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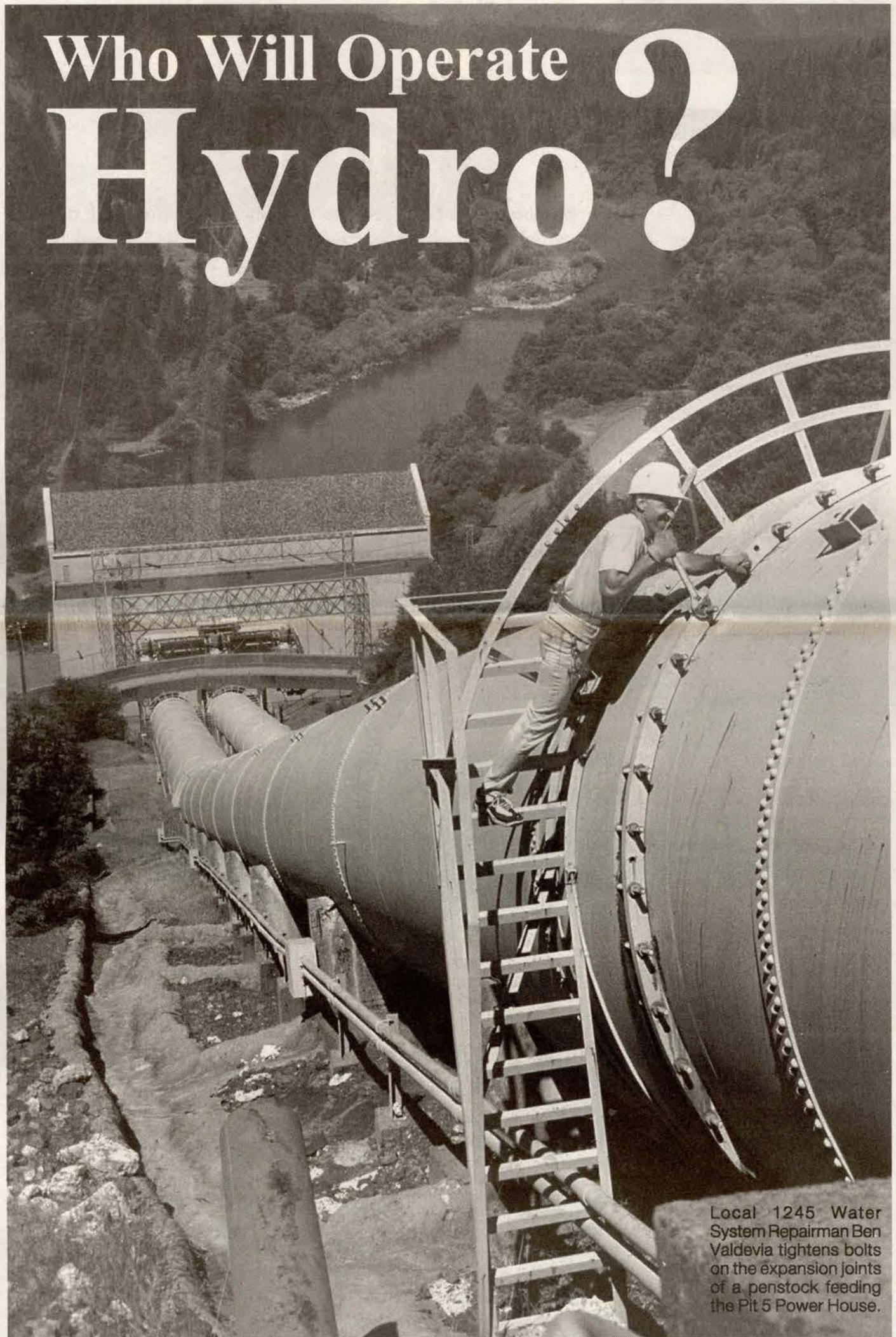
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Who Will Operate Hydro?



Local 1245 Water System Repairman Ben Valdevia tightens bolts on the expansion joints of a penstock feeding the Pit 5 Power House.

Eric Wolfe

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EVENTS

JULY 29-30
Advisory Council
Reno, NV

SEPTEMBER 9
Service Awards
Ukiah, CA

APPOINTMENTS

SIERRA PACIFIC POWER COMPANY

Ballot Committee
Chuck Faring
Franklin Chadwick
Vickie Borst

YUBA COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

Negotiating Committee
Ron Knudson

AC TRANSIT

Negotiating Committee
Ernest Orozco

ADELPHIA

Negotiating Committee
Robert Devito
Janise Ramos
Jay Reese

Job Description Ad Hoc Committee

Errol A. Stephens
Donna Whetstone

CITY OF SANTA CLARA

Ballot Committee
Doug Baldanzi
Keith Bowman

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA POWER ASSOCIATION

Negotiating Committee
Gary Herrin

TURLOCK IRRIGATION DISTRICT

Negotiating Committee
Richard V. Lane
Stephen Verschelden

OUTSIDE LINE

Negotiating Committee
Vern Brown
Jeff Johnstone
Jim Rowley

Joint Safety Committee
Bill Paulsen

LOCAL 1245 IBEW

Journeyman Lineman Examining Committee
Rich Cowart

CENTRAL LABOR COUNCILS

Butte/Glenn Counties
Al Knudsen

CONFERENCES AND CONVENTIONS

Nevada State AFL-CIO COPE Endorsement Conference

Tom Norlen
Spring Baker
Bob Vieira
Ray Thomas
Lynn Allen

Coalition of Labor Union Women National Executive Board

Dorothy Fortier
Kathy Tindall

IBEW Ninth District Progress Meeting

Jack McNally
Howard Stiefer
Jim McCauley
Mike Davis
Kathy Tindall
Chris Habecker
Anna Bayless-Martinez
John Mendoza
Darrel Mitchell
Dennis Seyfer
Jim Lynn
Kit Stice

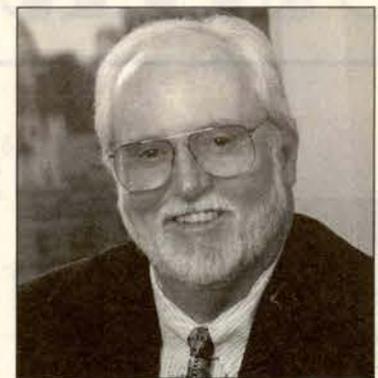
APRI California Section 18th Statewide Conference

Lula Washington
Alfred Fortier
Bernard Smallwood

POINT OF VIEW

Retirees Club deserves support

By Jack McNally, Business Manager



Members of the Local 1245 Retirees Club are making a strong effort to protect the economic security of our retired members. These efforts deserve the support of all Local 1245 retirees and retirees-to-be.

General wage increases negotiated by the union keep most members even with or ahead of the cost-of-living. But it's a different story for retirees. Although practices vary from employer to employer, retirees generally receive a benefit according to a fixed formula. While these benefits make our retirees a lot more comfortable than those who just have a Social Security check to live on, pension benefits are generally fixed. When the cost of living rises, retirees see their purchasing power decline.

An additional concern for many retirees at PG&E is that some of their

assets are tied up in PG&E stock. As everyone knows, that stock has not performed well in the era of deregulation, leaving many PG&E retirees with lower dividend income and less overall economic security.

PG&E does not hesitate to ask for the help of employees when it comes to supporting rate hikes or battling dangerous ballot propositions. Nor does PG&E hesitate to send its governmental affairs people to the company's various clubs and ask for help in writing letters to local officials on various issues.

Obviously no utility company is eager to incur additional expenses in this competitive era. But it would be wrong to regard retirees as just another line item in the company budget.

Local 1245 members are the

people who made PG&E. They are the ones who delivered the services that enabled PG&E to become the company it is today. And the same is true for the many other employers our members have assisted through the years.

And now the Local 1245 Retirees Club is stepping forward and asking for the recognition they deserve. They need your help. If you are retired, or are about to retire, please join the Local 1245 Retirees Club and get involved in a chapter in your area—or start one if there isn't one in your area.

It takes unity to get things done. It's true in the workplace, and it's just as true in retirement. For further information, call our Walnut Creek headquarters at 925-933-6060 and find out how you can get involved.



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Pole Test & Treat agreement with Osmose

Local 1245 negotiated a new three-year labor agreement with Pole Test and Treat contractor OSMOSE that provides a 2% wage increase retroactive to June 1, with wage openers in the each of the last two years.

The company agreed to provide a \$15 per diem for Treatment and Restoration Technicians working 60 miles or an hour-and-one-half drive time from their base headquarters.

Company also agreed to provide 10 days of paid jury duty and three days of funeral leave for death of immediate family members.



OSMOSE BARGAINING

Representing Local 1245 in bargaining were (clockwise, from left) Assistant Business Manager Art Murray, Drake Cesmat, Business Rep. John Brown, and Sr. Business Rep. Landis Marttila; for the company: Kurt Schnubel, Jim McGiffert, and John Audycki.

Tree trimmer struggles with rare disease

Local 1245 member Joe Link, a tree trimmer for Davey Tree, has been stricken with a rare disease called Guillians Barre Syndrome, which affects the sheath that covers the body's nerves.

The symptoms are severe and extremely debilitating, leaving Brother Link with the problem of having to learn how to do the simplest everyday tasks all over again.



After intensive therapy in hospital, Link was released to continue his therapy on an outpatient basis.

Although he is receiving support from his wife, family and friends, Brother Link faces mounting expenses. Contributions to assist Brother Link through this time of trouble can be sent to:

US Bank
1110 Dana Drive
Redding, CA 96002

Please reference "For Josef M. Link" on your check.

PG&E, union discuss Gas T&D job definitions



Eric Wolffe

GAS T&D LINE OF PROGRESSION/JOB DEFINITION COMMITTEE

Local 1245 Business Rep. Larry Pierce (left) led the union delegation in talks over Gas T&D job definitions. Also representing the union were (clockwise, from Pierce) Mike Scafani, Tim McCaulay, Jim Findley, Business Rep. Kit Stice, Eric Celosse, Frank Malcria, Dave Galimba, and Emet Miranda. Not in photo: Greg Molakides.

The PG&E Title 200 Gas T&D Line of Progression/Job Definition Committee met June 7 at PG&E's Industrial Relations office in Walnut Creek to consider company proposals for changes in job definitions.

The union expressed no opposition to three company proposals involving safety-related issues. But the union said it saw little value in discussing other company proposals unless compensation issues were a part of the discussion.

