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News briefs

Market

Manipulation will be the focus of an investigation by the Texas Public Utility Commission as it looks into TXU Corp.'s activity in the wholesale electricity market on the eve of Texas's transition to a completely deregulated market.

The Mega-Merger between FPL Group and Constellation Energy Group, worth \$12.5 billion, was called off last month amidst concerns by state regulators' over rising power prices.

Creating a "Switchman" classification was the subject of talks with PG&E in October.

Control Center Consolidation being planned at PG&E prompted talks with the union last month over staffing procedures, retention, bidding incentives and base rate increase.

Millions of Workers could be reclassified as supervisors and made ineligible for union protection as a result of the "Kentucky River" decision last month by the Republican-dominated National Labor Relations Board.

Utility Reporter

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UTILITY IS STRENGTH

For up-to-the-minute news, see our website: www.ibew1245.com



Sea of Orange

It was a sea of orange when Local 1245 members turned out for an Alameda City Council meeting in September to protest the city's intransigence at the bargaining table. The members' united action helped jumpstart negotiations, leading to an agreement that was ratified Oct. 31. See the story, along with a profile of Local 1245 members at AP&T, beginning on Page 7.

Still no action by PG&E on health care, pensions

Retirees' frustration grows

Activists from Local 1245's five Retiree Club chapters met at Weakley Hall in Vacaville Oct. 11 to discuss how to move forward on their growing alarm over the soaring cost of their medical insurance and the declining value of their pension checks.

The meeting was a sequel to a similar gathering in June, at which PG&E officers listened to retiree concerns and pledged to respond in the fall. While no official company response was offered at the October meeting, PG&E Senior Vice President Russ Jackson stopped by to discuss some of the constraints the company was operating under as it reviewed the retirees' request for economic relief.

PG&E's Director of Industrial Relations, Steve Rayburn, also attended the meeting.

Retirees took the opportunity to reiterate their frustration with current conditions.

"If we had known you were going to yank our medical coverage, we'd have negotiated better pensions instead (of negotiating medical benefits). Just because other companies are doing it, where are the morals here?" asked East Bay Chapter President Mike Silva. "I think we've proven to you it's hurting your retirees a lot...and you're morally obligated to fix the situation."

Jackson responded that growing competition in the utility industry had placed new pressures on the company. "In a competitive arena you have to do some of the things (needed) to keep a company competitive," he said.

On the subject of pensions, Jackson noted that the California Public Utilities

Rick Rodgers, Vacaville/Sacramento Chapter of the Local 1245 Retirees Club, offers his perspective on the financial crunch PG&E retirees are facing during a joint meeting of the five club chapters at Weakley Hall on Oct. 11.



Commission in 2003 had turned down a PG&E request for additional funding for its pension plan, but that in the most recent rate case the CPUC had agreed to more funding.

"There's going to be \$715 million more in (the pension plan) by 2009, so we should all be pleased with the increased funding," Jackson said. He acknowledged that the increased funding for the plan would enable the company to have a fully funded pension plan by 2009, based on current assumptions, but did not include funding to increase benefit

levels for retirees.

Even a 2% annual cost-of-living increase for retirees would create a \$285 million deficit in the pension plan by 2009, Jackson noted in an extended exchange with North Bay Chapter President Larry Mead.

Jackson was cool to the idea that shareholder money could be used to fund increases in the pension benefit, saying such a move would make it harder to attract investors and could also jeopardize PG&E's ability to gain CPUC approval

Continued on page 12.

New Sierra package not so new

Following the members' rejection of the company's contract offer last summer, Local 1245 resumed negotiations at Sierra Pacific Power this fall.

But the new package offered by the company through a mediator is not really so new. In fact, the value of the overall package is less than the package previously rejected, according to a memo sent to members by the Local 1245 Bargaining Committee.

Further, the union committee has suggested that the company may be trying to improperly negotiate directly with employees, and is not telling employees the whole story about the new package.

The union bargaining committee is currently preparing a comprehensive proposal, which will be delivered to the company through the mediator on Nov. 8. This proposal will address all items

Continued on page 13.

Arcing and Sparking



Tom Dalzell
BUSINESS MANAGER

What drives morale down?

In October, I visited almost 20 jobsites and met with several hundred of our members. Here is what struck me.

Our members are not afraid of hard work. Whether they are trimming trees, working in an office, working on gas pipelines, or working on power lines, they are used to hard work. Not once did I hear one of our members complain, "The work is too hard." Our members show up expecting to work.

They know that in most workplaces they are doing the job with staffing levels far below past levels, but they soldier on.

Our members like to be challenged in their work. A problem that they have never seen before, a solution that they had not thought of before, a new technology or process—they like the challenge. In large part, there is an acceptance that change is coming. Better than anyone, they know that there is room for improvement in the way they do their jobs, and they are anxious to see that improvement.

Our members are proud of the job they do. I visited members from PG&E, the Bella Vista Water District, the City of Shasta Lake, Davey Tree, Utility Tree, and Outside Line Construction. Everyone I visited was working hard, working smart, and taking pride in it.

Studies show that when employee morale is high, a unionized workforce is the most productive workforce in the market. Collective action comes naturally to unionized workers, who after all

are committed to collective bargaining. When they excel, they know that it reflects favorably not just on their employer, but on *their* union.

Studies also show what common sense would tell us—when employee morale is low, productivity suffers. In my visits, I saw a few jobsites where our members work hard, like challenges, and are proud—but where morale is low.

What drives morale down?

Petty supervision for one. I was flabbergasted to hear stories of supervisors in this day and age counseling employees who were 15 seconds late to their desk in the morning. This pettiness, manifested in supervisory intervention in issues like parking spaces and keys left on the desk, is a morale-killer if there ever was one.

Supervisory favoritism is another death blow for morale. No matter what else good a supervisor does, if they reward employees on the basis of favor curried, or save the worst jobs for shop

stewards, the good is forgotten and the favoritism remembered. Morale suffers.

A lack of management support for the job can hurt morale. I saw a workplace with the most daunting set of staffing, technological, and process challenges imaginable, yet I saw high morale there. Our members felt that supervision was on their side, helping them meet the challenges of the job. It is

continued on page 7

CALENDAR

Nov. 17: Service Awards, Petaluma, CA

Nov. 18: Stewards Conference, Petaluma, CA

Dec. 5: Retirees Club, Santa Rosa, CA

Dec. 5: Retirees Club, Merced, CA

Dec. 7: Retirees Club, San Jose, CA

Dec. 13: Retirees Club, Vacaville, CA

Dec. 14: Retirees Club, Dublin, CA

APPOINTMENTS

PORT OF OAKLAND

Bargaining Committee
David Cuthbertson
William Morrison

SIERRA PACIFIC POWER

Bargaining Committee
Dan Lyday

FRONTIER (SHINGLETOWN/ COLUSA)

First Bargaining Committee
Glenn R. Thompson
Donald Carman

PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC

Work and Resource Dispatcher
Performance Standard
Ed Dwyer
Michael Romo

CITY OF ROSEVILLE

Bargaining Committee
Travis Watkins
Doug Willford
Dennis Torres
Joel Gabezuela
Steve Seaton
Rick Thompson
Mike Barton

Bargaining Sub-Committee

Cheril Flower
Tom Cox
Terry Albers

CONFERENCES AND CONVENTIONS

IBEW Nuclear Conference

Dan Lockwood
Mark Taylor
John "Mike" Jacobson

IBEW Safety Caucus

Keith Hopp
Art Torres

ILCA Workshop and Awards Luncheon

Eric Wolfe



Letters to the Editor

On smoking

To the Editor:

I appreciate getting the information provided in the Utility Reporter Election Supplement (October-November 2006) which has been quite helpful. However, the glaring omission of any information whatsoever on Proposition 86 shows your true bias. Punish the smokers yet again! This knee jerk reaction will give the HMOs more power and money while giving less control for their patients. Very little will go to smoking cessation programs and health programs.

Physicians and law enforcement groups are against this proposition.

Our cigarette taxes already pay for your child's early childhood education and various other things that have absolutely nothing to do with smoking so don't let another proposition fool you into thinking this one will help thousand of smokers quit.

Again there actually will be less tax taken in California because smokers are fed up with being the scapegoat. We buy from Indian reservations, out of state and through the internet. All of which are legal and as yet cannot be touched by anti smokers actions.

In two years when the 10 cents per can tax on beer and a dollar on a bottle of wine goes into effect—to fight alcoholism, you'll understand what we've gone through.

Other than that, a good presentation on the issues.

Thanks.

Glynis Davey, Oakland, CA

Unit thanks negotiators

To the Editor:

We would like to thank each member of the negotiating committee for their work during the recent negotiations between IBEW 1245 and SMUD. We appreciate the effort of the people who step up to ensure that the interests of the members are promoted!

Our negotiating committee:

Sam Glero Dan White
Mark Flanders Don Kreuter
Dave Butler Ike Williams

On behalf of the membership,
Raymond Curtis, Unit Chair

Friend of the environment

Editor's note: The following letter to PG&E President and CEO Peter Darbee is reprinted here with the author's permission. See related story, Page 13.

Dear Mr. Darbee:

Congratulations! Your astute leadership has reached an unprecedented plateau. By becoming a friend of the environment and addressing global warming you have taken a significant step toward PG&E becoming the #1 utility nationwide.

We at the Merced Chapter of the IBEW Local 1245 Retiree Club are proud of your innovation.

Gordon Borges, President
Merced Chapter
IBEW Local 1245 Retirees Club



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Our Web Site can be viewed at www.IBEW1245.com.

Our phone number is (707) 452-2700.

Outside Construction

The union has ordered 120 long-sleeve T-Shirts. They are promised to us by Nov. 1. Cost is \$15.00 per shirt. If the first order works out, we can re-order and add hats, jackets, sweatshirts, even embroidered carhart work coats.



Ron Cochran,
Senior Business
Rep.

Crew Count:

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Abbett: | 1 crew |
| All Day: | 16 crews |
| Black & Veatch: | 2 crews |
| Contra Costa: | 3 crews |
| California Splicing & Testing: | .. 1 crew |
| Diversified: | 11 crews |
| Grace Associates: | 1 crew |
| Henkels & McCoy: | 9 crews |
| ILB: | 15 crews |
| Kingston: | 1 crew |
| Par 16: | crews |
| Mountain Power: | 1 crew |
| Michels Power: | 1 crew |
| Pacheco Utility: | 1 crew |
| Railway Elect.: | 1 crew |
| Wilson: | 2 crews |
| Woodward Brothers: | 1 crew |
| Sturgeon Electric: | 2 crews |
| TTR: | 3 crews |
| Davey Tree Pole Treatment Agr.: | 16 crews |
| Osmose Pole Treatment Agr.: | 30 crews |
| Republic Elect. (Signal Lights): | 40 members |
| Canus (Inspectors Comm And Relay Tech's): | 51 members |
| Smith Denison (Ug Agreement): | 12 crews |
| 88 line crews working. 72 crews as last month, up 16 crews: | |
| 12 under ground tech crews working | |
| 46 pole test & treat crews working | |
| 40 signal workers | |
| 51 tech workers (substation and line inspectors) | |

Dispatch Report from Sept. 13-Oct. 11:

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| Journeyman Linemen: | 84 |
| Apprentice Linemen: | 12 |
| Equipment Specialist: | 9 |
| Cable Splicers: | 0 |
| Groundman: | 33 |
| UG Techs: | 1 |
| Total Calls: | 138 |

The books:

| | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Lineman-1 | 32 |
| Lineman-2 | 20 |
| Lineman-3 | 2 |
| Lineman-4 | 12 |
| Groundman-1 | 15 |
| Groundman-2 | 5 |
| Groundman-3 | 18 |
| Groundman-4 | 63 |
| Equip. Specialist-1 | 6 |
| Equip. Specialist-2 | 2 |

Utility Reporter

| | |
|---------------------|---------|
| Equip. Specialist-3 | 3 |
| Cable Splicer-1 | 5 |
| Cable Splicer-2 | 1 |
| Cable Splicer-3 | 0 |

Cal-Nevada JATC Report:

We currently have 354 apprentices registered in our JATC program. We have 6 traveling apprentices working in our jurisdiction. 65 apprentices are working out of local 1245; 262 are working out of Local 47; 10 are working out of Local 396; 23 are off of work due to various personal reasons.

