



Tom Brown: new rep for Outside Construction

Tom Brown, a veteran hand with 30 years of experience in the trade, has been hired as the new IBEW Local 1245 business representative for Outside Construction.

Initiated in 1972, Brown most recently worked out of the Riverside office as a foreman for Par Electric. He has worked at various times as lineman, foreman, and superintendent, giving him wide experience in the trade.

Brown's utility experience includes stints at Southern California Edison, Nevada Power, and the Department of Public Works in Los Angeles. As an Outside hand, Brown has worked for virtually all of Local 1245's major signatory contractors.

Brown's father, Roy Brown, also worked extensively in the trade and served as an IBEW steward.

Brown will oversee operations at Local 1245's southern dispatch office in Riverside.

See Page 11 for more news on Outside Construction



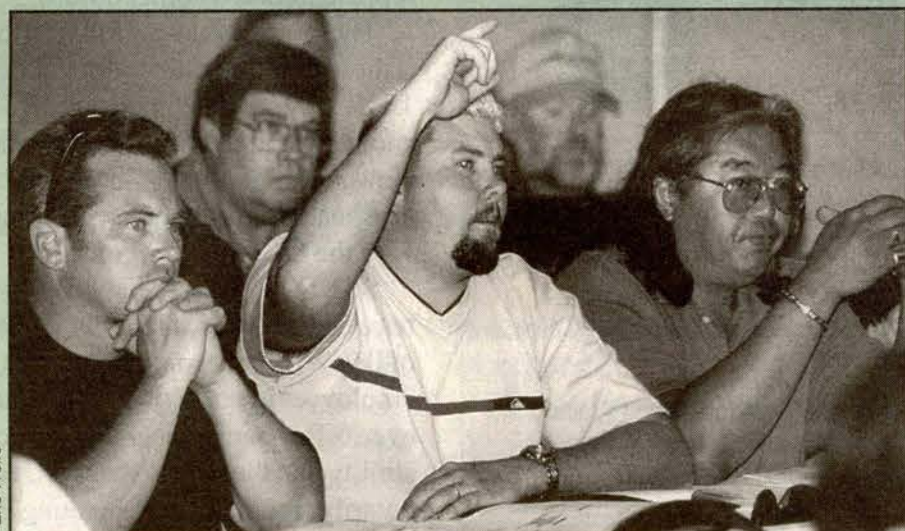
Photo: Eric Wolfe

BROWN JOINS STAFF

Business Manager Jack McNally (right) welcomes new Outside Construction representative Tom Brown to the staff with a handshake. They are joined by Senior Assistant Business Manager Darrel Mitchell (left) and Senior Business Rep. Landis Marttila, who is responsible for Outside Construction in the northern area.

New PG&E agreements on Intranet

The new Physical and Clerical labor agreements with PG&E, though not in print yet, will soon be posted on the IBEW web site on PG&E's Intranet. Go to PG&E Page One, then Human Resources, then Industrial Relations, then IBEW union board, then select Physical or Clerical Contract.



Eric Wolfe

Citizens Communications steward Tom Greer raises an issue.

Steward Training Conference

- ◆ Public Sector
- ◆ Tree Trimming
- ◆ Citizens Communications

Pages 5-7

Sierra Pacific sues to stop deregulation

In a move applauded by Local 1245, Sierra Pacific Resources has asked a federal court to declare Nevada's electric deregulation law unconstitutional.

The company hopes to stop the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada from implementing the deregulation law—Senate Bill 438—until the state legislature has a chance to revisit the issue when it convenes in July of 2001.

The lawsuit is the latest move in a

Page 3 ▶

Labor squelches Proposition 25

Union members displayed their political clout by helping defeat Proposition 25, an initiative that sought to reduce labor's voice in politics.

Sponsored by multi-millionaire businessman Ron Unz, Proposition 25 would have created unfair advantages for wealthy individuals and corporations over unions in political elections. The measure was defeated March 7 by a two-to-one margin in the California Primary.

"We got clobbered," Unz told reporters.

Union households accounted for 26% of the Democratic electorate and 16% of the Republican, according to Voter News Service/CNN exit polling.

Feature



Gary Mai 16

Political Action

IWC's Overtime Hearing 10

Inside

Point of View

Brainless at NECA 2

Outside Construction

Work Aplenty 11

Retiree Corner

Programs at Risk 15

Safety Matters

Stop the Pain 13

Women at Work

Priorities Revealed 14

EVENTS

APRIL 7

Service Awards
Marysville, CA

APRIL 8

Service Awards
Redding, CA

Stewards Conference
Stockton, CA

Stewards Conference
Santa Rosa, CA

APRIL 15

Service Awards
San Jose, CA

Stewards Conference
San Jose, CA

APRIL 22

Stewards Conference
Fresno, CA

Stewards Conference
San Luis Obispo, CA

Service Awards
San Luis Obispo, CA

MAY 6-7

Advisory Council
Concord, CA

MAY 12

Service Awards
Bakersfield, CA

MAY 13

Service Awards
Fresno, CA

MAY 19

Service Awards
Oakland, CA

MAY 20

Service Awards
Chico, CA

Stewards Conference
Chico, CA

APPOINTMENTS

CONFERENCES & CONVENTIONS

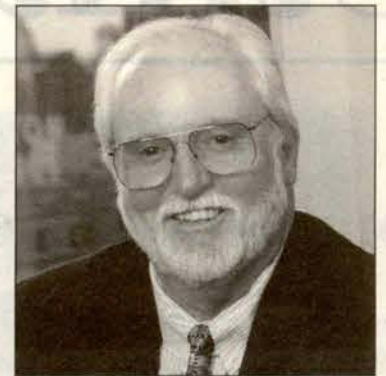
Inside Construction and Maintenance
Conference
Jack McNally
Landis Marttila
Art Murray

Annual Conference of the Western
Labor Communications Association
Eric Wolfe

POINT OF VIEW

Brainless move by NECA

By Jack McNally, Business Manager



God gave all of us a brain, but sometimes you have to wonder if He skipped a couple of folks.

Take the San Francisco Electrical Contractors Association, the San Francisco affiliate of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA). These people recently decided to hire a law firm to tell them how to defeat Local 1245 in a union representation election at one of their affiliated contractors: Abbett Electric.

OK, I know, corporations hire lawyers all the time to help them defeat unions. But this particular case defies all logic.

NECA is an association of electrical contractors that aggressively promotes its IBEW connection in order to win trust and business, including business from the nation's utility companies.

Listen to how a recent NECA

brochure trumpets the association's long alliance with the IBEW:

"When utilities team with NECA-IBEW line contractors, they find that things aren't what they used to be, they're better. With a NECA-IBEW team at your elbow, you'll be able to take on any project with confidence that your job will be completed safely, on time, and on budget."

