



Unit Leaders Conference

Pages 6-7

Will Rodriguez, chair, Unit 3213, Burney, Ca.

Units weigh proposals for PG&E bargaining

Local 1245 units considered hundreds of bargaining proposals submitted by members at unit meetings last month as the union began gearing up for general negotiations with PG&E.

Unit meetings will continue to accept proposals in April, and the General Bargaining Committee will begin shaping those proposals into a complete package.

This year's negotiations take place in one of the most complex bargaining climates ever.

- The utility is in bankruptcy, but enjoys a good revenue stream thanks to last year's rate hikes.

- The company has put forward a reorganization plan that would spin off generation and transmission assets (and Local 1245 members) to new federally-regulated companies, but a rival plan that preserves state regulation is being promoted by Cali-

fornia officials.

- San Francisco and other public entities are considering plans to municipalize PG&E assets, but PG&E could find itself in possession of additional assets if the California Public Utilities Commission were to exercise its authority to order utilities back into the generation business.

PG&E and Local 1245 have already convened a Pension Education Committee and a Joint Cost-of-Living Committee to research some of the more contentious issues likely to come up during negotiations.

The Pension Education Committee met March 6 for a presentation on the Fidelity-administered 401(k) plan. The union and company have been working to come up with a joint communication on the work done to date on this issue.

PG&E cancelled a March 19 meeting of the Cost-of-Living Education Committee. However, the company has provided the union fairly specific information on housing costs, cost-of-living, and employee turnover.

In this period of industrial upheaval, Local 1245 members have provided crucial support to the company. In San Francisco, Local 1245 played a decisive role in defeating two ballot measures to municipalize PG&E. And throughout the system, Local 1245 members have provided the reliable service that is the ultimate source of the company's value.

At unit meetings in April, Local 1245 members will be saying what they think their contribution is worth.

PG&E employees choose IBEW

In the spring of 1952, exactly 50 years ago, PG&E employees elected IBEW Local 1245 as their systemwide bargaining representative. On March 19, 1952, PG&E Physical employees voted for union representation. Less than 2% voted to have no union. On April 28, 1952, Clerical employees by a 3 to 1 margin voted for IBEW over a rival union. Since that time, general negotiations have been conducted over 40 times, producing the legally-binding wages, benefits and working conditions enjoyed by members at PG&E today.

Creditors could vote on PG&E plan in June

Creditors could begin voting as early as June on rival plans for PG&E's reorganization in a timetable established by Federal Bankruptcy Judge Dennis Montali on March 26.

PG&E was given until April 3 to file an amended disclosure statement and plan of reorganization. Hearings were set for April 11 and April 24. PG&E's plan could be sent to creditors for approval beginning June 17, according to Montali.

If the disclosure statement is approved by creditors and confirmed by Montali, the way would be cleared for PG&E to spin off generation and transmission assets to new federally-regulated companies.

Local 1245 representatives met with the company in March to discuss how this separation of assets would affect union members. The company reported significant progress on defining the work, workload, and workforce that would

be needed at each of the new companies, and estimated it will need about six months to get staffing in place. According to this timetable, job offers might come in the third quarter of this year.

The union will discuss the job-offer process with PG&E Corp., and will also negotiate with the corporation over the implementation of the benefits package. Impacts of the sepa-

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Service Awards
Oakland, CA

Service Awards
Reno, NV

Stewards Conference
Reno, NV

APRIL 12

Service Awards
Redding, CA

Service Awards
Fresno, CA

APRIL 13

Stewards Training
Fresno, CA

APRIL 20

Service Awards
Riverside, CA

APPOINTMENTS

PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY

Inspector/Patrolman Committee
Troy Castanon
Art Fahrner

CITY OF BERKELEY
Negotiating Committee
Richard Chan
Tom Hartman

CITY OF OAKLAND
Negotiating Committee
John Hendry
Ed Myall

CONFERENCES AND CONVENTIONS

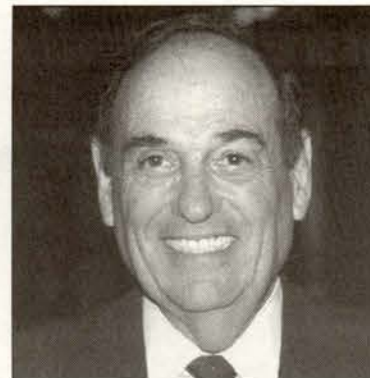
CLUW National Executive Board Meeting
(Coalition of Labor Union Women)
Dorothy Fortier
Kathy Tindall

2002 Annual Construction And Maintenance Conference
Tom Dalzell
Rich Dunkin
Jeff Johnstone
Ray Thomas

2002 Utility Conference
Terry Andreucci
Bill Brill
Mike Davis
Chris Habecker
Ed Mallory
John Mendoza
Dan Parmenter
David Scott
Hunter Stern
Perry Zimmerman

Making time for members

By Perry Zimmerman, Business Manager



When I was first a Business Representative in the early 1980s, I quickly learned what the job would do to me if I was not proactive about my time. If I simply reacted to what was happening, I would spend almost all of my time handling grievances for the very small number of our members involved in disciplinary action.

Don't get me wrong—defending employees who have been disciplined is an important part of our job. However, if a Business Representative spends all their time with discipline cases, the vast majority of our members who are never disciplined are not seen or heard.

Wherever I was assigned as a Business Representative, I made sure that all our members saw me, not just

those in trouble on the job. This took some planning and it made my days longer than they would have been or maybe even longer than they should have been, but it let me keep what I believe was my commitment to the members in my assignment. They would see me. I would have the chance to hear what they have to say. They would have the chance to hear what I had to say.

The same goes for the job of Business Manager. If I simply reacted to the demands on my time, I would spend almost no time with our members.

Other labor leaders want my time.
Lobbyists want my time.
Politicians want my time.
Lawyers want my time.

Accountants want my time.

Company representatives want my time.

And now with our offices moving to Vacaville, even architects and office space planners want my time.

If I'm not careful, my calendar suddenly is filled for weeks ahead with no time left for our members. Yes, of course, other labor leaders and lobbyists and politicians and lawyers and company representatives are all important, but a lot of those meetings can be handled by my administrative staff, freeing me up for what I think is most important and what I enjoy the most—our members.

As I look at my calendar for April, I already know what will be the most useful and enjoyable time of the month—the three days that I will spend with Business Representative Jim Lynn visiting members in the Fresno area, followed by a pin dinner on a Friday night and shop stewards training on Saturday. As I look at my calendar for May, I know that the three days that I will spend with Business Representative Mike Grill in the Bakersfield area and the day that I will spend with Gary Hughes in Stockton will probably be the best days of the month.

I am frustrated by the demands on my time, and if I could, I would spend all of my time meeting with members. The give and take with members is the life blood of union. I may not be spending as much time in the field as I would like, but I am doing my level best to get out of the office as much as possible.

Wherever you are in our jurisdiction, I hope to see you in the coming months and years. It might not be possible to get out to every member, but I'll try.



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Members speak out on pensions, LTD benefits



Remember injured workers

Dear Editor:

I read in the March edition of the Utility Reporter the letter by brother Mike Gragg concerning retirement benefits. As I am nearing retirement I must say that brother Mike has some terrific ideas and I completely agree with his proposals.

However, there is yet another group of needy brothers among us who are very rarely mentioned. A group that the economy has left far behind. We are the injured and discarded brothers, who, due to no fault of our own, have had an on-the-job accident. We and our families must now try to survive on 50% of our original pay with only one 2% raise in the last ten years.

We and our families deserve to be elevated to a decent standard of living, at least 75% of our original pay. We need regular pay increases of the same percentage, and with the same regularity, as those brothers who have been fortunate enough to retain their health and thus their jobs.

Robert Martin
PG&E LTDer
Sparks, NV

Execs vs. Retirees

To the Editor:

In order for current and future retirees to maintain a financial quality of life, immediate changes must be made to improve the pension plan. Every year the cost of living and medical expenses are skyrocketing, yet retirees have only received three cost of living raises in the past twenty-five years, which totals to an insignificant 12%.

As a result of favorable investments in the past, the company has not made contributions to the pension plan since 1993.

The company paid out \$64 million in bonuses and compensation in

2001 after filing bankruptcy and within the last month, paid 8 to 12% P.I.P. bonuses to management employees, amounting to millions of dollars.

I am hopeful the company will not use the pending bankruptcy case as an excuse not to address the bargaining table in good faith.

The company has a short memory when it comes to providing for retirees. Historically speaking, when assistance was needed to defeat detrimental issues such as Propositions I and F in San Francisco last year at a significant cost to IBEW membership funds, the company had no qualms about accepting help from retirees. Unquestionably, the company will call upon retirees, IBEW members, and their funds, to help defeat propositions and various issues in the future.

Prior to filing bankruptcy, Enron awarded top executives millions of dollars worth of compensation. Thousands of non-management employees lost millions of dollars in their 401-k retirement plans during

this period of compensation.

We hope and pray that P.G.&E. is not following in the footsteps of Enron!

Ed Lenoir
PG&E Sacramento

Pension COLA

To the Editor:

A recent article in the Wall Street Journal titled "The Rising Risks of Falling Inflation" stressed the point that deflation was extremely bad for the worker and for businesses because it is akin to every worker and every business taking a pay cut and that it sends debt burden soaring. This is a bunch of bull. It is the same thinking that has been prevalent for over 50 years that we need a 3% inflation rate to assure stability and growth in the economy.

For some time now the government economists keep telling us that we are in a recession and that inflation has been at a very low level, yet the next thing we are being told that the housing market is strong and

department store sales are up.

To learn the truth about inflation ask any retiree who has been retired 10 to 20 years. Better yet, check it out yourself, using your own experience, by selecting several consumer necessities and calculating the increases in costs in the last three years.

For future retirees, one protection you have against inflation is a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) on your pension. You will have a COLA on your Social Security pension check, but the bean counters always find ways to give you a 2.3% raise when the inflation rate is 2.4%, so Social Security pensioners are being squeezed. Also, since you will get Social Security and are probably getting a decent pension you have the privilege of paying taxes on your Social Security pension (you get squeezed again).

Don't you think it's time to think about getting a COLA on your pension?

Tom D.S. Young
Local 1245 retiree (PG&E)
Albany, CA

Get the latest news, fast!

◆ Members at PG&E:

Go to wwwhr/ibew on the PG&E Intranet (Page One)

◆ All Local 1245 Members:

Go to www.ibew1245.com on the worldwide web.

Speak Out!

Got something to share with your fellow union members? Send your letter (with your name, Social Security Number and phone number) to:

Utility Reporter Letters
IBEW 1245
PO Box 4790
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

Opinions expressed on this page are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IBEW Local 1245.



Slavery, subminimum wage, Korea power strike

Court undermines labor law

On a 5-4 vote, the US Supreme Court ruled March 27 that illegal immigrants do not have the same rights as Americans when they are wrongly fired from U.S. jobs.

