**From:** Merklein, Trip [CO]
**Sent:** Friday, October 21, 2011 9:58 AM
**Cc:** Burkett, Kay [CO]
**Subject:** Member Update 10/21/11
**Importance:** High

**School Board Race** In last week’s update, some experienced difficulty opening the link to the new SVVEA website about the upcoming School Board’s only competitive race in District A between Vice President Rick Hammans and challenger Arnold Hanuman, a Boulder County Deputy DA. If you had difficulty, give it another try: <http://svvea.org/?page_id=2> . {NOTE: This information is no longer on the website.)

**Proposition 103**School Board President John Creighton’s editorial from the *Times-Call* on 10/16/11 (see link) is a refreshing counterpoint to the 10/9/11 *Time-Call* editorial, “Bad time for this proposition” (featured in last week’s 10/13 Update). Creighton thanks the community for passing the indispensable 2008 mill levy override and acknowledges district staffs’ contributions of pay freezes and increased workloads resulting from new instructional programs, new state accountability standards, and increased class sizes. While he notes that continued cuts will lead to diminishing returns [of student achievement], I have observed that many teachers may already be experiencing this. The available time to meet the many new demands, coupled with larger class sizes, obviously presents limitations to what can be realistically expected with teachers’ productivity.  Preparation for the first round of parent/teacher conferences (and upcoming elementary report cards) has been taxing. With additional demands on contract time, many teachers are getting the job done at the expense of even more family time. From multiple perspectives, this is not best for kids.

Creighton points out that St. Vrain administrator salaries are among the lowest in the metro area. However, he fails to mention the fact that our teacher salaries are among the lowest as well. It should not be forgotten that we are all in this together.

If you haven’t seen it yet on TV, here’s the new ad promoting Prop 103:  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1p6Tm_nonvc>

**AR Meeting Surprises** Author of Proposition 103 Sen. Heath (D – Boulder) made a guest appearance at this week’s AR meeting to thank SVVEA for its strong support. He shared that there’s growing statewide support for Proposition 103 as indicated by recent newspaper endorsements in Fort Collins, Greeley, Durango, and Grand Junction. In another typical display of his commitment to public educators, Rollie drove up from south Denver to attend our meeting, and then drove back!  A special thanks to Jessicca Shafer, SVVEA and CEA Board member, 5th grade teacher at Longmont Estates, wife of State Senate President Brandon Shaffer, and parent of two St. Vrain students, for extending the invitation to Rollie.

Superintendent Don Haddad regularly attends our AR meetings, and he followed Rollie’s presentation. He too has been a tireless advocate for Prop 103 and has joined Rollie on occasion; recently at the Longmont Chamber of Commerce Prop 103 debate. Asked to signal the level of teachers’ increased workload over last year, your ARs sent a clear message to our superintendent that it has been extreme. While we did not delve into the details, it was an effective on-the-spot indication of a serious concern that Don and the School Board must continue to hear.

Finally, your ARs also cranked out a couple of hundred “Support Prop 103” letters to area voters. Please thank them for this contribution, along with their many others.

**Member Survey** As an SVVEA member, your voice carries weight. Our first survey of this year will be conducted next week. The preliminary Negotiation’s meeting with the District will be held soon after the Nov.1st election.

As always, thank you for supporting our profession as an SVVEA member.

Trip Merklein

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