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Zimmerman looks back **8**

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### News briefs

#### South San Joaquin Irrigation District

lost a key vote June 16 in its bid to take over PG&E facilities in the area. The county's Local Agency Formation Commission voted 4-1 against the plan.

**Contra Costa Unit 8** power plant can be completed and operated by PG&E, the CPUC has ruled. PG&E obtained the plant from Mirant in connection with a 2005 agreement resolving alleged market manipulation claims related to the energy crisis.

**Phil Angelides**, who helped defeat Arnold Schwarzenegger's attacks on pensions, health care and schools, and stood up to the energy pirates who ripped off California in 2000-2001, won the Democratic endorsement for governor in the June 6 primary.

**CEO bonuses** and incentives help them make 800 times what the minimum wage worker earns, says the Economic Policy Institute. That means the average CEO earns as much before lunch on their first day in the office as a worker on the minimum wage takes home in an entire year.

**National Labor Relations Board** cases now pending could wipe out federal labor law protections for hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of workers whose jobs include even minor, incidental or occasional supervisory duties, the AFL-CIO has warned.

**www.electrifyingcareers.com** is a new multimedia website co-sponsored by IBEW that presents students, parents and guidance counselors with information on opportunities available to young people in the electrical industry.

# Utility Reporter

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UNITY IS STRENGTH

For up-to-the-minute news, see our website: [www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com)

Serving on the bargaining committee, in a photo taken last winter, are, from left: Jerry McAllister, Aaron Dorman, Samson Wilson, Mike Grimm, Wayne Paterson, Dale Huntsman, Reto Gross, Randy Osborn, Gary Bailey, Gino Aramini and Vickie Borst. Not pictured: Tom Cornell and Rita Weishaar. PHOTO: Eric Wolfe



Key provisions of package – Page 6

## Sierra Pacific package goes out for vote

**N**egotiators for Local 1245 and Sierra Pacific Power agreed on June 27 to a package to be sent out to the union membership for ratification.

The negotiations were difficult because of full and ambitious proposals by both sides and the changing landscape of utility operation and ownership in the United States.

The company entered negotiations with ambitious plans to position Sierra Pacific favorably in an industry in which mergers and acquisitions are increasingly common. The company sought

to align benefits between Sierra Pacific and its sister utility, Nevada Power in Las Vegas. The company's objectives also included reducing so-called legacy costs—the employee discount for retirees, post-retirement medical benefits, and pension benefits.

Local 1245 entered into negotiations with an ambitious group of proposals aimed at improving wages and fringe benefits at a time when the company is financially sound.

Bargaining was long and intense—47 sessions over a nine-month period.

*continued on page 6*

## Retirees tell of desperation in face of rising costs

Eric Wolfe

**L**ocal 1245 retirees met with high-ranking PG&E officials on June 16 to air their grievances over rising medical costs and the declining value of their PG&E pensions.

All five Retiree Club chapters were represented at the meeting, including

*continued on page 4*



Merced Chapter President Gordon Borges. "What is PG&E's responsibility to retirees?"

## Retirement issues loom large in SMUD negotiations

**R**etiree medical benefits are among the top issues in general negotiations that got underway June 13 between Local 1245 and the Sacramento Municipal Utility District.

"Mostly because of our demographics the retiree medical has been the number one discussion point" among union members, says bargaining committee member Ike Williams.

Exact figures are hard to come by, but the baby boom generation is heading for the door in large numbers over the next several years. That exodus presents a two-fold problem for SMUD: funding medical benefits for those who are leaving, and remaining competitive enough in the labor market to attract new employees.

"They need to attract and retain young new hires," says bargaining committee member Dan White. "They're looking at a huge percentage of their population retiring in the next 5 to 10 years."

The union received 150 bargaining proposals from members, covering wages, pensions, medical benefits and working conditions.

"We looked at every single proposal," says Local 1245 Business Rep. Sam Glero. After weeding out duplicates, "every single proposal was submitted to



Serving on the Local 1245 Bargaining Committee at SMUD are, standing from left, Line Construction Light Foreman Don Kreuter, Line Equipment Operator Ike Williams and Local 1245 Business Rep. Sam Glero. Seated from left are Mark Flanders, Dave Butler, and Dan White. PHOTO: Eric Wolfe management."

Union members believe SMUD is well-positioned to deal with the needs of its employees after making \$170 million in profits over the past two years.

"They're very healthy right now," says Glero.

The impending retirement of the baby boom generation presents challenges to the union, too, which must train new people in the finer points of bargaining. This year's bargaining committee includes two veterans—Ike Williams and Don Kreuter—and three first-time negotiators: Mark Flanders, David Butler, and Dan White.

Union members at SMUD can check [www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com) for updates as bargaining progresses.



# RETIREMENT Celebration



Please join us to wish  
Local Union 1245 Business Manager

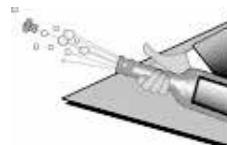
Perry



Zimmerman



Best Wishes on his Retirement!



**WHEN**

Friday, August 25, 2006  
6:00 – 7:00 – No Host Bar  
7:00 - Dinner

**WHERE**

Crowne Plaza Hotel  
45 John Glenn Drive  
Concord, CA

Dress Code: Casual Attire

\$55.00 per person including Dinner and Gift Contribution,  
Please respond by August 14, 2006!

Special hotel room rate reservation for \$85.00 when you mention that you're attending Perry Zimmerman's Retirement Party!

**CALENDAR**

- July 28: Service Awards, San Francisco (Pacifica), CA
- Aug. 1: Retiree Club, Santa Rosa, CA
- Aug. 1: Retiree Club, Merced, CA
- Aug. 3: Retiree Club, San Jose, CA
- Aug. 9: Retiree Club, Vacaville, CA
- Aug. 10: Retiree Club, Dublin, CA
- Aug. 12: Advisory Council, Reno, NV
- Aug. 25: Zimmerman Retirement Party, Concord, CA
- Sept. 11-15: IBEW Convention, Cleveland, OH
- Sept. 16: Outside Construction Service Awards, Sacramento, CA
- Sept. 30: Outside Construction Service Awards, Bakersfield

**APPOINTMENTS**

- CONFERENCES & CONVENTIONS**
- Grace Carroll Rocky Mountain Labor School  
Scott Hildebrand  
Eric Johnson
  - California Labor Federation 26th Biennial Convention  
Mike Davis  
Dave Scott  
Hunter Stern  
Dorothy Fortier

NAME(S):	# ATTENDING	AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$
DINNER CHOICE: PRIME RIB _____ GRILLED CHICKEN WITH SHRIMP SCAMPI _____		
<i>I'm sorry I can not attend, but enclosed is a check in the amount of \$_____ for gift contribution.</i>		
PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO "IBEW LU 1245" AND MAIL TO: GAIL VARNER (PZ), IBEW LU 1245, P. O. BOX 2547, VACAVILLE, CA 95696		
I WOULD LIKE TO:		
SPEAK OR MAKE PRESENTATION. NAME : _____		

## Correction

In the May 2006 Utility Reporter, SMUD Heavy Foreman Richard Harper was identified as an IBEW member. He is not.

## Unit corrections

Four units were listed with incorrect information in the June issue of Utility Reporter. The correct information is as follows:

- Unit 1115, Los Banos, meets at Tony's Rendezvous, 536 I Street, Los Banos.
- Unit 1221, Buellton, meets at Firestone/Walker Brewing Co., Buellton.
- Unit 1211, Salinas, meets at Mountain Mike's in Salinas.
- Unit 4419, Redding Davey/Utility Tree, will meet on July 26, not July 23.



**Business Manager & Executive Editor**  
Perry Zimmerman

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Our Web Site can be viewed at [www.IBEW1245.com](http://www.IBEW1245.com).

Our phone number is (707) 452-2700.



## Corporate salaries enough to make retirees cry

The retirement premium offset account has expired for some retirees and for others expiration is near. Does anyone at PG&E care?

PG&E executives live in a world where outrageous salaries and compensation run into the millions. For an eye-opener, go to [www.Sfgate.com](http://www.Sfgate.com) (San Francisco Chronicle) and click on executive pay by company. For more specific executive financial information go to Google search and enter pge executive salaries. There's a multitude of websites to choose from. Some of the information is enough to make a retiree cry—and not from happiness.

Also worth noting: go to PG&E Corporate Governance at [www.pgecorp.com/aboutus/corp\\_gov/](http://www.pgecorp.com/aboutus/corp_gov/) and click on Board of Directors. You will find that almost all the directors are on several other large company boards too. Think of the multiple salaries the directors are getting, then think of what retirees are getting after working decades for PG&E.

Are PG&E executives and directors that talented and knowledgeable? The answer from PG&E is always the same: They're worth what we pay them. And what are PG&E retirees worth? We're getting a disappearing pension that took years and years to acquire. No millions or bonuses for us.

Famed Banker, J.P. Morgan, said he knew of only one executive who was worth more than his rule of thumb for executive pay (10 times the pay of the basic employee of the company). What has happened?

And how does one get to be a director for PG&E? Can only a select few provide talent and experience? I'm sure there are numerous people in the wings that could provide just as much talent and knowledge as the current executives and directors. For one, I'd like to see a representative from Local 1245 be on PG&E's Board of Directors. Who has more knowledge about the company than someone who represents its employees year round. Check out the Board of Directors again and see if you agree.

There is a huge gap between executive pay and the basic employee of PG&E, and at the bottom of the barrel, the retirees, with almost no pay, thanks to medical deductions and no cost of living adjustment. Every retiree and active employee should write the CEO of PG&E, every individual director, and the PUC, and let

UtilityReporter

them know we're unhappy with what's happening to our pensions.

Lastly, I think a retiree from PG&E should be on the next negotiating committee to address retiree issues only. A live presence is a constant reminder to everyone at the table.

Retirees appreciate all that Local 1245 and active employees have done for us. But we need more help. Plain and simple: like active employees, we need a yearly cost of living increase, and we must do something to decrease the amount being deducted for our medical plans. Retirees are being attacked from two sides.

*Linda Lillehaugen, Santa Cruz, CA*

## Awesome Representation

This letter is to all the tree-trimmers out there. Your union rep, Ray Thomas, is the best thing that ever happened for you. He is honest, smart, aggressive and always available to you.

If you see something in the field that doesn't seem right, or if you are being harassed by your employer in any way, I urge you to call Ray. He will help you and truly understands what goes on out there in your workplace.

If you are a young new-hire, it is even more important that you attend your unit meetings, and get to know Ray. My husband has been in the union for 35 years and has never had the awesome representation that Ray Thomas provides.

The benefits that your union assures you are so important. Where would you be without health insurance that the union guarantees you? Who stands for you against the companies that are always on you for anything and everything?

Stand tall and be proud of your union. It's the union's job to protect you, and you are extremely fortunate to have Ray Thomas on your side. Reps seem to come and go, but this one is really a keeper! He is a true friend.

*Chloe Pickering, Berry Creek, CA*

## Immigration: another view

*Editor's note: The following letter from member Guy Greenwood is in response to a letter by member Greg Kestel in the June issue of Utility Reporter.*

Most Illegals are decent hard working people, leaving a miserable existence for a better life. Still, any man or woman who has a family to feed, out of desperation will do what it takes to feed them. This includes undermining the prevailing wage of others. In the labor movement they are called "Scabs" when they are used to replace union workers during a strike. The ones we should condemn, impeach, or recall are *all* the politicians with "R" or "D" behind their names who haven't done their job. There are many corporate execs who should join the ranks of the ENRON scum in jail for using Illegals to frustrate

a decent wage for those in the inner-city, and elsewhere who are Americans by birthright. There are plenty of Americans quite willing to work unpleasant, menial, tiresome, and risky jobs, but not for Third World wages.

