

1245

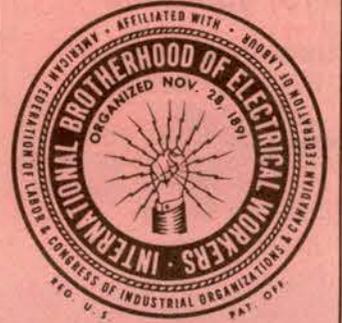
UTILITY REPORTER

Special Pull-Out Section:
The East Bay Fire

International Brotherhood
Of Electrical Workers
Local 1245, AFL-CIO
November 1991
Vol. XL No. 11



Apprentice Fred Rodriguez pauses for a moment's reflection during work in the fire zone Oct. 21. (Photo: Eric Wolfe)



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CALENDAR

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Bakersfield
Stewards Conference

November 16
Coast Valley
Pin Dinner
Monterey

November 22
Stockton
Pin Dinner

November 23
North Bay
Stewards Training
Santa Rosa

November 23
North Bay
Pin Dinner
Santa Rosa



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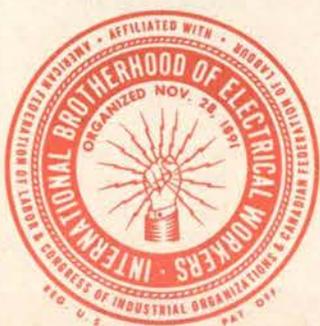
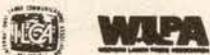
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Workers here and abroad

Rolling the union on . . .

Management rated: A survey by Wyatt Co., reported in the Wall Street Journal, indicates that a slight majority of unionized workers are satisfied with their pay, but only 30-32 percent believe management cares about worker well-being, treats them with respect or applies personnel policies fairly. Only 22-38 percent of union workers believe managers make good decisions, can be believed or operate ethically.

Thanks, now get lost: Gulf War veterans are entitled to only 13 weeks of unemployment pay, half the 26 weeks available to laid-off, private-sector workers, according to the Boston Globe. The Labor Department contends that armed forces personnel who choose not to enlist are actually quitting, and most civilians who quit are entitled to no unemployment benefits.

Style note: Apparently it is now stylish to be out of work. According to Harpers Index, Bloomingdale's is offering a new cologne called Recession. The price of a two-ounce bottle? Just \$22.50.

Talking: El Salvador's two largest national labor federations have endorsed United Nations-mediated peace talks between the government and the guerrilla movement. According to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, right-wing death squads are still directing violence at trade unionists. Between 1979 and 1986 over 5,000 trade unionists were murdered by the death squads.

NRC limits discharges: Workers at federally licensed nuclear power

plants may not be discharged or suspended solely because of a positive drug-test result until that result is confirmed by a follow-up examination, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission ruled in August. Companies licensed to construct or operate nuclear plants may not remove or suspend a worker who tests positive for drugs other than marijuana or cocaine unless other evidence indicates the worker poses a safety hazard.

Shell boycott: When Shell Oil Co.'s five-year lease to operate 13 service stations on the New Jersey turnpike ends next April the company will have to move its gas pumps elsewhere. New Jersey won't renew the contract because Shell's parent company continues to operate in South Africa and to sell fuel to the racist government for

use by its military and police. Shell Oil Co. is on the AFL-CIO boycott list for the same reason.

Time to register: Local 1245 members Norma Ricker and Danny Jackson attended the 22nd National Conference of the A. Philip Randolph Institute in Los Angeles in September. The conference focused on the need to register minorities and students to vote in the 1992 elections.

Discipline: Eighteen factory managers were taken to a rice paddy outside the Chien Bien refrigerator factory and shot to death as 500 plant workers looked on. They were accused of ignoring quality. Despite this questionable approach to workplace discipline, President Bush favors giving "most favored nation" trading status to China.



"Of course I know it was your idea, Dugdale, and I don't mind sharing the credit with you."

Polluted appointment: The Paperworkers union has objected to George Bush's appointment of International Paper Chairman John Georges to the President's Commission on Environmental Quality, according to Labor Notes. The appointment came just three weeks after IP pleaded guilty in federal court and was fined \$2.2 million for improper disposal of hazardous waste and lying to state and federal regulators.

Lula Simmons joins staff of Local 1245



Lula Simmons began work as a Local 1245 business representative on the first of October.

Simmons previously served as business representative and staff director for Service Employees Local 250 in San Francisco. She has worked as an organizer for the American Federation of Teachers and for the Service Employees International Union, where she was active

in the Justice for Janitors campaign in Atlanta.

Simmons has also served as a trainer in occupational health and safety for the Labor Occupational Health Program at the University of California-Berkeley.

Simmons began her work in the labor movement as a member of the Machinists union at Caterpillar Tractor in San Leandro in the early 1970s. When problems arose, such as people being passed over for promotions, she

decided to "step in and help out" and became a shop steward.

"It just seemed like the right thing," Simmons recalled.

As a Local 1245 business representative Simmons will work initially in the Bay Area.

"I just want to do the best possible job I can to enforce the contract and build more union involvement," said Simmons.

Meeting change

Unit 1113 (Madera) has a new meeting location: Madera Valley Inn, 317 N. "G" Street, Madera, Ca. The meeting time and dates remain the same.

Vetoes hurt working people

Labor bills die on Gov. Wilson's desk

Working people will pay the price for Gov. Wilson's hardcore opposition to legislation advocated by organized labor. The bills listed below were considered important enough by legislators to pass them, but Gov. Wilson killed them with vetoes.

VETOED:

EMF education (SB 920): Would have required the Public Utilities Commission and the Department of Health Services to continue research, training and public education programs concerning potential health risks associated with exposure to electric and magnetic fields.

12-hour day ban (SB 956): Would have banned 12-hour days without overtime pay and restored the eight-hour day as the standard in California.

Sexual harassment (SB 827): Would have authorized compensatory damages for sexual harassment.

Fetal injury (AB 489): Would have undone a court decision that cut off any compensatory damages for fetuses of pregnant women injured on the job.

Family support (AB 982): Would have established family support and resource programs in state-subsidized child development programs and in elementary schools.

Jobless pay (AB 1095): Would have added 13 weeks of jobless pay eligibility for many of the more than 40,000 Californians who are exhausting their 26 weeks of unemployment insurance every month.

Child care (SB 583): The child care master plan legislation.

Health care workers (SB 54): Would have established presumption of eligibility for workers' compensation benefits when health care workers contract AIDS, hepatitis or other bloodborne diseases after being exposed on the job through mishaps such as needle sticks.

Prevailing wage loophole (SB 1017): Would have plugged a loophole in prevailing wage regulations by applying wage and apprenticeship regulations to all work for which a contractor's license is required in connection with a public works project.

Prevailing wage certification (AB 66): Would have required contractors completing public works projects to certify, under penalty of perjury,

that they had paid prevailing wages.

Immigrant education (SB 112): Would have funded special education for new immigrants.

Prevailing wage enforcement (SB 523): Would have mandated enforcement of prevailing wage provisions on contracts for projects funded by industrial development bonds.

Standards for flaggers (AB 581): Would have required Cal-OSHA to set standards governing training and use of "flaggers" who direct traffic at highway and street construction sites.

Employment discrimination (AB 101): Would have banned discrimination in employment against gays and lesbians.

Union liability (SB 486): Would have relieved unions of liability for unauthorized actions of individual members.

Child care training (SB 1001): Would have set up funding procedures for training child care facility workers.

Pay in lieu of notice (SB 1035): Would have allowed workers fired without notice in plant closures to retain their pay in lieu of notice without surrendering unemployment benefits.

Credit reports (SB 473): Would have restricted use of credit reports by employers who are checking on their employees or screening potential employees.

Genetic screening (AB 1888): Would have prohibited employers from discriminating in employment practices based on the genetic characteristics of job seekers or current employees.

English-only rules (SB 834): Would have prohibited employers from imposing English-only rules on their workers unless they can demonstrate a business necessity.

Firefighters (SB 838): Would restore part of the workers' comp presumption for firefighters which had been weakened by a prior court decision.

PUC decisions (SB 1041): Would have allowed Public Utilities Commission decisions to be appealed to Courts of Appeal instead of the state Supreme Court.

Forest compromise (AB 860): The compromise for-

est protection legislation supported by labor, environmentalists and much of the timber industry.

SIGNED

Family leave (AB 77): Provides workers with up to 16 weeks of unpaid leave in a two-year period to care for a sick child, spouse or parent or to give birth or adopt a child.

OSHA fines (AB 1545): Provides large increase in fines for employers who violate Cal-OSHA workplace safety and health standards.

Workers compensation (AB 1576): Puts teeth into the workers' compensation law by requiring employers to show proof that they are insured when they take out or renew business licenses.

Apprentice program fees (AB 64): Repeals authority of the director of Industrial Relation to impose fees upon sponsors of apprenticeship training programs and appropriates special fund money to help support the apprenticeship program.

Contractor cheating (AB 1754): Allows the next lowest bidder on a public works contract to sue the successful contractor for damages if the contractor got the bid by cheating on unemployment insurance and workers' comp benefit premiums.

Minimum wage violations (SB 955): Authorizes damages equal to wages owed in addition to recovery of pay in minimum wage violations.

Injured workers' vacation pay (AB 540): Authorizes workers to collect accrued vacation without forfeiting state disability insurance benefits when they are idled by injuries or illnesses not related to the job.

Contractor licenses (AB 318): Requires growers to verify that labor contractors are licensed and makes the growers liable for workers' wages when unlicensed contractors fail to pay.

Eviction protection (AB 923): Extends protections against retaliatory evictions to all farm labor camps, not just camps with permanent housing.

Lead poisoning (SB 240): Requires a fee be paid by employers involved in industries which present a potential source of occupational lead poisoning. Fee would go towards maintaining lead poisoning prevention program.

(Note: Descriptions in some cases reflect original language of bills. In some cases the bills may have been amended before going to the governor.)

Two dozen reasons to become involved

Jack McNally, IBEW 1245 Business Manager

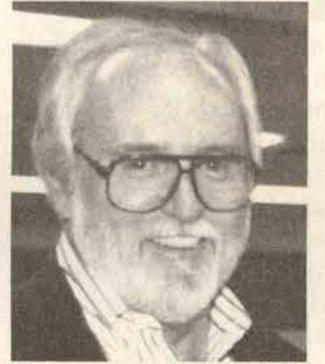
This fall Gov. Pete Wilson gave us two dozen reasons why working people should become more involved in the political process.

That's how many bills backed by labor made it through the state legislature, only to die from a Wilson veto. The vetoes provide a vivid reminder of the price Californians are paying for electing this anti-worker governor. (See list of vetoed bills elsewhere on this page).

Of special interest to Local 1245 members is the governor's veto of SB 920, the bill concerning electric and magnetic fields. This bill would have directed the Department of Health Services to conduct EMF education and training workshops for utilities, local health officials, employee groups, school groups and others concerned about exposure to EMF.

While there is not yet conclusive proof that exposure to EMF is dangerous, there are certainly enough warning signs to make us want to be cautious and to investigate further. SB 920 would have directed the Public Utilities Commission to identify measures to implement an interim policy of "prudent avoidance" of exposure to EMF. The compliance cost for utilities would have been relatively small, which perhaps explains why no utilities testified against the bill during committee hearings.

If EMF turns out to pose a health hazard, millions of people will be affected. None will be affected more than the members of Local 1245 who work around power lines, in power stations or at VDT terminals. Our union has been working jointly with PG&E for over a year to assess the possible dan-



gers, but Wilson chose to turn his back on those who may be at risk.

Wilson's other vetoes show a similar disregard for working people. He vetoed a bill that would have extended jobless benefits to unemployed workers in California, a state hit harder than most by the recession.

He vetoed a major bill on child care that would have greatly helped the state's working parents. He vetoed numerous bills designed to protect California's prevailing wage laws, and he vetoed other bills designed to protect against employment discrimination.

Thanks to vigorous lobbying by the California Labor Federation, a few good labor bills were signed by the governor, including the family leave bill.

But the final tally of labor bills makes it clear that Gov. Wilson is not interested in the health and safety, let alone the standard of living, of California workers. Most of these bills would have been signed by Wilson's labor-backed opponent in last year's election.

In coming months, our union will be gearing up its Power Pac program. If we want people in office who will care about our concerns and our needs, it's going to be up to all of us to help get them elected.

Delegates consider 75 resolutions

Convention celebrates IBEW's 100th birthday

It was part spectacle, part business, and 100 percent celebration when thousands of union members gathered in St. Louis for the 100th Anniversary convention of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers on Oct. 5-11.

On the weekend before the start of business, delegates joined in a massive parade through St. Louis to the towering Arch on the bank of the mighty Mississippi, filling the air with the music of the fife and drum as well as marching bands. Following the parade, over 15,000 celebrants crammed into the ice hockey arena, where they were treated to a dramatic re-enactment of the founding of the union, followed by a laser light show and a concert by singer Kenny Rogers.

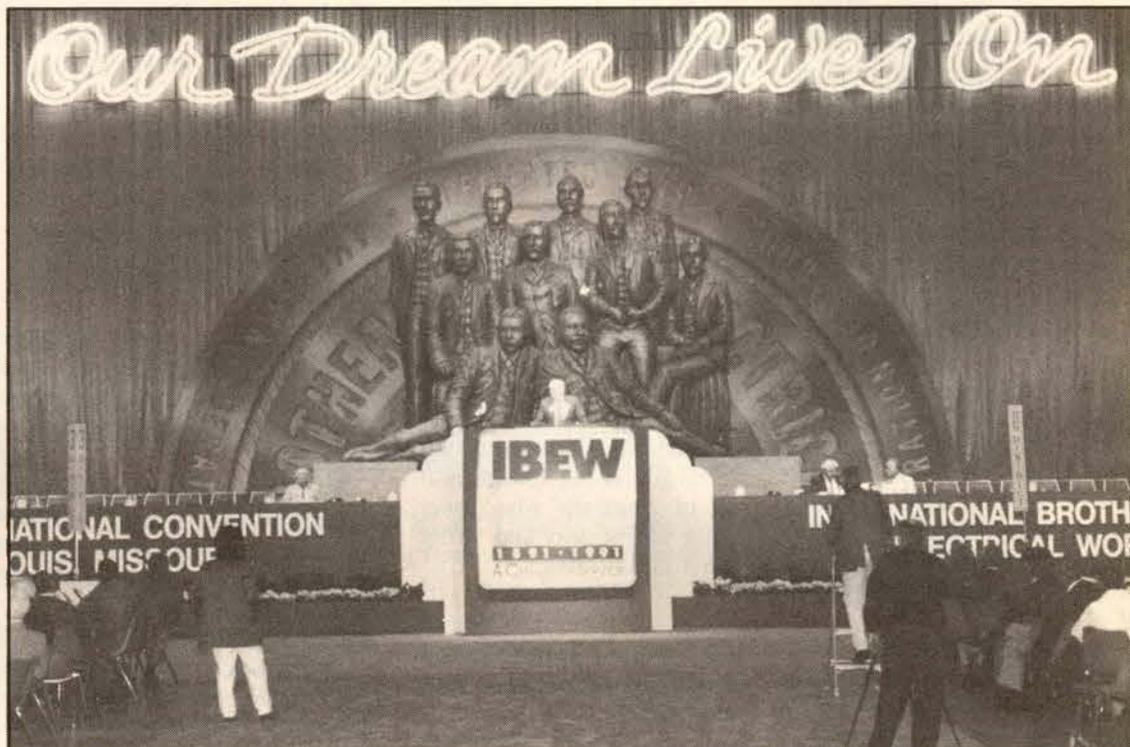
When the delegates settled down to business on Monday, there was plenty of work waiting for them. According to Local 1245 Business Man-

ager Jack McNally, who served as chairman of the resolutions committee, the convention considered a total of 75 resolutions.

Two resolutions were of particular interest to members of Local 1245.

Along with several other locals, Local 1245 put forward a resolution calling for the establishment of a Minority Affairs department at the International level. Delegates in support of this action argued that such a step would be in keeping with organized labor's long history of supporting economic and social justice. Proponents also noted that the fastest-growing part of the US workforce in the current decade will consist of ethnic minorities, women and immigrants, and that a Minority Affairs department could assist in organizing such workers.

Local 1245 delegates Kathy Tindall, Barbara Symons, and Dorothy Fortier all took the floor to support the crea-



Local 1245 Business Manager Jack McNally, chairman of the Resolutions Committee, addresses the 100th Anniversary convention in St. Louis, Mo.

tion of a new department or restructuring an existing department to give increased attention to minority affairs. The resolution was adopted.

