SPECIAL ELECTION ISSUE

THE MONTCLARION

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Lal takes election!!

Karali VP by one vote

by Mary Ann D'Urso

Sonjui Lal, one of two women ever to be elected to the position of SGA president, will take office June 1.

Lal won the election with a total of 723 votes. Her opponents, Art Massei and Jim Finnegan, had tallies of 518 and 335 votes, respectively.

"Obviously the best man for the job was a woman, Sanj deserved it" Ron Naples, Lal's campaign manager said at her victory party.

Undoubtedly the most suspenseful moment of the campaign results came when the position of vice president was announced. Phil Karali won the position by just one vote over his opponent Mike Sinatra. The vote was 728 to 727.

Sinatra later said that he would ask for a recount but that he would not contest the final outcome. "Obviously enough people liked what I had to say and agreed with me on what changes should be made in the SGA," Sinatra said, adding, "I'm going to run as a legislator for next semester."

Some of the key points which Lal would like to launch when she gets into office are an investigation into a judiciary branch of the SGA. "I feel that the executive board has too much power. I want to be open to ideas from the legislature and the students," Lal said.

Lal would like to initiate a grade plus system. Someone who received an 87 grade point average for the semester would then receive a 3.5 recorded on their cumulative average instead of a 3.0. "It's a more accurate way of assessing someone's grade instead of leaving it up to the teacher's discretion," Lal added.

Brian Cigc, the SGA president, said of his successor, "What's important is that she knows the students and the SGA well. Experience is the key to success. The students at MSC know this and voted for her and her record. I am confident that the transition period will go well, and that Sanj and her executive board will make all those who voted for them, and those who didn't, proud. The SGA is in good hands."

"This was the best election I've seen in four years," Steve Dempsey, the attorney general for the SGA said, "The election was fair and Sonj will do a good job. She's the most experienced with the SGA."

Dempsey said that he hoped that the people who lost would not be wasted, "We have to work together, pull together, a kind of unity behind one candidate."

The voting for the unopposed candidates went as follows: Laura Pedalino, secretary, 1,271; Sandy Schlanger, treasurer, 1,006; Craig Stuart, student representative to the Board of Trustees, 1,275.

"Being unopposed you expect to win, but it's not a reality until the votes are counted," Schlanger later said. She said that one of the things she was hopeful for was that a fairly big company might want to donate a van for tax purposes. "The van could be used for our student organizations which use buses or trains or cars to get to meetings or conventions," she said.

Stuart said after the votes were counted, "I'm really excited. I can't wait to do my job." The new student rep said that he wants to keep in contact with the students. He said that when he represents the students at board meetings he wants it to be their voices, their ideas. Stuart said he is hoping to establish office hours so that students can come up and talk about their ideas.

The referendum to change the limit of the cap on SGA fees from 12 to 15 credits was passed with a 297 yes to 247 no vote. However, according to Schlanger a 21 percent yes vote by the entire student body is necessary in order for it to take effect. Roughly 15 percent, or 1,669, MSC students voted in this year's election.

The votes were tabulated Saturday at 2 p.m. after weekend voting was completed.
The Montclarion would like to extend their best wishes to Sonjui Lal, the newly elected president of the SGA. We would also like to offer our congratulations to Phill Karali, the newly elected vice president; Laura Pedalino, secretary; Sandy Schlanger, treasurer, and Craig Stugart, student representative to the Board of Trustees.
SGA elections-Who wins?

by Jules Korzeniowski

Another May has come and with it another SGA election. For three weeks, the fourth floor of the Student Center has been the scene of countless social events, regulation maneuvers, hurt feelings, and uptight temper tantrums. Everyone is frustrated from saying hello and smiling (a fourth floor ritual) and now, hopefully everything will get back to normal.

The organizations which supported the winning candidates can count their good fortune in the form of their members being appointed to the new legislature in the fall. Those persons most active in the campaigns of the winners may expect cabinet position appointments and invitations to the SGA banquet in June. The losing candidates will either drop out of sight or will run for SGA legislative seats later this year. Some may even be appointed to a cabinet post or the legislature by the president elect just to show there are no hard feelings.

After the inauguration, the president elect will settle down to a summer job as executive director of the SGA corporation. The treasurer is also expected to be around, but doesn’t get paid for his efforts, but why did Sonni Lal win? Why Phil Karali and Laura Pedalino and Sandy Schlanger? Well, Laura Pedalino ran for secretary unopposed, Schlanger ran for treasurer unopposed also, but was Karali better than Mike Sarnia? He won by one vote. How much better qualified is Lal than Jim Finnegan or Art Masses?

