

# Mountain Times

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Columbia College

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## Chancellor's raise draws ire

By Connie Close  
MTX STAFF WRITER

A 13 percent raise for college Chancellor Pamilla Fisher has sent shock waves throughout the Yosemite Community College District.

The raise was granted to Fisher Nov. 7 by the district Board of Trustees. Board members are elected officials and make all final decisions.

The same night that Fisher received her raise, which brings her salary to \$125,000 a year, the Yosemite Faculty Association agreed to a 3 percent raise to be paid with money specifically set aside for cost of living adjustments.

"We were told the District could not afford more than the COLA allocated funding allowed, so YFA agreed," said Mary Landess, academic senate president. "Nobody but the Board of Trustees knew of Fisher's raise, no one else was involved in this."

Many classified employees, which include the non-teaching staff and maintenance workers, and the teaching faculty of both campuses feel that her raise is unfair.

"Many school employees have done 'more with less' with the spirit that we are here to serve

the students needs," said Candy Baily of the Columbia College Financial Aid office. "There have been many cuts in services that I'd like to see offered for the students."

This philosophy of 'doing more with less' shows itself in reduced class offerings and smaller budgets.

Approximately 16 fewer classes are being offered than last spring. Cuts have also been made in field trips and instructional supplies for students and travel expenses for faculty.

"Business Communications, which is required for certificate, is the only writing class that is required and was cut because of lack of funding," said Janet Carty, office technology instructor. "This is the first time in 10 years the class has not been offered...I am very upset and Fisher's raise is the coup de grace."

Fisher was not available for comment.

The raise granted to Fisher comes from the district's general fund, which also goes to supply materials and salaries. According to "The Atlas," an informational overview of the district, the supply budget in 1994-95 was \$2,211 less than was spent in 1990-91.

## Senate says 'sí': Hemp club official

By Heather Ficklin  
MTX STAFF WRITER

On a 7 to 3 vote, the Columbia College Cannabis Society was recognized as a club on Oct. 11, despite concerns that the club does not properly represent Columbia College.

Not all of the senators were happy with the fact that the cannabis society was recognized as a club.

"From past experiences with the cannabis society, I don't feel that they can conform to all of responsibilities of a recognized Columbia College cannabis club," said Senator Ben Caras. "I feel that they have in the past not operated in good faith, nor incorporated high standards of ethics in all phases of operation."

An example, according to Caras, is last October the society co-sponsored held a free concert for students. Two days before the concert, Joe Flaherty, the president of the cannabis club, came to the Student Senate and requested \$200 to pay for one of the bands. According to Caras, Flaherty committed to pay the band before he knew where the money was coming from, and despite a policy to require clubs to request money two weeks in advance.

Caras said the senate broke its own policy just for Flaherty. Whenever Flaherty is inconvenienced by a policy, he comes to the Senate and asks for an exemption, he said.

Not all senators agreed with Caras' view.

### Comparing Salaries Chancellors' Pay at Multi-Campus Community College Districts

District	Salary	Enrollment	Pay Per Student
Yosemite	\$125,000	19,232	\$6.50
State Center	\$126,938	25,389	\$5.00
Saddleback	\$145,000	33,600	\$4.32
Contra Costa	\$126,072	36,159	\$3.48
Foothill-DeAnza	\$128,750	47,000	\$2.74
San Diego	\$135,000	50,826	\$2.66

Source: Assoc. of California Community College Administrators

The class cuts for spring of 1996 are "in response to enrollment figures and student demand" said Joan Barrett, vice-president of instruction.

But several classes that have been cut from the spring schedule are required for majors or certificates and appear in the educational plan for graduation. Parks and Law Enforcement and Business Communications are just two of the classes cut from the upcoming spring schedule.

"We worked hard to establish a viable two-year plan, we shouldn't be cutting into it," said Instructor Ross Carkeet. "It

waters down the programs and puts students on edge to complete their requirements."