"Awarding back pay to illegal aliens runs counter to policies underlying" federal immigration laws, Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist wrote in the court's opinion.

The Bush administration had argued that penalties are needed to keep employers from wronging illegal workers, who number some 7 million.

US citizens are entitled to back pay if wrongly fired. The National Labor Relations Board said Jose Castro, even though he was an illegal worker, was owed nearly \$67,000. Castro, a Mexican national, lied to get a job at a California plant and then was fired after trying to start a union.

Justice Stephen Breyer, writing in dissent, said the employer was guilty of "a crude and obvious" violation of the labor laws. The \$67,000 penalty, he said, "reasonably helps to deter unlawful activity that both labor laws and immigration laws seek to prevent."

Joining Breyer were Justices John Paul Stevens, David Souter and Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

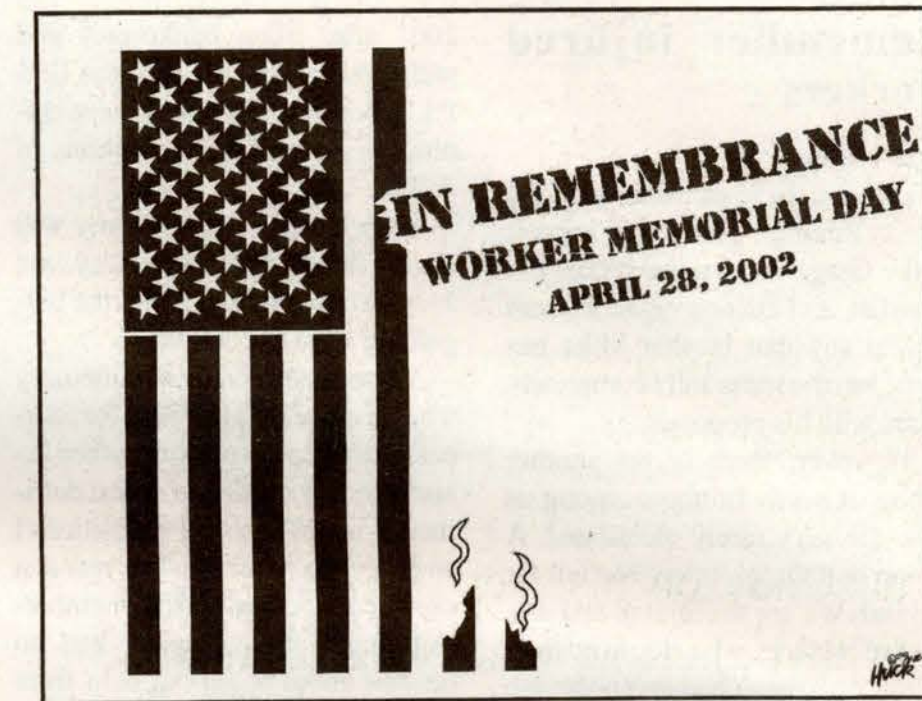
The AFL-CIO said it was "very disappointed" by the Supreme Court's decision, and cited Breyer's dissenting opinion that "the backpay remedy is necessary" because it "helps make labor law enforcement credible" by "mak[ing] clear that violating the labor laws will not pay."

Korea's second largest union umbrella group, with 650,000 members, in late March called on member unions to go on a general strike April 2 if the government rejects dialogue with power industry unions, the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions reported. As many as 5,000 electric workers have participated in the strike since Feb. 25 to protest government plans to privatize five firms supplying 60% of Korea's electricity. The strike has so far not interrupted the nation's electricity supplies as firms have brought in non-union workers. But as the action entered its fifth week, the government was preparing 400 military personnel to run power plants. Police have detained hundreds of unionists during the strike, and 198 workers have been fired.

► **Massive Rome Protest:** Up to two million unionists descended on Rome on March 23 in a massive show of force against plans by Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi to re-write labor laws, Reuters reported. Unionists say the proposed labor reforms will make it easier for companies to sack staff.

► **Slavery Conviction:** A federal judge sentenced a Silver Spring couple March 27 to nine years in prison for enslaving a teenager from Cameroon and forcing her to work for three years without pay as a housekeeper and babysitter, the Washington Post reported. The sentencing marks the second time in two years at the Greenbelt courthouse that a conviction for involuntary servitude has led to prison time.

► **AT&T Talks Open:** Contract negotiations opened March 11 between AT&T and two unions representing nearly 30,000 workers whose agreements expire May 11. The Communications Workers of America and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in Feb-



ruary refused AT&T's offer to extend the current contracts for up to 18 months after the company would not agree to a no-layoff pledge. The unions are seeking job security, job opportunities in growing areas of the company and improvements in wages and retirement and insurance benefits.

► **Unionists Win Damages:** A federal jury March 1 awarded \$755,000 to two union activists who were falsely arrested and subjected to excessive force during an organizing drive at Smithfield Packing Co. in Tar Heel, N.C., by a security guard who was also a deputy sheriff. During a union election vote count in 1997 at the plant, the late John Rene Rodriguez, an organizer for UFCW who died recently, and union member Rayshawn Ward were kicked, spat upon, handcuffed and arrested by two deputy sheriffs.

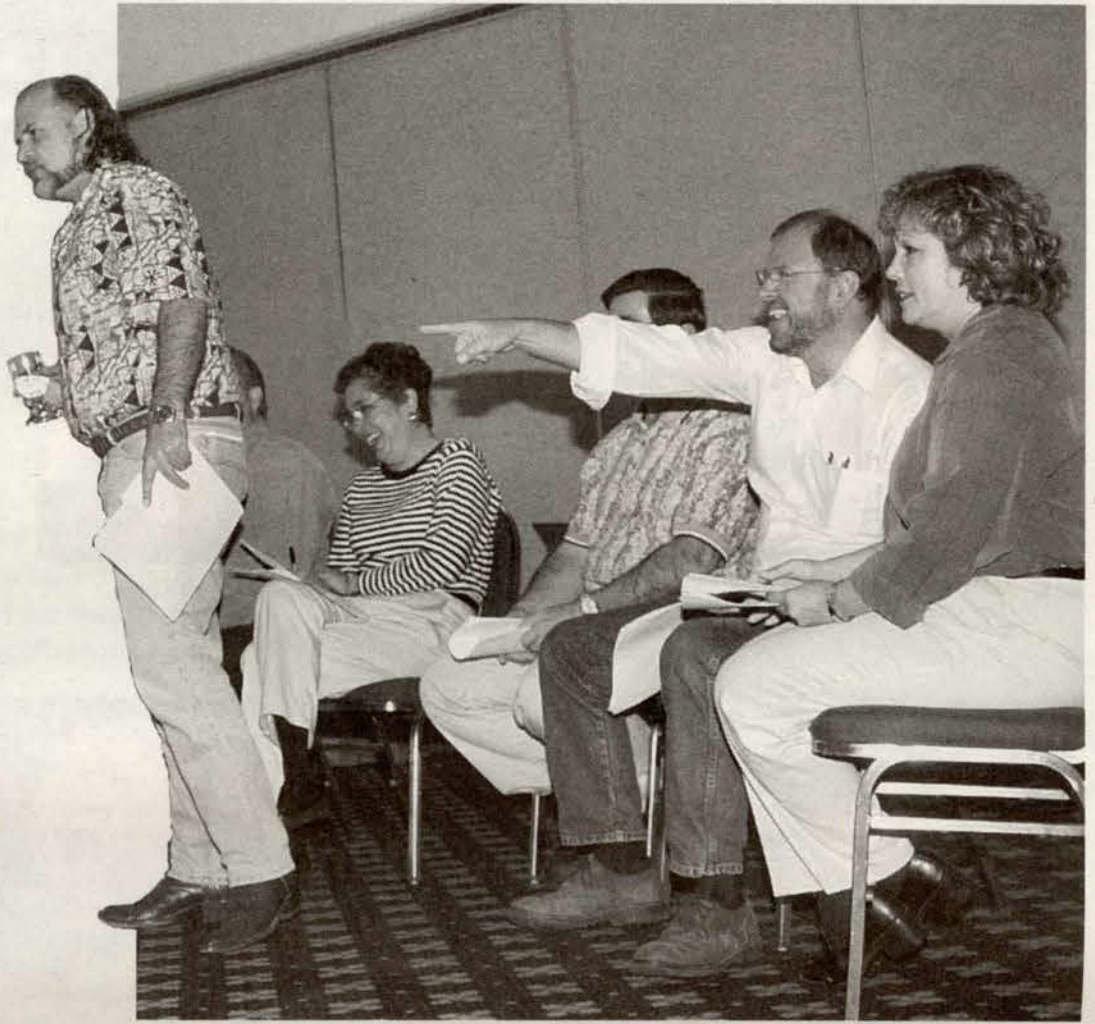
► **Subminimum Wage:** After receiving mountains of criticism from unions, civil rights groups and members of Congress, the Bush administration on March 6 backed off an effort to pay sub-minimum wages to welfare recipients in workfare jobs.

"All workers deserve the full protection of the law. We cannot abide using public funds to create millions of second-class workers," AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson said at a news conference the day before Bush's announcement.

► **CalPERS Backs Labor Rights:** The California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) announced in February it no longer will invest in companies based in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines or Thailand, where labor rights are denied systematically. The announcement follows a successful campaign by the California Labor Federation to persuade the giant pension fund to review core labor practices when making investment decisions.

► **Support for Farmworkers' Backs:** Nearly three decades after César Chávez pushed to outlaw the back-breaking short-handled hoe in the fields, a bill in the California Assembly seeks to restrict pulling weeds by hand. Backers say the bill is needed to close a loophole that allows farmers to skirt the 1975 law that made the little hoe history.

You've just started your monthly unit meeting. In walks a familiar face. A good union member. But he looks a little unsteady on his feet. And what's in that glass he's carrying in his hand?



Role-playing the part of unit members, Business Reps. Lynn Morel, Darryl Norris, Roy Runnings and Arlene Edwards react to the arrival of Mike Haentjens, who disrupts a mock unit meeting.

UNIT OFFICER TRAINING CONFERENCE

Concord, California

February 23, 2002



Unit Officer and Advisory Council Member Linda Jurado takes the floor during the morning "State of the Union" discussion.

The tipsy member, role-played with astonishing authenticity by Business Rep. Mike Haentjens, not only broke the rule against consuming alcohol at a unit meeting, he seemed disinclined to leave when asked to do so. What's a unit chair to do?

This was one of the scenarios played out at the Local 1245 Unit Officer Training Conference on Feb. 23 in Concord, Ca. The roleplay may not have captured an Oscar, but it succeeded in entertaining the unit officers and providing some tips on how to handle the sticky situations that can arise at unit meetings.