During the downturn of the 90's when out with my family who are legal immigrants, and naturalized Americans, we were frequently glared at and scorned. Because they "stuck out," my family became the object of frustration to some, because the part-time jobs at the local car wash or fast food restaurant were no longer available for their kids. Perhaps it was because of the missing income from their kid's part-time employment that was crucial to their family. My income was critical to mine when I was a teenager. Perhaps because they were now competing with the desperate themselves. I worked in a carwash when I was a kid, and worked as a cook for a while during college. (The only more miserable time I spent was the week I picked fruit with my godmother.)

Because of our skill, hard work, and UNION, we enjoy a reasonable standard of living. When we do not protect Americans of lesser circumstance, their afflictions will soon come to pay us a visit. Legal immigration is like adoption. Both parties get a trial to see if everything's acceptable to all. Funny thing happened in the 90's, the American people were not asked!

To paraphrase a speech by Booker T. Washington: Those who look to the incoming of those of foreign birth and strange tongue and habits for the prosperity of the South... Cast down your bucket among the people who have, without strikes, or labor wars, tilled your fields, cleared your forests, built your railroads and cities, and brought forth treasures from the bowels of the earth." Brother Greg Kestel is wrong, there is a crisis. It was created by the politicians and some of the same players he was complaining about. Fixing it will probably cost more than ENRON and Iraq together.

*Guy Greenwood, Martinez, CA*

## Rising health care cost

My name is John Donker. I worked for PG&E for 36 years. I retired on Feb. 1, 2006, as Electric Crew Foreman. I am extremely concerned about rising health care costs. I was paying \$38 per month before I retired; now it's gone up to \$493 per month. I understand we have received \$7,500 towards our monthly health care payments, but that will only last about 2 years or so.

PG&E used to consider all their employees "Family." Now it seems we have been cut loose. This issue is not going to go away. I would like to know what the company is going to do with people like me who helped build the company. We need some relief.

*John Donker, Woodland, CA*

## Cost of living raise would be 'a blessing'

I read the many "Letters to the Editor" regarding a "cost of living" raise for retirees and their surviving spouses. My Bert (Logan) was a very devoted employee as a lineman for PG&E and was also a shop steward for the IBEW 1245 for many years. He started with the company in 1950—retired as a ditch patrolman/station attendant in remote areas of the Sierra Nevada Mountains above Tiger Creek Power House in Amador County. Bert had cancer and lived many years working; he lived only 10 years after his 1982 PG&E retirement. We left California and came to Oregon.

Living out-of-state, I am not able to participate in the Retiree Club meetings. An occasional letter to the editor is my only input.

I hear what those retirees are saying—but I think, to realize how a surviving spouse lives, once their mate is gone, should be given a lot of thought. It's only on Social Security and what pensions that were set up at the time of Bert's retirement that gets me through. The world's a different place without your mate. My Bert will be gone 14 years this September 13, 2006. A cost of living raise would be a blessing in my world. There are certainly many changes to endure as we age. I'm looking at 80 years on my birthday this year.

Best wishes to you all, from a surviving spouse.

*Audrey Logan, Woodburn, OR*

## Retiree wishes Perry could stay

I've been associated with Local Union 1245 in a large variety of assignments under the direction of each of the four previous Business Managers. And if I had the power to keep Perry Zimmerman from retiring I'd use it.

Perry is the Business Manager who came to this job with a declared intent to restore harmony and dedication to the Union's staff and employees and also to bring the ideal of membership input and direction into reality.

He championed the cause of PG&E's retirees' steadily declining retirement income due to rising inflation and health-care costs. He realized that applying a benefit improvement for retirees was no different than improving the Retirement Plan or the Health Plan for active employees. Sooner or later we all become former employees who will be faced with the same obstacles to a harmonious retirement unless changes are made now.

All of Local 1245 members and employees owe much to Perry for all that he has accomplished during the 5 years as our Business Manager. I'd like

*continued on page 10*

## RETIREES MEET WITH PG&E, continued from page 1

the presidents from the East Bay, Vacaville, Santa Rosa and Merced Chapters.

Among those present from the San Jose Chapter was Jack Hill, who served as the retirees' representative on the Local 1245 bargaining committee during the last round of general negotiations. Hill began the meeting with a grim picture of the retirees' plight:

"Every one of the retirees are finding themselves in real trouble because of the cost of health care. There's got to be something we can do to take the pressure off of retirees. It's hell."

The pressure from rising health care costs has been building since 2000, when the company contribution to retiree health care premiums was capped by an agreement negotiated in the early 1990s. During general bargaining in 2002 the company and union negotiated a Retirement Premium Offset Account (RPOA) that defrays retiree premium payments by up to \$7500. But many retirees are now running through the money in those accounts and face a huge jump in costs.

"People are upset," said Mike Silva, president of the East Bay Chapter. "The reason they're upset is because you're into their pocketbook...Everybody should realize that \$7500 isn't going to last very long."

The PG&E delegation on hand to listen to the retirees' remarks included Senior Vice President Jeff Butler, Vice President for Human Resources Russ Jackson and Industrial Relations Director Steve Rayburn. They took notes on the retirees' remarks, occasionally responding to clarify a point or answer a direct question.

"What is PG&E's responsibility to retirees?" asked Merced Chapter President Gordon Borges.

Russ Jackson responded that PG&E had both "legal and social responsibilities" and that "hearing from you is part of it." Noting that health care is "a national crisis," Jackson said, "I think it's going to be a very difficult problem to solve."

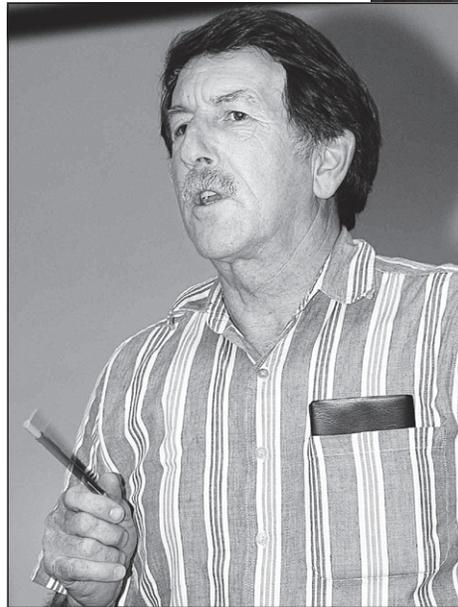
***"People are upset. The reason they're upset is because you're into their pocketbook... Everybody should realize that \$7500 isn't going to last very long."***



East Bay Chapter President Mike Silva.

***"It's companies like this that can make a difference."***

Santa Rosa Chapter President Larry Mead.



Larry Mead, president of the Santa Rosa Chapter, agreed that medical inflation was not PG&E's fault. "But it's companies like this that can make a difference" by taking action to help retirees.

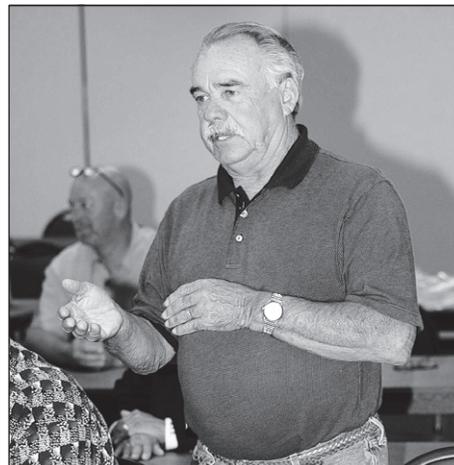
Some retirees noted they had assisted PG&E in the political arena over the years, but would be less willing to do so in the future unless retiree concerns were addressed.

"If you guys want our help, you've got to help us," said Bob Renaude, president of the Vacaville/Sacramento Chapter.

Mel Hambrick, who participates in the East Bay Chapter, noted that PG&E had applied to the CPUC to fully fund its pension plan. "There ought to be something there to establish a COLA (cost of living adjustment) for us."

Hambrick was one of several retirees to express appreciation for the opportunity to work for PG&E through the years.

"We've given a lot to the company and the company's been good to us. I



Vacaville/Sacramento Chapter President Bob Renaude.

***"If you guys want our help, you've got to help us."***

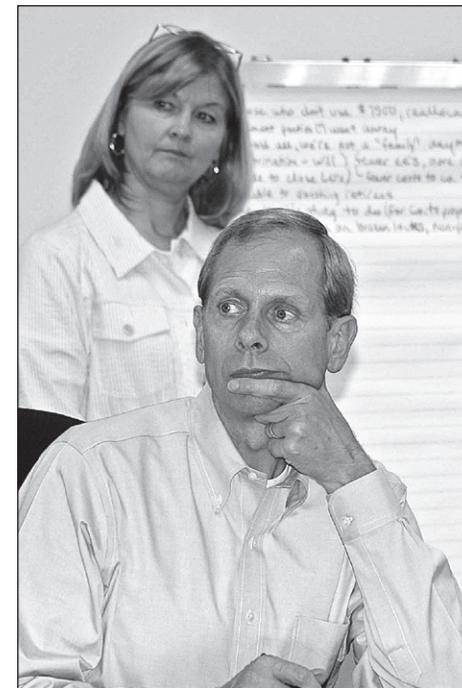
enjoyed working for this company for 34 years," he said.

But that service to the company in many cases has taken a physical toll on the employees who performed the work. Mike Silva called PG&E "the company I gave my legs to."

"I don't have cartilage in my knees, don't have cartilage in my ankle because of the job I did for this company," Silva said. "What happened to the feeling of family, that I gave so much to the company and they don't care about me anymore?"

Company officials, though generally refraining from responding to such questions, occasionally took the opportunity to supply information.

Russ Jackson told the retirees that removing the retiree medical cap would cost PG&E an additional \$200 million per year. "Just because we agree to



PG&E Industrial Relations Director Steve Rayburn listens to retirees' concerns; Kathy Price, PG&E Principal Negotiator, takes notes.

something doesn't mean we're going to get funding for it from the CPUC," he said. He also noted that increased utility merger and acquisition activity on the national scene required PG&E "to make sure we're competitive."

Jackson cautioned there would be no "quick fix" to the problems retirees face. Several retirees, on the other hand, stressed that the problem needed to be addressed now and not left to the next round of general negotiations, which won't get started until sometime in mid-2008.

"I served on the last negotiating committee and was proud of the RPOA, that we got retirees something," said Larry



East Bay Chapter member Mel Hambrick.

***"There ought to be something there to establish a COLA (cost of living adjustment) for us."***



San Jose Chapter activist Watie Anthney makes a point as PG&E Vice President Russ Jackson takes notes.



Former union negotiator and current retiree activist Larry Darby.

*“I served on the last negotiating committee and was proud of the RPOA, that we got retirees something. I don’t want to wait until the next negotiations. We need something now.”*

Darby, who retired in 2004. “I don’t want to wait until the next negotiations. We need something now.”

“We really need help and we need it now,” said Jack Hill. “We need something to help people before this term of the contract runs out.”

