

# UTILITY REPORTER

What, Me Retire?  
See Pages 6-8

# Time to choose

## Brown offers partnership with labor

By Kathleen Brown

**A**s governor, I will rebuild a true partnership between state government and organized labor, something which has sadly been absent from Sacramento. For 12 long and economically ruinous years, the needs and goals of California's working men and women have been ignored by the governor's office.

That neglect will end when I take office next year. In my administration, organized labor will be back on the inside, part of a true partnership which will move California forward into a better economic future. With your support, and that of your families, neighbors and friends, we will make a difference, we will govern together and preserve jobs.

### Jobs, Jobs, Jobs

For years, California has had a treasure: its highly-trained, skilled, productive workforce. But Gov. Pete Wilson has frittered away this great asset.

Wilson has presided over a ruinous dismantling of the manufacturing and industrial base which helped make California the world's eighth largest economy.

Wilson pledged to create new jobs. But his misguided policies and inaction have

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**"Public safety and our very lives depend on your efforts, and any dilution of our work force with cheaper, inadequately trained, non-union employees is both poor policy and a public menace.**

**"And this is one of the sharpest differences between Pete Wilson and myself. I have spent a lifetime supporting organized labor and progressive, badly needed legislation ... while he has spent his political career trying to gut unions and destroy prevailing wages."**

*Kathleen Brown*

## Wilson offers deregulation & downsizing

By Eric Wolfe

**T**he person most responsible for the downsizing at Pacific Gas & Electric—and the hardships it has brought to PG&E employees—is Gov. Pete Wilson.

Sound ridiculous? Consider the facts:

Since taking office in 1991, Pete Wilson has personally appointed four of the five current members of the California Public Utilities Commission: Gregory Conlon, Jessie Knight Jr., Norman Shumway, and Commission President Daniel Fessler.

Wilson's commissioners set their sights on creating a "competitive market" in electric generation that would allow big business to gain "direct access" to the cheapest sources of electricity.

The CPUC plan directly threatens the economic viability of PG&E and California's other regulated electric utilities. When the plan was announced last April, PG&E's stock value immediately plummeted.

In August, PG&E announced massive job reductions in order to make itself more "competitive."

This is a fundamental fact: *a different governor would have made different appointments to the CPUC.* A governor who cared more about California's citizens would

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## CALENDAR

November 3  
Pin Dinner  
Weimar, Ca.

Nov. 5-6  
Advisory Council  
Concord, Ca.

November 8  
ELECTION DAY  
BE SURE TO VOTE!

November 18  
Pin Dinner  
Fresno, Ca.

November 19  
Fresno Call Center  
Stewards Conference  
Fresno, Ca.

November 21  
Deadline for VRI at PG&E

November 28  
Last Day to Revoke VRI

December 2, 1994  
Pin Dinner  
Redding, Ca.



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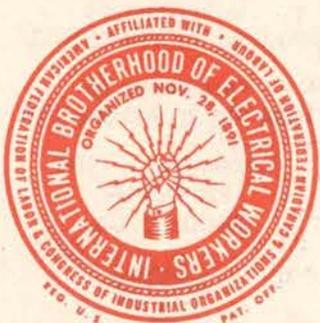
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### Workers here and abroad

## Rolling the union on...

**See You in Court:** The National Labor Relations Board went into federal court in September seeking an injunction to force Sprint to reopen its San Francisco-based Spanish-language telemarketing subsidiary and rehire the workers it fired. The NLRB is also asking the court to prohibit further closure, prohibit further harassment and intimidation of union sympathizers and to order a union election.

**Union Fund:** The Union Standard Trust is a new mutual fund dedicated to investing only in companies with significant portions of their work forces in unions, a record of good relations with those unions, and good worker health and safety records. The fund is designed to attract union pension funds.

**Credit Due:** PG&E's on-site childcare center in San Francisco was one of the reasons that PG&E was listed as one of the "100 Best Companies for Working Mothers" in the October issue of "Working Mother" magazine. Unfortunately the maga-

### A poet's response to restructuring

The California Public Utilities Commission wants to completely restructure the state's electric industry. But in a recent poem, Local 1245 retiree Charles Keppel suggests that maybe they're trying to fix something that ain't broke.

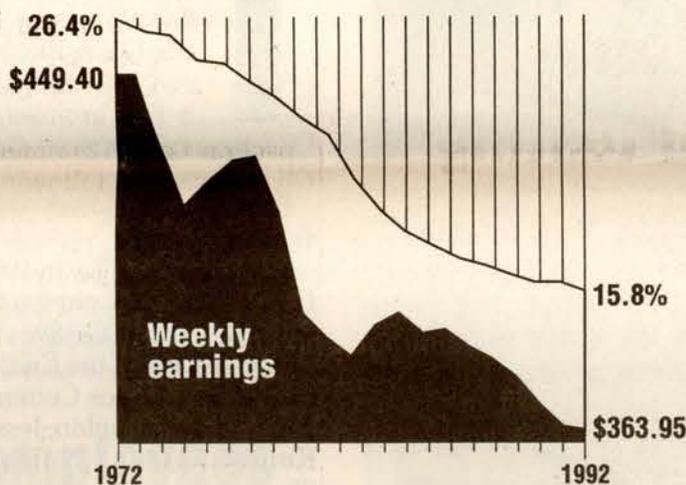
#### IT DOES

Late coming home, the quiet street,  
Parked cars, here and there a light still on.

It can't be all bad, it does work:  
Somewhere the machine is turned on,  
Wheels spinning, quietly delivering...

### As unionization declines, living standards decline

Percent of U.S. workforce unionized vs. average weekly earnings in 1992 \$



Source: Department of Labor

zine neglected to mention that PG&E's union, IBEW Local 1245, played a key role in persuading the company to create the center.

**Wrong Path:** The Presidential Commission on Worker-Management Relations—created to study possible overhaul of the nation's labor laws, found that the US labor market as a whole is dividing into "an upper tier of high-wage skilled workers, and an increasing underclass of low-paid labor." The Commission declared that "a healthy society cannot long continue along the path the US is moving..."

**Dolphin Boycott:** The Dolphin Hotel, located at Disney World in suburban Orlando, Fla., but owned and operated separately from

Disney World, has been added to the AFL-CIO boycott list. The Teamsters union has been trying to get the hotel's management to the bargaining table ever since the union won a representation election in 1993.

**Wrong Incentive:** The chairman of the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission said in September that looming deregulation was creating unprecedented economic pressure for utilities and providing an "incentive to cut corners" at nuclear reactors.

**Victories Up:** Labor unions won 50.4% of the 3,055 elections held in 1993, up from 49.9% in 1992, according to National Labor Relations Board data. Elections seeking to decertify unions are down 12%.

