

UTILITY REPORTER

PG&E Ballot Deadline:
July 19, 10:00 a.m.

McNally tells Public Utilities Commission:

Utility deregulation poses threat to service

Deregulation of electric utilities could erode the quality of the workforce and ultimately impair the quality of service, Local 1245 Business Manager Jack McNally warned the California Public Utilities Commission at a public hearing in San Francisco last month.

"The workforce may disintegrate," said McNally, one of eight panelists invited to comment on proposals for regulatory reform put forward by Pacific Gas & Electric, San Diego Gas & Electric, and Southern California Edison.

McNally questioned whether Independent Power Producers and other players now entering the market will make a significant commitment to educating and training their workers. That, in turn, could undermine existing training programs at the major utilities.

Are major utilities like PG&E "going to be willing to



Business Manager Jack McNally (near right) and other panelists offered comments to the Public Utilities Commission on utility proposals for regulatory reform. (Photo: Eric Wolfe)

invest in training when competitors are not doing that?" McNally asked.

Failure to adequately educate and train the workforce will ultimately "impact the reliability of service to citi-

zens in this state," said McNally, warning, "You get what you pay for."

Although each utility offered a different vision of how electric services should be regulated in the future, all

three utilities acknowledged that a new era of competition is underway in power generation.

Gone are the days where electric markets are domi-

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Sierra Pacific Power Tracy plant

Operators design non-rotating shifts

Control room operators at the Tracy power plant outside Reno, Nev., are working much longer hours these days—and liking it just fine, thank you.

In an experimental schedule designed by the operators themselves and agreed to by their employer, Sierra Pacific Power Co., the operators are working 12-hour, non-rotating shifts. The innovative schedule has opened up new possibilities for family life for the operators—something they're understandably happy about.

The experiment grew out of the operators' weariness with rotating shifts. As shift workers, they were rarely off more than one weekend a month. Under the new schedule, their hours are predictable and they have more weekends free.

They aren't working more hours. Just better ones.

"We didn't lose anything," said operator John East, who helped draft the new schedule. "Most people like the extra day off."

One of those people is Dave Condon.

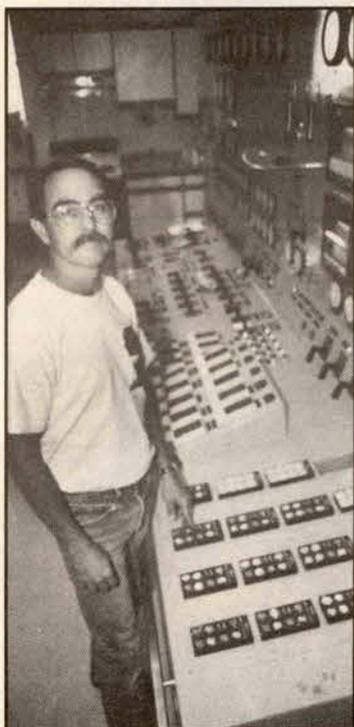
"I'm at home with my family every night," said Condon,

a 14-year union member who has been at Tracy for three years. "Now there's just one shift instead of three shifts so a body has a chance to get used to it. I think a body has a chance to get used to it physically and mentally."

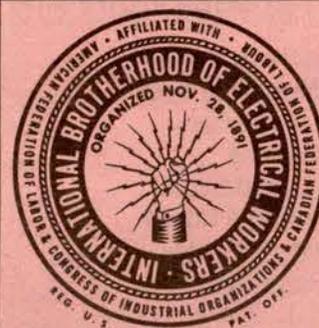
According to plant manager Pete Salcedo, the employees themselves took the initiative for changing the way their workday is structured. When several employees inquired about setting up 12-hour shifts, Salcedo consulted with Local 1245 Business Rep. John Stralla.

In accordance with union

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Operator Dave Condon



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CALENDAR

July 17
Coast Valleys/Moss
Landing Stewards
Conference
CANCELLED

PG&E Ballot Reminder:

Your ballot on the new PG&E contract must be received by Local 1245 no later than 10:00 a.m. on July 19, 1993.

July 24
Fresno/Yosemite
Stewards Conference
Fresno, Ca.

August 7-8
Advisory Council
Concord, Ca.

August 21
Union Golf Tournament
Alameda



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WIPA



Workers here and abroad

Rolling the union on...

Attitude: When the P.H. Glatfelter mill in Spring Grove, Pa. demanded concessions in health care, vacations and seniority, members of the Paperworkers union took a truckload of squealing pigs to the company's annual meeting, according to Labor Notes. The union said it was to illustrate the attitude Glatfelter's bargaining committee brought to the table.

Slight Delay: A mere 29 years after maintenance employees at Long Island College Hospital voted to unionize, the NLRB ordered the hospital to bargain with the SEIU, Labor Notes reported. The employer dragged out the process by appealing the appropriateness of the bargaining unit.

Now They Act: When it wants to, the NLRB can act more quickly. Following noisy demonstrations at NLRB offices around the country in February and May, NLRB General Counsel Jerry Hunter said he'll take "appropriate action" to stop future demonstrations inside NLRB

offices. The demonstrations were held, in part, to protest the NLRB's failure to act in a timely fashion to enforce labor laws.

Ukraine Unrest: Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian workers, primarily miners, walked off their jobs in June and threatened to block access to government buildings unless citizens are given a chance to pass judgment on the government in a national referendum.

Beware the Chip: Pregnant women working in computer chip fabrication facilities are 20 to 40% more likely to suffer a miscarriage than women working in non-fabrication jobs, according to a study by the University of California's Center for Occupational and Environmental Health. Exposure to photorealist/developer solvents is a possible culprit in the higher miscarriage rates.

Parttimer Protection: A US Labor Department official, in testimony to Congress last month, expressed concern that part-time workers are not receiving the health, pension and vacation benefits available to full-time workers. "Workers with insecurity have little attachment or responsibility to their employers," said Delores L. Crockett, who suggested that a review of labor laws and policies is in order to see if protections can be extended to part-time workers.

Single-Payer: The New England Journal of Medicine last month declared its support for a US national health

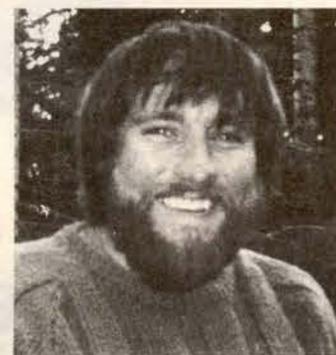
Accident claims Bobby Lee Cross

Local 1245 member Bobby Lee Cross, 38, died in an off-duty accident on June 5.

Cross, who worked for Sierra Pacific Power Co. and also in Outside Construction, was killed when a backhoe turned over on him. His father, Bob Cross, is a Local 1245 member in Outside Construction.

Former Local 1245 Business Rep. Tommy Heyl offered a eulogy on behalf of the union at the funeral.

Local 1245 extends its sympathies to the family.



Bobby Lee Cross

insurance plan modeled on the Canadian-style "single-payer" system. The Journal's editorial warned that the Managed Competition plan favored by the Clinton Administration would be less efficient than a single-payer system and will fail to contain costs.

Unions: the Best Therapy: Counselors at the Occupational Health Centers of America in Michigan became the first therapists to be represented by the United Auto Workers. The therapists' primary clients are GM and Ford workers. While the therapists clearly believe that individual therapy can help workers with their problems, they apparently also believe that group action is sometimes required.