According to Nancy Rosasco, vice-president of the Board of Trustees in a recent published interview, Fisher's new salary is "still below average for chancellors who run more than one community college campus in California".

But according to an Association of California Community College Administrators 1995-96 survey, the average salary for the 18 multi-campus chancellors in the state is \$119,920.

Fisher's salary of \$125,000 makes her the sixth highest paid multi-campus chancellor in the state, and the highest paid if her salary is ranked on a dollars-per-student basis.

"The cannabis society has every right to express their views just as every club does, and see them positively because they are doing lots of good visible activities, more so than others," said Senate President Caroline Buster.

All the cannabis society wants to do is to educate the student body about the alternate uses of the cannabis plant, Flaherty said. The club does not advocate pot smoking and is just trying to serve the student body, he said.

"Democracy is about speaking out, students have a right to stand up and speak about what they believe," said Flaherty. He said the society has never before had problems with the Student Senate.

The Yosemite Community college district has 19,232 students.

Josh Bigelow, Yosemite Faculty Association Representative at Columbia, used this analogy to explain faculty anger at Fisher's windfall:

"If a child went home to the primary caregiver and asked for new shoes and was told there was not enough money in the family budget, but, by the way, the parents are going to Hawaii on vacation, how would that make the child feel?"

A full-page ad appeared in The Modesto Bee on Sunday, paid for by the MJC Academic Senate, Yosemite Faculty Association, Columbia Academic Senate and the California State Employee Association.

"We are tightening our belts, Dr. Fisher. You can do the same," the ad read. "Thank the Board for their faith in you and for the raise, but reject it. Take 3.07% like the rest of us. Lead by example. Do not show more interest in your salary than in the welfare of the students and the morale of the staff."

Re-entry student Kathy Matthews was also angered by Fisher's raise.

"Ridiculous! After her faculty requested that she refuse the raise and she said she would accept it...I am livid! I think she is irresponsible," Matthews said. "If I had the choice of voting for her, my vote would go elsewhere!"



Campus fire department second to none...  
See back page for story.

MTX Photo by Mathew Schmitt



## Student organizes violence awareness group on campus

By Connie Close  
MTX STAFF WRITER

According to University and law enforcement statistics, every 15 seconds a woman is battered. Every 5 years domestic violence kills as many women as the total number of Americans who died in the Vietnam war.

Facts such as these has prompted Columbia College student Michelle Baron to organize the Domestic Violence Awareness Group. Baron also has personal experience with abuse as a child survivor of spousal abuse and her sister has experienced severe spousal abuse.

"I don't think people understand spousal abuse" said Baron. "There is what's called a honeymoon period of about 1 1/2 years, when they (husband/boyfriend) are wonderful to live with. Then an incident of abuse occurs, followed by apologies and concern and then it (the abuse) happens again.

"A lot of abuse is not physical, there are head games that hurt just as bad," said Baron.

Baron has many projects planned for the new awareness group, including fund-raisers for local shelters, teddy bear collection, ribbon days and a

project similar to the AIDS quilt.

The Mother Lode Women's Center in Sonora explained that since the O.J. Simpson trial, local women's shelters have been full.

The center was "bombarded with calls within 2-3 hours of the verdict," said LeeAnn Hatton of the M.L.W.C. "People seem more reluctant to call authorities since the verdict," said Hatton. In essence, it seems women are

instead more inclined to seek refuge away from the abuser and rely less on authorities to intervene.

The Mother Lode Women's Center offers a Domestic Violence Support Group on Thursdays from 10-12, with free child care and open to everyone.

Anyone experiencing spousal or family abuse may contact the Center at 532-4707.

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## Talking Heads

by Mathew Schmitt

You're having a dead man's dinner party. Who are you going to invite and why?

John Candy because he could make me laugh and consume a lot of food and Sammy Davis, Jr. because he can dance.

