

## Home sweet home, Vacaville



Picking up shovels to commemorate the start of construction on the new IBEW Local 1245 headquarters in Vacaville, Ca. are, from left: Recording Secretary Chris Habecker, Vice President Mike Davis, Executive Board members Anna Bayless and John Mendoza, and President Ed Mallory. Completion of the new building is expected some time this summer.

## Sierra Pacific agreement goes out for ratification

**N**egotiators for IBEW Local 1245 and Sierra Pacific Power Co. reached a table agreement on Dec. 12 that raises wages and improves benefits, union Business Rep. Randy Osborn reported. The agreement is subject to ratification by members.

The three-year agreement raises wages 3% effective the first full pay period after ratification, 3.25% in January of 2004, and 3.75% in January 2005.

Employees will receive a lump sum payment of \$200 in lieu of making the first-year wage increase retroactive to Jan. 1.

The table agreement improves the retirement plan by providing that all accrued sick leave at retirement will be added to years of service for purposes of calculating retirement benefits.

"I want to thank both the com-

pany and the union committees for their hard work and dedication to getting a quality product," Osborn told the Utility Reporter.

The agreement makes improvements to the 401k plan. Previously, contributions were capped at 17%. Under the proposed agreement the cap would track the IRS limit as it rises.

The union negotiated equity adjustments for 27 classifications, to be phased in over 3 years. The size of the adjustment varies among classifications.

Another important feature of the table agreement is the addition of language to protect employees in the event the company enters bankruptcy. The agreement requires the company to support the agreement in front of the bankruptcy judge and

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## Members overwhelmingly reject PG&E table agreements

**M**embers of IBEW Local 1245 by a wide margin voted down table agreements negotiated with Pacific Gas and Electric. In ballots counted Dec. 10, the agreement covering Physical members was rejected 963 to 5713, while the Clerical agreement was rejected 408-1237.

Turnout for the vote was very high, with over 71% of Physical members voting and over 57% of Clerical members voting.

Thirty ballots were disqualified. The Local 1245 bargaining com-

mittee met Dec. 11 to evaluate the results of the balloting and to plan the union's next step. The committee was slated to meet again following the holidays.

Business Manager Perry Zimmerman said the union would create an on-line survey around the first of the year to give Local 1245 members at PG&E an opportunity to re-state their priorities for the next round of bargaining.

"Our members have spoken at the ballot box. We know they want

their service to the company to be fairly compensated, and that the table agreements did not meet their expectations," said Zimmerman. "The on-line survey will give them an opportunity to tell us very specifically what their top priorities are."

Zimmerman praised the efforts of the union's bargaining committee members, which he credited with working extremely hard on a complex task.

"There is a wealth of expertise on this committee, and we'll need that

expertise when we go back into bargaining," Zimmerman said, noting that the exact size and make-up of the committee would be determined in coming days.

Serving on the ballot committee for the Dec. 10 vote-count were: Leroy Foster, Rick Davis, Vida Anderson, Sal Lozano, Shawn Rocha, Steve Pettigrew, Larry Gibson, Ken Amaral and Cormac Downey.

Serving as judge of the election was Jim Findley.

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Advisory Council  
Concord, CA

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Deadline for Entries in the  
Al Sandoval Competitive  
Scholarship  
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**APPOINTMENTS**

**US BUREAU OF RECLAMATION**

**Negotiating Committee**

William Chambers  
Robert Gonzales  
Mike McKay  
Ken Mitchell  
Greg Walpole  
Dan Wyand  
Juanita Green-Collins

**WELLS REC**

**Negotiating Committee**

Ricky L. Carner  
Shawn Kelley

**CITY OF WILLITS**

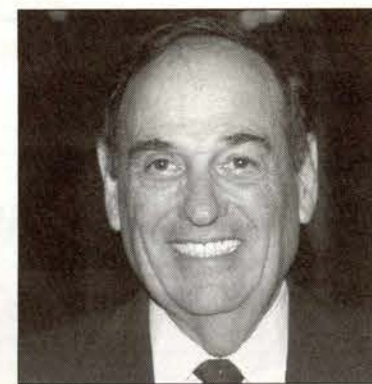
**Negotiating Committee**

J. C. England  
Joe Mondo

**YOUR UNION**

# Appropriate recognition for loyalty and hard work

By Perry Zimmerman, Business Manager



On December 10, ballots were counted in the ratification vote on the PG&E table agreement. With an extremely high voter turnout and by extremely large margins, our members rejected the table agreement.

On December 13, the wind and rain storms began.

The connection between the vote and the storms is hard to miss.

As I write this column, thousands of our members have worked 12 days without a day off in an effort to restore service to millions of PG&E customers affected by the storms. Many have worked nothing less than a 16-hour day for a week and a half. Much of the work has been in storm conditions, where the weather presents an additional element of dan-

ger beyond the routine risks of working at heights and in near proximity to high voltage.

Title 200, Title 300, and Clerical employees from PG&E—as well as hundreds of Outside Construction members—have barely seen their families, if at all, during the one time of year when American families most want to be together. As these Pacific storms continue pounding the California coast, it seems likely that thousands of our members will be away from their families working on Christmas and New Year's.

But our members have not complained about these exhausting levels of overtime. In fact, many have offered to continue working even after being told to go rest.

On the opening day of our negotiations with PG&E last summer, I emphasized the contribution made by Local 1245 members to the company's success.