Makes it sound like this relationship is solid as a rock. But now it appears that if you lift that rock a little bit you'll find something pretty disgusting underneath. Here's how Local 1245 uncovered this lower form of life:

Over a year ago IBEW President J.J. Barry moved the so-called commercial and industrial Outside Line jurisdiction from the Inside local unions in California and northern Nevada to Local 1245. This move requires that the local Outside agree-

ments between the local NECA chapters and the Inside local unions be terminated and new agreements be negotiated between NECA and Local 1245.

But when Local 1245 attempted to negotiate a new agreement with the San Francisco chapter of NECA, NECA helped Abbett Electric file for an NLRB representation election, claiming that Local 1245 did not represent the workers—even though these employees have been represented by the IBEW for decades. The NLRB subsequently ruled that an election shall be held, asking employees to choose between Local 1245 and "no union."

In a memo, San Francisco NECA's law firm advised NECA on strategies for obtaining a "no" vote:

"The employees may be advised that ... the Operating Engineers has expressed a desire to represent the Outside employees." If the employees vote down Local 1245, they would be "legally entitled to seek representation by other unions...."

These lawyers know full well that if these employees vote down Local 1245, they are not legally entitled to another union election for 12 months. However, the lawyers hold out the prospect of "voluntary recognition" with the Operating Engineers.

So NECA, the association of electrical contractors, the great partner of IBEW, is now going to encourage employees to vote down IBEW, and even offer as an inducement the possibility that the employer could voluntarily recognize the Operating Engineers.

This is a strategy for building a sound partnership with the IBEW?

I think you could find maggots with a more developed sense of honor than this. And more developed brains, too.

If NECA contractors value the IBEW relationship that has helped create their profits, they need to get their house in order.



Utility Reporter

April 2000
Vol. 49 No. 4
Circulation: 26,200



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Published monthly at 3063 Citrus Circle, Walnut Creek, California 94598. Official publication of Local Union 1245, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, AFL-CIO, P.O. Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

Periodical postage paid at Walnut Creek and at additional mailing offices. USPS No. 654640, ISSN No. 0190-4965.

POSTMASTER: Please send Form 3579, Change of Address, and all correspondence to Utility Reporter, P.O. Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

Single copies \$1. Subscription by arrangement. Have you moved recently? Please send complete new address and your Social Security Number (by U.S. Mail) to: "Address Change", IBEW Local 1245, P.O. Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596. Our Web Site can be viewed at www.IBEW1245.com. Our phone number is (925) 933-6060.

Lawsuit targets Nevada deregulation

► From Page 1

tug of war over the fate of electric utility service in Nevada. The Public Utilities Commission of Nevada, which has pressed for rapid, radical electric deregulation, recently said it would not allow Sierra Pacific Resources to recover costs previously incurred to serve electric customers. Sierra Pacific says regulatory actions of this sort have been a major factor in the precipitous drop in Sierra Pacific's stock value, which traded for \$27 per share last July but dropped below \$13 in late March.

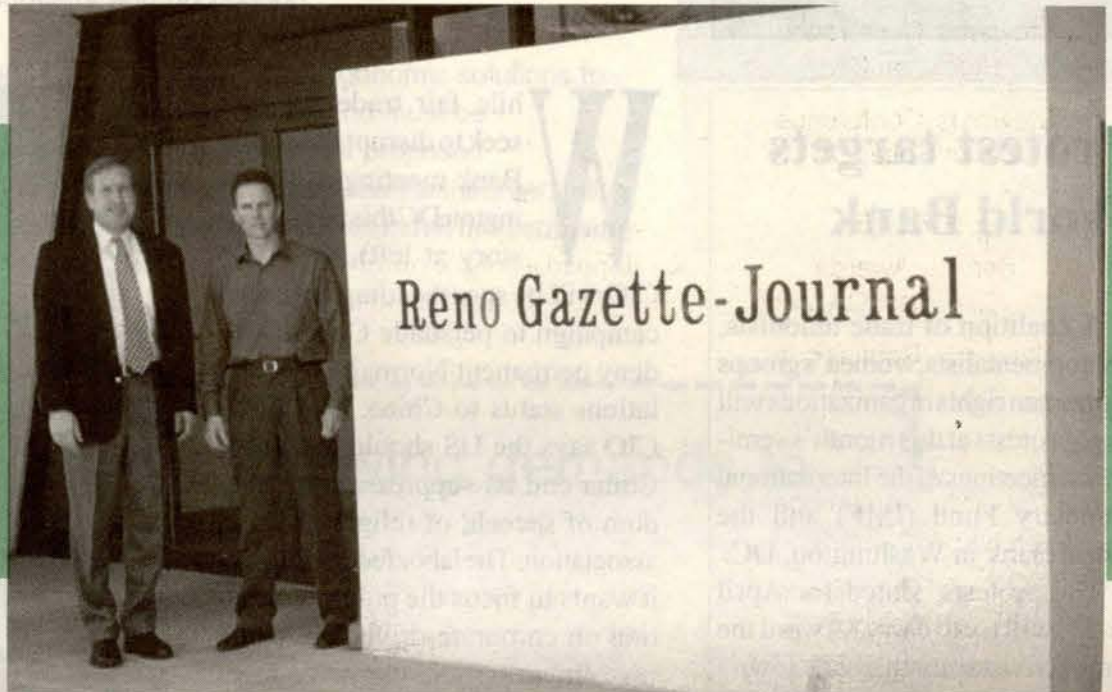
"We are deeply concerned about how these regulatory actions will affect Sierra Pacific's ability to continue providing high-quality electric service," said Business Manager Jack McNally. "We've been going through deregulation in California for many years now and we know how tempting it is for regulators to simply ignore service quality issues. That's a dangerous road to travel."

Local 1245 voiced its concerns about deregulation in a meeting on March 28 with the editorial staff of the Reno Gazette Journal. Representing Local 1245 at this meeting was Business Rep. Ray Thomas. Representing Sierra Pacific Resources were Malyn Malquist, chief operating officer; Karl Malquist, corporate communications; Kathleen Drakulich, legal division; and Greg Lambert, distribution marketing.

"I explained that Local 1245 has been dealing with deregulation issues for many years, and that it takes highly skilled people to do this work," said Thomas. "Our members work in customer service, power plant maintenance and operations, gas distribution, and electric transmission and distribution, and they are second to none in their skills and dedication. I expressed our union's belief that the PUCN must not interpret SB 438 in a fashion that harms system reliability."

Thomas said the PUCN's decision to block Sierra Pacific from

Malyn Malquist, chief operating officer of Sierra Pacific Resources (left) and Local 1245 Business Rep. Ray Thomas took their concerns about utility deregulation to the editorial board of the Reno Gazette.



recovering costs previously incurred will have a big impact on the company, and that eventually that impact "will reach the level of system operations and maintenance."

Malyn Malquist told the editors

that the company's intent was to stop deregulation until the legislature has a chance to further address the issue of fair and equitable implementation of the process.