Alyson Lee



Jesus Christ. I'd ask a lot of questions like how or what can I do to be a better person.

Tronsela Grimes



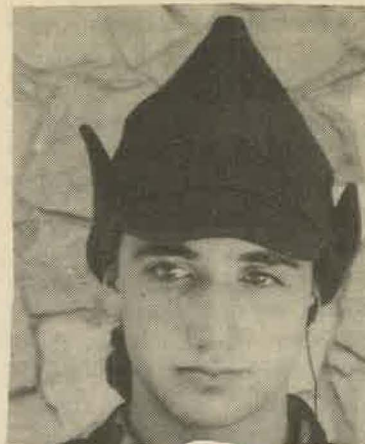
I am reluctant to answer because I would choose a woman. But I would be afraid of being accused of necrophelia.

Stanley Feingold



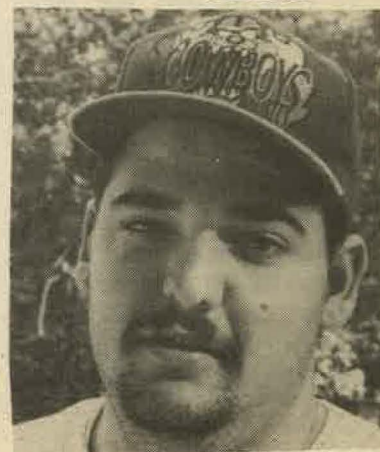
Tolken. He's a wonderful storyteller. It would be great to hear stories in person.

Orin Holland



Elvis. I'd ask if he really is dead.

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# Ancient trees, humble students

By **Connie Close**  
MTX STAFF WRITER

How many people would drive 200 miles to see 5000 year old dead trees? How about the World's Oldest living Thing -- a bristlecone pine tree over 4,600 years old aptly named Methuselah?

About 24 students of Dendrology, or the "study of trees" class left the Columbia College Campus on September 30 to travel with Instructor Ross Carkeet to the White Mountains to see these ancient trees. One student, Alan Smith, was on his

own quest to find and photograph the mighty Methuselah.

The White Mountains and the Ancient Bristlecone Pine forest is located in Inyo National Forest, northeast of Bishop, California. The trees have survived there under the most adverse conditions of limestone soils, arid land and rigors of the 10,000 foot elevation.

Carkeet has been making this trip with classes since 1968 and has missed only 3 because of sabbatical leave.

"Every year it gets better-the place grows on me...deep down

inside there is a desert rat in all of us and it's the simple and harsh ecosystem that I like." said Carkeet.

After weeks of study of many tree species, the class viewed slides, received handouts and listened to stories of past trips to the "Whites".

This trip is not for everyone, nor would everyone care about the trees. For the "odd" students of Carkeet this semester and for the past 23 or so years, it has always been a memorable experience.

One year it snowed and everyone huddled in the bus, put up barricades against the wind using the picnic tables, built a huge fire and generally cursed the day Carkeet was born. They never did get to the see the trees.

This year's class was undaunted. After a long day on the road, the group arrived at camp at about 5 p.m. Everyone quickly set up, got fires roaring and settled in for a chilly evening.

Bongo drums echoed through the hills as the stars filled the sky. By 11 p.m. everyone was in bed, perhaps wondering just

what the "ancients" would look like.

Upon rising early the next morning, the group boarded the bus for the short ride to the grove. One stop, the Sierra Vista Viewpoint, Carkeet described the geological processes that formed the Sierra Nevada Mountain ranges and the Owens Valley. Then, using a Geology pick or "G-pick", (a double pointed tool for digging around in the dirt), Carkeet proceeded to amuse the group with the "double G-pick toss" as taught to him by "Doc Rock" Tom Holst, Earth Science instructor at Columbia College.

Boarding the bus once again, the group finally arrives at the trailhead, wondering if they will see the oldest tree in the grove. The Methuselah Tree, first discovered in 1957 and the object of a National Geographic spread in the late 1950s, was something like a treasure to the group, something to be re-discovered.

