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Utility Reporter

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PG&E benefits agreement

Local 1245 members will vote by mail ballot in August on a new benefits agreement with PG&E.

The negotiations were driven by the continuing large increases in medical

costs that have become a nationwide problem for companies and their employees. The tentative agreement, which is endorsed by the Local 1245 Bargaining Committee, provides millions of dollars

Mail ballot ratification in August

in improvements, including more assistance for current and future retirees, increased company contributions to the Retirement Savings Plan, and more money for dental, orthodontia and vision benefits.

The tentative agreement will affect members in different ways, depending on their age, their family's medical needs, and other factors. The Local 1245 Bargaining Committee urges each member to carefully review the information in this issue of the Utility Reporter to arrive at an informed decision. Information is also available online at www.ibew1245.com, at summer unit meetings, and at worksite meetings throughout the PG&E system.

Learn the Facts: Pages 4-8.



Business Manager Tom Dalzell defends the union's bottom line during the final stages of negotiations at Weakley Hall in late May. The customary line of empty Diet Coke cans in front of him continued to grow as the day went on. Other negotiators on the union side of the table are, from left: Mike Scafani, Donna Ambeau, Mark Newman, Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier, (Dalzell), Senior Assistant Business Manager Sam Tamimi (in back) and Mike Jacobson. Leading negotiations for PG&E, across from Dalzell, is Labor Relations Director Steve Rayburn.

News briefs

More than 90 members of Congress visited IBEW-sponsored open houses around the country showcasing the union's training facilities and its willingness to provide the skilled workers that a green economy will require. The open houses were conducted over the Memorial Day break.

A Clean Energy Bill narrowly passed the US House on June 26, setting the stage for a battle in the Senate over funding non-carbon energy sources in an effort to combat global warming. "It's a bold and necessary step that holds the promise of creating new industries and millions of new jobs, decreasing our dangerous dependence on foreign oil and strictly limiting the release of pollutants that threaten the health of families and communities and the planet itself," said President Obama.

California's unemployment rate in May hit 11.5%, its highest level since record-keeping began in 1976. The state lost 68,900 jobs in May as unemployment rose from a revised 11.1% in April and 6.8% in May 2008.

Russian workers at a tungsten plant 700 kilometers from Vladivostok went on hunger strikes and threatened to block a highway over unpaid wages. The regional government agreed to take over the plant for the next five years after Russian President Vladimir Putin met with the regional governor.

Get answers to your union questions at: www.ibew1245.com

NV Energy

Stewards study retirement plans

The bargaining committee has been named for upcoming negotiations with NV Energy.

Members serving on the committee are Executive Board member Tom Cornell, Gary Bailey, Reto Gross, Advisory Council representative Michelle Ramsey, Dan Lyday, Scott Hildebrand, and Louis Kelly.

Retirement issues are likely to be a major factor in the upcoming negotiations, and they were the central focus of the stewards meeting held May 13 at the Airport Plaza Hotel in Reno on May 13. Nearly two hours was spent discussing Cash Balance retirement plans with Neff McGhie, a pension actuary.

Stewards also took a look at an actuarial study comparing the current retirement plan with the sort of plan the company might propose in upcoming bargaining.

Other topics discussed at the conference *continued on page 13*



From left: Gary Bailey, Reto Gross and Tom Cornell. Photos by Dale Huntsman



"Everyone is Responsible."

See Page 10.

Arcing and Sparking



Tom Dalzell
BUSINESS MANAGER

Management actions threaten job safety

As the recession continues, we are working harder than ever to protect our members from its fallout. This is especially true for our public sector members. Cities are faced with decreased tax bases and decreased funding from Sacramento, and most cities are taking the position that all employees must share the pain—even those represented by Local 1245 working for municipal utilities with enterprise funds that are healthy if not robust.

It seems counterintuitive to reduce service at money-making enterprises such as utilities, but many cities are doing exactly this. In some situations, these measures designed to cut costs end up costing the city more money because of the increased need for overtime during furloughs, but appearance seems to trump substance in too many cases.

With these difficulties all around us,

Assignment changes for Business Reps

There have been several recent changes in Local 1245 Business Representative assignments. Changes are listed below:

Bill Brill now has responsibility for City of Santa Clara (Silicon Valley Power).

Sheila Lawton now has responsibility for Sacramento Regional Transit.

Elizabeth McInnis, an organizer who was named Business Representative on June 1, has responsibility for City of Oakland, City of Berkeley, Alameda Power, and AC Transit.