Both the union and the company

stressed the importance of reliable electric service to the health of Nevada's economy, noting that Nevada residents would be the ones to suffer if electric deregulation isn't done carefully.

401k improvements bargained at Sierra Pacific

Responding to the merger between Sierra Pacific and Nevada Power, Local 1245 has negotiated improvements to the 401k plan and to the retirement plan for its members at Sierra Pacific.

The opportunity to make the improvements arose when Sierra Pacific prepared to take action to conform its payroll system to that of Nevada Power. The company found it needed to change paydates for Sierra Pacific employees represented by Local 1245.

Because the paydates are a mandatory subject of bargaining, the company entered into talks with the union. In exchange for agreeing to the pay date change, the union negotiated changes to the 401k and retirement plans.

Prior to the change, the company matched 50 cents on the

dollar up to 6% for base pay, incentive compensation, out of town, upgrade and shift premium.

The new formula provides that all taxable wages will qualify for the 401k match, namely:

- Base pay
- Incentive compensation
- Out of town
- Upgrade
- Shift premium
- Overtime
- Rest period
- Pager pay
- Any other cash earnings

The change to the retirement plan builds on changes made during general bargaining in 1997. Those changes, which attempted to create a "soft landing" in the event of Sierra Pacific downsizing, provided that

affected employees could add up to five "bridge points" to either their age or service or a combination of both, enabling some employees to use "bridge points" to boost them up to age 55, qualifying them for full retirement.

However, the "bridge points" negotiated in 1997 were not included in the formula for calculating the actual retirement benefit for such employees. This year's negotiations produced agreement by the company to include the bridge points in the formula for calculating the retirement benefit for credited service.

Additionally, 26 longer-term employees were given "credited service" for all years from age 25 down to 18 when they were eligible but unable to participate in the retirement plan.



Homicidal governor! Ducky bosses! WTO Two!

Protest targets World Bank

A coalition of trade unionists, environmentalists, women's groups and human rights organizations will stage protests at this month's semi-annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in Washington, DC.

The protests, slated for April 16-17, will try to carry forward the same activist spirit that shut down a meeting of the World Trade Organization in Seattle last December.

The IMF and World Bank were designed to manage global economic activity in the aftermath of World War II by fostering monetary and financial stability. Unfortunately, the policies of the IMF and World Bank have often increased socio-economic inequality, destroyed local environments, and slipped third world nations even further into debt.

Even a US Congressional report, released March 7, slammed the two institutions for being secretive, bullying and ineffective.

The bi-partisan Congressional panel criticized IMF programs, which it said "have not ensured economic progress. They have undermined national sovereignty and often hindered the development of responsible, democratic institutions that correct their own mistakes and respond to changes in external conditions."



While fair trade activists seek to disrupt the World Bank meeting in Washington DC this month (see story at left), the AFL-CIO will be spearheading a parallel campaign to persuade Congress to deny permanent Normal Trade Relations status to China. The AFL-CIO says the US should insist that China end its suppression of freedom of speech, of religion, and of association. The labor federation says it wants to focus the public's attention on corporate-driven trade and investment systems that drive down global standards for workers while destroying good jobs.

► **If it Quacks Like a Duck:** Unions and civil libertarians last month called on the New South Wales (Australia) government to protect the privacy of office e-mails. The call from the NSW Labor Council and the NSW Council for Civil Liberties for legislation on the issue came after two council workers were fired from Narrabri Shire Council for referring to their superiors as Huey, Dewey and Louie in office e-mails.

► **Just Joking:** Oklahoma Gov. Frank Keating has apologized for saying that "homicide" was the best way to deal with the state's teachers union. Apparently the infamous murder of federal employees in the Oklahoma City bombing didn't make much of an impression on the loose-lipped governor.

► **Resistance Is Futile:** The Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU) of Australia scored a breakthrough April 4 in its campaign to cut the work week to 36 hours. Four construction firms signed an agreement to phase in the 36-hour week over three years. Workers will receive a 15% pay hike, too. CFMEU secretary Martin Kingham called on other builders to drop their opposition to the shorter week. "Resistance is now futile," he said.



WELCOMING GORE

Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier (back row, center), in her capacity as President of the Alameda County Central Labor Council, joined Oakland Mayor Jerry Brown, Congresswoman Barbara Lee, and a host of trade unionists in greeting Presidential candidate Al Gore when he visited the East Bay prior to the March 7 California Primary.

► **Energy Plan Protested:** Costa Rica's two biggest ports were paralyzed April 3 by a general strike called by trade unions upset over the government's controversial plan to privatize Costa Rica's telecom and energy industries. Workers shut down the Caribbean port of Limon and the Pacific cargo port Puntarenas. The unions demanded that President Miguel Angel Rodriguez cancel his plan to privatize the Costa Rican Electricity Institute (ICE) which would split energy and telecom into two separate companies and open the respective industry markets. Rodriguez said he was prepared to suspend debate on the privatization plan for 60 days to "open a space for dialogue."

► **Engineers Kick Butt:** Engineers, technicians and other professional workers at Boeing returned to work March 20 after a successful 40-day strike that produced a new three-year contract containing wage in-

creases and preserving health benefits. Some 20,000 workers walked off the job over the company's contract demands for concessions and lack of respect for the workers. The strike, organized by the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace/Professional and Technical Engineers Local 2001, was the biggest strike of private-sector professionals in history.

► **Immigrant Workers Defended:** The AFL-CIO Executive Council has called for reforms that will protect workplace rights and freedoms for immigrant workers and hold employers accountable when they exploit immigrant workers. The Council called for replacing the current system of employer verification of workers' eligibility to work in the United States, and urged a new amnesty program and full workplace rights and freedoms for all workers—immigrant, native born, documented and undocumented.

Local 1245 Stewards

Training Conference



- ◆ Public Sector
- ◆ Tree Trimming
- ◆ Citizens Communications



Local 1245 stewards from tree trimming companies, public sector employers, and Citizens Communications met in Sacramento on March 25 for briefings on bargaining strategies, organizing, and the legal rights of employees facing discipline.

Making the trek to Sacramento were stewards from Asplundh Tree, Arbor Tree and Davey Tree, Modesto Irrigation District, Sacramento Municipal Utility District, City of Santa Clara, Citizens Communications, Charter Communications, Tri-Dam Project, City of Shasta Lake, Port of Oakland, and Merced Irrigation District.