In another resolution, Local 1245 called for reassessing the practice of splitting Outside Line jurisdictions.

There are approximately 40 local unions with split Outside jurisdictions in common geographic areas. These jurisdictions generally consist of Outside work let by utilities and Outside work let by private concerns, commonly called commercial and industrial.

The splitting of jurisdictions, according to the Local 1245 resolution, sometimes creates a situation where a lineman seeking work in his/her residence area may be classified as Group II for some Outside work and Group I for other Outside work, which promotes among these linemen a sense of being second class members.

Speaking in favor of the resolution was Local 1245 delegate Lee Thomas from Outside Line Construction, who argued that ending split jurisdictions would help organizing efforts.

The convention ultimately adopted the resolution, which calls on the International President to "investigate the locals involved in split Outside Branch jurisdiction" to determine "whether

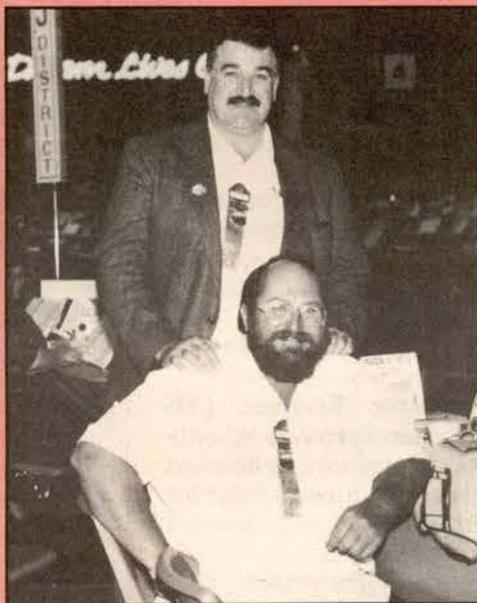
or not there is an overriding need to continue the split Outside Branch jurisdiction arrangement." The resolution calls on the International President to "eliminate the split" unless there is a preponderance of evidence warranting no change.

Also representing Local 1245 at the convention were Local President Howard Stieffer, Perry Zimmerman, Jim McCauley, Debbie Mazzanti, Sam Tamimi, Mickey Harrington, Ron Blakemore, Lisa Morrison, Anna Gomez, and Bob Choate.

The convention confronted a serious financial issue: the cost of running the IBEW has outstripped the union's ability to pay its bills. While members have enjoyed one of the lowest per capita taxes of any major union in North America, a budget prepared by the International Secretary and reviewed by an outside auditor confirmed that a per capita increase would be necessary if the union was to have adequate financing for serving the membership through the next five years.

The convention approved a resolution calling for a \$1 per capita increase effective Jan. 1, 1992, and another \$1 increase effective Jan. 1, 1994.

Convention snapshots



Above, Local 1245 delegates Bob Choate and President Howard Stieffer on the convention floor. At left, Local 1245 delegates Sam Tamimi and Wilma Arjona in front of the PG&E/Local 1245 exhibit.



Members celebrate Local's 50th anniversary

Local 1245 members were joined by their families and friends in San Jose on Sept. 21 in celebrating the local union's 50th anniversary.

The reception, the fifth in a series of celebrations around the union's jurisdiction, offered active members and retirees an opportunity to share memories and reflect on the contribution that Local 1245 has made over the years in uplifting their working conditions and living standards. Exhibits at the reception, held at the LaBaron Hotel, featured photographs of electrical workers dating back to the early part of the 20th century, copies of early contracts, and the original union charter of 1941, among other memorabilia.

A video program provided an overview of Local 1245 today, while another video tape provided by member Warren Burr featured rare film

footage of PG&E's first hot sticking school, held at Station B in San Jose.

"It's pretty amazing some of the stories you hear when you bring this many members together in one place, particularly some of the retirees," said Business Manager Jack McNally. "You really get an appreciation of how big an effort was put into organizing this union and building it into what it is today."

Local 1245 was originally chartered in 1941 by the IBEW to organize PG&E. A competing effort was conducted by members of a CIO union, the Utility Workers Organizing Committee. In 1951 the IBEW was able to win an election on the entire PG&E system with the assistance of a large group of CIO members who defected to the IBEW.

Today Local 1245 represents 20,000 people working for public as well as private-sector employers.



Exchanging stories with Business Manager Jack McNally (left) are Dorwin Robinson (middle) and Gary van Horne.



From left: Larry Vilen, 40-year union member, retired from PG&E-Belmont; Joann Tablizo; Leo Tablizo, a union member since 1969.



Joseph Laureano, accompanied by his wife at the reception, retired from General Office at PG&E in 1977. Laureano says he "got plenty of help from the union." (Photos: Eric Wolfe)

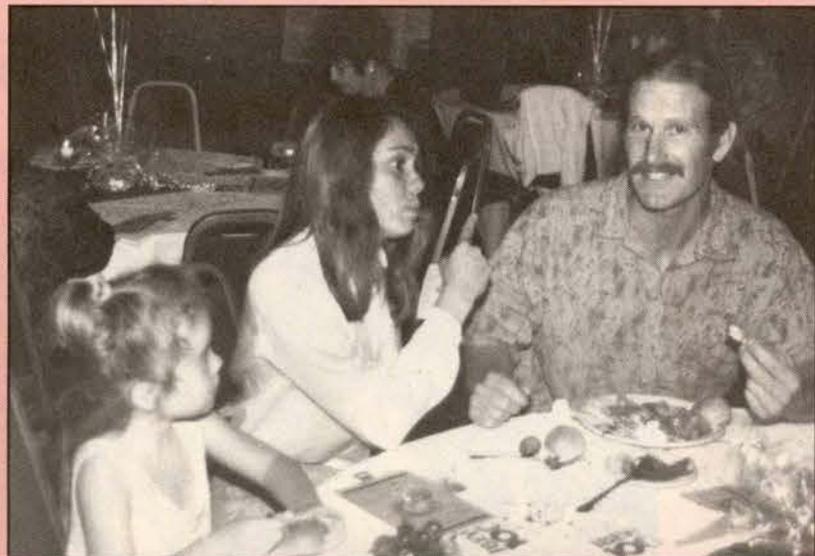
"People were so happy to see us back then they'd kiss us because we would get their gas connected up. Now they complain about the noise."

Larry Vilen, speaking about the difference between 1950s and now

"The only time we get that respect now was after the earthquake."

Leo Tablizo, PGE-Belmont

Union.



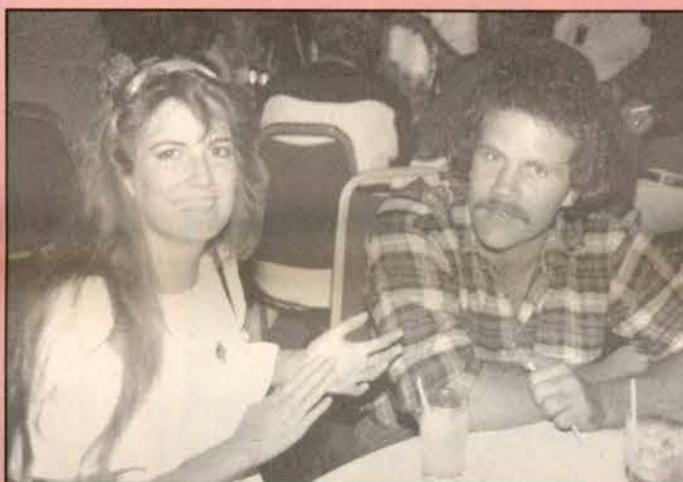
Bill Elliott, a three-year union member employed by Davey Tree, with wife, Mona, and daughter, Tara.



Richard Tan (left), a three-year union member in the City of Oakland electric department, and Harold Blethen, a union member at PG&E since 1986.

“Guys don’t go to the meetings. They say they don’t get anything out of it. But you’ve got to go if you want it to make a difference. Getting involved, that’s what it’s all about, isn’t it?”

*Mark Cullen, Davey Tree
12-year union member*



Cathy and Mark Cullen.



From left: Lori Bor... (teachers union) at... lineman and union n... PG&E bought out Co... for PG&E GC; and F...



Ounice Rax (right), lead pressure operator in San Francisco, has been at PG&E since 1946. He is joined by (from left) Agnes Pinson, guest; Ann Rax, wife; and Herman Pinson, guest. Rax retires in April of next year.



From left: Alice Lavoie; Pete Lavoie, at PG&E Miller; Bob Standley, at PG&E since 1965; Ed PG&E since 1954; and Richard Cox, guest.

Union. . .

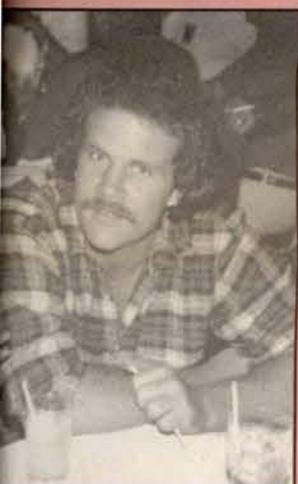


Richard Tan (left), a three-year union member in the City of Oakland electric department, and Harold Blethen, a union member at PG&E since 1986.



From left: Donna Gutierrez; Rick Gutierrez, a two-year union member at MPTV, Monterey; John Edwards, PG&E senior meterman in San Jose, 25 years in union, with daughter Debbie Edwards.

and proud of it!



From left: Lori Bonfante; Gary Bonfante, PG&E GC-Gas, Felton; Linda Retterath, ACE (teachers union) at Mission College in Santa Clara; Jerome Retterath, City of Santa Clara lineman and union member since 1974; Andrew Tyra Jr., retired, came to PG&E in 1954 when PG&E bought out Coast Counties Gas & Electric; Walt Rhinehart, retired, began work in 1951 for PG&E GC; and Ron Thomas, PG&E substation electrician in Santa Cruz.



From left: brother K members Hospital V



From left: Alice Lavoie; Pete Lavoie, at PG&E since 1959; Bev Miller; Bob Standley, at PG&E since 1965; Eddie Brighter, at PG&E since 1954; and Richard Cox, guest.

“Without the union you wouldn’t get the benefits you get now.”

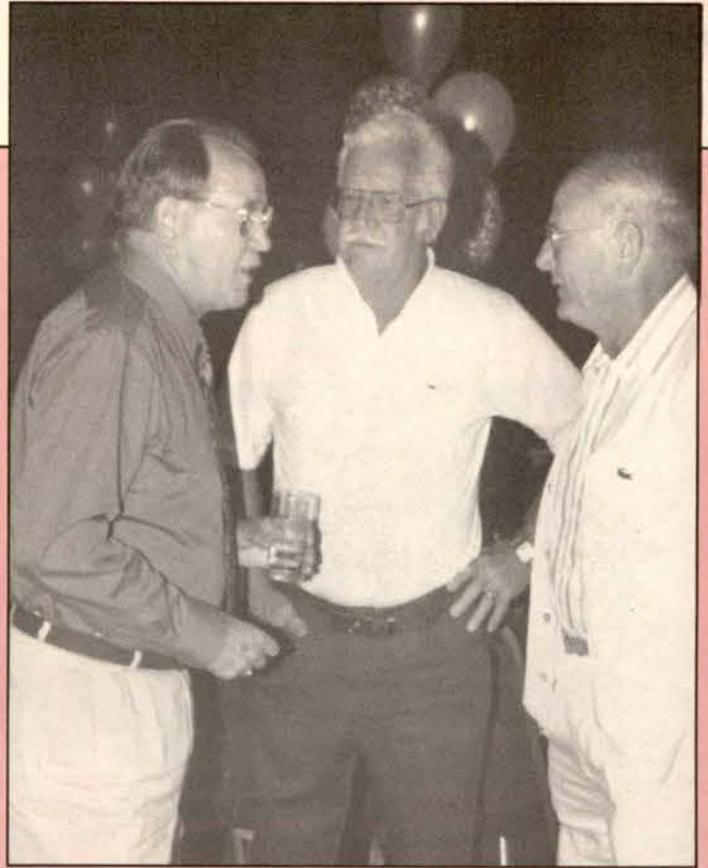
*John Arnold, retired
PG&E gas serviceman, Belmont*



From left: June Vilen, member Larry Vilen; 1957, retired from PG

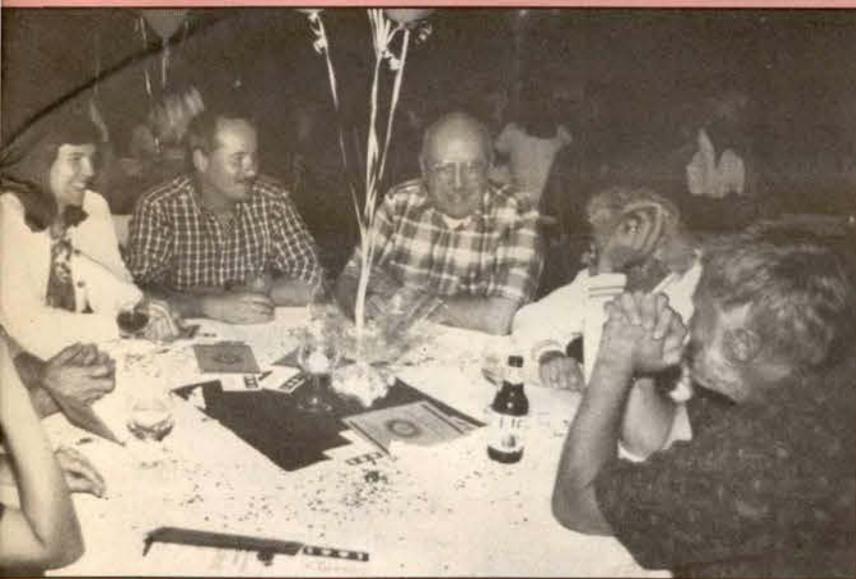


From left: Donna Gutierrez; Rick Gutierrez, a two-year union member at MPTV, Monterey; John Edwards, PG&E senior meterman in San Jose, 25 years in union, with daughter Debbie Edwards.



Retired union members from PG&E trading stories are, from left: Jack Hill, a former Local 1245 business representative, Rick Stearns, and Warren Burr.

and proud of it!



ante; Gary Bonfante, PG&E GC-Gas, Felton; Linda Retterath, ACE Mission College in Santa Clara; Jerome Retterath, City of Santa Clara member since 1974; Andrew Tyra Jr., retired, came to PG&E in 1954 when West Counties Gas & Electric; Walt Rhinehart, retired, began work in 1951 on Thomas, PG&E substation electrician in Santa Cruz.



From left: Norb Stanke, PG&E-Edenvale and his brother Ken Stanke, PG&E-Cupertino, both union members since 1966; wives Helen, member of Hospital Workers, and Phyllis, member of AFSCME.



since 1959; Bev
die Brighter, at

**“Without the union you
wouldn’t get the benefits
you get now.”**

*John Arnold, retired
PG&E gas serviceman, Belmont*



From left: June Vilen, former member of CSEA and wife of retired Local 1245 member Larry Vilen; Dorothy Arnold; and John Arnold, union member since 1957, retired from PG&E last year.



RUBBER GLOVING CLASS

Forty-two members of Local 1245 participated in the first PG&E rubber gloving training class. The five-day class was conducted at the Livermore rubber gloving school Sept. 16-20. Attending were, back row, from left: George Baker, Alfo Baldwin, Coy Baldwin, Ron Blakemore, Russel Brutcher, Edwin Busbee, Ron Colvin, Loran Davis, Michael Dolcini, Patrick Donlan. Fourth row, from left: EME Eisenga, Edward Fabela, Jack Farnham, Joseph Fernandez, Albert Fisher, Russell Grass, William Jennings, Paul Langum, Lanny Larsen, Robert Lees. Third row, from left: Donald MacAulay, Randy Maddex, Aaron Makaiwi, Kenneth McCoy, Dow McCurdy, Thomas McLane, Richard McPhedran, Renwick Moniz, Dan Neale, George Norman. Second row, from left: Larry Packer, Gerald Pittore, Jack Putman, Martti Rauhala, Richard Selberg, Richard Sims, Mike Sloan, Julius Sotelo, Scott Stalder, Chauncey Treadwell. Front row, from left: Lloyd Williams, Walter Williams, and instructors Ralph Chavez, Art Cordoba, Tony Espinoza, John Gonzales, Steve Manfre, and Bob Spencer.

Two members receive IBEW Life-Saving Awards

Local 1245 members Thomas Keys and Raymond Behill were awarded the IBEW Life Saving Award for their efforts in saving the life of a woman trapped in a burning house in 1990.

Bars on the windows and doors prevented the woman from leaving the house. Keys attempted to gain entry by cutting through bars in the back of the house, while Behill attempted to enter from the front.