Bill Brill



Sheila Lawton



Elizabeth McInnis

the agreement that we were able to negotiate with PG&E on benefits is all the more remarkable. Through improvements in prescription drug coverage, dental, orthodontia, vision, and 401(k), we were able to more than offset the increased costs in premium copays for active employees. At the same time we were able to make important structural and financial improvements in post-retirement medical benefits for existing and future retirees.

I am meeting with PG&E shop stewards throughout the system to explain the package, and rank-and-file members of our negotiating committee are taking part in an unprecedented number of on-the-job meetings with employees to explain the package. The meetings have gone well to date, emphasizing the importance of fact-based decision-making by our members during the August ratification process.

While we at Local 1245 are of course gravely concerned with the economic effect of the recession on our members, we have a greater concern: we don't want our members to become distracted from their work and fail to work safely and wisely. At more than one employer, political correctness is ravaging the bargaining unit with disciplinary decisions that defy common sense and infantilize the workforce. At one employer, an arbitrary overtime meal allowance has been superimposed over contractual language that neither recognizes nor permits fixed-dollar limits to meal allowances. At another employer, the contractual requirement that the employer provide laundered uniforms is simply being ignored. At another employer, our members who gave up a wage increase in January in return for a promise of no lay-offs are being told that they may be laid off nonetheless.

This list could go on for pages. The point is simply this—if you have to be thinking about petty political correctness, arbitrary overtime meal allowances, the unilateral removal of uniforms, or back-stabbing plans to lay

off, you cannot focus as thoroughly and intently as you need to on your job. With a loss of focus comes an increased risk of injury, and this is not acceptable.

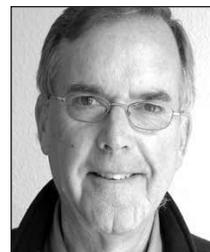
To our employers, we say: this is not the time to play out PC visions or petty “cost-saving” measures that only serve to anger your workforce.

To our members, we say: focus on what is in front of you—your job and your work. The most important thing that you can do is to work safely and go home to your family at the end of the day.

We need to work on this issue together. If we don't, safety will be the first casualty.

Local 1245 hires Fred Ross Jr.

Fred Ross Jr. has been hired by IBEW Local 1245 to assist with organizing.



Fred Ross

Ross, who came on staff April 30, is a veteran of numerous campaigns for worker rights. He served a six-year stint with Cesar Chavez's United Farm Workers in the 1970s. In the 1980s Ross helped establish Neighbor to Neighbor as a national grassroots campaign to oppose U.S. military aid to the Nicaraguan contras, who at the time were committing grave human rights abuses in an effort to overthrow the Nicaraguan government.

More recently Ross has served as a campaign director for the Service Employees International Union, including a campaign to organize janitors in San Francisco.

Ross says he learned from Chavez “that for farm workers to win justice they had to build power. Cesar encouraged us to be creative, risk failure, but above all else, make something happen.”

Welcome aboard, Fred!

APPOINTMENTS

NV ENERGY
Bargaining Committee
Gary Bailey
Tom Cornell
Reto Gross
Scott Hilderand
Louis Kelly
Dan Lyday
Michelle Ramsey

CITY OF GRIDLEY
Bargaining Committee
Elisa Artega
James Chancellor
Scott Taylor

PLUMAS SIERRA REC
Bargaining Committee
Susan Sessions

CITY OF SANTA CLARA
Ballot Committee
Rich Hill
John Sanders

LOCAL 1245 COMMITTEES
Local 1245 Safety Committee
Dan Boschee
IBEW Local 1245 Trustee (alternate)
Lou Mennel

CONFERENCES AND CONVENTIONS
Alliance for Retired Americans 2009
Legislative Conference
Bill Wallace

CALENDAR

- July 15:** Stewards/PG&E Benefits, Fresno, CA
- July 16:** Stewards/PG&E Benefits, San Luis Obispo, CA
- July 16:** Stewards/PG&E Benefits, Diablo Canyon
- July 17:** Stewards/PG&E Benefits, Bakersfield, CA
- July 18:** Service Awards, San Francisco, CA
- July 20:** Stewards/PG&E Benefits, Santa Rosa, CA
- July 21:** Stewards/PG&E Benefits, Stockton, CA
- July 21:** Stewards/PG&E Benes, Sacramento, CA
- July 23:** Stewards/PG&E Benefits, Redding, CA
- July 25:** Service Awards, East Bay, CA
- July 25:** Advisory Council, Vacaville, CA
- Aug 4:** Retirees Club, Santa Rosa, CA
- Aug 4:** Retirees Club, Merced, CA
- Aug 6:** Retirees Club, San Jose, CA
- Aug 12:** Retirees Club, Vacaville, CA
- Aug 13:** Retirees Club, Dublin, CA
- Sept 12:** Service Awards, Fresno, CA



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Our phone number is (707) 452-2700.