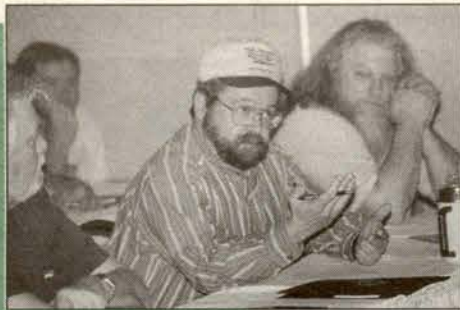
The conference focused on the nuts and bolts of union representation:

- Local 1245 staff attorney Tom Dalzell reviewed the entire process of bargaining, from gathering proposals, to researching issues, to tactical considerations in bargaining equity adjustments.
- Business Rep. Dennis Seyfer discussed the union's experiences in "interest-based" bargaining, an approach that emphasizes a more open style of bargaining in the pursuit of mutual gains.
- Business Rep. Landis Marttila discussed the challenges of organizing the remaining non-union tree trimming contractors.
- Business Rep. Frank Saxsenmeier offered an extensive review of employee rights to due process under the US Supreme Court's Weingarten decision and the California Supreme Court's Skelly decision.

Photos: Pages 6-7

Local 1245 Stewards

Training Conference



Tree trimmers: Davey Tree, Asplundh Tree, Arbor Tree, and Sacramento Municipal Utility District.



Citizens Communications



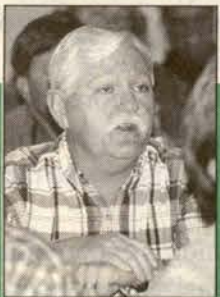
Port of Oakland



Merced Irrigation District



Charter Communications, Tri-Dam, City of Shasta Lake



Modesto Irrigation District



Participants



Sacramento Municipal Utility District



Staff attorney Tom Dalzell discussed bargaining strategy.



City of Santa Clara



Business Rep. Frank Saxsenmeier offered a detailed explanation of Weingarten and Skelly rights.

- Alexander, Bob
- Aquilio, Joe
- Arellano, Hector
- Armstrong, Mary
- Auldrige, Steve
- Brizzee, Gary
- Caballero, George
- Celli, Kurt
- Correia, Martin
- Cox, Ed
- Cuthbertson, David
- Danver, Alan
- Darlington, Dennis
- Davisson, Forrest
- Dixon, Rich
- Gartner, Peter
- Greenwood, Guy
- Greer, Tom
- Holopinek, Terry
- Hubers, Gary
- Keller, James
- Kennedy, John
- King, Phillip
- Lawton, Sheila
- Lovercheck, James
- Martin, Larry
- Morrison, Dave
- Mount, Chuck
- Mouw, Forrest
- Muraca, Ralph
- Murray, Don
- Quigley, Mike
- Rose, Mark
- Sheldon, Stephen
- Shepphird, John
- Southerland, Scottie
- Stoffer, Gary
- Stout, Mike
- Suarez, Gilbert
- Tanaka, Eric
- Torres, Arthur
- Trujillo, Angel
- Uphoff, William
- Vandermeer, David
- Velasquez, Miguel
- Vipond, David
- Wallace, Bill
- Watson, Dan
- Weathers, Frank
- Winters, Brian
- Wright, Rod

- Arbor Tree
- Asplundh Tree
- Charter Communications
- Citizens Communications
- City of Santa Clara
- City of Shasta Lake
- Davey Tree
- Merced Irrigation District
- Modesto Irrigation District
- Port of Oakland
- Sacramento Municipal Utility District
- Tri-Dam Project

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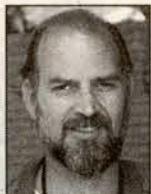
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- Pipe Line Operations
- Davey Tree
- Asplundh Tree
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- Asplundh Tree
- Davey Tree



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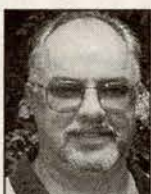
- PG&E Central Calif. - Madera to Stockton, including General Construction and CGT
- Asplundh Tree
- EPA-PROVCO



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- Davey Tree
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- Asplundh Tree



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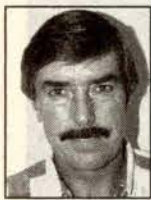


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- Clear Creek Community Services District
- Lassen Municipal Utility District
- Oroville-Wyandotte Irrigation District
- Richvale Irrigation District

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- Davey Tree
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- City of Willits
- City of Santa Clara
- Port of Oakland
- Northern California Power Agency



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- Wells Rural Electric Assoc.
- City of Fernley



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- Tri-Dam Project
- United States Bureau of Reclamation
- Western Area Power Administration
- Sacramento Regional Transit District



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- Davey Tree



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- Relief Assignments



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- Davey Tree
- EPA PROVCO



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Union members pack IWC overtime hearing

Union members rallied in force to defend overtime premium pay at a March 31 meeting of the California Industrial Welfare Commission.

Over 800 union members, including many from Local 1245, filled the hearing room, the balcony, the overflow room and the hallway to protest plans by the IWC to exempt some classes of employees from overtime pay.

"The solidarity demonstrated by union members made the difference in defending daily overtime pay," said Art Pulaski, leader of the California Labor Federation. "We thank Jack McNally and every Local 1245 member who took the time to stand up."

The IWC proposal sought to weaken overtime protections in three areas: for employees receiving stock options, for "managerial" employees, and for computer professionals.

The stock option proposal was pulled from the agenda at the start of the meeting, prompting a five-minute standing ovation from the hundreds

of union members present. The managerial exemption was tabled after testimony was taken. The proposal concerning computer professionals was referred to an IWC subcommittee, known as a wage board.

The proposals could come up for consideration again when the IWC meets again on April 14.

Unions maintain that the IWC proposals violate the spirit and the intent of the overtime protection law passed last year and signed by Gov. Davis. The law says: "The Legislature affirms the importance of the eight-hour day, declares that it should be protected, and reaffirms the state's unwavering commitment to upholding the eight-hour day as a fundamental protection for working people."

Threat to Unionized Workers

Even unionized workers who enjoy contractually-protected overtime premiums could suffer if the IWC succeeds in eroding current law. When ex-Gov. Pete Wilson used the IWC to eliminate daily overtime



Bernard Smallwood

DEFENDING OVERTIME

Local 1245 Business Reps Gary Hughes and Dennis Seyfer were among a large contingent of Local 1245 members who joined 800 other union members at a hearing by the Industrial Welfare Commission last month to consider changes to the application of the state's overtime law.

pay in 1998, the Machinists union suddenly faced employer proposals to take away the eight hour day in 31 contracts. Nursing home owners followed suit.

The California Labor Federation maintains that the IWC proposal would amount to a pay cut for hard-working Californians. Consider the many California workers who get small holiday bonuses. Under the IWC proposal, these workers would be denied hundreds and thousands of dollars in overtime pay if they got a Thanksgiving turkey or \$25 supermarket Christmas gift certificate.

Alston-Maxwell joins 1245 staff

Tonya Alston-Maxwell has joined the Local 1245 staff as an administrative assistant at the Walnut Creek headquarters.

Alston-Maxwell is a recent arrival in California. She was previously employed by First Union Bank in New Jersey, where she worked as a recruiter in the bank's Human Resources department.

