

The nays have it — barely

GTFF members fail strike by 14 votes

By MIKE HOPKINS
Of the Emerald

The Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation vote Thursday night was close, but the 230 "yes" tallies fell 14 short of the required two-thirds majority that would call for a strike.

Out of 307 votes cast, including 143 absentee ballots, the 136 "no"-votes included 59 persons who did not participate in the election and one blank ballot.

GTFF bylaws stipulate that at least two-thirds of the union's members must vote "yes" to ratify a strike. Irv Fletcher, executive secretary of the Lane County Labor Council and former University GTF, says that strike votes in private sector unions typically require only a simple majority of those attending the meeting for passage.

Following the rejection, the GTFFs passed a motion calling for another strike vote next Thursday at 7:30 p.m. in the Ballroom.

GTFF Pres. Charles Aker said he was "somewhat" disappointed with the election's outcome. "But I'm encouraged by the fact that 230 voted for the strike. If there's no movement by the University next week, we stand a good chance of passing it (a second strike vote) next time."

Some members who didn't take part in the election would vote for a strike if given another opportunity, Aker said.

Bill Ratteree, GTFF vice-president and chief negotiator, said the union's bargaining power is "strengthened somewhat" by the vote.

Ratteree said he expects no concessions from the University on salaries without the threat of a strike vote. Union members want the University to improve its salary offer, and perhaps scheduling another meeting to consider a strike will persuade the University to do so, Ratteree said.

The GTFF and the University have been involved in collective bargaining since October 1977. The union rejected the University's end-of-year contract offer last June 6, and sent the dispute to fact-finding.

The fact finder's subsequent report, which contains recommendations for compromise on 11 issues, agreed with the union's rationale on a few key items, particularly salary.

University Pres. William Boyd rejected the report, citing a lack of money necessary to satisfy the union's wage demands.

The GTFF executive council had recommended that union members approve a strike. According to Ratteree, a strike ratification would have been necessary to force University concessions by on the salary question.

In addition to salary only three issues--workload, reappointments and strike clause language--remain in dispute. Union negotiators say agreement on reappointments is close, but significant differences on the strike clause persist.

Aker said that the union had received a letter from Boyd Wednesday containing a revised proposal on workload. The new offer essentially takes the middle ground between the parties' present stance on workload, Aker said.

The University probably will submit the revised workload proposal at a negotiation session scheduled for 3 p.m. Tuesday.

Aker announced that absentee ballots for the Thursday strike vote meeting will be accepted at the GTFF office between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. next Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

The GTFF office is located at 868 E. 13th Ave., above the Red Rooster Barber Shop.

Teaching and research assistants are unionized at only two other American institutions, the Universities of Wisconsin and Michigan.

The Teaching Assistants Association won its first contract at Wisconsin in 1970 following a 24-day strike. A two-day work stoppage occurred there before a contract in 1975.

Marc Cohen, TAA president, reports his union's membership has rejected a number of strike proposals.

The only Michigan strike, called by the Graduate Employees Organization, lasted more than a month before the parties settled on the GEO's first contract.

Bylaws for both the TAA and the GEO contain the same requirements for strike ratification that GTFF members voted into their bylaws at a Sept. 28 meeting.



Photo by Patrick Sullivan

With the strike votes counted and discarded, GTFF Pres. Charlie Aker opens debate in which the union decided to hold another strike vote Thursday. Aker says he was disappointed with the outcome of the vote but encouraged that 230 GTFF members voted in favor of a strike. Aker said he interprets the vote as expressing confidence in the union.

Strike reaction dismays union leaders

By KELI OSBORN
Of the Emerald

GTFF Pres. Charlie Aker looked straight ahead, his face slightly flushed.

"I'm somewhat disappointed, but I'm encouraged by the fact that 230 people voted for the strike," Aker said after the Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation had fallen short of a vote approving a

strike Thursday night.

That sentiment was reflected in the remarks of a number of other graduate fellows.

Michael Rieck, a mathematics GTF, said the vote was close enough to indicate broad support for the strike. "And it's important that the University bear this in mind."

Before the balloting results were announced, Rieck said he had voted for a strike because "we (the GTFF) need to put the screws to the University."

Although the University has made some important concessions, he said, it was important to support his fellow union members. "I've been pretty middle-line all along," he explained, "but I feel strongly enough about this ... I mean, I have a good deal as a math GTF, but a lot of GTFs don't."

Biology GTF Alan Gross said the vote's closeness requires a second bal-

lot. "I do think we need to vote soon," he said. "It is important to emphasize that first vote was close."

Another grad fellow, Cora Fisher, said a strike would be a necessary lever in gaining a favorable contract for the GTF.

"If we stalk out of this room with that 'no' vote, there won't be an incentive for them (the University) to offer anything."

While reactions of GTFs ranged from dismay to encouragement, University Pres. William Boyd was satisfied with the vote's outcome.

"Of course I'm pleased that they voted not to strike at this time," Boyd said.

Boyd, however, added that whatever the outcome of the vote next Thursday, the University's position will remain unchanged.

"We'll be just as committed to reaching an agreement, and I'm optimistic that one will be reached within the next year," the president said.

today

With Halloween less than two weeks away, the University theater department is peddling dozens of old costumes it has accumulated through years of stage productions. What better way to remember your favorite play or musical than to purchase the garments of the cast? For details see Jack Hatfield's story on Page 11.

After a year beset by severe staff and financial problems, the 1977 Oregon yearbook is finally off the presses. Yearbook editor Jenni Nilson said if she had to do it over again, she wouldn't. Find out why on Page 13.