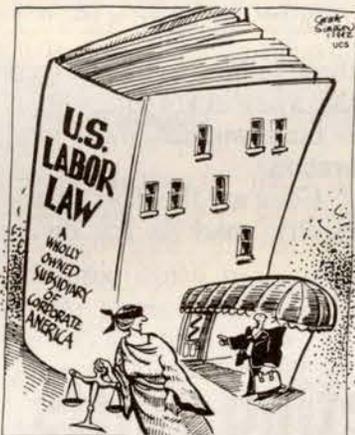
Just Following Orders: At the A.E. Staley plant in Decatur, Ill., management fired union member Dan Lane for following orders. He was told to remove all union logos and slogans from the plant during a bitter contract dispute. He complied by cutting the union logo from a sign at the plant entrance that

also displayed the Staley logo and the words, "Partners in Quality."

"Third World" Treatment: The German embassy in Washington, two consulates and US BMW dealers were targeted for pickets by US unions in June to protest BMW's "Third World" treatment of the US, according to the Wall Street Journal. Unionized in Germany, BMW hopes to use low-wage, nonunion labor to build a new plant in South Carolina and build cars there.

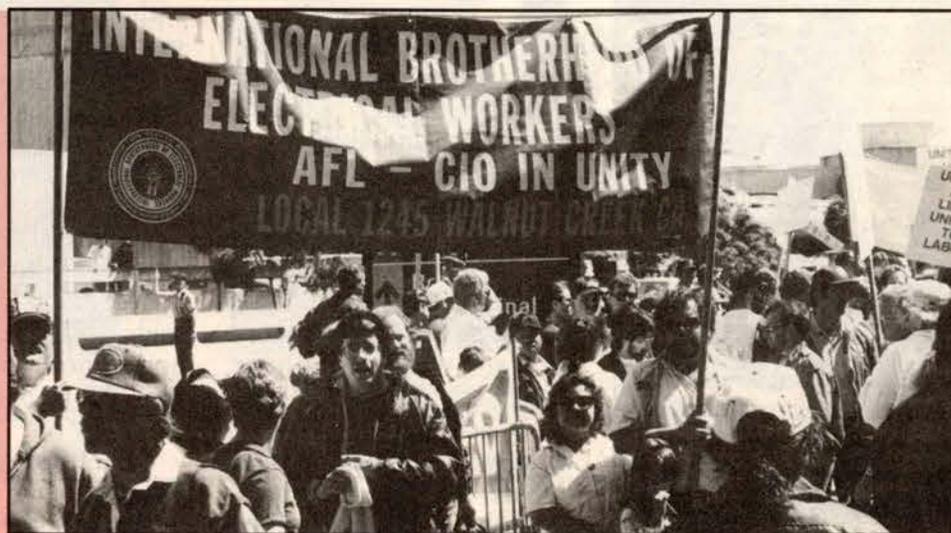
No Toilet Duty: Caterpillar was forced by the NLRB to post a notice at its Aurora, Ill., plant that it won't assign United Auto Workers' stewards "to the duty of cleaning washrooms, urinals or toilets."

Going Up: Disability claims by US employees rose 23% in 1992 over 1989, according to findings in 150 industries tracked by Unum Corp. The increase reflects more mental disorders like depression and anxiety, as well as more cumulative trauma disorders.



"Nothing personal... But you just don't fit in here."

UNITED AIR LINES PROTEST
Local 1245 members turned out at a San Francisco Airport rally in May to offer support to union Flight Kitchen workers at United Air Lines who are being asked to take wage and benefit cuts of 25% by United's CEO Stephen Wolf. Gathering under the Local 1245 banner were members Leo Tablizo, PG&E-Belmont; Dave Walters, PG&E San Francisco Steam Generation; Steve van Zandt, Western Cable TV; and Jim Kamariotis, PG&E Electric T&D. (Photo: Landis Marttila)



Utility Reporter wins journalism awards

The Utility Reporter captured five labor journalism awards in competition sponsored by the Western Labor Press Association for the 1992 calendar year.

Local 1245 member and PG&E lineman Eugene Williams won second place in the best cartoon category with a cartoon showing how business uses the US government to get tax breaks at workers' expense.

Local 1245 tree trimmer Pete Colbert took second place in photography for his shot of police officers arresting union Business Rep. Dean Gurke during last year's Asplundh Tree strike. The photo appeared in the April 1992 issue.

Local 1245 Communications Director Eric Wolfe took first prize for best news story with his March 1992 account of the Asplundh Tree strike.

Winning photo by Pete Colbert



The Utility Reporter won second place for best overall publication among newspapers of eight pages or more.

A second-place award for "Best In-Depth Analysis" went to Wolfe for a story entitled "The Governor Who Would be King," appearing in the September 1992 issue.

The labor journalism awards were announced at the WLPWA annual meeting in San Diego on May 15.

Over 100 labor publications from the western United States belong to the WLPWA.

APPOINTMENTS

PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY

PG&E Ballot Committee

Rick Bentler
Barry Claybaugh
Patty Del Toro
Dan Dennis
James Dorman
Barbra Fain
Art Garza
Mike Grill
Ralph Martin
Dave Scott

Seminars to help you plan retirement

Local Union 1245 will offer Retirement Planning Seminars to members and their spouses in August and September.

The seminars will cover all aspects of pre-retirement preparations, including financial and tax planning which will be explained by financial advisors employed Merrill Lynch.

The topics for discussion

will be:

- Planning for retirement
- What happens to medical/dental insurance at retirement?
- How to draw from PG&E's Savings Fund Plan early with no penalty
- What about Joint Survivor Option on the Pension Plan?
- Pacific Gas & Electric

stock forecast

- Interest rate and inflation forecast 1993-1994

After attending the presentation, you may arrange an individual conference with the Merrill Lynch financial planning specialist to analyze your particular situation. However, the seminars and conferences are *free of charge* and involve no obligation.

Thursday, Aug. 12, 7:00 pm
Hyatt Regency
1 Old Golf Course Rd.
MONTEREY, CA 93940
(408) 372-1234

Saturday, Aug. 14, 9:00 am
Madonna Inn
100 Madonna Road
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93405
(805) 543-3000

Tuesday, Aug. 17, 7:00 pm
Holiday Inn/Oakland Airport
500 Hegenberger Road
OAKLAND, CA 94621
(510) 562-5311

Wednesday, Aug. 18, 7:00 pm
Sheraton Hotel
45 John Glenn Drive
CONCORD, CA 94520
(510) 825-7700

Thursday, Aug. 19, 7:00 pm
Holiday Inn
282 Almaden Blvd.
SAN JOSE, CA 95113
(408) 998-0400

Saturday, Aug. 21, 9:00 am
Holiday Inn
300 J Street
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
(916) 446-0100

Tuesday, Aug. 24, 7:00 pm
Holiday Inn
111 East March Lane
STOCKTON, CA 95207
(209) 474-3301

Thursday, Aug. 26, 7:00 pm
Red Lion Inn
3100 Camino Del Rio Court
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93308
(805) 323-7111

Saturday, Aug. 28, 9:00 am
Holiday Inn/Fresno Airport
5090 E. Clinton
FRESNO, CA 93727
(209) 252-3611

Tuesday, Aug. 31, 7:00 pm
Eureka Inn
7th & F Street
EUREKA, CA 95501
(707) 442-6441

Wednesday, Sept. 1, 7:00 pm
Discovery Inn
1340 N. State Street
UKIAH, CA 95482
(707) 462-8873

Tuesday, Sept. 7, 7:00 pm
Dunfey Hotel
1770 S. Amphlette Blvd.
SAN MATEO, CA 94402
(415) 573-7661

Saturday, Sept. 11, 9:00 am
Red Lion Inn
1830 Hilltop Drive
REDDING, CA 96001
(916) 221-8700

Saturday, Sept. 11, 2:00 pm
Gordon Hall Conf. Center
1400 West 3rd Street
CHICO, CA 95926
(916) 896-2180

Saturday, Sept. 18, 9:00 am
Flamingo Hotel
Fourth & Farmers Lane
SANTA ROSA, CA 95405
(707) 545-8530

Skilled workers required for safe, reliable power

Jack McNally, IBEW 1245 Business Manager

The utility industry in the United States has developed systems that are second to none in the generation, transmission and distribution of gas and electrical power.