Behill reached the woman first and carried her to safety. Both men, employed in PG&E's Kern Division, were awarded the IBEW Life Saving Award.

In a letter commending the members' action, IBEW International President J. J. Barry wrote:

"It is with great pleasure that the IBEW sends ... two Life-Saving Award Plaques to

be presented to Brothers Raymond Behill and Thomas Keys."

Barry said the two men "performed the greatest service any person can perform on this earth, the saving of a human life."



LIFE SAVING AWARD
Thomas Keys shows the IBEW Life Saving Award he received for his efforts in saving this woman from a burning house.



SMUD RODEO CONTESTANTS

Representing the Sacramento Municipal Utility District in the National Lineman's Rodeo in St. Louis in September were Local 1245 members (back row, from left) Frank Misiewicz, Stanley Gee, Norbert Booth, Rick Harper and Jim Baird; middle row: Max Fuentes, Scott Hylton, Ted Warner, Ron Young, Jim Wilhelm; front row: Mike Bazil, Mike Fisher.

General Office holiday project sponsored by PG&E, union

Employees at Pacific Gas & Electric's General Office in San Francisco are sponsoring a project to help those in need during the holiday season.

Coordinated by the Labor-Management Committee representing San Francisco General Office departments, the project will work with San Francisco shelters serving the needs of homeless families and/or children. During the weeks between Nov. 18 and Dec. 10, General Office employees will be given the chance to donate clothing (new and like-new), new toys for children, and items of personal care for both adult and children.

Containers for collecting the items will be placed in locations throughout the General Office complex.

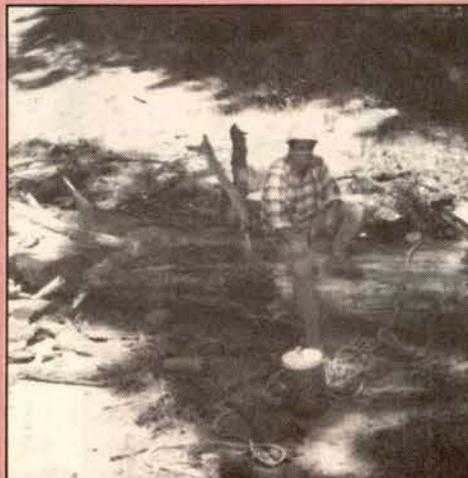
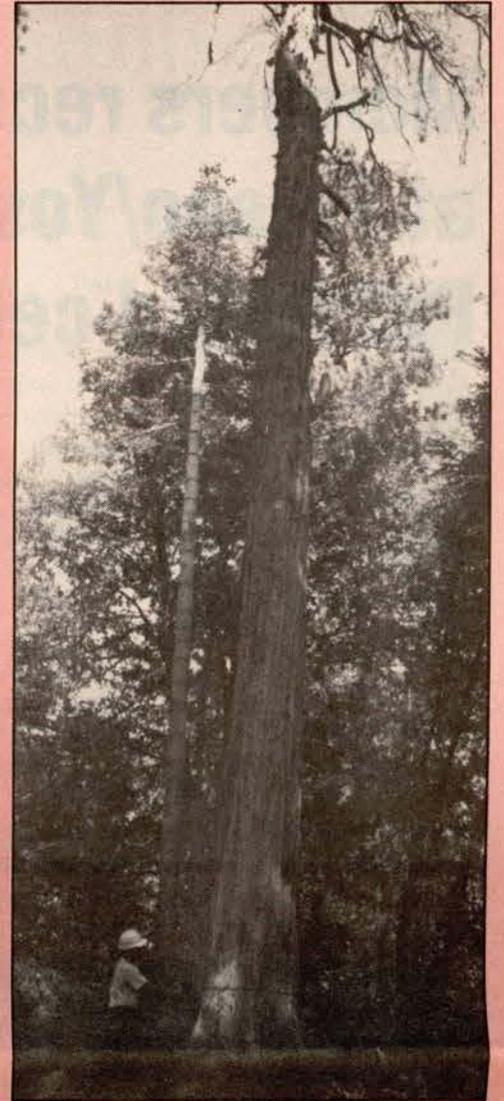
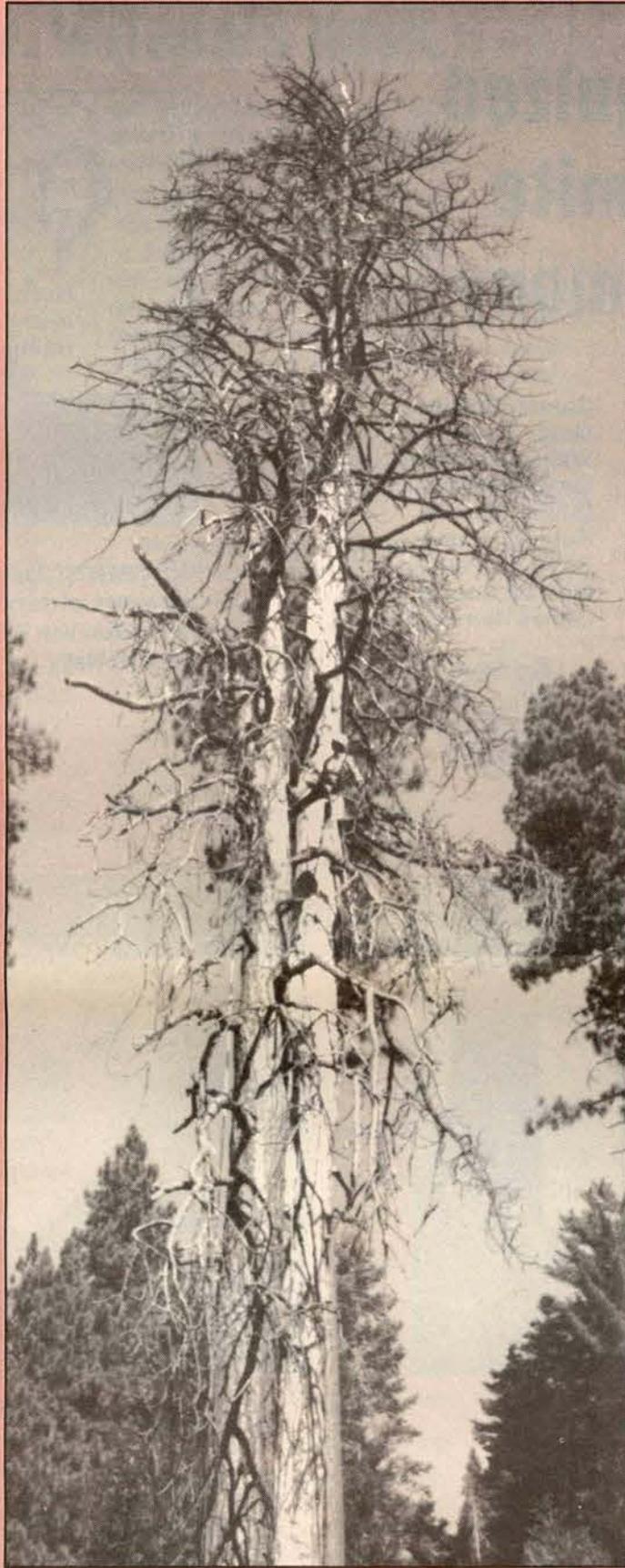
A kickoff for the holiday project will be held Nov. 12.

Sequoia Forest line clearance

Foreman Alan Finocchio (bottom center) and climber Ralph Ramos (bottom left) were at work for Davey Tree the week of September 16 in Sequoia National Forest, removing a cedar and two Ponderosa pines that could have fallen onto nearby power lines.

Part of the tree-trimmers' craft is putting ropes on the trees to make sure they fall away from the power line.

Trimming trees like this, ranging up to 200 feet tall, is a specialized art. "It's not like just going out and mowing a lawn," says Finocchio, who notes that California "has some of the most outrageous trees in the world."



Members recognized at Fresno/Yosemite Pin Award ceremony

45 years

Jack Morrill

35 years

Robert Cederlof

30 years

Fred Barry
Billy Marrison

25 years

Wally Vandergrift
Jerry Red

Bob Pickering

J. D. Perez

Bobby Midkiff

Ralph Hatcher

Jim Gollihar

Alfred Garnica

Norm Covert

P. A. Castaneda

Anthony Borba

T. L. Boggs

Edward Basgall

20 years

Frances Zwinge

Richard Camarillo Jr.

Carvel Williams

Geary Weaver

William Wadman

Larry Sebilian

Daniel Pronold

Robert Perkins

Salvador Perales

Michael Koontz

James Herrera Jr.



45 years: Jack Morrill displays special plaque honoring his years of service. He is joined by (from left) Business Reps. Ron Van Dyke, Frank Hutchins and Business Manager Jack McNally.



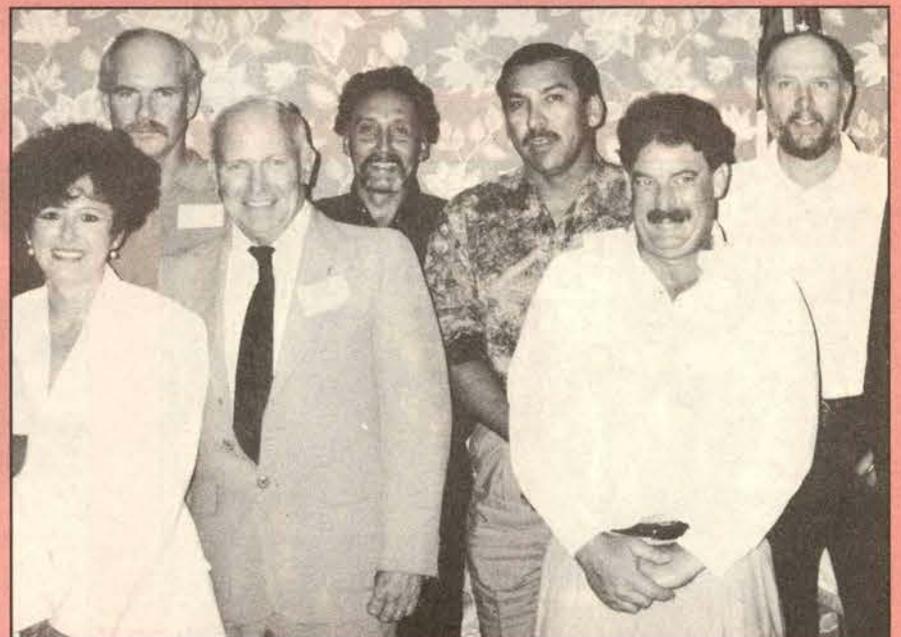
30 years



25 years



20 years



Conferences prepare stewards for union duties

The shop steward is the union's representative on the job site. When an injustice to a member occurs, it is often the shop steward who deals with the situation first. To help Local 1245 shop stewards

stay current on a wide variety of issues—from grievance handling to drug testing to political action—the union continues its on-going program of shop steward conferences. Listed below are some of the stew-

ards who attended. Because these lists are compiled from conference sign-in sheets (where signatures are sometimes illegible), some members who attended the conference may not be listed here.



Business Manager Jack McNally addresses stewards in Chico.

San Jose & Coast Valleys September 21

- Gregg King
- James Vermilyer
- Daryl Jack Turner
- Robert E. Dailey
- John Coates
- G. Hernandez
- Art Garza
- B. Saunders
- Louisa Donat
- Phyllis Hayes
- Bill Elliott

- Dan Penry
- Billy Wallace
- Lee Covington
- Norman Adamson
- Danny Jackson
- L. J. Carter
- Luis J. Sabala
- Bill Cowden
- David Armstrong
- Skip Harris
- Joe Kropholler
- James H. Basgall
- Rodney Dyer

- John Shertenlieb
- Bill Howard
- Bill Eldridge
- Daniel Pronold
- Allen C. Simms
- Wayne Cook
- Linda Jurado
- Tess Bock
- Anthony Norman



Stockton September 7

- Litha Saunders
- Judie Szostak
- Grover Day
- Gary Outlaw
- James Clemons
- Pat Nickeson
- William Hosford
- Olivia Mercado
- Mike Johnson
- James R. Clifton
- Jim Lynn
- Richard Brazil
- S. Leroy Adams
- Stanley Teausant

Outside Line August 17

- Bill Soderquist
- Ken Krampeter
- Donald Ankney
- Lars Harbeson
- Robert A. Padilla
- James R. Rowley
- Tube Dudley
- Louis Hogan
- R. Peterson
- Jeff Johnstone



Shop stewards at conference in Chico..

East Bay September 21

- Tom D. S. Young
- Della Underwood
- Guy George
- Kenneth C. Walsh
- Tommy J. Warren
- Rich Silva
- Larry Magnoli
- Anna Gomez
- George Adas
- David E. Meier
- Carl Makarezyk
- Donald Murry
- Jim Dorman
- Martha Bowman
- Felicia Mack
- John Roberts
- Clifton E. Jackson
- William C. Smith
- Barbara Cook
- Dan Ward
- Pat Collins
- Doris Pierce
- Donna Franklin

Fresno/Yosemite August 17

- Ed Dwyer
- Arthur M. Went
- Dan Mayo
- Arthur Verret
- Linda Jurado



Shop stewards at conference in Fresno.

(Nevada, continued)

- Dale Huntsman
- Chuck Farlow
- Doug Smith
- Louis Johnson
- Jack Bardick
- Gloria Miller
- Mike Grimm
- Percy Stahl

San Francisco/ General Office June 29

- Larry Lynch
- Leo Tablizo
- Nagaraja Rao
- Millie Phillips
- Dan Flores
- MayMay Gong
- Mike Crater
- James Horton
- Linda Botic
- Jerry Totes
- Jerry Takeuchi
- Robert G. Olague
- Larry Dickinson
- Shirley Henry
- Julio Mejia
- John Sunseri
- Brad Schuback
- Rudy Woodford
- Paul Sydow
- Eugene Van Ness
- Daniel Conway
- Bernard Smallwood

Chico August 24

- Harvey Iness
- Michael Oelrichs
- Arnold Streetman
- Joseph Belle
- Michael W. Brady
- Dennis Goodman
- William Tomlinson
- Ron Cochran
- Monte Nelson
- Margie Torres
- Steve Chapman
- JoAnn Villalovos
- Pat Thomas
- Arlene Filter
- Bonnie Lee Grimes



Shop stewards at Golden Gate region training conference.

Nevada June 29

- Stephanie Baber
- Tom Davis
- Bud Gray
- Don Moler
- Joel Cote
- Zenobia Foster
- Jan Stabile
- Steven Urrutia
- Toni VanLandingham
- Nancy Miraglia
- Craig Miraglia
- Earl D. Jones
- Sondra Reynolds
- Valerie Wiens
- Jim Salazar
- Mary Janet Peterson

Union members honored at East Bay Pin Dinner

On June 14 Local 1245 members in the East Bay were honored for their years of service to the union. Members who made reservations for the dinner are listed below. Names may not necessarily match up to the photos because some who made reservations were unable to attend or were not present for the photo.

40 years

Gene Wilson

35 years

George Manriquez
Dwight Haas

John Freitas
David Delee
Mac Davis
Doug Crowther

30 years

Wesley Vigars
David Sutton
Mike Silva
Patrick Gilmore
Herman Cordes Jr.
R. W. Clark
Finlay Boag
R. A. Bermel
John Anderson

25 years

Robert Willian
G. C. Taylor
Frank Rodriguez
James Paisano

Walter Mims
James Isham
Gerald Howell
Robert Hooper
Ronald Golino
Leroy Foster
Anthony Dunleavy
J. G. Caldera
Charles D. Bartch

20 years

William Wolf
Gary L. Vanhorne
Gary Smith
Douglas Scott
Stanley Schmidt
Geraldine Scaife
Ernest Quinonez
Billie Poe
Johnnie McQueen
Pamela J. McKean

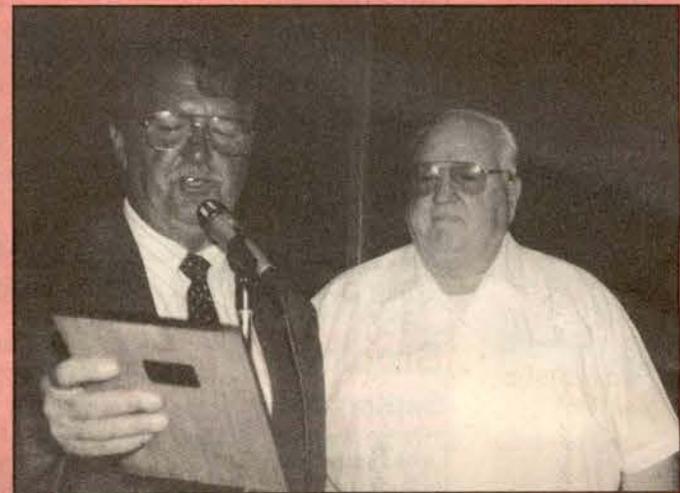
James McDonald
Avelina Martinez
Richard Landa
Donald Johannesen
Donald Jackson
James Hemphill
Howard Helton
Craig Harris
Gary hamill

Effie Greene
Daniel Gomes
Connie Gibson
Eloy Garcia
John Fulton
Kermit Forrest
Wanda Fong
Edna Dees
James Davis

Gary Daugherty
Steve Burton
John Burnett
Thomas Broughton
John Braseco
Joe Blacksher
Emily Berrios
Roy Bax
John Adams



35 years



40 years: Business Rep. Frank Saxsenmeier (left) presents 40-year award to Gene Wilson.



