

A Fork in the Road?

David Weaver

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"When you come to a fork in the road, take it."

Yogi Berra

The Maricopa Community Colleges Governing Board recently approved asking the voters to permanently adjust the base limit used to calculate the expenditure limitations crafted in 1980. Please check out this official MCCCDC website to get/remain up to date: maricopa.edu/about/expenditure-limitation

What follows are my thoughts as a failed retiree and intermittent adjunct faculty within Maricopa. The information contained herein is intended to be non-partisan and as factual as I know how to be. We are facing a critical budgetary decision on November 5, 2024, that could seriously impact the operations of the Maricopa Community Colleges. As a newly minted math faculty (I needed the M to round out my STEAM cred), I'll approach this as a math problem...

1980, Arizona voters approved Article IX, §21 of the state constitution, which limits expenditures for Arizona community colleges. As you will see when you visit the educational website, the math formula is:

Base x FTSE x Inflationary Factor = Expenditure limit

The Base was established on what community college was like in the '70s. Our Full-Time Student Equivalents and inflation have varied over time, but the Base is set at the 1980 level. Soon after the expenditure limit became law, the formula didn't reflect the current reality, but FTSE growth allowed us to keep moving forward. I'm reminded of a Jack-in-the-Box TV commercial where Jack is telling his executives that he is going to sell the Jumbo Jack for 99 cents. His accountant says, "But, Jack, they cost us \$1.25 to make. How can we manage that?" Jack replies: "One word – Volume!"

The growth of MCCCDC enrollment kept the gap between the 1980 base and the actual base cost at bay, until it didn't. COVID-19 impacted student enrollment significantly, starting in 2020, and today's enrollment numbers, though much improved, are still below pre-2020 numbers. In general, this has required most Maricopa budgets to be reduced by around 1% for the last year or two and likely will moving forward. These budgetary adjustments are expected for organizations as large as Maricopa, but the 1980 base number and the 2024 reality can no longer coexist.



If the voters approve the ballot measure in November, MCCCDC will be able to continue providing the myriad of valuable educational experiences, services, and leadership Maricopa County residents have come to expect. If the base is reset to a more realistic number by a **Yes** vote, there won't be any college or district budget increases or other windfalls. Rather, the existing budgetary belt-tightening will continue as that is what prudent stewardship of taxpayers' money requires.

However, if voters say **No**, MCCCDC will face a gap of ~\$100 million between existing demands and the current expenditure limit. With an overall budget of more than \$1 billion, budgets would need to be chopped 8-10%. As you probably know, most college/district budget expenditures are for personnel. So, to misquote Charlton Heston from the movie "Soylent Green," "Expenditure limitation is *people!*"

It's important to note several things:

- 1. Cha-cha-cha-changes:** In 1980, educational technology included mimeograph machines and overhead projectors. Student services have expanded far beyond basic advisement and tutoring. Maricopa now plays a vital role in economic development and cultural enhancement for our communities.
- 2. Playing FTSE:** The limitation formula uses Full-Time Student Equivalents (FTSE), which assume that each student enrolls in 15 credits per semester. Even before COVID further altered enrollment patterns, most students were part time and required individual access to technology, services, etc. If a student enrolls in a single course, we don't tell them they can only access 20% of a computer or website or counseling or...
- 3. No mas:** A ballot proposition would involve **no new taxes**. Changing the limitation formula would allow MCCCDC access to existing resources.

[Arizona Revised Statute § 15-1408](#) prohibits MCCCDC employees from using public resources to attempt to influence the outcome of elections (please look at the law for the lawyer language). However, Civic Engagement has long been a hallmark of Maricopa's identity, so please inform yourself and get engaged as you so choose.

A Maricopa Renaissance?

David Weaver | Physics Faculty Emeritus | david.weaver@cg.edu

I have attended every high school reunion held for the Class of '75 at Pampa High School in Pampa, Texas. Over the years, some memories seem to get gilded; with some of us being faster on the court or playing field, better actors in school productions, and more fun in general. I think this sort of rosy retrospection is normal. Still, I fear it may affect my reflections about my 40+ years as a Maricopa faculty member.