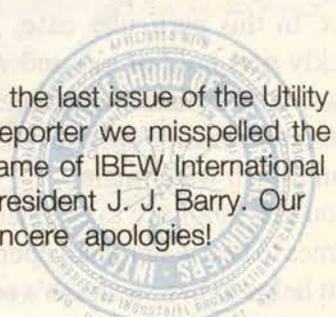
The company indicated a willingness to look at compensation issues and the next meeting is scheduled for July 13 to continue the talks.

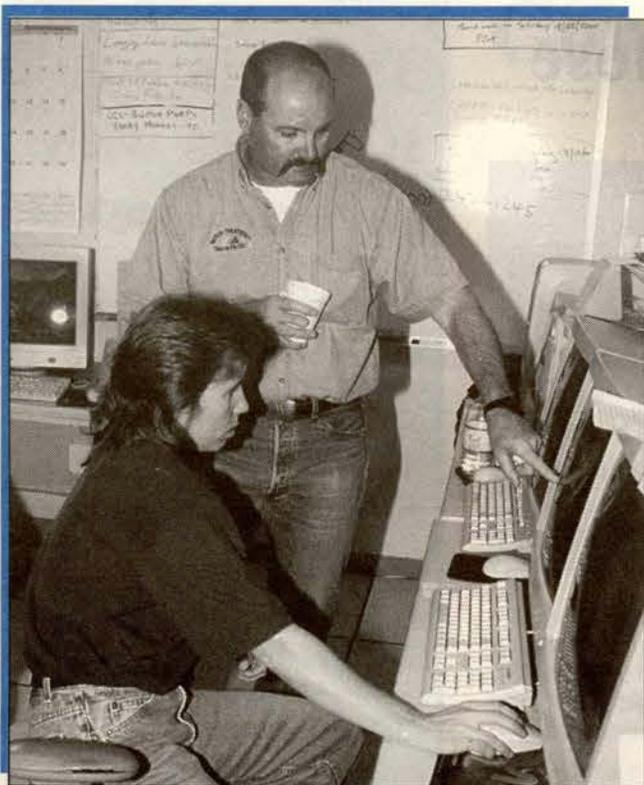
PG&E CLERICAL CONSOLIDATION
Members of the Clerical Consolidation Committee met June 21 at union headquarters in Walnut Creek. Serving on the committee are (standing, from left): Linda Norris, Brenda Fisher, Donna Ambeau, Arlene Edwards; (seated, from left) Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier, Karen Russell, Anna Bayliss-Martinez, Jerry Burns, and Adrienne Franks.



Correction

In the last issue of the Utility Reporter we misspelled the name of IBEW International President J. J. Barry. Our sincere apologies!





Skills on tap

The people
who bring
water to
Reno



The computer monitor is a window to the world for Local 1245 bargaining unit members at Sierra Pacific Power's Glendale Water Treatment facility in Reno, Nev.

Monitors inform them when water is flowing smoothly to the Sierra Pacific Power water customers they serve. And monitors alert them when things go wrong.

A low-suction indication, for example, tells Dave Bunt that the water pressure is low. But it can't tell him why. "Is it just a consumption issue, or is there something else going on?" wonders Bunt, Journeyman Operator, Water Protection.

It's a moment when the public needs alert, well-trained operators in place to identify the problem before service at the tap is jeopardized.

"I worry about my customers losing pressure at their homes—and also the possibility of contamination if we go negative on pressure," says Bunt. In this particular case, Bunt quickly gets hold of gas and water crews, who isolate the problem: a contractor backhoe operator has dug up an 8-inch water main.

You may not have to be Sherlock Holmes to be a water plant operator, but it helps to have a sleuth's sensibility.

"My world is a screen—18 inches,"

says Bunt. "All the information I have I pull off the screens."

For operators, cooperation from workers in the field means the difference between guesswork and knowledge.

"When I see changes (on the monitors) I don't know what it is out there—a main break or a truck that runs over a hydrant," says Sheryl Houlihan, Apprentice Water Plant Operator. Reports from the field enable her to interpret what she sees on her computer and take appropriate action.

Good communications skills are essential for coordinating operations in the plant with those in the field. Workers who understand and appreciate each other's roles can focus more of their attention on meeting customers' needs.

But day-to-day operations don't always leave time for employees to develop the sort of rapport that the job requires. Sierra Pacific recently inaugurated a labor-management program "so that people could get to know each other as individuals" outside of the workplace, says Houlihan.

So far, the program has enjoyed a good response. A company-sponsored golf tournament attracted 20 employees, and 60 showed up for the barbecue afterwards.

"The idea was to try to get people working together," says Houlihan. "We're all here for the same reason, so we might as well make the best of it."

The Glendale facility provides 25 million gallons of water per day to Reno-area customers. Sierra Pacific's Chalk Bluff plant, in operation about five years, provides an additional 70 million gallons to meet the area's growing need for fresh water.

There are more than 5,000 points to monitor on Reno's water system, including pump discharges, pump suction, and tank levels. That's 5,000 potential problem areas that Reno residents don't have to concern themselves with, because a well-trained unionized workforce is on the job.

[Next month: The Chalk Bluff plant](#)

You may not have to be Sherlock Holmes to be a water plant operator, but it helps to have a sleuth's sensibility.



Top left: Sheryl Houlihan, Apprentice Water Plant Operator and a 6-year union member, and Dave Bunt, Journeyman Operator, Water Protection and a 9-year union member.

Above: Dennis Bergstrom, SCADA Tech and 31-year union member (left), and Bill Summy, Water Supply Specialist, steward, and 15-year union member.

Left: Mary Hefner, an 11-year union member.



Improvements in City of Oakland agreement

Employees represented by Local 1245 at the City of Oakland are benefiting from improvements negotiated in the new Memorandum of Understanding.

The agreement provides general wage increases of 3%, 4% and 3% over the three-year term. Also provided was an equity adjustment of 1.5% for journeyman and higher classifications that took effect Jan. 22.

The journey wage after adjustments stands at \$28.67 an hour, increasing to \$28.92 an hour on June 24, and increasing to \$30.71 an hour on June 23, 2001.

The agreement also creates an IRS 125 account for increased direct payments to retired employees for medical.

While the previous MOU permitted the City to remove vacation balances in excess of twice the annual rate, the new agreement provides

Preparing for bargaining last fall were City of Oakland employees Ed Myall (left) and John Hendry, assisted by Business Rep. Bernard Smallwood (right).



Eric Walker

that employees cease to accrue vacation if their balance exceeds twice the annual rate. Employees may now sell back up to five days vacation a year under specified circumstances.

When Christmas Eve and New Years Eve fall on Friday, an employee assigned to work one but not both Fridays gets a half day off.

The meal allowance is increased to \$10.25 on Jan 22, 2000, \$10.50 on June 24, 2000, and \$10.75 on

June 23, 2001.

Minor modifications were made in night shifts permitting exact times to be established by the employee and the supervisor.

Representing the union in the negotiations were Ed Myall and John Hendry, assisted at various times by Business Reps Lula Washington, Bernard Smallwood, Frank Saxsenmeier, and staff attorney Tom Dalzell.

Members ratify first pact at Town of Fernley

Local 1245 members on May 15 unanimously ratified a first labor agreement with the Town of Fernley, Nev. that provides first-year wage increases ranging from 5.1% to 15.3%.

A general wage increase of 2% takes effect July 1, 2001.

The two-year agreement, which

covers water utility employees and parks employees, also provides wage schedule "steps" that increase 4% annually until an employee reaches the top step.

Job security is enhanced by a grievance procedure that has binding arbitration above the town board level of authority.

The agreement secures all current policy benefits—including medical and vacation benefits—through the term of the agreement.

"We received the right to represent Town of Fernley employees in July of 1999," said Local 1245 Business Rep. Ray Thomas, "and began negotiations the following month."

Assisting Thomas with bargaining were Michael Nevarez and Steven Henderson.

"In a first contract you seldom achieve all the gains you hope for, but we were able to obtain the major protections we were after," said Thomas. "Michael and Steven did one hell of a job representing the employees in these negotiations."

Also provided in the agreement is lay-off language that gives credit for employees' length of service.

Now that the pact has been ratified, the negotiating committee must meet with Town of Fernley representatives to blend the agreement with the Personnel Policy Manual.



Ray Thomas

TOWN OF FERNLEY

The newly-organized Town of Fernley bargaining unit includes (from left) Michael Nevarez, Steve Henderson, Kathy Lowrey, Kirk Huhtala, and Howard Hill Sr.

Unit updates

Unit 3514, Chilcoot, meets monthly, on the second Wednesday. Meeting dates for the remainder of the year are: July 12, August 9, September 13, October 11, November 8 and December 13.

Ray Thomas
Business Rep.

Unit 3213, Burney, has a new unit chair: Will Rodriguez.

Kit Stice
Business Rep.

Unit 1213, King City, now meets on the second Thursday of the month. Meeting time was incorrectly reported in last issue of Utility Reporter. Correct meeting time is 3:45 pm. Meetings for the remainder of the year are: August 10, September 14, October 12, November 9, December 14. The July meeting has been rescheduled for July 27.

Bill Brill
Business Rep.

Unit 3026, Portland/PG&E GTNW, has a new unit chair: Susan Corey.

Jim Lynn
Business Rep.

Unit 1511, San Jose, has a new unit chair: Fred DeAguinada.

Bill Brill
Business Rep.

"Liberty does not consist of mere general declarations of the rights of men. It consists in the translation of those declarations into definite action."

Woodrow Wilson



AFL-CIO on immigration

The AFL-CIO was recognizing a new world reality when it decided earlier this year to promote amnesty for undocumented workers and to call for the repeal of sanctions against employers who hire undocumented workers.

Current U.S. law makes it illegal for an undocumented worker to hold a job. Organized labor, concerned about preserving jobs for US workers, has been generally unsympathetic to immigrants working in the US illegally.

But the enforcement of current immigration policies isn't really benefiting native-born workers, says labor journalist David Bacon. When undocumented workers fear losing their jobs at the hands of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, employers can impose lower wages and worse conditions.

"INS enforcement has undermined the ability of immigrant workers to organize unions to improve those same conditions, hurting immigrant and native-born workers alike. Making immigrants vulnerable has been, in effect, a giant sweatshop subsidy," Bacon wrote in a recent op-ed piece for the San Francisco Chronicle.

Economic survival has become difficult in many countries because of trade policies imposed by wealthier countries and international financial institutions, such as the IMF and World Bank.