We graduated a total of 35 apprentices to journeyman lineman this year. We currently have an orientation/climbing class in progress. We started the class Oct. 9 with 15 individuals attending. We have indentured 126 apprentices into the program this year.

Dues Increase:

At the 37th IBEW International Convention, the delegates approved a per capita increase. This means a dues increase for our members. "A" member dues increased from \$22.30 per month to \$24 per month.

Effective immediately, any member paying dues into the 2007 year is respon-

Railway Electric: After Hours In San Francisco

After hours in San Francisco. The words conjure up images of late-night partying at the city's many bars and clubs, squeezing in a show or concert after work.

But for Railway Electric, "after hours" in San Francisco has recently had a somewhat different meaning. IBEW Outside Construction members working for the contractor spent the hours from 9 p.m. to 4:30 a.m. re-conductoring 60,000 feet of contact wire for San



Journeyman Lineman win Wellington's praise

Tim Riblett and Terry Dollarhide last month installed the first Hexagram DCU in Bakersfield, CA, part of PG&E's SmartMeter project. These Journeyman Linemen, dispatched by Local 1245, were performing the work for Wellington Energy Inc. Jack Ednie, Wellington's General Manager for Field Operations, e-mailed Local 1245 to say: "Thanks for sending these fine Journeyman Linemen to our project with PG&E."



sible to cover the dues increase. "A" dues for January 2007 onward are \$24 per month. The rate increase applies even if the member is paying the dues in 2006—as long as the payment covers dues going into the year 2007. Please help spread the news to the members.

This increase also affects the initiation amounts. Starting January 2007, groundman, equipment man, and apprentice initiations will be \$51 (\$25 initiation fee plus \$2 Death Benefit Fee

plus one month of dues at \$24). Lineman and Journeyman Lineman initiation will be \$76 (\$50 initiation fee plus \$2 DBF plus one month dues \$24).

Other News:

CAL OSHA; crane certification voting changed to November. We expect it to be implemented in December of 2006.

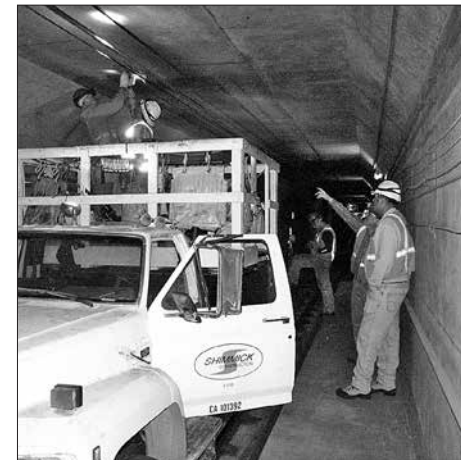
First Aid & CPR is the 2nd Saturday of every month in Riverside and Sacramento.

Francisco MUNI's light rail system.

Although the hours may not be the most convenient for the journeymen performing the work, the "after hours" schedule allows MUNI to de-energize the lines during a time when inconvenience to customers is minimized.

They were about one-third finished with the project when these photos were taken on July 28.

Next time you're out enjoying yourself after hours, raise your glass to the people whose after-hours labors make it all possible.



Working at the Church Street Station around 2 a.m., are, from left: Ron Cochran, IBEW Local 1245 Business Rep., along with Railway Electric workers Robert Radoff, Foreman; Daniel Gracia, Lineman and Local 1245 Advisory Council member; Dean Evans, Lineman and Shop Steward; Michael Steelman, Wireman.

The Failure of Jeff Skilling's Deregulation

Editor's note: IBEW Local 1245 began warning of the dangers of electric deregulation in 1993, and lobbied successfully in the mid-1990s to defeat Enron's pernicious attempt to take over PG&E's role of "default provider" of power in California's deregulated electric system. But Enron did succeed in hoodwinking California into creating electric markets, and then led the way in manipulating those markets. Enron CEO Jeffrey Skilling on Oct. 23 was sentenced to 24 years in prison for various crimes involving the company's financial schemes, but little attention has been given to the damage that Enron did to the nation's electric system. The following article by award-winning reporter Jason Leopold, published Oct. 25 on truthout.org is a revealing look at how Skilling and his company led California into its disastrous experiment with electric deregulation. The story has been edited for length.

By Jason Leopold

Like a huckster setting up a tent to hock snake oil, Jeffrey Skilling strode into a regulatory hearing in California 12 years ago hell-bent on making a sale.

"[Under deregulation, California] would save about \$8.9 billion per year," Skilling told California's Public Utility Commissioners during a hearing on June 14, 1994. "If you had \$8.9 billion you could triple the number of police officers in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland and San Diego. You could double the State of California construction for hospitals. You could double the number of teachers in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland and San Diego ... Commissioners, the patient is on the ground bleeding," Skilling testified. "Delay kills."

During this time Enron was still a relatively small company, with \$8 billion in annual revenue, a majority of which came from its marketing of natural gas. But with Skilling at the reins, Enron was on its way to becoming a \$100 billion-a-year behemoth.

In 1997, a year after California became the first state in the country to unanimously pass a law opening up its electricity market to competition, Skilling spread his gospel to a more powerful audience.

Opening the US electric power system to consumer choice and competition would be the equivalent of an "\$800 tax refund for every family in the country," the former Enron president told lawmakers during a May 9, 1997, hearing on the economic benefits of deregulation. "Two separate studies tell us that deregulation of electricity markets could save us \$60-80 billion a year."

That year, Enron hired Ralph Reed, the former head of the Christian Coalition, to pimp the company's agenda. Under Skilling and former Enron chairman Ken Lay's leadership, Enron donated more than \$858,000 in soft money and political-action contributions to numerous members of Congress and became the House's largest

contributor from the energy sector.

Skilling's charisma and Enron's hefty political contributions helped turn the concept of a competitive electricity market into federal law. Deregulation in turn helped Enron to become the sixth richest corporation in the world, and that ultimately made Skilling and his colleagues very, very rich.

But Skilling's bold prediction turned out to be wildly off the mark. Two new reports over the past few months have concluded that retail electricity rates are on the rise. In other words, deregulation of the electricity industry has turned out to be an

utter failure; consumers pay higher prices for power now than they did under a regulated system. More than a decade since the idea was introduced and implemented in some states, deregulation has been responsible for the numerous nationwide reliability issues, including rolling blackouts, daily power shortages, and the reality that the wholesale energy market can be manipulated.

As demonstrated by the 2000-2001 California energy crisis, companies including Enron, Williams Companies, Duke Energy, Reliant Energy and others exploited the so-called free market.

They caused the wholesale price of electricity to skyrocket by shutting down power plants in order to create artificial shortages, and sent their much-needed electrical supplies to other states just so they could boost their bottom lines and please investors. The scheme nearly bankrupted the Golden State. California was forced to tap into its budget surplus at a rate of \$50 million or more a day to pay for electricity because the utilities were broke. Eventually, the debacle cost Governor Gray Davis his job.

And now Skilling, for all his hubris, is headed to a federal penitentiary where he will spend the next 24 years sorting out his life after being found guilty of conspiracy, fraud, and a laundry list of other charges related to the financial machinations that brought down Enron Corporation five years ago. But the carnage that deregulation has wrought across the country has cost consumers tens of billions of dollars in additional costs over the years. Even worse, the deregulated market that Skilling insisted would be a boon to consumers in the long run is still ripe for manipulation.

Look no further than Enron's home state of Texas, where consumers pay the highest price for power in the country, about 12 cents a kilowatt hour,



Enron schemers Kenneth Lay, left, and Jeffrey Skilling promised that electric deregulation would bring wealth to California.

Jeffrey Skilling was ultimately convicted and sentenced to 24 years in prison for his crimes as CEO of Enron. Kenneth Lay, also convicted, died of a heart attack before sentencing. Californians will be paying higher electric bills for many years to come thanks to Skilling and Lay's deregulation boondoggle.



as compared to 6 cents/kwh 10 years ago prior to deregulation. Skilling told the Texas Public Utilities Commission back then that 6 cents was “absurdly high” and if the state implemented the consumer choice model rates would

Since the disaster in California, 34 states have decided to put the brakes on deregulation or scrap the plan outright. But the nationwide trend of higher electricity bills isn’t anywhere near abating. In fact, there are warnings

FERC warns that as other states start to open up their power markets to competition, the utilities are entitled to recover costs that exceeded the fixed price for power over the years by increasing retail rates. As a result, FERC warned in its draft report to Congress, there will likely be a public outcry to return to a time when power prices were set by regulators. But the commission’s chairman, Joseph Kelliher, is urging federal and state lawmakers to stay the course, claiming the free market will eventually soften prices. FERC admits there’s no proof that the outcome of deregulation will eventually lower retail prices for consumers but it’s apparent that under the old system, when regulators had authority over the retail price for power, it was cheaper, and reliability was never an issue.

FERC, and even pleas of price caps on out-of-control power prices were initially turned down before FERC finally relented.

Exacerbating the problem of higher retail prices is the fact that under deregulation the nation’s power grid is continuously being stretched beyond its means. Today, power is sent hundreds of miles across the grid to consumers by out-of-state power companies instead of being sent directly to consumers by their local utilities, which is what the grid was designed for.

In October, the North American Electric Reliability Council, an organization funded by the power industry, and that was named by federal regulators in July as the new watchdog group in charge of overseeing the rules for operating the nation’s power grid, issued a grim report saying the nation’s electricity future, under deregulation, is gloomy.

Combined with the shortcomings of deregulation, the neglect of the nation’s transmission grid will likely have long-term repercussions, as demonstrated by the dozens of scattered blackouts in the month of July throughout the nation this summer—one of the hottest on record. Since July, all seven of the country’s regional grid operators that monitor power flow throughout the nation reported record electricity consumption as temperatures increased. Blackouts struck many parts of the country during the month of July, not because of a shortage of supply, but because the dilapidated power grid could not handle the amount of electricity that was sent back and forth across the transmission lines.

But neither FERC nor state lawmakers appear to be considering a return to the old days of utility monopolies or what some refer to as re-regulation. One thing is certain, however, electricity prices will continue to rise over the next few years, ensuring that Jeff Skilling will never be forgotten.