In this era of utility deregulation, when everyone seems to be proposing ways to change the basic structure of the utility industry, it is important to remember how we got the high-quality system we have today.

It's not some accident of nature that Americans enjoy safe, reliable, and universally-available energy. Our energy systems have been built and maintained by highly-skilled utility employees who obtained their skills through union-negotiated apprenticeship and training programs.

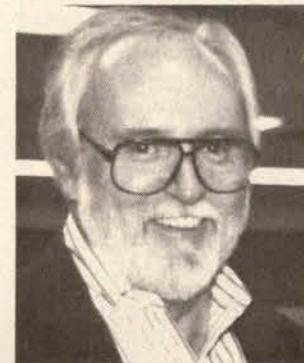
The modern era of universally-available electric power began at the close of World War II, when the population began a period of rapid expansion. With that expansion came growth in the demand for energy.

In time, industries began to require cleaner and more efficient energy. Technology became more sophisticated, requiring more sophisticated skills of those who operated it.

Utilities did not immediately appreciate this point. But unions did, and we used negotiations to demand an increase in formal training and education opportunities for unionized employees.

As a result, apprenticeship and training programs were put in place. Many of these programs were industry-specific, geared to impart the sophisticated skills specifically needed to maintain electric infrastructure in a modern society.

Utilities, in fact, are the *only* places where these industry-specific skills have been developed to any great extent. The people who pos-



sess these skills are a precious national resource.

At PG&E in the 1960s our union negotiated the Master Apprenticeship program to insure the perpetuation of the skills needed to keep the company functioning. That program initially covered 18 different skill areas. Additional ones have since been added.

Utilities were reluctant at first to commit funds to training. But most utilities have come to recognize that investing in skills pays big dividends in terms of productivity.

These are the facts: we've built a highly-skilled workforce in the utility industry. IBEW members can do the job better than anybody. We keep the power running. We've built a system that protects the safety of the workers and protects the public safety as well.

Local 1245 and other IBEW locals have a long-term commitment to maintaining this highly-skilled workforce. The question is: what is the commitment on the part of the utilities and the new players in the energy market? Will they see the long-term importance of preserving the quality and the integrity of the system we've worked so long and hard to build?

Or will that quality be sacrificed in cut-throat competition for short-term profits?

The public has a big stake in how that question is ultimately answered.

Sierra Pacific Tracy plant operators

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policy, Stralla said the longer shifts could be implemented if 75% of the employees affected by the change agreed to it.

Salcedo, in turn, laid down management's requirements: the plant's operation had to be assured, costs could not be increased, safety could not be compromised, and the schedule could not be in conflict with any laws.

Two of the union members actively participating in drafting a schedule were John East and John Bush. Salcedo rejected their first proposal and sent the operators back to the drawing board. The next time around they came up with a non-rotating schedule that met all of Salcedo's requirements.

According to Condon, Salcedo conducted two dinner meetings with the operators and their spouses to address any concerns they might have in changing to 12-hour shifts.

When the schedule was submitted to the operators for a vote, 100% of those voting approved the plan. Sierra Pacific Power's Human Resources department signed off on the plan, as did Stralla for Local 1245.

So far, the new schedule seems to be working. One benefit of having regular shifts, according to Condon, is that operators now have a chance to participate in car pools.

"That's not only good for us, saving on gas—it's good for the environment," said Condon.

Salcedo, himself a former union member and steward, gave the operators high marks in devising the new schedule.

"They did a good job. It was quite an agreement," he said.

Members pursued training on own initiative

Redding tree trimmers gain arborist certificates

Their job didn't require it, but line clearance tree trimmers for the City of Redding took the initiative recently to become certified arborists.

Local 1245 member Jay Hathaway, one of five tree trimmers to gain the arborist certification, said one beneficiary of the training will be the trees themselves. As arborists, the tree trimmers are more knowledgeable in the art of minimum trim, which should mean healthier trees and fewer burning problems.

The training could also have a public relations payback for the City of Redding, according to union member Blair Noel, who noted that customers tend to be protective of trees on their property.

"As an arborist, you can tell a customer more about their trees. It's good public relations," said Noel.

The desire to maintain a skilled and efficient

workforce prompted the City of Redding to send the tree trimmers for training, according to Frank Ryan, operations manager of Redding's electric department. Ryan praised

the tree trimmers for seeking the certificate and having the persistence to achieve it.

"It's a difficult certificate to get. It's a measure of the dedication this group brings to

their job," said Ryan.

Ryan said the city wanted to serve the public "the best we can," and that the way to do that is "to be as skilled and efficient as possible."



Line clearance tree trimmers for the City of Redding are, from left: Gary Hammon, Tom Harrell, Jay Hathaway, John Murphy, Ray Thomas, and Blair Noel. (Photo: Eric Wolfe)

Skies clear for 'Valentino' Poker Run

By Jim Dorman

What if we held a Poker Run and nobody came? I asked myself that question on June 5 as I was waiting to sign in the boats for this year's Joe Valentino Memorial Poker Run and Barbecue (formerly Day on the Delta). Although it was a clear morning, weather reports had predicted rain, which kept people away.

For those who did show up the weather was great, the water gun fights playful, the river smooth and the food plentiful. We had only 95 poker hands played, but lots of gifts for the ramp raffle thanks to Local 1245 Busi-

ness Manager Jack McNally, The New Mecca, Premier Video, Nacho Perez (PG&E), Chris Wiley (PG&E), and Stanley Clark (Local 1245 member).

I had feared that with such a small turnout we would not break even, but to my surprise, after expenses (the food) we turned a profit of \$30. We will turn that over to the Memorial Wall committee, which plans to build a wall in front of the Walnut Creek union hall to memorialize Joe Valentino and perhaps other members.

I promised the winners of the poker run that their names would appear in the Utility Reporter in lieu of

money, so here are this year's winners:

With four of a kind, Ida Lee. With a full house, Carmen Elizondo. With three of a kind, Erica Pate, John Duncan, Ervin Gaerlan, Bill Pate, and Ida Lee. With two pair, Kathy DeFoot, Nadia Pate, Bill Pate, Terri Holmes, Stan Clark, Lorin Davis (twice), Robert White, Joshua Gaerlan and Josh Elkins.