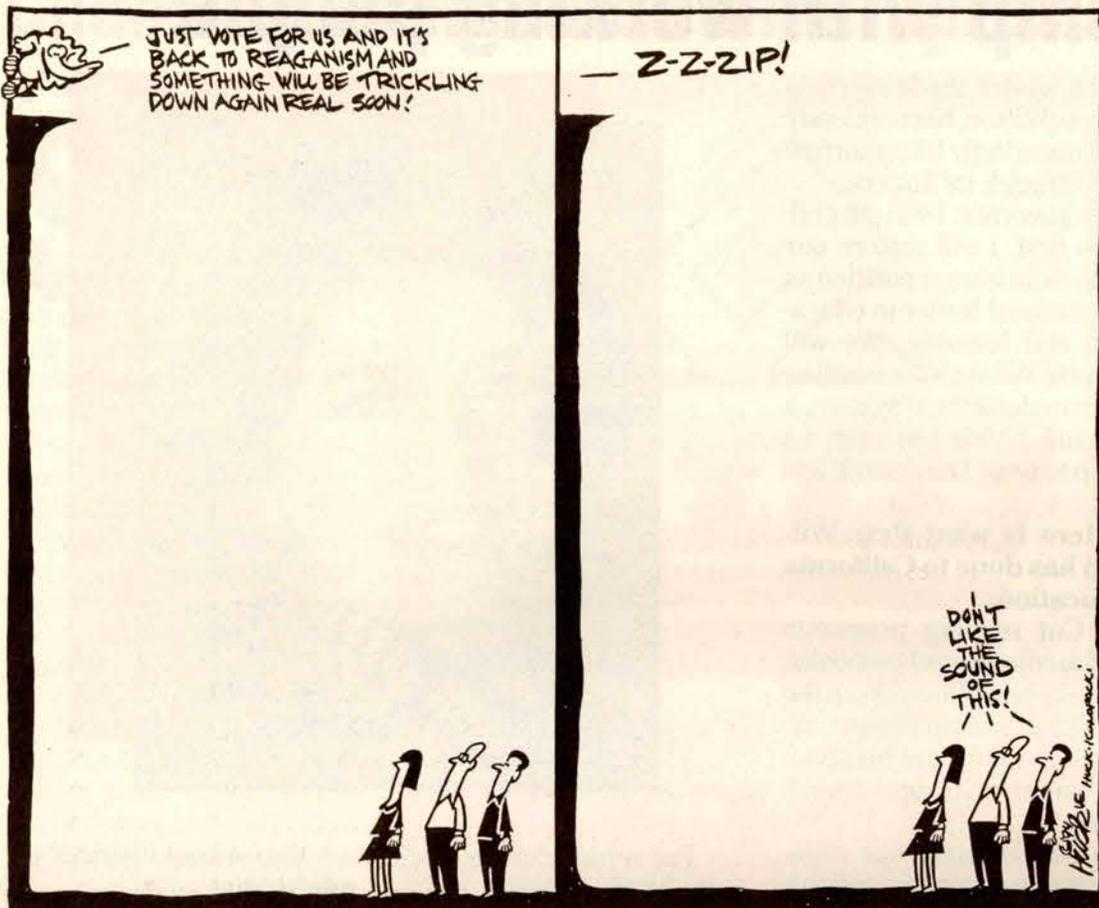


### Accident claims Dusty Johnson

Local 1245 traveler Dusty Johnson was fatally injured by electrical contact at Detroit Edison on Sept. 19.

Brother Johnson was performing work on a 4KV reframing job. It is believed he swung into an energized tap on the high side of a lightning arrester and the lower portion of his torso contacted the grounded lower side of the arrester.

Local 1245 extends its condolences to the friends and family of Dusty Johnson.



## New Year brings new regulations for random drug and alcohol testing

**O**n Jan. 1, 1995, thousands of Local 1245's members will be subjected to sweeping new regulations requiring random alcohol and drug testing.

The new regulations, issued by the United States Department of Transportation, will affect employees with commercial drivers licenses at virtually every employer with whom Local 1245 has contracts.

Under the regulations, effective Jan. 1, every employer with more than 50 drivers with commercial licenses must implement random alcohol testing (by breath analyzer) for 25% of its employees and random drug testing (by urine analysis) for 50% of its employees.

Negotiations are already underway with the Sacramento Regional Transit District and the Sierra Pacific Power Company, while bargaining with every other employer with more than 50 drivers will start up shortly.

According to Staff Attorney Tom Dalzell, who is coordinating Local 1245's bargaining efforts, some of the key

**"Although the regulations mandate large portions of the testing program, there are still several very important areas open to collective bargaining."**

*Tom Dalzell, staff attorney*

issues which need to be addressed in bargaining are:

- What employees are covered by the testing? Are all the commercial licenses now held being used?
- What will the employer do about emergency call-outs in light of the regulation's requirement that employees not drink any alcohol four hours before performing a safety sensitive job?
- What will be the consequences of a positive test result? How many chances at rehabilitation will an employee be given?
- What happens to employees covered by more than one set of drug testing regulations?

"Although the regulations mandate large portions of the

testing program," said Dalzell, "there are still several very important areas open to collective bargaining."

Dalzell noted that contesting the new regulations in court would be futile because the court had already found drivers to constitute a safety-sensitive position.

Two other sets of new Department of Transportation Regulations also go into effect on Jan. 1. Regulations affecting pipeline workers will add alcohol testing in limited circumstances (not random testing), while safety sensitive transit employees will be subjected to random alcohol and drug testing similar to the commercial drivers license program.

## Future of electric utilities will be decided on Nov. 8

Jack McNally, IBEW 1245 Business Manager

California voters will go to the polls Nov. 8 to exercise their rights under our democracy.

California's top constitutional offices as well as the Assembly and half of the State Senate are up for grabs, with many new faces in the running as a result of term limits.

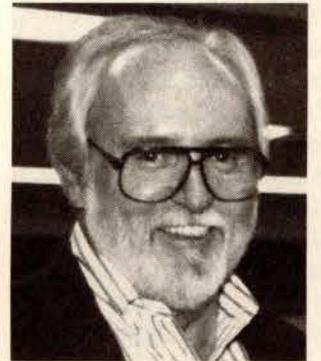
Most important of the races is the office of governor. The governor in California appoints individuals to fill seats on most state boards and commissions, as well as appointing their directors and deputy directors.

Some of the critical positions that are filled by the governor's appointment that have a direct impact on Local 1245 members are the following: Workers Compensation Appeals Board, Industrial Welfare Commission, Director and Deputy Director of the Department of Industrial Relations, State Apprenticeship, Cal-OSHA Standards Board, Cal-OSHA Appeals Board, the chief of Cal-OSHA.

And most importantly, the governor appoints the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC).

Certainly, the CPUC has had a dramatic impact on our members in recent months. The CPUC's proposal to radically change the way utilities are regulated will impact our public agency members as well as our members at the investor-owned utilities.

Pacific Gas and Electric Company and Sierra Pacific Power Company are directly regulated by the CPUC. In addition, Local 1245 represents members employed by eight cities and four districts involved with the distribution of electricity. We represent employees at ten irrigation districts,



most of whom are involved in the generation of electricity. And we represent federal employees involved in the generation and transmission of electricity at the US Bureau of Reclamation and the Western Area Power Administration.