After the conference was called to order by President Ed Mallory, an overview of current union issues was provided by Business

Manager Perry Zimmerman and Senior Assistant Business Manager Tom Dalzell. Vice President Mike Davis discussed the importance of political action. Following the roleplay, Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier offered instruction on Parliamentary Procedure, the key to insuring fairness and maintaining order at unit meetings.

In afternoon workshops, Mallory led a discussion of the duties and responsibilities of unit chairpersons. Recording Secretary Chris Habecker led a similar discussion on the role of unit recorders.

A reception at union headquarters followed the conference. No one was ejected for misbehaving.

More Photos
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LOCAL 1245 UNIT OFFICER



Billy Wallace



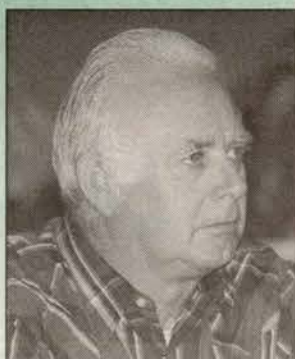
Cecilia DeLa Torre



Corrine Dauer



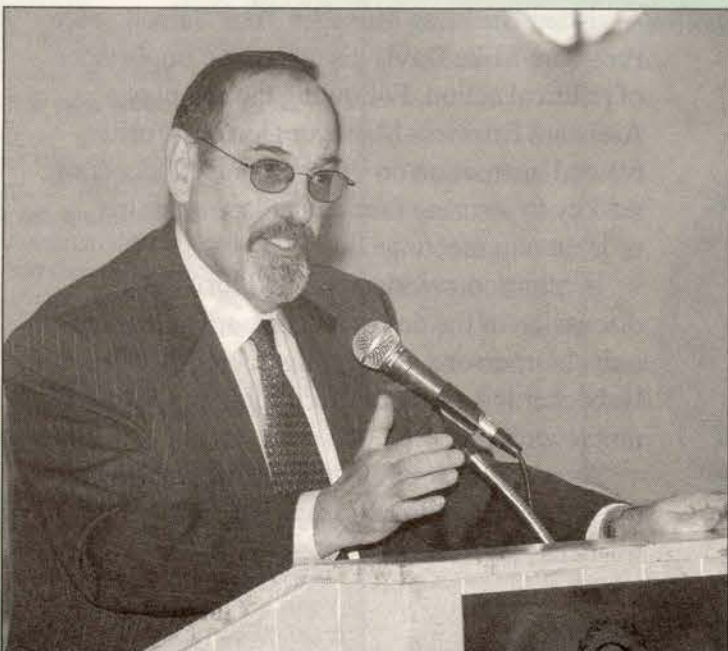
Brion Beaver



Larry Darby



Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier was principal organizer of the conference.

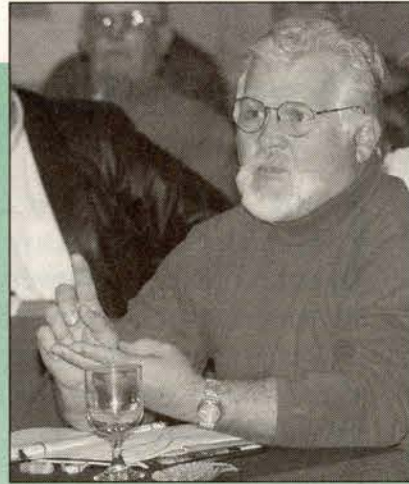


Business Manager Perry Zimmerman

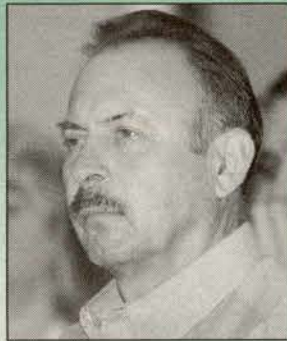


Jim Vermilyer

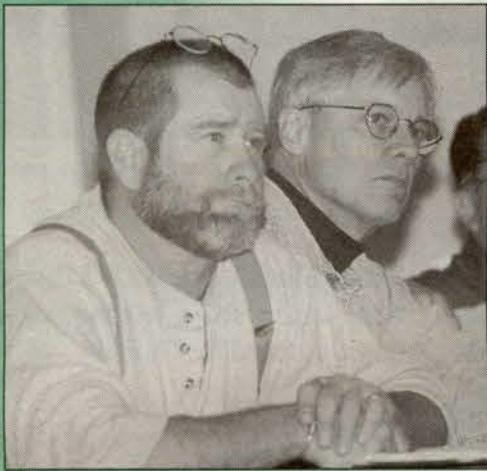
TRAINING CONFERENCE



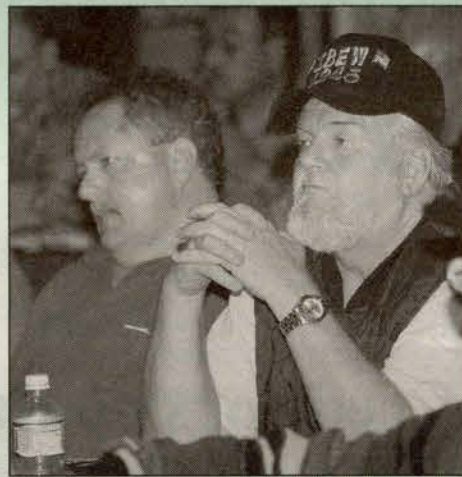
Dave Cannon



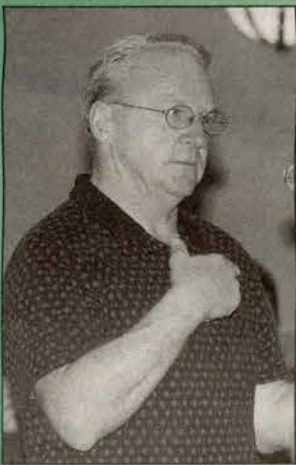
Larry Schlaht



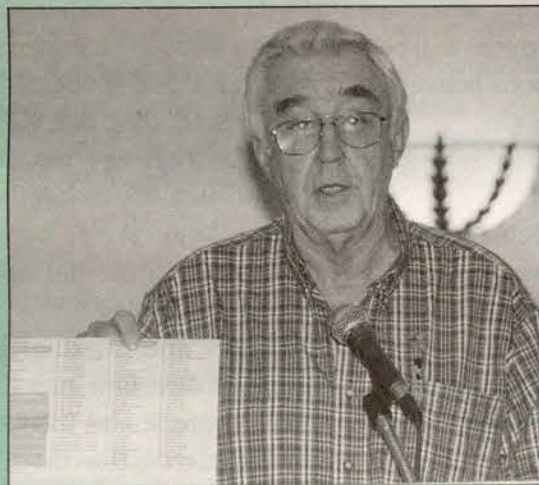
John Kent (left) and Lem Stubblefield



Grant Ritchie (left) and Gary Stoffer



Dick Manley



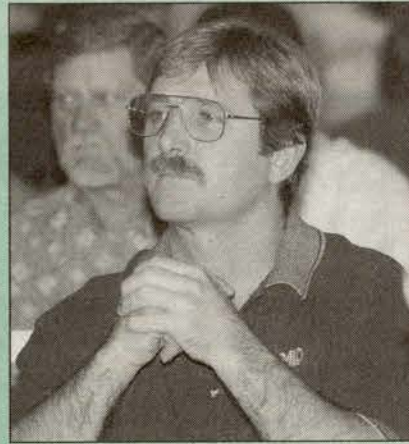
Vice President Mike Davis displays Local 1245 endorsements for California's March primary election, published in the Utility Reporter.



Spring Dykstra



Rita Weisshaar



Rod Wright

ATTENDEES

- Arellano, Hector
- Atkinson, Jeff
- Badhan, Tiger
- Bakkie, Terry
- Bargas, Tony
- Beaver, Brion
- Bibbs, Constance
- Cannon, David
- Choate, Cindy
- Corey, Susan
- Darby, Larry
- Dauer, Corrine
- Day, Grover
- DeAguinaga, Fred
- DeLa Torre, Cecelia
- Estes, Al
- Habecker, Chris
- Harrington, Mickey
- Hom, Harry
- Hudelson, Scott
- Jones, William
- Jurado, Linda
- Kent, John
- Landeros, Mario
- Lane, Richard
- Lozano Jr., Sal
- Manley, Richard
- Mennel, Louis
- Meyn, Dan
- Muraca, Ralph
- Neblett, Stuart
- Nelson, Monte
- Prince, Tana
- Ramos, John
- Rodriguez, Will
- Sala, Charles
- Sandoval Jr., Pedro
- Saunders, Barbara
- Schab, Heath
- Scott, David
- Shepherd, Ray
- Smith, Steven
- Smith, William
- Snyder, Ione
- Speak, Steve
- Stubblefield, Lem
- Suarez, Gilbert
- Thomson, Larry
- Venturino, Michael
- Vermilyer, James
- Wallace, Bill
- Walpole, James
- Ward, Stephen
- Warmuth, Bruce
- Weisshaar, Rita
- Willford, Doug
- Wood, Cathy
- Wright, Rod

Unit updates

Unit 1121, Coalinga, will now meet monthly. The newly-scheduled meetings will be on Tuesdays as follows: April 2, June 4, Aug. 6, Oct. 1 and Dec. 3. Due to scheduling commitments, the previously-scheduled meetings will still meet on Wednesdays, as follows: May 1, July 10, Sept. 4 and Nov. 6. All meetings begin at 4 p.m. at the PG&E yard on Jayne.

Mike Grill,
Business Rep.

Unit 3712, Santa Rosa, has a new meeting time: 6:00 p.m. Meetings are still held on the first Tuesday of the month at the same location.

Larry Pierce,
Business Rep.

A current schedule of unit meetings—with times, dates and locations—can be found on the IBEW web page at:

www.ibew1245.com

Members with access to a computer at PG&E can find unit meeting information at:

www.hr/ibew

Correction

The February issue of the Utility Reporter incorrectly reported that endorsed candidates Katherine Maestas and Jon Bagatelos received a dual endorsement for Assembly District 10, indicating they were from the same party. The correct information is that Local 1245 endorsed Maestas for the Democratic nomination and Bagatelos for the Republican nomination.

Wage hikes in 5-year contract at Lassen MUD

Local 1245 members at Lassen Municipal Utility District in Susanville, Ca. approved a new Memorandum of Understanding.

The five-year MOU provides wage increases for each year as follows: 4% retroactive to Jan. 1, 2002; 4% effective Jan. 1, 2003; 3% effective Jan. 1, 2004; 3% effective Jan. 1, 2005; and 3% effective Jan. 1, 2006.

The union successfully defended fully-paid medical premiums for active employees and retirees.

“With today’s rising medical costs this was a significant accomplishment in a five-year agreement,” said Business Rep. Ray Thomas.