While it was never the intent of the trip to find just that tree, it's rediscovery by Smith turned out to be one of the main

highlights of the trip. Smith had located a photograph of the tree and studied it at length before leaving on the trip.

"The night before we left I did not get very much sleep-wondering if I should divulge it's whereabouts if I did see it...I had spent so much time studying it's shape that I was sure I would recognize it," said Smith.

The tree at one time had a sign on it, but it was removed to ensure its safety when the grove became a botanical reserve.


"The whole reason the tree is not identified is to protect it," Smith explained.

Smith perhaps would not have slept for many nights had he not found it...and much to the surprise of the entire class the tree was identified!

"Finding the Methuselah Tree was incredible," said Gaila Johnson. "The whole trip was a bonding experience for the class and motivated me to become more involved."

Smith is humble and quiet about locating the tree, others were more outspoken.

"I felt insignificant in the face of eternity," said Eric Johnston.



**Columbine**  
TYPE & DESIGN  
(209) 533-0883

## Mountain Times

**Managing Editor:** Lara Lelis

**Photographer:** Mathew Schmitt

**Staff Reporters:** Karen Bladel, Connie Close, Heather Emerson, Heather Ficklin, Sara Green, Rebecca Hansen, Lara Lelis, Johann Newton, Mathew Schmitt, David Serpa, Dwayne Smith

**Adviser:** Steve Elliott

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**COLUMBIA COLLEGE**  
**MOUNTAIN TIMES**  
c/o Editorial or Advertising  
11600 Columbia College Drive  
Sonora, CA 95370  
Phone (209) 533-5171

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## Senate stickers = discounts

By **David Serpa**  
MTX STAFF WRITER

Students who would like to go to see Claim Jumper sports but just don't know how to float the bills for a season pass have a solution

closer than they may realize.

The Student Senate is offering activities stickers for the first time this year. With this sticker students not only get discounts on campus but off campus as well. Right now the student senate is putting

together a booklet which will tell students where they can receive discounts.

Students who decide that they would like a sticker not only will get into all Claim Jumper games free, but will also get valuable discounts at places in the community like The College House, Uptown Books, Clint's Sports, and even Parrots Ferry Brewing Co.

The money that is collected from the activities stickers will be used to help keep the senate running. Companies that are involved in sponsoring the activities stickers say that they just think it's smart business. Parrots Ferry Brewing Co. went on to say that they think of it as not only a way to help their community but also a way to advertise their own business.

The only problem is that the stickers are not being sold because basically, the students just don't know about them. But you can still get an activity sticker in the business office for only five dollars Mon. Through Fri. 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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# Program turns out firefighters

By Johann Newton  
MTX STAFF WRITER

With a trim looking crew and their fire engines poised for action, the Columbia College Fire Department stands guard at the top of the hill, ready for any emergency. It is a real, working fire department staffed by professional firefighters.

Throughout the 27-year history of the department, their commitment to service has proven invaluable to the community.

"The members of this department have earned an excellent reputation in the field," said Fire Chief George Melendrez. "What's unique about us is we're staffed by advanced students of Fire Technology. Many current leaders in the fire service got their start here. We're professional, and I'm proud of that fact."

Columbia is one of only two community colleges in the state that operates a fire department. This gives Columbia's students an edge over other fire programs in that it provides opportunity for both training and hands-on experience.

But just being enrolled here doesn't guarantee the students a position in the fire department. Along with the basic requirements of being 18 years

old with a clean driving record, applicants must also pass an oral and written exam, and a test of physical agility. It is a competitive process and only those with the highest scores are chosen.

Troy Gonzales, a burly 26-year old, explains the physical agility test, which he said is one of the toughest in the state.

"We start down by the tennis courts, and wearing full 'turn-out' gear, except for the 'bunker pants', and carrying a 50 pound hose pack, we run up a flight of stairs, then cross a 4 inch by 4 inch balance beam without falling.

