System, 1145 Market St. 3 rd floor, San Francisco, 94103
- call HSS, 628-652-4700, leave a specific message
- go to HSSB meeting: Second Thursday of most every month, 1:00 pm, City Hall, room 436
- watch HSSB meeting and participate on TV (channels 26, 78 or online (sfgov.org, SF Government TV)

The contract with Blue Shield is for three years. It is very unusual, but possible, that changes could be made after the first year. It is important to document your experience and let the HSSB Commissioners know what happened. Everyone is encouraged to check out the HSS website at sfgov.org.

Addendum from Chair, Lisa Guzman:

Occasionally, we will receive phone calls or e-mails from our members through the UESF office re: the transition to Blue Shield. It is important that you follow the steps Rudi has given above since they (HSS) are the experts. If UESF Retired receives a general question, I have tried to handle it as best as I can, but if it's a really specific issue, I have forwarded the emails or phone call info to Rudi. She MIGHT know the answer you are looking for. But, the real experts are at the HSS office. Do talk to them.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Did you know that the UESF Retired Division currently has 765 members?

36 members attended the membership meeting in March. All attendees information was checked against the official membership list to insure accuracy. Non-members were contacted.

FYI, only dues-paying members (currently paying \$48.00/year for certificated and \$24.00 for classified) are considered to be members of UESF Retired.

UESF Retired Division Membership Team:

Terry Lai

Elaine Merriweather



RETIREMENT STATEMENT

from Pat Crawford, UESF-R Treasurer

It has been a great honor to have served as your treasurer and part of the team that reactivated UESF-R after a COVID required shutdown.

On June 30th of the current fiscal year, I will retire. I plan to deliver my final financial report at our UESF-R September General Membership meeting.

Please consider running for this position! Retirees are facing proposed financial cuts from several directions, and it's so important that UESF-R stands strong in this struggle for justice.

Thank you for the privilege of working with you!



In unity,
Pat Crawford

P.S. Please plan on attending our May 15th meeting at which time we will honor the legacy of Dennis Kelly and vote on our much needed dues increase!

UESF-R HOLIDAY PARTY

Photos from Pat Crawford, UESF-R Treasurer

On December 18th of the past year, the UESF Retired Division held their annual Holiday Luncheon at John's Grill to celebrate the year of 2024 and to welcome in the new year. Come join us next holiday season!



“HANDS OFF” RALLIES

Photos from Pat Crawford, Lisa Gutierrez Guzamn, and Mary Anne Ahtye



From Civic Center to Redwood City, UESF Retired Division members attended the “Hands Off” rallies held on April 5th to protest the Trump Administration and Elon Musk.