The agreement also clarifies family sick leave provisions under both



Local 1245 members at Lassen Municipal Utility District vote on the new Memorandum of Understanding.

state and federal law.

Union negotiators were JoAnn Villalovos, Jim Lovercheck and

Scotty Merrill. Local 1245 Business Rep. Jack Osburn led the negotiations, assisted by Thomas.

Creditors could vote on PG&E plan in June

► From Page 1

ration of assets on employees will be the subject of negotiations between Local 1245 and PG&E Co.

Obstacles Remain

While the company remains optimistic that its plan will win confirmation by the court, significant obstacles remain.

The California Public Utilities Commission, viewing PG&E’s plan as an “end-run” around state regulation, is scheduled to formally submit an alternate plan of reorganization and disclosure statement on April 15. That plan, whose general themes have already been made public, would preserve the commission’s

regulatory authority over PG&E and use the utility’s cash reserves and loans to settle the company’s debts.

PG&E and Local 1245 have both argued that the CPUC plan would shortchange the utility and jeopardize future reliability of the system. A hearing on objections to the CPUC’s disclosure statement is scheduled for May 9.

PG&E and state officials, at Montali’s direction, met last month with a professional mediator in an effort to iron out the vast differences between their two approaches to bringing PG&E out of bankruptcy. The content of those talks has been a closely-guarded secret.

A major point of contention is whether the judge has the authority

to pre-empt state laws that stand in the way of PG&E’s reorganization plan, such as the law enacted last year that prohibits the sale of PG&E’s remaining generation assets. Montali ruled in February that federal bankruptcy law does not automatically override state law, and implied that state law might prevail if the public health and safety is at issue.

Montali has since indicated he will consider PG&E’s counter-argument—that the disputed laws deal with economic rather than public safety issues—if and when creditors approve the company’s plan.

Approval by creditors is a highly-technical process. Approval from at least half of an eligible class of creditors, holding two-thirds of the debt, is required. It has not yet been established which of the 13,000 creditors will be entitled to vote. Creditors can vote for either or both plans.

Montali has said he will not allow voting on any plan until efforts at mediation have been completed. Even when the creditors finally get the opportunity to vote, Montali will still have the authority to pass judgment on the legality of any plan that is approved.

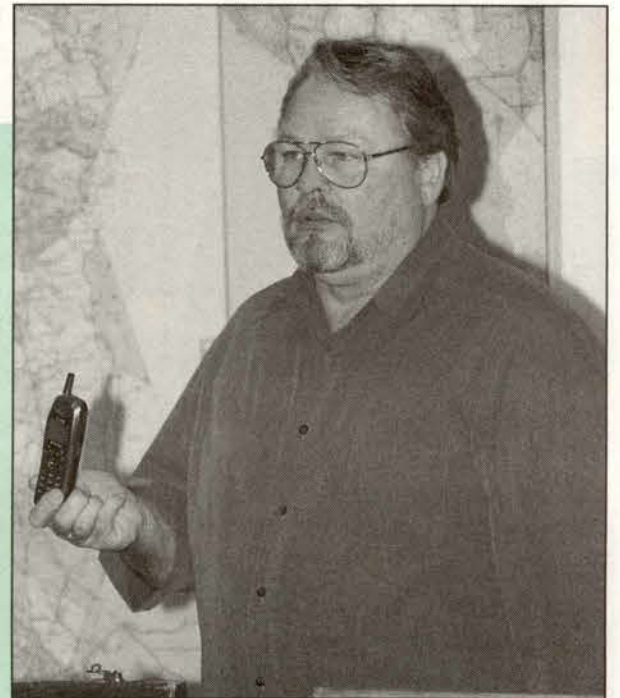
State labor fed names Zimmerman

Local 1245 Business Manager Perry Zimmerman has been appointed as a vice president of the California Labor Federation, the AFL-CIO central body representing two million union members in California. The Federation sets organized labor’s political agenda in California, including the promotion of legislation advancing workers’ rights, and protecting health and safety on the job.

The Future ...

The Local 1245 staff ain't gettin' any younger and the search is on for fresh talent to carry on the union's proud tradition.

Story & Photos by Eric Wolfe



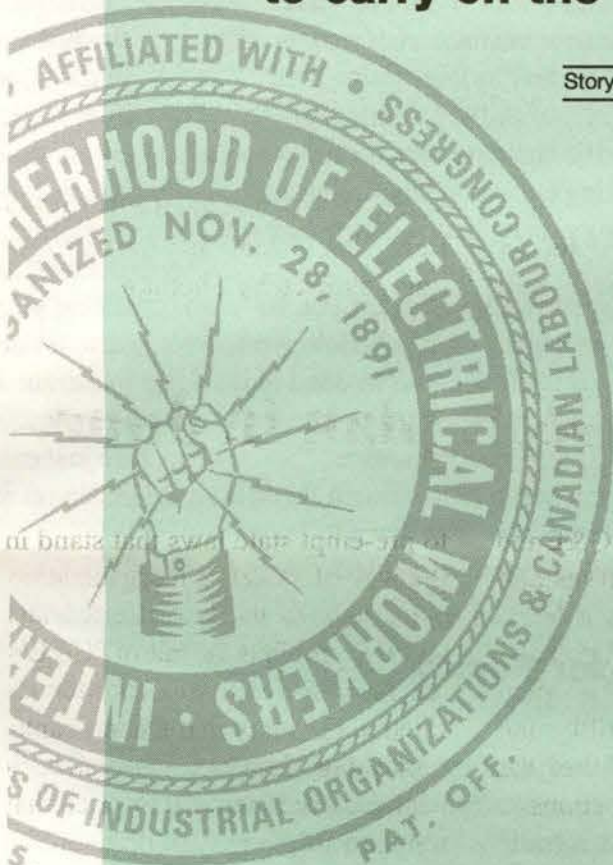
Business Rep. Jack Osburn advises would-be business representatives: "Control your telephone, or your telephone will control you."

"Here's your keys, here's your car, here's your assignment." That's the orientation that new business representatives have traditionally received when they hire on to Local 1245, according to long-time Business Rep. Jack Osburn.

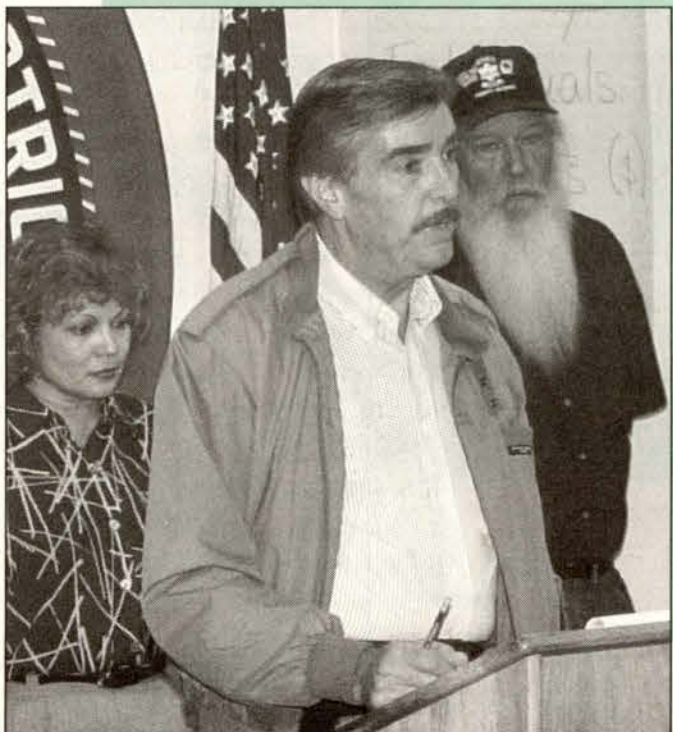
It's a sink-or-swim approach, one that has produced some very talented staff members through the years. But it's an approach that is being re-evaluated as the union faces the challenge of eventually replacing a staff that is growing a bit, well, long in the tooth.

That's why Business Manager Perry Zimmerman convened an unprecedented three-day seminar Feb. 26-28 to begin training a new generation of union leaders. It was the first in a series of planned conferences designed to give rank-and-file activists a glimpse into the inner-workings of the union.

Including a hard-nosed look at the day-to-day life of a Local 1245 Business Representative, as described by those who have lived that life for many years.



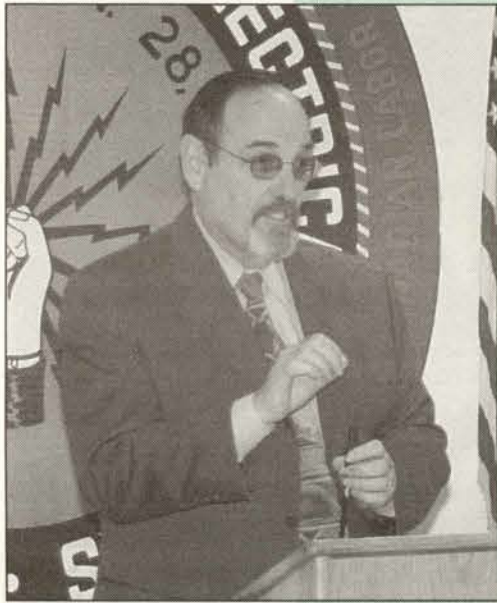
Business Reps Larry Pierce (middle) and Arlene Edwards (left) and former Business Rep Gary Mai participate in a frank discussion of the highs and lows in the life of a Local 1245 business representative.



Page 10 ►

... Is Now!

The Future ...



Business Manager Perry Zimmerman

► **From Page 9**

“When your phone rings, it’s hardly ever good news,” notes North Bay Business Rep. Larry Pierce, who’s been solving members’ problems for over two decades.

Those problems can range from minor annoyance with a supervisor to possibly illegal sexual harassment to major breaches of the labor agreement.

“Don’t try to play God,” says Osburn, whose assignment area includes Citizens Communications and a host of public sector employers. “Members know what they want more than we think they do.”

Listening to Members

Indeed, listening to members is the starting point for most of what a business representative does. Sometimes a willing ear is all an unhappy member requires—someone in a position of some authority who can appreciate the frustrations of daily worklife and offer a sympathetic word.

But other times those frustrations are rooted in genuine workplace problems that require the union’s attention.

“When there are tough issues, meet them head on,” says Jim Lynn, business

rep for PG&E’s Fresno Division. “When you’re there, representing your members, they know you care.”

Then there are the times those issues come crashing over you like El Niño surf, threatening to swamp even the most well-meaning business representative. Lynn offers this advice:

“Prioritize your work everyday.”

Some new business reps may want to go a step further in fine-tuning their organizational skills. Osburn suggests prospective business reps should consider taking classes in labor relations, psychology, even interrogation techniques.

But no matter how expert you become at arranging your schedule, you can’t let yourself become wedded to it. Meetings get cancelled. Appointments get missed. Emergencies arise.