30 years



25 years



20 years

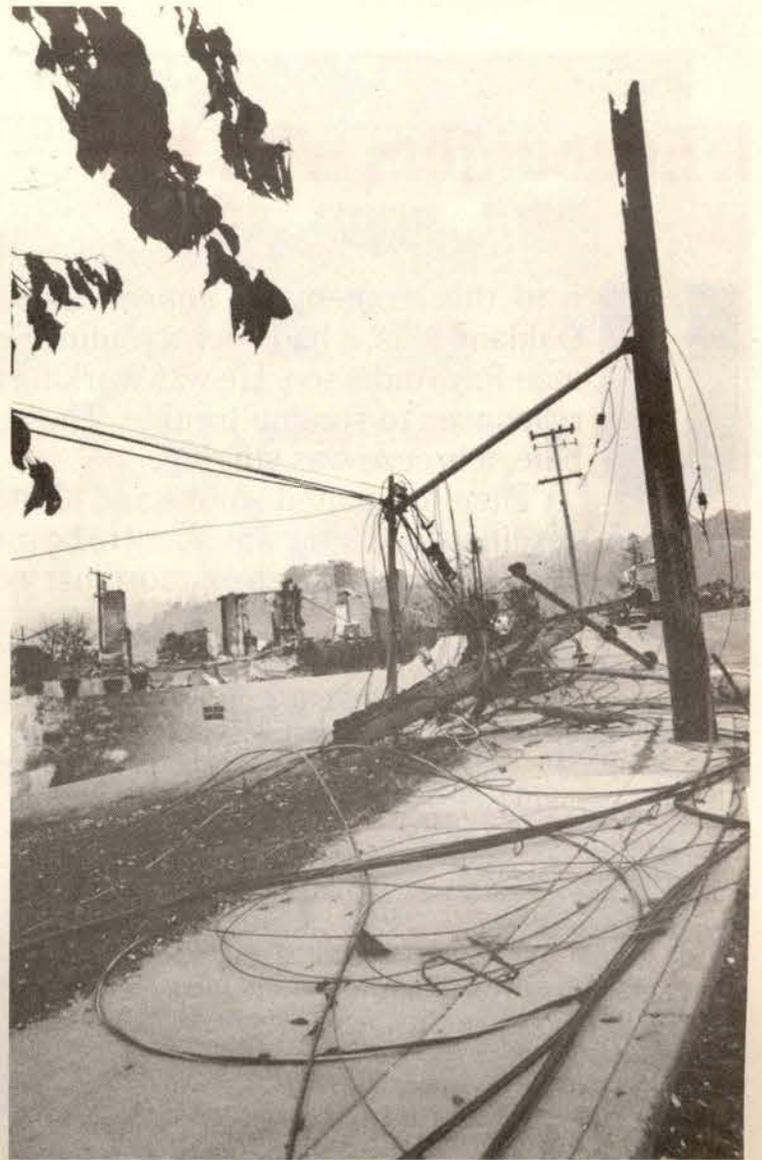
Giving their best:

Union members respond to the fire disaster

The fire that roared out of the East Bay hills the morning of October 20 demonstrated the forces of nature working their worst. It also showed thousands of Bay Area citizens working their best: fighting the fire, ministering to victims, maintaining vital services, beginning the recovery.

Dozens of members of Local 1245 were among those who were put to the test ... and gave their best.

Story and Photos
by Eric Wolfe



In neighborhoods bordering Broadway Terrace in Oakland the East Bay Fire left smoking ruins and tangled masses of utility lines ... but little else.

I. Encounters with fire

Up to the moment he noticed smoke billowing out of the Oakland hills, it had been a routine Sunday for PG&E troubleman Ray Anderson. He was working the normal tags: routine responses to routine trouble. The sun was out, the sky was blue, a breeze was stirring.

Then he spotted smoke and alerted his District Operator. Anderson's ordinary workday was about to be transformed by high winds and record temperatures into an extraordinary encounter with one of nature's primordial forces.

The fire that roared out of the East Bay hills the morning of October 20 claimed at least 25 human lives, destroyed over 3,100 homes and apartments, and wreaked untold havoc on plant and animal life over a three-square-mile area.

But if the fire demonstrated the forces of nature working their worst against the East Bay's hillside communities, it also showed thousands of Bay Area citizens

working their best: fighting the fire, ministering to victims, maintaining vital services, beginning the recovery.

Dozens of members of Local 1245, including Anderson, were among those put to the test.

Shortly after Anderson's call, the District Operator discovered that circuits had gone down at PG&E's Station K, located near the junction of Highways 24 and 13, just west of the Caldicott

Tunnel. The DO radioed Anderson, a 20-year member of Local 1245, to check it out.

By now smoke and fire were rapidly spreading through the area. Police had shut down Highway 13, but waved Anderson's PG&E truck through. Anderson found himself heading up a nearly-deserted highway toward unknown dangers.

"The smoke was very very thick," said Anderson.

See PAGE D



Local 1245 members John Salazar (left) and Ernest Johnson were on standby near Claremont Hotel on Monday to shut a major gas main if necessary.

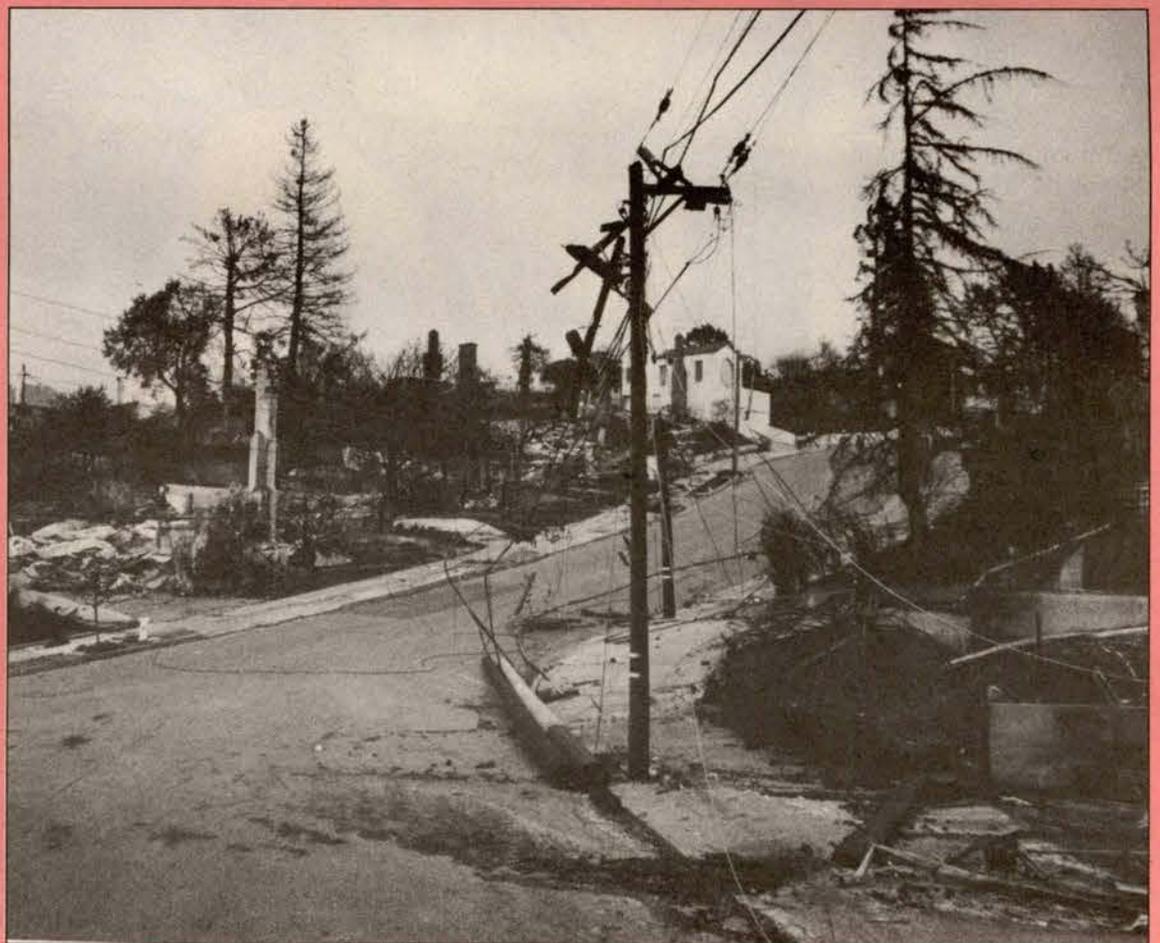


Gary Hamill, a 20-year member of Local 1245, stands on the stump of a tree burned in the fire. The first day of the fire he drove to Station K after hearing that fellow troubleman Ray Anderson was trapped there. The fire burned grass and shrubs around the station and heavy smoke contaminated the 115KV lines, relaying the circuit.



“If you ever had a picture in your mind of what hell looks like, this has got to be something like it.”

*Joe Clough,
apprentice lineman*



From PAGE B

"The closer I got to [Station] K, the thicker it got."

When Anderson arrived at the station shortly before noon, he began to grasp the magnitude of the disaster befalling the East Bay.

"The shrubs and grass in front of the station were burning. All along the perimeter it was burning. The houses along Hiller Highlands [across the highway] were totally ablaze. It was a terrible thing to see. I was hearing explosions on the hill."

The station had already lost three circuits. Anderson cut out three closing relays and green-flagged the breakers.

At one point, a supervisor called "and wanted to know if I could give him a list of materials to get things straightened out," Anderson recalls. "I said, 'You don't have a piece of paper long enough.'"

Anderson was advised to leave the station, but he wasn't so sure he wanted to.

"By this time the fire was coming into the lower yard. The smoke was so thick I couldn't get out of there. I decided the station was the safest place to be rather than try to drive out through the smoke."

"Flames 40 feet high"

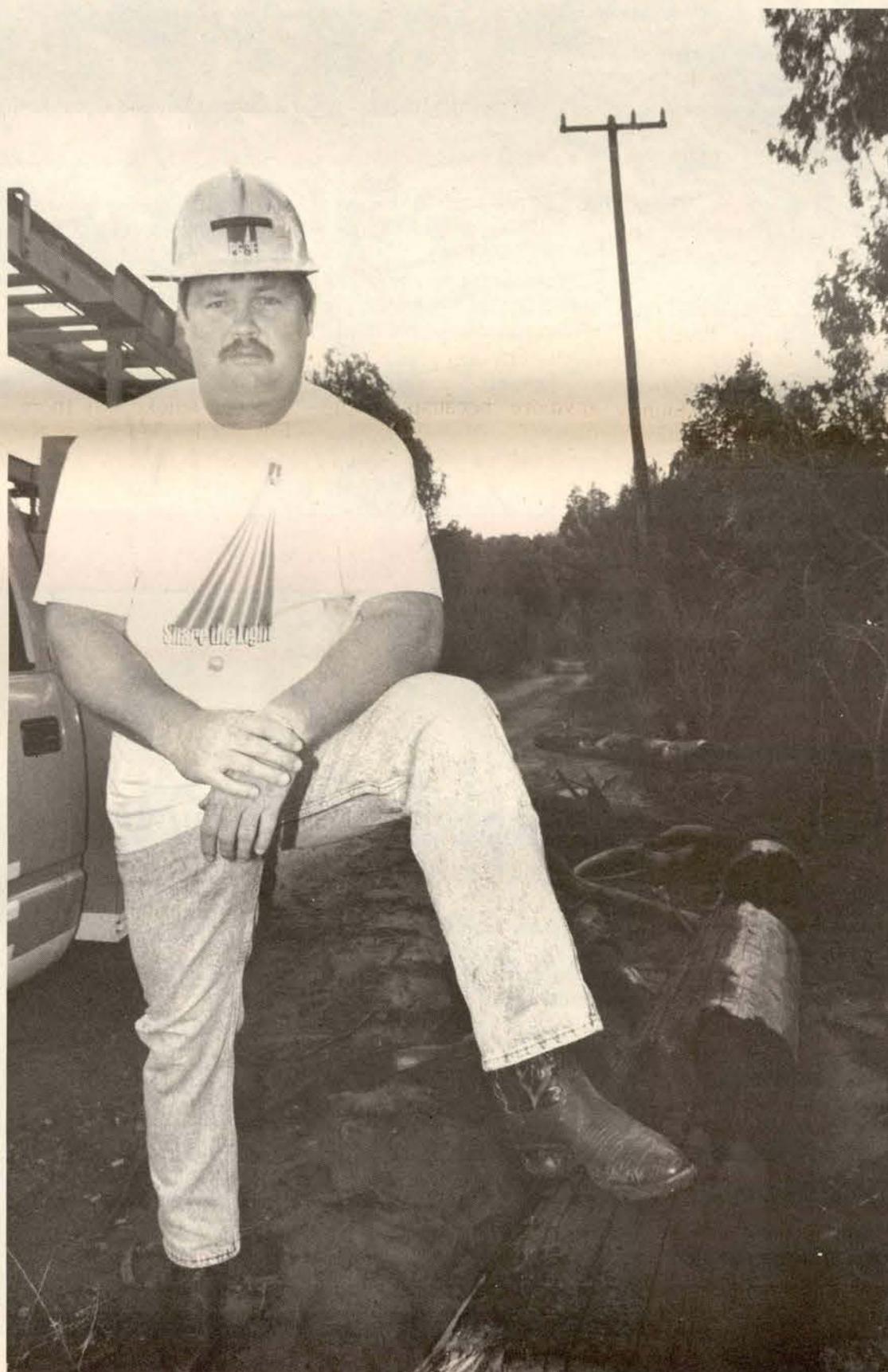
Over his radio PG&E troubleman Gary Hamill heard that Anderson was trapped in Station K. Hamill had reported for duty that morning, as soon as he saw the smoke. Now, following Broadway up the hill, he made his way to Station K.

"I got up there and Ray was OK but the fire was bad," said Hamill. "It was all around us, around the station. The Broadway Terrace on-ramp had flames 40 feet high coming up around it. Houses up in Hiller Highlands were exploding. It looked like Kuwait, like the oil wells blowing. Houses in the lower Montclair area, on the other side of the station, were on fire, too."

"That wind was blowing 60 miles per hour, 70 miles per hour," Hamill said. "We saw pieces of tree-branches big enough they'd knock you out-flying through the air from Hiller Highlands, on fire flying through the air."

"The flames by now were whipping across the road. You couldn't even see the road anymore because of the flames. The smoke was there, fire was leaping across the road, so I put my foot down to the gas and boogied through it, which was a hell of a rush."

Ray Anderson, troubleman



When Ray Anderson came down this road on Oct. 20, he raced head-on into a wall of flames.

At one point, smoke from the fire grew so thick it contaminated the insulators on the 115 KV transmission lines coming into the station.

"They flashed over and relayed the circuit," said Hamill. It dumped the tower lines. That was kind of amazing."

Eerie twilight zone

Meanwhile, other PG&E employees were also swinging into action. The company needed to find out where the fire was and where it was heading.

Gas serviceperson Karen Wasiolek reported to work for her usual Sunday shift at 2 p.m. Along with three others, she was quickly dispatched to the fire zone. Police waved her vehicle and the others through the barricades.

Like Anderson earlier, they found themselves in an eerie twilight zone. There was no one to tell them what was going on. Their job was to find out.

"We were driving around on Highway 13 and Highway 24, surrounded by smoke and flames, trying to figure out what the parameters were," said Wasiolek, who was initially dispatched to the Thornhill area in the Oakland hills. "I started driving on Highway 13, which was deserted. It was so full of smoke you could only see 20 feet in front of you."

Next Wasiolek headed for Hiller Highlands.

"It was this funny state where nobody knew what was going on," said Wasiolek, a seven-year member of Local 1245. "The foremen didn't know how bad it was. Only a few police were around. So you didn't know when you made the decision to go up a street if the fire would come back around behind you. That was the scary part. Nobody knew."