It is shortsighted, says Bacon, "for the U.S. to promote these policies on the one hand, and then ignore their consequences on the other. The migration of people will not stop until the underlying economic causes forcing people from their homes are eliminated."

Egads! There are *workers* in my factory!

China has freed a long-time dissident two years before the end of his 13-year prison term for organizing a labor union during the Tiananmen Square democracy movement, Associated Press reported. A worker at the Shaoguan electrical engineering plant in Hunan, Zhang joined protests in the province inspired by the student-led demonstrations taking place in Beijing's Tiananmen Square in 1989. He made speeches in Changsha and advised workers setting up an independent union. After the June 4 military assault that ended the Beijing protests, Zhang urged resistance to the crackdown. Quickly rounded up, Zhang was sentenced to 13 years in prison for "counterrevolutionary propaganda and incitement."

► **Egads! There are Workers in My Factory!:** "This place stinks.

It's just full of workers, like flies buzzing over a cesspool," Toyota official Shigeki Tomoyama told the Wall Street Journal during a visit to a Toyota car distribution center near Tokyo. Tomoyama and his boss cut nearly 20% of the facility's jobs.

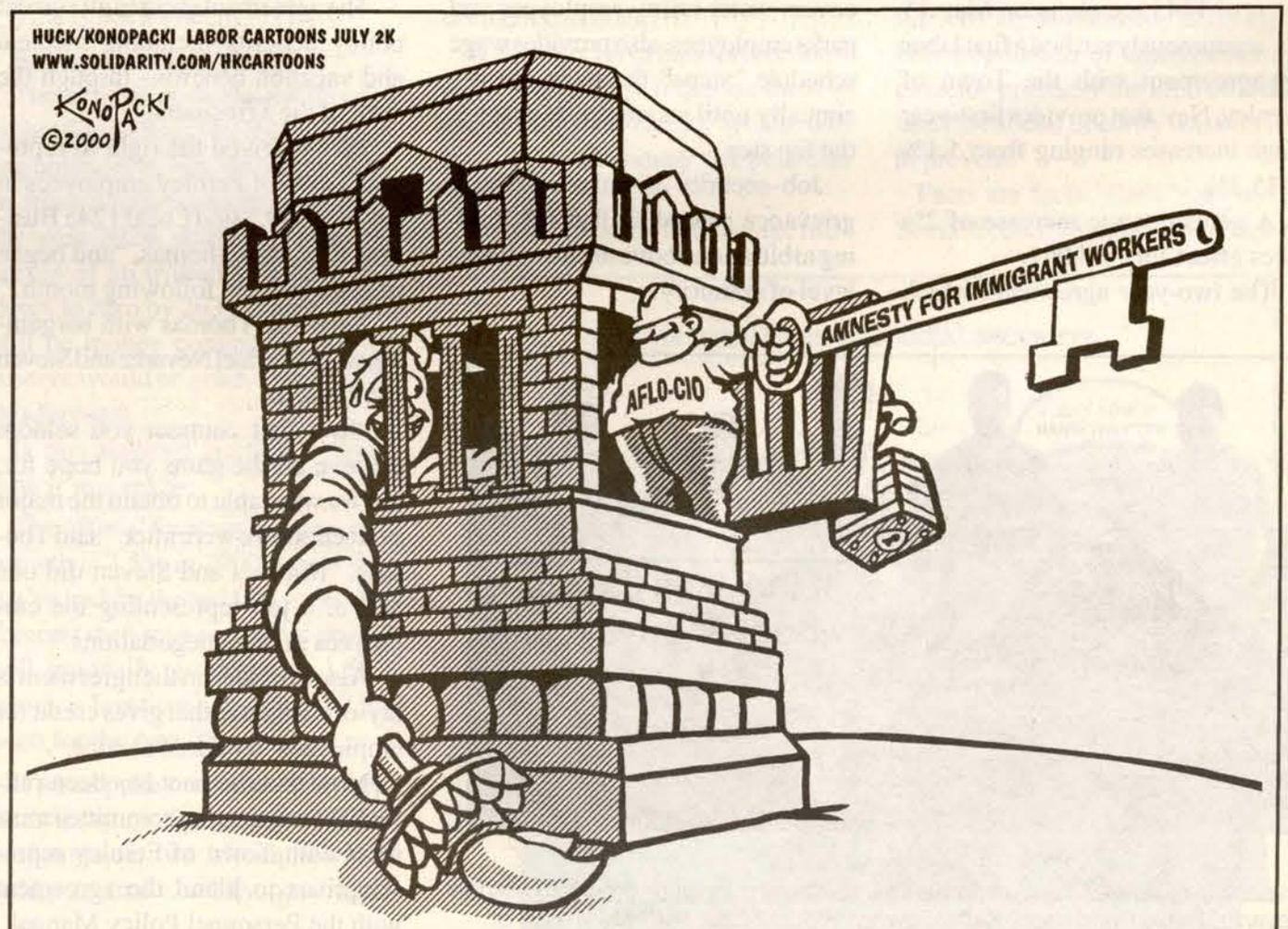
► **Students Back Janitors:** After a 33-hour student occupation of the school's admissions office, Wesleyan University agreed to improve wages and benefits for its janitors, Labor Notes reported. The janitors, who work for outside contractors, will also be guaranteed the right to keep their jobs if the university switches contractors.

► **Wrong Team:** Managers at the US Postal Service in Tampa told employees they'd loosen the dress code to allow employees to wear team jerseys to work when Tampa Bay played Washington in an NFL playoff game in January. But a su-

pervisor sent custodian Bill Rizi home because he showed up wearing a shirt for the wrong team—the Washington Redskins, Labor Notes reported. Rizi returned to work, wearing the same shirt, after the Postal Workers union intervened.

► **No School Privatization:** Police used tear gas June 20 to disperse a demonstration of about 5,000 teachers amid a six-week strike that has shut Ecuador's 23,000 public schools. Some 140,000 public school teachers have refused to report to work since May 15, demanding pay hikes and guarantees that the public school system will not be privatized.

► **CEOs Doing Fine, Thanks:** CEOs at America's largest corporations were paid an average of \$12.4 million in 1999, according to Business Week. That's 475 times the average pay of a blue-collar worker, a gap this is still growing.



Who Will Operate Hydro?

Story & Photos by Eric Wolfe

While politicians, regulators, environmentalists, and energy companies wrangle over the fate of Pacific Gas & Electric's hydro-electric facilities in the new competitive era, the employees who actually manage those resources have a word of advice: whoever operates the system had better know how it works.

It's advice that politicians—and the public—should take to heart.

When California embarked on electric deregulation in the mid-1990s, the state Public Utilities Commission pressed PG&E to divest its fossil fuel plants in the interest of creating competitive markets for electricity. But no one was in a hurry to mess with hydro.

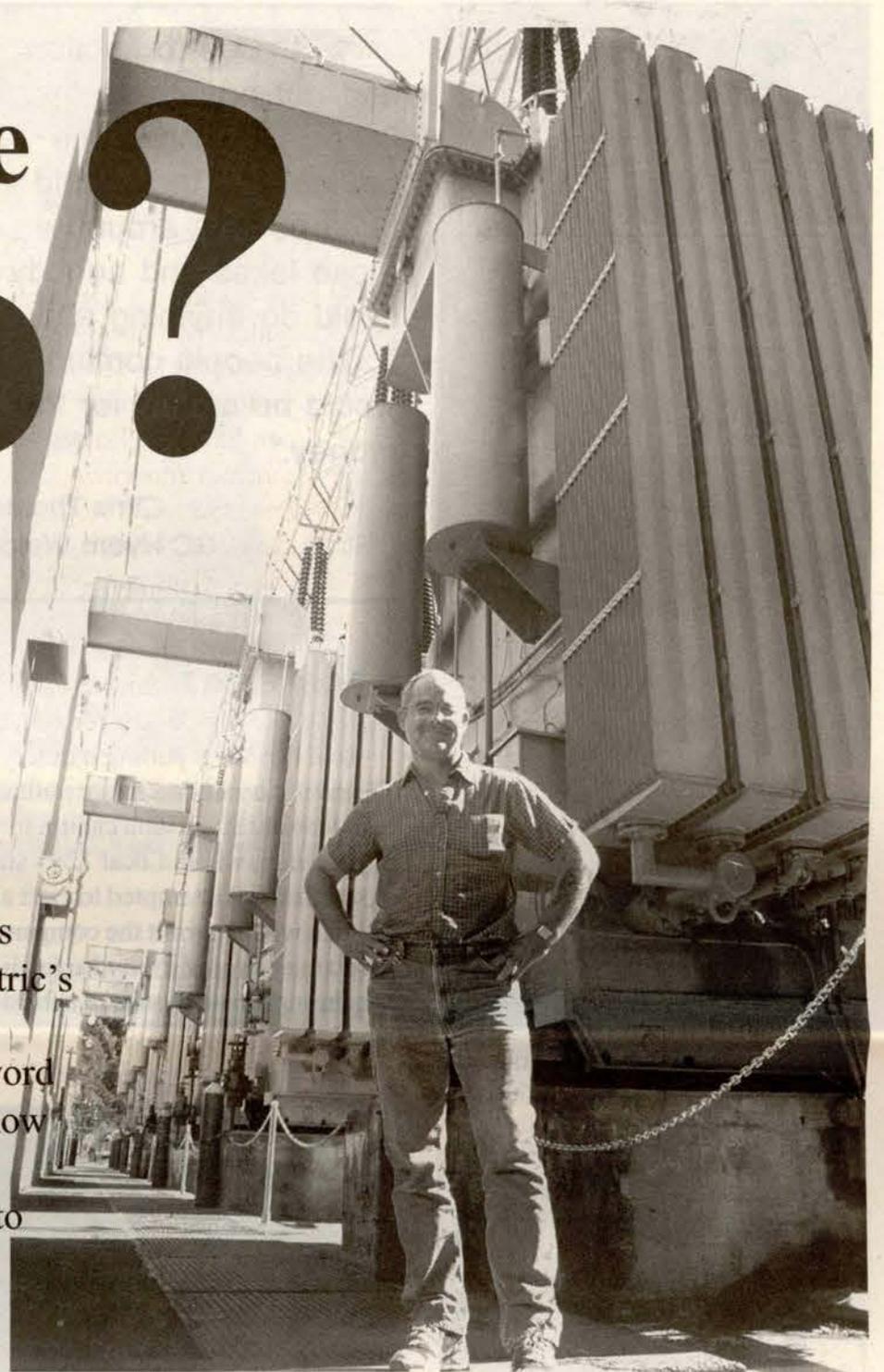
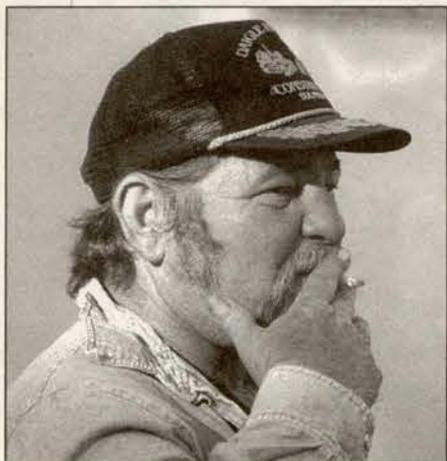
And no wonder. The 16 rivers, 99 major reservoirs and dams, 68 power houses, and associated

flumes, tunnels and canals that comprise PG&E's complex hydro-electric infrastructure feed 3,896 megawatts of power into the electric grid. Hydro-electric generation has been part of the California landscape for over a century, and has served as midwife to many other resources that Californians hold dear.