All of these agencies will be impacted by what is finally decided by the CPUC and the legislature. In fact, any entity that generates, transmits, and distributes electricity in California will be impacted. If you have any doubt about that, just look at the list of registered "parties of interest" in the current CPUC proceedings.

State legislators and the CPUC commissioners will make the decisions on what kind of utility structure California is to have.

But in our democracy, the actual power belongs to us—the citizens. On Nov. 8, we elect the legislators who will vote on these issues, and we elect the governor who will choose the next batch of CPUC commissioners.

It is up to us to take the actions needed to improve our lives. That is the point of having a democracy.

This month's election has far-reaching consequences for the members of this union. A new governor will help change the entire landscape in which we operate.

It's a change that is long overdue.

# Brown offers partnership with working people

From PAGE ONE

resulted in the loss of more than 600,000 productive, paying jobs. He vowed to revitalize California's economy. But he has caused thousands of businesses to close, forcing tens of thousands of skilled, union workers to relocate or sharply curtail their lifestyles.

Here's an example of Wilson's failed leadership: the Aerojet Corporation sought—and received—\$250,000 in state subsidies for a conversion project. Wilson provided this money knowing fully that the project, involving the production of natural gas tanks, would be located in Nevada.

California's governor, in other words, used our money to create a new industry in Nevada, thereby destroying the possibility of creating several hundred new jobs. With this kind of friend, who needs enemies?

California cannot survive without a strong, productive, unionized manufacturing base. It's that simple. When I am governor, my top priority will be to revitalize our depressed industries and create jobs.

Together we will:

- Work to keep manufacturing and its well-paying, highly-skilled jobs in California.

- Aggressively promote California as the place for cutting edge industries to relocate and hire the best-trained and most skilled work force in the world.

- Fully use and reward the experience and expertise of skilled union members in new high-skilled, consumer-oriented projects like the electric car and high-speed mass transit.

- Lobby strongly in Washington, DC to bring new transport, defense, and sea/space exploration projects to California.

We invested millions of dollars and hours into creating an industrial workforce second to none. We simply must not allow this pool of skilled workers to go to waste. We cannot allow your priceless experience to be lost.

Pete Wilson has sat idly by while California's manufacturing base has eroded and its superb automotive workers have been forced to move away, or let their skills rust in other jobs. He has done nothing proactive to save industries and jobs. When events forced him to react, he did so slowly and ineffectively.

When I am governor I will be the biggest booster of California's industrial base. I will lead a successful effort to restore our proud, productive, manufacturing heritage. I will put people back to work—at jobs for which they have been so well-trained.

## Investing in Tomorrow

State government holds tomorrow in its hands. Unfortunately, state govern-

ment, under the leadership of Pete Wilson, has recklessly and uncaringly let tomorrow slip through its fingers.

As governor, I will put children first. I will restore our state to its former position as the national leader in education and learning. We will reverse Wilson's dismantling of our educational system, a decline which has seen us drop to near-Third world levels.

## Here is what Pete Wilson has done to California education:

- Cut reading programs and funding for schoolbooks;
- Slashed billions from the public education budget, repeatedly using it as his favorite target at budget-crunch time;

- Sat by while our classrooms became the nation's most overcrowded;

- Tried to block 100,000 youngsters from kindergarten;

- Failed miserably in his promise to be the "education governor."

## Here is what I will do for our schools and students when I am governor:

- Provide safe, drug-free and gang-free schools for every child;

- Implement a comprehensive K-12 education plan which sets meaningful goals, rigorous standards, and relevant courses for the 21st century;

- Make schools responsible for how they spend tax dollars;

- Put school control back in the hands of parents, teachers and communities;

- Create a High School "Jobs Ready" Program to prepare students for 21st century work and careers;

- Provide schools with the hardware, software and interactive TV needed to put schools on the new Information Highway;

- Reform bilingual education to teach effective English;

- Send students who bring arms to school to special disciplinary academies, and if necessary to tough juvenile "boot camps";

- Adequately fund campus security, anti-drug and gang programs and after-school projects;

- Cap school districts' administrative costs.

Education is my passion. As a concerned Californian, a mother and grandmother, I will accept nothing less than the best education for our children.

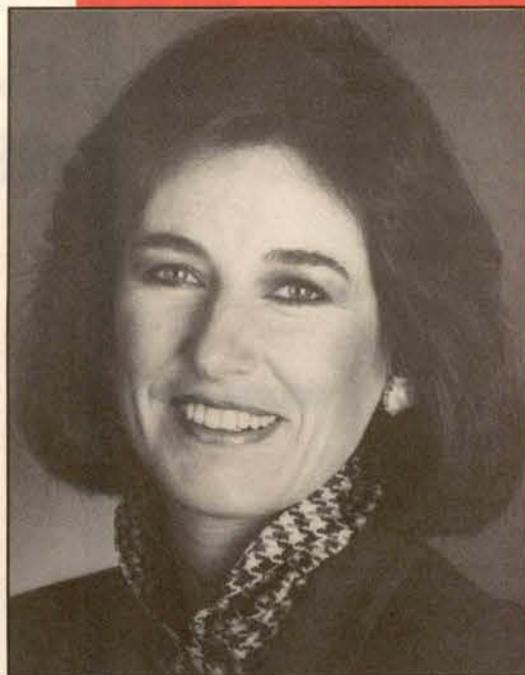
## Quality Work, Fair Wages

California's working men and women have every right to fair wages, a comprehensive benefit package, and assurance that competent, quality labor will be appreciated and rewarded.

In the vitally important building trades, it is imperative that only the best and most skilled workers are used. Public safety and our very lives depend on your efforts, and any dilution of our work force with cheaper, inadequately trained, non-union employees is both poor policy and a public menace.

And this is one of the sharpest differences between Pete Wilson and myself. I have spent a lifetime supporting organized labor and progressive, badly needed legislation like the Davis-Bacon Act, while he has spent his political career trying to gut unions and destroy prevailing wages.

(Kathleen Brown is the candidate for governor officially endorsed by IBEW Local 1245 and the California Labor Federation.)



**"California's working men and women have every right to fair wages, a comprehensive benefit package, and assurance that competent, quality labor will be appreciated and rewarded."**

*Kathleen Brown*

# Wilson's legacy to us: deregulation & downsizing

From PAGE ONE

have appointed CPUC commissioners with a more balanced view of public policy.

But Californians elected Wilson, who gave us the current CPUC commissioners, who are giving favored treatment to big business and giving the rest of California the shaft. If the CPUC plan is adopted, utility employees will see more downsizings, residential ratepayers will see higher electric bills, and all Californians will be at risk of a long-term decline in the quality of electric service.

That is not some accident of a nature. It is a direct consequence of electing Pete Wilson as governor in 1990.

And more of the same is what we can expect if Pete Wilson is re-elected Nov. 8.

## Hostility to Workers

Wilson's hostility to workers is visible in his other appointments as well. Consider the Cal-OSHA Standards Board, which is responsible for setting standards to protect workers' health and safety on the job.