The company officials said they would study the various remarks and proposals made by the retirees and respond at a time to be determined.

Following the meeting Hill said he was pleased that a dialog had been established with the company. “We knew this was going to have to be an on-going thing,” he said.

*“There’s got to be something we can do to take the pressure off of retirees. It’s hell.”*



San Jose Chapter member Jack Hill.

“They listened and they wrote a lot of stuff down,” said Larry Mead. “They realize there’s a problem—that’s the main thing.”

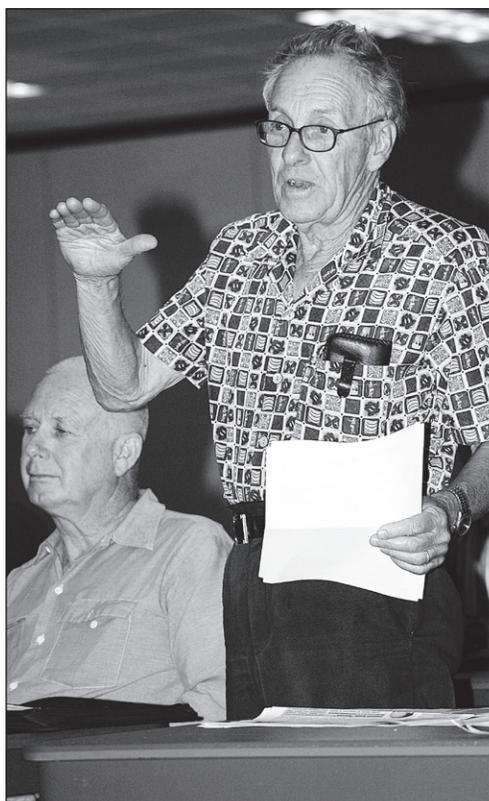
“It was a great meeting,” said Mike Silva. “I think that everything that could be said was said and I think they listened.”

Retirees expressed hope that the dialog could lead to concrete results.

“We’ve got to do something because the situation is dire,” said Hill.



PG&E Senior Vice President Jeff Butler listens to retirees’ concerns.



Robert Sherbourne discusses retiree hardships.

## Retirees: Time to Pay Dues

Your annual dues of \$36 for membership in the Local 1245 Retirees Club is now due. Your membership entitles you and your spouse to participation in club activities, including important efforts now underway to win better pensions and more protection against rising medical costs.

Membership automatically qualifies you for a \$1,000 death benefit, as well as a \$500 death benefit for your spouse. And of course your membership also entitles you to receive the Utility Reporter.

It has been a very productive year for the Local 1245 Retiree Club, with new chapters organized in Vacaville, Santa Rosa and Merced, and a special meeting with PG&E on June 16 to discuss retiree medical costs and pension issues. Through unity we can make ourselves heard!

Stay informed, stay active, make a difference! Membership runs from July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007. To renew your membership, send \$36 payable to “IBEW Local 1245” to:

Tonya Alston-Maxwell, Office Manager  
IBEW Local 1245  
P.O. Box 2547  
Vacaville, CA 95696

## Retiree Club Chapter Presidents:

<b>East Bay Chapter (Dublin):</b>	Mike Silva
<b>San Jose Chapter:</b>	Richard Murphy
<b>Vacaville Chapter:</b>	Robert Renaude
<b>Santa Rosa Chapter:</b>	Larry Mead
<b>Merced Chapter:</b>	Gordon Borges

## Retiree Club Meeting Schedule

### East Bay Chapter:

2nd Thursday each month, 10 a.m., IBEW Local 595, 6250 Village Parkway, Dublin, CA

### San Jose Chapter:

1st Thursday each month, 10 a.m., at IBEW Local 332, 2125 Canoas Garden, San Jose, CA.

### Vacaville/Sacramento Chapter:

2nd Wednesday each month, 10 a.m., at IBEW Local 1245, 30 Orange Tree Circle, Vacaville, CA.

### Santa Rosa Chapter:

1st Tuesday each month, 10 a.m., at IBEW Local 551, 2525 Cleveland Ave., Suite B, Santa Rosa.

### Merced Chapter:

1st Tuesday each month, 10 a.m., Merced Senior Community, 755 W. 15th St., Merced.

## SPP Package

continued from page one.

Senior Assistant Business Manager Tom Dalzell praised the union's bargaining committee for hanging tough during an extremely difficult process.

"The rank and file committee was as good a committee as I've ever seen," said Dalzell, who will become the union's Business Manager on Aug. 2.

"There was intense pressure, both from management and from our membership, and the committee just rode it out. There were some of the best 'costers' and benefit analysts that I've ever seen on our committee," Dalzell said, referring the process of figuring out the dollar cost of individual proposals.

Dalzell credited the entire committee with thinking of the good of the entire bargaining unit, not just their own department.

"Especially important was the unanimous feeling of the committee that changes that negatively affected current retirees were not acceptable. This line was one that we would not—and did not—cross," Dalzell said.

### Triaging the Issues

Dalzell and Assistant Business Manager Dennis Seyfer joined the negotiations after meeting with top management and agreeing that negotiations had gone on too long and were undermining employee morale.

To break the logjam that had developed after 40 meetings, company and union negotiators triaged their proposals and agreed to address only the proposals most valued by one side or the other. With a pared-down, triaged list of issues, the parties proceeded one issue at a time.

Soon a model for resolution had been developed—listen to the other side's concerns, brainstorm solutions, and make a "supposal" (as opposed to an official pro-

## In memoriam: Ben Hudnall

IBEW Local 1245 mourns the passing of Ben Hudnall, long-time Business Manager of Engineers and Scientists of California, IFPTE Local 20.

Ben died June 12 after a very difficult struggle with cancer. He will be remembered as a dedicated labor leader who represented his union's membership with intelligence and passion.

As the leader of a union representing professional employees at Pacific Gas & Electric, Ben often had occasion to work closely with IBEW Local 1245 on shared priorities. He stood in solidarity with IBEW Local 1245 leaders on the steps of the state building in San Francisco in December of 1994 when more than a thousand union members and allies protested downsizing at PG&E.

Local 1245 offers our deep condolences to the friends, family and co-workers of our union brother Ben Hudnall.



ESC Business Manager Ben Hudnall joins IBEW Local 1245 in a 1994 demonstration at the California Public Utilities Commission to protest PG&E downsizing.

posal) to solve the issue. With "supposals", the parties were able to work through a number of issues, knowing that if the process did not work, they would revert to the proposals that had been on the table when the "supposal" process began.

As with almost any package, members will find flaws in this one.

"There is probably something in the

package to worry every member, but there are some important improvements that can't be ignored, Dalzell said.

"Each member will have to make their own best judgment as to the package's worth. No matter how they vote, our members should recognize how tireless and dedicated their committee was in doing their best to protect and improve our members' working lives."

Updates on the ratification process will be posted as they become available at [www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com), the union's website.

The major elements of the package appear below.

Crunching numbers last winter during negotiations are, from left, Wayne Paterson, Reto Gross and Gary Bailey.



## Package Highlights

Highlights of the Sierra Pacific Power package include the following:

A three-year term, to expire 12/31/08

General wage increases of 3.75% for each year of the agreement, except for employees in the Inside and Outside Clerical, Reprographics, and some classifications in Buildings and Grounds Occupational Groups. These employees will receive a lump sum payment of 3.75% for each of the three years. A list of the classifications will be made available.

Equity increases of 1.75% (year one), .75% (year two) and .75% (year three) for journeyman classifications in the SCAT, Telecom and Electric Occupational Groups, the Fitter and EO III positions in Gas Operations and ERO Steam. A list of the classifications will be made available.

Premium of 6% added to hourly rate for California employees to compensate for California state income tax

STIP of 3.5% for each year of the contract

Signing bonus of \$750 in lieu of retroactive wage payment

Second tier wages and hiring hall agree-

ment for new hires in clerical and meter reader jobs; use of hiring hall linked to retention of clerical jobs in Reno

Change in PPO (Union Best and Basic) for active employees to Advantage Plan; 18% premium co-payment for ALL plans

Option for employees hired after 1/1/98 to trade employee discount for full dollar-on-the-dollar 401(k) match up to 6%.

Option for employees hired before 1/1/98 to trade employee discount and retiree medical for Local 396 retiree medical, full match on 401(k) up to 6%, and cash buy-out

Option for retired employees to trade existing medical coverage for Local 396 retiree medical coverage and cash buy-out

No change in retiree medical coverage for current retirees who do not take option described above

Medical Plans available to employees retiring after 1/1/07 will be Advantage, HHP and Health First

Change in meal allowance, providing for in-lieu meal payment and establishing fixed amount for most meals taken

Common holiday schedule with Nevada Power

Working hours modifications

New employees will automatically have full match on 401(k) instead of the employee discount

These are only the highlights of the agreement. The next step for the parties is to produce a single written document that includes all items that make up the package to be sent out for ratification. We expect that this process may take several weeks.

As soon as there is agreement on this document, copies will be mailed to all Local 1245 members and education meetings will be scheduled throughout the service territory. Local 1245 staff and Sierra employees who were members of the negotiating committee will attend these meetings to explain the document and answer member questions.

Additionally, the Company's committee will be conducting meetings with MPAT employees to explain the contractual changes in the near future.

The actual ratification will be conducted by mail ballot with three weeks between the date of mailing and the date by which the ballots must be returned.

## Election for Convention Delegates

The vote totals for all candidates for IBEW International Convention are listed below. Winning candidates are listed in bold. The IBEW International Convention will be held September 11-15, 2006 in Cleveland, Ohio. Lem Stubblefield served as Judge of the Election Committee.

<b>Dorothy Fortier</b>	<b>755</b>
<b>Bob Choate</b>	<b>586</b>
<b>Christine Habecker</b>	<b>574</b>
<b>Cecilia De La Torre</b>	<b>532</b>
<b>Eric Wolfe</b>	<b>523</b>
<b>Art Freitas</b>	<b>522</b>
<b>Jim McCauley</b>	<b>500</b>
<b>Anna Bayless-Martinez</b>	<b>498</b>
<b>Ed Mallory</b>	<b>481</b>
<b>Al Fortier</b>	<b>474</b>
<b>Linda S. Jurado</b>	<b>442</b>
<b>Landis Marttila</b>	<b>392</b>
<b>John M. Mendoza</b>	<b>386</b>
<b>Mickey Harrington</b>	<b>385</b>

Gloria Flores	374
Hunter Stern	363
Mike Davis	361
Bill Brill	355
Barbara Saunders	344
Lonnie Smith	339
Sam Guterrez	330
Ray Thomas	330
Bernard Smallwood	326
Dan Mayo	311
Darryl Norris	298
Mike Grill	270
Oscar Martinez	268
Mary Herr	267
Ed Dwyer	254
Dennis Flores	251
Diane Tatu	241
Alycia Gordon	238
Joe Johnson	238
Mike Haentjens	235
Mike Jimenez	235
Dennis Torres	220
Leroy Foster	219
David Crawford	212
David Scott	207
John Villegas	202
Mike Rome	200
Geary Weaver	200
Paul Boyd	194
Ignacio Araquistain	179
Arthur C. Palmer	172
Michael Saner	168
Rob Thomas	162
Joseph Audelo	154
Mike Jameson	146
Steve Landers	139
Anthony Fortune	119
Glenn Richards	119
James Walpole	107
Tim Gilbride	99
Christian Schaefer	99
Walter Carmier	86
Brad Schuback	86
Richard Harness	83
David Durston	76
Jason Haase	72