Protected forests provide refuge

"If they sell the land, whoever buys it may not let the people use it. People are real curious about what's going to happen."

Dan Herbert
Tractor Operator



Chris Jones, System Operator at the Pit 5 power plant on the Pit River near Burney in northern California, is one of the skilled Local 1245 members who makes sure that hydro facilities are run safely.

for wildlife and preserve the integrity of the watershed. Streams and lakes provide recreational opportunities—boating, swimming, hiking, hunting, fishing, photography. And then, of course, there's the issue of water storage in a state where residential, industrial and agricultural water consumption continues to grow.

"PG&E lets people come in for hunting, fishing...just lets them use the land. It's almost like a state park," said Don Frisbie, a former hydro employee and 15-year union member who now works as a

General Construction backhoe operator. "We're GC so we travel around and get to talk to people in a lot of different areas. I haven't had a single person say they're looking forward to somebody else taking over the power plants."

"If they sell the land, whoever buys it may not let the people use it," said Tractor Operator Dan Hebert, a Local 1245 member since 1978. "People are real curious about what's going to happen."



Chris Thomas

“If it goes to auction and got privatized, [lakes] could become private and they could build condos around those lakes and nobody could do anything about it. The people coming in would be after it for the money.”

**Chris Thomas
GC Hydro Welder**

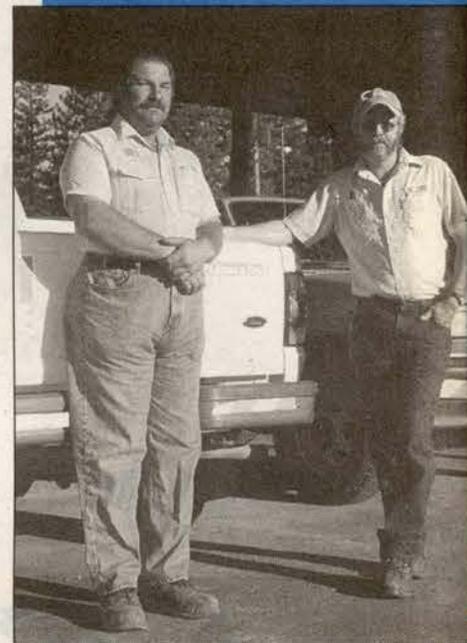
“We didn’t see any need to change a system that works well for customers, for our members, and the general public that uses these resources,” said Local 1245 Business Manager Jack McNally. “But if the politicians are going to make PG&E divest these resources, then I think the best solution is to transfer [to a subsidiary] so you don’t lose the skilled workforce that understands how the system works.”

The other alternative under consideration—auctioning the system off in pieces—could bring in out-of-state owners with no stake in preserving the other recreational and environmental assets associated with the hydro facilities.

“If it goes to auction and got privatized, [lakes] could become private and they could build condos around those lakes and nobody could do anything about it,” said Chris Thomas, a GC Hydro Welder and 16-year union member. “The people coming in would be after it for the money.”

PG&E works in “close partnership” with the state Fish & Game

Burney-area meter readers Jim Anderson (below, left), a 21-year union member, and Dale Graves, 8-year union member.



► **From Page 7**

Real curious is putting it mildly. The fate of hydro is a major political battleground at the state capitol in Sacramento, where Local 1245 and PG&E last fall attempted to craft a bill that would permit the company to retain control of the hydro facilities through an unregulated subsidiary.

department, Thomas said. “Privatize it—it would be a mess.”

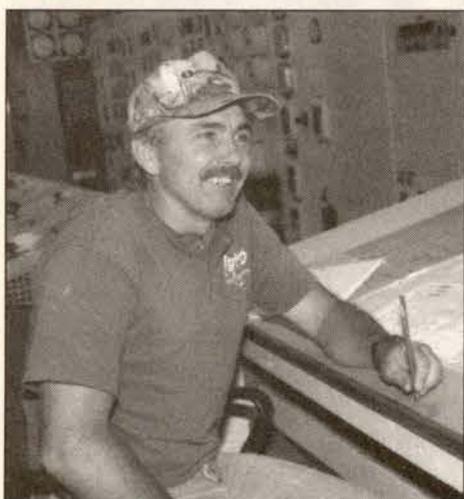
Other resource issues aside, there’s also reason to worry whether new owners would even be compe-



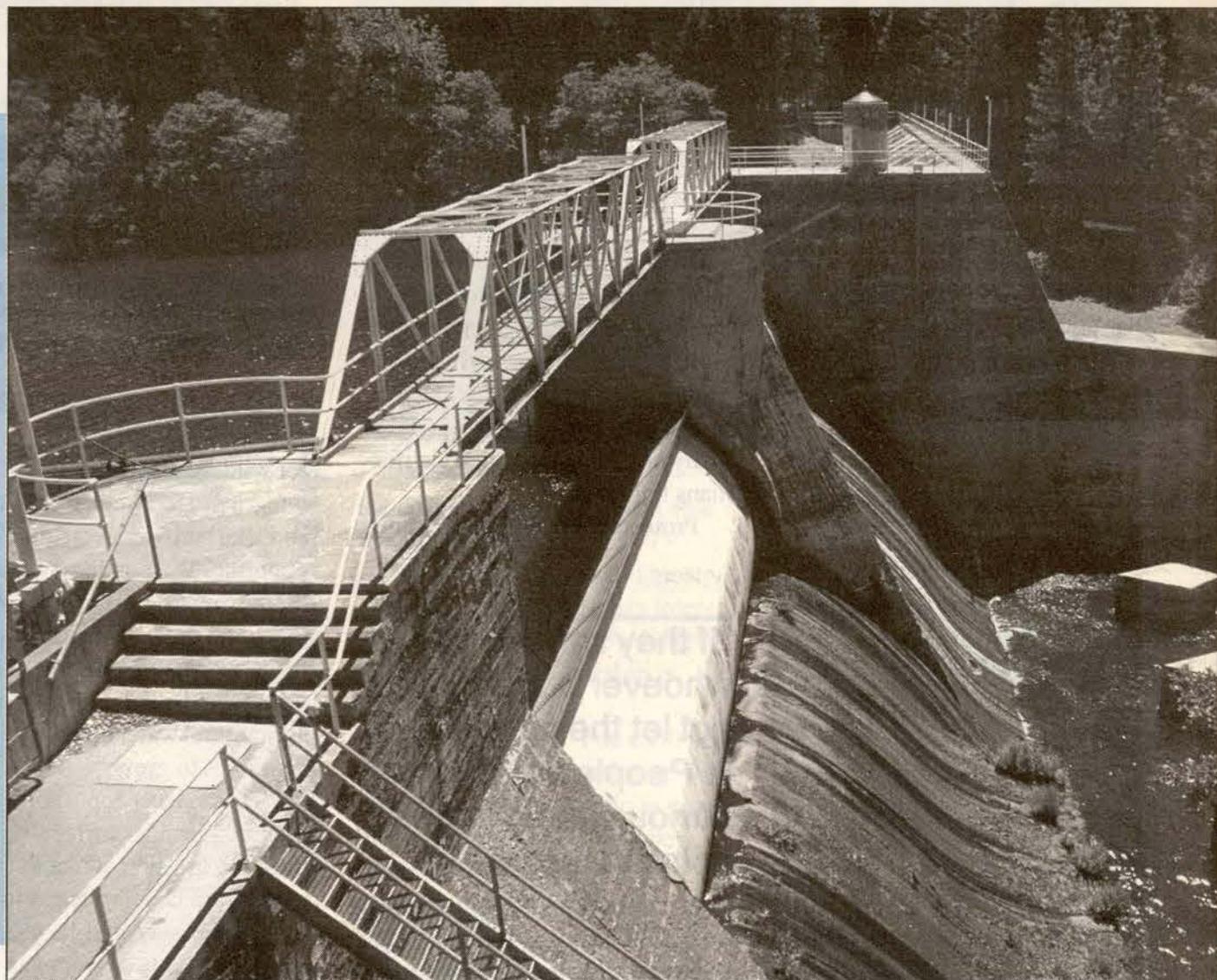
Roving Operators Randy Trafton and Jerry Covert.

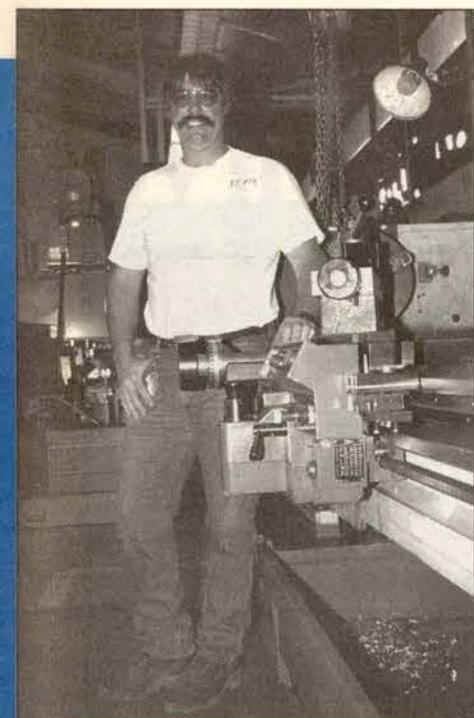


Jeff Meyers, Roving Operator, 18-year union member.