To insure a balanced perspective, the Standards Board is supposed to have two representatives from business, two from labor, two from occupational safety and health, and one "public" representative. But Wilson has let the labor positions remain vacant for long periods of time and has filled all the other positions with pro-management corporate officials.

As a result, the Standards Board has consistently dragged its feet on setting standards to protect worker health and safety. For example: instead of establishing an ergonomics standard to protect workers from repetitive motion injuries—as the legislature directed it to do—the Standards Board is proposing a standard designed to protect employers from additional costs rather than protect workers from injury.

As governor, Wilson has consistently used his veto pen like a machete to hack apart bills that would have helped average working Califor-

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nians. (See box, below).

But Wilson's anti-labor bias didn't begin with his term as governor. Attacking working people has been the hallmark of his entire political career.

As San Diego mayor in the

1970s, Wilson eliminated prevailing wage provisions on city-financed public works projects. He also was credited with dismantling the San Diego Police Officers' disability retirement fund.

As a US Senator from 1983 to 1991, Wilson voted against labor 86% of the time.

During his nearly four years as governor of California, Wilson and his appointees have carried water for

the wealthiest people in California.

If he is re-elected, working people had better be prepared to hunker down for another four years of punishment.

## Wilson's shameful attack on working people

During his first three years in office, Pete Wilson vetoed 78 bills that were sponsored or supported by the California Labor Federation.

Although final figures for 1994 haven't been compiled yet, Wilson hasn't let up in his hostility toward working people. His vetoes this year include:

- **AB 3374 (Unemployment Claims)** would have imposed severe fines on employers who submit fraudulent payroll records to the Labor Commissioner, fail to maintain proper records, or force employees to pay kickbacks. The bill would also have given workers the right to sue to recover unpaid wages.

- **AB 1443 (Employee Leasing)** would have required employee leasing companies to register with the Department of Industrial Relations, in order to make sure that such companies comply with the state's workers' compensation laws. The bill was a response to a history of abuse by employee leasing firms, but Wilson vetoed it.

- **AB 990 (Overtime Pay Violations)** would have imposed the same civil penalties and remedies for violations of overtime pay re-

quirements as are now provided for violations of minimum wage requirements. Violations are extremely widespread according to the California Labor Federation. Misdemeanor penalties currently in the law are virtually unused and thus provide no deterrent against violations.

- **AB 2750 (Wage Claims, Collective Bargaining Agreements)** would have brought the California Labor Code into compliance with recent Supreme Court decisions which hold that the Labor Commissioner must enforce claims for unpaid wages by claimants who are covered by collective bargaining agreements.

- **AB 2867 (Unemployment Compensation)** would have increased the maximum weekly unemployment insurance benefit from \$230 to \$245. Twenty-nine states have benefit levels higher than California's.

- **SB 1419 (Unemployment Insurance)** would have lowered the threshold for triggering federal/state extended benefits.

- **SB 2031 (Disability Benefits)** was necessary in order to match a recent increase in workers' compensation temporary disability benefits. Historically, SDI maximum weekly benefits

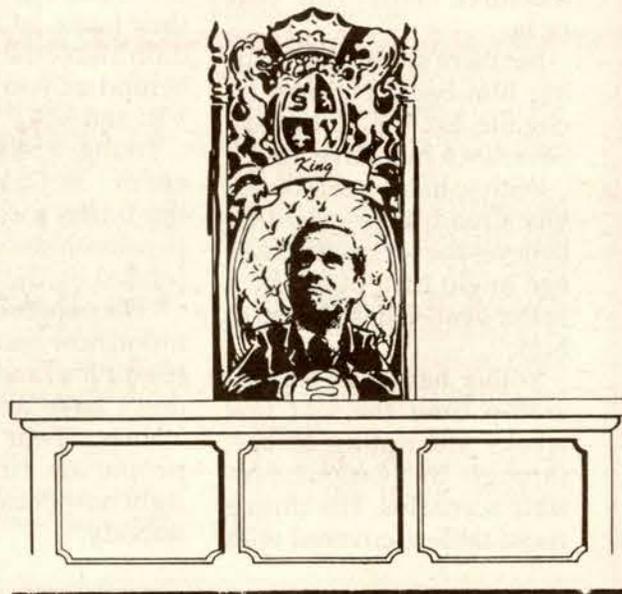
have been increased to keep pace with increases in workers' comp benefits. Obviously the replacement needs of injured workers are the same whether they happen to be hurt on or off the job.

The disability program, instituted by Gov. Earl Warren half a century ago, has always been non-political, according to California Labor Federation leader John Henning.

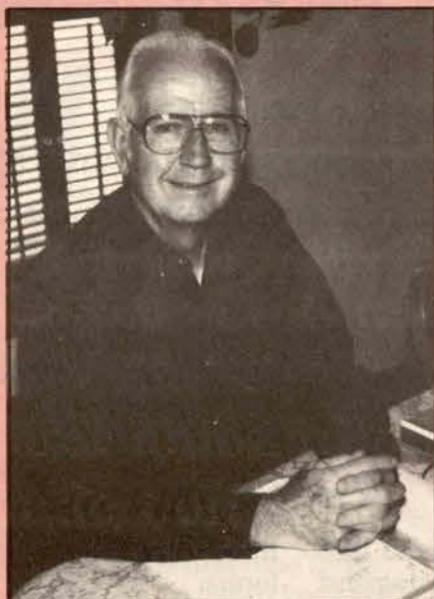
"Those who seek to make an ideological tax issue out of this bill seem to have little regard for the needs of the injured worker or for the

smooth and efficient operation of the workers' compensation and state disability insurance programs," Henning said.

- **SB 1464 (Occupational Safety and Health Violations)** would have removed an employer's ability to delay abating a workplace hazard by appealing a Cal-OSHA citation. This bill would have allowed Cal-OSHA to require abatement upon the filing of complaint, despite an employer's appeal, if the alleged violation is deemed to present a safety or health risk.



A Governor Out of Touch with the People



“If we didn’t have the union muscle behind us, you can forget the VRI and VSI... Between [the union] and the door you don’t have anybody.”

*Tom Young*

## ‘Back the union,’ Tom Young advises

**A**fter 32 years, Tom Young is bidding farewell to PG&E. The only question that remains is, “Which way out?”

Soon to be 66, Young had planned on working until early 1996. But then along came this year’s downsizing.

Now he thinks it’s time for “old timers” like himself to get out—and help reduce the chances of younger workers.

Young wasn’t in the pool of eligible workers for the 1993 Voluntary Retirement Incentive (VRI). This year he is.

But there’s one thing holding him back. He may be eligible for the Voluntary Severance Incentive, too.

With so many years of service already to his credit, he believes the severance package might turn out to be a better deal—if it is offered to him.

Young has spent considerable time the last few weeks attempting to sort through the various possible scenarios. His dining room table is covered with

books and pamphlets about retirement and investments.

He knows from personal experience that parting ways with an employer can be a far nastier experience than what he faces today at PG&E.

“The last job I had before this one, I worked for 11-1/2 years and they closed the plant. We got no severance, no retirement, no nothing. It was goodbye, that’s it,” said Young, a long-time steward.