"From there, we crawl under two saw horses dragging the hose pack and run up two more flights of stairs. Then, using a rope, we haul a hose bundle up a 20 foot incline and lower it back down again and clap our hands over our head.

"We then quickly remove our gear, i.e. helmet, coat and pack, and run from the tennis courts up to the fire house. Once there, we must lift a charged section of hose over three barrels without knocking them over, then, connect and disconnect a hose coupling. After that, we run into the equipment room, grab eight hose bundles from a make-shift closet, and stack them outside, then restack them in the closet. And that's the end of the test.



MTX Photo by Mathew Schmitt

"Oh, and it has to be completed within 12 minutes," Gonzales said.

In the early days of the department, hiring was done on a more casual basis according to Jack Amundsen, the first fire chief at the college.

"When I got there in '71 we had eight firefighters. Two crews of four, and they pulled 24 hour shifts. We didn't have a test for physical agility, just an oral interview with myself and the two crew leaders," Amundsen said.

From the time the school opened in 1968, until the actual fire station itself was built two years later, the campus had an

agreement with the California Department of Forestry for 24 hour fire protection.

Transportation Supervisor, Ken Lucas, said that before the fire station was completed the fire crews slept on the 'hose beds' on top of the 1953 Federal fire engine. There was also an old house trailer for the crews to use, he said.

Today, the station is staffed by three shifts of six people, including one crew leader for each shift. The department itself is run by a fire chief and an assistant.

Accommodations for the fire fighters has improved considerably. Living quarters consist of one bunk room, shared by the six on duty crew members, and a large central room with a kitchen-lounge combination.

It's the fire fighters home-away-from home, and a big part of their lives while they're on duty.

"I feel most people on campus don't have an understanding of the amount of hours they put in," said Jim Mendonsa assistant fire chief and college instructor. "They do 48-hour shifts. They're there and there committed. They can't run home and get extra socks."

Not everything is set-up for co-eds, which makes things challenging for firefighter Edie Stone, the only woman in the department. "It's like having five brothers," Stone said about sharing living quarters with the rest of the crew. "I've been harassed once for snoring, and then there's the dirty socks."

Stone, who had a well paying job as a telephone operator before coming to Columbia, wanted more than just a job. "It got to the point where I just wasn't satisfied. I wanted a job that was exciting, something with value associated with it. The fire department provided that."

Stone, with her flame red hair

tied back in a bun, has the energy and motivation that it takes to be a firefighter.

"It's not easy being a woman in the fire department," she said.

"There's a certain amount of flak you're going to catch. But it hardly matters because of the gratification you get doing the job outweighs the hassles. It's a new situation every day. It's fun and it's worth it."

Beyond the typical duties of fire fighting and emergency medical aid, the firefighters provide other services to the campus and the community. Crew leader, Brian Jones, a two year veteran of the department, explained some of those services.



Firefighter Edie Stone

MTX Photo by Mathew Schmitt

"We'll do fire prevention for the schools, talk to the kids about 'stop, drop and roll', staying low and not playing with matches. We'll let them squirt the hoses and play on the engines," said Jones. "We give portable fire extinguisher demonstrations for the culinary arts program. We provide automatic aid to the county for breathing support by replacing air cylinders at all structure fires. And we do odd jobs too, like changing the letters on the campus marquee."

They're also trained in rope rescue, according to assistant chief Mendonsa, and they carry the 'Jaws of Life' to extract victims trapped in automobiles. They are part of the mutual aid system involving the Tuolumne and Calaveras Ranger District, which is part of the State Emergency Services Division.

"The fire fighters here are real eager to learn and to do their job well," Mendonsa said. "The department is a benefit to the college and to the community."



MTX Photo by Mathew Schmitt

**WATERED DOWN** - CCFD members display their abilities as they practice on campus.