Thanks go out to all who volunteered—I think everyone there ended up helping in one way or another—with special thanks to our Chef Ida Lee, and event chairman Bill Pate. Thank you to Ed Caruso from the union for showing up and helping me sign in six boats over a three-hour period, and starting the water gun fights.

With any luck at all, the weather will be great next year and we'll have our usual large gathering—on Saturday, June 4, 1994. See you then.

(Jim Dorman is on the union's Advisory Council)

Joe Valentino Memorial Dinner

Friday, July 9, 1993
7:00 pm

IBEW Union Hall
3063 Citrus Circle
Walnut Creek, Calif.

Proceeds from the dinner will be used to construct a memorial wall in front of the Local 1245 union hall.

Dinner tickets: \$15

For information call
Connie O'Donnell

510-674-6509

To purchase tickets, or to make a contribution to the Memorial Wall, send check payable to Connie O'Donnell to:

Connie O'Donnell
1232 Blvd. Way
Walnut Creek, CA
94595

Steve Quinn, 45, perishes in fire

Steve Quinn, an 18-year member of Local 1245, was fatally burned in a brush fire on June 16.

The accident occurred sometime shortly after noon while Quinn was operating a flail mower on a canal bank near Planada for his employer, Merced Irrigation District. Quinn was 45.

Local 1245 linemen ready to rodeo

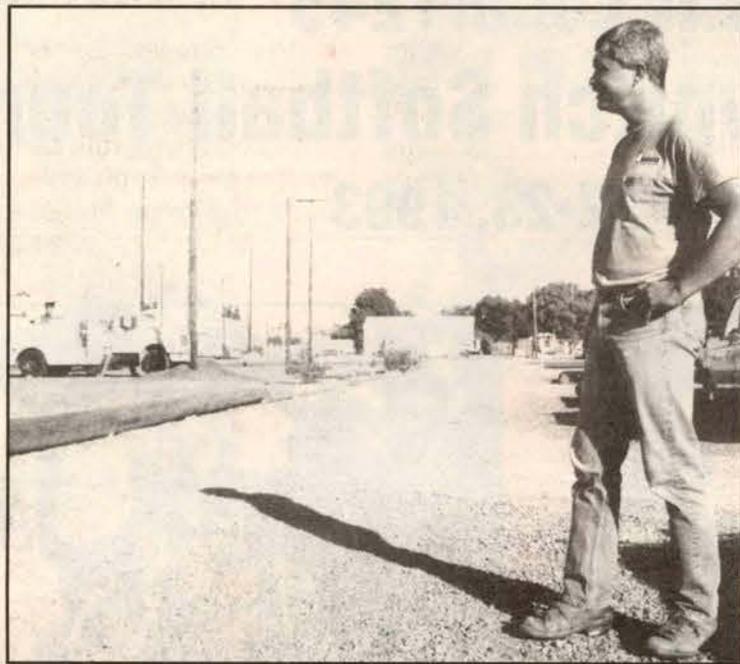
At this year's regional Lineman's Rodeo in Sacramento, Max Fuentes, Jerry Tittle and Gerald Mankins have a lot to live up to. And it doesn't bother them a bit.

Last year, the three linemen for the Sacramento Municipal Utility District took first place in competition among municipal utilities at the National Lineman's Rodeo in Kansas City, Mo., and second place among all teams. This year they hope to do just as well—both in the national event on Sept. 25 in Kansas City and in the regional competition to be held July 10 in Sacramento.

But they think the benefits of rodeo competition go far beyond the momentary excitement of winning. According to Fuentes, participants benefit from observing linemen from other parts of the country, where different tools and different techniques are sometimes used.

And then there's the element of competition.

"It makes you do your work better," Fuentes insisted, noting that you want to try harder "if you know



Local 1245 member Scott Hylton, SMUD's rodeo coordinator, surveys grounds where rodeo equipment will be built.

there are other guys out there doing it faster than you."

The July 10 rodeo in Sacramento is being co-sponsored by Local 1245 and three of its signatory employers: SMUD, Sierra Pacific Power, and Pacific Gas and Electric. Line crews from other area utilities are also expected to participate.

Scott Hylton, a SMUD heavy foreman in charge of preparing the rodeo grounds, said rodeo competition im-

proves skills by instilling a type of mental discipline when performing linework.

"It develops a thought process where you have to pick [the job] apart in such detail: these are the rules you live by, where you make no mistakes, there are no wasted moves," Hylton said. That level of concentration carries over onto the job, he believes.

Fuentes agrees. "Because we're competitive, and take our job seriously, we'll get that job done," Fuentes said. "The spirit of the team—it helps your production."

Fuentes credits SMUD's training facility for the outstanding performance by SMUD at the national rodeo last year. SMUD crews swept first, second, and third place in competition with about 60 other municipal utility teams. And a SMUD apprentice, Greg Smelser, took first place among apprentices in the pole-climbing competition.

In part because of Smelser's success, rodeo organizers decided to have apprentice-level competition included in this year's regional rodeo.

Fuentes, Tittle and Mankins sound like they expect to repeat last year's outstanding performance. But even if they don't, they aren't too worried about it.

"If you get to the top of the mountain [even once] you can say you did it," said Fuentes.



SMUD linemen Jerry Tittle, Max Fuentes, and Gerald Mankins hope to repeat last year's Rodeo successes.

Deregulation

From PAGE ONE

nated by large, vertically-integrated utilities with a monopoly on all phases of the market—generation, transmission and distribution. By amending the Public Utility Holding Company Act, the US Congress opened the door to Independent Power Producers (IPPs) to compete in markets for electric power. And by amending the Federal Power Act, Congress provided IPPs more assured access to the transmission grid.

However, Congress left individual states some leeway in deciding how far to take deregulation. Last month's PUC hearing offered the utilities a chance to propose a new regulatory framework, and gave panelists a chance to respond.

All three utilities proposed incentives for making utilities operate more efficiently, but PG&E was the most enthusiastic about the role of market forces. Among other proposals, PG&E said it wanted "flexibility" in setting prices to prevent its large industrial customers from turning to other suppliers.

Impact on Ratepayers

This proposal prompted panelist Ashley Brown, a former Ohio PUC commissioner, to question what impact "price flexibility" would have on residential ratepayers, who presumably would not have the market power to negotiate for special rates. Brown pointed out another problem with entrusting an essential service to the marketplace:

"People want to reduce uncertainty with respect to power supply, but what's more uncertain than the market?" he asked.

In a background paper,

the PUC noted it had longstanding constitutional obligations with respect to electric power, including "universal service, safe and reliable service, and service which does not unduly discriminate among consumers."

However, the PUC is likely to come under increasing pressure from powerful economic forces with an interest in maximizing the market's role and minimizing public oversight. Industrial consumers of electricity, hoping to benefit from "price flexibility", will surely exercise their muscle in favor of further deregulation.

Likewise, Independent Power Producers can be expected to seek changes in the current regulatory framework that would increase their chances at getting a piece of the action.

And there's a lot of action to be had in the California energy market.

PG&E, the nation's largest investor-owned utility according to a recent survey by Business Week magazine, had over \$10.2 billion in sales last year. Southern California Edison ranked third with nearly \$8 billion, while San Diego Gas & Electric had close to \$2 billion.

But if there is a lot of money to be made in the deregulation of this huge market, there is also something to be lost if deregulation goes too far: assured access to safe and reliable power for all the people of California.