I said that Local 1245 members had suffered a decade or more of uncertainty due to deregulation and then bankruptcy.

I said that Local 1245 members had stood by PG&E before the CPUC, in bankruptcy court, and in fights against municipalization.

I said that Local 1245 members had watched management be rewarded for its loyalty to the company in hard times. And I said that we believe now is the time for our members to be recognized, and not just with words of praise and thanks.

Now, in December, along come the storms to prove my point a thousand times over.

I fully appreciate the contribution made by management to PG&E's success. I respect the busi-

ness acumen that has kept the company going during the most difficult decade in PG&E's history.

I don't begrudge the multi-million dollar retention bonuses awarded senior management in the last two years. How management is compensated is none of my business, other than the fact that it sets a tone for a company. Here, the tone is clear—this company values and rewards loyalty and hard work.

Okay goose, how about the gender?

The storms establish in a painfully obvious manner who it is that keeps the lights on and gas flowing.

We do.

The storms establish unequivocally the loyalty and willingness of our members to work hard.

Today, 12,000 IBEW members are doing the work that 17,000 were doing a decade ago. Basic arithmetic shows just what that means. We now do the work with 30% fewer people. To accomplish this, the remaining workers must work 42% harder. They are, and then some.

In January, we will return to the bargaining table knowing several things.

We know that our members were not satisfied with the last table agreement. We know that, despite this near-universal dissatisfaction, they have responded to the wind and rain storms with a dedication and a professionalism that is nothing less than heroic. And we know that whatever good will PG&E enjoys among the public is largely the product of our members' work.

Our members are right to expect that their work be properly recognized at the bargaining table.



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## Taking care of the members

Gentlemen and Ladies:

Over my work life I was always employed. Whenever I left one job I had another waiting. Actually it was rock steady.

When I graduated High school I enlisted in the Air Force rather than be drafted. After the four years in the service I took a week off. Then by Wednesday of the next week I had a job at United Air Lines.

I was going to go to college but my father had two very bad heart attacks so I determined to work full time to help my parents instead. Then I decided to get a trade and applied for a sheet metal and machinist apprenticeships. I decided on the Machinists and went to work for the American Can Co.

I was there for over 17 years when they closed the doors. I had a

job waiting for me at a hole in the wall machine shop. Within a year my own family and I moved to the East Bay, Antioch in particular. I was there three months when I found my last job at Pittsburg Power Plant.

What a difference and change I went through. I had been an in-shop Machinist and Tool and Die Maker. Now I was maintaining turbines, valves, fans, toilets, etc.

But the best part of all was working with a company and union that actually worked together to avoid strikes. Every time a contract was up while I was an in-shop Machinist we went on strike. In those years only one contract was agreed upon where we didn't go on strike.

The IBEW has always taken better care of it's members than the Machinist union did when I was in it. For that I am very grateful.

I got to retire at 55. Actually I am on LTD. The doctors retired me. Without LTD I would not have my own home because of the loss of

income if I were to depend on the states disability plan.

Now this year the IBEW has worked very hard to improve LTD and the regular pension.

Gentlemen and Ladies, I thank you.

Gary Champagne, LTD

## Thank you for your support

Dear Local 1245:

I want to thank the members of IBEW for the kindness and support you gave our family after the death of my husband, Tim Ruiz, who died Nov. 5. Tim began his IBEW apprenticeship in 1985 and on Oct. 18, 1988 he achieved his dream of becoming a journeyman power lineman. The support of the union during this time has meant a lot to our family and I wanted to say thank you.

Tawnya Ruiz

# Speak Out!

Got something to share with your fellow union members? Send letters (with name and phone number) to:

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

*Note: We can't print personal attacks or letters dealing with union politics. Opinions expressed in Speaking Out are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IBEW Local 1245.*

## PG&E storm response prompts public praise ... & promises of probes

California Public Utilities Commission President Loretta Lynch said the commission would investigate widespread outages during December's storms.

Lynch indicated she wanted to look at PG&E's system upkeep, its call center performance and its response time in fixing outages.

Another investigation was promised by Sarah Reyes, chair of the Assembly's Utilities Committee.

A spate of stories about PG&E's performance dominated the news media during the height of the storm. While many customers expressed appreciation for the efforts of employees in the field, others questioned whether PG&E was adequately prepared.

About 2 million PG&E customers had lost power at one time or another as the Christmas holiday approached, victims of a series of storms that paraded out of the northern Pacific and wreaked havoc on the utility's poles and wires.

General Construction Subforeman "A" Ron Vessels was thrust into the limelight by a San Francisco Chronicle story on Dec. 20 that examined in detail the grueling hours and difficult conditions endured by PG&E workers.

"For us, the greatest part of the whole job is turning on the power again and hearing people yell with happiness," Vessels told the Chronicle. "We leave our own families at home in the dark with no

power, sometimes, when we come out here," he said. "I've missed all kinds of special events with my kids because of the long hours, and I'll

miss Christmas again this year if the storm kicks up again. But I'll tell you—there's not much of a better feeling in this world than hearing that yell."

### Double-time expanded for storm

Local 1245 Business Manager Perry Zimmerman on Dec. 19 signed a Letter Agreement with Pacific Gas & Electric Co. that authorizes special double-time pay for Prearranged Overtime on non-workdays during a series of severe winter storms.