A business rep must remain flexible, Osburn counsels. “You have to learn how to juggle your schedule.”

Time for Family

In all that juggling, however, “make time for your family,” cautions Arlene Edwards, a business rep for PG&E

members at the Center, West Sacramento Processing Stockton Credit

Other business same point: don family. This can challenging in a duties routinely the house early and frequently from home at night family time on h sure it doesn’t g never-ending de

Given these c asking yourself earth would any

Senior Assist Tom Dalzell sug are just cut out f Business reps ty

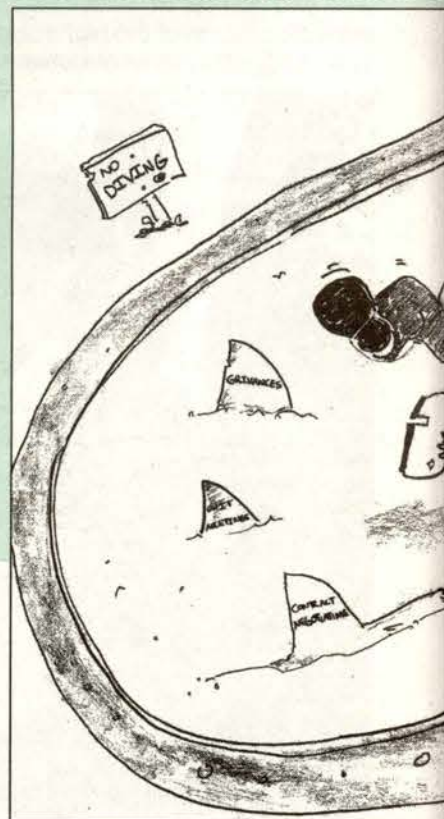


Local 1245 Office Manager Tonya Alston-Maxwell.



Jim Hayes, PG&E

The traditional approach to tr



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rep for PG&E's Fresno Division. "When you're there, representing your members, they know you care."

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Time for Family

In all that juggling, however, "make time for your family," cautions Arlene Edwards, a business rep for PG&E

members at the Sacramento Call Center, West Sacramento Payment Processing Center and Stockton Credit Center.

Other business reps make this same point: don't leave out your family. This can be particularly challenging in a job where your duties routinely get you out of the house early in the morning and frequently keep you away from home at night. Lynn says he puts family time on his calendar to help make sure it doesn't get swept aside by the never-ending demands of the job.

Given these demands, you might be asking yourself right about now, why on earth would anybody want the darn job?

Senior Assistant Business Manager Tom Dalzell suggests that some people are just cut out for this kind of work.

Business reps typically have a "bit of the



Business Rep. Arlene Edwards



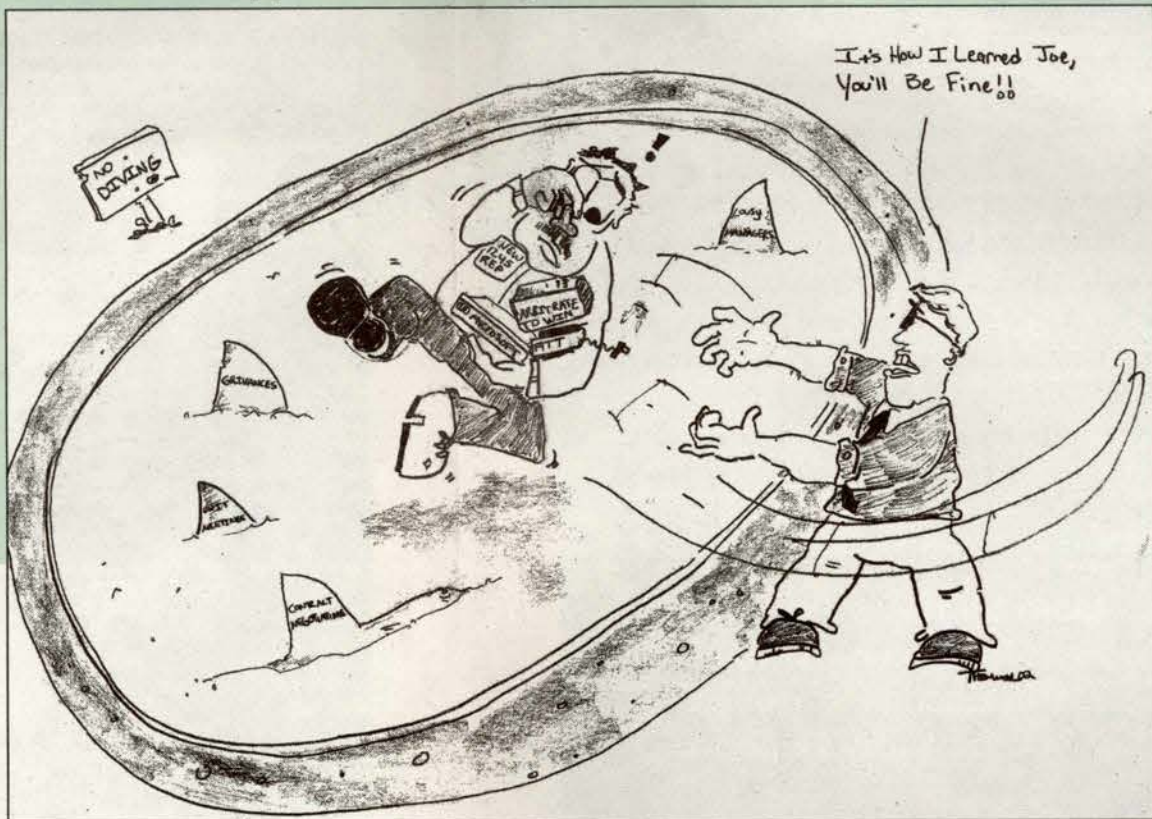
Receiving in conference reps hired v

"The only person who doesn't make a mistake is the person who doesn't do anything. If you make a mistake, call someone up and tell them they were right."

Sr. Business Rep. Frank Saxsenmei

Page 12 ▶

The traditional approach to training a Local 1245 Business Representative...



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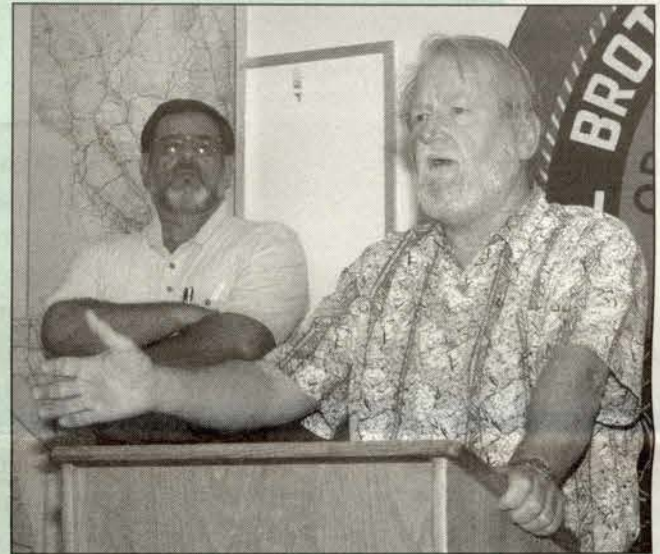
Business Rep. Arlene Edwards



Receiving intensive training on union structure and history at the Future is Now conference were more than three dozen union members, including several business reps hired within the past year and a few members of the Local 1245 office staff.

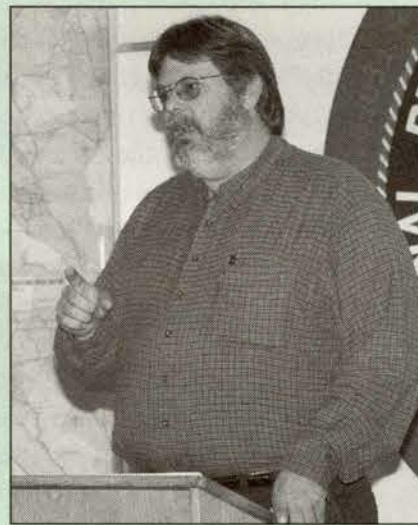
"The only person who doesn't make a mistake is the person who doesn't do anything. If you make a mistake, call someone up and tell them they were right."

Sr. Business Rep. Frank Saxsenmeier.



Page 12 ▶

ining a Local 1245 Business Representative...



Business Rep. Kit Stice

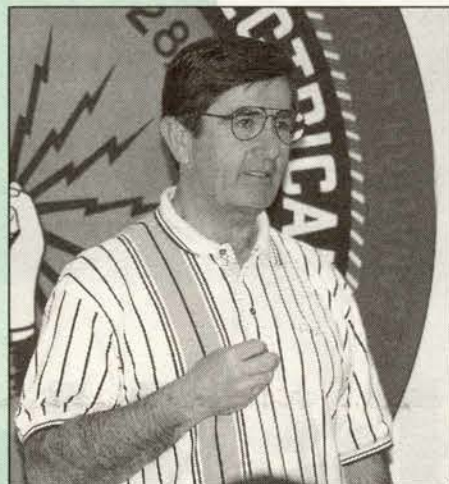
... Is Now!

Attendees

Heather Allison
 Tonya Alston-Maxwell
 Hector Arellano
 Rick Bentler
 Cheryle Bradley
 Vern Brown
 Rich Cowart
 Ed Dwyer
 Al Fortier
 Linda Gazzoli
 Sam Glero
 James Hayes
 Angela Jacobson
 Jeff Johnstone
 Richard Lane
 Shelia Lawton
 Corrine Mascarenas
 Steve Mayfield
 Liz McInnis
 John Mendoza
 Lynn Morel
 Darryl Norris
 Jeff O'Donnell
 Ernie Orozco
 Jeff Pedersen
 Brian Ralston
 Chris Reese
 Katharine Reeves
 Grant Ritchie
 Adam Rouston
 Russ Rylee
 Santiago Salazar
 Nick Schader
 Mike Scafani
 Gil Suarez
 Chris Van Dyke
 Mike Venterino
 David Vipond
 Todd Woolman

Presentors

Ken Ball
 Bob Choate
 Tom Dalzell
 Arlene Edwards
 Dorothy Fortier
 Mike Grill
 Don Hardie
 Austin Lea
 Jim Lynn
 Gary Mai
 Bob Martin
 Lita Martin
 Jim McCauley
 Junior Ornelas
 Jack Osburn
 Larry Pierce
 Frank Saxsenmeier
 Dennis Seyfer
 Roger Stalcup
 Kit Stice
 Ray Thomas
 Eric Wolfe
 Perry Zimmerman



Business Rep. Darryl Norris

► From Page 11

rebel” in them, says Dalzell, the kind of spark that drives some to become shop stewards so they can stand up for the rights of their fellow workers.

“It’s a crusade, in a way,” says Osburn.