The next couple of years could well determine whether the public retains some measure of control over a vital resource, or whether control is entirely surrendered to unregulated enterprises beholden only to their shareholders.

The PUC is likely to come under increasing pressure from powerful economic forces with an interest in maximizing the market's role and minimizing public oversight.

IBEW Local1245 16th Annual Slowpitch Softball Tournament May 22-23, 1993



Class "D" Champions:
J & R Janitorial



Class "Over 35" Champions:
Colma Reds

Winners' Circle



Class "D" Second Place:
SMUD Team #1



Class "Over 35" Second Place:
Repro Rejects



Class "D" Third Place:
Chosen Few

Individual Trophies

All Tournament: Class D

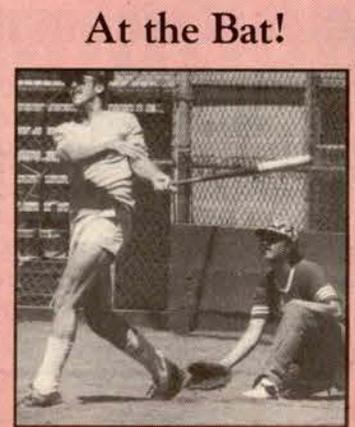
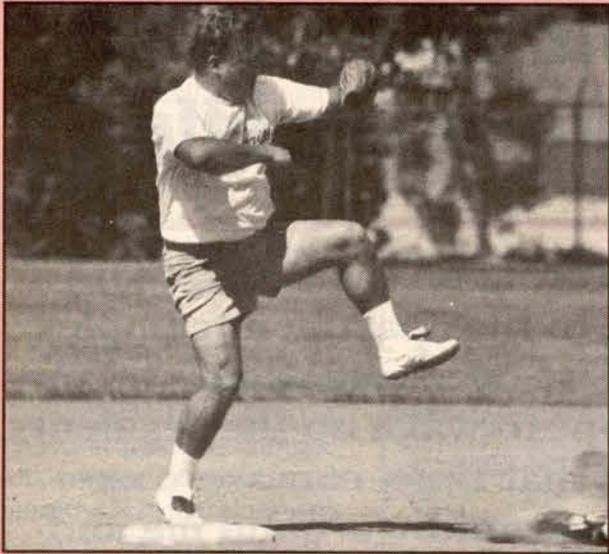
MVP: Billy Hinegartner

- 1st Rich Carrasco, J & R Janitorial
- 1st Frank Rutledge, J & R Janitorial
- 1st Chris Bailey, J & R Janitorial
- 1st Brad Chambers, J & R Janitorial
- 2nd Loren Boelman, SMUD #1

- 2nd Bruce Green, SMUD #1
- 2nd Richard DeArcos, SMUD #1
- 3rd Dennis LaChapelle, Chosen Few
- 3rd Sam Andreoli, Chosen Few
- 4th Anthony Blake, Pothead's

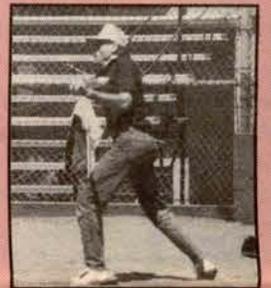
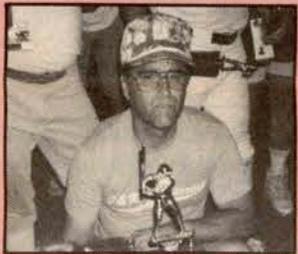
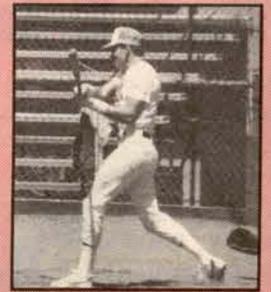
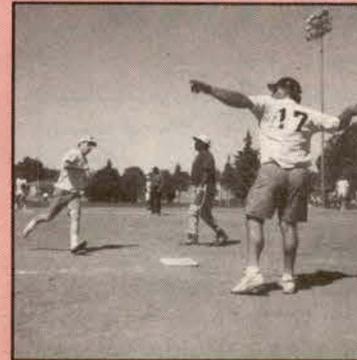
All Tournament: "Over 35"

MVP: Dave Pizzo
Best Defensive: Rick Wassmer

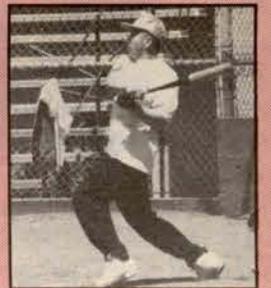


At the Bat!

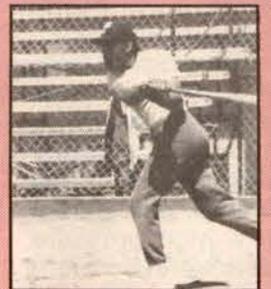
The Race to the Plate!



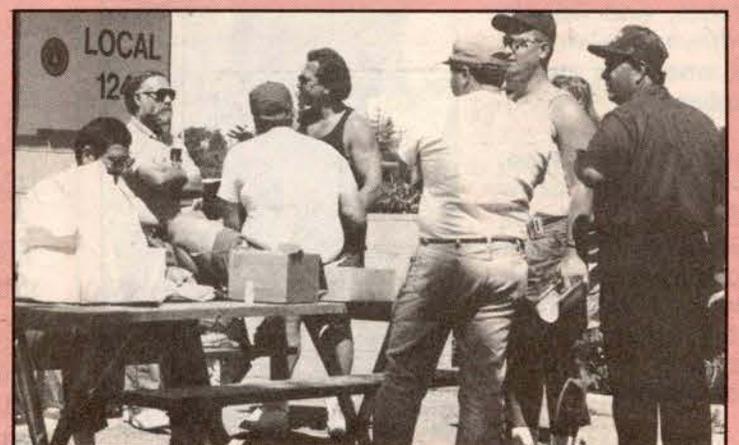
Take Me Out to the Ballgame!



Play-by-Play
Photos by Ed Caruso & Friends



n Few



Local 1245 Softball Commissioner Ed Caruso (seated)

Accident victim needs blood

Local 1245 member Kevin Houston, a PG&E fitter at Monterey Service Center, needs donations of O-Negative blood. Houston's leg was amputated following a backhoe accident last month.

If donating outside the Monterey area, indicate that it should be credited to Kevin Houston at County Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula. Members wishing to offer other forms of assistance should contact PG&E General Foreman Mike Scardina at 408-648-3258.

PG&E Gas T&D



Above: At work in Sacramento recently replacing a low pressure gas system with a high pressure system were (from left) Jim Souza, foreman and 27-year union member, and Dennis Cardin, utility worker and one-year union member.

At right: Louis Basso, a PG&E light crew foreman-gas, pauses while performing meter inspections in a San Francisco residential district last spring. Basso is a 37-year union member.



PG&E employee at Diablo Canyon

Member wins Life Saving Award for apartment fire rescue effort

Local 1245 member Michael Creath has received the Life Saving Award Plaque and pin from the IBEW for his role in helping about a dozen people escape an apartment fire last December.

Creath, an 11-year union member, jumped into action at four o'clock on the morning of Dec. 12, 1992, when he heard explosions outside of his apartment.

"Looking out my balcony door, I saw flames over the 40-foot trees between my carport and the adjacent carport," Creath said in an account he wrote shortly after the event. Dressing on the run, Creath raced to the apartment complex and beat on several doors in an attempt to wake up the residents.