The carnage that deregulation has wrought across the country has cost consumers tens of billions of dollars in additional costs over the years. Even worse, the deregulated market that Skilling insisted would be a boon to consumers in the long run is still ripe for manipulation.

fall well below that figure. Next year Texas is expected to transition to a fully deregulated market, meaning consumers would pay whatever the free market dictates. With deregulation just around the corner, the Texas PUC started to take notice of a pattern of questionable trading practices in its wholesale power market that seemed eerily familiar to those that took place in California five years ago.

On Oct. 20, the Texas PUC announced that it will immediately launch an investigation of TXU Corporation to determine whether the energy company manipulated Texas’s wholesale electricity market by withholding its supplies from the marketplace on certain days in 2005 whereby the company created an artificial shortage and boosted the wholesale price. The investigation stems from an annual review of the state’s power market prepared by Potomac Economics Ltd. The report says TXU’s “balancing energy offer patterns raise substantial competitive concerns.”

TXU vehemently denied the charges, saying in prepared statement that the company “stands firmly behind its record. We are running our largest, most efficient plants at higher output levels than at any other time in history, while making our excess capacity available to the marketplace.”

That’s what Skilling and other energy company executives said during the height of the California energy crisis when charges of deceptive trading practices were hurled at them. It took years, but eventually evidence surfaced proving the claims had merit and California sued the energy companies in an attempt to recover \$8.9 billion – ironically, about the amount Skilling said California consumers would save under deregulation. The state recovered only a fraction of that amount, and consumers were left holding the bag and will continue to do so for the next 20 years because the state was forced to enter into high-priced contracts to ensure power continued to flow into California.

from federal energy regulators that it’s about to get worse.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, whose main function is to ensure power prices remain at a “just and reasonable” rate, has sent a draft report to Congress saying come next year consumers are likely to experience “rate shock” as utilities across the coun-

Since the disaster in California, 34 states have decided to put the brakes on deregulation or scrap the plan outright. But the nationwide trend of higher electricity bills isn’t anywhere near abating. In fact, there are warnings from federal energy regulators that it’s about to get worse.

try seek the authority to raise their rates in order to cover the increased expense of generating electricity.

Electricity rates were set at what was thought at the time to be an artificially high price during the transition to a deregulated market. But no one accounted for the possibility that the cost to generate electricity would exceed the fixed rate, which was the case when natural gas prices skyrocketed. Natural gas is the key ingredient used at many power plants to generate electricity. In some parts of the country, particularly in the Western United States, the wholesale price of electricity went above and beyond what the utilities were permitted under law to collect from its customer base.

California’s 1996 deregulation law uncapped wholesale power prices, but froze the rate the utilities could charge consumers. When wholesale prices surged in both the spot and day-ahead markets, running well above what the utilities could charge customers, the utilities couldn’t do anything about it because the state deregulation law didn’t allow them to sign long-term supply contracts.

It’s worth noting that Kelliher, who was appointed chairman of FERC last year by President Bush, has long been a champion of the free-market as well as a close confidant of Skilling’s. He was also a member of Vice President Dick Cheney’s energy task force and person-

ally helped write President Bush’s National Energy Policy in a way that would be financially beneficial to energy corporations—at the expense of consumers.

The fact that consumers cannot depend upon a federal agency whose priority is to protect them is part of the problem. By law, FERC is not supposed

FERC admits there’s no proof that the outcome of deregulation will eventually lower retail prices for consumers but it’s apparent that under the old system, when regulators had authority over the retail price for power, it was cheaper, and reliability was never an issue.

to be a free market advocate, but that is exactly what the agency has become since California’s experiment with deregulation went haywire. Demands by consumer groups and state lawmakers that the state return to regulation were met with resistance by Bush’s

Jason Leopold is a former Los Angeles bureau chief for Dow Jones Newswire and a recipient of the Project Censored award in 2004, given to journalists who investigate issues that mainstream media fail to cover.

Line Clearance Tree Trimmers

City Of Redding Utility Arborists: Uniquely Qualified

The IBEW Local 1245 agreement with the City of Redding Electric Dept. is the union's only labor agreement that requires line clearance tree trimming to be performed by certified Utility Arborists. That includes arborists like the City of Redding employees pictured at right, removing Digger Pine trees along 12kv distribution lines off of Rancho Rd. in Redding. They are, from left: John Murphy, Utility Arborist; Jay Hathaway, Senior Utility Arborist; Tommy Sparks, Utility Arborist; and Tom Harrell, Senior Utility Arborist.

Certification of Utility Arborists is through the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). To become an ISA-certified arborist, applicants must have at least three years of tree care experience and pass certification testing created by an international panel of experts.

Testing is in 12 domains of arboriculture expertise. These City of Redding Electric Utility Arborists are not only qualified to perform arboricultural tasks ranging from pruning to large removals, they are experts in tree physiology and they represent the City of Redding's commitment to first rate line

clearance tree trimming for their electric utility customers.

Arboricultores de servicios públicos de la Ciudad de Redding: Singularmente cualificados

El convenio del Local 1245 de la IBEW con el Departamento Eléctrico de la Ciudad de Redding es el único convenio laboral que requiere que la poda de árboles para la limpieza de líneas sea realizada por arboricultores certificados. Eso incluye arboricultores como los empleados de la Ciudad de Redding en la foto de abajo, retirando pinos Digger a lo largo de las líneas de distribución de 12 kv cerca de Rancho Rd., en Redding. Ellos son, desde la izquierda, John Murphy, arboricultor de servicios públicos; Jay Hathaway, arboricultor principal de servicios públicos; Tommy Sparks, arboricultor de servicios públicos; y Tom Harrell, arboricultor principal de servicios públicos.

La certificación de los arboricultores de servicios públicos es a través de la Sociedad Internacional de Arboricultura (ISA son las siglas en inglés). Para ser un arboricultor certificado por la ISA, se



City of Redding Utility Arborists, from left: John Murphy, Utility Arborist and 24-year union member; Jay Hathaway, Senior Utility Arborist and 29-year union member; Tommy Sparks, Utility Arborist and 3½-year union member; Tom Harrell, Senior Utility Arborist and 27-year union member. Not pictured: John Schiff, Utility Arborist and 21-year union member.

Arboricultores de servicios públicos de la Ciudad de Redding, de izquierda a derecha: John Murphy, arboricultor de servicios públicos con 24 años de miembro en el Sindicato; Jay Hathaway, arboricultor principal de servicios públicos con 29 años de miembro en el Sindicato; Tommy Sparks, arboricultor de servicios públicos con 3-1/2 años de miembro en el Sindicato; Tom Harrell, arboricultor principal de servicios públicos con 27 años de miembro en el Sindicato. No está en la foto: John Schiff, arboricultor de servicios públicos con 21 años de miembro en el Sindicato.

Photo: Ray Thomas

debe tener por lo menos tres años de experiencia tomando cuidado de árboles y pasar un examen de certificación creado por un panel internacional de expertos.

El examen cubre 12 áreas de conocimientos de arboricultura. Estos arboricultores del servicio eléctrico de la Ciudad de Redding no sólo están cal-

ificados para ejecutar trabajos desde podas hasta la retirada de grandes árboles, pero ellos son también expertos en la fisiología de los árboles y representan la dedicación de la Ciudad de Redding a tener una poda de árboles de primera clase, para proteger las líneas eléctricas que suministran energía a sus clientes.

Tree Stewards review rights

Photos by Junior Ornelas

Local 1245 stewards in Line Clearance Tree Trimming met last April at Weakley Hall in Vacaville to discuss the current state of affairs in the industry. They reviewed issues ranging from contractual meal entitlements to employee rights under the Family Medical Leave Act. The conference was led by Senior Business Rep. Ray Thomas and Business Rep. Junior Ornelas, with assistance from Local 1245 steward Carl Lamers.

ciones corrientes en la industria. Ellos evaluaron asuntos que van desde el pago por comidas a los empleados hasta los derechos de los empleados bajo la ley de Ausencia del Trabajo por razones médicas. La conferencia fue encabezada por el Representante Principal de Negocios Ray Thomas y por el Representante de Negocios Junior Ornelas, con la asistencia del delegado sindical del Local 1245 Carl Lamers.



Attending the conference at Weakley Hall were, from left, Tim Gray, steward at Davey Tree in Sonora; Dale Evenson, steward at Asplundh Tree in Lake Port; and James Gorman, steward at EPA Provco in Oroville.

Asistiendo a la conferencia en Weakley Hall estaban, desde la izquierda, Tim Gray, delegado sindical en Davey Tree en Sonora, Dale Evenson, delegado sindical en Asplundh Tree en Lake Port, y James Gorman, delegado sindical en EPA Provco en Oroville.

Alex Rodriguez, right, steward at Davey Tree/Turlock Irrigation District.

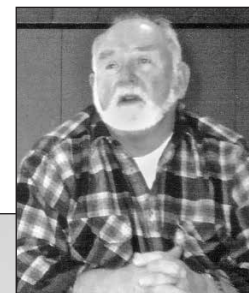
Alex Rodríguez, a la izquierda, delegado sindical en Davey Tree / Distrito de Riego de Turlock.

Fred Wann, far right, is shop steward and Vegetation Specialist in the North Valley for EPA Provco.

Fred Wann es delegado sindical y especialista de vegetación en North Valley para EPA Provco.

Pete Ely, right, steward at Davey Tree in Red Bluff, and John Shepherd, far right, steward at Davey Tree in Redding.

Pete Ely, a la izquierda, delegado sindical en Davey Tree en Red Bluff, y John Shepherd, delegado sindical en Davey Tree en Redding.



Ray Thomas, left, Local 1245 Senior Business Rep. and Carl Lamers, steward at Davey Tree, lead a discussion.

Ray Thomas, a la izquierda, Representante Principal de Negocios del Local 1245, y Carl Lamers, delegado sindical en Davey Tree, conducen una discusión.

Delegados sindicales revisan los derechos de empleados

Fotos de Junior Ornelas

Los delegados sindicales del Local 1245, en la poda de árboles para la limpieza de líneas, se reunieron el pasado mes de abril en Weakley Hall, en Vacaville, para discutir las condi-

IBEW packs public hearing at Alameda City Hall

Members action jumpstarts negotiations

Members of IBEW Local 1245 ratified a new agreement with Alameda Power and Telecommunications by a wide margin on Halloween, ending nearly two years of bargaining over a contract that expired at the end of 2004.

Negotiations had stalled over the city's attack on medical benefits and its failure to offer a competitive wage package. Local 1245 members, patience wearing thin, packed a public hearing at Alameda City Hall on Sept. 26 to express their frustration over the city's failure to make a realistic offer.

Thirty union members, about two-thirds of the entire unionized workforce at AP&T, showed up in bright orange IBEW t-shirts in a flashy demonstration of solidarity. They remained respectful in demeanor throughout the hearing, but burst into loud applause each time a union member finished addressing the council.

"I think you have the most serious at-

traction and retention problem I have ever seen," Business Manager Tom Dalzell told the council in the union's opening remarks. The city's last proposal, for wage hikes of 0%, 2% and 2% over a three-year period, "will put you at the bottom of the pile for lineworker wages in California."