Jim Barnes, GC Electrician





Electric Machinist Steve Amaral

body,” said Chris Jones, a system operator at the Pit 5 power plant on the Pit River near Burney in northern California. “It’s a trust issue. This river is not PG&E-owned. We have to operate in a manner where we don’t jeopardize life and property.”

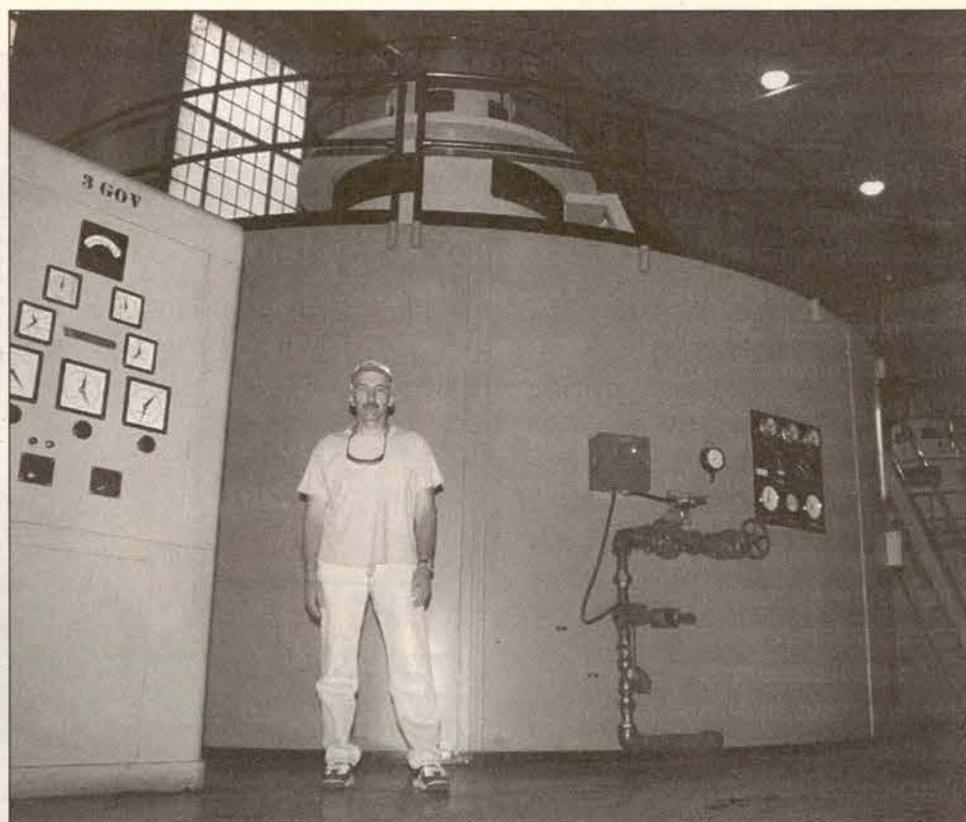
Jones noted that operators cannot always control the amount of water going through the system. If it becomes necessary to “spill” water, the operator has to know how to minimize the spill, and when to get patrols out to warn fishermen and others downstream.

“Not everybody can do this work—you have to have training,” said Jones, whose own training included a two-and-a-half year apprenticeship followed by state certification.

Sobering Thought

For those who have no qualms about turning the system over to inexperienced owners unfamiliar with the hydro infrastructure, Jones has this sobering thought: not even the Independent System Operator, the California non-profit agency officially responsible for operating the state’s transmission grid, fully understands hydro’s intricacies.

“The ISO doesn’t necessarily know how the system works,” said Jones. The ISO is responsible for ordering up power when it is needed, but the hydro operator has to possess the skills and experience



IBEW members Ben Valdevia, Water Systems Repairman, next to generating units at the Pit 5 Power House. Pit 5 has four units rated at 40 megawatts each. The Pit River is spring fed, making it a year-round source of power. The river discharges into Shasta Lake.

to recognize situations where equipment is being jeopardized or where a spill condition exists.

“The company says ‘You will operate in a safe manner,’ and that pretty much falls on me,” said Jones.

For decades, the public has been able to trust that these resources are being managed by conscientious employees like Jones, people with a personal stake in the communities they serve. In the rush to deregulate the electric industry in California,

the safe and reliable operation of the hydro-electric system is still being treated by policymakers as a peripheral concern—if it is even considered at all.

Many Local 1245 members think the public may eventually discover that deregulation was not in their interest.

“I look at what happened to the phone company—it’s a mess,” said

tent just to simply operate the hydro facilities.

“We have to operate in a safe manner so we don’t disturb the public and maybe injure some-

Other resource issues aside, there’s also reason to worry whether new owners would even be competent to operate the hydro facilities themselves.

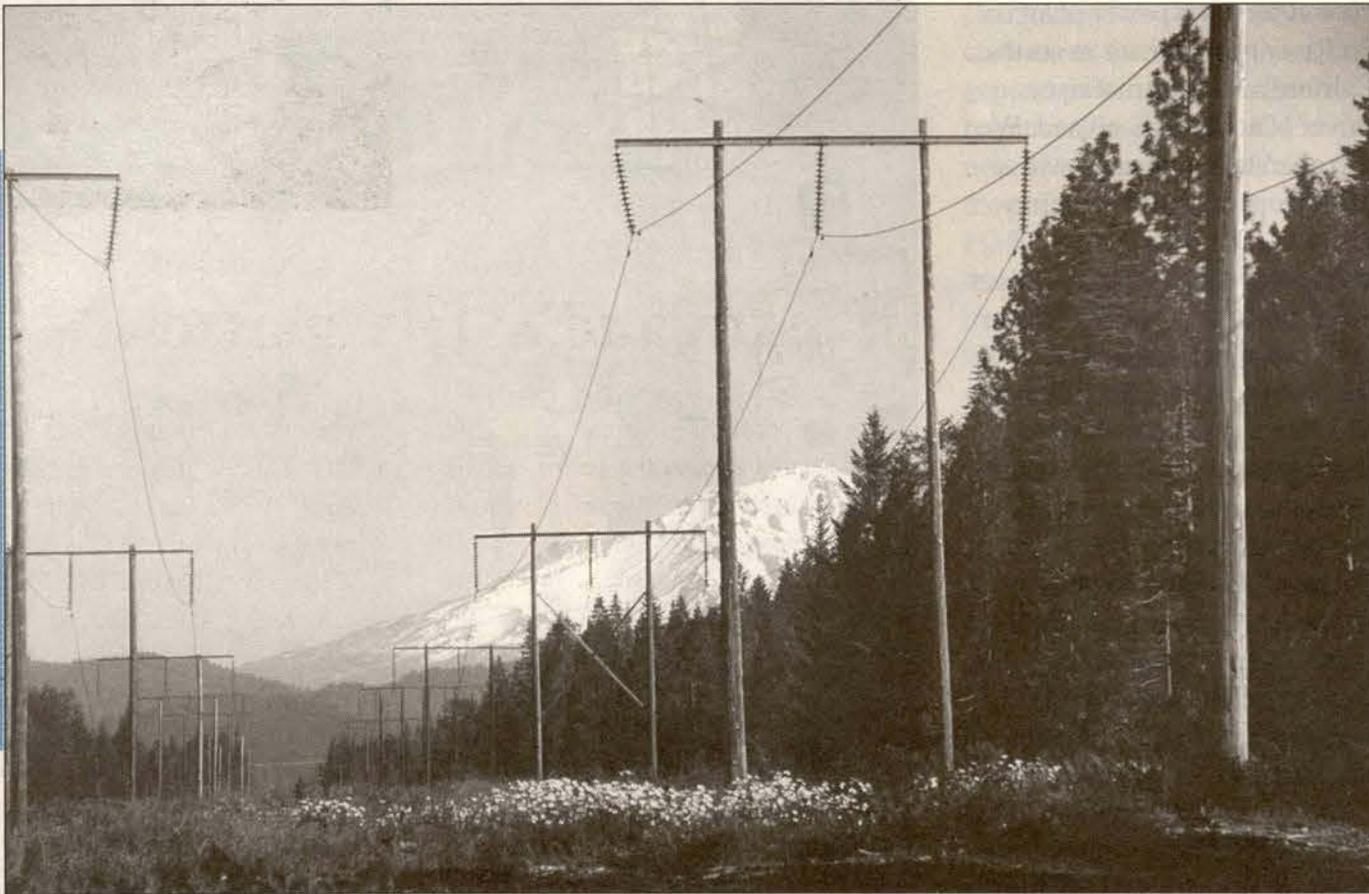
Says PG&E System Operator Chris Jones:

“We have to operate in a safe manner so we don’t disturb the public and maybe injure somebody. It’s a trust issue. This river is not PG&E-owned. We have to operate in a manner where we don’t jeopardize life and property.”

“We’re GC so we travel around and get to talk to people in a lot of different areas. I haven’t had a single person say they’re looking forward to somebody else taking over the power plants.”

**Don Frisbie
GC Backhoe Operator**





The 16 rivers, 99 major reservoirs and dams, 68 power houses, and associated flumes, tunnels and canals that make up PG&E's complex hydro-electric infrastructure feed 3,896 megawatts of power into the electric grid.

► From Page 9

Jim Barnes, a General Construction Electrician working at the Pit 3 Power House. "I'm into the competitive world, but I don't think this will help us little guys at all."

Already there are troubling signs that this experiment in so-called competitive markets will fail to achieved the promised savings for consumers. Nothing in the current market structure prevents suppliers from withholding power

when rates are low, then selling it when shortages cause rates to spike up.

In August and September of 1999, for example, the average cost of power was just over \$50/mw. But during the first 20 days of June, when a heat wave struck California, the average price shot up to \$123/mw.

"Companies will try not to sell power when the prices are low," observed Jones, the System Operator at Pit 5. "How that's good for



TIGER CREEK

Hydro employees in attendance at a recent Tiger Creek unit meeting are: Danny Furtado, Rex Velasco, David Langelier, Louie Pence, Rick Davis, Jerold Wallace, Kenneth Streeby and Eric Helmle. Also pictured is Advisory Council member Grover Day.



Gathering at the Burney yard one morning before work last month are (from left) Chris Shattuck, Burney Unit Chair Will Rodriguez, Richard Hollister, Bob Swanson. In June Hollister celebrated his 45th year of membership in the IBEW.

the customer nobody's been able to explain to me."

Nonetheless, Jones and most other Local 1245 members interviewed for this story now believe that a change of ownership is inevitable.