# SERVICE AWARDS



## San Luis Obispo, CA

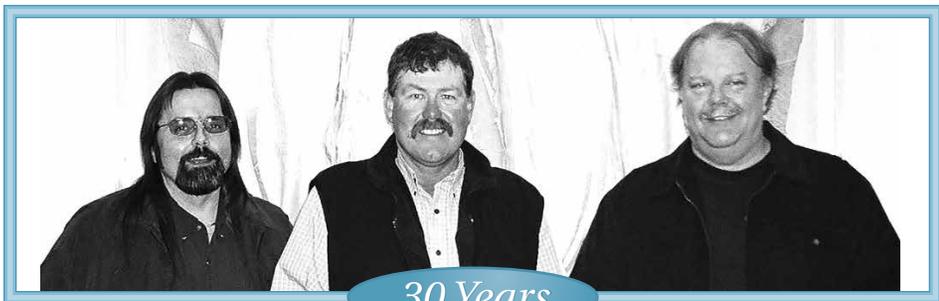
March 18, 2006



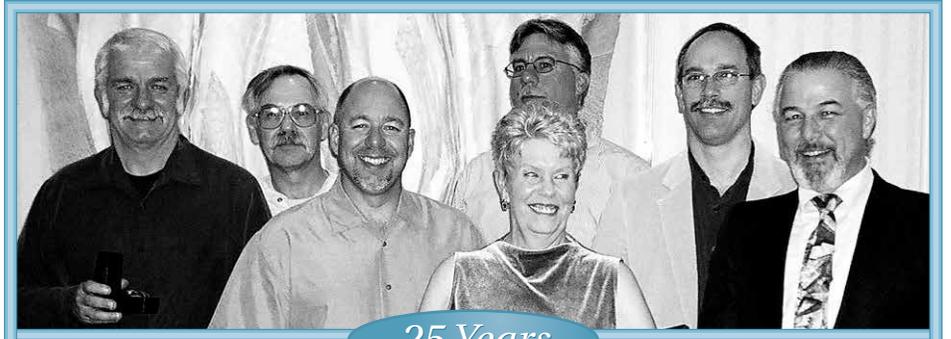
Joe Horst, center, receives 40-year award from Business Rep. Mike Haentjens, left, and Assistant Business Manager Bob Choate.



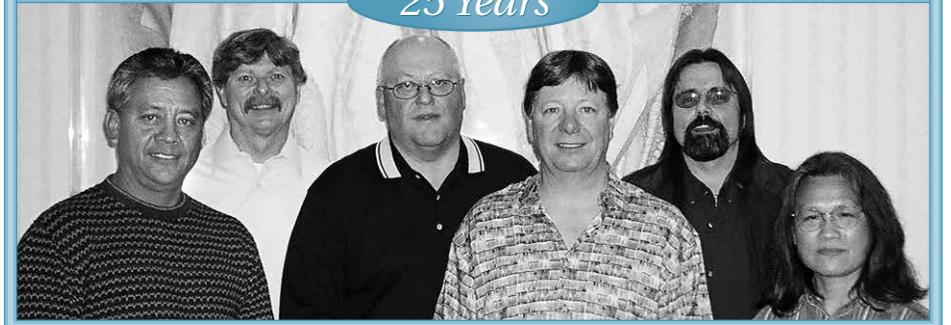
Receiving 35-year awards from Business Rep. Dan Lockwood are, from left, John Ramos, Joe Johnson, (Lockwood), Bruce Norne and James Blake.



30 Years

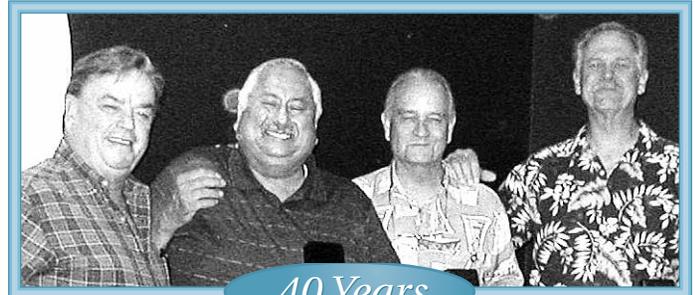


25 Years

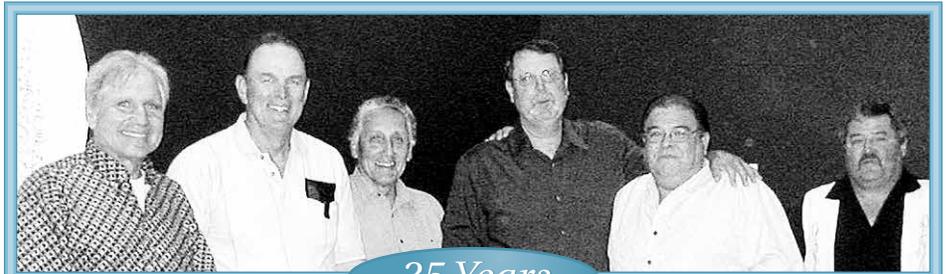


## Merced, CA

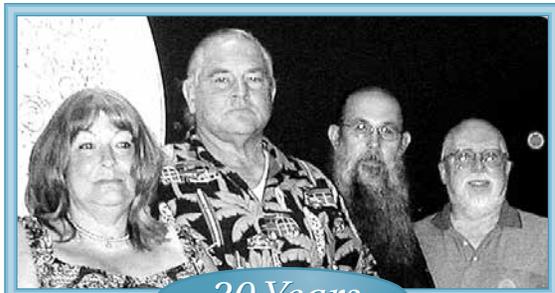
May 12, 2006



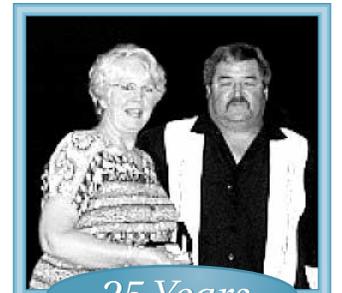
40 Years



35 Years



30 Years



25 Years

### THE HONOREES

#### 40 Years

Joe T. Horst

#### 35 Years

James Blake  
Gregg Burk  
Bruce Horne  
Joseph Johnson  
John Ramos  
Frank Teague

#### 30 Years

Carol Enos  
Howard Krinsky  
Danny Lambert  
Dean Mooney  
John Paulson  
Robert Rowley  
David Selstad  
Nicholas Smith  
Stan Weaver

#### 25 Years

Aulton Allison  
Darrel Andrews  
Reiko Bolon  
Max Carreras  
Rick Chadband  
William Dolengewicz  
Janelle Felix  
Daniel Ferrini  
George Fox  
Frank Geisler  
Jamie Irons  
Dennis Jaehnig  
John Janzen  
Jimmy Johnson  
Frank Kucera  
Maureen Lannan  
William Lee  
Dan Lockwood  
Timothy Matthews  
Mark May  
Michael Mc Cracken

Gerald McMullen  
Gary Medigovich  
Robert Miller  
William Murray  
Kathleen Oles  
Rosemary Paz  
Laura Plemons  
Shelby Puckett  
Michele Pugh  
Mary Reneau  
Rolando Rodriguez  
Linda Salazar  
Gregory Smith  
Kenneth Steffen  
John Stone  
Andy Valdez, Jr.  
Daniel Ward  
Stuart Weaver  
Maria Wilkerson  
Anthony Wire  
Lawrence Wise  
Fred Woltman III

### THE HONOREES

#### 40 Years

Johnny Alarcon  
Peter A. Castaneda  
Mike Johnson  
Merrill Medinas  
Bob Pickering

#### 35 Years

Raleigh Braswell  
Carl Bushman  
Grady Climer  
Mario Dominguez  
Billy Garcia

James Herrera, Jr.  
Paul Leonardo, Jr.  
Ernest Sanchez  
Vincent Serpa  
Pat Supernaw  
Patrick Thiercof  
David Varner  
Ronnie Young

#### 30 Years

William Bonds  
Phillip Broughton  
Dennis Dyer

Douglas Holden  
Gerald Knox  
Rodrick Labuga  
Mark Maire  
Minerva "Joy" Ohagan  
Robert Weston

#### 25 Years

Blaine Cobb  
John Coleman  
Mollie Erbes-Conley  
Michael Nordgreen  
George Pfeffer



**PZ retirement paves way for smooth leadership transition**

Weakley Hall, the union's headquarters in Vacaville, was constructed during Zimmerman's first term as Business Manager.

## Zimmerman's Legacy: Service to Members

When Perry Zimmerman was elected Business Manager of IBEW Local 1245 in 2001, he was determined to make good on his promise to improve service to the union's members. But the rancorous election that swept him into office had left the union staff divided and anxious about the future. Zimmerman knew he had to restore unity to his staff before he could begin work on his other priorities.

He considers his first decision one of the most important that he made: naming Tom Dalzell to be his Senior Assistant Business Manager.

"I chose Tom because he could bring peace. He helped me when things were rocky," said Zimmerman in an interview last month.

Leadership transitions have not always been smooth at Local 1245. Changes of leadership in hotly contested elections in 1977 and 1980 created long-lasting rifts within the union. Zimmerman wasn't interested in repeating that history; he was looking to the future.

"I felt there was a need for a change of direction—to listen to the membership more and put the membership ahead of everything else," he said.

For starters, he insisted that the union's business representatives increase their



Business Manager Perry Zimmerman, working his cell phone hard.

face-to-face contact with members at company headquarters, "whether it was PG&E Division or General Construction, Sierra Pacific, SMUD, Trees, Irrigation Districts—all the employers."

And Zimmerman practiced what he preached. He visited "just about every headquarters" himself during his five years in office and instructed his administrative staff—the union's assistant business managers—to attend unit meetings. He wanted to know what members were thinking and saying, what issues they considered important.

During the contract negotiations with PG&E that began in 2002, Zimmerman expanded his program of outreach. In addition to regular unit meetings, the union held five meetings with members throughout the PG&E system, as well as convening two large general meetings.

"We reached out to the membership so they could speak and we could listen

to them," Zimmerman said.

### Staffing Decisions

The focus on member service was also evident in Zimmerman's early staffing decisions. A major concern was PG&E General Construction, whose mobile workforce made consistent representation a special challenge. Zimmerman's solution was to assign three business representatives to focus almost entirely on General Construction.

Zimmerman was also concerned about the level of service to members in line clearance tree trimming. Here, too, the mobility of the workforce was a factor. Language barriers also presented challenges. Zimmerman assigned two business representatives to improve service: one with tree trimming experience, and one with fluency in Spanish.

Members at public sector employers also saw increased representation from the union staff.

A major issue for Zimmerman when



From left: Steve Rayburn, Director of Industrial Relations; John Moffat, PG&E Principal Negotiator; and Perry Zimmerman.

he campaigned for Business Manager in 2001 was the union's relationship with PG&E, which had been characterized as a "partnership" since the mid-1990s. Zimmerman believed that the company's Industrial Relations department had been somewhat marginalized during this period, and that it needed to be restored to a central role in company-union relations.

"The relationship now is that whenever I meet with senior officers, Industrial Relations is always invited to those meetings," said Zimmerman.