Dalzell said the city had "a jewel" in its revenue-producing electric utility.

"You have a tremendous asset but you are neglecting that asset. You are risking irreparable damage."

He urged the city to come up with a proposal that recognizes the reality of the marketplace, as well as recognizing the skilled employees who make up the utility's workforce.

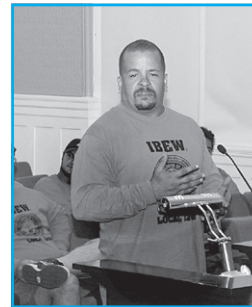
Following Dalzell, several union members took a turn at the microphone.

"Our wages have become stagnant," said Al Fortier, chair of Local 1245 Unit 2211/Oakland. "I come to work every day knowing that any careless act can lead to serious injury or death, (and yet) you have moved (during negotiations) to eliminate the safety net for industrial injuries."

Larry Rodriguez, the Local 1245 Ad-

visory Council representative for AP&T, disputed the idea that the city has no money to give union members a decent raise.

"You have the money for undergrounding projects. You tell us you have no money but you come up with money to benefit the few who live on the Gold Coast," said Rodriguez, referring to a recent project to put electric lines un-



Eddie Courtney: "If you don't know what we do, come out and watch us someday."

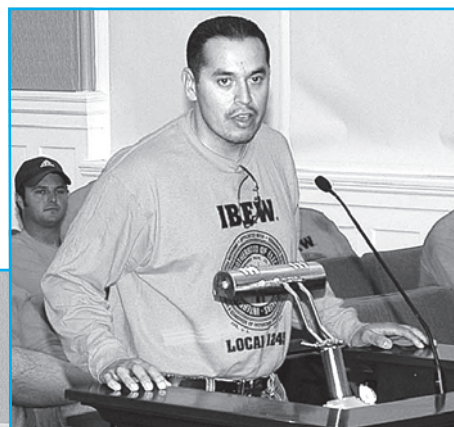
derground in one of the city's wealthier neighborhoods.

Lonnie Hasty took the microphone to compare Local 1245 members to police and firefighters. "You go to work every day not knowing whether things are going to be routine or are going to go bad," Hasty said. He asked the council to "just be fair."

"Health care is important to us," said Alex Gonzalez, who was next at the microphone. "We all work at least 30 feet above the ground. We all risk something when we go to work every day."

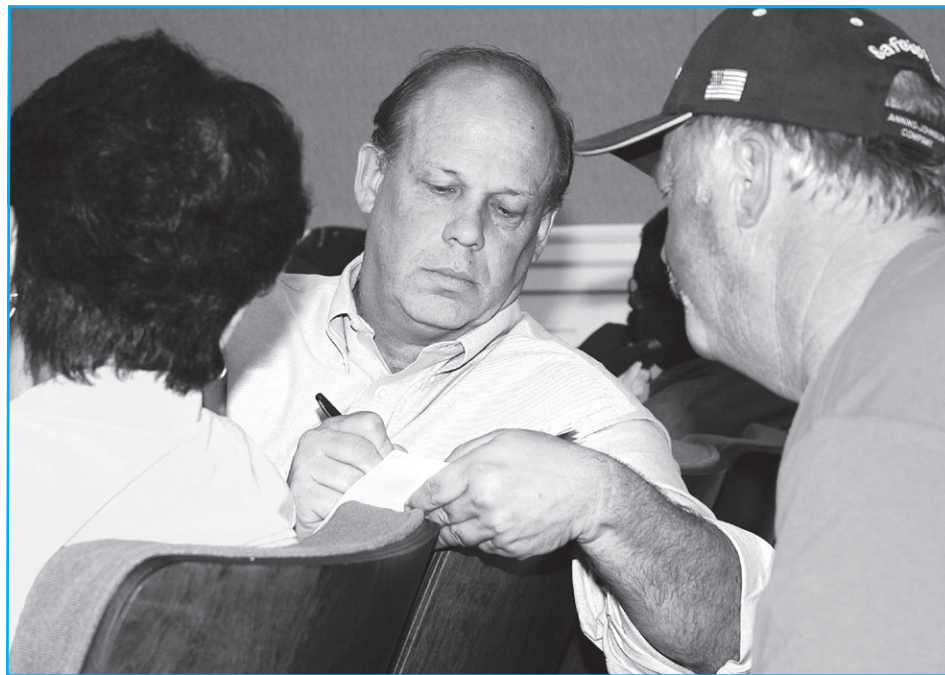
"The firemen don't go into the vaults if there's a fire in the vaults. They come to us," said Eddie Courtney. "If you don't know what we do, come out and watch us someday."

The councilors, apparently relieved that the orange-clad crowd had not caused some sort of physical disruption, thanked the union members for

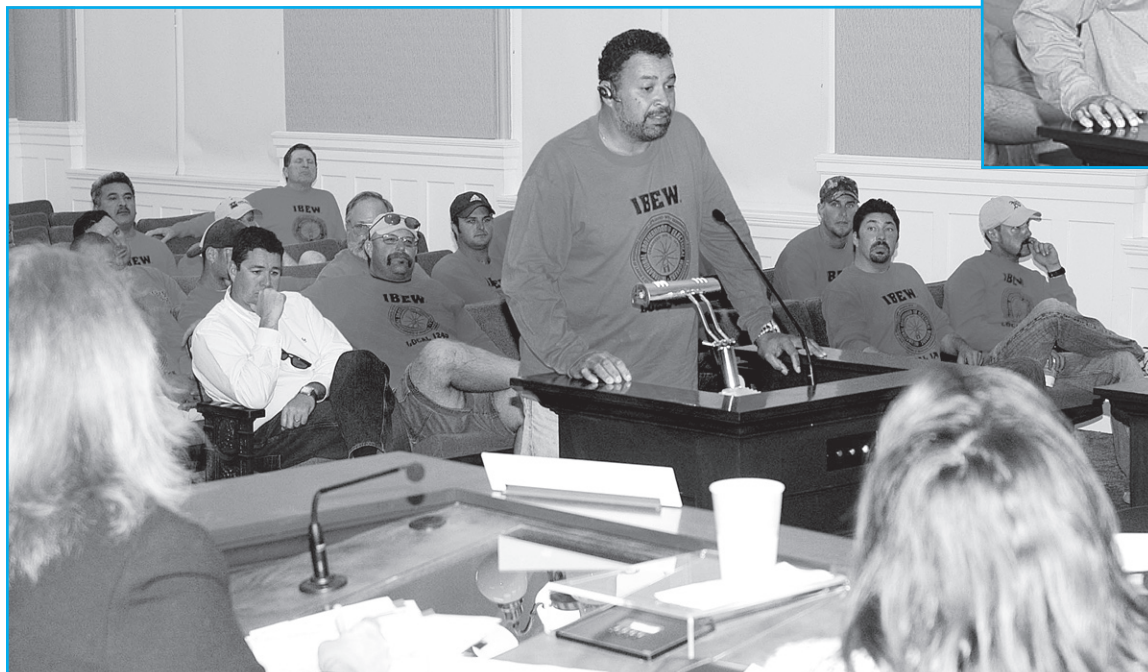


ABOVE Alex Gonzalez: "Health care is important to us."

LEFT Lonnie Hasty: "Just be fair."



Business Manager Tom Dalzell confers with a member during the hearing.



their respectful manner and for their comments.

The city later agreed to resume negotiations with the assistance of a state mediator, leading to the agreement that was ratified on Oct. 31.

Medical preserved

The city agreed to continue paying 100% of employee medical premiums for the time being, increase wages by 2% retroactive to July 1, 2006, by 3% in 2007, and to match the Consumer Price Index in 2008.

Line classifications will receive an additional 5%, and employees not at the top step of their classification will get accelerated step increases. Employees who didn't qualify for either of those increases will get a \$1200 lump sum.

The union accepted a mandatory rotating standby system for emergency coverage for weekends and holidays, and a reduction in the city's supplemental industrial injury benefit from 100% of salary to 80%.

Negotiating for the union were Alex Gonzales, Larry Rodriguez and Al Fortier, along with Business Rep. Lynne Morel, with assistance from Business Manager Tom Dalzell.

Morale, from page 2

not simply a lack of resources, it is a lack of management attention that hurts morale. When it appears that supervision and management don't care about a problem and are willing, for example, to let a crew push-start a stalled truck rather than assign a mechanic to work days and be there for this type of problem, morale suffers.

A final morale-killer is when management shows contempt for the workforce during collective bargaining. Our members at Sierra Pacific Power feel that management's aggressive take-back proposals at a time when the company is doing well show a lack of respect for the work that they do. It is hardly a surprise that morale is currently very low at Sierra Pacific.

There is little that a union operating within the traditional confines of collective bargaining can do to correct most of the problems that lead to low employee morale. But these problems can have a tremendous impact on the work lives of our members, undermining the good we do at the bargaining table in terms of wages, hours, and working conditions.

In the months ahead, we will be looking outside the traditional confines of collective bargaining to see what others have done to help resolve the underlying problems that lead to loss of morale. There are no ready-made solutions to such problems, but that won't stop us from looking for them.

BRIDGESIDE JOB

Vigilance is essential

When you've got a 10,000-pound hunk of metal dangling at the end of a boom you want to keep a close eye on where it's going.

That was the challenge for Lineman Al Fortier and Apprentice Lineman Michael Hamill last month during the installation of a transformer that will serve the new Bridgeside Shopping Center in Alameda.

It's nothing new for a line crew to install a transformer. But no matter how routine the job, no matter how often it is performed, linemen know the key to safety is being alert to the possibility of something going wrong.

"You want to make sure you're watching the boom—making sure it's not getting into any energized lines," says Fortier. The boom operator, in turn, relies on Fortier's hand signals to stay clear of trouble.

Getting into energized lines isn't the only potential hazard when moving a transformer.

"You want to have your outriggers down so the truck is leveled off properly," Fortier explains. You also don't want to overload the crane. "You have to look at the boom angle and make a calculation off the chart of what is the maximum load you can pick up with that boom radius and angle," he says.

Working the job with Fortier and Hamill were Line Working Supervisor Michael Sherman and, operating the boom, Apprentice Lineman Mark Regan.



The crew, from left: Line Working Supervisor Michael Sherman, Apprentice Linemen Mark Regan and Michael Hamill, and Lineman Al Fortier.



Apprentice Lineman Mark Regan operates the crane.