Letter Agreement 02-63, which took effect upon signing, applied to Title 200 and 300 gas and electric employees in Operations, Maintenance and Construction (OM&C).

Normally the overtime premium for the first 12 hours on a non-workday is time-and-a-half. The special double-time premium was to remain in effect for the duration of the storm, but no later than Dec. 31.



## Unemployment, outages, pathogens and voodoo

### Australia Post wins 'Worst Boss' award

Australia Post was named "winner" of the inaugural Tony Award for Australia's worst boss, Australia's Daily Telegraph reported.

The award is sponsored by the New South Wales Labor Council and named after Workplace Relations Minister Tony Abbott who once famously said that a bad boss was better than no boss.

Labor Council secretary John Robertson said Australia Post won because of a string of petty, unfair management decisions that "continued to push the envelope for workplace bastardry."

Recent cases where Australia Post has come under fire for treatment of employees include:

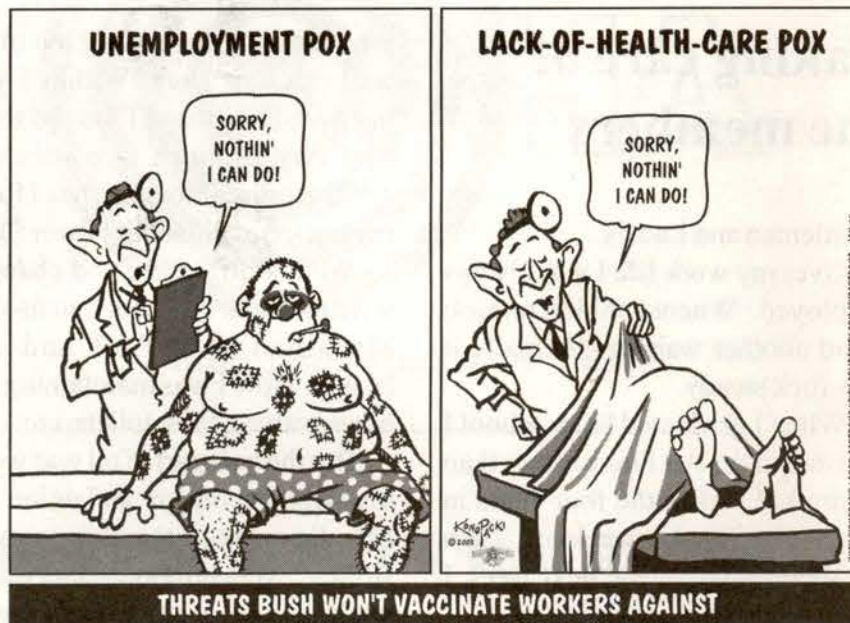
- Docking \$3000 from call center worker Cori Girondoudas for having too many personal photographs on her desk.
- Forcing Sydney post sorter Richard O'Brien on to sick leave because he was overweight.
- Ending Post Office worker Sarah Daghlian's career by taking away the stool she had relied on for 12 years to relieve discomfort in her legs.
- Sacking postal worker Maree Marshall and reporting her to police after she kicked a faulty door. Ms Marshall was reinstated after her story appeared in *The Daily Telegraph*.

The other Labour Council award finalists included Virgin Mobile for allegedly undercutting union wages and Tasmanian mine operator Barmingo for docking workers for sick days and being late with their pay.

Nearly 800,000 jobless workers were slated to lose their unemployment benefits on Dec. 28 after the Bush administration and Republican leaders in the US House of Representatives refused to approve a Senate bill that would have extended emergency unemployment benefits for three months. A Dec. 19 study by the nonpartisan Center for Budget and Policy Priorities called for extending and strengthening the Temporary Emergency Unemployment Compensation (TEUC) program because the nation is experiencing a 6% unemployment rate, the highest level in eight years. The report also found that extending the benefits would stimulate the sluggish economy.

► **Union Voodoo?** Management at a nursing home in a Miami suburb and union organizers for SEIU have reached a settlement over allegations of voodoo, nbc6.net reported. Management of Mount Sinai-St. Francis Nursing and Rehabilitation Center earlier this year had accused union organizers of using voodoo tactics to scare workers into voting to unionize. Union officials had complained that the nursing home had created an atmosphere of intimidation by spying on workers and threatening them as they handed out union fliers.

► **Outages Blamed on Staff Cuts:** Electricity company staff cutbacks have been blamed for hundreds of thousands of homes being left without power after late-October storms in Great Britain, BBC News reported. Union leaders are warning that a shortage of routine maintenance workers could mean more blackouts. Amicus, the UK's largest manufacturing union, says there are not enough staff employed to trim trees growing too close to power lines. It estimates that up to 15,000 jobs have been axed from the electricity distribution network over the past five years.



► **Outages & Biohazards:** A three-hour power failure at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center in New York last month renewed concerns about the safety of the high-security government laboratory while it is being run partly by replacement workers during a five-months strike, the New York Times reported. The loss of power and failure of all three backup generators raised fears that the containment of infectious pathogens could have been seriously compromised at the laboratory.

► **Off the Clock at Wal-Mart:** A federal court jury in Portland, Ore., found Dec. 19 that Wal-Mart managers violated federal wage laws by forcing employees to work overtime without pay, aflcio.org reported. More than 400 Oregon Wal-Mart employees are seeking damages for performing off-the-clock work in a class-action lawsuit.