Zimmerman believes the union benefits from a close relationship with the Industrial Relations department, a belief based in part on his high regard for the people who work in it. He remembers when Industrial Relations Director Steve Rayburn was "a brand new hire in HR in Sacramento" two decades ago.

"I found Steve in those 20 years to have never lied to me," Zimmerman said. "He has always dealt with the issues protecting PG&E, but at the same time never giving me a reason to distrust him," Zimmerman said. "And his integrity is spread through his department."

### Rapport with Members

Zimmerman's commitment to good representation for the union's members was a prominent feature of his campaign for Business Manager in 2001. But that's not where it began.

Rapport with members was his trade-

mark as a business representative, beginning with the Sacramento assignment in 1981. His other assignments included Citizens Utilities (now Frontier), PG&E North Bay, San Francisco and East Bay, and the Sacramento Municipal Utility District.

In 1992 he was promoted to Assistant Business Manager, with overall responsibility for public sector employers and for non-PG&E private sector employers, except tree trimming companies and construction. In his last year as Assistant Business Manager, Zimmerman handled PG&E grievances at the Review Committee level.

When he retired from the union staff in 2000, Zimmerman thought he might find contentment on the golf course. He soon found that golf was not enough. He believed the union was in need of change and struggled with the idea that he ought to be the one to do something about it.

## Competitive Streak

Zimmerman admits to a competitive streak. His father encouraged a career playing professional baseball. Zimmerman enjoyed the sport and enjoyed playing alongside his identical twin brother, Larry. But play professionally?

"I recognized there were a whole bunch of people who were better baseball players than I was," said Zimmerman. After graduating high school Zimmerman landed a construction job with A. Teichert and Son. The lure of a 40-hour week and better benefits led him to apply for jobs with PG&E and Pacific Bell. He was interviewed by both companies on the same day. Pac Bell was paying \$58 a week; PG&E was paying \$98.



Gas Serviceman Perry Zimmerman.

Zimmerman did the math and hired on as a laborer in PG&E's Gas Department.

"I worked as a laborer, helper, gas serviceman, and service operator, and enjoyed all of them," he said.

He also enjoyed socializing with co-workers off the job, finding plenty of opportunities to hone his poker game.

"I won more times than I lost. That's probably because I was sober most of the time when everybody else got drunk."



Perry Zimmerman, Assistant Business Manager, 1999.

He also began to socialize with Delores, whom he met in 1973 and married in 1977. "She had five kids and I had two. I'm very luck all the kids blended perfectly."

Zimmerman is the first to acknowledge that his subsequent achievements owe a lot of Delores. "She made a lot of sacrifices and moved throughout the system with me—never complaining, never saying no. She has always encouraged me."

The year 1977 proved to be a significant one for Zimmerman in another way. It was the year he became a steward of Local 1245. He became vice chair of Unit 3811-Sacramento in 1978, moved up to unit chair in 1979, and went on the Advisory Council in 1980. In 1981 he became a business representative.

In 1991 he won more votes than any other candidate in the election of delegates to the centennial convention of the IBEW.

## One More Mountain

Any of these achievements might have been seen as the capstone to a career of union service. But for Zimmerman there was one more mountain to climb. His decision to



Delegates Sam Tamimi, left, and Perry Zimmerman attending the IBEW International Convention in 1996.

challenge Business Manager Jack McNally ran the risk of alienating friends and colleagues, but he believes it was the right decision for the union, and for himself.

"It's been a good five years—been the best five years of my life," Zimmerman said. "And I want to give a lot of credit to my administrative staff and the business reps who helped make that possible."

Although he fell one year short of completing the two terms he originally pledged to serve, he believes it's the right decision to leave now to ensure a smooth transition to new leadership.

"There's no way I could have accomplished what I did without Tom Dalzell. When I decided I was not going to complete another term, my obligation was to offer the best qualified person to take my place and I'm proud the Executive Board took my recommendation and appointed the most qualified person.

"Tom is a capable leader, and with Sam Tamimi as his

designated senior assistant they're going to provide a smooth transition for the future," Zimmerman said.

As he reflects on transitions, Zimmerman remembers a story about Jack McNally he heard many years ago.

"Jack was telling someone his best three hires were Tom Dalzell, Sam Tamimi and Perry Zimmerman. Look what happened. Two ended up being business managers and the other is about to become a Senior Assistant Business Manager," said Zimmerman. "Jack must be proud."

Zimmerman will step down as Business Manager on Aug. 1, but that doesn't necessarily mean that his service has ended.

"I will be actively involved as a retiree, will be actively involved in anything Local 1245 asks me to do," he said. "I need to do something with my time besides playing golf. It's on my agenda, but I tried that last time I retired and it wasn't enough."



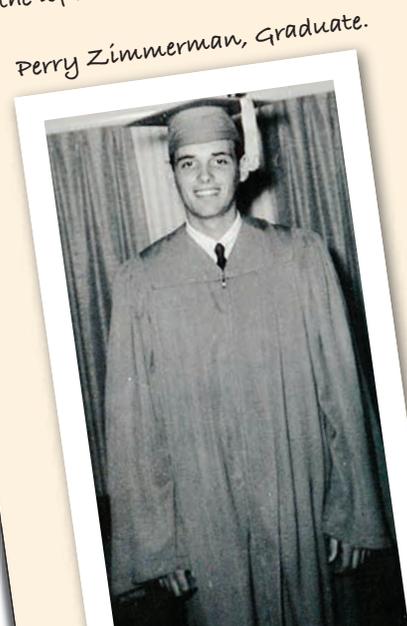
Perry and Larry. That's Perry on the left, right?



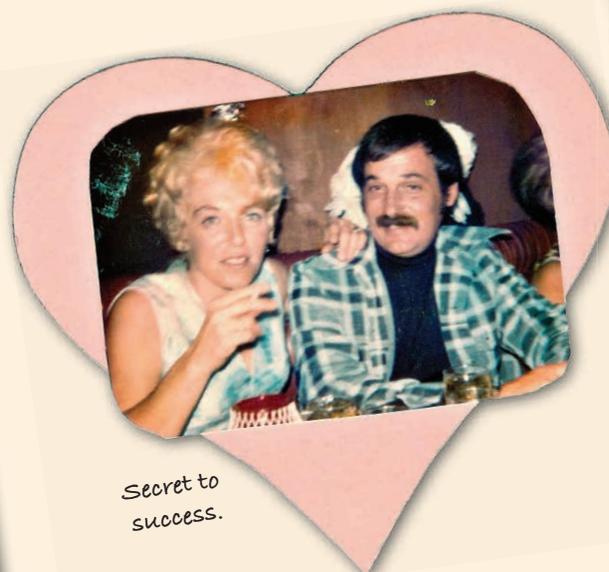
Perry and Larry, out for a stroll.



Perry and Larry, a fearsome duo at the bowling alley.



Perry Zimmerman, Graduate.



Secret to success.



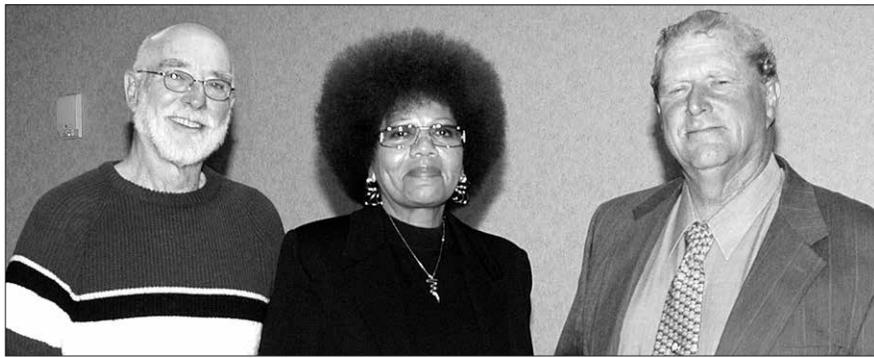
Perry's first retirement, in 2000.

# SERVICE AWARDS

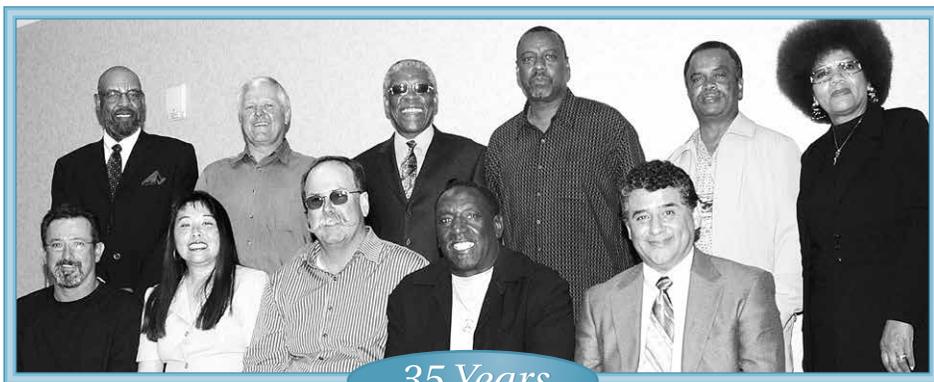


## Emeryville, CA

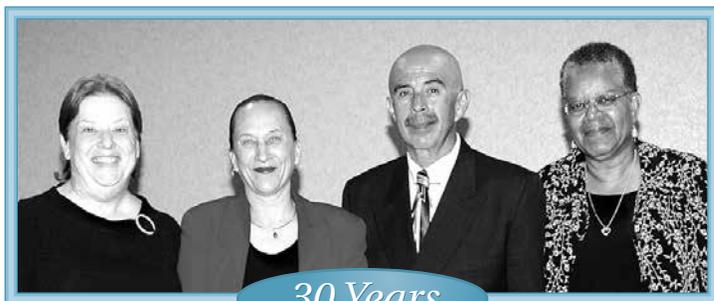
May 20, 2006



Forty-year members Leroy Foster (left) and Robert Hooper (right) are presented with their awards by Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier.