"By that time, cars were exploding rapidly around me and timbers were crashing down into the carport," Creath said. "The heat was intense."

He quickly realized that the front of the apartment could not be used as an evacuation route, so he ran to the back, where he saw his wife (who had already called 911) up on a fence telling people further into the complex not to go back into their apartments.

Ready to Jump

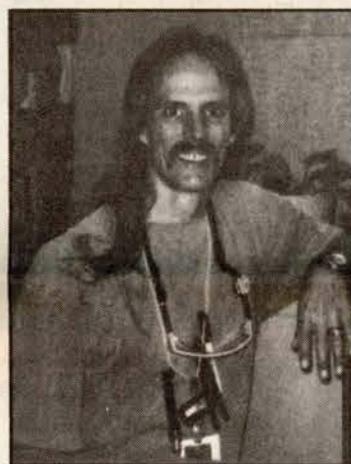
"I looked up and saw a couple at their second story window pleading for help. As I jumped over fences to help, I noticed an elderly woman at her window ready to jump. I yelled for a ladder or a rope from the crowd," said Creath.

When a neighbor, Kevin Webster, brought an extension ladder, the two men climbed up and helped about a half dozen people exit through second story windows.

"Still waking more people up, we conducted a door-to-door search to insure complete evacuation had taken place. By then, we had woke up and evacuated 16 apartments," Creath said.

Dressing on the run, Creath raced to the apartment complex and beat on several doors in an attempt to wake up the residents.

'By that time, cars were exploding rapidly around me and timbers were crashing down into the carport,' Creath said. 'The heat was intense.'



Michael Creath

After the Fire Department arrived and began to get the fire under control, Creath assisted fire fighters in locating gas main shut-offs and electricity panels.

"We went with the gas company from apartment to apartment looking for gas leaks. PG&E sent a service-

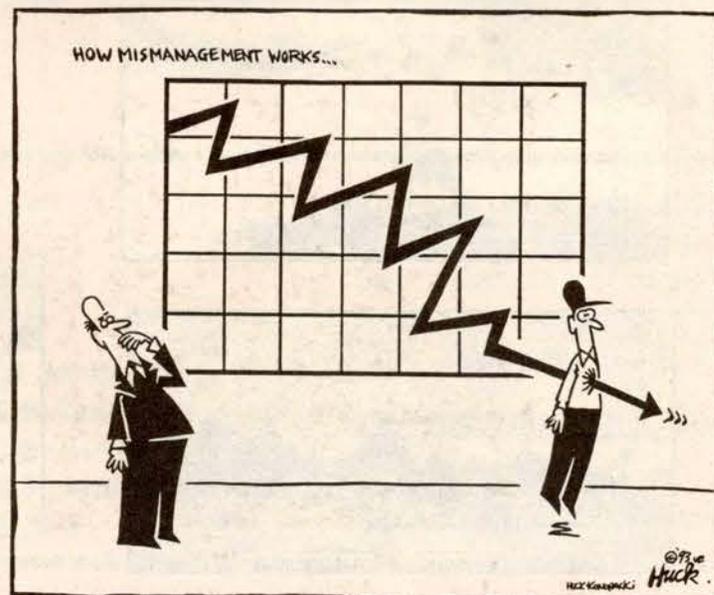
man out to help reduce the risk of electric shock to the firemen, so we located the main breaker for him," said Creath.

Only when the situation was well under control did Creath have a chance to assess his own condition: a fall in the backyard had fractured his tailbone. Elizabeth Creath suffered cut and bruised feet.

"A Lot of Tears"

Creath said he didn't consider himself a hero, just "a neighbor and a friend." He remembers that while trying to comfort his neighbors in the immediate aftermath of the fire, "a lot of tears hit my shoulders from hugs I received."

Creath is a Chem-Rad Protection Technician at Pacific Gas & Electric's Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant.



Shasta Dam Area PUD

Members determined to preserve union

When citizens of the Shasta Dam Area Public Utility District gathered on July first to officially become the city of Shasta Lake, Utility District employees planned on being there, too—with a union contract ready for signing.

This issue of the Utility Reporter went to press before that historic encounter took place. But the issues that prompted it had been brewing for some time.

Why did District residents decide to become a city?

Some speculate that it was about money. There were questions about the way the county was distributing public funds. There was talk about a city designation providing access to new sources of grant money.

Members of Local 1245 employed by the Public Utility District regarded such speculation with a certain amount of detached skepticism. But there's one thing the employees aren't at all detached about: their union contract.

The employees have been led to believe their jobs will end when the city is born. No one is saying who will be rehired by the new city and under what circumstances.

The fate of the union con-

tract is unknown.

Organized since 1980, the District employees think they have a lot to offer the new city.

"The best thing they've got going for them is their employees," said Bill Gardner, a troubleman. But as of mid-June management had not bothered to inform the employees what is in store for them, a situation Gardner called "asinine."

But unionism isn't about waiting around for fate to run its course. It's about action.

So on the evening of July 1, when the new city council is sworn in, the union members plan on being there with contract in hand, ready to be signed.

"We'll be going in at seven p.m. and ask the new city council to recognize the unit," said Business Rep. Jack Osburn.

Although the employees know that bargaining is part of unionism, giving up their union just because their employer changes clothes is one item they don't plan to negotiate over.

"The last contract they tried to divide and conquer [us]," said lineman Ken Nielsen. "It didn't work."

The employees intend to "stay united" through this current transition, said Nielsen, adding, "It's going to be interesting."



Shasta Dam Area PUD employees include Chuck Robinson, Sr. Plant Operator; Jose Castro, Water Waste Water Maintenance II; Mike Adams, Water Waste Water Leadman; Ron Criss, Floating Utility Maintenance Man; Stephanie Tonsing, Water Waste Water Maintenance (and shop steward); John Bishop, Meter Reader II and Warehouseman; and Sheldon Eardley, Water Waste Water Leadman. Inset: Bob Cone, Water Waste Water Working Foreman.

Bella Vista Water District

Meeting separately: fun while it lasted

Union members at the Bella Vista Water District never left the City of Redding unit of Local 1245.

But there were times they wanted to concentrate on issues pertaining strictly to their own employer. So a while back, union members at Bella Vista began meeting after-hours on District property.

"We're kind of like a family. We're all pretty close-knit," said union member Chuck Lukens. "So we formed our own little unit."

But now that they're in the second year of a three-year agreement, Bella Vista employees are shutting down their separate meeting, acknowledging that there aren't any burning issues requiring their attention right now.

Beginning in July, they'll fold themselves back into the City of Redding unit. But that doesn't mean they won't resume their own meetings if the situation warrants.

"When the need comes for us all to come together on District property, we'll do it. In the meantime, we can meet with the others [in

Redding]," said shop steward Bonny-Lee Doyle.

Union steward Phil Alleman doesn't think where members attend is so important, just so long as they attend somewhere.

"As a union we're only as strong as we come together," said Alleman.

So for now, the Bella Vista meetings are over. But members agree it was fun while it lasted.