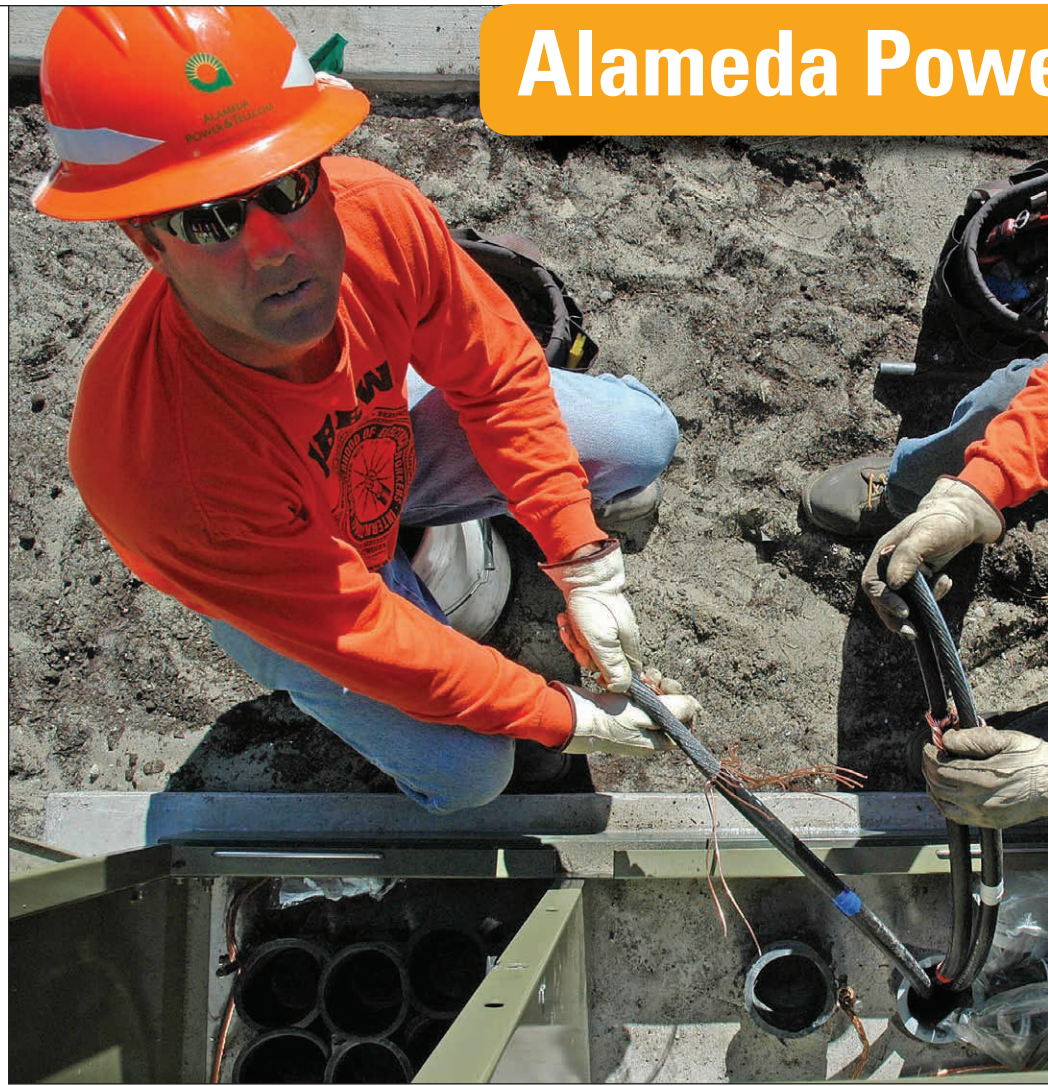


Apprentice Lineman Michael Hamill, left, and Lineman Al Fortier guide the 10,000-pound transformer to the pad. Operating the crane is Apprentice Lineman Mark Regan.



Local 1245 Business Rep. Lynne Morel and Lineman Gary Fenton talk shop in front of the new mall that will be served by the transformer being installed by the AP&T crew.

Alameda Power



Ken Swain, left and Erik Rivera prepping cable ends for termination.

HARBOR BAY ISLE JOB

Transformers for Harbor Bay Isle



Ken Swain

The crew, from left: John Deschaine, Eddie Courtney, Erik Rivera, Ken Swain and Michael Stover.

Erik Rivera and Ken Swain looked like old hands last month as they prepped cable ends for termination during the installation of a pad-mount transformer—one of two transformers that will feed four buildings on North Loop Road, Harbor Bay Isle, in Alameda.

Rivera and Swain recently completed the first step in their apprenticeship, another milestone on the road to becoming linemen. Apprentices, of course, are essential to any utility that wants to replenish its workforce—and any utility that doesn't want to do that is in big trouble.

Line Working Supervisor John Deschaine, working on the Harbor Bay Isle job with the apprentices, can tell you what it takes to make it as a lineman.

"We're looking for guys not afraid to work, who have initiative, and want to learn the trade." An apprentice also has to "have the ability to take orders in an extremely stressful situation," says De-

schaine, who serves on the Apprenticeship Committee at AP&T.

"We're looking for motivation. It's not just the money, it's also the trade. You've got to want to be a lineman," he says.

After the prep work Rivera and Swain will press the one-ought connector on the cable end, then slide the elbow housing on. A load break pin will be inserted on the tip, after which it will be ready to install on the primary bushings.



Groundman Michael Stover applies caulk to the transformer.



GIBBONS STREET JOB

Root of the problem

When a street light box pushed up out of the ground, an AP&T crew got to the root of the problem—tree roots that is. The crew removed the metal box and cut away the offending roots to make room for a new fiber glass box. All in a day's work so that your street lights stay on at night. Working the job were Street Light Technician Brian Darnell, Electric Helpers Richard Quinn and Scott Kolberg, and Construction Foreman Jimmy Ford.

Street Light Technician Brian Darnell prepares to replace the old street light box.



At work on Gibbons Street are, from left, Street Light Technician Brian Darnell and Electric Helpers Richard Quinn and Scott Kolberg. Not pictured: Construction Foreman Jimmy Ford.



Erik Rivera

Later, when the contractor's secondary is ready, the crew can go hot and check the voltage.

Also working on the job are Groundmen Michael Stofer and Eddie Courtney.

ALAMEDA POINT JOB

Crossed wires

When the AP&T crew arrived at Pacific and Main at Alameda Point, they suspected a bad transformer. They isolated a neighboring transformer so they could test the transformers one at a time for possible problems. But a visual inspection of a nearby span of wire soon revealed that one of two parallel lines was draped across the other. How it happened is anybody's guess: Freak wind? Dangerous prank? Sabotage by the Leprechaun Liberation Front? No matter. Line Working Supervisor John Deschaine, working from the bucket, quickly disentangled the lines.

You get some interesting company when you're working at heights.



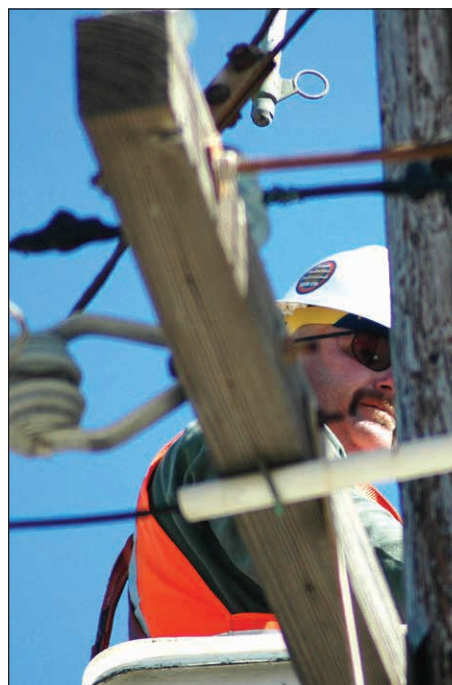
Line Working Supervisor John Deschaine reviews the situation with (from left, Ken Swain (obscured), Erik Rivera and Michael Stofer.



System Tech Alex Gonzalez



Groundman Eddie Courtney secures the transformer to the pad.



John Deschaine begins the visual inspection from the bucket (above) and isolates a transformer (right).



Continued on page 16.

20TH ANNUAL Local 1245 Golf Tournament

Local 1245 members, staff and friends teed off under blue skies and a hot sun in Vacaville on Oct. 14 for Business Manager Tom Dalzell's 20th Annual Local 1245 Golf Tournament. The tournament at Green Tee Golf Course featured a hole-in-one by Eric Wright, lots of prizes, and a barbecue lunch back at Weakley Hall. The tournament organizer was Business Rep. John Mendoza. Photos are courtesy of Senior Business Rep. Ron Cochran and Local 1245 Administrative Assistant Lita Clark.





Willie Riley, Reggie Riley, Gus Bowman and Don Taylor of Riley Marketing Services for ALLSTATE group took first.



Eric Wright



Local 1245 Administrative Assistant Lita Clark helped with tournament publicity.



Al Fortier, Dan Gracia, Lonnie Hasty and Derrick Phillips



Local 1245 Treasurer Cecelia De La Torre receives "Closest to the Hole" prize from Business Rep. and tournament organizer John Mendoza.



Business Rep. Mike Haentjens tends the grill for the after-tournament barbecue.



Mike Davis, Charles Garetson, Latane Garetson and Jay Hughes



Former Business Manager Perry Zimmerman, with wife Delores and friends, is no stranger to the golf course.



Local 1245 Senior Business Rep. Ron Cochran and Local 1245 Administrative Associate Nancy Kendrick provided support for the tournament.

THE WINNERS

1ST PLACE:

Willie Riley, Reggie Riley, Gus Bowman and Don Taylor of Riley Marketing Services for ALLSTATE group.

2ND PLACE:

Al Fortier, Dan Gracia, Lonnie Hasty and Derrick Phillips

3RD PLACE:

Mike Davis, Charles Garetson, Latane Garetson and Jay Hughes

HOLE IN ONE:

Eric Wright

CHIPPING CONTEST:

Art Garcia

PUTTING CONTEST:

Donny Kline

LONGEST DRIVE FOR WOMEN:

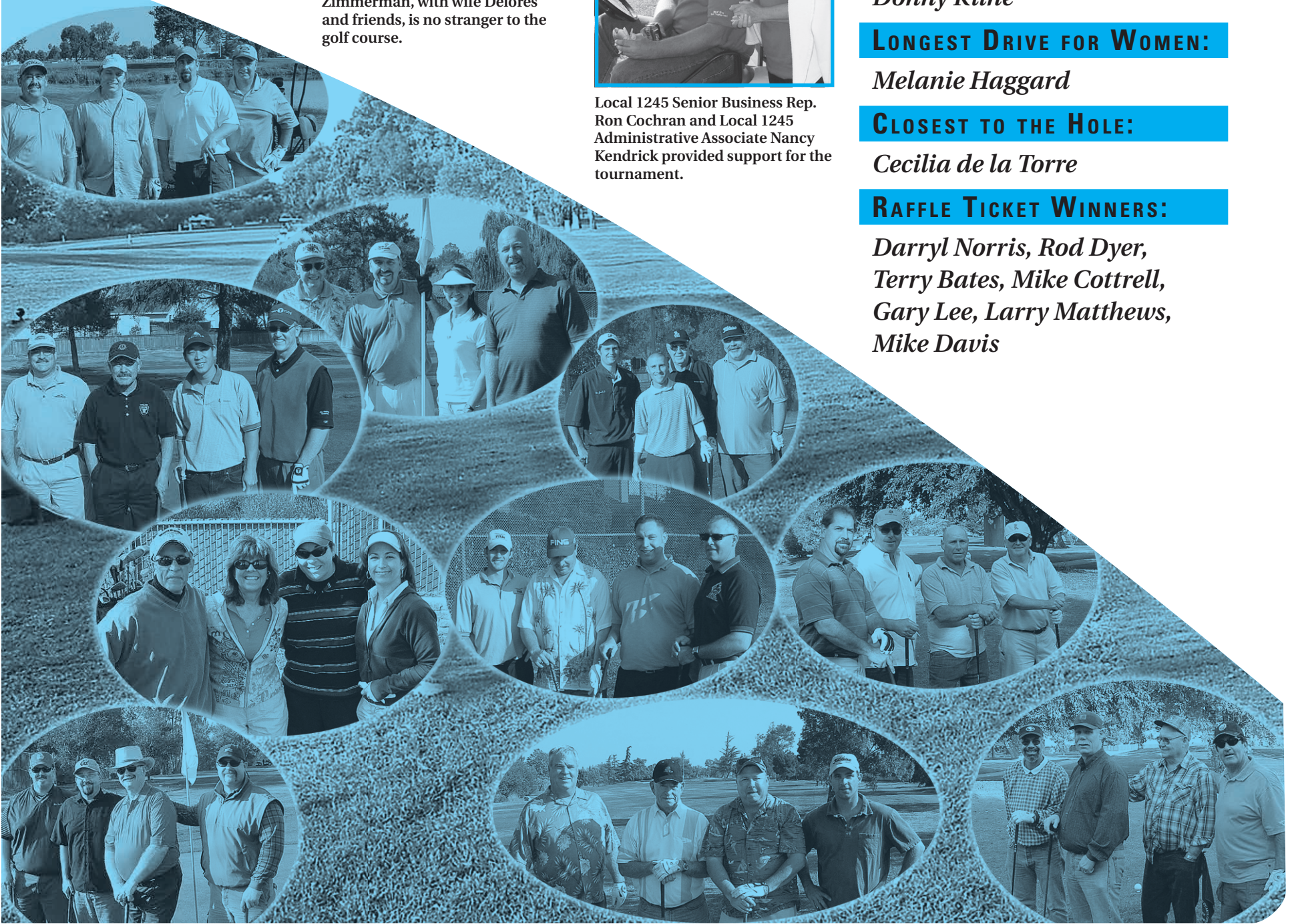
Melanie Haggard

CLOSEST TO THE HOLE:

Cecilia de la Torre

RAFFLE TICKET WINNERS:

Darryl Norris, Rod Dyer, Terry Bates, Mike Cottrell, Gary Lee, Larry Matthews, Mike Davis



Retirees' Corner



Retirees, from page 1

for rate-funded pension increases in the future.

"Did you ask the CPUC for money for bonuses?" one retiree asked, referring to the large "retention" bonuses given to top managers during PG&E's bankruptcy.

The bonuses were paid out of shareholder funds.

Two Speeding Trains

Business Manager Tom Dalzell said the union's retired members have "an irrefutable moral argument" for economic relief, and that the company has "a strong business argument" for keeping down costs.

He compared the situation to two trains speeding toward one another on the same track. Somehow, Dalzell said, PG&E needed "to find a way to do some-

thing to help the people who gave to this company."

It is especially important, he said, to do something for the "3,574 people who retired before Jan. 1, 1993" and whose pensions average just \$921 a month, said Dalzell "That's close to chump change after medical costs are subtracted," he said.

The retirees thanked Jackson for taking time to attend the meeting, but were clearly disappointed that the company had made no substantive offer to address their concerns.

"I think communication is good," Mike Hall, a member of the Merced Chapter, told Jackson. "But we need action."

After the PG&E officials left, the retiree meeting remained in session to discuss ways of better coordinating the actions of the existing five chapters, and of mobilizing even more retirees in the campaign for economic relief.



Larry Mead, president of the North Bay Chapter, peppered Jackson with a series of pension questions.



"I think communication is good. But we need action." Mike Hall, Merced Chapter



Dave Blabon, a member of the Santa Rosa Chapter, questions why PG&E has not built a cost-of-living increase into its pension plan.



Bob Sherbourne belongs to the East Bay Chapter.



Senior Vice President Russ Jackson explains pension funding levels to the Local 1245 retirees gathered at Weakley Hall on Oct. 11.



Merced Chapter member Gary Parker pursues a line of questions with PG&E Senior Vice President Russ Jackson.

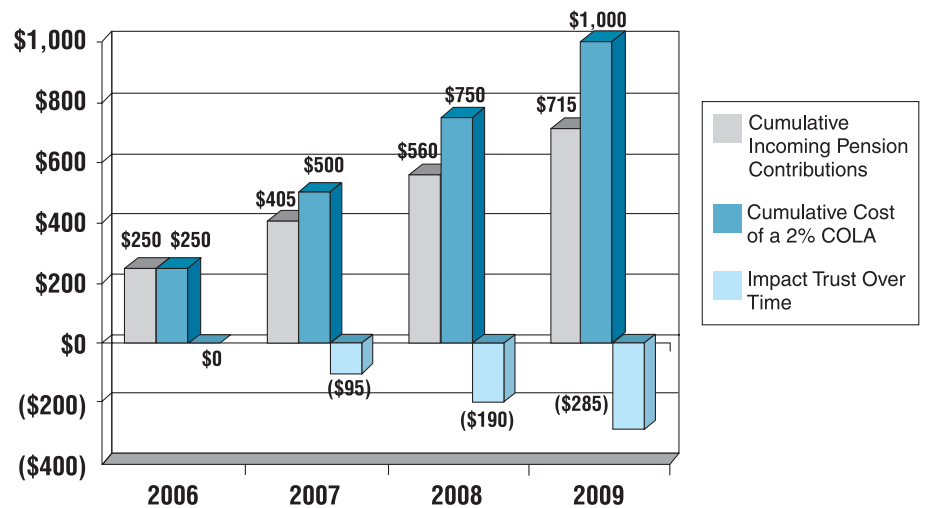


Merced Chapter President Gordon Borges said retirees expect action from PG&E. The retirees gathered at Weakley Hall on Oct. 11 asked Borges and Jack Hill to coordinate activity between the five chapters of the Retirees Club, and also acknowledged the leadership role that former Business Manager Perry Zimmerman is playing.



Business Manager Tom Dalzell outlines the financial problems facing retirees, and the difficult economic choices facing PG&E—comparing the situation to two trains speeding toward each other on the same track.

Gap in funding Created by an Automatic 2% Pension COLA



The CPUC approved a pension contribution of \$250 million in 2006 and \$155 million in 2007, 2008 and 2009. This will bring the pension plan to a fully funded status by the end of 2009. It would cost about \$250 million per year to provide retirees an automatic 2% cost of living adjustment. By 2009, the trust would be underfunded by \$1 billion and its overall asset amount would have decreased by \$285 million.

Chart by PG&E



Mike Fragulia, Merced Chapter, and Stan Mitchinson, East Bay Chapter, ponder Jackson's explanation of how a COLA would create a funding shortfall in the pension plan.



Watie Anthney, left, and Jack Hill, represented the South Bay Chapter at the Oct. 11 meeting.

Bob Olson celebrated his first month of retirement by speaking up at the Oct. 11 meeting, as Ken Rawles of the North Bay Chapter listens. Olson says he'd like to convene a new chapter of the Retirees Club in the Lake County area. Anyone interested in participating should contact Local 1245 Office Manager Tonya Alston at 707-452-2718.



After his retirement in August, former Business Manager Perry Zimmerman wasted little time jumping back into action—as a member of the Vacaville/Sacramento Chapter of the Local 1245 Retirees Club. With his special expertise on PG&E, Zimmerman is serving as an advisor to Business Manager Tom Dalzell on retiree issues.



Club membership is better deal than ever

Restrictions removed on death benefit!

Good news for members of the Local 1245 Retirees Club! The age limit has been removed on the life insurance policy that all Retiree Club members automatically receive as a benefit of membership.

Now, regardless of your age, you and your spouse automatically qualify for the life insurance policy—also known as the death benefit—simply by maintaining your membership in the Retirees Club at an annual cost of just \$36. By the way, the spouse's membership is included for free when the retired member pays the \$36 annual dues.

The life insurance policy provides \$1,000 to the beneficiary upon the death of the Retiree Club member. In the event that the spouse dies first, a benefit of \$500 is paid to the beneficiary. If the member dies first and the spouse continues to pay dues to the Retirees Club, the spouse's beneficiary is entitled to the full \$1,000 benefit upon the death of the spouse.

Retiree Club membership is a great deal. You receive the Utility Reporter, which always includes a report on retiree activity—including recent efforts to fight the ever-rising cost of medical insurance.

The Retirees Club is a fantastic bargain for former members of Local 1245. Check it out. Contact Office Manager Tonya Alston at 707-452-2718 or tfa3@ibew1245.com.

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 Street., Merced. The October meeting has been changed to Oct. 16.



Local 1245 Business Rep. Dan Lockwood (standing right) conducts a union orientation with nuclear operators, including: Heather Lewis, Timothy Thomas, Patrick Tomasovich, Casey Weir, Brian Sawyer, Todd Hall, Jake Brancheau, Bryan Gawan, Bryce Bigelow, Aaron Cortes and Sam Williams.

PG&E Nuclear Operators-in-Training

Future operators of PG&E's Diablo Canyon Power Plant undergo a comprehensive training program to prepare them for the complex technology they will be responsible for operating. The class of operators shown here

have already passed the company's POSS test and are well into the 6-month Initial Operator Training Class.

Within 6 months of hiring on they are also required to pass the company's ACT test.

Trainees will spend 18 months of training that includes classroom work as well as standing watches at the plant. In all, it will take 54 months before these employees achieve top step Nuclear Operator.

Darbee wins kudos for action against global warming

It was praise from an unexpected quarter last month when PG&E President and CEO Peter Darbee was hailed by San Francisco Chronicle columnist David Lazarus for joining the fight against global warming.



Peter Darbee

"The Earth is warming. Mankind appears to be responsible. The need to take action is now," Darbee told Lazarus. "If you had asked me five years ago, this wouldn't have occurred to me. Somewhere in this process (of becoming CEO), I developed a point of view."

The science on global warming has become overwhelming, and Al Gore's movie "An Inconvenient Truth" has brought that science to a much wider audience than ever before. Other than "scientists" on oil company payrolls, or the occasional Paleolithic senator from Oklahoma, virtually no one disputes that the activity of humans is heating the planet in ways that are likely to threaten our future.

What utilities do is important. Fossil fueled power plants are among the largest emitters of carbon dioxide, one

of the major culprits in the warming of our planets.

PG&E, like California's two other major utilities, is under a legislative mandate to get 20% of its energy from renewable sources by 2010. But rather than viewing the requirement as a regulatory burden, PG&E seems to be embracing the challenge for its own sake—and the sake of the planet.

Lazarus praised Darbee for calling attention to the link between greenhouse gases and global warming, and said Darbee "is among the most prominent energy-industry execs calling for a nationwide cap on carbon-dioxide emissions."

"If the leaders of the energy industry don't take a responsible position on this topic," Darbee told Lazarus, "who will?"

In the past, environmentalists might have dismissed such talk as just so much b.s. But it's hard to be dismissive when the b.s. is real: PG&E recently signed a contract to buy natural gas made from California cow manure. The gas will generate enough electricity to power about 50,000 homes.

When Darbee became CEO in January 2005, he wasn't sure what to think about global warming, so he called in experts from both sides of the debate.

"I didn't feel too good about the people on the other side of this argument," he told Lazarus. "I didn't think they presented good evidence. Ultimately, I found that the evidence is pretty compelling that the Earth is warming."