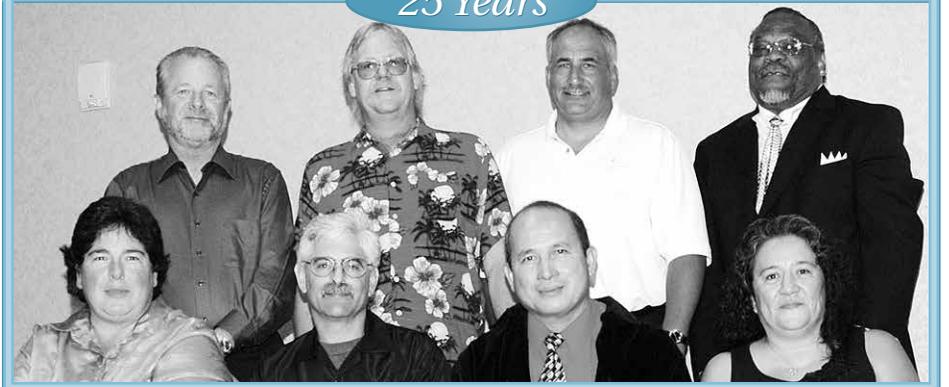
35 Years



30 Years



25 Years



### THE HONOREES

#### 45 Years

William Peper

#### 40 Years

Leroy Foster  
Arthur Hein  
Robert Hooper  
Landers Ligon  
Antonio Magtoto  
F. L. Mitchell  
James Rorie  
G. K. Sondersen

#### 35 Years

Roger Augustin  
Roy Bax  
Richard Beard  
Joe Blacksher  
Michael Bottini  
Thomas Broughton  
Robert Caldwell, Jr.  
Michael Coyne  
Stephen Cozzi  
Edward Crosby  
Wanda Fong  
Kermit Forrest  
Dennis Gabellini  
Raymond Ghiotto  
Connie Gibson  
Thomas Gillespie  
Darrell Griffith  
Frank Guise  
James Hemphill  
Dan Jefferies  
William Jennings  
Willie Kilgore  
Richard Landa  
Avelina Martinez  
James McDonald  
Johnnie Mcqueen  
Dale Miners  
Garland Nesbitt  
Kenneth Owens  
Billy Poe  
Miguel "Mike" Rivera

Samuel Rocha

Daniel Ruiz  
Geraldine Scaife  
Stanley Schmidt  
Charles Smith  
Gary Smith  
Richard Stovall  
Raymond Swindell  
Gregory Thomas  
Larry Todd  
Robert Westmacott  
Charles Williams  
Eugene Williams

#### 30 Years

Wayne Banks  
Clark Bomagat  
John Brady  
Michael Burgess  
Jacquelin Burns  
Jose Delgado  
Thomas Fonseca  
Diane Guerrero  
Matthew Krietich  
Romulo Magtoto  
Harold Natata  
Roy Rodgers  
Margarita Serrano  
Susan Stanton  
Nicholas Stella

#### 25 Years

Gerald Allen  
Sam Andreoli  
Rodrigo Armas  
Bennie Blake  
Paul Boyd  
Stephen Breazeale  
Curtis Brown  
Alex Campiotti  
Carlos Castrillo  
Crystal Chaney  
Michele Chin  
Thomas Dalzell  
Jerry De Baca  
Michael De Hart

Kevin De Void

Thomas Denning  
Vicki Easterday  
Steven Edwards  
Dennis Finnegan  
A. C. Gatan  
James Genco  
Dennis Gow  
John Harris  
Alan Hitchens  
Steven Huber  
Ira James  
Kevin Kiernan  
Donald Knoedler  
Jackson Lacombe, Jr.  
Theresa Llacuna  
Lawrence Magnoli  
Woodie Martin  
Joseph Morgan  
Paul Olson  
Kelly Overen  
David Palmer  
Cheuk Pang  
Mark Patterson  
Marc Pella  
Ernest Pena  
Lawanna Philpot  
Laureano Rafael  
Terry Ramsey  
Lawrence Rodriguez  
Ruben Romero  
Joseph Ryncarz  
Maria Salas  
Mark Sanchez  
William Scoggins  
R. E. Shields  
Mark Valdez  
Joseph Vasarhely  
Ernesto Vasquez  
Nadine Vick  
Martin Way  
Alfred White  
Rudolph Wilson  
Perry Wong  
Robert Wright  
Joseph Zozom

### Letters, continued from page 3

Perry to stay for another 5 years, but if he won't, I wish him and his wife a long, healthy retirement.

*Gary Abrahamson, San Leandro, CA Member, Retirees Club, East Bay Chapter*

### Heat standard

I just wanted to send you a copy of the Heat Illness Standard that the Cal-OSHA Standards Board voted on, and approved 6-0, at the June 15 Standards Board meeting. [Note: Readers can link to this document from the Local 1245 home page at [www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com)]. There are a few changes from the version you had in the

June issue of Utility Reporter.

I want to thank you and Local 1245 for getting the word out on this and hopefully this year we will not see the deaths we have seen in the past.

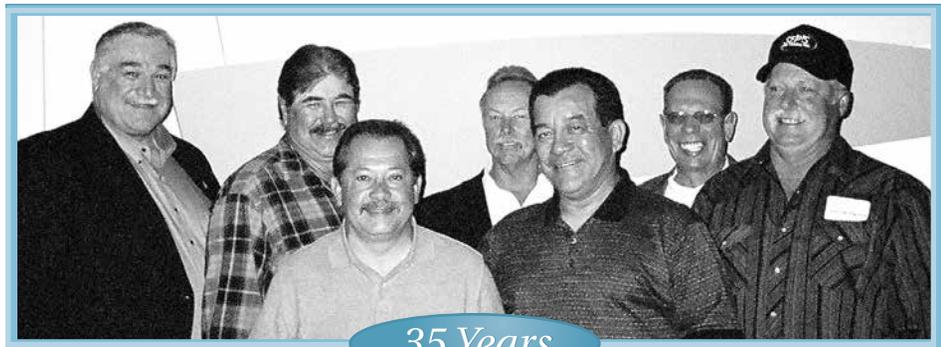
Of special notice to all our members is the company requirement to have sufficient drinking water available throughout the shift to allow for at least one quart, per person, per hour and that shade must be available when the employee needs a break from the heat. Their call, not the employers. Also, no specific number of breaks, only as needed by the worker.

*Art Murray, IBEW International Rep and Member of Standards Board, Cal-OSHA*

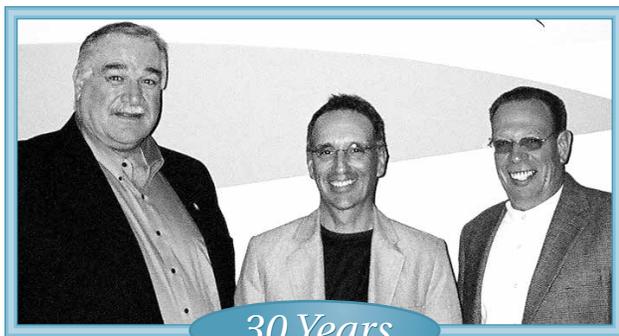
# SERVICE AWARDS



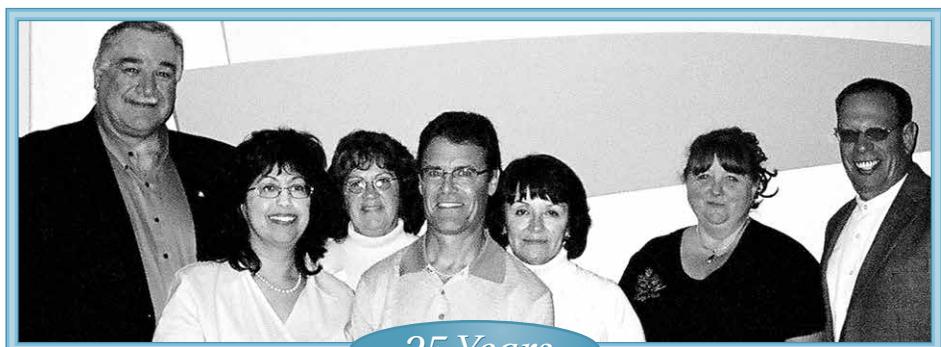
## Monterey, CA May 13, 2006



35 Years



30 Years



25 Years

### THE HONOREES

#### 40 Years

J. D. Sotelo

#### 35 Years

Thomas Barker  
William Bravo  
Richard Cecil  
Louisa Donat  
Roger Elzey  
R. D. Garcia  
Glenn Griffin  
George Hernandez  
Rick Kimes  
Lonnie Martin  
Stephen Moreno  
Frank Paz, Jr.

Joseph Sigala, Jr.  
Steven Snyder  
Ronald Turner  
Benjamin Valdez

#### 30 Years

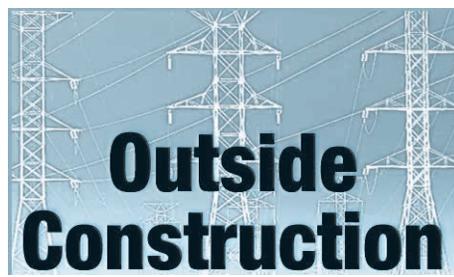
Paul Cabanlit, Jr.  
Charles Davis  
Joseph Grassi  
Richard Lopez  
Ronald Malone  
Michael Minoggi  
Felix Rosario  
Charles Strong

#### 25 Years

Mary Alvarez

Frank Babb  
Katharine Bevan  
Eva Bojorquez  
Phyllis Cabrera  
Pamala Camera  
Mark Creech  
Greg De Mars  
Frederick Menezes II  
Roberta Mora  
Diane Oryall  
Alex Robinson  
Maria Roman  
Cynthia Stewart  
Karla Terry  
Michael Zimmnicki

## Outside Construction



From May 11 to June 14 we had 83 calls for Journeyman Lineman; 17 calls for Apprentice Lineman; 0 calls for Equipment Specialist; 5 calls for Groundman; 3 calls for Cable Splicers; and 18 calls for UG Techs, for a total of 126 calls.



Ron Cochran

Total crews working:  
Outside Line: 64 crews  
Smith Denison (UGT): 18 crews  
Osmose (Pole Test): 30 crews  
Davey Tree (Pole Test): 15 crews  
Republic (Signals): 24 men  
Canus (Testers-Insp.): 53 men

There are 328 apprentices registered in JATC:  
1 traveling apprentice

50 working out of local 1245  
247 working out of local 47  
11 out of work  
25 Apprentices graduated to Journeyman  
77 indentured this year

Orientation/climbing class is in progress. Twenty started, 16 have been indentured. Last four are finishing up this week. There was a work methods training class in June with 11 apprentices attending.

Ron Cochran has been appointed by Business Manager Perry Zimmerman to replace Dave Crawford as trustee on the Cal-Nevada JATC training trust. Cochran will attend trustee training the week of June 25.

A retirement planning seminar for members in Outside Construction will be held Nov. 18 at Weakley Hall in Vacaville. Interest cards will be mailed out.

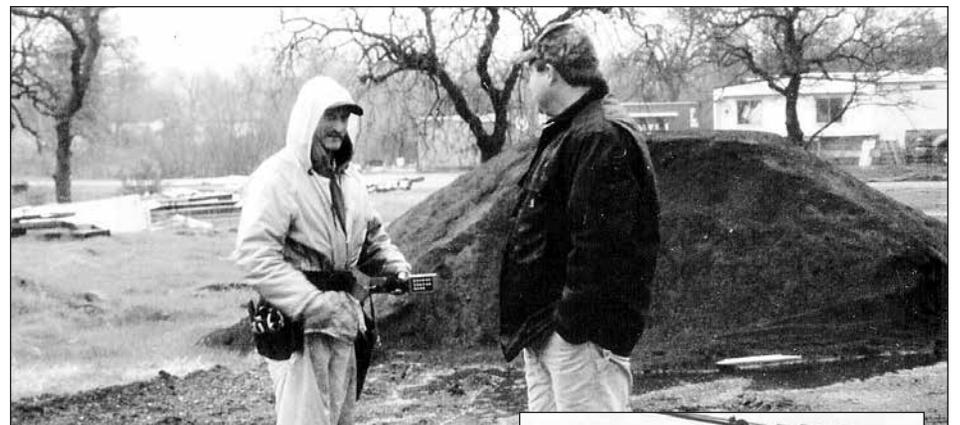
Shop stewards are needed at all job sites. A steward training workshop will be held Feb. 10, 2007.

Service Awards dinners for Outside Construction will be held Sept. 16, 2006 in Sacramento and Sept. 30, 2006 in Bakersfield.

*Ron Cochran, Business Representative*

## Restoring the connection

During heavy storms in early 2006, Local 1245 members at Frontier Communications were busy making sure that Frontier customers, both commercial and residential, had dial tone and uninterrupted high speed internet service.