"We wanted to start shutting the gas off of homes that weren't damaged yet, which meant keeping ahead of the fire. We didn't know where it was coming from or where it was going," said Wasiolek.

"And we couldn't keep up. You'd look down the street and see charred foundations and blue roaring jets of fire where the gas mains were. It

See NEXT PAGE

was everywhere and it was growing at such a rate—it became quickly apparent that such huge areas were affected they needed to shut off the mains.”

Pumps disabled

Around 3:45 p.m. Hamill and Anderson decided it was safe to leave Station K.

By this time, PG&E had big problems on its hands. Firefighters were rapidly depleting the water in Oakland's storage reservoirs and the fire had knocked out power to some of pumping plants used to refill them. Hamill and Anderson, staying in close radio contact with the district operators, attempted to locate switches that would allow them to route power to the pumping plants while keeping the fire areas de-energized.

Hamill remembers hooking up at some point with Ken Evans, a PG&E supervisor, and driving through the fire zones looking for switches.

“The DOs knew where the switches were but they didn't know where the fire was,” said Hamill. Staying in

close radio contact with the DOs, he and Evans tried to gather information on where the fire was in relation to the switches.

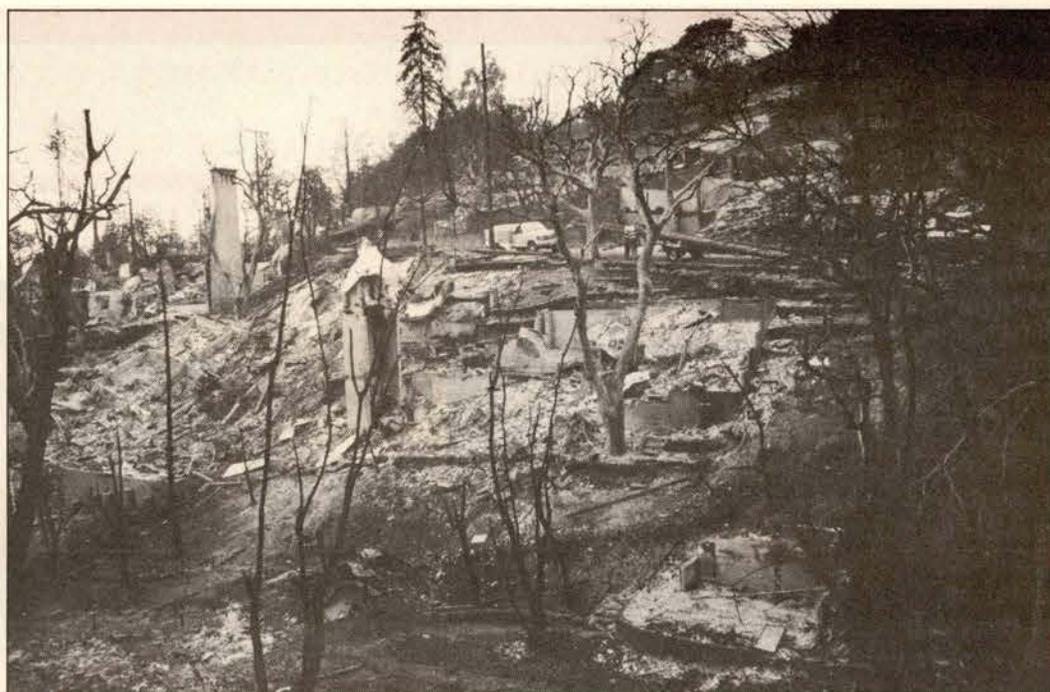
As dusk approached, the DO asked Anderson to open a switch at Florence Station, a 4kv substation located just off Highway 13, south of Highway 24.

The access road to Florence Station is a narrow dirt road etched into the hillside above Highway 13.

When Anderson arrived, the pole line along the road was on fire. To the left, an embankment dropped off sharply to the highway. To the right, above him, a row of houses nested along the hillside.

“The shrubs on both sides were burning and the houses up the hill were on fire,” said Anderson. “There was fire on both sides of the road but nothing was blocking the road.”

With dusk coming on, Anderson drove the 200 yards or so to the station as the fires grew in intensity on either side of him. He found the station in good condition, but notified the DO that the



Oakland neighborhood destroyed by the October fire.

poles were on fire.

Then he turned his truck around to leave.

“The flames by now had got up into the trees and were whipping across the road,” Anderson recalls. “You couldn't even see the road anymore because of the flames.”

Another road led on up to

where the houses were burning but Anderson figured that area was lost. The fire was moving rapidly. Anderson knew he had to make a break for it. And there was no way out but the way he had come in.

“The smoke was there, fire was leaping across the road, so I put my foot down to

the gas and boogied through it, which was a hell of a rush.”

For about 30 feet—and probably the longest moment of his life—Anderson drove through flames. But safely on the other side he had no time to think about what he had just done or take a breather. Night was coming on, and the fire was still spreading.

“Kind of chaotic”

“By nightfall the scene had totally changed,” recalls Wasiolek, the gas serviceperson. “The area was swarming with emergency personnel. It was kind of chaotic. You had the sense that things were not well-organized.”

Indeed, how could they be? People may long debate whether the fire could have been prevented, but once the fire was unleashed in all its fury, human defenses were simply overwhelmed. Under these circumstances, chaos rules until people mobilize.

In a large and complex society, it often seems that order is something worked out at the top: in the laws passed by Congress, in policies set in corporate boardrooms, in decisions by the Federal Reserve. But crises like the East Bay Fire strip away much of the formal order and help us see that society in very important ways is ordered from the bottom up. Our economy runs, services are provided,

See NEXT PAGE

“It was this funny state where nobody knew what was going on... So you didn't know when you made the decision to go up a street if the fire would come back around behind you. That was the scary part. Nobody knew.”

*Karen Wasiolek,
gas serviceperson.*





Along the hillside, presiding over the smoking debris where homes once stood, were the ubiquitous chimneys, lined up in lonely rows.

From PAGE E

laws are enforced, power grids maintained, by the day-to-day and moment-to-moment decisions of *workers*, the people on the scene.

During the East Bay Fire, those on the scene included many members of Local 1245: troublemen, gas service, line crews, gas construction crews, district operators—all of them pitting their skills and their intelligence against one of the mightiest forces of nature.

During the first part of the night, Wasiolek and other gas servicepersons tried to help find gas main shut off valves. When gas T&D crews took over most of that work, the servicepersons “fanned out and asked the fire chiefs what we could do,” said Wasiolek.

“The fire chiefs directed us to houses that still needed to be shut off. And that’s what we did. Four of us went down the street where the fire was coming and shut those houses off.

“People were so dazed. It was so surreal. There were cars abandoned on the freeway. There were people just walking out of Hiller Highlands.”

At one point, Wasiolek recalls, “we came across two men who were walking with their dogs. So we put them in a truck—these two guys and their five dogs—and drove them down. We unloaded them and then went back up. It was just that kind of night.”

“Like a bad movie”

Sometime that night Anderson and Hamill got a call that a tanker truck and a fire truck in the Broadway Terrace area had electric lines come down on them.

“The lines were dead, but the trucks were all wrapped up in them,” Anderson said. “Gary was behind me but he called me and said he couldn’t get through. I continued on up. Everything was burning. It was like a bad movie.”

Anderson located the

tanker truck caught in the wire.

“We had a transformer hanging by the second leads. The wires were down across the tanker truck. I couldn’t climb the pole because it was burnt all up. So the firefighters got a ladder up and I climbed the ladder and started whacking the lines down with my 12 KV hot cutters.

“It was very smokey,” Anderson continued. “Fire was all around. The firefighters were trying to keep the fire off the roadway. I was real pumped up. My adrenalin was flowing. My lungs were burning. I was taking little short breaths because of all the smoke. My eyes were watering. I could see flames leaping through the windows of the houses.

“It was unreal. It was like it was happening and wasn’t happening.”

By the time he had freed up the tanker truck, Anderson couldn’t get back down Broadway Terrace. Fire

blocked the road. He decided to stick with the fire crews for a while.

Hamill, meanwhile, continued to respond as emergency needs arose. He remembers going up a pole to cut some jumper:

“The fire in the house across the street was burning so hard it singed the decal on my hat. The guy had ammunition in the house and it started going off. That scared the shit out of me.”

Later in the night, Hamill and Anderson regrouped at Dick’s, an Oakland cafe, and had a bite to eat, after which Anderson was sent to Hiller Highlands to see if he could re-energize a pumping station at Norfolk and Marlboro.

“The fire was pretty much out at Hiller Highlands at that time,” Anderson recalls, “but gas was spouting out of the gas mains—it looked like [after] a nuclear explosion. There were little fires all over, but there was nothing much left to burn.”

On his way to the station,

he encountered a vehicle blocking the road. A policeman was stationed nearby. Laid out in the road were five bodies. After the policeman convinced him that debris totally blocked the road ahead, Anderson left Hiller Highlands and spent the rest of the night switching and patrolling the lines.

For most PG&E employees in the area, it was a long night to be followed by a long week.

Wasiolek stayed on duty until two o’clock Monday morning, then reported back four hours later for a 16-hour shift. Hamill stayed on duty through 3:30 Monday afternoon.

When Anderson finally made it home at 9:30 Monday morning, his wife was waiting for him at the door with the first routine request he had heard in about 26 hours:

“She said, ‘Take those clothes off in the garage—you’re not coming in the house with those on.’”



II. Out of the ashes . . .

On Monday morning, while fires still burned south of Highway 24 in Oakland and to the north in the Berkeley Hills, a PG&E General Construction crew headed by foreman Bill Jennings crossed through police lines at the Claremont Hotel and headed up Tunnel Road.

Calmer winds had sapped the fire of some of its fury and PG&E crews were now moving into areas devastated the night before. Sunday morning's sunny brilliance was gone, replaced by skies of murky gray.

Jennings' crew turned right onto Roble and followed the winding one-lane road down into the narrow canyon nestled between Tunnel Road and Highway 24.

Plumes of smoke drifted across a landscape of ruined homes, where small fires still smoldered. Blackened automobiles sat low to the ground, tires vaporized in the inferno.

Chimneys that had been designed to contain fire rose out of ash heaps toward the smoke-filled sky, ghoulish monuments to a fire that people could not contain.

Out of these same ashes,

the beginnings of a new community would arise today.

Jennings' crew set to work replacing a mainline 3-phase brought down by the fire. Occasional gusts of wind served as a reminder that a change in the weather could bring renewed energy to the fire, perhaps even bring it back to this canyon.

Next to one of the unburned homes, a lone fireman kept a quiet watch atop a yellow fire truck, taking occasional swigs from a can of soda. Two sober-faced Red Cross volunteers passed nearby with clipboards in

hand, assessing the damage.

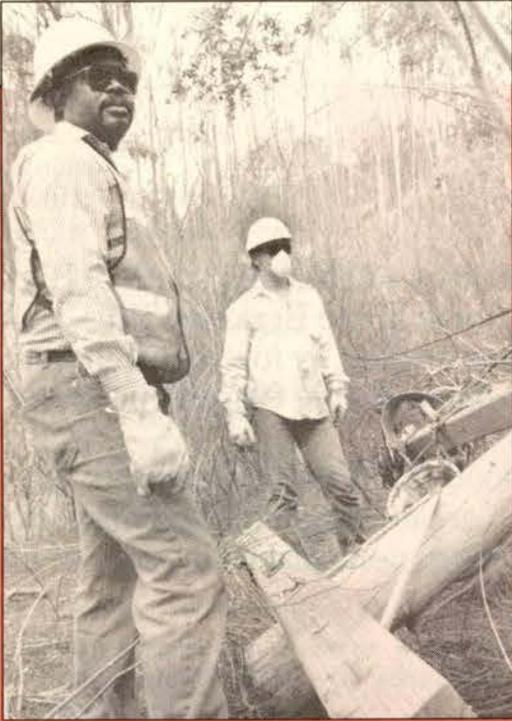
Working with Jennings were journeymen Marty Sikorski, Dave Shulz and Fred Lahn. They were joined by another crew consisting of Mike Smith, Dave Bunker, Ron Ellis and Fred Rodriguez. With only one line truck available, the two crews worked together to set the first pole.

Nearby, an underground crew headed by foreman Bill Brush pulled in line from across Highway 24. Included on the crew were Jeff Luque, Randy Royval, Bill Goodman, Kevin Ryan, Rob Soares, Joe

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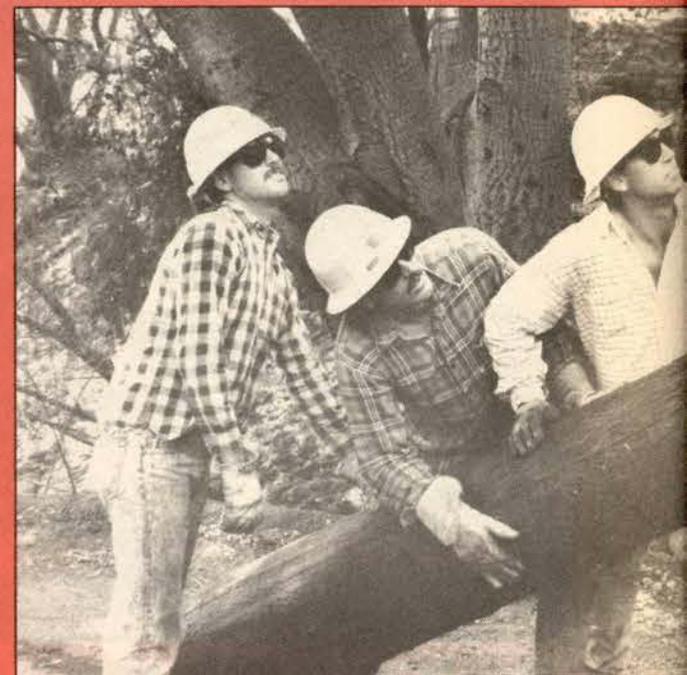
Above: Foreman Bill Jennings surveys the scene after arriving in the Roble/Chabot area Monday morning following the fire. Behind him are Marty Sikorski and Dave Shulz. Top left: (from left): Jennings, Dave Bunker and Mike Smith set the first pole of the morning.



At left: Groundman Darryl Price, left, and apprentice Joe Tancel, working near Chabot Road just north of Highway 24 on Monday following the fire. Below, from left: Linemen Dave Shulz and Dave Bunker and operator Ron Ellis, working the same day along Roble Road.

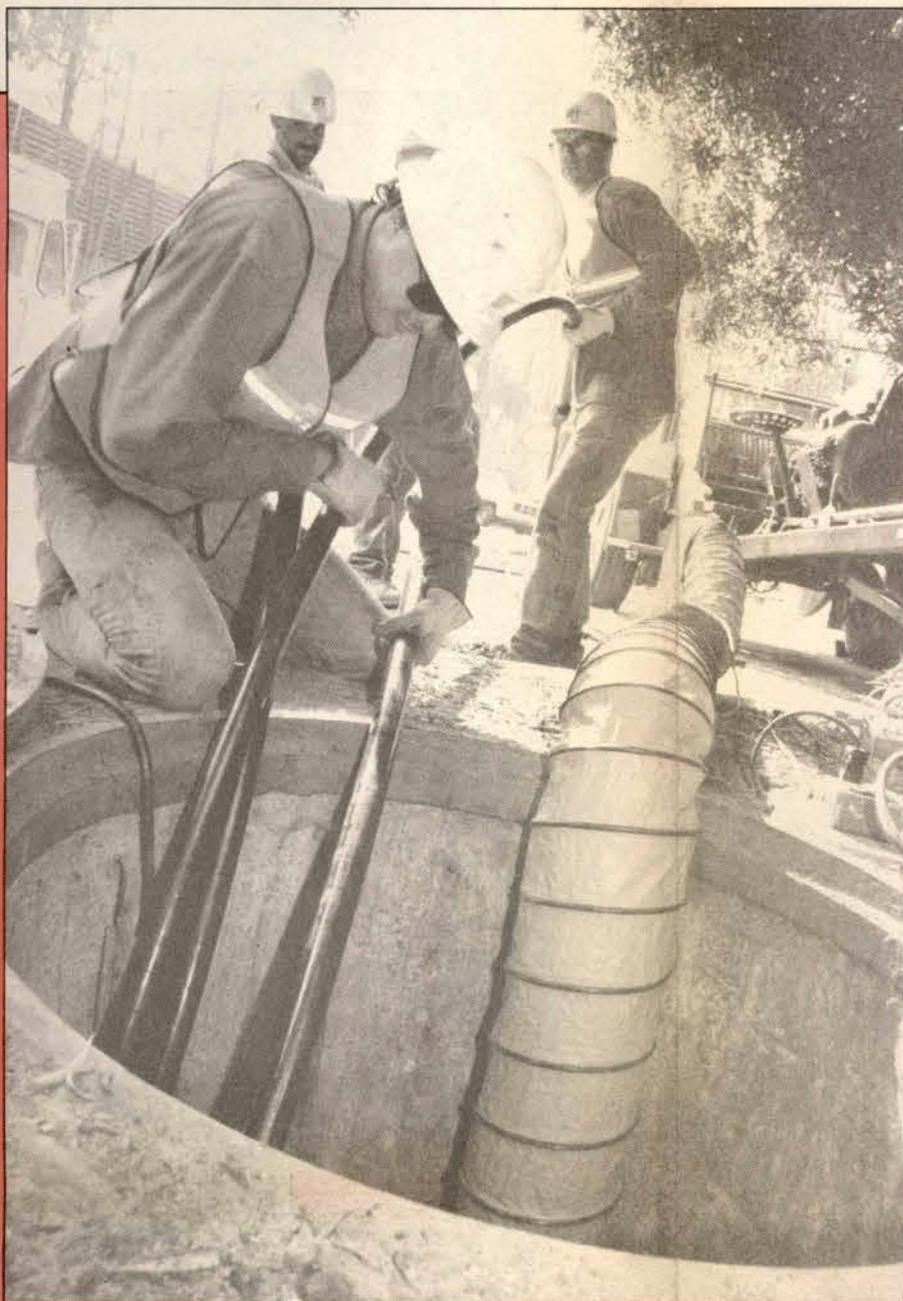


Above: Pulling cable on Bill Brush's under Chabot Road on Monday following the fire; apprentices Jeff Luque and Bill Goodman, and Royval; Kevin Ryan is down in the hole. At right: Goodman working on a line.