► **Toxic Poles:** The Communications Workers of America joined Beyond Pesticides, an environmental group, in a federal lawsuit filed Dec. 10 to stop the continued use of highly toxic wood preservatives linked to a wide range of health problems including cancer, birth defects, kidney and liver damage and neurological disorders, aflcio.org

reported. Workers can be exposed through contact with utility poles.

► **Huge Back Pay Settlement:** About 212,000 current and former federal employees will share \$173.5 million in back-pay in a 20-year-old wage dispute. The settlement will reimburse thousands of federal workers who were denied certain salary increases from 1982 to 1988 because of an Office of Personnel Management regulation.

► **Controllers' Hunger Strike:** Several hundred air traffic controllers in Siberia went on a hunger strike—but continued to work—as they sought a 30% increase in their current monthly salary of 15,000 roubles (\$470), BBC News reported. Unlike their counterparts in high-profile airports in Moscow and St Petersburg, Russia's provincial air traffic controllers suffer the same sort of low pay and wage arrears as other state and municipal employees.

► **35-Hour Week Dumped:** France's 35-hour week was dumped last month by President Jacques Chirac, the Chicago Sun-Times reported. Lionel Jospin, the former Socialist prime minister, started the 35-hour week to in an effort to create jobs and give workers' more leisure time.

## Sierra Pacific table agreement

► From Page 1

to take "every reasonable" step to persuade the judge to permit the company to honor the terms and conditions of its labor agreement with IBEW.

The table agreement requires the company to make "every reasonable effort" to find limited duty work assignment for an employee who needs it due to illness or injury. When possible, the company is to make such work available at the employee's own headquarters.

Under the table agreement, the Long Term Disability benefit (non-taxable) is set at 60% of the normal wage, down from the existing 66%. However, the agreement increases the cap on this benefit from the current \$2500/month to \$10,000/month.

The table agreement also:

- ◆ Increases rest period from 9 to 9.5 hours.
- ◆ Increases the shift premium to \$1.15 for second shift and \$1.35 for third shift.
- ◆ Improves meal expense language.
- ◆ Adds a requirement for company to respond within 30 days to an Accident Committee recommendation.
- ◆ Adds a Commercial Drivers License requirement to Field Clerk, Customer Serviceman District, and Serviceman Electric in order to increase the pool of available drivers.

◆ Provides a short-term incentive plan of 3.5% of wages each year.

Members of the bargaining committee, along with Business Reps. Osborn and Santiago Salazar, visited every Sierra Pacific headquarters the week of Dec. 16 to explain the agreement to members. Ballots were mailed Dec. 16. To be valid, completed ballots must be received by the union no later than 10 a.m. on Jan. 3, 2003.

Union members serving on the bargaining committee are: Gino Aramini, Gary Bailey, Rita Weisshaar, Vickie Borst, Glenn Buschine, Tom Cornell, Scott Downs, Mike Grimm, Dale Huntsman, Casey Kottke and Wayne Patterson, along with Business Reps. Osborn and Salazar.

SIERRA PACIFIC POWER CO.

# To everything a season . . .

Photos by Eric Wolfe



The dog days of summer seem a distant memory as the West Coast reeled under the impact of ferocious winter storms at the close of 2002. But last summer's fire season had a ferocity all its own, keeping Sierra Pacific Power crews hard at it for weeks on end.

Working to repair fire-related damage along Highway 395 south of Holbrook, Nev. in late July was the Sierra Pacific crew of Frank Riger, Upgraded Foreman; Paul Wiles and Greg Dydo, Linemen; and Randy Micky, Operator. General Foreman was Jim Richardson.





## Pacific Gas Transmission

### The Honorees

#### PGT/2002

**30 YEARS**  
Tom Touchon  
Frank Deister  
Pam McKean

**25 YEARS**  
Mark Latta  
Paul Hathaway

**20 YEARS (from 2001)**  
Ken Sorenson  
Jim Kissee



**More PGT:** Business Manager Perry Zimmerman, right, presents service awards to, from left, Tom Touchon, 30 years; Jim Kissee, 20 years; and Paul Hathaway, 25 years in Redmond, Or.



**PGT 30 Years:** PGT members Frank Deister, left, and Pam McKean, middle, received 30-year service awards from Business Rep. Jim Lynn shortly before Jim's untimely death last September.

#### Frontier/2002

**30 YEARS**  
Jerry Will  
Sylvia Quam

#### Lassen MUD/2002

**25 YEARS**  
Gary Robertson  
JoAnn Villalovos  
Craig Lima

## Lassen Municipal Utility District



**Lassen MUD:** From left, Business Rep. Ray Thomas presents 25-year awards to Gary Robertson, Joann Villalovos, and Craig Lima.



**Frontier:** Jerry Will, left, and Sylvia Quam, middle, receive 30-year awards from Business Rep. Ray Thomas.

## Frontier

# Congratu

Sierra Pacific...  
 to seek help...  
 agreement



Monterey 35 Years



Monterey 55 Years: Fifty-five year member Gerald Dyer (3rd from left) is congratulated by, from left: Business Manager Perry Zimmerman, Business Rep. Bill Brill, (Dyer), and Business Rep. Mike Haentjens.