Playing Many Roles

Crusade or not, the successful business rep quickly learns that playing the rebel only goes so far when you are constantly making decisions that affect people’s lives. Serving the best interests of the members means you must also learn to play other roles: investigator, researcher, counselor, negotiator, mediator, even confessor. The ability to step outside yourself and choose which role is best-suited to a particular situation is part of the business rep’s job.

“You have to look at your ego,” advises Osburn. “Relationships are very important.”

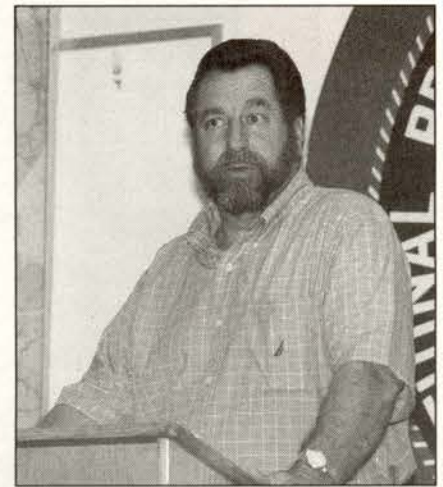
Humor can be an effective way to maintain good relationships. Osburn singles out a humorous tactic employed by Unit Chair David Vipond to remind members to be involved in the union: he wears a bow-tie to work on unit meeting day.

Humor can also be used to ease tensions during negotiations with management. If management negotiators start pressing too hard for “flexibility” on the part of the union, Osburn says he may accuse them of using the “f” word. Little quips like this may not be side-splitting funny, but they can be a more effective way of showing displeasure than losing your temper and pounding the table.

“Anger is your enemy,” notes Pierce. “The person who loses their temper first is usually the person who loses the argument.”

Developing a Style

All of this advice might make it look like a prospective business rep has to conform to some standard of perfection in order to qualify



Business Rep. Wayne Greer

for the job. But that’s not the case at all. The reality is that no two business reps are alike, says former rep Gary Mai, and each business rep has to develop his or her own style.

In fact, perfection isn’t even part of the equation, because mistakes are an inevitable

part of the job. The key is how you deal with your mistakes and other situations where things don’t go the way you planned.

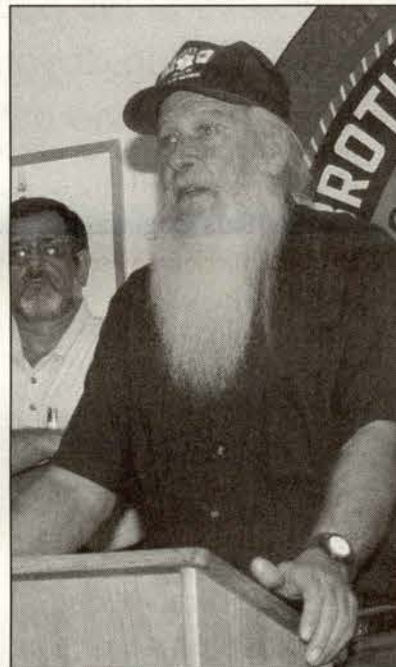
“The only person who doesn’t make a mistake is the person who doesn’t do anything,” says Senior Business Rep. Frank Saxsenmeier. “If you make a mistake, call someone up and tell them they were right,” he advises.

Perhaps the only immutable requirement of the job is this: at some fundamental level you have to believe in the union’s mission.

You can arrive at that belief in many different ways. In Saxsenmeier’s case, union was a family value.

When Saxsenmeier came home from his first day of work at PG&E, his father—an active member of the Letter Carriers union—asked to see his union card. Saxsenmeier assured his father that he wasn’t required to have a union card until he had been on the job for six months. “That’s fine,” his father replied. “But don’t come home until you have your union card.”

It’s the sort of attitude you find in a good business rep.



Former Business Rep. Gary Mai

More Stories & Photos from
 “The Future is Now”
 in upcoming issues
 of the Utility Reporter

Dog bite prevention program

Editor's note: The following letter was originally written last month as an e-mail to PG&E CEO Gordon Smith from Meter Reader Lynda Culver. It is reprinted here with permission of the author. Culver attended one of four presentations hosted by PG&E in February and March on dog bite prevention. The programs were conducted by the Billi Ray Dog Bite Prevention.



Real dogs were used in last month's Bulli Ray training on dog bite prevention, hosted by PG&E.

Dear Mr. Smith:

My name is Lynda Culver. I am the meter reader from Vacaville who fell and broke my wrist while trying to get away from two dogs on December 7, 2001. First of all I would like to say how much I appreciated your calling me. It made me feel like there was genuine concern on your part. You told me on the phone to give you a call if there was anything you could do, thus, the reason for this letter.

After being off work for nearly 12 weeks, I returned to work on light duty on February 21, 2002. I am still facing weeks more of physical therapy. Since I was on light duty I had the opportunity to attend the Bulli-Ray Dog Training Seminar at the Sacramento Service Center on Friday, March 1. Mr. Smith, this training was the best I have received since I've been with PG&E! Had I had this training before December 7, I believe I would not have been hurt!

Meter Readers have been required to carry a dog wand since March

2001. Unfortunately, since we were never trained on the proper use of the dog wand, many of us rejected the idea of carrying it as just another hassle. This dog training seminar showed me how to use the dog wand and gave me respect for it.

Not only did the trainer demonstrate the use of the dog wand, she told us the history on the types of dogs we face out there, what we're dealing with and what we can do to avoid an attack. She told us what to do if a dog does attack us and what to do if there are multiple dogs. I can't speak highly enough about the training!

After having two dogs come after me, I was leery about reading meters again. But since I went to that seminar, I am more prepared to handle myself if the situation should ever arise again.

With the Company doing all they can to prevent dog bites, I'm writing to encourage you to have this seminar presented to all meter readers, systemwide. Not only meter readers, but gas servicemen and anyone else who works in the field would benefit. The trainer has trained thousands of postal workers and employees of utility companies in Southern California. She is excellent and the training I received, although a little late now, will be invaluable to me for the rest of my life.

By the Local 1245
Safety Committee



Jack & Jill: working too hard

We have all heard the old adage, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."

Unfortunately, the Jacks and Jills of the 21st century are overworked, according to the Families and Work Institute. According to an Institute study, the American worker works on average more than two weeks more per year than their closest rival, Japan. This has led to serious workplace and personal problems for the working person.

Surveys of both blue collar and white collar workers have revealed that 24% of employees work more than 50 hours per week while another 26% work six to seven days per week. With all of this workday stress it is not easy to turn off the pressure once you leave the work-

place.

Here are a few tips to help deal with overwork stress:

- Take some time out at the end of each workday to spend alone undisturbed. Even a half an hour can re-energize you and place a mental space between you and the workplace.

- Listen to your body. If you are feeling tired on a consistent basis it is probably your body telling you to slow down.

- Don't use drugs or alcohol as a stress release. Often these substances have an opposite effect.

Most of all, remember that you can only do so much in one day. Pacing yourself aids you in expending energy when it is needed and saving energy when it is not.



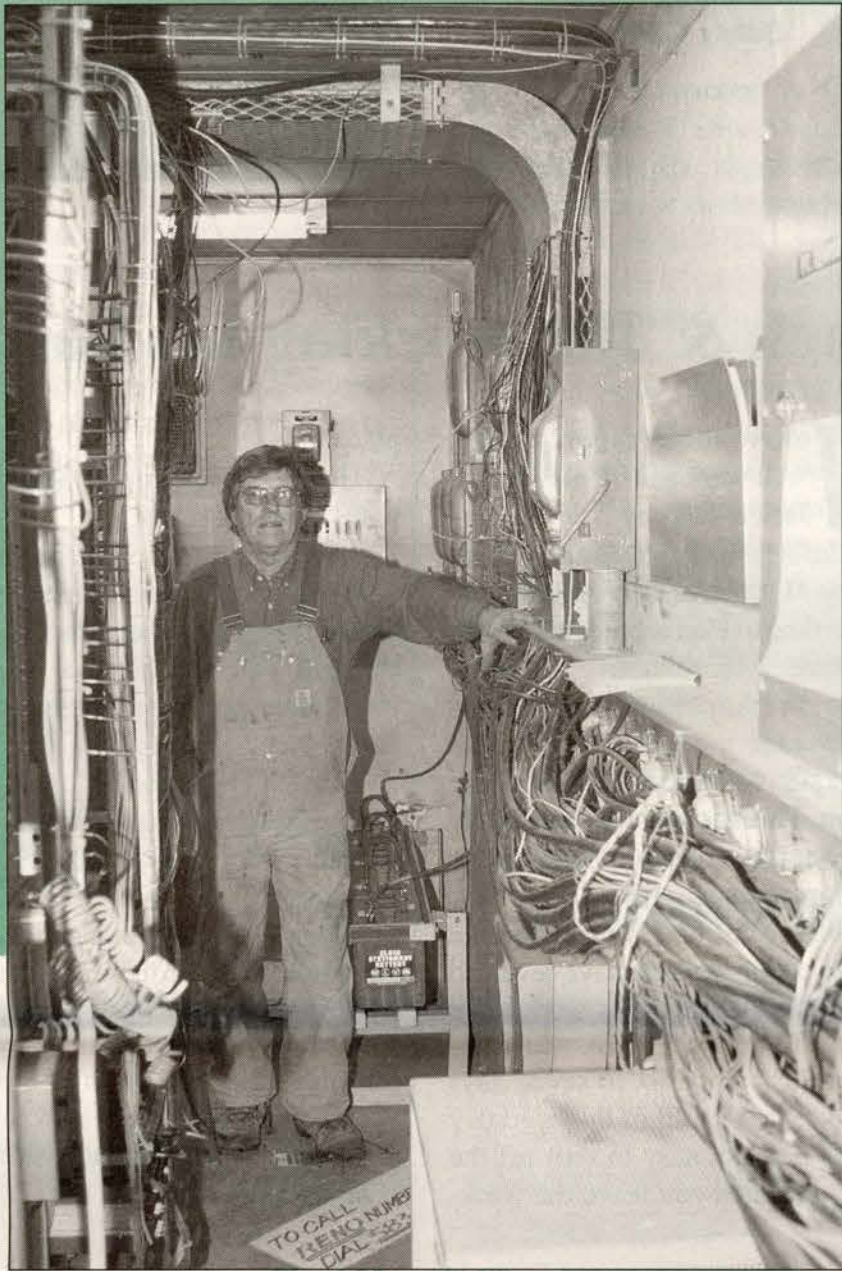
"Stress management? Management is responsible for the stress in the first place!"

Current members of the Local 1245 Safety Committee: Stoney Burk, Alameda Power & Telecommunications; Keith Hopp, Pacific Gas & Electric; Ralph Muraca, City of Santa Clara; Al White, Pacific Gas & Electric; David Vipond, Citizens Communications; Rich Lane, Turlock Irrigation Dist.; and Asst. Business Manager Jim McCauley.