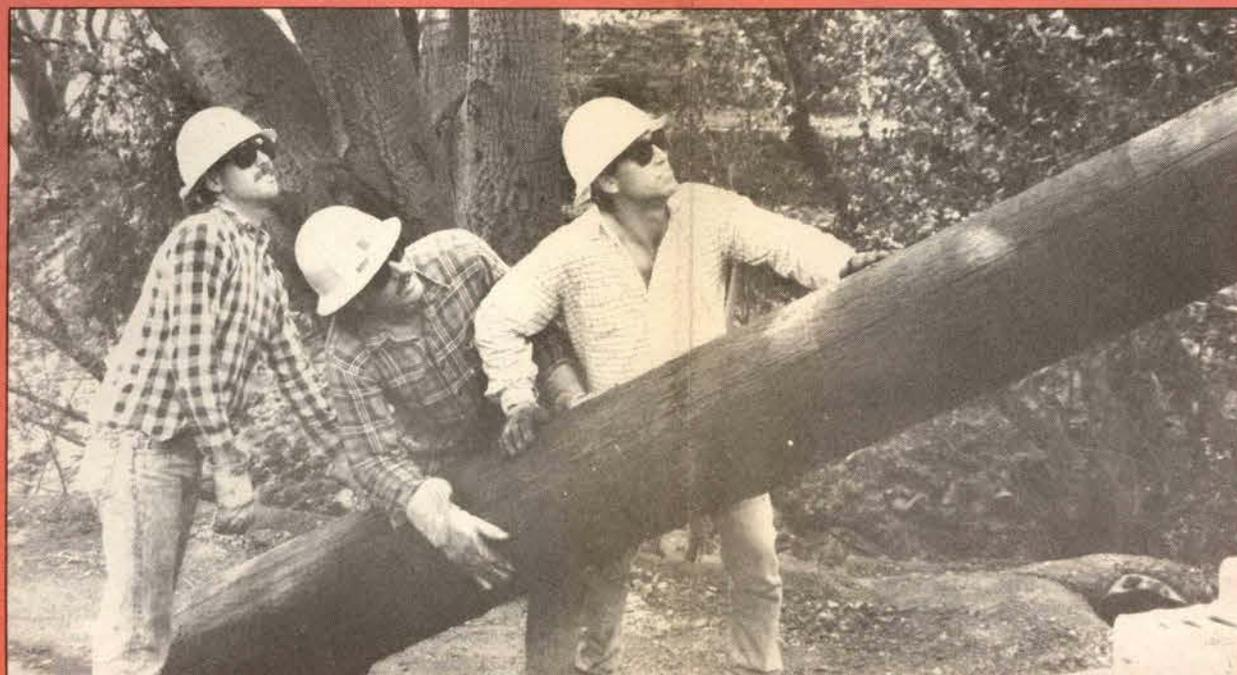
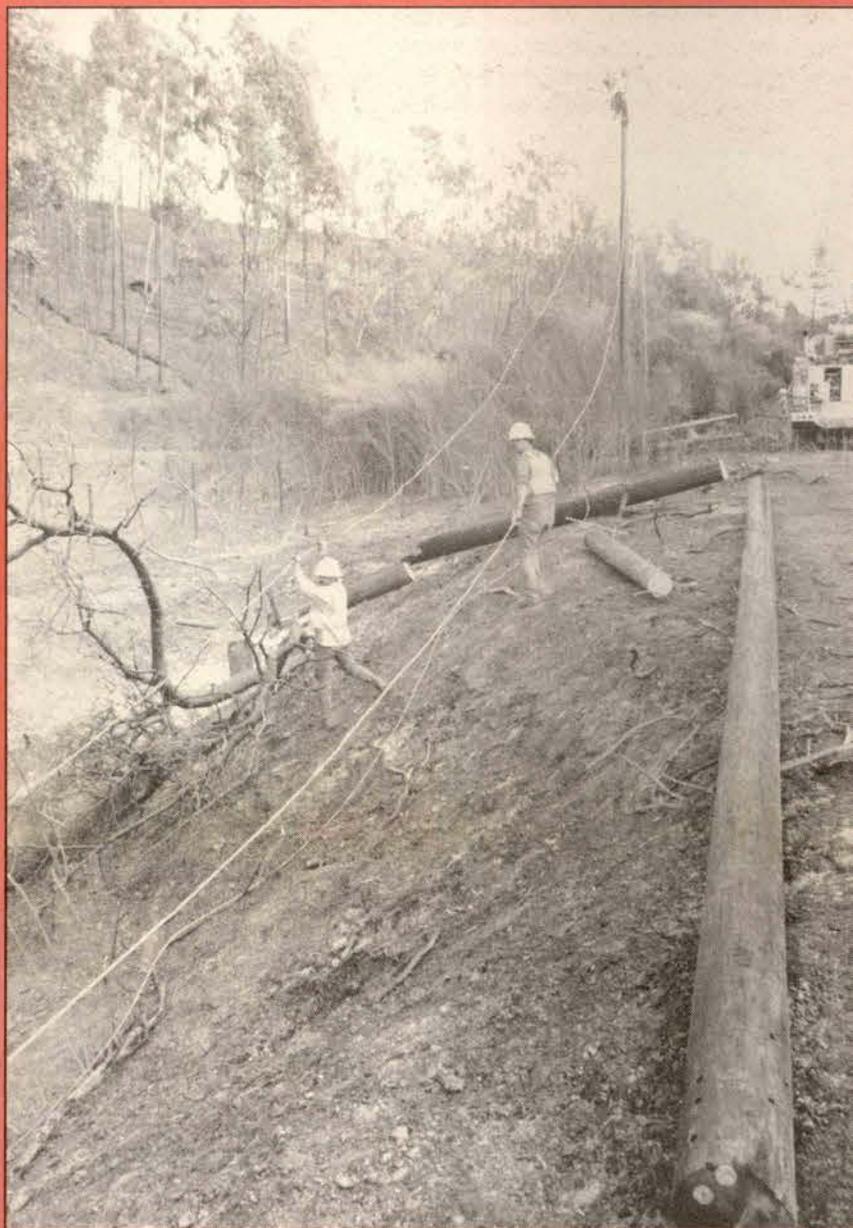
Giving Their Best: A Special Report on the East Bay Fire Disaster

left, and
r Chabot
Monday
Linemen
ator Ron
le Road.



Above: Pulling cable on Bill Brush's underground crew on Chabot Road on Monday following the fire are, from left, apprentices Jeff Luque and Bill Goodman, and lineman Randy Royval; Kevin Ryan is down in the hole. **At right:** Luque and Goodman working on a line.

Right: Mike Ford, apprentice, working near Chabot Road on Monday afternoon. The helicopter behind him is part of the fire-fighting effort.

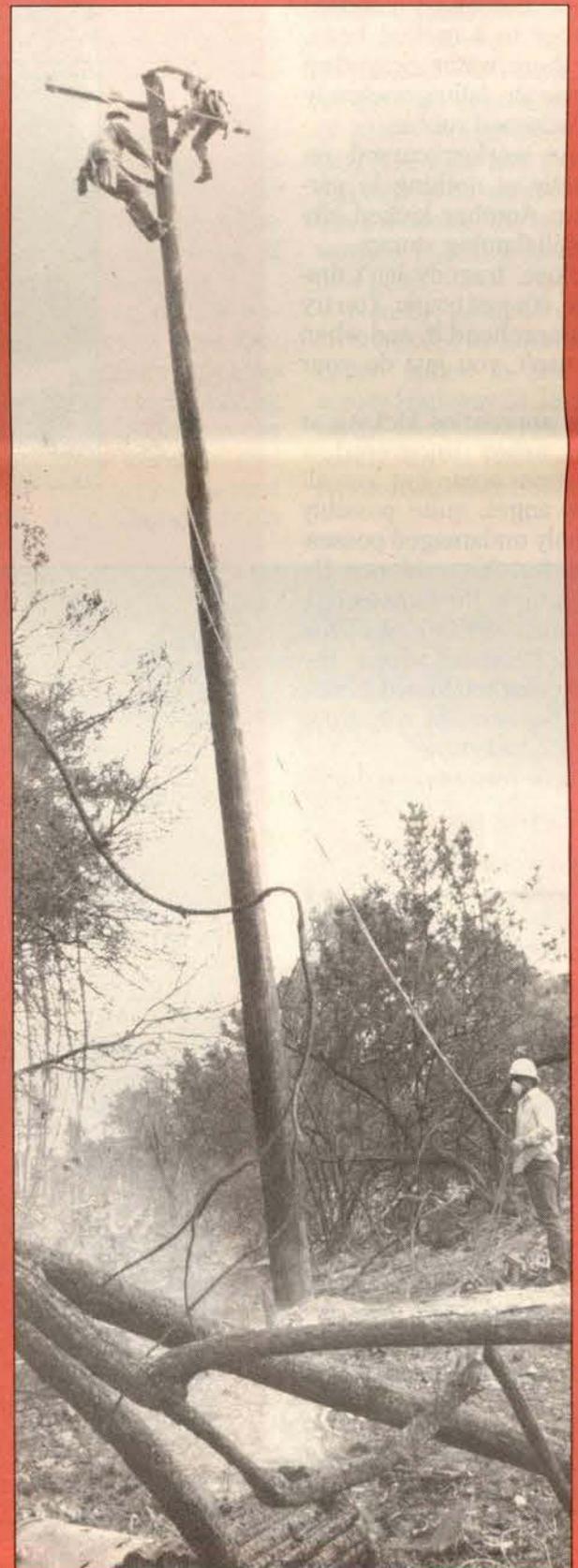
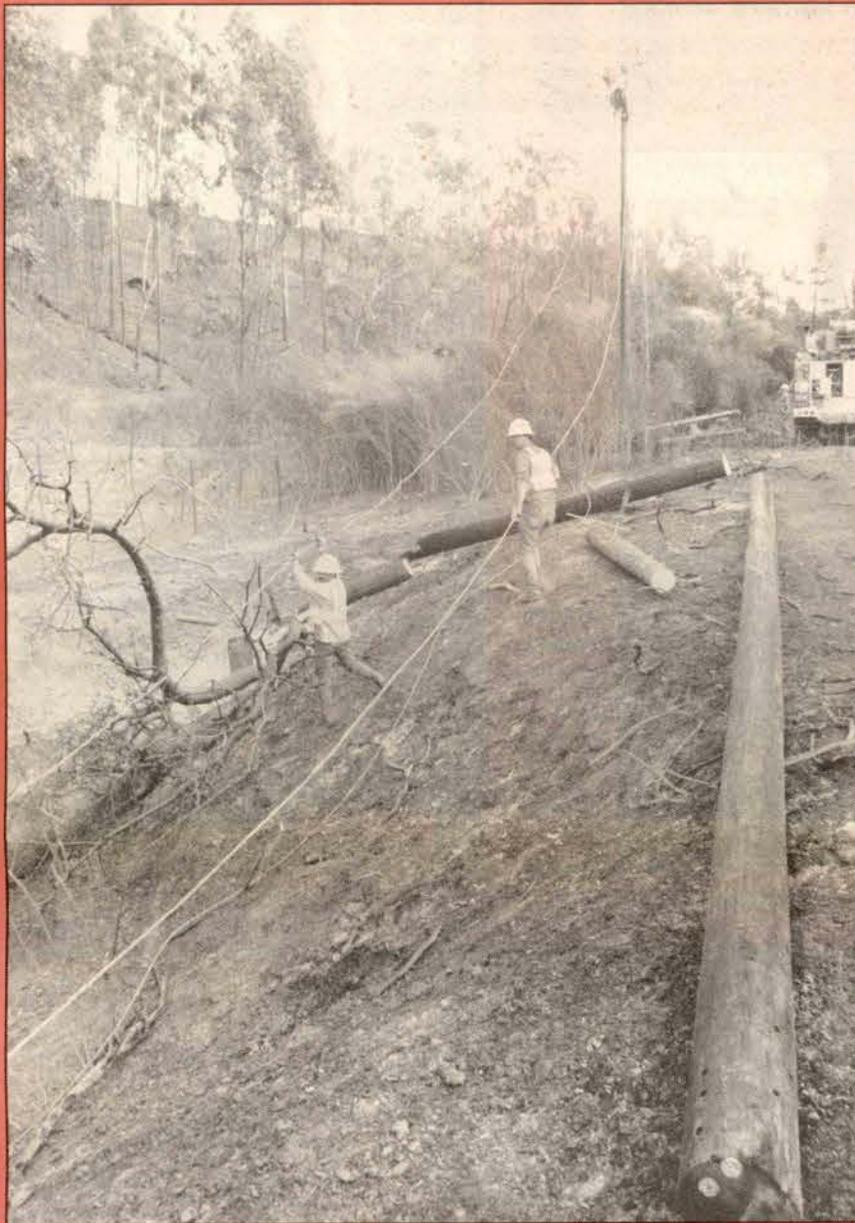
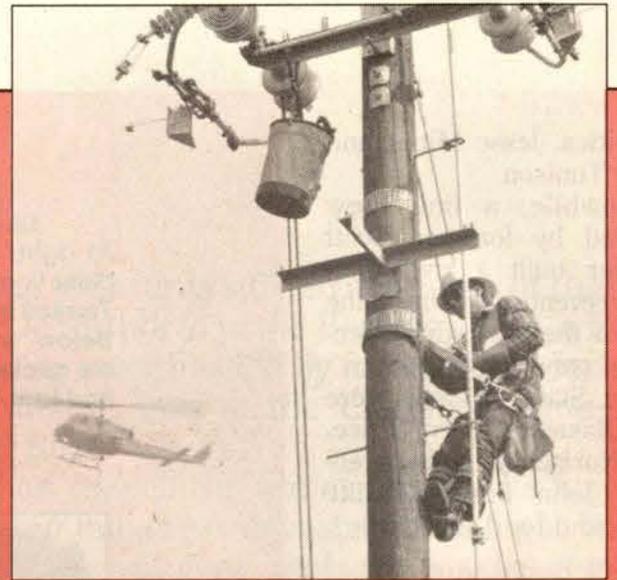


Left: Dave Bunker, Mike Smith and Dave Shulz position a pole while working on Roble Road on Monday. **Right:** John Findley and Bill Goodman replacing downed line near Chabot Road. On ground is Joe Tancel. A still-smouldering fire is visible in foreground.



ound crew on
are, from left,
lineman Randy
ght: Luque and

Right: Mike Ford, apprentice, working near Chabot Road on Monday afternoon. The helicopter behind him is part of the fire-fighting effort.



Left: Dave Bunker, Mike Smith and Dave Shulz position a pole while working on Roble Road on Monday. Right: John Findley and Bill Goodman replacing downed line near Chabot Road. On ground is Joe Tancel. A still-smouldering fire is visible in foreground.



From PAGE G

Laucirica, Jesse Mims, and Jerry Tunison.