“So actually our union has done very well and the people should start appreciating the fact that they did go out and push for [VRI and VSI]. Because PG&E on their own hasn’t got a soft spot in their heart, let’s face it. If we didn’t have the union muscle behind us, you can forget the VRI and VSI.”

Young, a relief system operator in Oakland, credits the union for bargaining a pension system that is totally funded by the employer.

“The people better back the union now because between [the union] and the door you don’t have anybody,” said Young. “Your management people are running scared right now because they have nobody.”

# Wh me re

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## Barbara Symons plans to

**F**or Barbara Symons, retirement will be a new opportunity to continue being what she has been throughout her career: an activist.

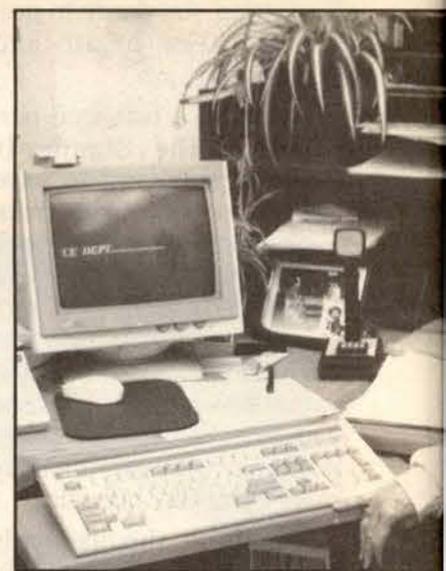
With one great-grandchild and another on the way, her services as a great-grandmother are sure to be in high demand. But she has other plans as well. Symons says she wants to do volunteer work teaching illiterate adults how to read. And she plans to remain active in union work through the Local 1245 Retirees Club.

Symons, a foreman’s clerk in Petaluma, says the union has made it possible for her to do what she wants in her retirement.

“I’m not going to be out buying yachts or anything, but I’m certainly going to be in a good financial condition,” says Symons, 66. “If I were not working in a union shop with group benefits and salary that the union has worked hard to get for me, I wouldn’t be in this good of a situation.”

Women she knows who are retiring from other companies with a full pension “are nowhere near as secure as I am because their wage structure has been so bad.”

For Symons, the hardest part about leaving PG&E is her belief that many battles remain to be fought there.



“I’m not going to be anything, but I’m certainly in a good financial condition in a union shop with salary that the union has worked hard to get for me, I wouldn’t be in this good of a situation.”

# at, tire?

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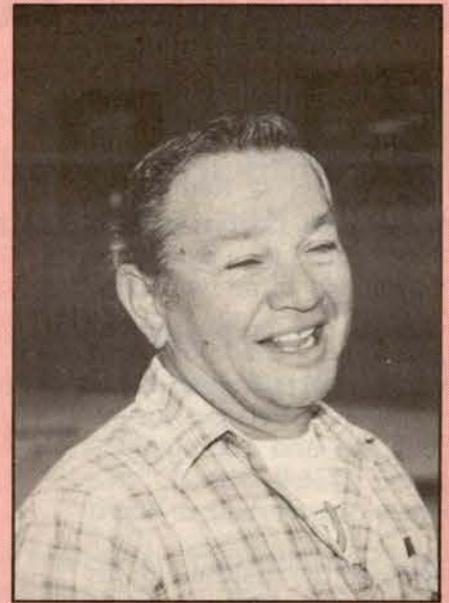
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"I'd like to see union members get more involved--to protect themselves. The company is really going to go after them."

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*Hank House*

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## Hank House is still figuring his options

**H**ank House thinks it may be time to end his 27-year career at PG&E. But like many union members, he's postponing a final decision on the Voluntary Retirement Incentive until he's had a chance to fine-tune his financial calculations.

Those calculations include the three years of additional credited service provided by the VRI program, the value of his PG&E stock, and his continuing service in the National Guard.

He knows he has until Nov. 21 to make his decision. He's grateful to the union that he has options to choose from.

"I think the union's done an outstanding job," says House, a cable splicer in Hayward. "Without the union, the company wouldn't have to give you what they're giving you."

House credits the union with putting him in touch with information on retirement finances. He expects that an upcoming appointment with a Merrill Lynch financial advisor will help him make his final decision.

To listen to House talk, that

decision will probably be to leave. His growing disillusionment with PG&E is a big factor in the equation.

The issue, for House, is stability. He thinks PG&E has become "more unstable."

"When you're working under unstable conditions, it's a safety factor," House says. He recalls seeing recent outages taking much longer than normal to correct.

"A bad example is what they're setting," he says. "It scares you working for the company--how can they work like this?"

In this kind of atmosphere, the union will become even more necessary than before, House believes.

"I'd like to see union members get more involved--to protect themselves. The company is really going to go after them," he says.

For House, retirement would mean "facing the music"--literally. He plays classical guitar, is learning the clarinet, and says he gets a big kick out of playing saxophone in an "old timers' orchestra."

The utility industry's loss may be the music world's gain.

## remain a union activist



"They're talking about world class service, and yet they seem to be throwing all kinds of roadblocks in the way of employees providing world class service," she says.

"PG&E is just downsizing. They're not getting in and finding out what isn't working well, why it doesn't work, and what can be done to correct it."

Employees want to provide good service, she says. But downsizing is making that increasingly difficult.

"I just hate to see our people get to the point where they are discouraged about the kind of job they are allowed to perform," she says.

If the company is going to become more productive, it will be because of the people in the field, not "lawyers and accountants," she says.

"Most of us who have worked for any length of time are aware that most of the things that get accomplished get accomplished because [people in the field] get in and do it. And we take pride in our work."

That sense of pride is one reason that Symons has been a life-long union activist, and why she plans to stay active.

"I can't leave unionism completely--it's just too much in my blood," she says. "I think it's so vitally important."

*Barbara Symons*

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## Mike Silva: no regrets

**W**hen Mike Silva was considering leaving PG&E under the 1993 Voluntary Retirement Incentive (VRI), people warned him he'd "turn into a couch potato" and "go blind watching TV."

It never happened. Between household chores, fishing expeditions, financial classes for senior citizens, and get-togethers with other PG&E retirees, Silva says he's "never had a bored day."

In fact, for the first time in his life Silva finds he has to keep an appointment book just to keep track of it all.

Silva, a former utility underground construction foreman, has no regrets about taking VRI in 1993. Things have worked out well financially, and he finally has something he never had before: "the freedom to do whatever I want to whenever I want to."

"I don't have a lot of pressures like I used to have at work—deadlines, jobs that got to get done," says Silva. "And I don't have customers to satisfy. I just have myself and my family."

About the only thing that bothered him about taking VRI is his



belief that PG&E will no longer be able to provide high-quality service with so many experienced employees leaving.

Otherwise, retirement suits Silva just fine. He knows the union helped make it possible.

"I'm sure this isn't what the company would've been giving us without a union," he observes.