For those of you with histories in MCCCDC going back to the 1980s, you might remember very active Task Forces and retreats to Mormon Lake with cabins and bonfires and conversations about heady educational stuff into the wee hours. We grappled with the Faculty Computer Literacy Project using the Concerns-Based Adoption Model and with making all Maricopa courses competency-based. We embraced the dawn of the Internet while writing across the curriculum, using interactive engagement strategies in our laboratories, and having the *Maricopa Center for Learning and Instruction* facilitate Dialog Days and other staff development opportunities throughout the year. Those were the days...

I **do** have rosy reflections on what some may think of as a golden age for Maricopa, and I am brimming with optimism about the future of MCCCDC. Despite budget expenditure limitation challenges (described front page in this newsletter), post-COVID changes to the interplay between students, faculty, content, modalities, technologies, etc., and the rapidly evolving demands of being a modern worker and citizen, the community college can be a big part of defining and delivering solutions for our communities. But we won't get there by trying to return to some previous time; we must forge ahead.

I returned from retirement (again!) in '23 because I saw my physics and engineering students struggling with the content, often due to a lack of appropriate math skills. I know many fine math faculty who care deeply about their subject and students, so it had to be something more systemic. I decided to teach math to see if I could bridge some gaps. While taking three graduate math courses, I taught four math classes for Phoenix College last year. Those experiences underscored the notion that a renaissance in education was called for as the challenges will require solutions beyond what we teach in certain courses.

"You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete."

- Buckminster Fuller



Ann Oehmke, the Maricopa Community College Retirees' Association board president, and I began kicking around an idea of a college-within-a-college nearly a year ago. At times, there would be nearly 200 years of Maricopa experience around the table. While there was often rosy retrospection going on, there was also a strong sense of purpose: to leave Maricopa better than we found it and help students of today get prepared to deal with the problems of today.

So, I set about drafting a proposal for a new college pilot, housed at the Phoenix Forge makerspace during off-hours. What followed was several months of writing and revisions, involving several dozen people from inside Maricopa and out, from PhDs to those who never went to college.

I set a goal to deliver the proposal to MCCCDC Chancellor Steven R. Gonzales at the end of January. The Sunday before delivery, the *Sunday Times* had a special section about the *cost of college (and is it worth it?)*. Therein was a reference to a book titled *"Whatever It Is, I'm Against It" – Resistance to Change in Higher Education* by Brian Rosenberg. I ordered the book immediately (based entirely on the title), received it the following day, devoured it, and had several conversations with its author over the next few days before submitting the proposal.

I named the proposed college **Renaissance Tech™** to be housed at the Phoenix Forge and feature project-based learning communities with disciplines integrated around students solving real-world problems. The subtitle is "The College of Tangible Knowledge" and the sub-subtitle is "A School of Undisciplined Learning." Imagine tossing some 40 transferable credits worth of various disciplines into a colossal cauldron and stirring them up to provide:

- just-in-time skills to students as they...
- address real issues in their lives...
- in 1-month chunks...
- further collected into two four-month and one two-month groupings...
- culminating in a single one-year experience and...
- a large-scale capstone project...
- along with various business/industry certifications/micro-credentials.

The Chancellor supported these ideas for a pilot college model but warned of potential budget challenges. That warning manifested when Maricopa's Chief Operating Officer, Dr. Lee Ann Bohn, alerted me about an impending existential budget crisis within MCCC. If you wish to read Version 1 (and future?) of the proposal, visit this link or use the QR code: <https://shorturl.at/sWY06>



However, not to be dissuaded, we've come up with an alternative plan that will get us through the current budget. Instead of budgeting for residential faculty level pay for the planning and execution of the entire 40-credit program beginning immediately, I will focus on teaching two courses as a learning community at the Forge this Fall. To support this pilot of a pilot, the MCCRA board will provide funding for a lab technician and to pay for needed course materials. If this effort with MAT 188 Precalculus and PHY 111 General Physics I is successful, then there are plans to follow with MAT 206 Elements of Statistics and PHY 112 General Physics II.

Ideally, Maricopa will have funding to consider innovative projects like these for the fiscal/academic year 2025/2026.