Meanwhile, a line crew headed by foreman Scott Stalder built a riser that would eventually connect the line to the area where Jennings' crew worked.

On Stalder's crew were Jim Blakesley, Darryl Price, Ray Horlacher, and apprentices John Findley, Mike Ford, and Joe Tancel.

In a strange land

It was familiar work, but in a strange land.

Over here a vintner's store of wine bottles lay jumbled together in a melted heap. Over there, water sprayed up into the air, falling uselessly on blackened rubble.

One worker cursed repeatedly at nothing in particular. Another kicked idly at a still-flaming stump. Up close, tragedy isn't dramatic. It's just tragic. You try to comprehend it, and when you can't, you just do your job.

An apprentice kicking at some ashes uncovered a Christmas ornament, a small brass angel, quite possibly the only undamaged possession left at this residence. He held it up to the light as others came over to look. Then the apprentice wiped the angel clean and tossed it back into the heap of ash from which it had come.

There was work to do.

Restoring power

And work they did.

The fire cut power to over 9,000 electric customers. To restore that power would require setting up to a thousand poles, replacing hundreds of transformers, and stringing miles of wire under circumstances that were far from ideal.

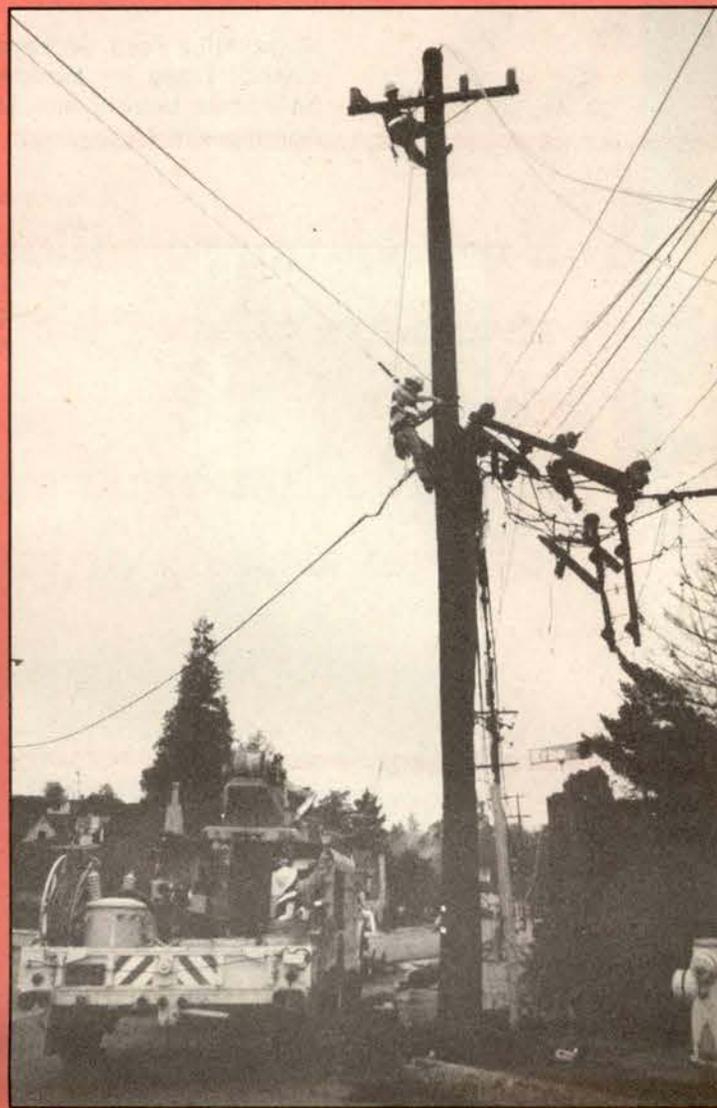
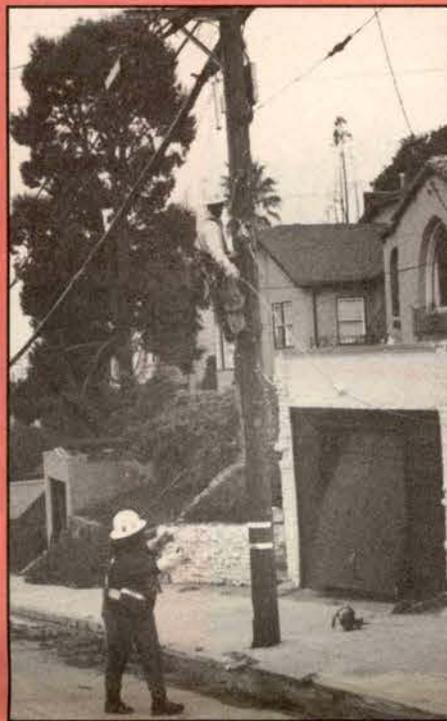
On Monday alone, before the fire was officially declared under control, crews like those headed by Jennings and Stalder helped restore power to some 3,000 customers.

Gas crews responded with equal speed. Their first task, of course, was to deprive the fire of fuel by sealing off all gas to the fire zone, a task that was accomplished by early Monday morning.

Text continues PAGE L

CLEARING WRECKAGE

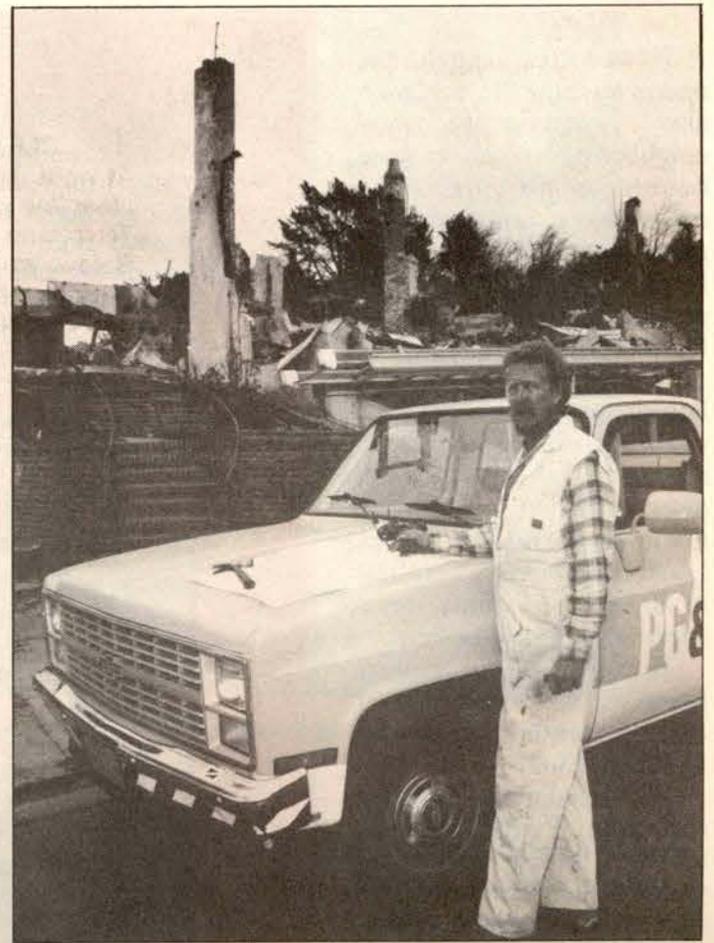
At right, Mike Ward and Phil Maher clear line wreckage along Broadway Terrace on Tuesday following the fire. Below, working just down the road are groundperson Lorraine Jenkins and Eric Wright.



The East Bay Fire offered countless views of utter devastation. Curiously, pieces of pottery were frequently among the few objects spared in the conflagration, leaving some houses looking like the site of an archaeology dig.

“You’re looking to follow the map, but there are places where it just disappears. It’s unrecognizable. Any familiar landmarks, they don’t mean a thing anymore.”

Clifford Speakman, voltage tester



Mike Kress, at far end of pole, and other members of Randy Maddux's General Construction crew, position a pole they are preparing to set at Grandview and Vicente in the Berkeley hills. Working in the area at the time were Mike Blattler, field garage mechanic A, Don "Dad" Dean, operator, and Kevin Robinson, apprentice.

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However, capping the gas mains feeding the fire zone also cut service to many neighboring residents whose homes had been spared. As mains were repressurized, gas service teams fanned out across the area to turn gas services back on, check for leaks and re-light pilots.

Such large needs translate into long hours for those charged with restoring basic services to the public. In the days immediately after the fire it was not unusual to find Local 1245 members putting in 20 hours, in some cases even 40 hours, at a stretch.

However, besides long hours, the fire disaster placed other demands on those who responded to it.

On Tuesday morning, for example, PG&E voltage tester Clifford Speakman worked the Broadway Terrace area in Oakland, checking the 4 KV line coming out of Florence Station.

Electric lines, tangled up with phone lines around charred remnants of poles, lay strewn across sidewalks, spilling into streets. Along the hillside, presiding over the smoking debris where homes once stood, were the ubiquitous chimneys, lined up in lonely rows.

Lost landmarks

"You're looking to follow the map, but there are places where it just disappears," said Speakman, standing at the corner of Agnes and Proctor. "It's unrecognizable. Any familiar landmarks, they don't mean a thing anymore."

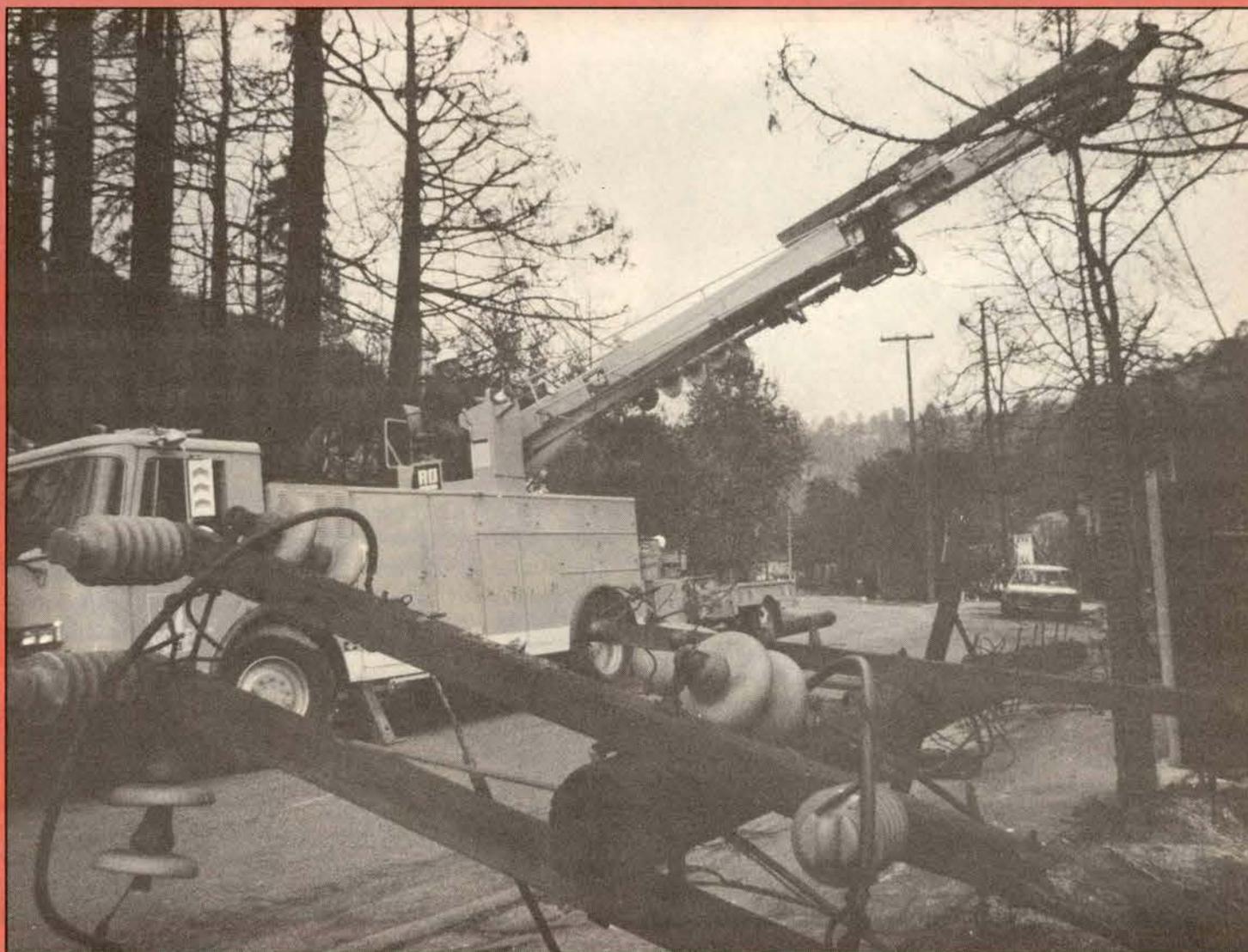
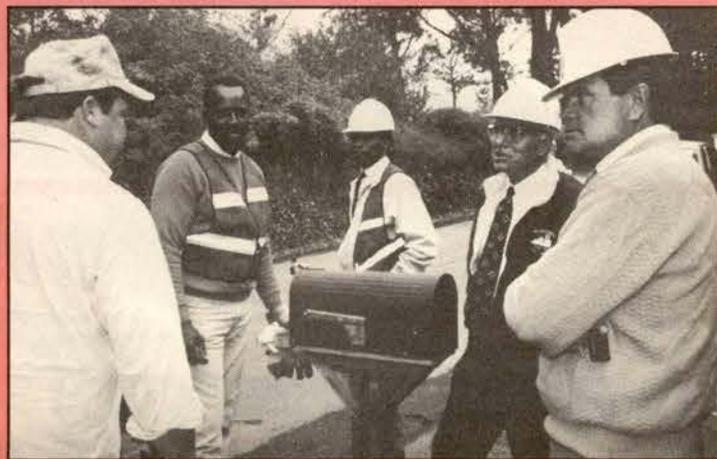
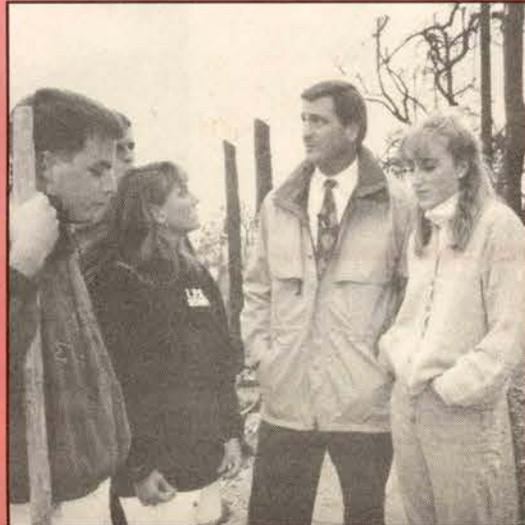
Familiar work, but in a strange land.

Speakman, a 15-year member of Local 1245, looked around the area, again consulted his map, then shrugged. "It's surprising how we depend on landmarks."

Landmarks were in short supply where Speakman stood, just as they were north of Tunnel Road in Berkeley where several PG&E crews worked that Tuesday to rebuild electric lines up the Vicente Creek canyon. One man painfully aware of these lost landmarks was a UPS driver named Mike, whose route included these roads.

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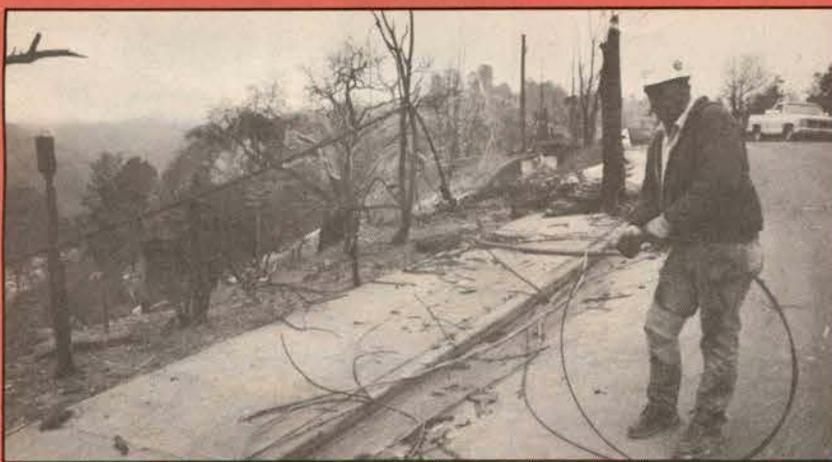
At right, readying a pole for setting on Vicente near Alvarado are, from left, Jim Mouat, Joe Clough and Dan Amour. Below right, on Broadway Terrace, troubleman Ray Anderson (left) trades observations on the recovery effort with PG&E's Cliff Ray, Bob Harris, CEO Dick Clark and Ken Miller. Below, California Insurance Commissioner John Garamendi inspects a fire-ravaged neighborhood in the Berkeley hills.