Palo Cedro Maintenance Splicer Frank Stone, left, talks with an appreciative customer after confirming that service had been restored to the man's residence.



"In Charge" Maintenance Splicer John White performs aerial repairs on Frontier's phone system off of Highway 44, east of Palo Cedro.



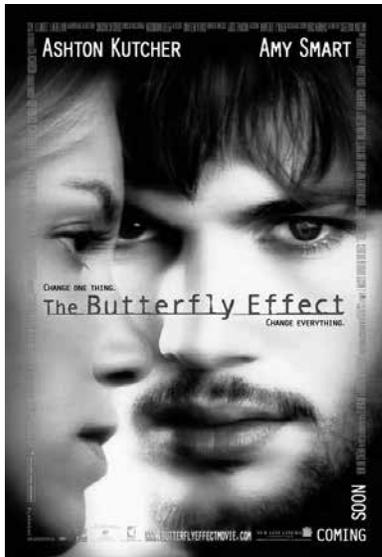
## Time to be safe

By Bob Burkle

Ashton Kutcher stars in a great movie called "The Butterfly Effect."

In this story, the main character, played by Kutcher, discovers he has a talent evidently passed onto him by his father that allows him to go back in time. He repeatedly attempts to go back and alter the outcome of a prank that turned into tragedy, but each attempt end up creating a new set of equally undesirable outcomes.

It is fascinating to dream of going back in time. The idea of changing one detail about the past to affect the present in a favorable way is a common thought for us all. This is never more prevalent than when an accident occurs. Someone is injured or killed. Regret, despair, sadness, and pain tend to lead us to lament about what few small changes we could have made for prevention's sake, especially when it is evident that an accident



was easily preventable.

Easily or not, "preventable" is the key word here. If there was any way we could have prevented an accident, it is no doubt a more desirable outcome.

Of course, we can't go back in time. What we can do is use the knowledge that the actions we take today, in the present, are the only options we have to keep us out of harm's way. The choices we make, with the knowledge we have, determine how we protect ourselves against all possible future events.

Once an accident occurs, it is beyond our ability to add protective measures; beyond our ability to magically erase injuries; beyond our ability to change what is now the past. The time to change that would have been before, not after, the event. This is the essence of safety: the time to prevent and protect against accidents that occur in the future is now.

That means making smart choices everyday, because you will never know when the unexpected will occur. That means using all of your protection every day, not just those times when you "think" something is going to happen.

Think how smart you will feel when you have the thought that you would *not* want to change the past, because you made the right choices, and you avoided injury. Be a genius—use the knowledge you have to make the right safety choices. Do it now.

*Bob Burkle, a lineman at City of Santa Clara, is a member of the Local 1245 Safety Committee.*

## Making the most of safety facts

By Bob Burkle

Thanks to changes in the way information is collected and analyzed at the National Safety Council, we in the utility industry can now have a look at statistics that apply directly to our operations.

Prior to 2003, records for accidents and injuries were combined with other industries' reports, such as transportation. Having statistics available specifically for the utility industry will be valuable in years to come, as we can now track data for our separate operations to see trends, and hopefully improvements.

A few facts are noteworthy. From year 2003 to 2004, the number of recordable accidents cases for Electric Power transmission, control, and distribution climbed from 4.9 to 6.2 per 100

workers. Water, Sewage had the highest rate of accidents in 2003 (6.6). In 2004, Water, Sewage dropped to 6.0 in 2004, while Natural Gas Distribution, claimed the highest rate of accidents: 7.3 per 100 workers.

The leading type of nonfatal injury for utility workers was sprains and strains: 3,530 in 2003. Among all private sector employees in 2003, 569,910 suffered strains and sprains.

The most common body part affected in these incidents was the back. Back strains and other back injuries—caused by overextension—are a leading problem for the utility industry, according to Tony Watkins, National Safety Council's Utilities Division chair. Overextension caused a total of 1,600 utility workers injuries, 550 of which were the result of lifting.

Aging is one primary reason these injuries need to be addressed in safety programs. Physical labor takes a toll on older workers. Those workers between 45 and 54 years old suffered more

## Induction: the Other Invisible Killer

By Art Torres

Those of us who work with electricity know the dangers of this unseen, invisible force. Some of us have seen electricity when something goes wrong, such as uncontrolled voltages due to phase-to-phase and phase-to-ground faults. We have been trained to "treat it hot until it's grounded."

Another invisible killer, a partner to high voltages, is induction. Induction is when you have ungrounded, de-energized lines in close proximity to ener-

gized hi-voltage lines. The energized lines create a magnetic field which, if it is of a high enough magnitude, will energize the dead lines with a static charge. The de-energized lines will retain this static charge until it is discharged, hopefully with a set of grounds instead of a human conductor.

If the static charge is large enough it will cause serious injury and or death. We've all walked across a carpet then touched something metallic and we get a tingle. When we are talking transmission voltages, that tingle can send you to the promised land.

Let's not take short cuts. "Treat it hot until it's grounded," and don't forget about the other invisible killer—induction.

*Art Torres is a member of the IBEW Local 1245 Safety Committee.*

## Take time to test the air

By Art Torres

Those of us who have worked in vaults and manholes know that sometimes the odors in those environments are not very savory. Leaves, mud, stagnant water, and other indescribable matter can make for an unappetizing experience.

There are other things we should be careful of prior to entering these spaces: noxious gases. What form of gases can exist in a confined space?

Carbon monoxide is the first to come to mind. With vehicular traffic passing over manholes all day long, day in and day out, chances are those holes are going to collect carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide is heavier than air so a hole in the street is the perfect place for this gas to hide out.

How about methane gas created by

an accumulation of rotting vegetation in a dark and smelly hole in the middle of the street? Not a good thing to breath, plus it's volatile.

Prior to entering an underground manhole or vault, always use a gas monitor to test for oxygen content and any dangerous gases or combustibles. Learn to use these monitors—they can keep you out of trouble. Consider the alternatives: if your work partner decides to go into an untested environment and passes out, what are you really going to do? If you go in after him/her there's a good chance you aren't going to make it either. By the time you get out the air blower, call for help, and finish running around in a panic, it's probably too late.

Take the time to test the air.

*Art Torres is a member of the Local 1245 Safety Committee.*

## Local 1245 Safety Committee

Current members of the Local 1245 Safety Committee are Keith Hopp, Pacific Gas & Electric; Al White, Pacific Gas & Electric; David Vipond, Citizens Communications; Kurt Celli, Modesto Irrigation District; Art Torres, Sacramento Municipal Utility District; Bob Burkle, City of Santa Clara; James Gorman and Carl Lamers, Davey Tree; and Assistant Business Manager Howard Stiefer.

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WEB-03/05

# Sonoma County trim

Photos by Eric Wolfe

Line clearance tree trimmers Antonio Lopez and Carlos Castro work along Highway 29 in Sonoma County, clearing growth away from PG&E power lines. Lopez is a foreman for Davey Tree Surgery Co.; Castro is a climber. Among the hazards that accompany this work are fast-moving traffic, intense heat and the proximity of energized power lines.



Foreman Antonio Lopez operating the pole pruner.



Climber Carlos Castro gathers limbs tossed down by Antonio Lopez. Safety cones help provide a margin of safety while working on these winding mountain roads.



Davey crew works along Highway 29 in Sonoma County.

## Paltry penalties for endangering workers

**C**orporations with unsafe and even deadly working conditions get penalized, right?

Like the \$3 million fine against a pipeline company for a spill and explosion that killed two 10-year old boys and a teenage boy in Washington State. Or the \$2.5 million penalty against nuclear labs around the country for exposing workers to radiation.

UtilityReporter

And the \$1.3 million in fines against coal companies for deaths and injuries to miners.

Sure sounds like fitting penalties.

Yet nearly all of that \$6.8 million is a part of the more than \$35 billion in fines and other payment penalties against corporations and individuals in civil and criminal cases that has gone uncollected in the past 10 years, according to a study by the Associated Press.

The AP study, as reported by the AFL-CIO's Mike Hall, found:

Individuals and corporations regularly avoid large, highly publicized penalties for wrongdoing—sometimes

through negotiations, sometimes because companies go bankrupt, sometimes due to officials' failure to keep close track of who owes what under a decentralized collection system.

In many high-profile cases, fines are touted by authorities as proof that they are cracking down. Yet frequently those orders are quietly negotiated to just a fraction of their original amounts—as if drivers, faced with fines for speeding, offered the traffic court judge pennies on the dollar, and the judge agreed.

In the pipeline case, the \$3.5 million fine was reduced to \$250,000. The fines

against the nuclear labs were waived. In the coal mine cases, one fine, \$435,000 assessed against Jim Walters Resources for the deaths of 13 coal miners in a Brookwood, Ala., mine in 2001, was reduced to \$3,000 and the AP reports the rest went largely uncollected.

If companies such as these—which saw their fines shrinking to an outrageously small percent of the original assessment—and others know that the cost of their wrongdoing isn't going to hurt much, what kind of incentive do they have to obey the law or follow safety rules?

# SERVICE AWARDS

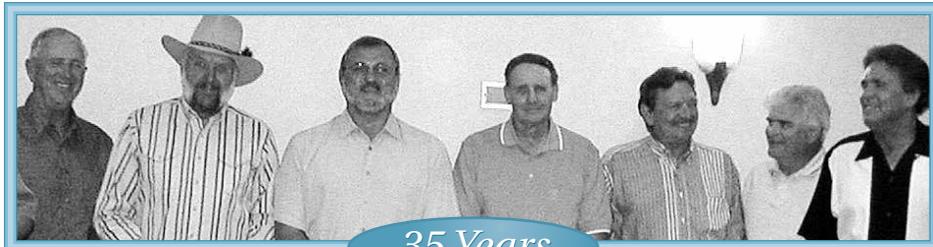


## Fresno, CA

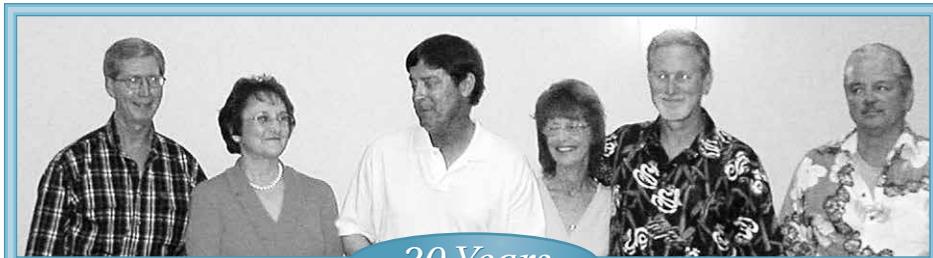
May 13, 2006



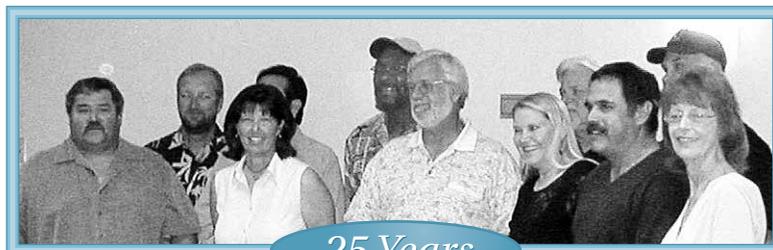
Bruce Pontious receives his 50-year plaque from Business Rep. Mike Grill, left, and Local 1245 Recording Secretary Chris Habecker, right.