"You can't say, 'You can't sell these assets.' The question is, will it be done with the public in mind, or will the bottom line just be money?" said Jones.

Roving Operator Randy Trafton, a 30-year union member, summed up the feelings of many

hydro employees when he said, "I'd like to see us go to [PG&E affiliate] US Generating. I think there'd be more continuity there. We have very competent people in place now who can run the river."

Fortunately, public awareness of the issue seems to be growing.

"More and more I'm getting questions because [the issue] is out in the field," said Barnes. "People want to know 'How's this going to affect me?' and I say, 'How's the phone company been treating you?'"

PG&E gets Cal-OSHA variance

By Larry Pierce

Cal-OSHA has granted Pacific Gas & Electric an experimental variance to allow workers to access a pole, tower, tree, or other elevated work location directly from an aerial lift truck.

This variance from existing High Voltage Electrical Safety Orders was granted on April 15, following a February field demonstration to senior Cal-OSHA safety engineers.

PG&E and Local 1245 are jointly developing the rules and procedures to safely perform the transfer technology. Local 1245 actively supported the experimental variance.

Procedure training for both General

Construction and Division employees began in PG&E's North Coast/North Bay areas on May 8. During the trial period, all bucket to pole or structure transfer activity will be limited to trained employees in the area.

Initially, 16 aerial lift trucks are being equipped with portable fiberglass access steps which mount inside the insulated buckets. They are approved only for double bucket trucks.

A safe and successful year of continued procedure refinement, coupled with Cal-OSHA approval, could result in systemwide expansion of this process after April 2000.

Larry Pierce is a Local 1245 Business Representative in the North Bay.

US House blocks ergonomic rules

The US House of Representatives voted last month 220-203 to block the Clinton Administration's plan to protect workers from repetitive-motion injuries.

The regulations, proposed last fall, would require employers to take steps to protect workers from the repetitive motion ailments that force thousands of American workers off the job each year. The regulations are the first attempt to establish broad federal

standards governing ergonomics—tailoring workplaces to meet the physical needs of workers.

The federal rules were designed to protect an estimated 27 million workers performing manual tasks in a wide variety of occupations in both factory and office settings. Proponents say such regulations would reduce repetitive-motion injuries by 300,000 annually, saving employers approximately \$9 billion in annual workers' compensation costs.

By the Local 1245
Safety Committee



Steam and safety glasses

The cracking sound could be heard across the room, as the side shields of the safety glasses are forcibly removed.

"Makes me look stupid," someone says, justifying the action.

Whatever you think of their appearance, safety glasses serve a real purpose. There are many styles of safety glasses on the market for those who don't need prescription glasses, offering protection from eye injuries from the side.

Side protection is important. Em-

ployees can suffer injuries from material and dirt that enter the eye from the side due to a gust of wind.

In some cases these accidents are caused not by just one incident, but by many small ones that add up to an accident.

In my case, they added up to a blast of steam and boiler scale to the side of the face, resulting in a light burn to the face and a slightly burned eye.

I give a healthy thanks to the ANSI standard that required the side shields on my safety glasses!

Unseen hazards

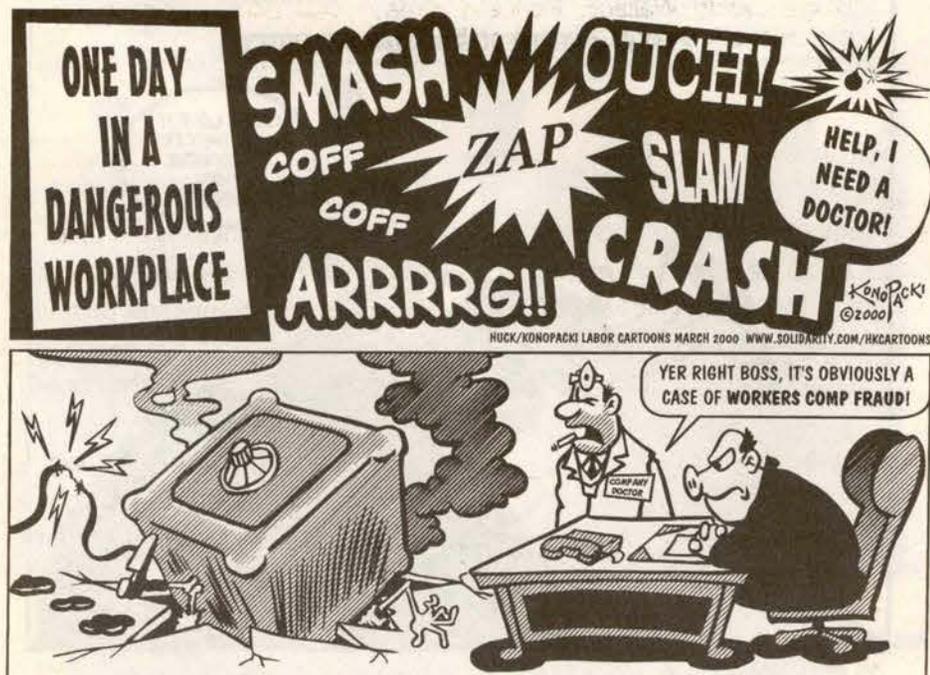
Protecting ourselves from skin contact with dangerous chemicals is easily controlled by the use of our protective equipment—sometimes.

But sometimes protective equipment itself can become a hazard. Protective gloves, such as latex gloves, can cause skin-related problems. Problems to watch for are rashes, allergies, and asthma. Wash your hands before and after using gloves to prevent dirt and chemical buildup in the gloves, which can

transfer chemicals onto the hands and skin.

Sometimes protective gloves need to be washed before removing them, to reduce contamination. Use new gloves when possible and replace contaminated and soiled ones. Sometimes it may be necessary to wear two pairs for proper protection.

Always wear proper protective gloves and equipment, and inspect them frequently so you can avoid unseen hazards.



Carlos Mier, OM&C Troubleman

Carlos Mier, an OM&C Troubleman for PG&E in Garberville, Ca., died June 23 in a company vehicle on his way to the Garberville yard. Mier, who had 22 years with PG&E, is survived by his wife Cheryl and daughter Jessica. The incident is under investigation.

Local 1245 extends its condolences to the friends, family and co-workers of Brother Mier.

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.



New alliance to represent retirees

By Orv Owen

The National Council of Senior Citizens has endorsed an AFL-CIO proposal to create the Alliance for Retired Americans, a new national organization for retired working Americans.

The proposal was endorsed last month at the NCSC's 22nd Constitutional Convention in Las Vegas, where I was honored to represent the Local 1245 Retirees Club as a delegate.

Like our beloved NCSC, which has been a close ally of the American labor movement for 40 years, the new Alliance will champion progressive public policies for retirees, and it will provide communications, education programs and valuable benefits for its members.

But, unlike the NCSC, the Alliance for Retired Americans will have the power of a massive membership—estimated at 2 million. Union retirees will have lifelong membership, with their dues paid by their national unions. NCSC members who are not union retirees will be able to join. NCSC state and local organizations will work with the AFL-CIO to become fully engaged with the new Alliance.

The officers further stated that the NCSC will work closely with the Alliance and the AFL-CIO to make sure this new organization fulfills the promise to become a stronger voice for America's retirees as we prepare for the struggles facing us in the 21st century—protection of Social Security, prescription drugs under Medi-

care, and pension rights.

A resolution to adopt the Alliance of Retired Americans was voted on by the 1000 delegates attending and participating at this historic convention and passed unanimously.

We will be receiving more information on the mechanics of membership and operations of the new Alliance as soon as they are developed. I am extremely excited about this new Alliance and its potential for all working Americans.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the officers and members of Local 1245 for allowing me to represent our members and retirees at this historic convention.

Keep the faith!

Orv Owen is a retired Local 1245 Assistant Business Manager.

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.



Separating fact from fiction in Social Security 'crisis'

Is Social Security going broke? That's what some Wall Street interests would like you to think, and they've done a fairly good job of pulling the wool over the eyes of American citizens.

Indeed, Social Security had cash flow problems in the 1970s and 1980s. But these were fixed by law in 1983. Social Security this year will take in \$155 billion more than it pays out. At the end of this year, the Trust Fund will exceed \$1 trillion.

The Social Security Trust Fund will continue to take in more money than it pays out for the next 24 years,

reaching a total in 2024 of \$6 trillion.

This is not a system in crisis.

But what about after 2024?

The official government forecast is that Social Security will start paying out more in benefits than it takes in from Social Security taxes after the year 2024, and Trust Fund reserves of \$6 trillion will be drawn down to zero by 2037. There would still be money coming in, but the reserve would be gone, according to this forecast.

Is this forecast credible? Here's how it was made:

The official forecast for economic growth is 3.5% in 2000, lower than we've had for the last five years. The forecast then says economic growth will gradually go down to 1.5%—which is less than half of what it has been for the past 75 years.

It's bad policy to make wildly optimistic assumptions about economic performance, but it's equally bad policy to make wildly pessimistic

assumptions, which is what the government has done.

Wall Street loves these projections, however, because it can use them to push for privatization, which will make a lot of money for portfolio managers.

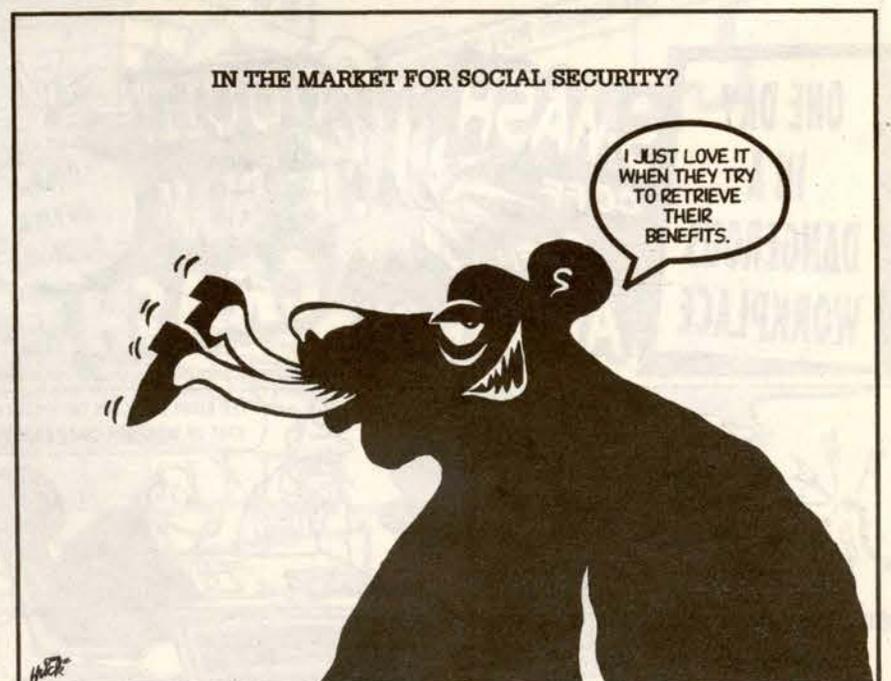
But privatization could make mil-

lions of seniors vulnerable to fluctuations in the market, creating a new population of destitute senior citizens—precisely the kind of situation that Social Security was created to prevent.