If you look at the background of the presidential winner, you see he has three years of SGA experience. If one goes back over the years one sees a pattern. Brian Cige had three years experience in the SGA; as did Karali and Board of Trustees representative. The year before that Nadar Tavakoli had three years experience as an SGA legislature; one of them as president pro tempore of the legislature. Charles Sahner had the least experience of all the candidates mentioned. He was a legislature for one year before he ran and won. Before him Jose Fuentes had served for two years in the SGA, as a member of a Class One organization, as a legislator and cabinet member of Maryann Prezunkin’s administration. In short, you have to be an SGA insider to win an election for president, or if you’re an outsider, you must have the support of a significant part of the fourth floor students (FFS). No fourth floor support, no win. The FFS at MSC speak their own language. They all know each other, they know who is intelligent and who is a fake, they know who is efficient in administration and who isn’t. The FFS take themselves very seriously and they take the yearly elections seriously. But then you would too if collectively you spent $500,000 annually. There is also institutional loyalty. If a FFS isn’t loyal to the central SGA administrative legislative structure, then they are loyal to the bureaucratic one: the Class One or Two organizations. And since their organizations spend a good deal of money, they want to make sure they have a friend in office.

At there any real issues in SGA elections? Yes, but with certain exceptions, they are usually the same ones each year and they are not the ones the average student reads about in The Montclarion or in campaign literature. With the exception of the Fuentes Administration.

Four years ago two issues were significant in SGA elections. One was the disfranchisement of part-time students. In other words, they got to pay SGA fees. The other question revolved around a proposed Student Athletic Commission (MAC) a completely independent corporation disassociated from SGA administrative oversight. Fuentes ran on both issues in the affirmative and won by a landslide. But notice there was no issue. It was money. Oh, incidentally, Jose Fuentes would MIS with a $60,000 white elephant which he had also promoted during his campaign; the TV display system.

One hears the students at Partridge Hall love watching the afternoons, and the juniors watch sitcoms at night. The following year, Sahner ran again against The Montclarion which was, and still is, considered as a very powerful Class One organization. The increases, of course, were funded by fees paid by the students. They, luck, persons, got SGA offices opened in the evening hours. One year The Montclarion received new machines worth $30,000, WMBM received new radio equipment for $17,000, a new Class One Student organization, Class One Conference, was created and given a $40,000 budget. The yearbook, La Campana had to make more books for part-time students and they received another $20,000. By the end of the four years, the annual tenure, (Sahner), all of the extra income had been allocated among the Class One organizations. Incidentally, the central administrative apparatus also got an increase to $10,000 during the Fuentes administration.

In short, SGA elections are not about parking spaces for commuters, improving shuttle bus service, judicial committees for students in the appeal process for grades, SGA elections are about power. We support the right candidate and reap the benefits the following academic year during budget time.

This is not to say that FDS don’t care about the student population at large. They genuinely believe that their organizations provide legitimate services to students. And in many cases this is so. But as with any institution, a certain amount of its creative energy is spent perpetuating itself. It is rare for any organization to dissolve itself voluntarily and this is so at MSC as well. Our Class Ones and the central SGA administrative legislative apparatus recruit and socializes its leaders from the general student body. These leaders, in turn, administer their organizations, all the organizations.

Many members of WAMSC are presently working as a legal advisor to the SGA. But they also learn valuable skills, make important contacts in business and school administration, build up their resumes. It is difficult to make Who’s Who at MSC if you are not involved in the fourth floor in some way. A quick glance at some of the former SGA officers and Class One leaders is illuminating. First SGA presidents: Mike Alexander, Jose Puentes, Manny Menendez, a business executive for a large corporation. Phil Karali, a well paid bureaucrat in Washington D.C., Jose Fuentes, a law school student, Nadar Tavakoli is in law school; Brian Cige is applying to law school. And then the last SGA president, Angelo Genova is presently working as a legal advisor to the SGA.

Many members of WAMSC
**Winners?**  
continued from page 3

go into broadcasting, College  
Life Union Board (CLUB)  
gets into business  
administration or work in  
entertainment management,  
Huston editors go to law  
schools or work in various  
publications as reporters,  
editors, graphic personnel or  
photographers.  
In other words, MSC  
fees subsidize handsomely  
training for many of MSC's  
political elite. So next May  
when someone approaches you  
with a petition as candidate for  
the SGA office, pay close  
attention to what they say.  
They're spending your money  
building their resumes.

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