She is not exactly a stranger around the union hall: she's been working for Local 1245 as a temporary employee since last November. In her permanent position she will be assisting Senior Assistant Business Manager Darrel Mitchell.

We're happy to have Tonya Alston-Maxwell on board.



Tonya Alston-Maxwell

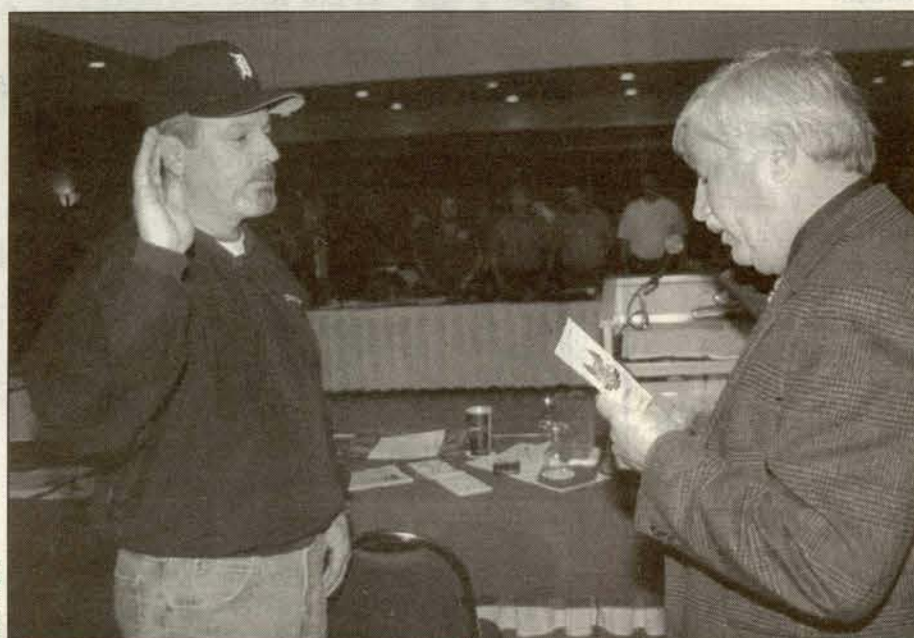
Eric Wolfe

Unit meeting corrections

Last month's Utility Reporter misreported meeting dates for two units:

Unit 3714, Ukiah, meets on Wednesday of the first full week of each month. Upcoming meeting dates are May 3 and June 7.

Unit 4418, Davey Tree, meets on Wednesdays, not Tuesdays. Upcoming meeting dates are: May 10 and June 14.



Eric Wolfe

NEW ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER

Mark Taylor (left) is sworn in by Local 1245 Vice President Jim McCauley as the new Advisory Council member for the Coast Valleys area. He fills the vacancy created when Dan Lockwood was hired onto the Local 1245 staff.

Outside

Work aplenty

There is work aplenty in the southern area for Outside Construction hands, reported Business Rep. Tom Brown.

Southern California Edison has begun its pole replacement project, and work is proceeding all out. Work also continues at other utilities, including San Diego Gas & Electric and the City of Anaheim.

Contractors at work include Henkels McCoy, Poulk & Stienle, Sturgeon, Diversified and Hot Line. Par Electric has begun a high line job in Bakersfield.

New Outside Construction Journeyman

Joint Apprenticeship Training Program Coordinator Chris Larsen (left) presented a watch to Scott Hudelson, who recently attained journeyman status after completing the apprenticeship program.

Through a comprehensive 7,000-hour training program, the Riverside-based training center is turning out the skilled journeyman who will form the backbone of the new century's skilled utility construction workforce.



Landis Marttila

C onstruction

Outside Negotiating Committee

Local 1245 members on the Outside Construction Bargaining Committee came to union headquarters in Walnut Creek to prepare for negotiations with the National Electrical Contractors Association for a new labor agreement.

Representing Local 1245 on the committee are (from left) Assistant Business Manager Art Murray, Vern Brown, Jeff Johnstone, Jim Rowley, and Senior Business Rep Landis Marttila.



Landis Marttila

Labor agreement reviewed

Assistant Business Manager Art Murray (above, right) met recently with apprentices at the Joint Apprenticeship Training school in Riverside to familiarize the members with the terms and conditions of the current union contract.





By the Local 1245
Safety Committee

Making time for safety

Time. What is time? Most of us have lots of things to do every day. Therefore we must have some type of schedule.

A schedule is how we allocate time. One thing we need to allocate time for is safety.

When we are trying to meet a deadline, hurrying to get things done, or trying to finish projects, the pressure is on. Maybe we are short of time. And just maybe it is because we did not allocate our time as best we could have.

When we are rushing and hurry-

ing, it seems that is when most accidents occur. Auto accidents, slips and falls, slips of memory—these can lead to all kinds of mishaps.

So when we get out of bed to start our day, let us allow plenty of time to accomplish what we want to get done safely. Allow ample time to do these things, and whether we are conscious of safety or not, safety will come more readily with proper planning of our time. We will be more able to avoid rushing, and thus avoid accidents at home, at work, and at play.

Eyes on the road, please

What are they doing up there? You've seen it before—that car just in front of you. Swerving, slowing, speeding up.

Are they impaired?

Yes! But not with any substance.

It's that thing sticking out of the driver's head. A cell phone!

Don't join this growing legion of hazardous drivers. When you need to talk on the phone, try to pull over to a safe place to stop.

Or at least get into the slow lane

and try to limit your phone conversation to when you are in flowing traffic. That is, when you are not having to negotiate stop lights, sharp turns, or passing situations.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, out of 7 million crashes in 1995, nearly 25% of them involved some form of inattention.

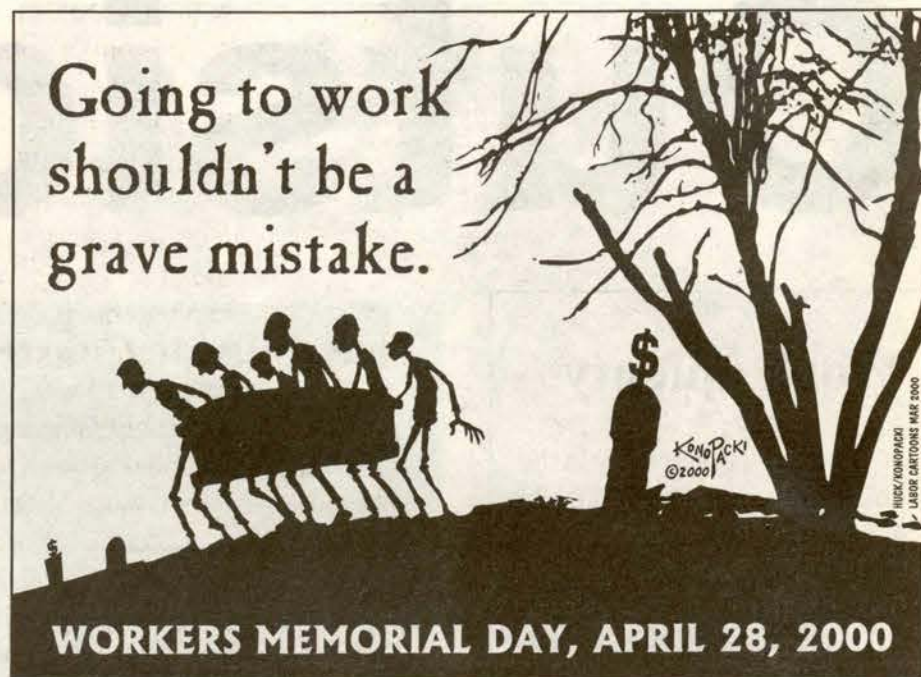
That was five years ago. Think of how many more cell phones there are on the road now!