Facts are facts. There's no crisis. Social Security should be left alone!

Dues now due

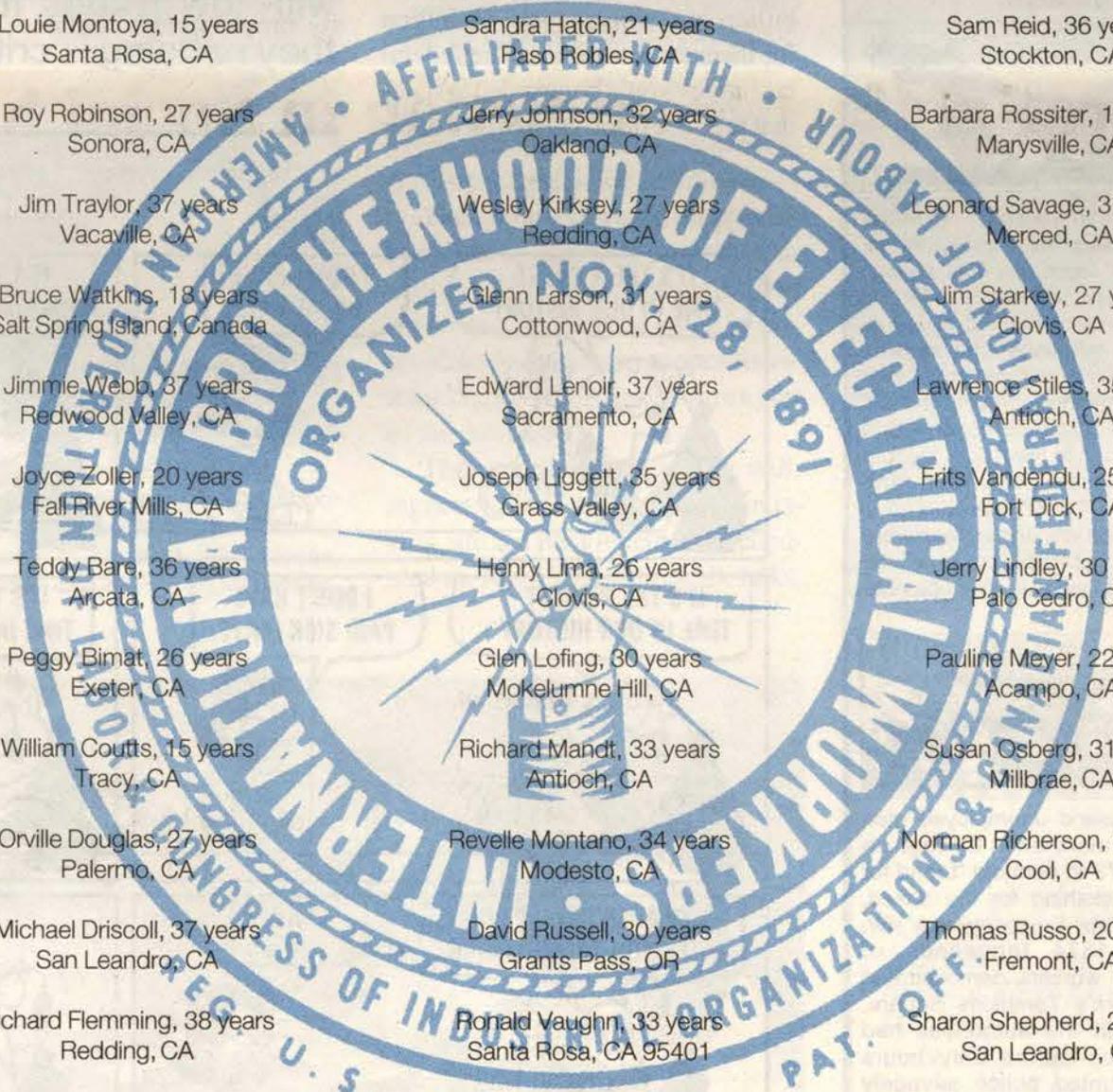
Your dues for the Local 1245 Retirees Club are now due. Dues for the fiscal year are \$36. Please note your Social Security Number when making payments. If you have questions, call Sheryl Dillon at (925) 933-6060 ext. 206.



Congratulations Retired Members!

The Local 1245 Retirees Club congratulates these recently-retired members of the union. We invite you to participate in—or start!—a Retirees Club chapter in your area.

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| Fontaine Madkins Jr., 36 years
Merced, CA | Winfred Pierce, 33 years
Eureka, CA | Nerio Hernanadez, 27 years
San Francisco, CA | Kenneth Booth, 15 years
Reno, NV |
| Theresa Sanchez, 20 years
Bakersfield, CA | Gerald Pittore, 30 years
San Ramon, CA | Pauline Hubbell, 32 years
Canyon Lake, TX | John Cowan, 30 years
Vacaville, CA |
| Florence Silsby, 30 years
Petaluma, CA | Albert Pulgarin, 35 years
Bakersfield, CA | Harvey Iness, 30 years
Red Bluff, CA | Kenneth Cuneo, 32 years
Cloverdale, CA |
| Harry Uyemura, 30 years
Auburn, CA | Darrell Reinhardt, 36 years
Fresno, CA | Edward Basgall, 36 years
Clovis, CA | William Degischer, 34 years
Yuba City, CA |
| Tranquilino Veneracion, 20 years
Newark, CA | Keith Severson, 33 years
Cottonwood, CA | Thomas Cook, 40 years
Santa Rosa, CA | Everett Eastman, 25 years
San Jose, CA |
| Alfred Verducci, 16 years
Oakley, CA | Guy Lamoureux, 32 years
Carlsbad, CA | Joseph Fernandez, 40 years
Broderick, CA | Darrell Gillette, 32 years
Eureka, CA |
| Darrell Woods, 28 years
Santa Clara, CA | Carl Makarczyk, 34 years
Kensington, CA | Thomas Gillett, 35 years
Shasta Lake, CA | Manuel Gonzales, 35 years
Merced, CA |
| Henry Ball III, 38 years
Dublin, CA | Milton May, 28 years
Durango, CO | Leonel Grady, 36 years
Woodland, CA | Raymond Meinel, 30 years
Lodi, CA |
| Charles Bryan, 30 years
Fremont, CA | Gerald Mills, 40 years
San Jose, CA | Ralph Hatcher, 38 years
Madera, CA | Jimmie Pyle, 38 years
Yankee Hill, CA |
| Michael Burroughs, 32 years
Marysville, CA | Louie Montoya, 15 years
Santa Rosa, CA | Sandra Hatch, 21 years
Paso Robles, CA | Sam Reid, 36 years
Stockton, CA |
| Donald Butler, 30 years
San Luis Obispo, CA | Roy Robinson, 27 years
Sonora, CA | Jerry Johnson, 32 years
Oakland, CA | Barbara Rossiter, 19 years
Marysville, CA |
| James Clancy, 36 years
Red Bluff, CA | Jim Traylor, 37 years
Vacaville, CA | Wesley Kirksey, 27 years
Redding, CA | Leonard Savage, 31 years
Merced, CA |
| Robert Daniels Jr., 31 years
Fremont, CA | Bruce Watkins, 18 years
Salt Spring Island, Canada | Glenn Larson, 31 years
Cottonwood, CA | Jim Starkey, 27 years
Clovis, CA |
| Giovanni Dinelli, 27 years
Bakersfield, CA | Jimmie Webb, 37 years
Redwood Valley, CA | Edward Lenoir, 37 years
Sacramento, CA | Lawrence Stiles, 35 years
Antioch, CA |
| Tom Hegenbart, 14 years
Oroville, CA | Joyce Zoller, 20 years
Fall River Mills, CA | Joseph Liggett, 35 years
Grass Valley, CA | Frits Vandendu, 25 years
Fort Dick, CA |
| Marvin Hurlburt, 36 years
Sebastopol, CA | Teddy Bare, 36 years
Arcata, CA | Henry Lima, 26 years
Clovis, CA | Jerry Lindley, 30 years
Palo Cedro, CA |
| Gary Overacker, 41 years
Grass Valley, CA | Peggy Bimat, 26 years
Exeter, CA | Glen Lofing, 30 years
Mokelumne Hill, CA | Pauline Meyer, 22 years
Acampo, CA |
| Billy Perkins, 28 years
San Lorenzo, CA | William Coufcs, 15 years
Tracy, CA | Richard Mandt, 33 years
Antioch, CA | Susan Osberg, 31 years
Millbrae, CA |
| Duane Petersen, 30 years
Fremont, CA | Orville Douglas, 27 years
Palermo, CA | Revelle Montano, 34 years
Modesto, CA | Norman Richerson, 36 years
Cool, CA |
| | Michael Driscoll, 37 years
San Leandro, CA | David Russell, 30 years
Grants Pass, OR | Thomas Russo, 20 years
Fremont, CA |
| | Richard Flemming, 38 years
Redding, CA | Ronald Vaughn, 33 years
Santa Rosa, CA 95401 | Sharon Shepherd, 21 years
San Leandro, CA |
| | Ralph Hatcher, 38 years
Madera, CA | Frederick Abella, 32 years
Yuba City, CA | Richard Toscani, 32 years
Cool, CA |





Gore proposes childcare incentives

WOMEN WORKERS' HISTORY

The Long Depression

In September 1873, the banking house of Jay Cooke and company closed its doors setting off a chain reaction of bank failures that brought about the longest and most severe depression the nation had yet experienced. Not until mid-1878 would the economy revive. In the meantime, one out of every five workers was unemployed; those with jobs worked part-time, or faced pay cuts. There was widespread hunger and misery; employers took advantage of workers' fear for their jobs to smash unions.