BTW, a primary target of these proposed learning communities is allied health preprofessional students (pre-med, pre-dent, pre-vet, pre-pharm). If you know of any potential candidates, direct them to the GWCC Fall schedule for MAT 188 and PHY 111 (the learning community is the only instance of each of these courses)



Back to the future?

MARICOPA *Gold*

It's YOUR Organization

The Maricopa Community Colleges Retirees' Association was created over 50 years ago to monitor and communicate issues affecting persons who have retired from the college district. Membership is open to all current or retired, full or part-time, faculty, staff, administrators and spouses. Our members are encouraged to be active and participate while having fun doing it. MCCRA membership is over 3,000.

Some of the benefits of membership are:

- keeping retirees or those planning to retire connected with the District and informed of issues
- monitoring Arizona State legislation regarding educational issues
- sponsoring pre-retirement forums
- participating in District bond and board elections
- providing student scholarships
- connecting with travel and group events

The pre-retirement forums are packed with information from representatives of the Arizona State Retirement System,

the Social Security Administration and Medicare, as well as financial planning. Even retired folks can benefit by attending so they can ask questions of the experts about senior life.

You can join MCCRA or continue your membership by paying the annual dues of \$25. Members receive the retiree newsletter, *Maricopa Gold*, two times a year to inform them of events, activities and opportunities. The newsletter is mailed to 2,375 addresses and the online version is emailed to 674. You can mark your preference on the Dues Form on page 7. Or send your email address to the organization at mccrassoc@gmail.com

The second form on page 7 provides you the path to contribute to the MCCRA Endowed Scholarship Fund. You can send a check or donate online. The balance of the fund is almost \$200,000 and the need to award scholarships or to support new ideas is growing.

You are invited to get involved! www.mccrassoc.org

Maricopa News

April is Arizona Community College Month

April 2024 is now recognized as Arizona Community College Month. Katie Hobbs, Governor of Arizona, proclaimed support for the ten Arizona community college districts, on Wednesday. The proclamation coincides with National Community College Month in April and celebrates the contributions that Arizona community colleges make daily to shaping the future of Arizona and its economy through high-quality education and training.

Arizona's ten community college districts include:

- Arizona Western College
- Central Arizona College
- Cochise College
- Coconino Community College
- Eastern Arizona College
- Maricopa Community Colleges
- Mohave Community College
- Northland Pioneer College
- Pima Community College
- Yavapai College

Governing Board Officers Approved

2024 did not bring any additions to the MCCCCD Governing Board, but a change in officers was approved in the January meeting. Susan Bitter Smith is the Board President and Dr. Tom Nerini will serve as Secretary.

New Leadership to Drive Innovation and Growth

MCCCCD is pleased to announce the selection of three new executive leaders:

- Dr. Lee Ann Bohn, Chief Operating Officer
- Dr. Heather Carter, Senior Vice Chancellor of External Affairs
- Dr. Lisa Armour, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost

"Our employees are our most valuable assets," said Chancellor Dr. Steven R. Gonzales. "We've put a great emphasis on expanding our executive leadership team, attracting those whose industry experience and knowledge align with our strategic vision."



Dr. Bohn began her role as the Chief Operating Officer in December, filling a critical position vacant since June 2021. As MCCCCD moves forward with the implementation of the systemwide strategic plan, [Excellence 2026](#), Bohn will play an integral role in ensuring strategies are incorporated into the institution's daily operations.

Paragon Award Won by MCCCCD Marketing

In January, the Marketing Department for MCCCCD was recognized with a national award for its bachelor's degree marketing campaign. The 2023 Paragon Award is given by the National Council for Marketing & Public Relations (NCMPR) annually as one of the most distinguished award programs honoring two-year community and technical colleges. It is the only national competition of its kind.

The "Start Here. Finish Here." marketing campaign was developed to support awareness of the newly released bachelor's degrees and took home the honor of being awarded best recruitment or marketing campaign. The campaign rose above 1,500 entries from 210 community colleges and marks the second consecutive year that the District, or one of its colleges, has received an award at a national level for best marketing campaign (GateWay, Mesa, 2022).

The campaign was a collaboration between several college marketing directors, and the District marketing team, and also included key stakeholders who worked on the bachelor's degree project.