"I'm a big enough man, Chandler, to admit when I'm wrong. You weren't faking your injury."

Current members of the Local 1245 Safety Committee are: Stoney Burke, Alameda Power & Telecommunications; Keith Hopp, Pacific Gas & Electric; Ralph Muraca, City of Santa Clara; Mark Rose, Davey Tree; Al White, Pacific Gas & Electric; Rod Wright, Modesto Irrigation District; and Assistant Business Manager Art Murray.

Going to work
shouldn't be a
grave mistake.



Labor seeks benefit increase for workers injured on job

Workers injured on the job will recover more of their lost wages if the California legislature heeds labor's call to increase Workers Compensation benefits.

Senate Bill 996, Fairness for Injured Workers, would increase the temporary disability benefit, the permanent partial disability benefit and the life pension benefit for injured workers. The bill, sponsored by the California Labor Federation, is being carried by Senator Patrick Johnston.

Injured workers testified before Johnston's committee last month about the hardships they face due to inadequate compensation. Steve Duncan, the lone survivor of the Tosco refinery fire near Martinez last year that killed four workers, criticized provisions of the state law that prohibit injured workers from suing negligent employers.

Unions say the legislation is needed because the Workers' Compensation reform bill of 1993 disproportionately aided employers at the expense of injured workers. The 1993 bill was designed to generate substantial savings, which were to be divided equally between employers and injured workers.

But things have not worked out that way. Employers, who were ex-

pected to save \$1.5 billion each year, have in fact saved over \$10.5 billion in the last three years. Meanwhile, workers have experienced benefit increases less than \$500 million each year, but these were basically paid for by reductions in stress and post-termination claims and a cap on vocational rehabilitation benefits.

A RAND Civil Institute for Civil Justice report, Compensating Permanent Workplace Injuries, concludes that all injured workers experience significant wage loss following a disabling injury and that current benefits are grossly inadequate.

Among other provisions, SB 996 would do the following:

- ◆ Increase the maximum weekly temporary disability benefit from \$490 to \$651 per week.

- ◆ Increase the minimum weekly permanently partially disabled benefit from \$70 to \$100 per week.

- ◆ Increase the maximum weekly permanently partially disabled benefit to \$200 per week when the final adjusted permanent disability rating is greater than 70%, for injuries occurring on or after 1/1/2001.

- ◆ Increase the maximum weekly permanently partially disabled benefit to \$230 per week, regardless of disability rating, for injuries occurring on or after 1/1/2001.



Each year, more than 600,000 workers in America suffer from crippling back injuries and repetitive strain injuries. These disabling injuries are the nation's biggest job safety problem. RSIs affect workers in virtually every industry and occupation.

It doesn't have to be this way. Ergonomic solutions to these problems are well-known and must be implemented. OSHA has issued a proposed ergonomics standard to protect American workers. But some employer groups are trying to block the proposal from becoming law.



American workers make the following demands to Stop the Pain!

- ◆ A final OSHA ergonomics standard now. The rule-making process and implementation of the standard should proceed without delay.
- ◆ Action by employers to fix hazardous jobs that cause crippling back injuries or Repetitive Stress Injuries.
- ◆ Fair compensation for workers crippled by back injuries or RSIs. Insurers and employers must recognize work-related RSIs and provide speedy compensation to injured workers.

Name	Address	City	State	Zip
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

Sign and mail this petition to your US Representative and US Senators, and send a copy to:

AFL-CIO Department of Occupational Safety & Health
 815 - 16th Street NW
 Washington, DC 20006



WOMEN WORKERS' HISTORY

Taking on the Sweatshops

At the insistence of Elizabeth Morgan of the Ladies Federal Labor Union, the Chicago Trades and Labor Assembly in 1891 agreed to an investigation of Chicago sweatshops. The result, according to labor historian Philip Foner, was "one of the most important and influential reports in American labor history, which eventually called the attention of the entire nation to the sweating system."

A labor investigative team including Morgan and accompanied by representatives of the city health department, city attorney's office and the press made unannounced visits to 30 sweatshops. Interviews with women and children workers revealed unhealthy working conditions and pitifully poor pay. Some of the worst shops were owned by a philanthropist, J.V. Farwell; one was a tiny 10-foot square basement where 23 people worked. Young girls received only \$3 for a 60-70 hour week making velvet cloaks for the wealthy.



The findings were published in a pamphlet, which aroused the public's fear of contagious diseases as much as its sense of decency. The report named names and detailed hours, wages and unsanitary conditions. This information became the basis for action: a campaign for an anti-sweatshop bill. Thanks to the hard work of Elizabeth Morgan, the Illinois Women's Alliance, and the labor movement, the Illinois legislature enacted the Factory and Workshop Inspection Act in 1893.

Survey reveals working women's priorities

This year America's women will be the deciding factor in scores of political races around the country. And when millions of working women go to the polls in November, these will be their priorities: equal pay, paid family leave, health care and retirement security.

Those were the findings of the Ask a Working Woman telephone survey recently conducted by the AFL-CIO, the nation's largest organization of working women with more than 5 million women members. The survey capped a year of research by the AFL-CIO Working Women's Department, which hosted 5,000 group discussions in kitchens, workplaces, conference rooms and town halls around the country in 1999.

The priorities revealed by the survey should come as no surprise to anyone familiar with the stresses that working families face. Working women in particular shoulder a heavy burden in America's families, workplaces and communities.

Working women around the country say that if they are to meet their obligations at home and at work, they need more time, pay and benefits. And their top legislative priorities in this all-important election year are equal pay, paid family leave, health care and retirement security.

The survey found that:

Most working women today—69%—feel secure in their jobs.