**Monterey/Salinas, CA**  
**October 19, 2002**

**The Honorees**

55 YEARS  
 Dyer, Gerald A.

40 YEARS  
 Mederos, Manuel A.

35 YEARS  
 Ballew, B. C.  
 Blotti, John  
 Hoffman, J. M.  
 Ricks, Duane  
 Tomasini, R. M.

30 YEARS  
 Corda, Ronald S.  
 Cordoba, Art

Nakamura, Gin T.  
 Nichols, David H. Jr  
 Pursley, David L.  
 Rodriguez, J. A.  
 Seidel, Robert  
 Thomas, Mark  
 Valencia, Herbert

25 YEARS  
 Arnold, Phillips  
 Borges, Steven  
 Guttirez, Kenneth  
 Luna, Benjamin  
 Romero, Ruben  
 Saunders, Barbara

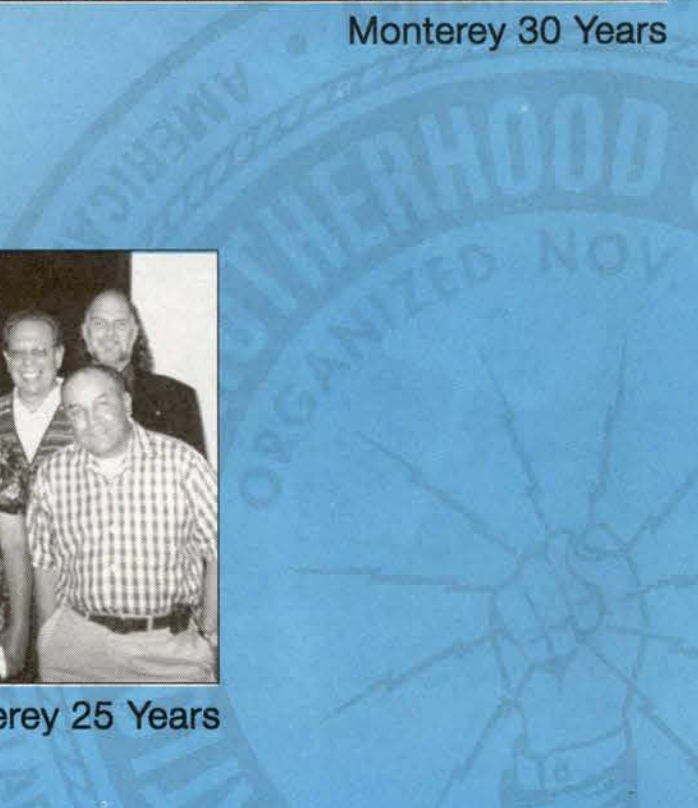


Monterey 30 Years

*lations!*



Monterey 25 Years





## Domestic violence: where to seek help

### United States lags on maternity leave

Although wages in the United States outpace pay in most other nations, this country falls behind the rest of the world on paid maternity leave. The United States is one of only six nations that does not guarantee, through corporate or government compensation, paid leave for women when they give birth. The others are Australia, Lesotho, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Swaziland, according to a survey conducted by a United Nations agency.

Are you in an abusive relationship?

If so, don't despair. There are a number of places you can turn to for help.

But first, be careful how you proceed. Don't let your abuser know you are seeking help. If he finds out, he may try to thwart your efforts to get help. Worse still, he might escalate the abuse.

So who can help?

According to Maria Vera and Toby Goldsmith of the University of Florida, you should consider seeking help from those who know you best: family and friends.

However, they caution it may be necessary to seek professional guidance. Medical and mental health professionals can treat the physical and emotional injuries you may already

have suffered. They can provide the treatment or medications you need, either directly or by recommending programs specially designed to help victims of domestic violence.

It is important to remember that emotional wounds can be just as damaging to you as physical wounds. Counselors can help to heal these emotional wounds.

If you are in immediate danger and need emergency help, you should call 911. The police can arrest your abuser, help you get a restraining order, take you to a battered women's shelter or take you for emergency medical care.

Courts can issue a restraining or protective order to keep your abuser away from where you live and work. The order becomes effective as soon as it is issued. It can be extended or

made permanent if necessary.

People who violate restraining orders are considered to be in contempt of court and may be arrested and taken to jail. The violation of a restraining order usually results in a criminal charge and the violator may serve time in jail.

Don't be afraid to seek help and utilize the resources that are available in your community. There is no excuse for abuse. If you don't feel safe in your home, take action to protect yourself before the problem becomes worse.

Get the latest union news  
by visiting the  
Local 1245 website at:

[www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com)

## Providing a proper union education



In Times Gone By



IBEW archive photo by Gary Black

**WITH BABY AND BANNER**  
Motherhood was no obstacle for Mary Unterreiner when it came to walking the picketline in the 1977 strike against Citizens Utilities. Shown at left is Sister Unterreiner with daughter Angela.



IBEW archive photo by Neva Landa

**GOODBYE CORD BOARDS**  
Daughter Angela put in another appearance at Mom's workplace in 1978, this time without the picket sign. Citizens Utilities Telephone Operator Mary Unterreiner is shown at left in 1978, when the old "cord boards" were being closed out.



## Unit meeting schedule changes

Unit 1215, San Luis Obispo/Pismo, now meets at The Apple Farm, 2015 Monterey St. in San Luis Obispo. Meeting dates and time remain the same.

Dan Lockwood,  
Business Rep.

Unit 1129, Auberry, corrected meeting dates are: Jan. 14, Feb. 11, March 11, April 8, May 13, and June 10.

Mike Grill,  
Business Rep.