Redding Maintenance Unit ratifies extension

By Ray Thomas

The IBEW Maintenance bargaining unit at the City of Redding voted overwhelmingly on April 27 to accept the tentative agreement for a contract extension.

Since last summer IBEW 1245 has been in difficult negotiations with the City of Redding for both our Maintenance and Electric bargaining units.

At the center point of negotiations, the City of Redding demanded two major concessions from these IBEW 1245 units:

The elimination of City contributions to retiree medical benefit costs for any future hires; and 10% employee monthly co-pay on the average monthly cost of aggregate health and welfare

premium costs.

As was the IBEW's position in 1991, our Union negotiating committee, and our membership as a whole, was not interested in creating a second class citizen with respect to eliminating the retiree medical benefit for newly-hired employees—men and women who would also be future members of this Union.

The 10% employee health and welfare co-pay may have been palatable to our membership with the City's pre-funding of the hourly value of the benefit from the start, however the Union and the City were ultimately unable to come to an overall agreement on benefits matters.

As all are aware, the economy has not been friendly to those of us sitting at the

continued on page 17

Unit changes

Unit 3212, Redding, will now meet at 4:00 pm. Dates and location remain the same.

Kit Stice, Business Representative

Unit 1411, City of Santa Clara, has rescheduled meeting dates to avoid conflicting with other unit meetings served by Business Rep. Bill Brill. Brill has recently taken over responsibility for the Santa Clara unit from Sheila Lawton, who has been re-assigned elsewhere. Meetings for the rest of 2009 for the Santa Clara Unit are as follows:

July 15, August 19, September 16, October 21, November 18, December 16

Unit 1511, San Jose, has a new meeting location effective July 8, 2009: the Sherwood Inn and Restaurant, located at the corner of Foxworthy Ave. and Almaden Expressway (2988 Almaden Expressway). The former meeting site has gone out of business. Meetings will continue to be held on the second Wednesday of every month beginning at 5:15 pm.

Bill Brill, Business Representative

Pittman memorial

The Local 1245 Executive Board voted unanimously on May 29 to add the name of David Pittman to the union's Memorial Wall, located at the entrance to union headquarters in Vacaville.

Brother Pittman served the union as steward, unit chairman, and Advisory Council member, where from 1993 to 1997 he represented members employed by Irrigation Districts.

Brother Pittman, initiated into IBEW in 1978, spent many years working at the Modesto Irrigation District in the Utility Services and Maintenance Unit.

The union is proud to honor David Pittman with a space on the Memorial Wall.



Dave Pittman

City of Santa Clara pact ratified

Local 1245 members at the City of Santa Clara ratified a new four-year agreement by a nearly two-thirds margin in a mail ballot counted on May 15.

The agreement provides wage increases of 5% in years one and two, and 4.5% increases in total compensation in years three and four. The term is December 2008 through December 2012.

The employer will pick up 25% of the employer share of PERS in year one and an additional 25% of the employer share in year two. At that point, the employer will be covering 100% of employer's

PERS share.

The agreement also provides:

- Employer contribution of \$50 per month per employee to VEBA.
- Rubber gloving premium of 6%.
- Improved rest period language.
- Improved vacation allowance for employees with 16 years or more.

The negotiating committee consisted of Bob Burkle, Dan Ryker, Chet Manchester, Jorge Jaime, Business Manager Tom Dalzell and Business Rep. Sheila Lawton.

The ballot committee consisted of John Sanders and Rich Hill, with Austin Lea II as judge.



Jonathan Rouse II displays the plaque he received for penning the winning essay in the Al Sandoval Competitive Scholarship contest. With him, from left, are President Mike Davis, Truckee Meadows Water Authority fitter Jonathan Rouse Sr., Jonathan Rouse II, and former Business Manager Perry Zimmerman, who served as contest judge. The contest provides \$2,000 in college financial aid.

Jonathan Rouse II wins Al Sandoval Scholarship essay contest

By Jonathan Rouse II

Essay Question:

"Why have America's unions strongly opposed many recent trade agreements—such as the North American Free Trade Agreement of 1994 and the Columbia Free Trade Agreement now under consideration—and what sorts of measures have unions recommended to make trade agreements more acceptable?"

Blue Collar workers have always been the catalyst for the United States. Unions such as the AFL-CIO and IBEW have been known to be giving their union members rights and fair job benefits, other than non-union organizations. However, Trade Agreements such as the North America Free Trade Agreement and the Columbia Free Trade Agreement have created obstacles for American businesses to flourish jobs.