**Editor's note: Last year, the Utility Reporter interviewed two union members who were considering leaving under the 1993 VRI. One left, one did not. This month, we revisit Mike Silva and Rich Bidinost and learn how things turned out.**

## Rich Bidinost: time to go

**L**ast year Richard Bidinost thought long and hard before deciding to turn down the union-negotiated Voluntary Retirement Incentive.

When PG&E downsized again this year and another VRI was negotiated, Bidinost says he took about two seconds deciding.

"I know I want to get out and do something different," says Bidinost, a gas serviceman in San Jose.

"I know things are going to be changing pretty dramatically [at PG&E]. With deregulation, people are going to be asked to do a lot more work."

Indeed, competitive pressures will almost inevitably force the company to attempt to squeeze more work out of fewer workers. Bidinost doesn't plan on being one of them.

Still a relatively young 52, Bidinost says he'd like to start his own business. His departure means PG&E is losing 31 years of experience. And it's a loss for the union as well. Bidinost, a stew-



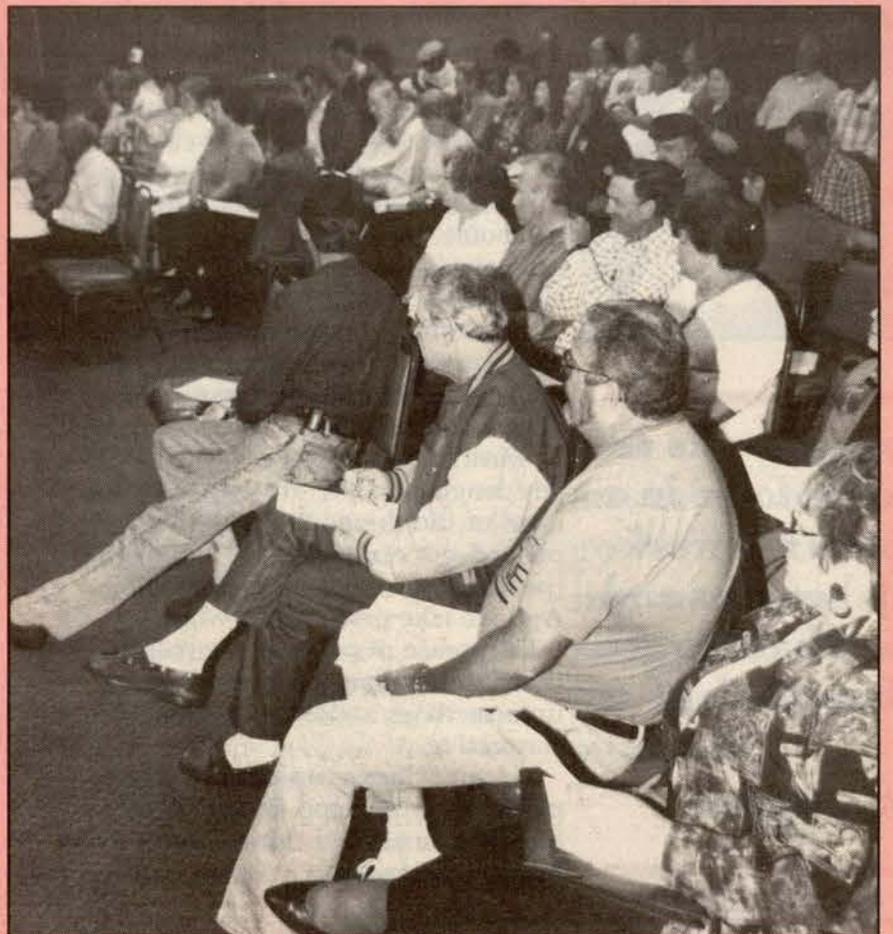
ard since 1972, has served on the Local 1245 Advisory Council and represented the union on various joint committees at PG&E.

Bidinost says the union has "done a hell of a job" responding to PG&E's decision to downsize. He says a friend of his didn't fare nearly so well when IBM let him go: he was given his notice and "walked to the gate at the same time."

According to Bidinost, the friend later told him: "I can understand now why you want a union."

## Retirement Planning

Business Rep. Sam Tamimi (right) hosts the Local 1245 Retirement Planning Seminar in Oakland on Oct. 13. Representatives from Merrill Lynch provided free retirement planning advice at Local 1245-sponsored seminars in Ukiah, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Sacramento, Santa Rosa, Concord, Eureka, San Jose, Redding, Chico, Foster City, Stockton, Bakersfield, and Fresno, as well as Oakland. (Photos: Eric Wolfe)



## Choosing candidates who represent our views

By Orv Owen

Since my return from World War II on April 22, 1946, I have participated in every local, state and national election available to me.

At each time I voted for candidates who most represented my views and goals. Some won and some lost. During those campaigns, the political rhetoric appeared to be more for what the candidates were "for" and what their records "were" rather than what they were "against."

Hopefully not appearing too naive, I always felt our government was a representative system taking society and civilization for its basis, and nature, reason, and experience for its guide.



Despite the continuing bombardment of negative and vicious campaigning in the media, I have faith that the voters will filter out all the political bull shit and vote on the candidates who represent their views and goals.

I do know that Local 1245 retirees will vote and participate in phone banks and getting people to the voting booths.

Brother Ron Weakley suggested to me not long ago that maybe folks should incorporate because they would be treated better as a business. Food for thought!

Brother Weakley also stated that enjoying good health is the most important item in life—except love between loving people. How true!

Keep the faith!

IBEW  
Local  
1245



Retirees Corner

### Power of hope

Since the 1950s scientists have consistently found that 30 to 40% of all patients given a placebo (fake drug) show improvement for a wide variety of conditions—whether it's coughing, seasickness, or various types of pain.

More recently, several researchers have suggested that, for certain conditions, placebos are effective in up to 70% of patients. Even more surprising, about 10% of people given a placebo report side effects normally associated with a chemically active drug, and others even experience withdrawal symptoms when they stop taking the fake drug.

This provides fascinating proof that, when it comes to pain and other phenomena, the mind and body work together.

## Health care quiz shows need for Prop. 186

Backers of single-payer health care have devised a simple quiz to help Californians decide whether to vote "yet" on Proposition 186 on the Nov. 8 ballot.

There are eight questions. If you answer "no" to any one of the eight, you don't have the health insurance you need. This means you ought to vote for Proposition 186, as recommended by the California AFL-CIO's Committee on Political Education and by IBEW Local 1245.

The questions:

- Does your health insurance pay for long-term care at home or in a nursing home?
- Can you keep your insurance forever, even if you lose or change your job?
- Does your insurance allow you to see any doctor you choose?
- Do you have insurance with no deductibles?
- Will you still be insured even if you have cancer or some other "pre-existing condition?"
- Does your insurance pay for prescription drugs, preventive care, chiropractors, nursing care and mental health?
- Will Medicare take care

of all your health needs during retirement?

- Are you free from fear of losing your life savings due to a major illness?

Workers are being reminded also of some of the health care problems affecting them that can be rem-

edied only through real health care reform.

Health care benefits currently are a major factor in 70% of the strikes in this country.

Out-of-control health care costs are eating up money that should go into pay raises.