See related letter-to-editor, page 2

SPP, from page 1

presently on the table, according to an Oct. 30 committee memo to members at Sierra Pacific.

The status of negotiations will be a major topic of discussion at the November round of unit meetings, according to Business Rep. Randy Osborn.

The complete text of the Local 1245 Bargaining Committees memos to members on Oct. 26 and Oct. 30, as well as future updates, can be viewed on-line at www.ibew1245.com. Also available on-line is the complete proposal offered by the company through the mediator in October, as well as the Ratification Package of July 12 that was voted down by members. Excerpts of the Oct. 26 memo appear below:

It seems the Company is once again trying to improperly negotiate directly with you and undermine your Negotiating Committee. This could be construed as an Unfair Labor Practice.

The second part of this is the Company is not giving you the whole story. The partial Company proposal you are being shown is based off of the package you voted "No" on. If it is not addressed in the new proposal it remains unchanged from the Ratification Package of July 12, 2006.

Let's take the wage offer for example.

- The current 10% wage offer is for 2007 and combines the 5.5% 2006 and 4.5% 2007 that were in the July ratification package, which was rejected by you.
 - Line Rate \$32.66 X 1.055 = \$34.46 (2006) X 1.045 = \$36.01 (2007) Rejected July 12, 2006 Offer
 - Line Rate \$32.66 X 1.10 = \$ 35.93 (2007) Current Offer
 - This is \$.08 per hour less than offered in the last package.
- Another example is in Post Retirement Medical.
- Company proposal would force all employees with less than 75 points (age + years of service) to accept their proposed buyout and accept the \$260/\$130 offered to Local 396 Bargaining Unit Employees.

Here is an example of how this could affect an actual member:

Age today—44, Years of Service today—17, Points—61

Our calculations show this proposal would increase this employee's contribution to retiree medical by approximately \$296,000.00.

This calculation is based on:

- 5.37% medical inflation
- 5% gain on the \$40,000 buyout
- Life expectancy of age 75
- Retire at age 60

As an overall package your Negotiating Committee calculates its value as less than the package you have already rejected.

IN UNITY, Your Negotiating Committee – Randy Osborn, Dennis Seyfer, Reto Gross, Dan Lyday, Gary Bailey, Dale Huntsman, Tom Cornell, Vickie Borst, Jerry McAlister, Aaron Dorman, Mike Grimm



of a four man GC crew performing work on a substation breaker in Station L. The crew consisted of a foreman, an electrical tech, an electrician and the Apprentice Electrician.

The breaker system is set up in cubicles with the breaker controls on one side of the cubicle and the associated high voltage breaker, bus bars and potential transformer on the opposite side of the cubical structure with its own door and lock. There are adjacent cubicles with similar back to back construction.

The cubicle being worked on was de-energized and grounded and the adjacent cubicles that were energized were identified with black and yellow warning tape. In the instant case cubicle 2 was being worked on. (In the graphic presentation below we are looking down on the cubicles.) Lower box 2 is the control box with the grounds installed on upper box 2 the breaker bus bar cubicle. Both sides of cubicles 1 and 3 were marked energized with black and yellow tape. Cubicles 4,5,6, and 7 were



Business Rep. Landis Marttila briefs the Local 1245 Safety Committee on the circumstances of an electrical contact that injured a PG&E General Construction Apprentice Electrician on Oct. 24.

Apprentice Electrician injured in electrical contact

A PG&E General Construction Apprentice Electrician suffered 2nd degree burns over 35% of his body after a high voltage contact at Station L in San Francisco on Oct. 24.

The Apprentice Electrician was part

not marked with tape and were locked with a 2# corp lock.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | energized bus and potential transformers |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | controls |

During the last ten minutes of the lunch break the Apprentice Electrician walked alone and unobserved to energized cubicle 6, unlocked the corp lock and made contact with the energized 12KV fuse holder on the side of the cubicle. Other employees on the crew

continued on next page



AFL-CIO Working Women Survey 2006

Working Women are Concerned

Today's working women are concerned.

Pay isn't keeping up with the cost of living. Health insurance is unaffordable—and one family illness can mean poverty. Retirement security is disappearing. Many of us feel we're working just to pay for child care. We're still struggling with unequal pay and discrimination. And every day we watch the rich get richer and corporations and CEOs take more than their fair share of the pie.

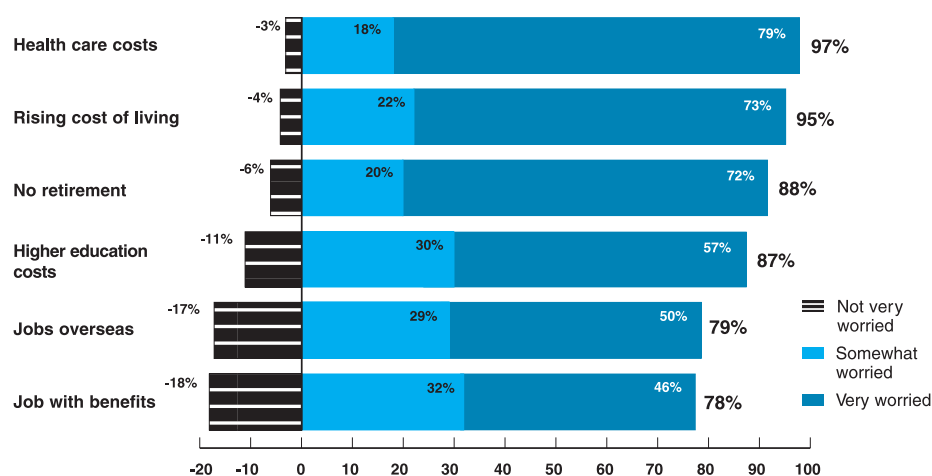
More than 26,000 women shared their concerns by completing the 2006

AFL-CIO Ask a Working Women Survey in June-August. Their responses and comments paint a troubling picture of the struggles of today's working women.

For many working women, the long hours they put in at work and the family time they sacrifice does little more than help them make—or almost make—ends meet.

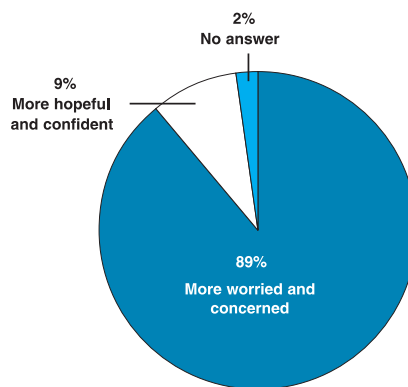
Today's working women worry about basic economic issues such as pay not keeping up with rising costs, inability to afford health insurance and lack of retirement security. Affordable health care is the top concern of women who responded to the survey—97 percent of them, across age and race lines, say they

Worry About Economic Issues is Very Intense

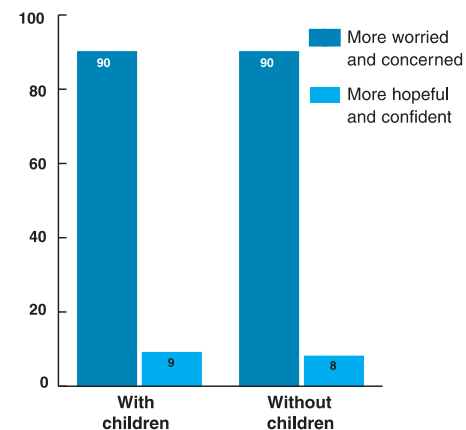


Hopeful or Worried About Young People?

Do you feel more hopeful and confident or worried and concerned about the future of young people going into the workforce?



Concern by parental status



are worried about the rising costs of quality health care. But the list of concerns is long: college costs, job exporting, continuing discrimination on the job, lack of control over work hours and more.

Working women's worries are not only for themselves—93 percent of those taking the survey say they are concerned for the next generation of working women as well.

In this election year, the survey shows working women believe good legislation can make a difference in their lives. They also want to see large, profitable corporations and their CEOs held accountable for the treatment of workers.

What's at stake, these women tell us, is the heart and soul of America: our working families.

Concerns About the Future

While working women express anxiety about their current conditions and their own futures, they are deeply worried about the fate of young people entering the workforce. Eightynine percent of survey-takers say they are wor-

ried and concerned about the future of the coming generation of workers, compared with 9 percent who label themselves "more hopeful or confident."

Concern about the future is shared by women of all races and in all age groups—regardless whether they have children.

What Working Women Worry About

For today's working women, the economy is a source of great concern. Large majorities of women who participated in the AFL-CIO's 2006 Ask a Working Woman Survey express concern about rising health care, living and higher education costs, lack of retirement and other benefits and jobs being sent overseas.

Topping all these concerns, though, is the rising cost of health care. On a 1 to 10 scale of concerns, rising health care costs get a score of 9.18. Nearly all the respondents—97 percent—say they are "very worried" (79 percent) or "somewhat worried" (18 percent) about health care costs.

Apprentice, from page 14

responded to the sound of the arc and the subsequent cross phase explosion across the three phases of the cubicle. The Apprentice Electrician's clothes were on fire and they were cut off by his coworkers. At the direction of 911 personnel ice water was poured on his chest area.

The Apprentice Electrician is in the San Francisco General burn unit. His parents, brother and wife are in attendance.

Local 1245 Business Rep. Mike Saner and I inspected the accident site and interviewed the foreman and the electrical technician.

The San Francisco District Cal-OSHA Office will be interviewing the GC crew.
Landis Marttila, Business Rep.

Getting home

By Carl Lamers

Every day requires a conscious and constant application of safety to get home to those who love and care for you.

Some safety rules and procedures may seem overdone at times, but the intent is to get you home at the end of the day in one piece.

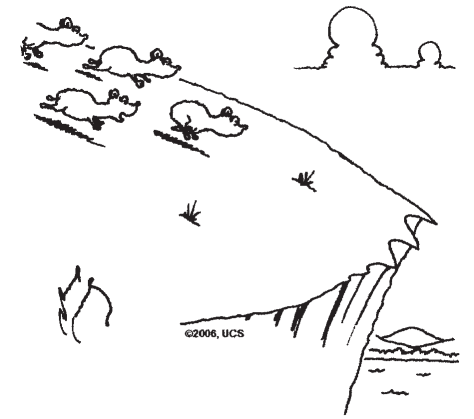
Put on your hard hat, safety glasses, gloves, use your "double safety." You know the drill.

The hazards of working on the road are known to us all. Visibility is the key to survival. Put the vest on. Use traffic warning signs and cones. Most importantly, keep your eyes and ears open. Don't let yourself be distracted.

When the public travels through our work sites they are often using cell

phones, eating lunch, otherwise preoccupied or just confused by our activity. Many will need or want direction.

Follow procedures for the sake of you and yours.



Are you sure this is the way to the OSHA conference?

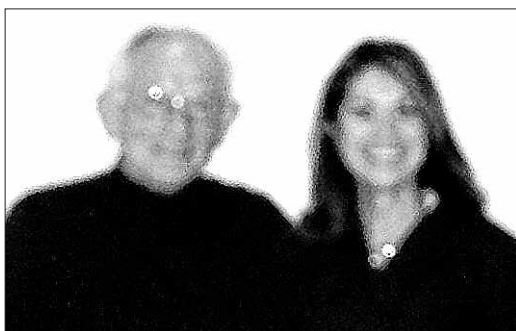
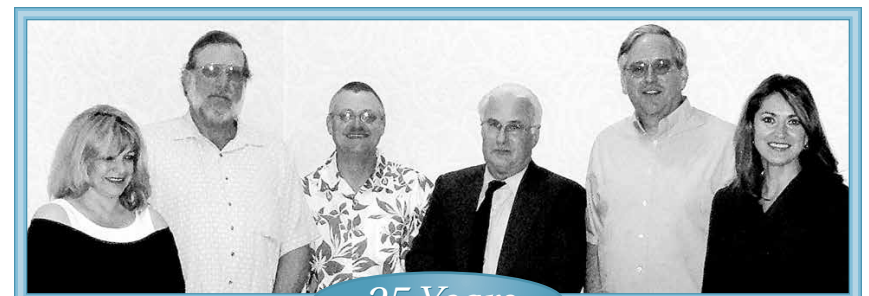
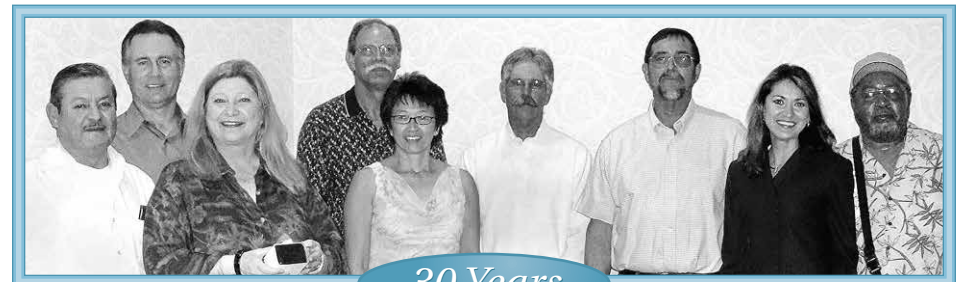
Local 1245 Safety Committee

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

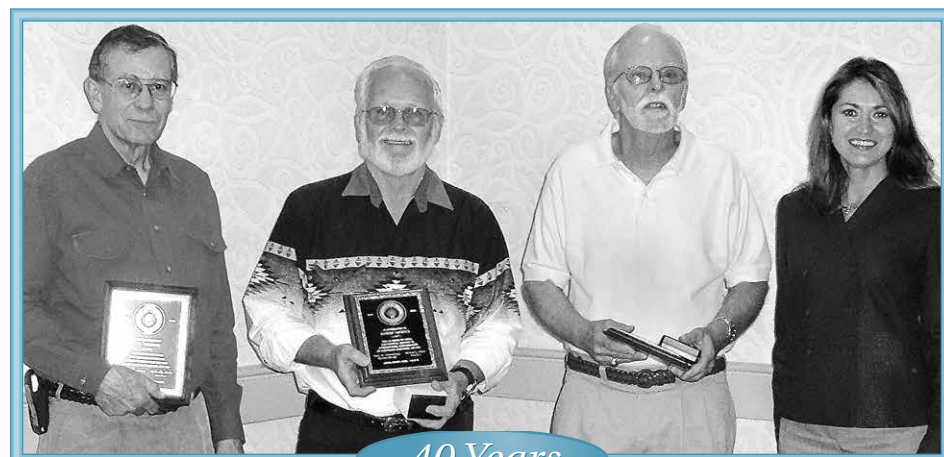


Stockton, CA

April 29, 2006



John Anderson accepts 45-year award from Local 1245 Treasurer Cecelia De La Torre.



THE HONOREES

60 Years

Norman Zwinge

45 Years

John Anderson
Ray Hickey

40 Years

C. R. Edwards
Walter Janson
Tom Locklin
Roger Stalcup
Jimmielee Truesdell
Robert Vavrock

35 Years

Billy Adams
Dennis Albin
Roger Baldwin
Dennis Benning
Bruce Burton
Dennis Cowden
Lawrence Davis
Grover Day
Harry Depedri
Day Gorham

25 Years

Donna Hatch
Thomas Hughes
Ventur Martinez
Glennnda Mc Closkey
Ernest Mello
Stephen Norvell
Michael Parker
Robert Proctor
Raymond Rendon, Jr.
David Scoggins
Bobby Sledge
Dennis Walter
Chester Young, Jr.

30 Years

William Beard
Edward Conrado
Maurice Dionne
Arie Foster
Robert Hanson, Jr.
Ed Kane
John Loades, Jr.
Edward Mitchell
Chris Reyes
Michael Richards
Michael Rivera
Helen Sakai

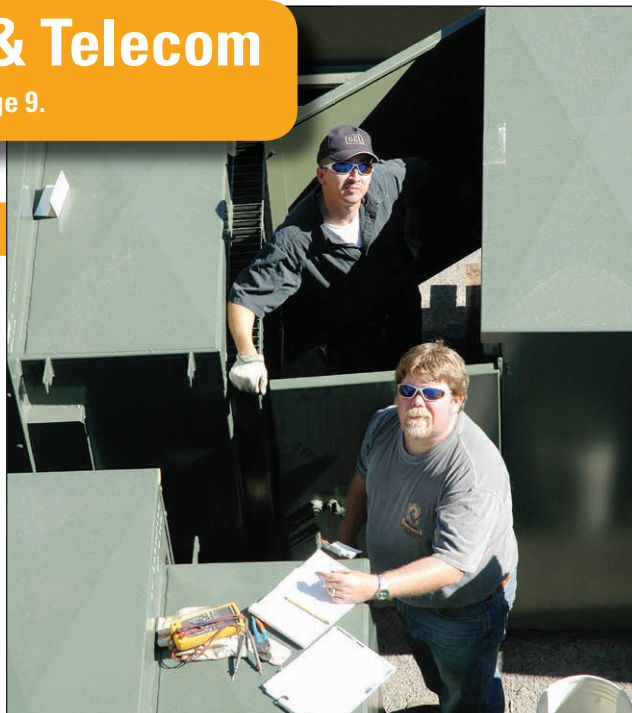
25 Years

Doyle Alcorn
Pascual Banuelos
James Bowman
Cynthia Camille
James Clifton
Irene Cook
Forrest Davisson
Mike Frantz
Peggy Hall
James Harrison
Patrick Hazen
Jeff Kaiser
Thomas Knox
Valencia Metters
Sandy Mullikin
Salvador Naranjo
Richard Nassano
Irene Price
William Reeves
Daniel Santos
William Schmer, Sr.
Susan Tachara
Armand Taylor
Mel Tucker
Martin Turney
Linda Wall
Robert Weaver
Mark Weeks

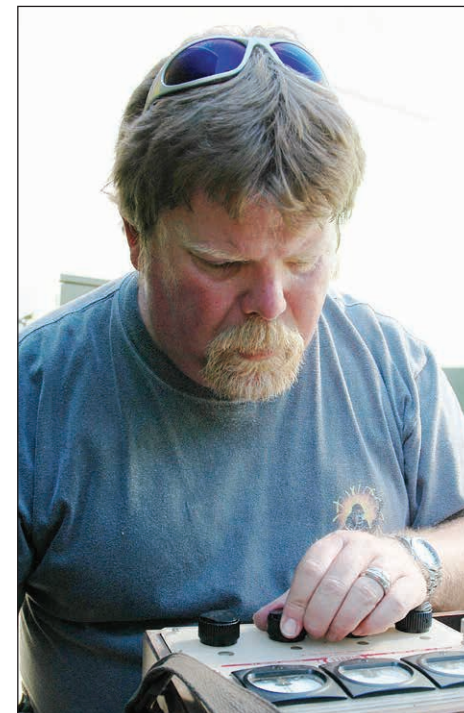
OLD CENTRAL SUBSTATION

Testing new transformers

Transformers have to be tested before they're put into service—one of the many precautions that go into assuring the reliability of the electric system. AP&T utilizes extra space at its old central substation on Grand Street to put the new transformers through their paces.

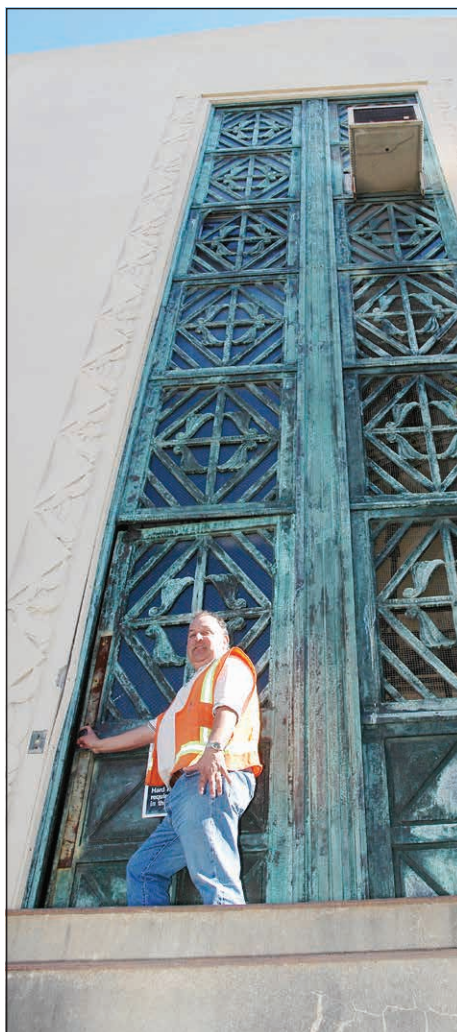


Performing the tests are Electrical Maintenance Technicians Fernando Morales (above) and Greg Davis (right).



Old Central Substation

There was a time when the old central substation was the center of action for the Alameda power system—and something of an architectural curiosity as well. Advisory Council Member Larry Rodriguez offered the Utility Reporter a tour—including the gigantic front doors (right), old breakers (bottom), and the old system dispatch board (below).



STOREROOM

Making the job ready

Before anything gets done in the field, people behind the scenes lay the groundwork. At AP&T that's the job of storeroom personnel. They work with the engineers to make sure the job is ready and supply the linemen with the necessary equipment and accessories. Managing inventory properly is important to efficiency because the utility doesn't have a lot of room to buy materials in bulk.



From left, Sal Tafaoa, Stock Clerk; Torrie Dettmer, Store Clerk; Ryan Madigan, Storekeeper; and Jeff Rude, Facilities Maintenance.

DISPATCH

Keeping it juiced

An organization like AP&T requires a variety of skilled workers in closely coordinated functions to keep the lights on. But no one is more critical to the job of keeping the system juiced than the System Dispatcher.

At AP&T, four System Dispatchers work in rotation to make sure the trans-

mission and distribution lines are bringing power to the city's 33,000 residential and business customers.

In the event of an outage, the Dispatchers prescribe the sequence of activities to restore power.

"We lost the whole city one time in a lightning strike," recalls System Dispatcher Joe Parker. "The whole thing went dark. But we got to switching and restored power in a matter of minutes."

AP&T's other System Dispatchers are Eileen Edman, Joseph Torres, and Chief Dispatcher Larry Rodriguez.



System Dispatcher Joe Parker has 14 years at AP&T, including 9 in dispatch.