

Bee VOP: Politics inspires retired journalist to analyze the facts

Editor's note: The Bee receives more than 5,400 letters to the editor each year. A number are from regular contributors — writers we would describe as Very Opinionated Persons (VOPs). You might recognize their names. In this weekly feature, we will tell you a little more about some of them.

VOP: Eugene L. Conrotto

Occupation: Retired journalist (Desert Magazine, Palm Desert Post); retired teacher (Oakdale High School and Modesto Junior College); author ("Lost Desert Bonanzas," 1963; "Miwok Means People," 1973; "Lost Gold & Silver Mines of the Southwest," 1996; "Delmonico's Game Recipes," 1994; "Classroom Strategies for the Subversive Teacher," online only)

Bee reader: Since 1970

Contributor: First op-ed article appeared in 1984 concerning his acquaintance, Sandra Day O'Connor. Since then, at least 35 letters and eight op-ed pieces have been published.

Excerpt from recent letter: *"It is well to note the world's two most literate societies prior to World War II were Japan and Germany. This is not a vote against literacy; it is a vote against conformity, a vote to teach our children not only how to earn their daily bread, but how to enjoy each mouthful."* — June 20, 2005

Reaction to letters: "I get considerable reaction from time to time. This is not a neighborhood village anymore; you see people uptown you know. But you live in your own little bailiwick, there's not the communication."

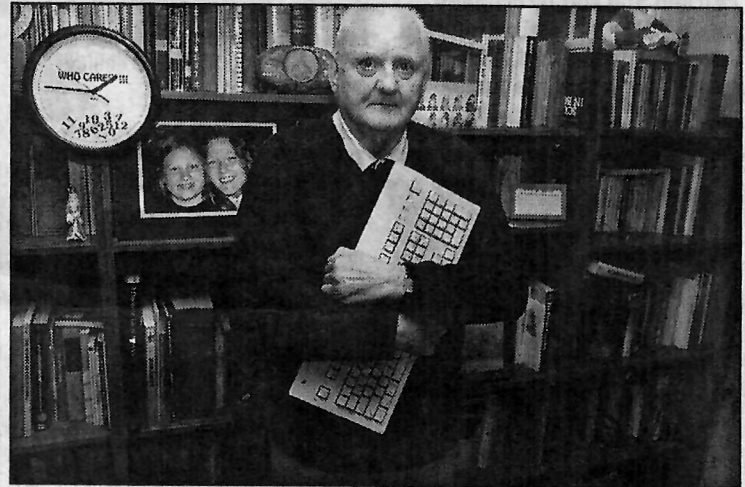
Favorite nonpolitical topics: "You've got me there; I'm a political animal."

Advice for prospective writers: "Keep it short and keep it focused; one subject. And I try to get some bite into my letters."

Family: "My family is my daughter-in-law and my two granddaughters." Conrotto's wife, only son and his brother all

"I speak the truth"

— Eugene L. Conrotto



TODD E. SWENSON/THE BEE

Writer Eugene Conrotto, a frequent contributor to The Bee's Opinions pages, clutches a keyboard in his Modesto home.

died within a short time frame three years ago. "I'd like to put in a plug for Hospice, they saved my life — they and MICL (Modesto Institute of Continued Learning). When you don't have a family anymore, my shrink told me to reach out. I reached out to Hospice and MICL and life is back on an even keel."

Education: Stanford graduate (bachelor's in sociology), California State University, Stanislaus (master's in English)

Topic that doesn't get adequate attention: "The radicalization of religions in the East and the West. ... We're going to the Crusades again; we're going to have a holy war. This is insanity. My greatest fear is that we're going back to the Dark Ages and a guy like Bush is leading the way."

THE MODESTO BEE EDITORIAL BOARD

JUDY SLY, Editor of Opinions Pages
jsly@modbee.com

MIKE DUNBAR, Associate Editor
mdunbar@modbee.com

DANIEL DAY, Managing Editor
dday@modbee.com

KIRK STOCKHAM
Visiting Editor

+

14 Nov 05 Bee