Unit 1115, Los Banos, corrected meeting dates are: Jan. 21, Feb. 18, March 18, April 15, May 20, and June 17.

Mike Grill,  
Business Rep.

Unit 2318, Richmond Physical, has a new January meeting date: Monday, Jan. 6 at 4:45 pm.

Lula Washington  
Business Rep.

Unit 2301, East Bay Clerical, has a new January meeting date: Monday, Jan. 6 at 6:00 pm.

Lula Washington  
Business Rep.



### The Honorees

50 YEARS  
Tanksley, Bernie

40 YEARS  
Bock, D. E.  
Hadley, Hollis

35 YEARS  
Albert, R. G.  
Cook, P. A.  
Flak, Ralph M.  
Gragg, M. D.  
Grass, Russell  
Henry, John  
Holmes, R. M.  
Lemley, David  
McCullough, R.  
Roga, Victor P.  
Santori, David L.  
Schrock, Kerry G.  
Stiefer, Howard

30 YEARS  
Allen, Brian E.  
Bell, Susan L.  
Bradhurst, Richard  
Burrato, Gary  
Butler, Richard

Chestovich, Valerie  
Cowart, Richard  
Dempsey, James  
Dunn, Dennis D.  
Garatti, Karen  
Garretson, Frank  
Genetti, George  
Giannini, Kenneth  
Gibson, David A.  
Giorgi, Ronald L.  
Giovannoni, Larry  
Haley, David A.  
Hollman, Norman  
Lobao, Michael  
Lowers, James  
Maddex, Randy W.  
McKoon, Chang  
Miller, Gary  
Murrtha, L.  
Muzzin, Luigi P.  
OBrien, Tom Jr.  
Parmenter, David  
Patten, Douglas  
Peterson, David A.  
Pratt, Chris N.  
Renenger, Dunn  
Riggins, Robert C.  
Salazar, Phillip

Sobelman, John A.  
Walsh, Steven A.  
Wendt, Fred D.  
White, Mike  
Whitney, W. P. II  
Whitty, Walter J.

25 YEARS  
Beckman, Thomas  
Brown, Elaine F.

Cannon, DeAnne  
Chapman, Mark G.  
Dalby, Randall  
Daniels, Richard W  
Dauer, Corrine  
Enz, Mack  
Farris, Kenneth  
Fisher, David  
Foster, Lesa C.

Frediana, Steven  
Hamilton, James S.  
Jacka, Chris  
Lathrop, Gary M.  
McBroom, Michael  
O'Brien, Larry  
Payne, Thomas  
Silva, Terry  
Wallace, Joyce



### North Bay March 15, 2002



## Al Sandoval competitive scholarship

Application available on Page 12. Applications are also available on the Internet at:

[www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com)

(select "news archives") to find application).



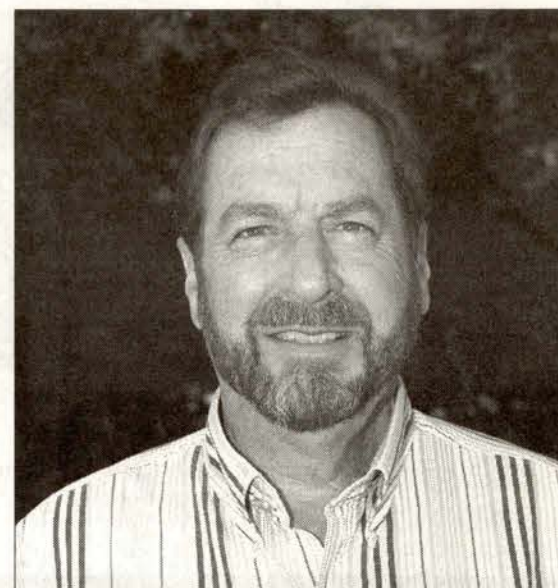
## Party Feb. 1 to honor retiring Business Rep. Wayne Greer

A party to honor the service of retiring Local 1245 Business Rep. Wayne Greer will be held Feb. 1 at the Holiday Inn, 1050 Burnett Ave., in Concord, Ca.

No-host cocktails are at 6:30 pm, dinner will be served at 7:30 pm.

The cost is \$50 per person. Please make reservations by Jan. 15 by contacting:

Frank Saxsenmeier: 707-939-7611  
or  
Lita Martin: 925-933-6060 ext. 225



Wayne Greer



By the Local 1245  
Safety Committee

## Slips and falls

In the early decades of the 20th century slapstick comedy was all the rage.

Comedians like Charlie Chaplin and Harold Lloyd made millions laugh with their seemingly endless pratfalls and "busters" on the silver screen. And they made big dollars doing it!

Today most people view slapstick as unsophisticated, yet it's hard not to chuckle at an unexpected fall

or slip.

Unfortunately, in the real world, slips and falls have a more costly consequence. Sprained ankles, torn muscles and bruised backs are frequently the result of failing to watch where we are walking.

Unlike the screen slips and falls of Chaplin and Lloyd, slips and falls in the real world *cost* big dollars instead of earning them.

*Richard Lane*

## Working with oils

Whether it is hydraulic oil or transformer oil, working with oils can be a health issue.

Those who are engaged on the job with these types of oils must take care of clothing, gloves and boots, and wash hands as soon as possible after contact with these oils.

Inspect all your equipment for

leaks. Check hoses and fittings.