Operator Jim Mouat prepares to lift a pole into place.



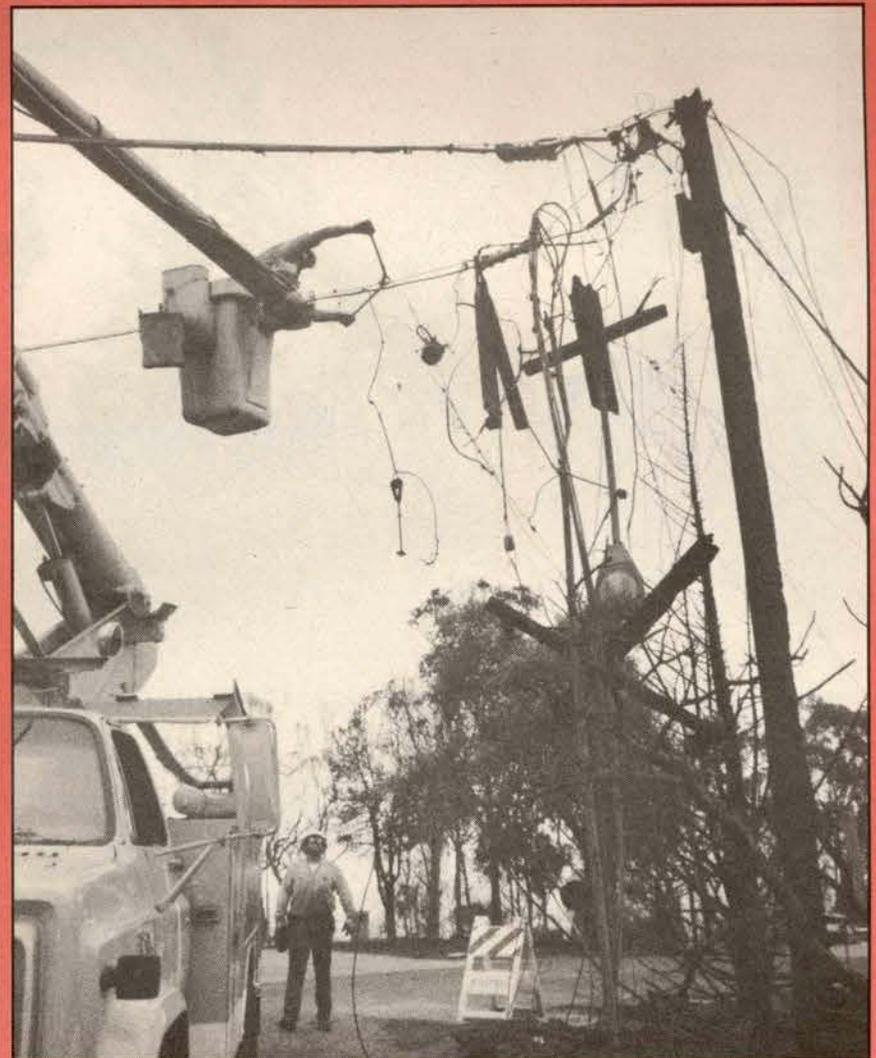
Groundman Rich Haines clears ruined equipment on Gravatt in the Berkeley hills.



Lineman Roger Davis clears ruined equipment on Gravatt.

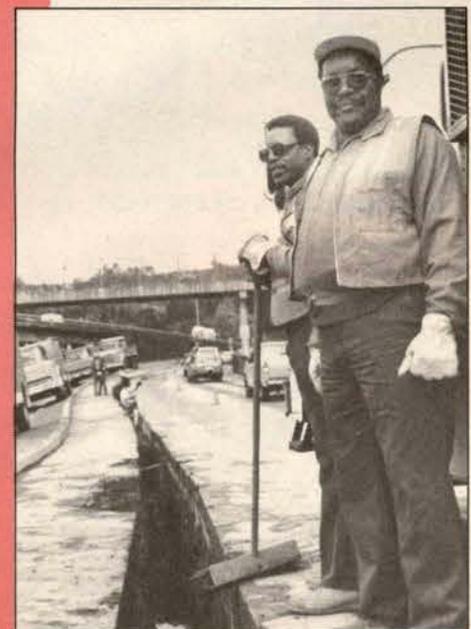
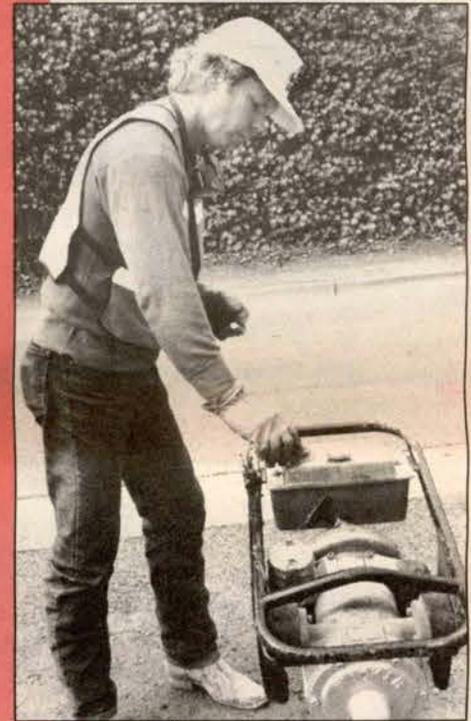
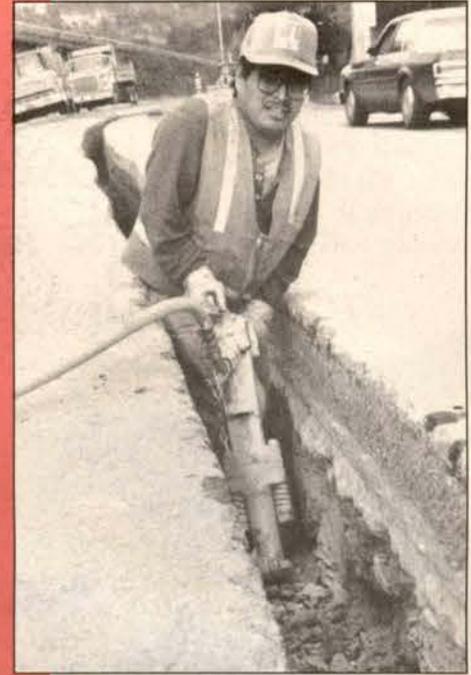
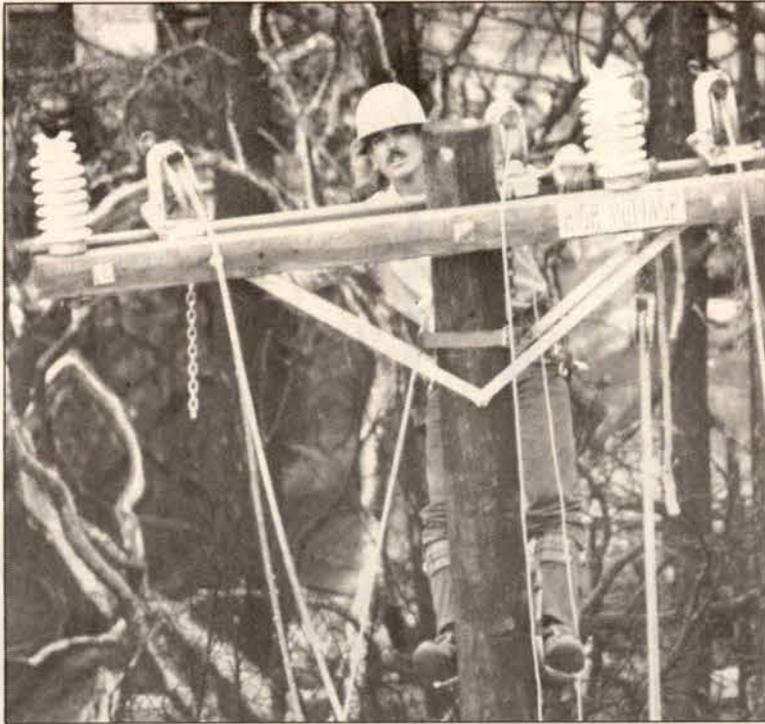


G. Nicole Brooks clears ruined equipment on Gravatt.



Ken Mescher, working on Gravatt, cuts line ruined in the fire.

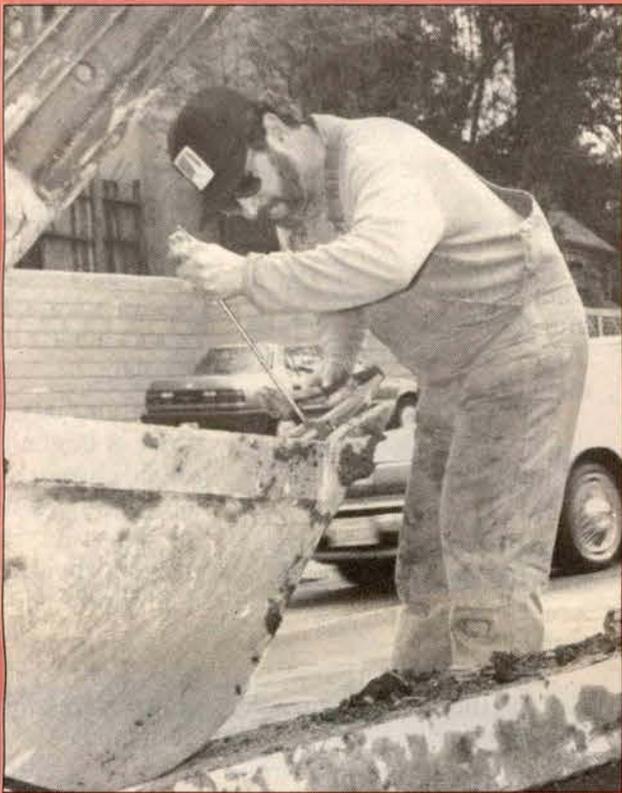
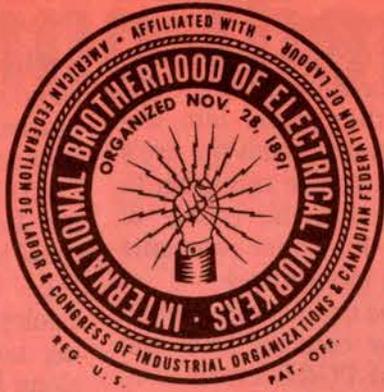
Mike Smith working in the Berkeley hills on Tuesday after the fire.



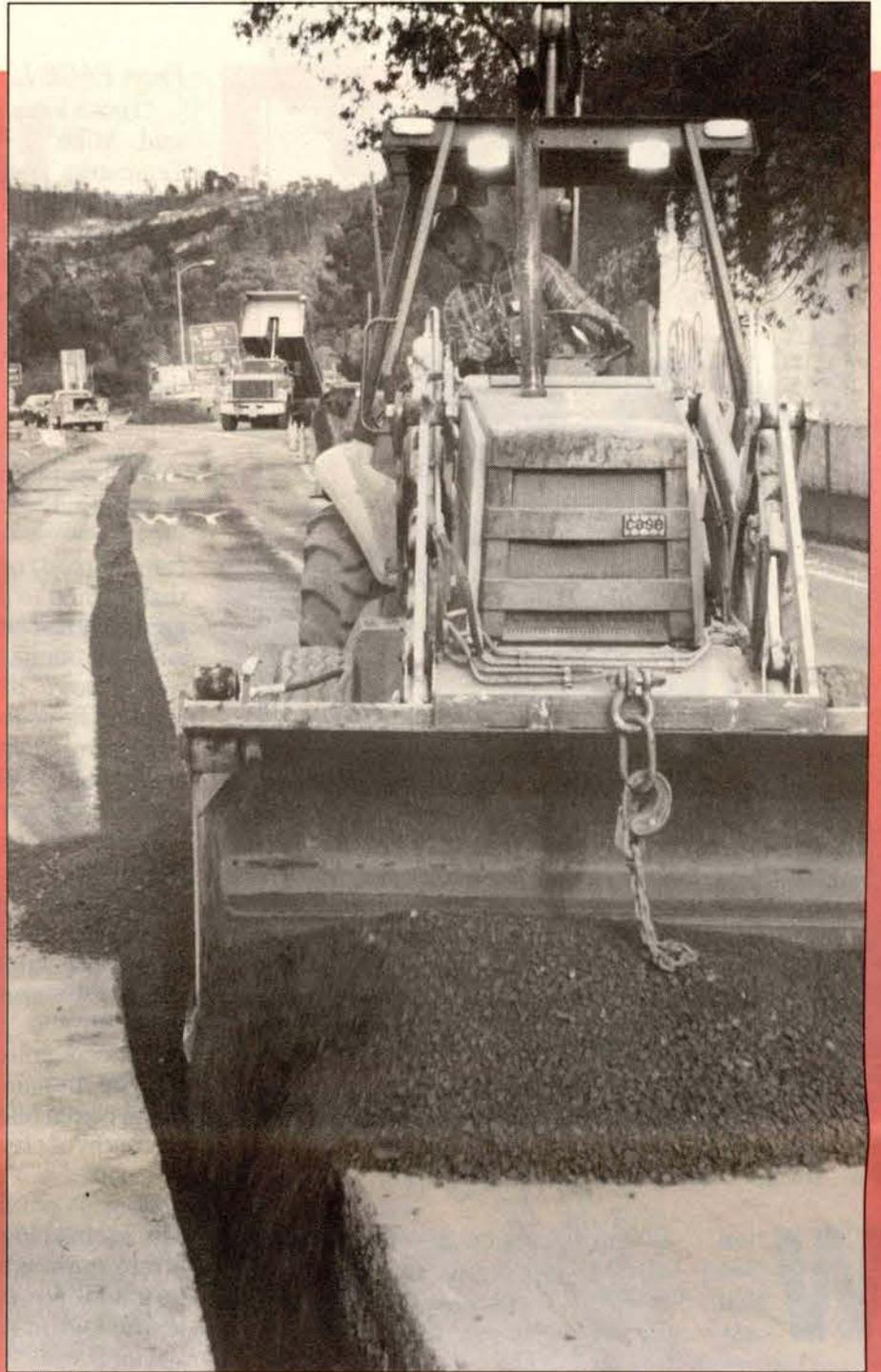
Local 1245 members laying new gas main along Broadway in order to pick up a backfeed to the fire area are (from top): Miguel Lopez, utility worker; Cory Shepard, fieldman; and Robert Brown (left), truck driver, and Sam Johnson, equipment operator.



James Holcomb and Juan Duniga (climbing pole) at work in the Berkeley Hills on Tuesday after the fire.



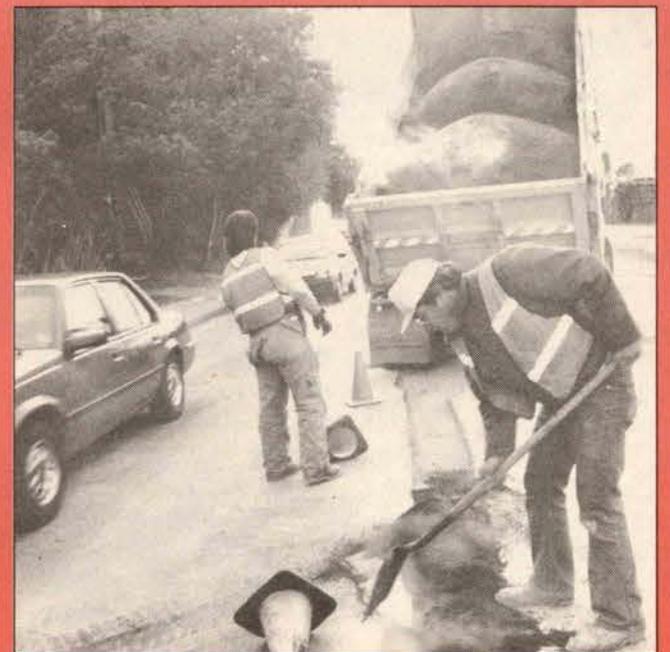
Welder Richard Burgess, a 20-year union member, puts on tiger tooth to assist in digging through rock.



Louis Odom, back hoe operator, covers over new gas main along Broadway in Oakland.



Gas crew foreman and 22-year union member Will Warren operates the whacker on Broadway gas main construction job.



Local 1245 Vice President Jim McCauley (right) and son, Will McCauley, working on the Broadway gas main job.