**Worker
Memorial Day
April 28, 2002**

SIERRA PACIFIC POWER

Sierra crews bring needed repairs to Truckee substation



Senior Relay Control Technician Mike O'Neal in the old building at Truckee Sub.



Fourth-year Apprentice Electrician Kevin Vial, a 10-year IBEW member, shows off the progress made on the new building.



Apprentice Electrician Randy Brunelli, a six-year IBEW member.

“All this stuff is older than I am.”

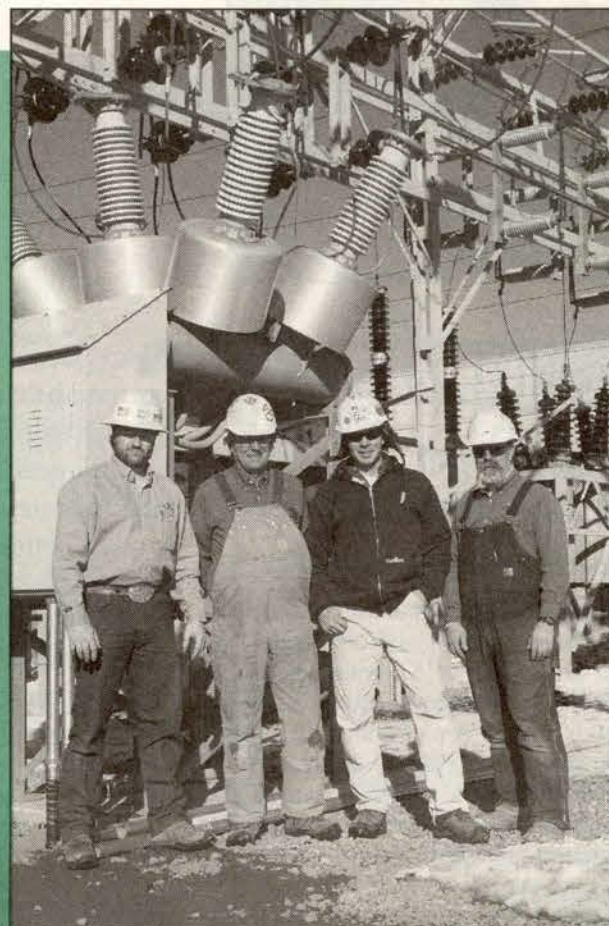
That’s what Senior Relay Control Technician Mike O’Neal had to say about the aging wires in the small, cramped and dusty building at Sierra Pacific Power’s Truckee Substation north of Lake Tahoe.

“We took pictures of this stuff and showed it to management,” Neal said.

Apparently this approach had the desired effect because the Truckee substation was authorized for a facelift and the crew has been busy transferring the guts of the operation to a new (larger, cleaner, lighter) building and pulling out new control wiring to each breaker.

The Truckee sub ties to Truckee Donner Public Utility District and to Pacific Gas and Electric.

And no, we didn’t ask O’Neal how old he was, but we can tell you that he’s been a member of the IBEW for nearly 40 years.



Kevin Vial, Mike O’Neal, Randy Brunelli and Mike Coli.



Control Foreman Mike Coli, a 23-year IBEW member.



Bill forces disclosure of caregiver background

Gov. Gray Davis announced last month that he is drafting legislation to give parents the right to know the details of any crimes committed by caregivers working in state-licensed child-care homes and centers.

The bill will require those with criminal convictions in licensed child care to either sign a waiver agreeing to have their pasts revealed or leave the industry. The bill would also

allow the Department of Social Services to release the information.

An investigation by the Orange County Register revealed critical flaws in the state's background-screening process. Among the 640 convicted criminals working in Orange County licensed child care, the Register found people with extensive and sometimes violent histories, including convictions for such crimes as arson, grand theft, domestic vio-

lence and drug dealing.

Dunn said parents have a right to determine whether the criminal history of a caregiver could compromise the safety of their children.

"I am pleased to assist the governor in finally giving to parents the right to know the background of the individuals who are caring for their children," Dunn told the Register.

The bill will face opposition by privacy-rights groups.

WOMEN WORKERS' HISTORY

Grandmother's Murder

Fannie Mooney Sellins was already known as a garment workers' leader when she became a mineworkers' organizer in the bloody coalfields of West Virginia. An effective organizer, she made herself unpopular with the authorities: she was charged with "inciting to riot" and imprisoned for six months until pardoned by President Woodrow Wilson.

A MINER IS TERRIBLE THING TO WASTE!!



After four tough years in West Virginia, Sellins moved to New Kensington, Pa., and became involved in the UMWA's efforts to organize the miners of the Allegheny Valley. She became popular among miners and their families—which made her a marked woman.

Miners employed by Allegheny Steel's coal company struck for higher wages and better conditions in July 1919. The company continued operations with strikebreakers. At the company's request, the sheriff stationed a dozen deputies, armed with revolvers, clubs and riot guns, in what is now Natrona Heights, Pa.

There had already been an arrest on Aug. 26 when Sellins arrived on the picket line. She tried to calm the mostly women and children present when the deputies clubbed and shot to death an unarmed, 60-year-old miner named Joe Starzeleski. As Sellins urged the women to take cover, she was struck by a rifle butt, then shot at point blank range. As she lay dying, the guards pumped three more bullets into her body. Sellins was 47 years old, a grandmother and the mother of a youth killed in France, fighting in a war "to make the world safe for democracy." It took four years to bring the deputies to trial. A Pittsburgh court found them not guilty. Her killer became captain of shop police in an Allegheny Valley steel mill.

'Unions for women, women for unions' campaign

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the AFL-CIO and the Coalition of Labor Union Women launched a new campaign, "Unions for Women, Women for Unions," on March 7, one day before International Women's Day.

Women make up 42% of the global workforce and are joining unions at a higher rate than men. The aim of the new "Unions for Women" campaign is to double the number of

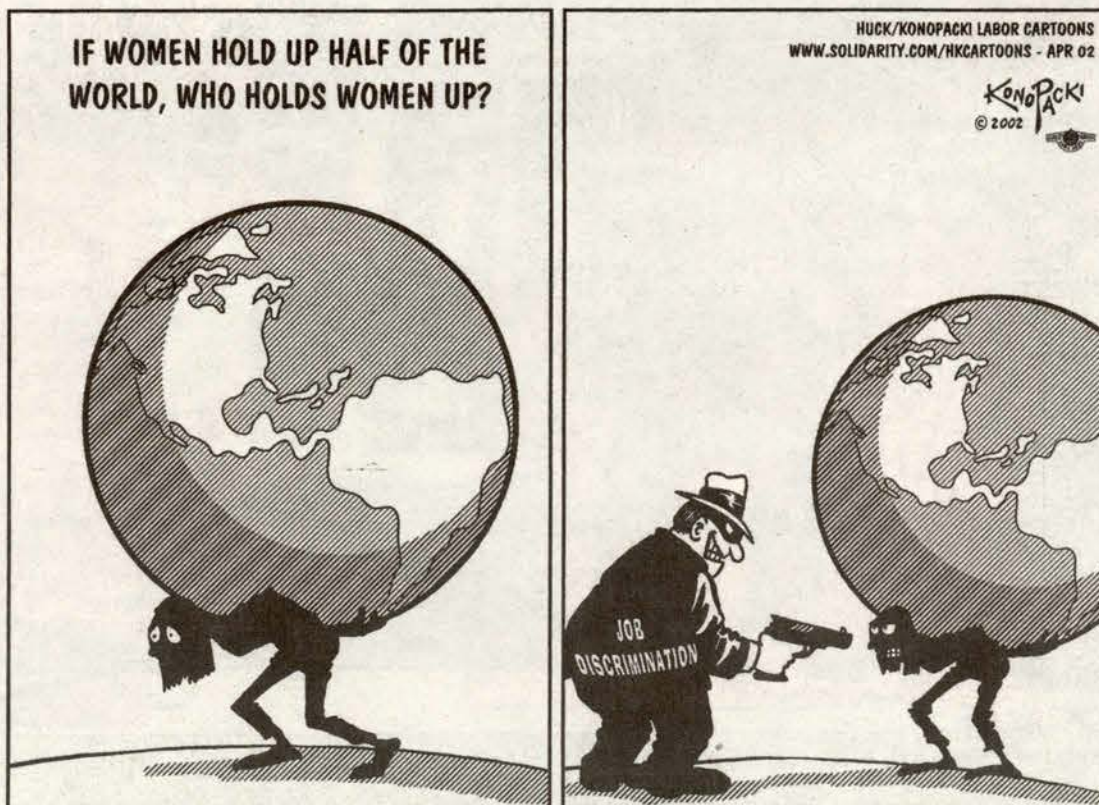
women trade unionists worldwide and improve their working conditions.

Based on findings of ICFTU's 2001 "Ask a Working Woman" survey—which was modeled after the AFL-CIO survey—the campaign will focus on the needs of young women, migrant women and women from ethnic minorities.

"In order to attract even more women to the labor movement, it is

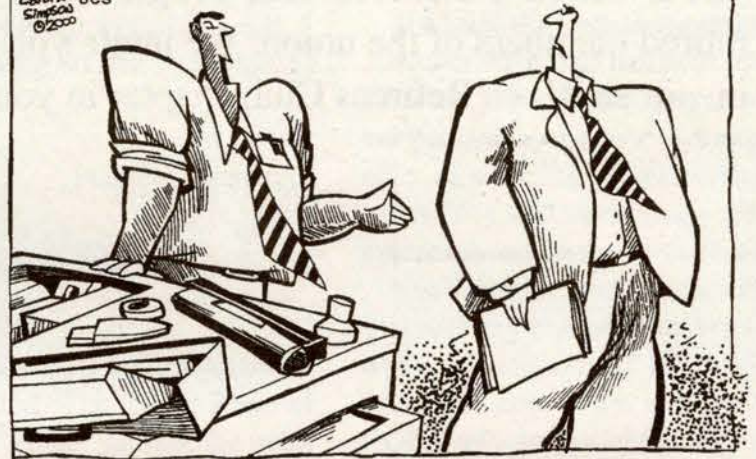
crucial we break down the barriers that prevent them from joining unions and change the perception that trade unions are not doing enough to meet their needs," said ICFTU Women's Committee Chair Nancy Riche. For more information about the campaign, visit:

www.aflcio.org/publ/press2002/pr0307b.htm





"I'd LIKE to get to work on time, but it makes the day too long."