If you operate a bucket truck you will most likely be confronted with oils. Footing on top of your platform will get very slippery when oil is present, making accidents more likely.

Cleanliness can be a life saver.

*Gil Suarez*



"Here's one from the Safety Committee -- you're not a member anymore."

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; and Assistant Business Manager Jim McCauley.

Don't Be Terrorized On The Job!



Stop The Attacks On OSHA!

HICK

## Bosses in driver's seat at OSHA

The Bush administration continues to embrace pro-management groups and "experts" to the near exclusion of workers and their unions in its workplace safety and ergonomics policy panels, according to the AFL-CIO.

On Dec. 3, the administration announced formation of a national advisory committee on ergonomics that includes seven management representatives and just two union safety and health experts. It is the first time in the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's 32-year history that an advisory committee does not include an equal number of management and union representatives.

That action follows OSHA's recent formation of several "alliances" with industry groups to study workplace safety and ergonomics. But not one of these so-called alliances includes workers or their unions.

In fact, the business-backed groups on both the ergonomics advisory committee and in the alliances worked against establishment of a federal ergonomics standard during the decade-plus fight to win the safety protection and applauded the Bush administration's support and eventual repeal of the ergonomics standard just weeks after Bush occupied the White House.

It's worker safety, Bush-style.

### Safety Tailboard

**Question:** Where else can I go, other than my employer, to get Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for products that I use at my workplace?

**Answer:** By the nature of your question you apparently are aware that by law your employer is required to keep up to date and accessible MSDS sheets on all products at your workplace. However, if you have access to a computer an excellent website to check is [MSDSolutions.com](http://MSDSolutions.com). On this site you can access over 1 million MSDS's published by 15,000 manufacturers. You must have a product name and manufacturer and set up for a free account. If you don't have Internet access you can call 1-888-255-6737 ext. 211.

Receive an IBEW cup and cap for submitting a safety question selected for publication in Safety Tailboard. Safety Tailboard is an open forum for discussion and learning about safety issues. Submit your question, along with your name and phone number, to:

Safety Tailboard,

c/o Jim McCauley, IBEW 1245, PO Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596

# Market losses derail retirement dreams



Stock market losses have derailed retirement dreams for 20% of older workers and caused many retirees to go back to work.

One-fourth of American stock owners between age 50 and 70 report that their investments have fallen 25% to 50% in value the past two years, according to a study released last month by the American Association of Retired Persons. Many have been forced to compensate by postponing retirement.

As fewer companies offer traditional pensions, and with Social Security being threatened with privatization, the ability to save and invest wisely has become increasingly important to US workers. Longer life expectancies also mean



that Americans must stretch savings. But nearly 41 million Americans worked at companies that didn't of-

fer any retirement plan last year. An additional 12 million didn't participate in the plans their companies did offer, according to a Congressional Research Service report.

## Cuts target ill and aging

Even before California's projected budget deficit ballooned to \$35 billion in mid-December, Gov. Gray Davis targeted an array of services to the elderly and ill for cuts.

In his package of cuts and savings announced in early December, Davis proposed cutting spending for health and social services by \$2 billion. The package also called for cutting funds for public schools by \$3.1 billion this year and in the 2003-04 budget year that begins July 1.

As is often the case when government spending contracts, those with the least power end up bearing the greatest burdens. Among the programs slated for slicing and dicing: syringes for diabetics and payments to nursing homes that care for 200,000 aging and infirm Californians.

In health care, among Davis' proposals are recommendations to eliminate payments for dental care and to stop paying for medical supplies such as rubber sheets for poor people. Many experts said infirm people need

such supplies to remain in their homes and avoid going to nursing homes. Davis also urges a 10% cut in payments to nursing homes, after having embarked on a push two years ago to improve nursing-home care.

At an annual cost of \$9.8 billion, the Medi-Cal program pays the health-care costs of 6.4 million indigent elderly and disabled people each month. Davis proposes to trim \$167 million from Medi-Cal starting in the third quarter of the 2002-03 fiscal year. If spread over a full year, that could translate to nearly 7% of the total spent on Medi-Cal.

It is not yet clear whether payments to nursing homes and health care for the elderly will face even steeper reductions in light of the budget figures released on Dec. 18, which indicated a deficit of \$35 billion.

As part of his "aging with dignity initiative," the governor in his first term boosted payments to nursing homes by 10%, and ordered pay raises and improved training for nursing home workers.

### Signs for Concern

Even workers who have retirement savings accounts typically don't save enough, and what they have saved has been squeezed by the bear market.

Among the recent signs for concern:

- Among stock owners 50 to 70 years old who have lost money in the stock market and have not yet retired, about 20% have already postponed retirement as a result of their losses, AARP said. Among retirees who have lost money in the stock market, 3% returned to work since March 2000.

- In early 2000—at the peak of the stock market bubble—the median value of retirement savings accounts amounted to just \$18,000, according to the congressional study.

- In 2002, 15% of workers said they had not saved anything for retirement, according to a survey by the Employee Benefit Research Institute. And 27% of workers ages 40 to 59 said they have less than \$10,000 saved for retirement.

## 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.

Clarence Hebert, 37 years  
Novato, CA

## Be in the know!

Check out the latest news updates on the Local 1245 site on the world wide web.

Go to:  
[www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com)

**Local 1245  
Trade and Vocational School Grant**

The purpose of these grants is to provide aid to the children of members to attain a trade or technical education.