Working women were hard-hit. Maids were dismissed, sales clerks let go, "factory girls" faced pay cuts; sewing women were destitute. These garment workers, working at home, saw sewing machines repossessed; unable to pay the rent, they were evicted. According to one historian it was no exaggeration to say that working women in New York faced a choice between starvation and prostitution. "There never was a period at which working women were in more need of help than now," the New York Times said in December 1873.



Twenty thousand unemployed men and women marched in Chicago on Dec. 11, 1873 to demand "bread for the needy, clothing for the naked, and houses for the homeless." On Jan. 13, 1874 thousands of unemployed workers demonstrated on New York's Tompkins Square, unaware that the authorities had revoked their permit only hours before. Mounted police savagely charged into the crowd, clubbing women, children and men, in what one worker described as "an orgy of brutality."

Presidential candidate Al Gore last month proposed \$38 billion in incentives and tax breaks to improve child care nationwide through better training and higher standards for caregivers.

Gore said that, if elected, he would spend the money over the next decade to help parents with their taxes and to reward states that require improvements in child care programs.

"It all comes down to what kind of value do we place on the children of this country," Gore said. "I think they are our future. It's kind of cliched, but certainly true, and if we all believe it, we need to put our money where our mouths are."

Gore's plan would provide \$30 billion in tax breaks and \$8 billion for incentives to states. The federal incentives would be awarded to states that promise reforms such as worker

pay, background checks, and reading programs. On ABC's "Good Morning America" Gore noted that many states have no standards for childcare workers.

"There's not even a criminal background check to see if abusers are hired, there's no training, there's a very high turnover with low wages for these people, and the job they're doing is critical," Gore said.

Gore's plan would require participating states to establish programs

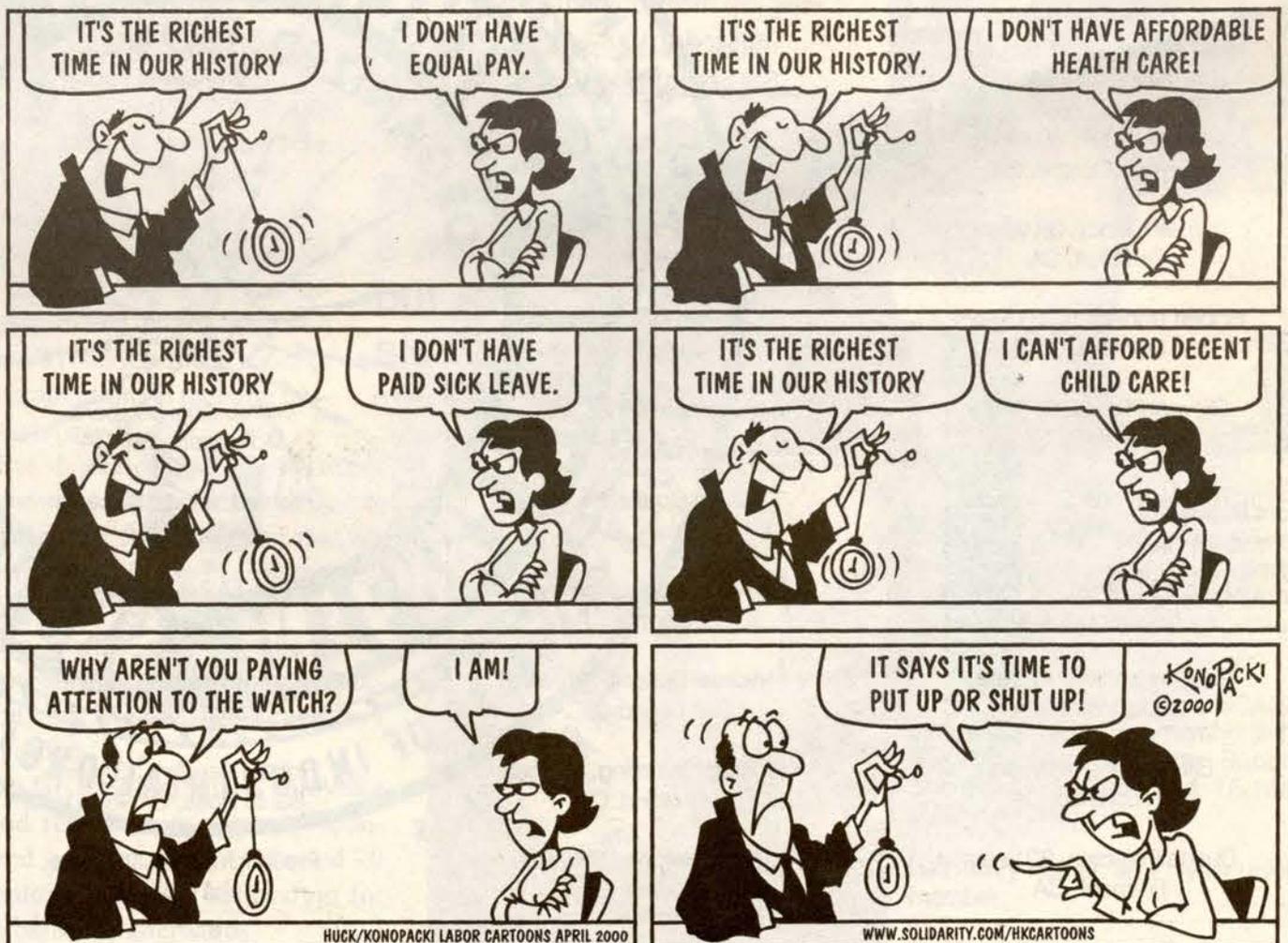
for early reading and would award bonuses to staff members who complete literacy training.

Gore also proposed tax relief for parents who stay home with their children, allowing parents of children younger than one year to claim assumed child care expenses of \$500.

About 13 million children under age 6 are receiving child care in the United States, but only 14% of child care centers have been rated as high quality, according to Gore.

"There's not even a criminal background check to see if abusers are hired [as childcare workers], there's no training, there's a very high turnover with low wages for these people, and the job they're doing is critical."

Vice President Al Gore

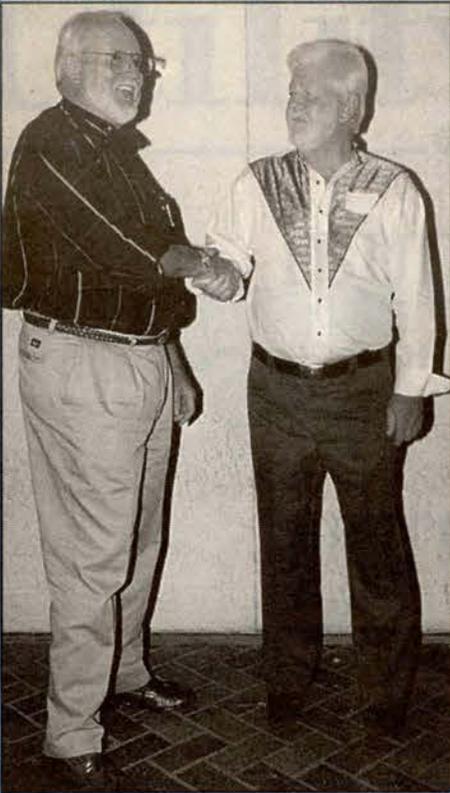


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Landis Martilla

50 Years: Bernard Mulcahy



Bernard Mulcahy, James Buchanan, Bobby Dutton, Mike O'Keane, Billy Kibbe, Tim Bell, Wayne Jones, Blake Livingston.

Honorees

50 Years
Leonard Colcleaser
Bernard Mulcahy

40 Years
Joe Zack Pelts

35 Years
Ebert Brown
Chris Cordero
Wayne Dyer
Lars Harbeson
Blake Livingston
Wayne Jones
Billy Kibbe
Ron Pendergrass
Robert Sandow
Charles Wilkins

30 Years
John Benedict
James Buchanan
James Garrett
Michael O'Keane
Allen Simontacchi

25 Years
William Carr
Steven Sandell
Jerry Taylor Jr.

20 Years
Timothy Bell
Bobby Dutton
Earl McKinney
Davis Woddard



35 Years: Blake Livingston



35 Years: Billy Kibbe



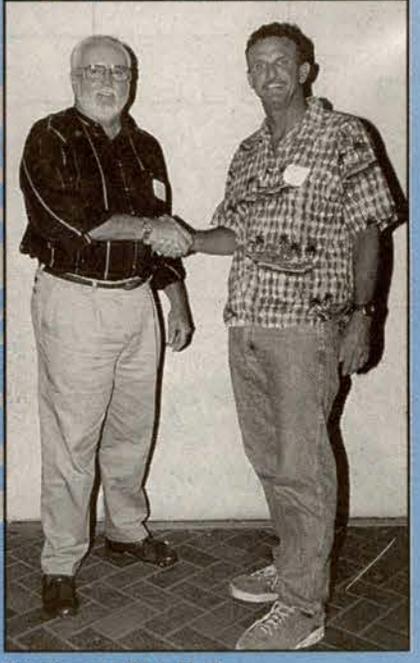
30 Years: Mike O'Keane



30 Years: James Buchanan



35 Years: Wayne Jones



20 Years: Tim Bell



Fifteenth Annual IBEW Local 1245 Golf Tournament

Saturday, Sept. 23

**Diablo Creek Golf Course
First Tee Time: 10:00 a.m.**

Buffet Breakfast
American Style

Free Refreshments
On The Course

Guests Are Welcome!
4-Man Best Ball Scramble
Limited Tee Spaces
Entry Deadline: Sept. 6

\$75 Entry Fee
(Includes Cart, Green Fees and
Buffet Breakfast)

- *Team Awards (Cash)*
- *Closest to the Hole Contest*
- *Long Drive Contest*
- *Beat McNally*

Don't Miss Out--Register Now! Deadline is Sept. 6!

1. Name _____
 Address _____

2. Name _____
 Address _____

3. Name _____
 Address _____

4. Name _____
 Address _____

Fore!

**Hors D'oevres and Awards
Immediately Following**

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Concord, California
(925) 686-6266**

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"Local 1245
Golf Tournament"
Mail to:
PO Box 4790
Walnut Creek,
CA 94596

For Further
Information Call:
Frank Saxsenmeier
925-933-6060 Ext. 338
or 707-939-7611
Hunter Stern
925-933-6060 Ext. 246
or 415-289-9042

Foursomes are not necessary