Shasta Dam Area PUD employees William Gratteau, Apprentice; Bill Gardner, Troubleman; Doug Lowrance, Lead Worker; and Ken Nielsen, Lineman. (Photos: Eric Wolfe)



Bella Vista Water District employees gather in June, along with Business Rep. Jack Osburn (right), for their last meeting at the District. Attending were Bonny-Lee Doyle, Phil Alleman, Michael Grandmain, Richard Welch, Debbie Pollard, Chuck Lukens, and Michael Lawrence. (Photo: Eric Wolfe)

Sacramento Regional Transit

RT mechanics prepare way for new CNG buses

Sacramento Regional Transit is on the road to possessing the largest bus fleet in America to run on compressed natural gas (CNG). It's a distinction that RT could not achieve without the expertise of its union mechanics, members of Local 1245.

In recent months, RT has been dispatching the mechanics to Rome, NY to inspect the new CNG-powered vehicles as they roll down the assembly line operated by the manufacturer, Bus Industries of America.

According to Local 1245 shop steward Larnell Gill, the RT mechanics were responsible for making sure that "everything that was supposed to be on there was on there."

Union member John Mendonca said half the RT fleet will be converted to CNG vehicles by early 1994. The whole fleet, comprising 112 vehicles, will operate on the clean-burning fuel by the year 2000.

A compressor station and fueling island have been constructed to keep the new fleet supplied with fuel. Service persons will refuel the vehicles on a daily basis, mechanics will perform repairs and preventative maintenance, while facility maintenance workers will maintain the compressor and fueling stations.

Clean-burning CNG buses, along with RT's fleet of light rail vehicles, will deliver a big bonus to area residents: downtown Sacramento will be free of diesel pollutants.

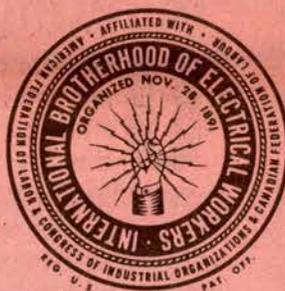
According to union member Frederick Carr, RT's venture into compressed natural gas is being carefully tracked by other urban mass transit districts. If it proves successful, CNG could become the standard for urban transit systems.

The first CNG vehicles are to be unveiled in a ceremony in Sacramento on July 6.

Clean-burning natural gas buses, along with RT's fleet of light rail vehicles, will deliver a big bonus to area residents: downtown Sacramento will be free of diesel pollutants.



RT mechanics in front of a current diesel bus. From left: Larnell Gill, Richard Naylor, John Mendonca, John Bowden, and Ben Valencia.



RT mechanics and Business Rep. Wayne Greer in front of one of the buses retired in the 1970s.



Members working on the light rail system for RT include (at left, from left) Advisory Council member Wilfred Nunez, Donnell Williams and Jim Watt.



RT light rail vehicle in operation in Sacramento.

Donnell Williams (right) works on the magnetic brake system of a light rail vehicle.



Organizing underway in Yuba City/Oroville area

By Orville Owen

As a result of the interest shown by retirees in the Yuba City/Chico/Oroville/Marysville-area, a special bulletin, along with Retiree Club organizing packets, was recently mailed to all retired members in those areas.

Members from these areas who would like to participate in establishing a Local 1245 Retiree's Club chapter are encouraged to contact the Retiree's Club at the Local 1245 Walnut Creek office. Or they may contact the local Business Representative in their area for assistance.

Organizing all of our retired members is still the prime goal of the Retiree's Club. The issues and policies that caused us to band together over 50 years ago are still alive and kicking, and the struggle for fairness and dignity still goes on.

Even though we now enjoy some security and better quality of life than those who came before us, we must maintain our vigil. It is to our benefit to strive to have a voice in those matters that concern our retirement years—to have a voice in the union we belong to, the companies we worked for, and the nation we live in.

Without our union and our potential political power, we become fair game to the forces that believe they can expand their wealth and fame off the backs of the retirees and their dependents. As I see it, we have no other alternative but to organize and take the steps that are necessary to protect our interests and the interests of all working people.

It's no secret that health care costs are exploding. Last year health costs rose a whopping 22% and they have tripled over the past five years.

As the economy weakens, profits shrink and health care costs continue to skyrocket, everyone involved in providing health care benefits is forcing more and more money out of retirees' pockets.

In a letter I recently received from union brother and former Business Manager Ron Weakley, he stated:

"Retirees from the private sector, as well as government agencies, will get the shaft even deeper than they have. Retirees' dependents are the first and main target, but all

will feel the hit."

So as I see it, even though we are enjoying our retirement years, we cannot bury our heads in the sand and ignore what is happening in

the world. We must organize and participate in those decisions that affect our lives and the lives of our dependents.

We need each other! Keep the faith!

National health care

Reform should include long-term care

By Senator Russ Feingold

Our country is facing a health care crisis. Although there is disagreement on the specifics of reform, with over 35 million Americans lacking health care coverage and the cost of care exploding, the need for comprehensive acute care reform is widely acknowledged.

What has not been recognized, however, is the critical need for long-term care reform.

Though long-term care benefits have been included in some health care reform plans, none of the proposals has offered the fundamental reform that is needed. Such neglect is a serious error as the demographic imperatives of health care are most strikingly felt in the area of long-term care. The elderly are the fastest growing segment of the population, and those over age 85—individuals most in need of long-term care—are the fastest growing segment of the elderly.

Failure to reform our current long-term care system will mean a growing population of long-term care consumers served by a shrinking set of alternatives, all of them increasingly costly.

We need legislation that

offers fundamental long-term care reform, legislation that will emphasize community- and home-based flexible services that respond to individual consumer choice and preference, and that will relieve pressure on the federal deficit and on families, who are often forced to spend their life savings to pay for the long-term care of a loved one.

Long-term care reform should be state-based within an overall federal health system. States like my own state of Wisconsin have been laboratories of long-term care reform. They have managed to create service systems that are responsive to consumer needs and preferences without relying on an overreaching bureaucracy.

Indeed, it is often the bureaucracies of the current system of long-term care programs that have been much more responsive to provider desires than to consumer preferences. Taking a traditional regulatory approach, they have driven up costs to consumers and taxpayers, and have lacked the flexibility needed to respond to consumers.

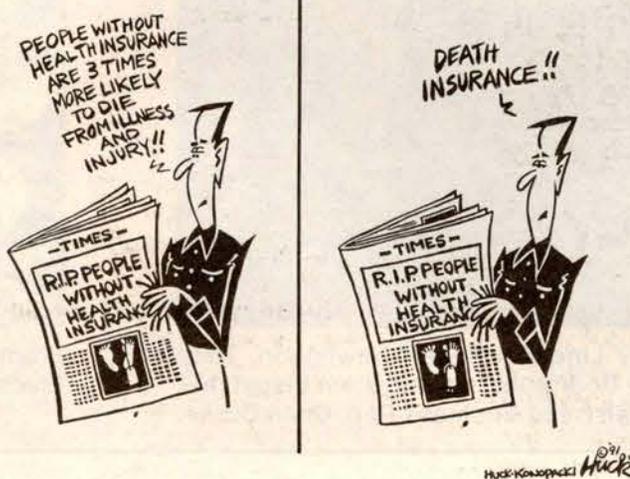
We must move away from the current regulatory intensive medical model, and emphasize that the consumer of

long-term care services is more like a customer than a patient. The system should be flexible enough to respond to the individual preferences of the customer, from the initial assessment right on through to ongoing services, with case managers and others regularly consulting with the customer, as well as family members, to be sure their needs are met in a satisfying manner.