But the frantic pace of today's economy continues to put a strain on working women—many of whom are working odd hours and schedules other than those of their spouses and partners. Most working women (60%), and an even higher percentage of working women with children under the age of 18 (67%), say they work at least 40 hours a week—including some 15% of working women who say they work more than 40 hours a week. But what is

Many Women Work Irregular Schedules, Making It More Difficult to Coordinate Jobs with Family Responsibilities

	Traditional hours (Mon.-Fri. days)	Irregular schedules (Some evenings and/or weekends)
All working women	71%	28%
With children under age 18	73%	26%
Single women	59%	40%
Under age 30	64%	35%
High school education or less	61%	38%
Earn less than \$25,000	57%	42%

most surprising is the number of working women who say they are working irregular schedules and shifts that are different than their spouses' and partners':

More than one in four working women (28%) say that at least part of their working hours are in the evenings or on the weekends—and this also is true of women with children under 18 (26%).

The women most likely to work irregular schedules are working women who earn less than \$25,000 a year (42%), single women (40%), women with a high school education or less (38%) and women under the age of 30 (35%).

Equally startling is that nearly half of all women who are married or living with someone (46%) say they work a different schedule than their spouses or domestic partners do.

Among married women with young children, the figure rises to 51%.

"Good economic times" notwithstanding, surprising numbers of working women are doing without the basic benefits they need to care for their families. While a majority of working women receives basic health, pension and sick leave benefits on the job, remarkably high numbers are doing without. At the same time, most working women do not have paid family leave or child care benefits.

◆ Nearly one-third (29%) of working women say they do not have paid sick leave for themselves;

◆ More than half (54%) have no paid leave to care for a baby or an ill family member;

◆ One-third (34%) have no flexibility or control over their work hours;

◆ One in four (24%) do not have employer-provided health insurance;

◆ Some 28% do not receive pension or retirement benefits on the job;

◆ And the vast majority (74%) says their employers do not offer child care benefits.



Utility Reporter

Programs affecting seniors at risk

By Orv Owen

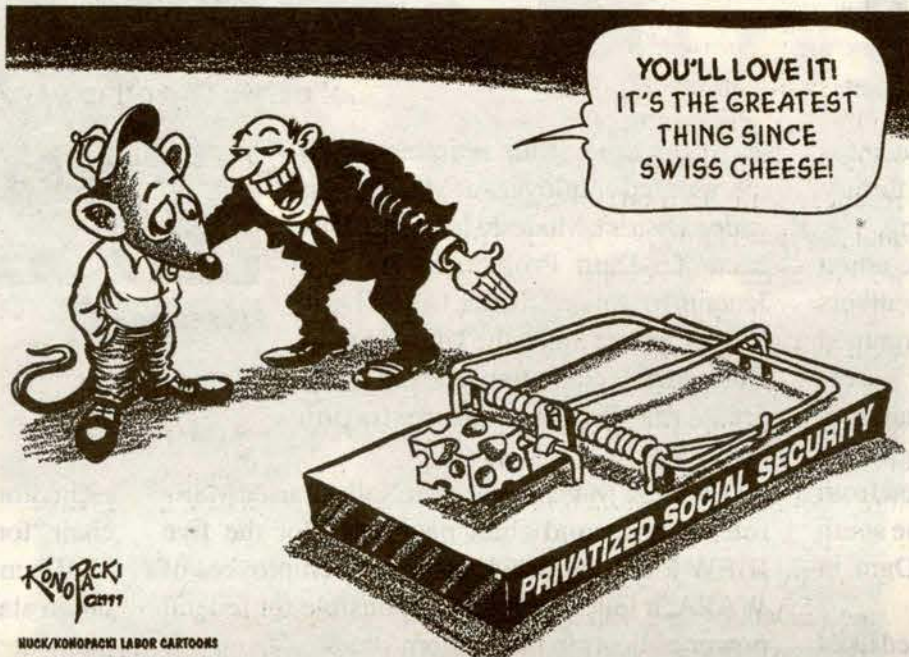
It is no secret that the votes of seniors in this year's election may be the most important votes in their lifetime.

The future of programs affecting seniors are at risk. Social Security, Medicare, Long Term Care, and reform of the managed care industry as well as the most needed prescription drug benefits will be in harm's way.

The makeup of the next Congress and the next President will be critical to the preservation of these senior programs.

Most of the incumbents in Congress will be too busy running for reelection to accomplish any meaningful legislation this year. And, unfortunately, there's little doubt that when the next Congress takes office, many of those who oppose our traditional senior programs will be back. They will continue to push their goals to privatize the Social Security system and replace the traditional fee-for-service Medicare program with vouchers.

Older Americans want Social Security and the traditional fee-for-service Medicare programs to remain intact, and we want and need a uni-



versal and comprehensive prescription drug benefit under Medicare.

In order to keep secure the current programs, we must elect candidates to public office who share our concerns and vision. I certainly recognize that many people are bored by and tired of listening to candidates and political pundits with their endless rhetoric.

However, we cannot be complacent.

We must keep challenging these candidates seeking our trust and our votes. The alternative is unacceptable and the consequences undesirable. Contact the candidates that are seeking your trust and put their feet to the fire on these issues affecting seniors, our children and grandchildren. It's our future that we're talking about—and theirs.

Keep the faith!



Make a Date...

The Local 1245 Retiree Club invites you to join us for companionship, discussion and projects. Current meeting locations are:

East Bay Chapter: meets 2nd Thursday each month, 10 a.m., at Local 1245 headquarters, 3063 Citrus Circle, Walnut Creek, CA.

San Jose Chapter: meets 1st Thursday each month, 10 a.m., at Local 332, 1870 Stone Ave., San Jose.



Seniors 'get on the bus' to protest drug price-gouging

To help publicize the shameful price-gouging that seniors experience when buying necessary medications, a group of New Hampshire senior citizens embarked on a bus trip to buy medications in Canada, where the cost is significantly lower than in the United States.

The January bus trip, led by former talk-show host Phil Donahue, was timed to attract the attention of presidential candidates stumping in the state.

The seniors stopped at the New Hampshire campaign headquarters of five presidential candidates to ask

them to "get on the bus" for lower drug prices.

Among those on the bus were Russell and Suzanne Woodard of Piermont, NH, who spend more than one-fourth of their \$1,400 monthly income on medicines. Like countless other seniors, when they can't afford to pay for a prescription, they cope by reducing their daily dosage or delaying filling the prescription.

The couple saved nearly \$600 on the drug-buying expedition to Canada.

"Unfortunately, we can't go to Canada every time we need to fill

prescriptions," Russell Woodard said.

According to Public Citizen, one out of three Medicare recipients—14 million older adults and people with disabilities—have no private prescription drug coverage, and Medicare covers only those medicines administered in a hospital setting. In addition, many more seniors have inadequate or insecure insurance coverage with high deductibles and co-payments and low annual caps.

President Clinton has proposed a Medicare drug benefit, but his plan falls short of guaranteeing fair prices.

One proposal that would get the job done is HR 664/S 731, the Prescription Drug Fairness for Seniors Act by Reps. Tom Allen of Maine and Henry Waxman of California and Senators Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts and Tim Johnson of South Dakota. This legislation would require drug companies to make their products available to Medicare beneficiaries at the same lower prices as other most-favored customers.