Emeritus Status Awarded

The Governing Board grants Emeritus status at its monthly meetings based on nominations of recently retired faculty and executive staff.



Correction – In the last newsletter, the information about one retired faculty member was incorrect. The editor apologizes to Dr. Gray and her info is corrected below.

APRIL 2023

Dr. Bonnie Gray, Psychology, SCC

SEPTEMBER 2023

Virginia Edwards, Counseling, CGCC

Lori Liang, Fashion Merchandising & Design, MCC

Dr. Karen Reeder, Social & Behavioral Sciences, CGCC

DECEMBER 2023

Brad Bates, Chemistry, CGCC

John Jensen, Math, RSC

Dr. Wanda Tucker, Philosophy & Religious Studies, RSC

Frank Zamora, Counseling, GWCC

FEBRUARY 2024

Dr. Pusha Ramakrishna, Biology, CGCC

MARCH 2024

Roger McKinney, Art, SCC

Larry Williams, Hospitality, SCC

The Role of a Lifetime

Gordon Jesse, Theater Faculty Emeritus

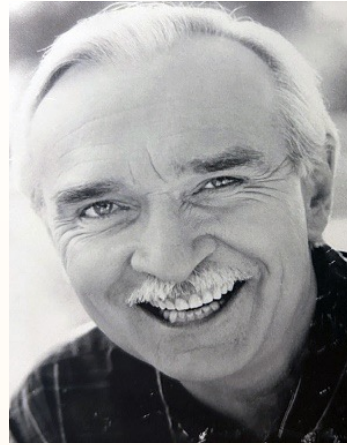
Charles Evans was the first theater arts teacher at Mesa Community College, starting in 1964, and he was the proverbial “one man show,” serving as the teacher, producer, director, designer, and technical supervisor until Lyn Dutson joined the faculty in 1969. During his time at MCC, Charles mentored countless students from his classes in speech communications, theater, and English. He served the college as chair of the Speech Communication and Theater Arts Department multiple times, as well as chair of the Art Department for two years. He was a member of the MCC Faculty Senate for many years and served a year as Faculty Senate president. In October of 2022, Charles received the MCC Hall of Fame award for his excellence in teaching and contributions to MCC and the community.

During Charles’ 30-plus years, the MCC theater department presented well over 100 productions, always with his involvement in some capacity. In the very earliest years, productions were presented in venues on and off campus. Some were at churches, some at MCC’s first temporary campus in what became the Landmark Restaurant at the SW corner of Main and Extension, Williams Air Force base, and some were even presented in mortuaries in the area.

When the new campus at Southern and Dobson opened in 1966, it originally did not include a proper theater so the only on-campus venue that could be used was the Navajo Room, a large multipurpose space used until 1970. At that time, a temporary wooden building was moved to the south side of the MCC campus and made into a small theater. It was dubbed the Theater Outback due to its location in a then-distant part of the campus. In 1978, the Maricopa Community Colleges District simultaneously built permanent theaters at PC, MCC, GCC, and SCC. At that time, the name Theater Outback was transferred to the new facility.

One highlight of Charles’ time with MCC and MCCCDC was when he produced and directed an original play written by Dr. Paul Elsner, then chancellor of the District. Chancellor Elsner had grown weary of writing journal articles about the role of community colleges nationwide, and had written a one-act play on the subject called, *Le Movement*. He wanted Charles to head the production and to use theater, dance, and music faculty from around the District to collaborate in the production. The plan was to present it the following spring at each of the colleges that had theaters. The campus performances went well and plans soon were made to take the show to the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC) annual conference in Orlando, Florida, in spring of 1986. There it was presented for about 1,000 people and was enthusiastically received.

Charles believed that to be a good teacher and advisor, he should be doing theater outside of his MCC program, thus he acted, directed, and assisted with amateur community groups such as the Mesa Little Theater, Tempe Little Theater,



December 12, 1935 – October 26, 2023

and Scottsdale’s Stagebrush Theater. In 1991, he portrayed Abraham Lincoln reciting the Gettysburg address with a Civil War reenactment group from Glendale. They eventually went on tour to England and performed in the British Royal Tournament in London’s Earl’s Court. As a part of this, he was honored to meet the Royal Family.