Furthermore, nonunion employers are undercutting union employers primarily by cutting corners on health care benefits.

Proposition 186 would provide the real health care reform needed to correct these problems.



Local 1245 retirees and spouses attended specially-scheduled meetings last month to learn about upcoming changes in medical benefits for those who use Kaiser facilities. Meetings were held Oct. 13 in Walnut Creek (above) and Oct. 12 in Bakersfield.

## Candidates Endorsed by Local 1245 and by the Nevada State AFL-CIO for the November 8, 1994 General Election

U.S. SENATE  
**Richard Bryan (D)**

GOVERNOR  
**Bob Miller (D)**

SUPREME COURT  
**Bob Rose**  
**Myron Leavitt**

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT #1  
**James Bilbray (D)**

LT. GOVERNOR  
**Lonnie Hammergren (R)**

TREASURER  
**Bob Seale (R)**

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT #2  
**NO ENDORSEMENT**

ATTORNEY GENERAL  
**Frankie Sue Del Papa (D)**

CONTROLLER  
**Peter Sfferazza (D)**

SECRETARY OF STATE  
**Tom Hickey (D)**

SHERIFF/WHITE PINE COUNTY  
**Cole Morrow**

STATE SENATE CAPITAL DISTRICT  
**Ernie Adler (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #4  
**Earl Little (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #17  
**Bob Price (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #30  
**Jan Evans (D)**

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #1, CLARK  
**John Wiles (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #5  
**Pam Mortensen (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #18  
**Bill Petrak (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #31  
**Bernie Anderson (D)**

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #2, CLARK  
**Jack Regan (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #6  
**Wendell Williams (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #19  
**Sandi Krenzer (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #32  
**Gail Scalzi (D)**

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #3, CLARK  
**Bob Coffin (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #7  
**Morse Arberry (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #20  
**Stephanie Smith (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #33  
**NO ENDORSEMENT**

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #5, CLARK  
**Steve Sisolak (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #8  
**Barbara Buckley (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #21  
**Kathleen Harney (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #34  
**NO ENDORSEMENT**

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #7, CLARK  
**Lori Lipman Brown (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #9  
**Chris Giunchigliani (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #22  
**Gene Segerblom (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #35  
**Marcia deBraga (D)**

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #8, CLARK  
**Paul Yates (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #10  
**David Goldwater (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #23  
**Richard Perkins (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #36  
**Roy Neighbors (D)**

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #1, WASHOE  
**Bernice Mathews (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #11  
**Doug Bache (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #24  
**Vivian Freeman (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #37  
**NO ENDORSEMENT**

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #2, WASHOE  
**Len Nevin (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #12  
**Genie Ohrenschall (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #25  
**Karol Kellison (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #38  
**Joe Dini (D)**

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #4, WASHOE  
**Emma Sepulveda (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #13  
**NO ENDORSEMENT**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #26  
**Victoria Gravelin (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #39  
**NO ENDORSEMENT**

STATE SENATE WESTERN NEV. DIST.  
**Ame Hellman (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #14  
**Mark Clarke (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #27  
**Ken Haller (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #40  
**Maxine Nietz (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #1  
**Tom Collins (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #15  
**Lou Toomin (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #28  
**Vonne Chowning (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #41  
**Larry Spitler (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #2  
**John Ponticello (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #16  
**Rick Bennett (D)**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #29  
**NO ENDORSEMENT**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #42  
**NO ENDORSEMENT**

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #3  
**John Bonaventura (D)**

**Make Your Voice Heard: Vote!**

# IBEW LOCAL 1245 UNION SHOPPER



**Jacket**  
Black with IBEW Logo  
S/M/L/XL/2X  
**\$26.00**  
+\$3.00 shipping

**Club Shirt**  
(No pocket)  
Black, Mint, Blue, Peach,  
Jade  
Logo on chest  
M/L/XL/2X  
~~\$19.50~~ **Now only \$15!**  
+\$2.50 shipping

**Bucket Bags**  
Lineman Logo in Center  
**\$5.00**  
+\$1.50 shipping

**Stadium Jacket**  
Silver, Red  
(Specify front or back logo)  
S/M/L/XL/2XL: **\$35.00**  
3X, 4X: **\$45.00**  
+\$3.00 shipping



**T-Shirt**  
Ringer with IBEW Logo  
S/M/L/XL/2X/3X, 4X  
**\$8.00**  
+\$1.50 shipping

**Sweat Shirt/Crew**  
Blue, Gray, Black  
M/L/XL/2X  
**\$15.00**  
+\$3.00 shipping  
(Allow 2-4 weeks for delivery)

**Sweat Shirt/Hooded**  
Blue, Gray, Black  
M/L/XL/2X  
**\$17.00**  
+\$3.00 shipping  
(Allow 2-4 weeks for delivery)

**Golf Shirt**  
(With Pocket)  
Navy, Red, Royal, White,  
Maize  
Logo on sleeve  
M/L/XL/2X  
~~\$22.50~~ **Now only \$15!**  
+\$2.50 shipping

**Suspenders**  
Red, Yellow  
Regular, Long, XL  
**\$10.00**  
+\$1.50 shipping

**Lineman Pin**  
Goldtone  
**\$5.00**  
+\$0.55 shipping



**Coffee Mug**  
IBEW (Ceramic)  
Black or Blue  
"Proud To Be Union" (Plastic)  
White  
**\$5.00**  
+\$3.00 shipping

**IBEW Women Charm**  
14K Goldplated  
~~\$8.00~~ **Now only \$5!**  
+\$0.55 shipping



**Hats**  
Proud To Be Union Logo  
**\$5.00**  
+\$0.75 shipping  
Lineman Logo  
**\$5.00**  
+\$0.75 shipping

(Note: One size fits all)

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## Order Form

Quantity	Item	Color	Size	Price	Shipping	Total
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2.						\$
3.						\$
4.						\$
5.						\$

Ship To:

GRAND TOTAL

\$

Name

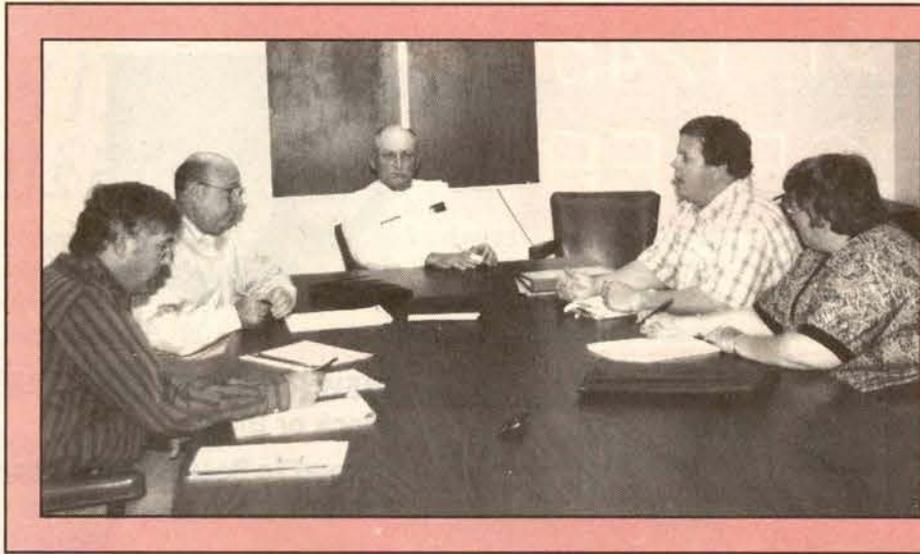
Address

City/State

Zip

Phone #

Mail completed form with check or money order payable to:  
IBEW Local 1245  
c/o Office Manager  
PO Box 4790  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596