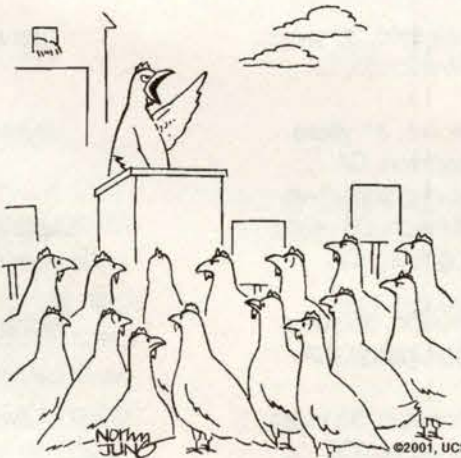


"You shouldn't have told the employees to 'work smarter.' They all went and joined a union."



"Is there anyone here who knows anything about our employees?"

Life at work



"They're paying us chicken feed!"



"I think installing surveillance cameras on the shop floor might have been a mistake."

Congratulations!

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.



Danny Ahles, 34 years Stockton, CA	Mack Enz, 30 years Clearlake, CA	Lawrence Homer, 35 years Santa Rosa, CA	William Riesen, 31 years Fernley, NV
Gary Alderman, 37 years Walnut Creek, CA	Paul Estes, 35 years San Anselmo, CA	Larry Hopkins, 41 years Placerville, CA	Otis Roy, 35 years Mariposa, CA
John Barth Sr., 30 years Merced, CA	John Ferrara, 34 years Santa Cruz, CA	Albert Hottinger III, 16 years Oroville, CA	Dennis Russell, 31 years Campbell, CA
Jonathan Bartlett, 34 years Santa Rosa, CA	Theresa Lee Fiscus, 18 years Atascadero, CA	Hugh Karutz, 36 years Lincoln, CA	Norman Schirle, 45 years Campbell, CA
Robert Berry, 17 years Magalia, CA	Marvin Fleming, 32 years Santa Maria, CA	William Knox, 35 years Chico, CA	Donald Schroeder, 25 years San Jose, CA
William Boone, 30 years Chico, CA	Jimmie Forester, 38 years San Leandro, CA	Gary Lee, 32 years West Lotus, CA	Kenneth Simpson, 16 years Antioch, CA
Katharine Brooks, 18 years Ukiah, CA	Gloria Foster, 32 years Richmond, CA	Darryl Lewis, 34 years Sacramento, CA	Robert Sorentrud, 32 years San Jose, CA
Magdalena Cadiz, 29 years Hercules, CA	John Frings, 30 years Oakdale, CA	Jack Marley, 34 years Newman, CA	James Souza, 35 years Diamond Springs, CA
David Cheek, 36 years Anderson, CA	Allen Funderburk, 38 years Pinole, CA	Ercelle Mayfield, 30 years San Francisco, CA	Larry Ray Tivis, 32 years Foresthill, CA
Ronald Connelly, 32 years Rodeo, CA	Peter Giovanetti, 34 years Oakland, CA	Jim Moore, 31 years Stockton, CA	Sylvia Womble, 17 years Fairfield, CA
Ronnie Cook, 34 years Lincoln, CA	Rufus Green, 33 years San Jose, CA	Gary Munson, 36 years Kingsburg, CA	Saphrona Alexander, 4 years San Jose, CA
Larry Davila, 31 years Clovis, CA	Thomas Grennie, 29 years Brisbane, CA	John Nelson, 36 years Arroyo Grande, CA	Barbara Renoude, 35 years Vacaville, CA
Francis Edward Deschaine, 33 years Colorado Springs, CO	Robert Hensley, 39 years Lockeford, CA	David Pinkston, 35 years Richmond, CA	Jerry Woolf, 35 years Atwater, CA
Sonja Lee Edwards, 24 years Oroville, CA	Charles Herfurth, 31 years Merced, CA	Leandro Quintana, 41 years Fremont, CA	

Hear it from the ones who are burdened the most

By Peter Mandon

I am an 82 year old retiree and am greatly concerned about what is happening to my benefits and cost of living increases. The increase in the medical costs and no increase in pension is placing more pressure on our lives. Please PG&E, try to do the right thing with the retirees.'

I. L. C.

I attended a retirees luncheon in San Jose on Feb 5. It was nice to see a lot of old friends. Everywhere I go there are retirees with the same concerns. Above is a sample of what we all hear from them.

We did a little informal survey at the luncheon and I am going to let you read what some of them had to say. I am using only their initials to help preserve their privacy.

To whom this may concern:

Our insurance went up to \$357 a month.

H. C.

Why has there been such a high increase in the medical plan? Just for me it is \$175 per month. My wife has her own plan.

R. W. G.

As a retiree since 1982 I don't think the retirees are getting a fair shake.

N. G.

P.S. Give me liberty or give me death.

Dear Gordon.

A lot of us are finding it difficult to keep things going without any PG&E dividends. It would be very helpful if you could increase our pensions and decrease the cost of our medical insurance. Please do what you can to help.

D. A. 1981

I would like to see the medical cost reduced. It went up a great amount this year. From \$50 to \$175.

Y. S. 1985

For all of you that are thinking of retiring, beware of the continuous yearly increases in our medical premiums. With that and no increase in our pension the good life that we all dreamed of won't last long. If the cap was removed from the medical plan—and deductibles and prescriptions continue to increase—then we haven't gained anything.

For the brothers and sisters that are still working, we need your help in making things better for all retirees. I believe you are going to have an opportunity to vote for a contract that will improve the quality of life for a substantial number of members.

I wish I could print all of the notes that were passed on to me. Here is one more.

Our medical is terrible high. I am a widow with only social security to live on. With bills to take care of, I

feel I won't be able to have medical. I can't believe that my husband worked for a company as PG&E and my very small pension almost exhausted.

M. R.

We don't really know what it is like to walk in someone else's shoes.

Let us all work for a common goal of making sure we have affordable medical and prescription (and why not optical and dental?) coverage.

Why do the retirees not have the right to vote on union contracts. It seems to me that it should be a basic right of anybody that will be affected by the outcome.

If anybody wants to communicate with me, send me an e-mail at pkmandon@aol.com. Or letters can be sent to me at the IBEW Local 1245 office, c/o Eric Wolfe, and they will be forwarded to me.

Keep the faith.

Peter Mandon is a member of the San Jose Chapter of the Local 1245 Retirees Club.



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 IBEW Local 332, 2125 Canoas Garden, San Jose.

Doctors rejecting Medicare patients

Significant numbers of doctors are refusing to take new Medicare patients, saying the government now pays them too little to cover the costs of caring for the elderly, the New York Times reported.

Medicare cut payments to doctors by 5.4% this year. The government estimates that under current law, the fees paid for each medical service will be reduced in each of the next three years, for a total decrease of 17% from 2002 to 2005.

Some doctors are now purposely limiting the number of their Medicare patients. The American Academy of Family Physicians says that 17% of family doctors are not taking new Medicare patients.

Total Medicare spending rose 24% in the last five years, to \$238 billion in 2001, and the Congressional Budget Office predicts that it will grow faster in the next five years, to \$310 billion in 2006.

Many HMO's have left Medicare or curtailed their participation, dropping 2.2 million patients in the last four years.



When Privatized Social Security meets Bear Market...

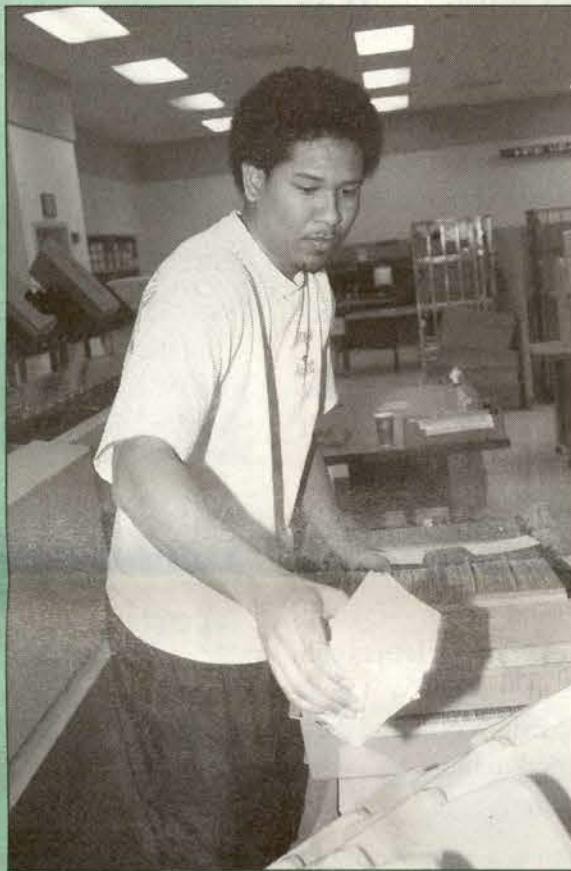
West Sacramento Payment Processing

Monthly payroll. Balanced payment programs for customers.
Overtime meal money for employees.

Processing money is the central activity at PG&E's Payment Processing Center in West Sacramento. The Local 1245 members who do this valuable work are seldom in the spotlight. But we'd sure miss them in a hurry if they weren't there performing this valuable work!



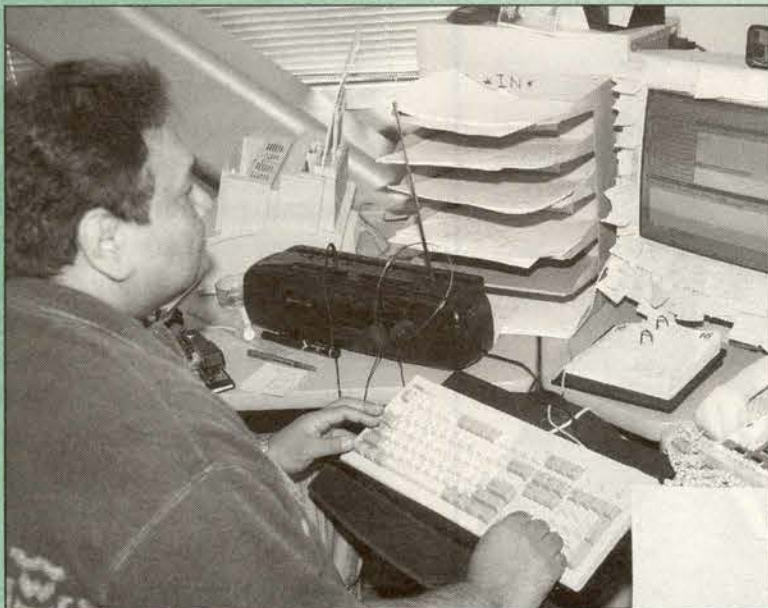
Utility Machine Operator Vanessa Preciado.



Utility Machine Operator Malcolm Blakely cleaning stubs and checks and feeding them to transport machine.



Utility Machine Operator Linda McFarland (left) speaks with Local 1245 Business Rep. Arlene Edwards.



Accounting Clerk Charles Rico working with the Automated Payment System.



Accounting Clerk Judy Long processing customer requests that arrive by mail.



Accounting Clerk Glorial Burrell working on the Balanced Payment Program.