Drug prices are estimated to rise by 10.3% annually through the year 2008. Congress must take action to protect our senior citizens.

Gary Mai: Diligent. Conscientious. 100% Union.

For Gary Mai, being a Local 1245 business representative came down to three things: Bargaining, bargaining, and bargaining.

The affable Mai, who retired from the union staff last month, represented Local 1245 members at eight different employers. He often bargained three labor agreements a year in a union assignment that stretched from Fresno in the south to Shasta Dam in the north.

"It seemed like I was always at the bargaining table," said Mai. "It's a bargaining assignment."

In the popular imagination, union negotiators are guys with long cigars who pound tables

with oversized fists. But that's not Gary. Slender and soft spoken, Mai's bargaining style emphasized substance over theatrics, persuasion over bombast. Where possible he tried to convince managers that "they could run their operations better" through good relations with the union.

Mai succeeded in building cooperative relationships with many employers, but acknowledged that "some chose to fight."

At the time of his retirement Mai represented employees at Merced Irrigation District, Modesto Irrigation District, Tri-Dam Project, South San Joaquin Irrigation District, City of Lodi, City of Shasta Lake, the United States Bureau of Reclamation, and the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA).

Business Manager Jack McNally praised Mai's role as chair and chief negotiator for the five IBEW local unions who represent employees of WAPA, a federal agency responsible for federal power projects in the western states.

"Gary did a great great job dealing with that group of people, and also in dealing with our public sector," McNally said. "We're going to miss him."

Mai happily shares credit for union successes with the stewards he worked with.

"My assignment area was so spread out I depended a lot on stewards to do the day-to-day stuff," Mai said. "I had some really good stewards."

Like Bill Chambers, a steward at the Bureau of Reclamation's Keswick Dam in the Redding area.

"He acted on my behalf for many many years," said Mai. "He was the rep up there. I couldn't have handled that property without Bill."

It's understandable that Mai would have an affinity for union stewards. He became one himself around 1970 at the City of Lodi, where he worked first as a groundman, then lineman, then

estimator. In addition, Mai said he served as unit chair "forever."

When he was approached about joining the union staff, Mai was skeptical. The labor agreement at the City of Lodi did not require the employer to give an employee leave for union service. If things didn't work out, Mai could have found himself unemployed.

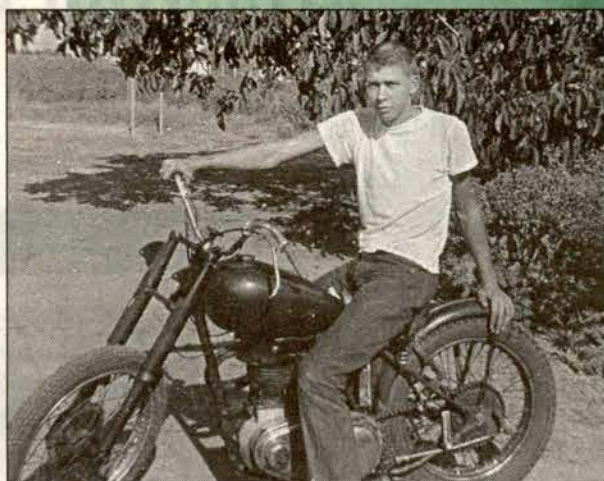
"Micky Harrington was my rep at the time and he kind of goaded me into it," Mai recalled.

An accomplishment that Mai rates among the most satisfying of his union career was a contract arbitration that pitted Mai and staff attorney Tom Dalzell against the Bureau of Reclamation. The union prevailed, and the experience left Dalzell with a high opinion of Mai.

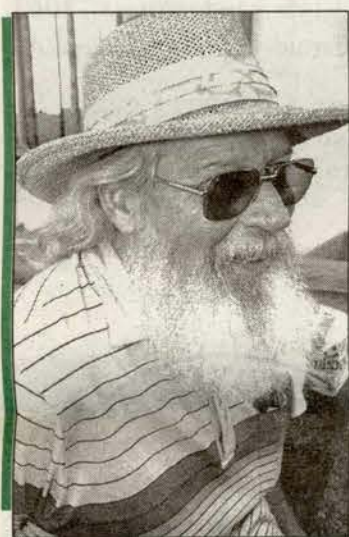
"He is smart. He is 100% union. He is dedicated. He is diligent and conscientious," said Dalzell during a staff gathering in Mai's honor. "And he doesn't believe his own b--- s---."

Mai, who was raised in a union household, said he plans to remain a member of Local 1245. Beyond that, his plans are simple:

"I'm gonna play golf with Frank Hutchins."



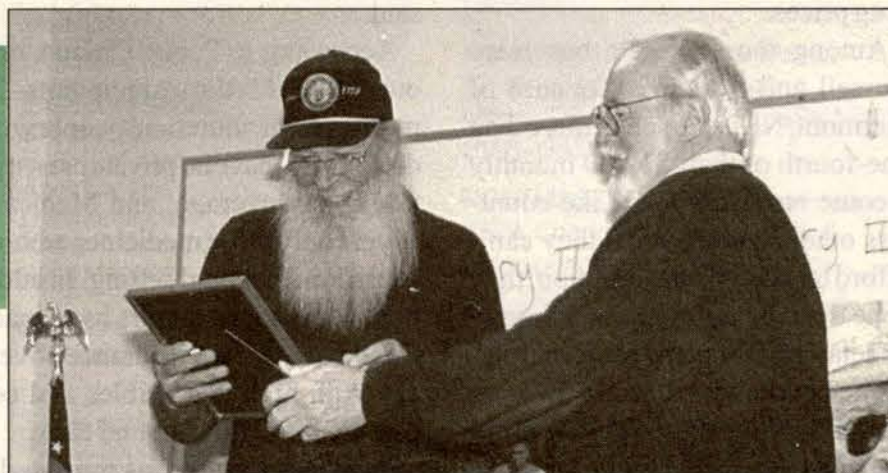
Motorized Mai.



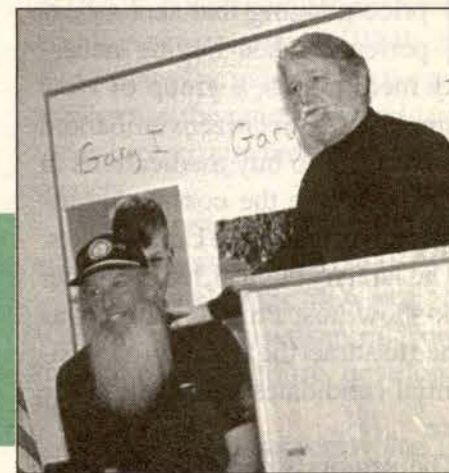
A more recent Mai.



Staff Attorney Tom Dalzell



Business Manager Jack McNally



Business Rep Frank Saxsenmeier

Congratulating Gary Mai for his service to the members of Local 1245 are: