

Utility Reporter

IBEW LOCAL 1245 • AFL - CIO

Vol. 51 • No. 8 August 2002

Unity Is Strength



Sierra Pacific Power

Members weigh bargaining strategies



"The membership is the only thing that has been keeping this company afloat," Wayne Patterson declared during a rank and file meeting convened last month by Business Manager Perry Zimmerman to learn what members are thinking about upcoming negotiations with Sierra Pacific Power. At left is Rita Weisshaar. At right is Gino Aramini.

Local 1245 members last month expressed interest in "focused bargaining" with Sierra Pacific Power to modify the labor agreement that expires at the end of the year. But the members also cited a number of pressing issues they would like to deal with sooner rather than later.

The detailed discussion of bargaining strategy came during an all-day meeting July 9 in Reno. Local 1245 Business Manager Perry Zimmerman convened the group to hear the opinions of Local 1245 members from throughout the Sierra Pacific Power system.

Zimmerman opened the meeting with an overview of the company's financial situation. The cash-strapped, credit-challenged utility is finding it hard to secure

Page 4 ▶

Union reviews PG&E proposals

Local 1245 bargaining committees spent July studying PG&E contract proposals.

Business Manager Perry Zimmerman said the company appears to be seeking a multi-year agreement with some emphasis on limiting the bidding process. The proposal also contains familiar cost-shifting and cost-cutting issues.

"At this stage in the process we're mainly studying what the company is proposing and getting clarification where needed," said Zimmerman.

Local 1245 members employed by PG&E will find an insert in this issue of the Utility Reporter containing the text of the union and company proposals. The proposals have also been posted on the IBEW page on PG&E's intranet. On PG&E computers, go to www/hr/ibew.

During July, the union's Benefits Committee met seven times, the General Construction Committee met twice, and the General Bargaining Committee met eight times. The Benefits and General Construction Committees expect to meet with management negotiators prior to the Sept. 3 start date for General Bargaining.

Zimmerman said the union would continue to utilize the insights of rank and file members as bargaining proceeds. A meeting with several dozen rank and file members from throughout PG&E has been scheduled for Aug. 5 to get reactions to the company's proposals.

**Members at PG&E:
See Insert for
Contract Proposals**

REGISTER TO VOTE

Do It By Mail!

California residents, call:

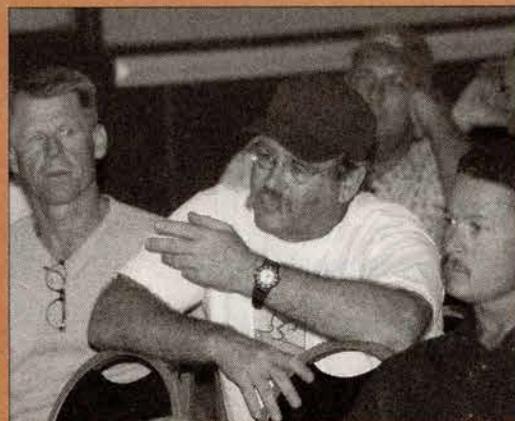
1-800-345-8683

And remember to vote on November 5!

Preparing for Round Two at SMUD

Members at the Sacramento Municipal Utility District tell the Business Manager why they rejected the proposed labor agreement.

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Feature



PG&E GC in San Francisco 8-9

Service Awards East Bay 12-13

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SEPTEMBER 7

Service Awards
Bakersfield, CA

SEPTEMBER 14

Stewards Training
Bakersfield, CA

SEPTEMBER 14

Service Awards
San Francisco, CA

OCTOBER 5

Deadline for Registering to Vote
in Nevada for Nov. 5 Election

OCTOBER 19

Steward Training
Salinas/Monterey, CA

OCTOBER 19

Service Awards
Salinas/Monterey, CA

OCTOBER 21

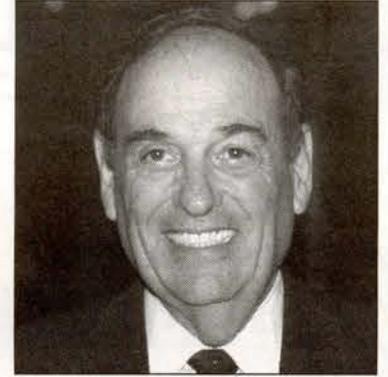
Deadline for Registering to Vote
in California for Nov. 5 Election

NOVEMBER 5

General Election
Remember to Vote!

Bargaining collectively for a diverse membership

By Perry Zimmerman, Business Manager



By the end of 2002 we will have negotiated new contracts covering approximately 80% of Local 1245's diverse membership.

When we enter negotiations with an employer, we know that we must speak for all the employees in the bargaining unit. By engaging in *collective* bargaining, we must do the best we can for all the employees. This requires a careful balancing of interests.

At PG&E, for example, a large number of employees are contemplating retirement in the next few years. They are interested in improving post-retirement medical benefits and pension benefits. Younger employees generally have different priorities. Retirees have distinct priori-

ties, too. Although we do not officially bargain for existing retirees, we are mindful of their past service and sacrifices, and we cannot ignore the harsh effects of the current cap on post-retirement medical premiums.

Many other interests must be balanced in the PG&E negotiations. Members in General Construction seek contract improvements that would only affect Title 300. Workers in high cost-of-housing areas are asking for relief which would not benefit other members. We hear urgent requests for inequity increases for specific classifications.

Another balancing act is going on with our negotiations at Sierra Pacific. Some of our members there favor full-scale bargaining on all issues this fall. Other members want a more focused approach because of the tremendous uncertainty resulting from Sierra's financial difficulties. This issue was debated at length at a July 9 meeting in Reno (see story, page one) and it is a perfect example of the balancing that takes place in collective bargaining.

Everywhere that we negotiate, we must deal with the competing interests of our members. There are two ways of dealing with this situation.

The first is to count votes and to attempt to negotiate improvements for enough workers to win a 50%-plus-one vote to ratify the contract. I have never believed in this approach. It chokes off discussion and can leave a bitter taste among those whose votes were not needed for the majority ratification strategy.

The approach that I favor is simpler and, I believe, more principled. I stress that we are engaged in *collective* bargaining, and explain the union's actions as thoroughly as pos-

sible. I believe most members will understand and appreciate this approach, even if their particular interest is not advanced as a priority in a given set of negotiations.

Over the last 20 years, I have watched carefully our negotiations with the City of Healdsburg. Until very recently, Healdsburg was strapped for money, and there was never enough money in the budget to bring all three groups of union-represented employees up to market levels. Through a consistent and articulate explanation of what we were trying to do, Larry Giovanonni, our skilled head shop steward at the City, was always able to convince the groups not receiving inequity increases that their turn would come. It always did—Electric Department one year, Public Works the next, and City Hall the year after, until finally economic growth in Healdsburg made real gains for all workers possible. We survived 20 years of balancing not by counting votes, but by explaining collective bargaining and promoting unity.

I have seen our members respond to the message of unity and collective bargaining. I saw it at the July 9 Sierra Pacific meeting in Reno, at the SMUD meeting in Sacramento later that night, and at two large PG&E gatherings held in Concord. While advancing their own views, our members were respectful of the views of others.

We will always do our best to get the most possible for the most members. If you don't understand why we are doing something, always feel free to ask. It is my deeply-held belief that your questions and your input are the foundation of the collective bargaining process.



W.L.C.A.
WESTERN LABOR COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION

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FINANCIAL PLANNING SEMINARS A LOCAL 1245 MEMBER BENEFIT

Outlook for PG&E Common Stock.

How much do I need to retire?

Which options should I use in my 401K?

How does an IRA Rollover work?

Investment outlook for economy and interests rates.

What steps do I need to take prior to retirement?

What happens to my retirement if I go on LTD?

Do I need a Living Trust?

Free!

For Local 1245 Members
and Their Guests

Date	Time	Location	Hotel
Sept. 7, Saturday	9-11 am	Redding	Red Lion Inn
Sept. 7, Saturday	1-3 pm	Chico	Masonic Lodge
Sept. 10, Tuesday	7-9:30 pm	San Mateo	Marriott
Sept. 12, Thursday	7-9 pm	Monterey	Hyatt
Sept. 14, Saturday	9-11 am	San Luis Obispo	Embassy Suites
Sept. 17, Tuesday	7-9:30 pm	Stockton	Radisson
Sept. 18, Wednesday	7-9:30 pm	Oakland	Holiday Inn
Sept. 21, Saturday	9-11 am	Sacramento	Capital Plaza Halls
Sept. 21, Saturday	9-11 am	San Jose	Hyatt
Sept. 25, Wednesday	7-9:30 pm	Walnut Creek	IBEW Union Hall
Sept. 27, Friday	7-9 pm	Ukiah	Discovery Inn
Sept. 27, Friday	7-9:30 pm	Bakersfield	Four Points Sheraton*
Sept. 28, Saturday	9-11 am	Fresno	Radisson
Sept. 28, Saturday	9-11 am	Santa Rosa	Hilton
Oct. 5, Saturday	9-11 am	Eureka	Red Lion Inn

* This is the new location for the Bakersfield seminar

Invitations will be mailed to Local 1245 members aged 45 and over some time in August. If you plan to attend, please return the reservation card to assist our planning for these events. If you have questions, call Jim McCauley at (925) 933-6060 ext. 210.

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Working For Working Families



Business Manager Perry Zimmerman (middle) speaks about upcoming bargaining with Sierra Pacific Power. At left is Senior Assistant Business Manager Tom Dalzell. At right is Assistant Business Manager Dennis Seyfer.

Members outline concerns for

► From Page 1

power in the open market just as the summer heat is boosting electricity demand. Bankruptcy, or a takeover by another utility, have become real possibilities.

While the utility has approached the union about a possible extension of the labor agreement, Zimmerman said he had not yet responded to the offer because he

first wanted to hear the views of the members.

And the members had plenty to say.

They discussed the merits of a one-year extension versus something longer. They discussed the impact an extension would have on their job security in the event that Sierra went bankrupt during the term of the extension.

But most of all, they expressed strong feelings about a number of issues they hope can be addressed in "focused bargaining" as part of any agreement to extend the current agreement.

Tom Cornell said that some wage inequity issues "have real merit."

"I don't think we should have an extension without addressing some of these issues."

Scott Downs expressed similar concerns about work-rule issues, which he described as "a real burr in the saddle." At the same time, Downs and others suggested it might be possible to deal with those issues outside of the general bargaining process.

Members generally expressed more interest in job security issues than wages issues, given the distinct possibility of a bankruptcy or a buy-out. Rita Weisshaar, a clerical foreman in Reno, expressed her concern that clerical jobs could become increasingly vulnerable to outsourcing.

Perhaps the most important job security



Line Working Foreman Bruce Warmuth, center, offers his viewpoint. At left is Dan Lyday. At right is Paul Wiles.



Jeff Turk, Troubleman

Story & Photos
by Eric Wolfe



Chuck Rader, Instrument Tech.



Aaron Dorman, Instrument Tech.



Dale Huntsman, Fleet Mechanic



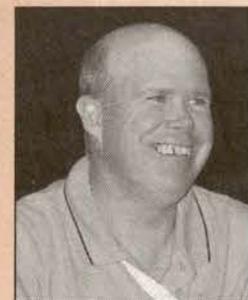
Tom Cornell speaks about the importance of addressing inequity issues.



Caroline Leider, Customer Srv. Rep.



Casey Kottke, Mechanic Welder



Steve Urrutia, Line Working Foreman



John Maulduin, Clarifier Operator

bargaining with Sierra Pacific

measure would be to strengthen the “successorship” language in the agreement. As explained by Senior Assistant Business Manager Tom Dalzell, the union’s goal in such bargaining would be to require a new employer to accept the labor agreement, to recognize the union, and to agree to no layoffs for the term of the agreement.

Dale Huntsman voiced concern about the future of the post-retirement medical plan and warned that the company may seek to move toward a “defined contribution” plan that limits the company’s contribution.

Not everyone favored the idea of focused bargaining. Bruce Warmouth and Paul Wiles, among others, reported strong sentiment in their areas for pursuing full-scale bargaining.

The strongest language of the day came when members started talking about Sierra Pacific’s failure to recognize the contribution that union members have made to the company.

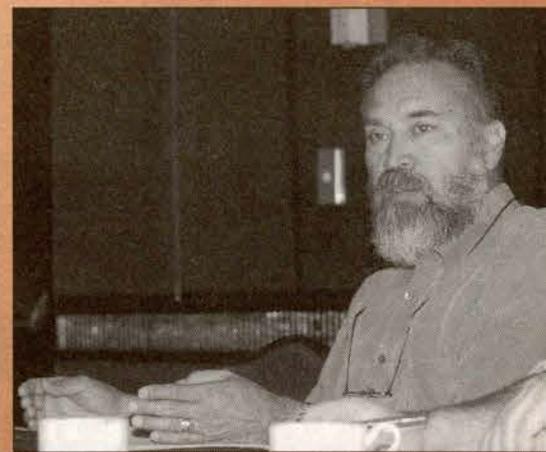
“The membership is the only thing that has been keeping this company afloat,” said Wayne Patterson. “Their focus has not been on the employees. We need to get the focus back on what they’ve got here.”

Gino Aramini expressed deep frustration over the company’s failure to heed practical advice from the employees.

“They need to listen to the guys and their ideas for saving money or the chickens are going to come home to roost,” said Aramini.

“Whenever you go to a labor-management meeting they have all new people there and nobody remembers what happened at the last meeting.”

Zimmerman said he and his staff would seriously consider all the viewpoints expressed during the meeting, and that the union leadership would continue to consult with the members over bargaining strategy.



Business Rep. Santiago Salazar



Business Rep. Randy Osborn



Vickie Borst, Customer Service Rep.



Advisory Council Member Bob Vieira

Participants

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Gino Aramini | Dan Lyday |
| Gary Bailey | John Mauldin |
| Vickie Borst | Wayne Patterson |
| Tom Cornell | Jim Pursel |
| Aaron Dorman | Chuck Rader |
| Scott Downs | Richard Tissue |
| Craig Gillett | Jeff Turk |
| Mike Grimm | Steve Urrutia |
| Dale Huntsman | Robert Vieira |
| Mike Kennedy | Bruce Warmuth |
| Casey Kottke | Rita Weisshaar |
| Caroline Leider | Paul Wiles |



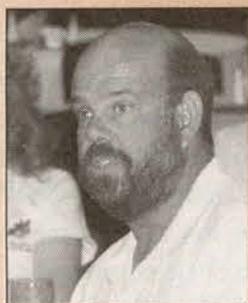
Mike Kennedy, Meter Reader



Craig Gillett, UMS, Fallon



Richard Tissue, General Foreman



Mike Grimm, Troubleman



Gary Bailey, Control Room Operator



From left: SCAT Electrician Tom Cornell, Troubleman Jim Pursel and Troubleman Scott Downs

SMUD members speak out about rejected contract

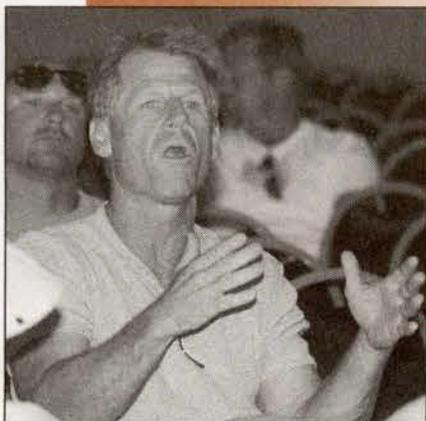
Story & Photos by Eric Wolfe



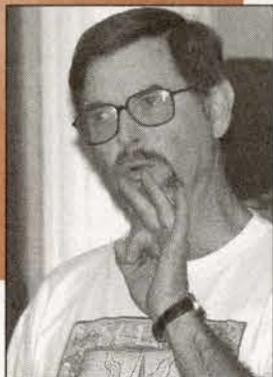
Dan Currier



Scott Southerland



Richard Giesser



Jim Phelan



Mike Tessier



Eric Land



Dave Williams

Local 1245 members at the Sacramento Municipal Utility District sounded off last month about a negotiated agreement that was rejected in a June 26 ratification vote.

They gathered July 9 at the invitation of Business Manager Perry Zimmerman to explain what provisions of the negotiated agreement needed more work.

One sticking point is the overfunded status of the retirement plan. Employees currently pay 5.087% of their base wage toward a 2% at 55 retirement option negotiated three years ago. The new agreement would have lowered the employees' contribution to 2.4%, but some members viewed that as excessive given the overfunded status of the plan.

Changes in two on-call policies—at Fresh Pond headquarters and in Distribution Services—also aroused opposition. The change at Fresh Pond would require bargaining unit employees to take calls that had formerly been taken by exempt employees. In Distribution Services, there were proposed changes to the historical application of call out procedures, in effect restricting crew members' ability to reject overtime.

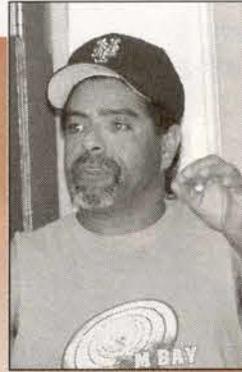
Members also expressed concern about changes in the way that overtime would be computed for work performed on a member's "alternative workday" day off; for example, an employee on a 4-10 schedule who works on the fifth day.

The Local 1245 negotiating committee met with District officials on July 12 to explain the concerns voiced at the July 9 meeting, and to make some new proposals. Responding to members' suggestions, the July 12 meeting was held at a neutral location rather than on District property.

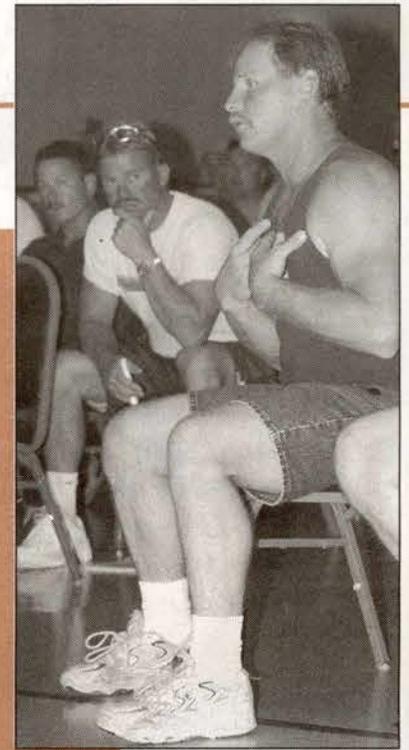
**Sacramento
Municipal
Utility District**



Max Fuentes



Dino Correia



Mike Bazil



Richard Fasani



John Moe



Dave Brown



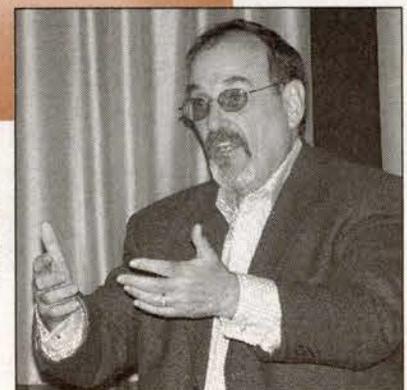
Les Hulett



Union bargaining committee members (from left) Jim Loy, Business Rep. Wayne Greer, Gary Stoffer and Brian Knox listen to members' remarks.



Mike Worley



Business Manager Perry Zimmerman (right) thanks SMUD members for attending and voicing their concerns.

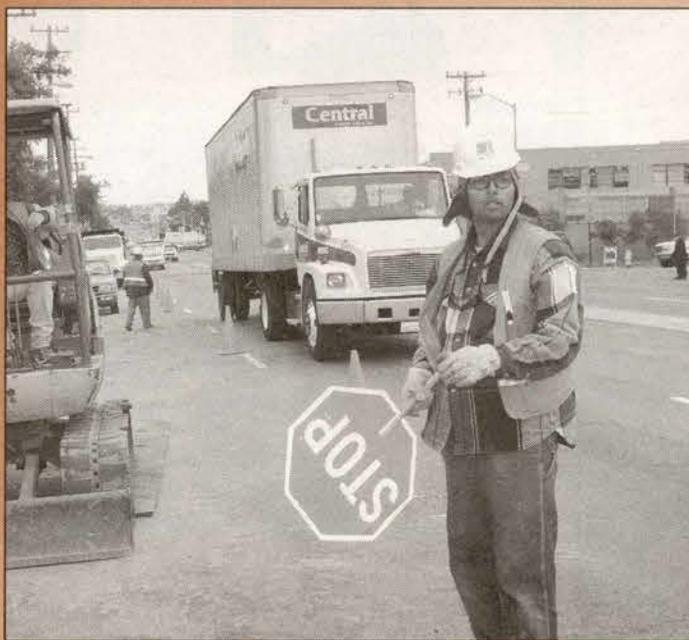
Controlled chaos



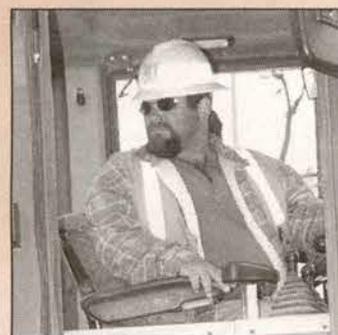
Backhoe Operator Floro "The Flip" Idio



Miscellaneous Equipment Operator Kasey Civik



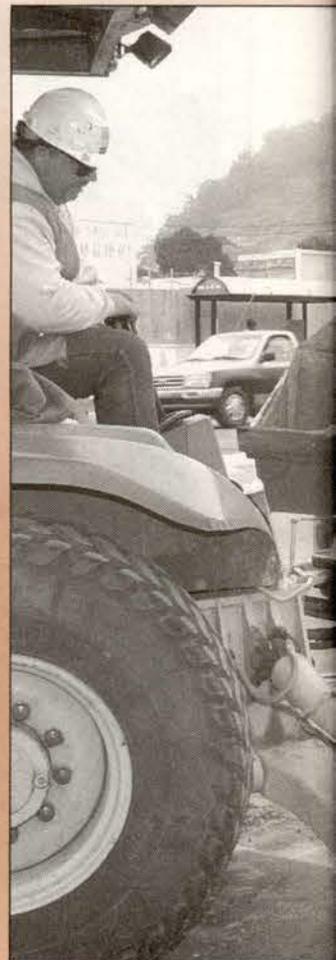
Fieldman Adeel Babar



Mark Walker, Driller



Backhoe Operator Ben Baur



A lot of vehicles packed into



Utility Worker Rolando is measures if you're deep enough.

Working Foreman "A" Bill Kelly doesn't have to search for words to describe the scene on San Francisco's Third Street, where PG&E General Construction gas crews maneuver in tight quarters to install ducts for cable and fiber. "It's controlled chaos," says Kelly, watching drillers, excavators, backhoes, and bobcats trying to maneuver in the one lane allotted to them by the city while heavy traffic whizzes by just inches away.

PG&E crews are used to dealing with the city's byzantine network of utility services. But tearing up a three-mile stretch of Third Street to replace gas and information conduit in advance of a new rail line coming from the Giant's ball park has posed special challenges.

"We were getting conflicting reports on which gas main was dead and which was live," says David Brown, Working Foreman "B". Then there was the rectifier that appeared to be destined for the same enclosure as a gas regulator, a problem that should have been anticipated by the blueprints, but apparently wasn't, according to Working Foreman "A" Mark Garner. And let's not forget the trees.

"There's trees that have been designated to come out and trees designated to stay," says Garner. Only problem is, "the city won't tell us which is which."

"It's the City of San Francisco," says Kelly. "Need I say anything more?"

Perhaps the biggest challenge has been the city's

limitation on their workspace—the workers are allowed to close only one lane of traffic on the busy thoroughfare.

Safety is an ever-present concern, especially for Safety Coordinator Scott Ford, who says safety on a job like this really comes down to staying alert. Backhoe Operator Ben Baur, who performed the most recent safety walkaround for the union, agrees.

"When the public sees an orange cone it seems they speed up rather than slow down," says Baur.

"You're constantly watching traffic because they're always flying around these corners."

Baur gives the company and his co-workers high marks on safety.

"All the union brothers stick together. I think we have a strong group here. I feel the company gives everybody everything they need or ask for" in terms of safety, says Baur.

But Baur and many of his co-workers are not so charitable when talking about what it takes to live in San Francisco. "It's hard to keep the people here.

The rent here is more than some people's mortgage across the Bay," says Baur, voicing an oft-heard complaint about the city's vastly inflated housing prices.

"There needs to be some incentive for people to stay here."

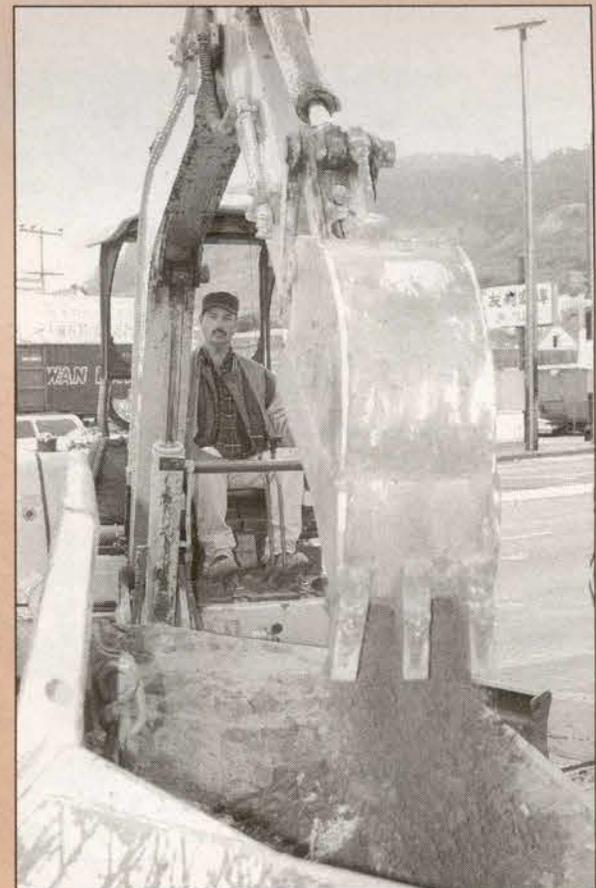


Utility Worker Victor Goree

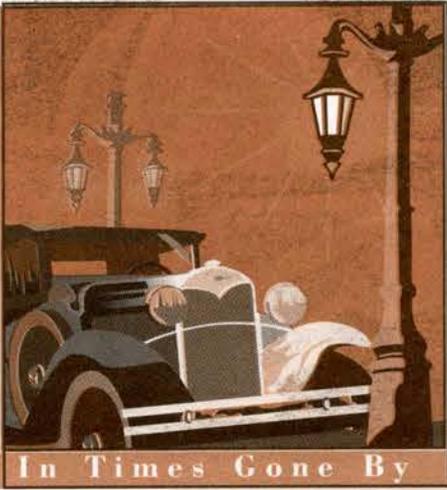
PG&E General Construction in San Francisco



a small area.



Backhoe Operator Mike Silva



In Times Gone By



IBEW 1245 archive photo, courtesy Lenard Gover

Frank Campbell and Lenard Gover, PG&E General Construction, cut 397 and splice it back in San Rafael. 1959.



IBEW 1245 archive photo, courtesy Leonard Hansen

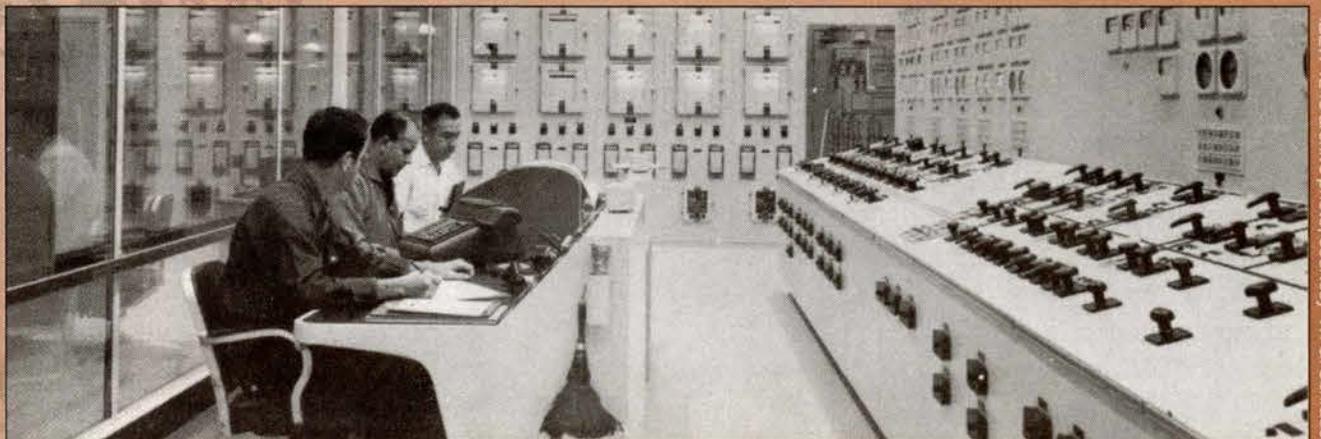
Line crew in San Francisco, California. 1953.

Embracing our heritage

In more ways than one, Local 1245 retirees have paid their dues.

They paid regular union dues, like union members working today. But they also “paid their dues” to their employers, in the form of skilled service, loyalty and the productivity that permits companies to survive and profit.

In honoring our retirees, we embrace our heritage.



IBEW 1245 archive photo, courtesy W. G. Schrader

In the Shasta Power Plant control room are Operator Farnsworth, Shift Supervisor Bill Schrader, and Senior Operator Charles Norman. About 1955.

Laughter may be the best medicine

Have you ever observed a group of people watching a comedy act and noticed the physical changes taking place within that group?

Many of us have witnessed such events, yet few of us may recognize that laughter is an essential emotion that promotes well being and health far beyond any other emotion we may possess.

Scientists have noted in clinical studies that people in the full throes of genuine laughter have a higher oxygen content in their blood, are more alert due to brain stimulus and have a higher feeling of well being.

Diana L. Mahony, PhD of

Brigham Young University, credits laughter as having medicinal characteristics that, while not a substitute for medicines or medical care, are important to healing and the positive outlook associated with getting better.

What does this mean to us as we go about our daily lives?

One message may be that we all have a choice to view the world as we wish, and react to it as we choose. Being receptive to humor may indeed have a direct effect on our health and the health of those around us.

So what's holding you back? Go ahead and laugh!

Richard Lane

Melanoma and exposure to sunlight

Skin cancer—melanoma—appears to be increasing in this country, according to the American Cancer Society.

The number of new cases this year is expected to be about 50,000, double the number of cases just 20 years ago.

Melanoma starts in the pigment cells and spreads beneath the skin surface if not detected in its early stages. It has a cure rate of 90% if it

is caught early. But if it is not cured early, it can spread to the liver, lungs, brain, and lymph nodes.

Because many people spend a lot of time in the sun, ultraviolet radiation is usually the cause for melanoma. Always protect yourself from the sun as best you can by using sunscreen. Be sure to reapply sunscreen periodically while spending time in the sun.

Stoney Burk

Preventing computer injuries

Researchers in the Ergonomics Program at the University of California—Berkeley and the University of California—San Francisco have developed a new tool that ergonomic coordinators use to help people reduce the risk of injury when working at the computer.

Up to now ergonomic assessments have focused primarily on the characteristics of the workstation, such as the height of the keyboard and monitor.

The new approach is evaluating how people are really working, looking at their posture and movements.

Furniture and equipment are still

important factors in ergonomic assessments, but how we use the equipment is now seen as just as important.

Remember, it is your responsibility to notify your supervisor if you feel your workstation does not fit you!

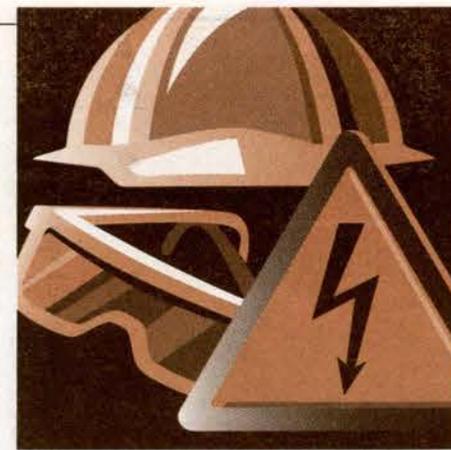
David Vipond

**Register to Vote!
You Can Do It By Mail!**

Call:

1-800-345-8683

By the Local 1245
Safety Committee



Leaves of three—let them be!

Poison oak forms a dense leafy shrub usually one to six feet in height. The plants have distinctive leaflets, nearly always borne in groups of three—hence the old adage, “Leaves of three, let them be.”

Very occasionally leaves are composed of five, seven or nine leaflets. Young leaves are light green, but will turn bright red or yellow in the fall. In the spring, small whitish-green flowers are borne in clusters on slender stems. Creamy white berry-like fruits appear in mid-October and will remain on the plant until spring.

Poison oak is native to western North America, ranging from British Columbia to the Baja California peninsula. In California it grows in a wide range of habitats from sea level to higher elevations.

Poison oak causes skin irritation in many people. A toxic oil in the sap is released when an individual comes in contact with the leaves or stem. Skin irritation and itching is followed by water blisters. Symptoms may persist up to 10 days.

The least hazardous time to re-

move poison oak is in the late fall or early winter, when temperatures are cool and the plants have lost their leaves. This reduces the chance of exposure to the toxic oil. The primary ways of managing poison oak are mechanical removal by hand-pulling and treatment with herbicides.

Burning is not recommended because the smoke is a serious health hazard.

When physically removing poison oak with digging and cutting tools, wear appropriate protective clothing, including a face shield and washable cotton gloves over plastic gloves.

If you're exposed:

- Wash contaminated skin several times with cold water and a commercial poison oak preparation. If soap is not available, use vinegar (2 teaspoons in 1 cup of water), or alcohol (used in equal parts with water).

- Apply Calamine lotion or a paste of baking soda to the rash to relieve itching.

Gil Suarez



“OSHA again? Now what do they want?”

Current members of the Local 1245 Safety Committee: Stoney Burk, Alameda Power & Telecomm.; Keith Hopp, Pacific Gas & Electric; Ralph Muraca, City of Santa Clara; Al White, Pacific Gas & Electric; David Vipond, Citizens Communications; Rich Lane, Turlock Irrigation District; Gil Suarez, Davey Tree; Art Torres, Sacramento Municipal Utility District; and Assistant Business Manager Jim McCauley.

East Bay Service Awards

April 6, 2002



Charles Rose (eft) and Manny Mederos (right), receive awards from Business Manager Perry Zimmerman.

40 Years



30 Years



30 Years



25 Years



30 Years



25 Years



35 Years



35 Years



30 Years

The Honorees

50 YEARS

Stenberg, Lawrence A.
Vargas, Clarence

40 YEARS

Gann, Kenneth Q.
Mederos, Manuel
Rose, Charles
Sevier, Ronald L.

35 YEARS

Abrew, Judy
Anderson, Donald D.
Angotti, S. J.
Boeder, Robyn L.
Breeding, David W.
Bryson, W. C.
Carnes, J. W.
Cazier, Calvin
Coffin, Peter C.
Connelly, Ron
Costa, Ron W.
Fischer, Donald R.
Ford, George W.
Fuerniss, A. J.
Fuhr, K. P.
Grass, Russell J.
Hodgson, John F.
House, Henry J. Jr.

Ingersol, Ronald L.
Johnson, Charles W.
Krick, R. L.
Lees, R.
McKinley, E. M. Jr.
Ochoa, John
Ross, Christine
Stevens, D. P.
Wimborough, C. G.

30 YEARS

Bailey, Robert C.
Bailey, Thomas L.
Baskett, Ronald R.
Benson, Jay
Burgess, Richard W.
Bustamante, Robert A.
Carter, James E.
Claxton, Stephen
Coleman, Charles
Contreras, Andrew P.
Cunningham, Wade S.
Demartino, Gary
Ewert, Robert L.
Favilla, Robert
Feddersen, Gary A.
Figueroa, Avelino
Franks, Stephen P.
Fitzgerald, Gary F.
Gerber, Raymond

Good, Clifford
Greer, David L.
Harris, David
Hernandez, Manuel Jr.
Hernandez, Samuel B.
Hernandez, Steve
Herras, Rudolfo E.
Hofer, James A.
Iwasaki, Arthur
Jackson, Kenneth D.
Lashon, Harvey
Llacuna, Gilbert C.
Malone, William M.
Marcillac, Lydia P.
Martinez, Mario
Massey, Kent
Matthews Dianne
Meier, David E.
Meyer, Harold W.
Moise, Mario
Mosle, Philip
Nystrom, Keith E.
Pate, William S.
Phillips, Michael L.
Powell, Janet
Presley, Arlan D.
Presley, Gary D.
Preszler, Larry D.
Pruett, John
Rease, Layton E.

Richards, Eugene A.
Royal, Donnie
Rubio, Robert P.
Rust, David
Smith, Curt P.
Stilwell, Ralph Jr.
Thomas, Steve
Torres, Raymond
Ward, Michael
Williams, George W.
Williams, James M.

25 YEARS

Abe, Jean
Abeyta, Robert
Addiego, James
Bolton, Sharon
Bond, Edward V.
Carson, Cathy L.
Cheung, Lily
Chuck, Bella P.
Churchill, Ronald
Cooper, Floyd
Crosslin, Floyd
Diaz, Marco F.
Edwards, John W.
Garcia, Victor Jr.
Garner, Mark C.
Garrity, David
Gomez, Anna N.

Gomez, Theresa
Harms, Courtney M.
Hurtado, Antonio Jr.
Inderkum, Joseph A.
King, John
Kroger, Larry
Kuryla, David F.
Laird, Timothy
Lopez, Esteban Jr.
Manansala, Luciano
Masangay, Evangeline
Mouat, James C. III
Muhamedcani, Barry
Murray, William
Neira, Julie
Orosco Richard
Posey, Ronald
Rigsby, Brenda
Robinson, Robert
Sanders, James
Simpson, Frank
Stewart-Carne, Joy D.
Vasharely, Michael
Walsh, Kenneth
Weightman, Edwin
Wing, James
Wren, Gaye
Yamahiro, Robert
Yoshida, Clifford
Young, Clifford



Paid family leave bill advances in Assembly

WOMEN WORKERS' HISTORY

Right to Vote

During World War I, the women suffrage movement intensified the campaign to win women the right to vote. The campaign, made special efforts to win the support of working women. In September 1917, the National American Woman Suffrage Association urged "wage-earning suffragists everywhere" to work and organize for "the principle of equal pay for equal work."

Working women picketed President Wilson in the White House, carrying banners that read, "All women should have the ballot, but we working women must have it." Pickets were physically assaulted by men, some in uniform. The police stood by and watched, eventually arresting the women, who then faced brutal treatment in prison.



But the picketing continued, sometimes by members of the Women's Trade Union League. With so many women working in war-related industries, "doing everything for the Government," they argued, they should have "the ballot as a weapon to safeguard the conditions under which both women and children work."

Such arguments helped win over President Wilson, the Congress and state legislators. In August 1920, the 19th Amendment became part of the US Constitution, stipulating that the right to vote "shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State on account of sex." It had been 72 years since the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, NY—long years of struggle carried out largely by women themselves, with occasional support from organized labor.

Over the ongoing protests of employer groups, a labor-sponsored bill to provide paid family leave passed the California Assembly Insurance Committee on June 26.

The measure, which would make California the first state in the nation to enact paid leave for the care of a seriously ill loved one or for bonding with a new child, passed the committee by a vote of 11-7. The bill would grant up to 12 weeks paid leave through the State Disability Insurance program.

Costs for the program would be split evenly between workers and employers.

Paid leave is needed due to severe and increasing demand, according to the California Labor Federation, which sponsored the bill. Baby boomers, in particular, are "sandwiched" between generations often in need of care—aging parents, and young children.

The current system of unpaid leave

has been helpful, but falls far short of the demand: Up to 78% of the workers who need to take such leave don't because they can't afford to.

SB 1661 would allow them to take the time they need to care for a loved one without sacrificing their

paychecks.

Indexing Minimum Wage

Another issue of special importance to women is AB 2242, which would index the state's minimum wage to inflation. The bill has advanced to a key Senate committee after passing Senate Labor & Industrial Relations on a party-line 5-3 vote.

Voting against the bill were Senators Bob Margett of Arcadia, Tom McClintock of Thousand Oaks and Rico Oller of Roseville.

The bill, which calls for a modest increase for California's lowest paid workers, heads next to Senate Appropriations.

Among those who would benefit from an indexing of the minimum wage are the thousands of in-home supportive services workers—many of them women—who provide essential care to the disabled and the elderly.



"I see by your resume that you have a life outside your work. I'm afraid that won't do."

Discharged military moms seek justice

A bill to compensate women who were discharged from the military for being pregnant is being prepared by Rep. Cynthia McKinney of Georgia.

The Pentagon changed the policy about the same time that a federal appellate court in 1976 ruled that the automatic discharges of pregnant

women violated constitutional guarantees of equal protection.

Congressional lawyers were reviewing the bill in July prior to its planned introduction.

"I think they've done a good job, even if they didn't do it as rapidly as I hoped," Wisconsin resident and Army veteran Carolyn Tyler told the

Sacramento Bee. "Considering the state of the nation, I am actually surprised we've gotten as far as we have."

The legislative effort could effect more than 6,500 women who were automatically discharged just from the Women's Army Corps between 1969 and 1973, one Army study found. Tyler, who was among those discharged, told the Bee she already has collected more than 550 names and stories from women forced from the service for pregnancy. Many now live in California.

McKinney's legislative director, Eric Lausten, suggested the bill may be structured to pay the discharged veterans based on how much time remained on their original enlistment contract.

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- ◆ Stand Up & Be Counted.

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Drug dollars go mostly to marketing & advertising

Huge pharmaceutical companies pour far more money into marketing and advertising their products than they spend trying to develop new and better drugs to meet the nation's medical needs, a new report by Families USA reveals.

The report, *Profiting from Pain: Where Prescription Drug Dollars Go*, shows that the nine publicly traded U.S. drug companies, which manufacture 50 of the drugs most often prescribed to seniors, spent \$45.4 billion on marketing and advertising in 2001 and only \$19.1 billion on research and development.

"High prices are needed, the industry contends, to finance research and development so manufacturers can bring newer, better drugs to market. If steps are taken to rein in drug prices, so the industry argument goes, manufacturers will be forced to slash R&D. This report belies that argument," the report's introduction finds.

In recent public statements, President George W. Bush has repeated the industry argument that the high cost of drugs is necessary to support research and development.

"The drug industry should stop scaring America's seniors with false claims that drug price moderation will prevent research on new medicines," said Ron Pollack, Families USA executive director.

Most Profitable Industry

While working families pay more and more for their prescription drugs, the pharmaceutical industry has been the most profitable U.S. industry for each of the past 10 years, according

to the report.

The report also reveals that drug companies' profits far outstrip the amount of money spent on R&D. The firms made about \$30.6 billion in profits in 2001—more than 60% more than their expenditures on research and development. Merck & Co. Inc.'s profits were nearly three times its R&D budget and Bristol-Myers Squibb Co.'s profits were more than twice what it spent on R&D.

Drug company executives also have reaped big profits from pain, according to the report's figures. The drug industry's top five most highly paid executives pocketed more than \$183 million in compensation in 2001, while the five executives with most value in unexercised stock options held more than \$322 million in those options.

"In light of huge industry profits, enormous executive compensation packages and big marketing budgets," industry claims that it is making efforts to moderate drug prices, "are both irresponsible and wrong," Pollack said.

Opposing Help for Seniors

On top of trying to justify their high prices for prescription drugs, the drug companies have joined their congressional allies and the Bush White House to oppose legislation to establish a Medicare prescription drug benefit to help seniors pay those the soaring drug prices that force many seniors to choose between medicine and meals. Senate Republicans blocked a move to make cheaper generic versions of drugs more ac-

Retiree correspondent Pete Mandon is on vacation. His column will return in the September issue of Utility Reporter.

cessible to seniors to provide older Americans with some relief from soaring drug costs.

A Republican-sponsored prescription drug plan recently passed by the US House of Representatives does not add prescription drug coverage to the regular Medicare benefit. Instead, it "encourages" HMOs and private insurers to market a private drug plan. There's no guarantee, and considerable uncertainty, that all or even many retirees would ever get coverage for their drug costs.



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.

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.

Dennis Diebold, 34 years
Windsor, CA

Larry Perry, 32 years
Irrigon, OR

Ronald Eakin, 5 years
Ojai, CA

Ronald Popp, 32 years
Sparks, NV

Thomas Kelleher, 31 years
San Francisco, CA

James Thomas, 37 years
Bethel Island, CA

Rodney Krick, 35 years
Minden, NV

Sylvia Thomas-Carroll, 6 years
Palm Desert, CA

Thomas Lehfeldt, 30 years
Vacaville, CA

Dennis Tognetti, 36 years
Sparks, NV

Mardella Litz, 30 years
Lodi, CA

Pete Villa, 30 years
Half Moon Bay, CA

Clarence Lua, 40 years
Rohnert Park, CA

Thomas Walker, 19 years
Magalia, CA

Larry Magniez, 16 years
Turlock, CA

Robert Wallington, 38 years
Colfax, CA

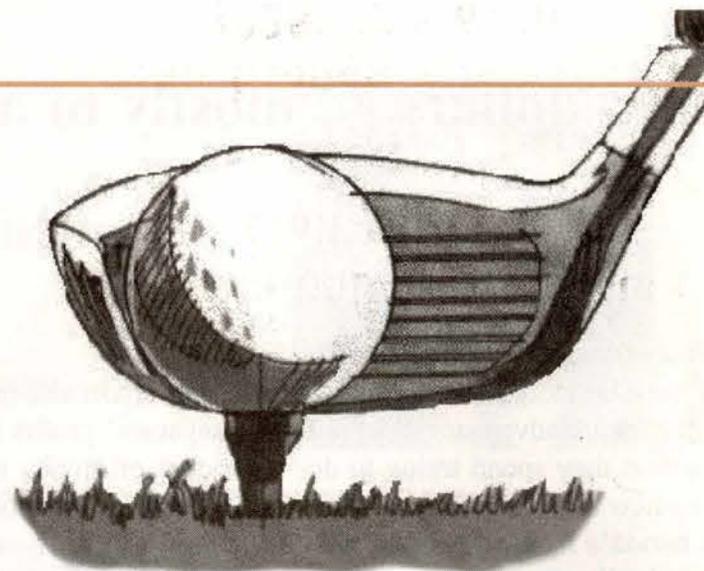
Alicia Nelson, 37 years
Salinas, CA

Vote!

November 5, 2002



Sixteenth Annual IBEW Local 1245 Golf Tournament



TEXAS BBQ!



Free Refreshments On The Course!

Saturday, Sept. 7

1:30 p.m. Shot Gun Start

San Ramon Royal Vista Golf Course

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- *Closest to the Hole Contest*
- *Long Drive Contest*
- *Beat the Business Manager Contest*

Guests
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Tee Spaces

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Don't Miss Out – Register Now! Deadline is Aug. 26!

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Address _____

2. Name _____
Address _____

3. Name _____
Address _____

4. Name _____
Address _____

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Mail to:
IBEW 1245
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Walnut Creek,
CA 94596

*Four-somes
not necessary!*

For Further
Information Call:

Jim McCauley
(925) 933-6060 Ext. 210

John Mendoza
(510) 331-6729

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Immediately Following**

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Golf Course**

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San Ramon, CA 94583
(925) 828-6100**