Throughout it all, Charles maintained an active secondary career as a working professional model and actor. He acted in scores of local and regional commercials for such entities as a supermarket chain in Hawaii, a bank in Oklahoma, Nicorette gum, and many Valley businesses. He also did a video for Toyota of America which was shown at 1,100 Toyota dealerships in the U.S. A versatile creative person, Charles also wrote plays, TV scripts, and a novel.

Charles was born in Hayes, Kansas in 1935, and attended Fort Hayes State College for his bachelor’s degree and Kansas State University for his master’s. He initially taught public school in Scott City, Kansas for five years and, while there, met and married his wife, Mary Ann, in 1959. They came to Arizona in 1962 for Charles to assume a teaching position at Mesa High School, and then in 1964, he seized the opportunity to join the fledgling Mesa Community College.

In 1994, Charles retired and stayed another five years in the district’s 49% retirement program, making a total of 35 years with MCC. In 2004, he and Mary Ann returned to Scott City to care for aging family members and, while there, he continued to work, direct, and act in community theater. Always the educator, he substitute taught in all levels of the local public schools. In 2018, Charles and Mary Ann returned to Arizona, this time to Lake Havasu City, to be near their youngest child and her new family. Charles and Mary Ann had four children and now have 14 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Charles Evans passed away on October 26, 2023 in Lake Havasu City at age 87.

The Boomer Time Machine

Ed Loughlin, MCCC Retiree

After watching the Grammy Awards, I reminisced about the rock groups from our era. Let's start with the 10 best American rock and roll bands from the 1960s. My opinion of course. I did not include any individual singers or duos. Maybe we can cover them in a future issue.

#10 Creedence Clearwater Revival – This great band would have placed higher, but a bunch of their hits came in the '70s. They are the only group on our list to never have a song reach the top of the charts. How that could happen is still a mystery. Of course, they did have five tracks that landed at #2 and scored two #1 albums. Led by John Fogerty, these guys made swamp rock a genre of its own and their songs have stood the test of time.

(PF – Personal Favorite – *Born on the Bayou*)

#9 The Mamas & The Papas – When you think of great harmonies, this group and the Beach Boys are the two that come to mind. Their first two hits (*California Dreamin'* and *Monday, Monday*) gave notice to the world about what the next few years would bring. John Phillips wrote the songs and guided this group of talented singers that included wife Michelle Phillips, Mama Cass Elliott and Denny Doherty. Mama Cass would also have a successful solo career in the early '70s before her untimely death in 1974.

(PF – *Look Through My Window*)

#8 The Lovin' Spoonful – John Sebastian led his group to incredible success in the mid '60s. With a pleasant and distinctive folk-rock sound, their tunes appealed to everyone, and they were a constant presence on the radio dial. I think *Summer in the City* was specifically written for us here in the Valley! John would go on to even more fame in the '70s by writing and singing the theme song to the TV show "Welcome Back Kotter".

(PF – *You Didn't Have to Be So Nice*)

#7 The Monkees – What began as recruiting four goofballs to do a TV show, evolved into one of the most prolific bands of the decade! Producers quickly realized that these guys were for real! Songwriters had to have a new tune ready for every episode and Davy, Peter, Micky and Mike performed them better than anyone could have imagined. In a few short years, they had compiled an impressive catalog of hits that included three chart-toppers!

(PF – *You Just May Be the One*)

#6 The Four Tops – Levi Stubbs had Motown's most powerful voice and he led the Tops to hit after hit from the mid '60s to the mid '70s. They had an amazing 24 tunes reach the top 40 and gave us two legendary dance songs with one of them topping the charts. Do you remember what they were?

(PF – *Standing in the Shadows of Love*)

#5 Smokey Robinson and the Miracles – One of the most multi-talented men in music history, when he wasn't writing hits for his own group, Smokey was writing them for

other artists at Motown, such as Mary Wells (*My Guy*) and The Temptations (*My Girl*). His poetry with lyrics is without equal and he was adept at singing both up-tempo rockers and heart-wrenching romantic ballads. There will never be another like him.

(PF – *Tracks of My Tears*)

#4 The Four Seasons – The movie and Broadway play ("Jersey Boys") allowed a new generation to appreciate this unique group. Growing up listening to Cousin Brucie play their records on WABC in New York was the most fun! With Bob Gaudio writing the hits and Frankie Valli singing them, their sound was distinctive and instantly recognizable. Their first three songs went to #1 and they were just getting started.

(PF – *Walk Like a Man*)

#3 The Temptations – A group that transcends time, they were just as successful in the '70s as they were in the '60s. With incredible voices like David Ruffin, Eddie Kendricks and Paul Williams, their hits dominated the charts for over a decade. More than a few music aficionados consider *My Girl* to be the greatest song of the decade.

(PF – *You're My Everything*)

#2 The Beach Boys – With Brian Wilson at the helm, these young men in striped shirts brought the sound of Southern California to the country and the world. Songs about surfing, cars and girls filled the airways and spoke to teenagers everywhere. Even kids in the Midwest were singing "if everybody had an ocean, across the USA."

(PF – *Don't Worry Baby*)

#1 The Supremes – Diana Ross, Mary Wilson and Florence Ballard had the hardest time scoring their first hit. In 1964, Motown founder Berry Gordy had them work with his premier songwriting team of Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Eddie Holland (Holland/Dozier/Holland) and the collaboration was magic. Their first hit came quickly (*Where Did Our Love Go*) with many more to follow. By 1969, they had scored many top 40 songs and an even dozen #1 hits. Their name is very appropriate because to this day, no other American group has even come close to that achievement.

(PF – *Reflections*)

Disagree with my list?

Let me know your picks for the greatest American groups of the decade. eloughlin1@cox.net

See you next issue!

How are you spending your time?

Maricopa Gold invites submissions from retirees about what you are doing. Share anything you think would be of interest to other retirees from the college district.

Travel
Volunteer activities
Class or workshop
Hobby
Games
Organizations or clubs
Genealogy
Poetry

Written a book
Book recommendation
Movie suggestion
Favorite music
History of ?
Senior discounts
Favorite restaurant
Excellent wine

Heath tips
Hiking or walking trail
Train trip
Favorite cruise destination
Gardening
Feel good moments
Good joke
Anything !!!

If you don't want to commit to write an article, send in basic information and we will follow up with you. The newsletter welcomes you to send in a photograph with a caption describing the activity and the participants. Email info or photos to the Maricopa Gold editor at patti.n.johnson@cgc.edu

2024-2025 Dues Renewal • Maricopa Community Colleges Retirees' Association

Name _____ Check if any info is new _____

Address _____
Street

City State Zip

Phone: Home () _____ Other () _____

Email address _____

Membership Dues are \$25/year valid from July 2024 through June 2025.

Dues \$ _____

Make check payable to: MCC Retirees' Association

SURVEY: How would you prefer to receive your Maricopa GOLD newsletter?

Mail to: Rita Covert, Treasurer • MCC Retirees' Association (MCCRA)
2411 W. 14th Street • Tempe, AZ 85281-6942

Printed/Mailed _____
Online _____

Maricopa Community Colleges Retirees' Association • Endowed Scholarship Fund

Name _____ Check if any info is new _____

Address _____
Street City State Zip

Phone: Home () _____ Other () _____

Email address _____

Retired from which college _____

You can contribute in several ways to MCCRA Endowed Scholarship Fund. You may write a check.

Mail to: Maricopa Community College Foundation
2419 West 14th Street • Tempe, AZ 85281

Or you can donate online at: mcccdf.org/

Either way, please indicate you are supporting the MCCRA Endowed Scholarship. A receipt will be sent to you.

CELEBRATING SUCCESSSES AND LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

For over 50 years,
the Maricopa Community Colleges
Retirees' Association membership has funded
scholarships for deserving students. Now, the MCCRA
Board has identified a revolutionary educational initiative
Renaissance Tech™ explained
in an article in this issue. It has
been enthusiastically endorsed by
Chancellor Steven R. Gonzales, but it
needs funding and MCCRA wants to
help. Please help us serve more
students by going to page 7
of this newsletter to renew
your membership, and
consider adding a little more.
This will guarantee continued
scholarships and help with new
initiatives.

**Let's keep
student
successes
going!!**