There is overwhelming evidence that the home- and community-based emphasis will not only keep costs down, but actually reduce costs in those instances where we keep people out of nursing homes. In Wisconsin, we've experienced savings of 25% to 50%, lowering long-term care costs to taxpayers by hundreds of millions of dollars. At the federal level, that savings translates into billions of dollars.

We must work to ensure that this kind of fundamental long-term care reform is included in the overall health care reform package that will be considered by Congress later this year.

(Senator Russ Feingold is a Democrat from Wisconsin. This essay is excerpted from Senior Citizens News, June 1993)



IBEW
Local
1245



Retirees Corner

A Mother Jones postage stamp?

The "Friends of Mother Jones" are spearheading a grassroots campaign to honor Mother Jones on a United States postage stamp.

Mother Jones is one of labor's most legendary figures. She spent the last several decades of her long life fighting alongside workers—especially miners—trying to establish unions. She spoke out fearlessly, whether confronting judges, police, bosses, or goons.

Mother Jones was a founding member of the Industrial Workers of the World. She lived from 1830 to 1930.

Union members who wish to support the drive to put Mother Jones on a US postage stamp should write letters or send petitions to Marvin Runyon, Postmaster General, US Postal Service Headquarters, 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Washington, DC 20260. Send copies of your letters to Jim Goltz, Secretary, Friends of Mother Jones, 3354 Edwardsville Rd., Edwardsville, IL 62025.

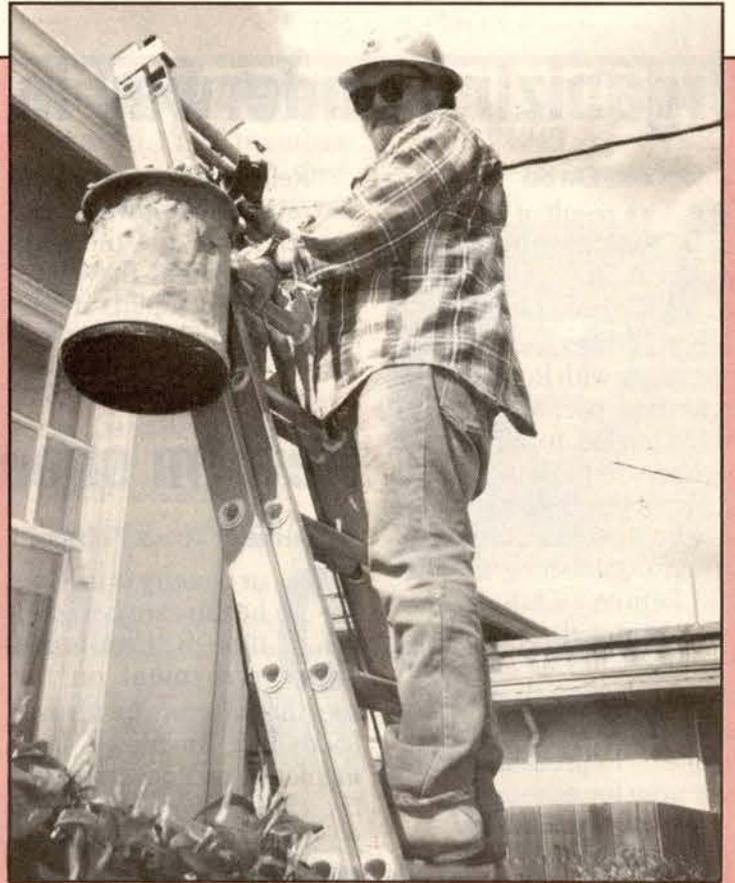
"Professors wonder what is the matter. Newspapers wonder what is the matter. The churches wonder what is the matter.... Don't you understand what is the matter today? The man up in the tower, watching the clouds rumbling all over, knows that before there is a crash of thunder there are clouds everywhere, and so it is today, my friends. There is unrest everywhere... The reason is because the world's workers have produced the enormous wealth of the world, and others have taken it."
—Mother Jones, 1921



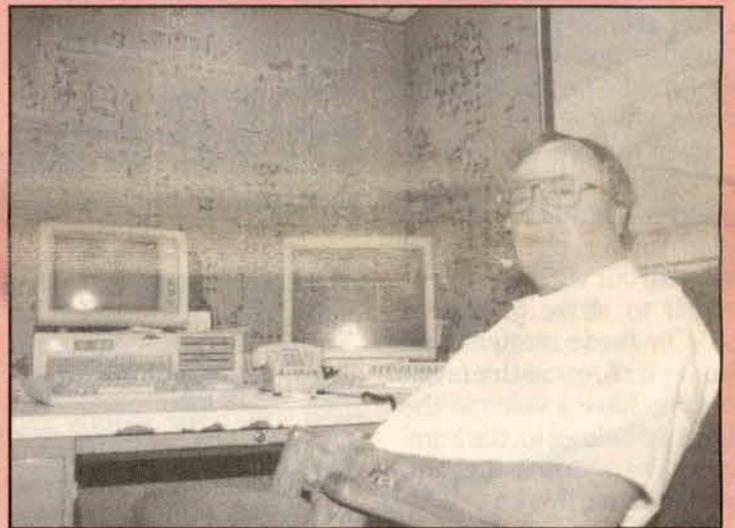
Alameda Bureau of Electricity



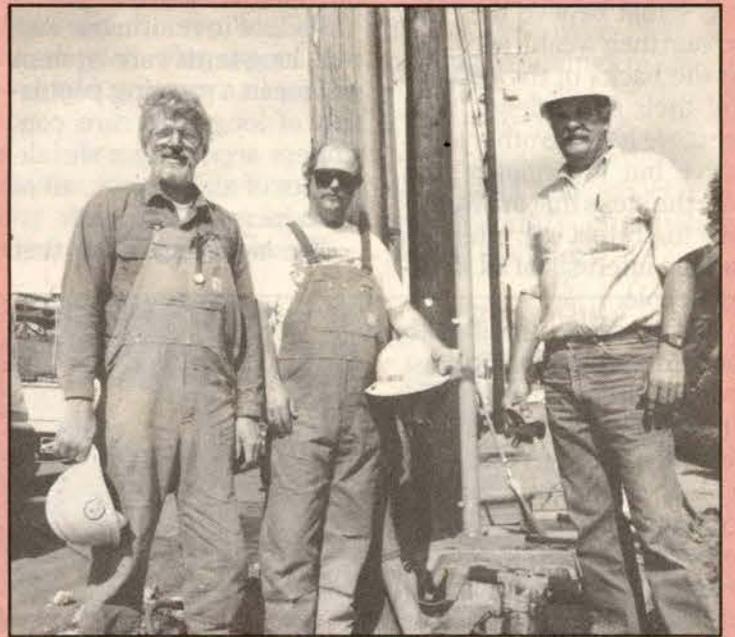
On truck, left to right: Bureau of Electricity Linemen Robert Rawlinson, Tony Bollinger, and J.R. Stevens. Standing: Larry Rodriguez, chief system dispatcher and Local 1245 Advisory Council member (left), and Business Rep. Dean Gurke.



Ray Young, service lineman. (Photos: Eric Wolfe)



Tom Taxstadt, system dispatcher.



From left: Cable Splicers Frank Ditto and Dennis Gow, and Electric Working Supervisor Leonard Erwin.