- The grants will be as follows:  
\$500 per year, for up to two years for two candidates, as long as a passing grade is maintained, and a parent maintains membership in good standing in Local Union 1245.
- In order to be a candidate in this contest, you must be a daughter or son, natural, legally adopted or a legal ward of a member of Local Union 1245. You must be a high school student who has graduated or is graduating in 2003. A copy of your diploma or a letter from your high school stating that you will graduate in 2003 must be attached to your application. Additionally, a letter of recommendation from your vocational teacher, department head, or school principal must accompany the application.
- Applications may be secured by addressing the Recording Secretary of Local Union 1245, by calling the Union office, or by using the form printed in the Utility Reporter.
- The grant will be made only to a candidate who intends to enroll full time in any industrial, technical or trade school, other than correspondence schools, which are accredited by the national Association of Trade and Technical Schools or the Association of Independent Colleges and Schools.
- Applications must be mailed to IBEW, Local Union 1245, PO Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596, by registered mail or certified mail only, and be **postmarked no later than the first Monday of April each year (April 7, 2003)**.
- Two names will be drawn by the Judge of the Competitive Scholarship Contest from those submitting applications. These two will be recipients of the grants.
- Checks will be paid directly to the school upon presentation of tuition bills to the Local Union.
- Presentation of awards will be made to recipients at the unit meeting nearest his/her residence following the drawing.

**Application for the Local 1245 Trade & Vocational School Grant for Members' Children Enrolling in Technical, Industrial, or Trade Schools**

Sponsored by Local Union 1245  
International Brotherhood of  
Electrical Workers, AFL-CIO

PO Box 4790  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596  
(925) 933-6060

**Candidate Information**

Candidate's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
 State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 High School \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address of High School \_\_\_\_\_  
 What school do you expect to attend? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Where is it located? \_\_\_\_\_  
 What trade or craft will you be studying? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Why this particular skill? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Candidate's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of Member/Parent**

Name of Member/Parent \_\_\_\_\_  
 Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_  
 I certify that I am a member in good standing of IBEW Local Union 1245, that the Candidate named above, \_\_\_\_\_, is my \_\_\_\_\_, and that the Candidate will graduate from high school during the term ending \_\_\_\_\_, 2003.  
 Signature of Member/Parent \_\_\_\_\_  
 Union Card No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 This is to certify that the above named Candidate is currently enrolled as a student at \_\_\_\_\_ and has or will be graduating in \_\_\_\_\_, 2003.  
 Official's Signature and Position \_\_\_\_\_

**Local 1245  
Al Sandoval Memorial Competitive Scholarship**

The purpose of this contest is to provide a grant in aid for scholarships to colleges and junior colleges, thereby making financial assistance toward the attainment of a higher education.

- The grant will be as follows:  
\$500 per year, up to four (4) years, as long as a "C" (2.0) average is maintained, and a parent maintains membership in good standing in Local Union 1245.
- In order to be a candidate in this contest, you must be a son or daughter, natural, legally adopted, or a legal ward of a member of Local Union 1245. You must also be a high school student who has graduated or is graduating in 2003. A copy of your diploma or a letter from your high school stating that you will graduate in 2003 must be attached to your scholarship application.
- The scholarship grant will be made only to that candidate who intends to enroll full time in any college certified by their State Department of Education and accredited by the local accrediting association.
- Application may be secured by addressing the Recording Secretary of Local Union 1245, by calling the Union office, or by using the form printed in the Utility Reporter.
- Checks will be paid directly to the college upon presentation of tuition bills to the Local Union.
- All applications shall be accompanied by a written essay, not to exceed five hundred (500) words, on the subject designated by the Executive Board.
- Essays should be submitted on 8-1/2" by 11" paper, on one side, preferably typed and double spaced, with applicant's written signature at the conclusion of the essay.
- Applications and essays must be mailed to IBEW, Local Union 1245, PO Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596, by registered or certified mail only, and be **postmarked no later than the first Monday in March of each year (March 3, 2003)**.
- Each year the scholarship shall be presented at the Advisory Council meeting in May; the judge and a guest and the recipient and parents shall be invited, at Local Union expense, to present and receive the scholarship award.
- A suitable trophy or plaque shall be purchased by the Local Union, at a cost not to exceed \$75, to be presented to the scholarship recipient.

**The topic for the 2003 Al Sandoval Memorial Competitive Scholarship Essay is: HOW WILL UNION MEMBERS BE AFFECTED BY THE HOMELAND SECURITY ACT?**

**Application  
for the Al Sandoval Memorial Competitive Scholarship**

Sponsored by International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, AFL-CIO  
Local Union 1245, PO Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596  
(925) 933-6060

Candidate's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
 State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 High School \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address of High School \_\_\_\_\_  
 What college or school do you expect to attend? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Where is it located? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Candidate's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of Member/Parent**

Name of Member/Parent \_\_\_\_\_  
 Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_  
 I certify that I am a member in good standing of IBEW Local Union 1245, that the Candidate named above, \_\_\_\_\_, is my \_\_\_\_\_, and that the Candidate will graduate from high school during the term ending \_\_\_\_\_, 2003.  
 Signature of Member/Parent \_\_\_\_\_  
 Union Card No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 This is to certify that the above named Candidate is currently enrolled as a student at \_\_\_\_\_ and has or will be graduating in \_\_\_\_\_, 2003.  
 Official's Signature and Position \_\_\_\_\_