35 Years



30 Years



25 Years

### THE HONOREES

#### 50 Years

Bruce Pontious

#### 40 Years

M. W. Dean  
Louis Sisk

#### 35 Years

Carl Bushman  
Richard Downs

Charles Garabedian  
James Greydanus  
William Grigsby  
Danny Hernandez  
Frank Lathrop  
Marvin Pennington  
Salvador Perales  
Ronnie Powell  
Daniel Pronold  
Aaron Reed  
Larry Sebilian  
Richard Stillwell  
Geary Weaver

Frances Zwinge

#### 30 Years

Anthony Chavira  
Florence Cotton  
Darleen Foote  
Kelly Foster  
Christine Habecker  
Dennis Istre  
Frank Malcria  
John Monreal, Jr.  
Ron Moody  
Patrick Obrien

Michael Parsons  
Mark Pavlovich  
Don Ragsdale  
Adrian Ramorini, Jr.  
Keith Rasmussen  
Clifford Riddle  
David Sandlin  
Pedro Sandoval, Jr.  
Robert Whitley

#### 25 Years

Robert Allustiarti  
David Baldwin

Thomas Baldwin  
Berniece Bradley  
Sandra Brechmann  
David Cabezut  
Valerie Cal  
Guillermo Coronel  
Tom Dyer  
Victor Flores  
Karen Gibson  
Michael Grill  
Janey Holden  
Leland House  
Gary Isaac

Michael Lara  
Stephen Lathan  
Ruben Lopez  
Frederick Macleod  
Sandy Martinez  
Pride Mc Coy, Jr.  
Iveory Montgomery  
Dale Okamura  
Percy Sanderson  
Russ Silva  
Edward Vermilya  
Richard Wiederhold  
Arnell Work

## Oroville, CA

February 25, 2006

### THE HONOREES

#### 60 Years

Joseph Flores

#### 40 Years

James Dean  
Dennis Jacobs  
Alvin Knudsen  
James McMillen  
David Ostrander  
John Riccobuano  
A. A. Vega

#### 35 Years

John Clover  
Charles Cutshall  
Ronald Fargen  
Richard Lutz

Danny Sherman  
Harry Skemp  
Dennis Thomas  
Kenneth Williams

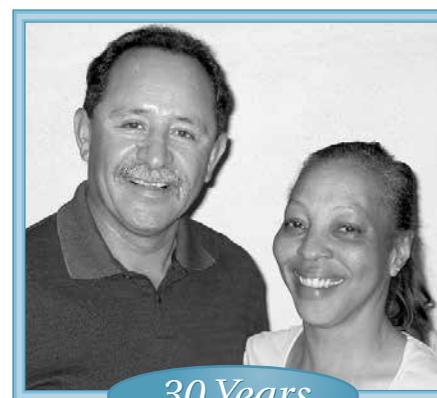
#### 30 Years

John Carlisle  
Raymon Dreiss  
Jim Edwards  
Randy Garcia  
Tim Gobel  
Richard Martinez  
Thomas Perez  
James Pinocchio, Jr.  
Natalie Sherman  
Ronald Sobrero  
Richard Walls

#### 25 Years

Dan Beer

John Benzel  
Doug Coon  
Gary Elliott  
Robin Harriger  
Mary Haughey  
Carl Kirby  
Gerald Linville  
David Lau  
Martha Long  
John Lopez  
Leonard Martin  
Ralph Martin  
Richard Mayfield  
Scott Petersen  
Pamela Ramirez  
Leroy Shuman  
Richard Stoyanowski  
Judy Stangelan  
Stephen Tissot



30 Years



25 Years

# SERVICE AWARDS



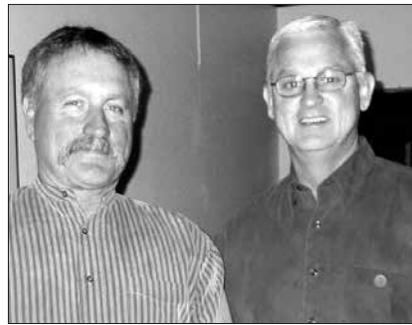
## Ukiah, CA

March 25, 2006



**Frontier Service Awards**

Local 1245 Members Monte "Toot" Nelson, left, and George Andreasen, right, were presented with Service Awards on Feb. 10 in Alturas, Ca. by Senior Business Rep. Ray Thomas. Nelson is a 35-year member; Andreasen is a 25-year member.



Honored for 35 years of service are Ed Jones, left, and Gary Silver.



Honored for 30 years of service are, from left, Bill Dawson, Wanda Otte and Ed Austin.



Dorleen McBride, left, receives 25-year service award from Assistant Business Manager Dennis Seyfer.

### THE HONOREES

#### 40 Years

L. C. Baker  
A. R. Gregory

#### 35 Years

Sama Hagen  
Edward Jones  
John Perez  
Gary Silver

#### 30 Years

Edward Austin  
William Dawson  
Gary Fernandez  
Wanda Otte

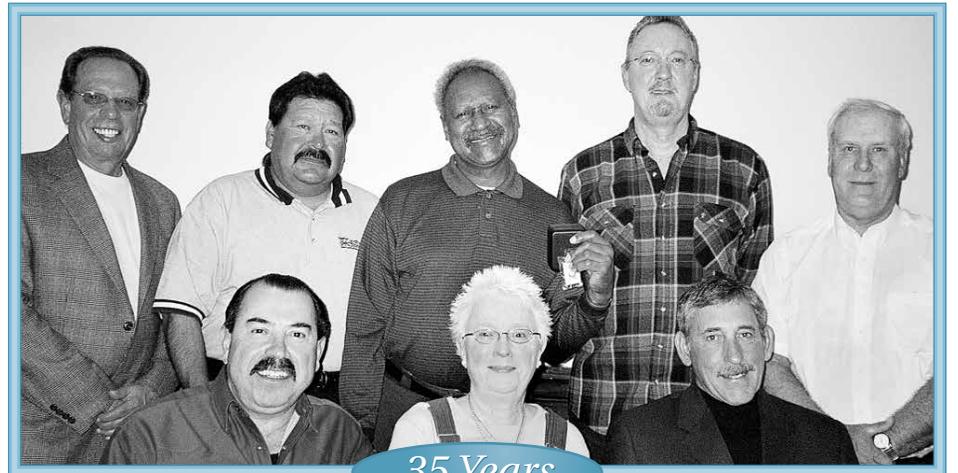
#### 25 Years

Stanley Fedornak  
Dorleen Mc Bride

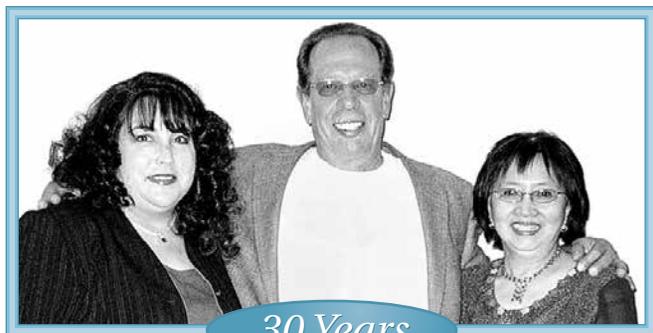
## San Jose, CA

March 11, 2006

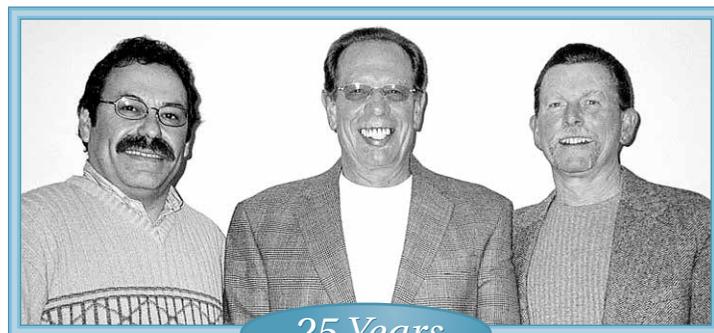
Jack Hill, left, Retiree Club representative on the most recent PG&E General Bargaining Committee and a former member of the IBEW Local 1245 staff, receives his 40-year award from Business Rep. Bill Brill.



35 Years



30 Years



25 Years

### THE HONOREES

#### 55 Years

Karl M. Davey

#### 40 Years

Craig Feldhaus  
E. E. Hathcoat

Jack Hill

#### 35 Years

Ruben Aguilera  
Patrick Alameda  
Ronald Bruno  
Carlos Castillo  
Susan Chase  
Glenn Cobb

Sherman Coleman

Robert Cowan  
Malcolm High  
Fred Jones  
Robert Lowther  
Ivy Rachley  
Gary Vanhorne  
Mauro Vela, Jr.

#### 30 Years

Richard Borba  
John Cibelli  
Lynda Collins  
David Olvera  
Jerome Retterath  
Ted Rohl  
Valori Souza - Mccoy

Amelia Sulit

Debra Wibeto

#### 25 Years

Jeffery Amaral  
John Becerra  
Richard Boyle  
Gordon Callaghan  
Heriberto Contreas

Edward Fleige

Forrest Freitas  
Sherri Gardner  
D Gunnar  
Darrell Hashimoto  
Claude Rose  
Edward Silva  
Robert Thompson

# I.B.E.W. AND MERRILL LYNCH PRESENT RETIREMENT SEMINARS FOR 2006

Full buffet breakfast, lunch or dinner will be served at all morning, afternoon or evening seminars. Presentations will be given by an I.B.E.W. Local 1245 Rep as well as Merrill Lynch Financial Advisors Bob Gallo, SVP and Dave Brantley, FVP.

**Is Your  
TIME COMING?  
ARE YOU  
PREPARED?**

All seminars are free of charge and will be open to employees over the age of 40 and those on L.T.D.

**SAN JOSE** Saturday, September 9  
Breakfast 9:00 – 12:00 noon

**SACRAMENTO** Saturday, September 9  
Breakfast 9:00 – 11:00 am

**OAKLAND** Tuesday, September 12  
Dinner 6:30 – 9:00 pm

**CONCORD** Tuesday, September 12  
Dinner 7:00 – 9:30 pm

**BAKERSFIELD** Friday, September 15  
Dinner 6:30 – 9:00 pm

**REDDING** Saturday, September 16  
Breakfast 9:00 – 11:00 am

**FRESNO** Saturday, September 16  
Lunch 9:00 – 12:00 noon

**CHICO** Saturday, September 16  
Lunch 1:00 – 3:00 pm

**SAN MATEO** Tuesday, September 19  
Dinner 6:30 – 9:00 pm

**STOCKTON** Tuesday, September 19  
Dinner 7:00 – 9:30 pm

**EUREKA** Saturday, September 23  
Breakfast 9:00 – 12:00 noon

**MONTEREY** Thursday, September 28  
Dinner 6:30 – 9:00 pm

**UKIAH** Friday, September 29  
Dinner 7:00 – 9:00 pm

**SAN LUIS OBISPO** Saturday, September 30  
Breakfast 9:00 – 12 noon

**SANTA ROSA** Saturday, September 30  
Breakfast 9:00 – 11:00 am

If you plan to attend please R.S.V.P. when you receive your invitation from the Union or call (800) 234-3858 and ask for Yi Seeman for more information.



**Merrill Lynch**