**PACIFIC GAS TRANSMISSION**  
Local 1245 members recently ratified changes to the pension and 401K plans at Pacific Gas Transmission. Serving on the union's bargaining committee were (from left) Steve Jordan, Senior Assistant Business Manager Darrel Mitchell, Bob Blank, Paul Oliver and Pam McKean. (Photo: Eric Wolfe)

## AC Transit pact ratified

Local 1245 members ratified a new 38-month agreement with AC Transit that provides 9% in wage hikes.

The agreement provides a 2% wage hike retroactive to April 1, 1994, another 2% effective last month, 2% in April 1995, and 3% in April 1996, according to Business Rep. Lula Washington, who helped negotiate the agreement.

The pact increases the tool allowance to \$500. It also makes improvements in absentee language.

Serving on the union bargaining committee, in addition to Washington, were Lynne Morel, Ed Lim and Dennis Hert.

## Union reps take on PG&E Call Center assignment

Veteran union activists Enid Bidou and Pat Collins have been assigned to represent Local 1245 members at the newly-created PG&E Call Centers.

The two business representatives bring considerable experience to their new assignment. Bidou has had 35 years of PG&E customer service experience and Collins has 28 years at PG&E, most of it in customer service.

"With all the new management and bargaining unit employees at the four new centers, we are being kept very busy," said Bidou. "It's

kind of like re-inventing the wheel."

"It's a big challenge," a g r e e d Collins, a former member of the Local 1245 Advisory Council.

Part of that challenge is the fact that the Call Centers are a departure from the traditional approach to handling customer service matters. Instead of taking telephone inquiries at local service centers throughout PG&E territory, calls are now being processed centrally at the four regional centers in

San Francisco, Fresno, San Jose and Sacramento.

T h a t means more customer service employees working at one location. It also means handling inquiries from customers who may be a great distance away.

"I think change is always difficult for people, and our members have certainly been put through a whole lot of changes the past two or three years," said Collins.

"Hopefully things are going to start settling down a

bit," she said.

According to Bidou, when the Call Centers opened the biggest issues were vacation and overtime procedures, with the half-hour lunch break "running a very close second."



Bidou



Collins

## Agreement at Shasta Lake

Local 1245 members employed by the City of Shasta Lake ratified a new Memorandum of Understanding in September that provides a 2.65% general wage increase.

The one-year MOU expires June 30, 1995. It covers em-

ployees at the newly-constituted City of Shasta Lake, formerly the Shasta Lake Municipal Utility District.

Serving on the Local 1245 negotiating committee were Ken Nielsen and Stephanie Humphrey, along with Business Rep. Gary Mai.

## Maintenance employees ratify MOU with Redding

Maintenance employees represented by Local 1245 ratified a new Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Redding in September that provides an immediate 3% wage increase and an additional 3.25% in September of next year.

The MOU increases the meal allowance to \$7.50 for breakfast or lunch and \$15

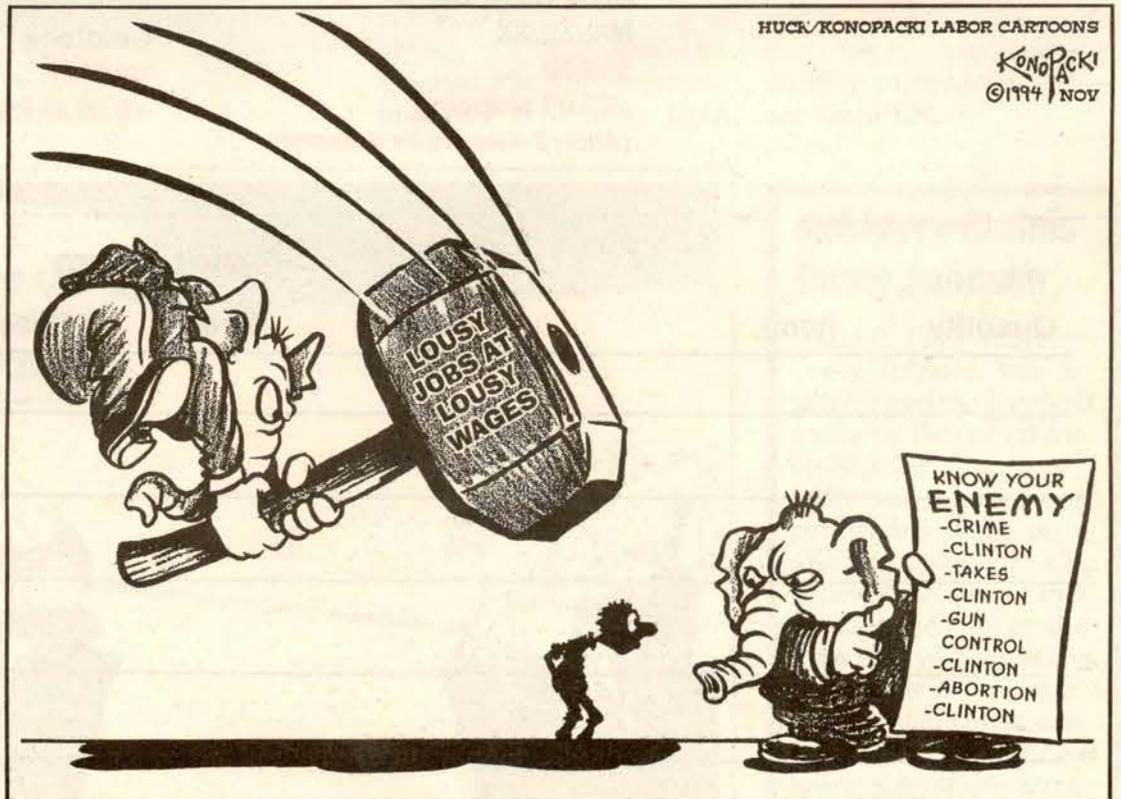
for dinner.

The pact provides for a mediation step in the grievance procedure prior to the parties going to arbitration.

In addition, the pact extends early work hours in the spring.

According to Business Rep. Jack Osburn, who helped negotiate the agreement, the union committee was able to obtain \$200 per year for employees holding an arborist certificate. That payment will enable employees to defray the costs associated the training required for maintaining the certificate.

Serving on the negotiating committee with Osburn were Bill Andersen, Mark Burgon, Steve Mayberry and Dwayne Norman.



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Unity  
Is  
Strength

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