The North America Free Trade Agreement was signed by Bill Clinton with the intention of removing barriers in trade and investment between the United States and its neighboring countries Canada and Mexico. It was also created to increase the cost of living in both Canada and Mexico, which would result in the creation of Labor unions. However, corporations have taken free trade to their advantage while wages are not well regulated in Mexico, resulting in corporations moving jobs to Mexico because the corporation gains more profit than it would in the United States.

Recently, Mexico released plans to build a port on the scale of the Los Angeles and Long Beach Ports. Being nestled in Punta Colonet, Mexico, the Port will take jobs away from United States union longshoremen in which China will direct trade to Mexico rather than the United States due to Mexico's relatively low tariffs. With this change thousands of United States longshoremen as well as truck drivers will be out of jobs due to Mexican truck drivers driving up to the United States to deliver products to local markets.

The Columbia Free Trade Agreement states that worker's rights would be improved and unions could be established. However, as of 2007 over two thousand Colombian trade unionists have been murdered. These murders were linked to union activity in the country of Columbia. Primarily the government is killing union activists; unions in the United States strongly disagree with this trade agreement due to the Colombian government's anti-union platform.

Unions now try to make agreements or revise the trade agreements in order to make the agreements more acceptable. The Employment Trade Act is a step forward for unions and governmental officials to review NAFTA A and enforce labor and human rights for workers no matter what country the worker is working in. The Columbia Free Trade Agreement is also being revisited. Since the agreement was signed, congressional representatives have been fighting to go back to the agreement and contain more labor rights for workers.

As shown, the North America Free Trade Agreement and The Columbia Free Trade Agreement have been negatives yet they were designed to be positive, but with human rights being low, workers are not able to receive fair wages and establish unions.

Cody DaLuz wins Trade Grant

Cody DaLuz is the winner of the 2009 Local 1245 Trade and Vocational School Grant for 2009.

Under the terms of the grant, DaLuz is eligible for \$500 a year for two years to attain a trade or technical education.

Cody DaLuz is the son of Local 1245 member Carlos DaLuz, who is employed with PG&E in San Francisco.

Congratulations Cody!

Tentative Agreement on PG&E Benefits

Q&A

Give me the bottom line: Are we better off with this deal?

Overall, yes. There is a lot of money on the table.

But how about me? Will I be better off?

Many members will gain financially. That's why the union bargaining committee is recommending a "yes" vote. But some members may not gain financially. Members individually must decide for themselves whether the Tentative Agreement will benefit them.

The TA will double my premium co-payment for medical insurance. What's that going to cost me?

The premium co-payment for most plans will increase from 3.75% to 7.5%. For an employee-plus-spouse in the most expensive plan (NAP or CAP), your monthly co-payment will increase by about \$49. That's \$588 a year. The chart on Page 8 called "Effect of Premium Co-Pay Increase" will show you the estimated increase in co-payment for your plan and family situation.

OK, I looked it up and I can't afford that premium increase.

Remember, you will also be earning more in wages. Wage increases have already been negotiated for Physical employees for 2010 and 2011. For example, if you're a Physical employee making \$39/hour in 2010, your wage will increase by \$270 a month in 2011. That's \$270 extra going in your pocket versus the \$49 leaving your pocket. See the chart on Page 8 called "Effect of General Wage Increase" for what your general wage increase will be in 2011.

Clerical members don't have a wage increase scheduled for 2011.

That's correct. The Clerical increase will be negotiated by the union and the company sometime in 2010.

I don't like the idea of having to use some of my wage increase to pay for medical premiums.

No one likes it. But there are some monetary gains in the TA that should interest you, such as improvements to the Retirement Savings Plan (RSP). If the TA is ratified, the company will increase its match from 50 cents on the dollar to 60 cents.

What does that add up to in dollars?

As an example, let's say you're making \$39/hour this year. After general wage increases are factored in, you will be making approximately \$42/hour in 2011. If the TA is rejected, the company's annual RSP contribution in 2011 would be about \$2626. But if the TA is ratified, the company's annual RSP contribution would be about \$3151. That's a gain of \$525. In 10 years, the increased contributions would add up to about \$6232.

But I don't make \$39/hour.

The union has prepared a table that shows PG&E contributions to RSP under the current 50-cent formula and under the proposed 60-cent formula for a variety of wage levels. It's too

Highlights

Background

During General Bargaining in 2008, IBEW Local 1245 and PG&E set aside the issue of benefits so that it could be considered more thoroughly during a "benefits re-opener" in 2009. Benefits bargaining started March 23 and concluded May 29 with a settlement (Tentative Agreement). The IBEW Local 1245 Bargaining Committee recommends that members ratify this agreement by voting "Yes".

The Basic Problem

Rising health care costs will soon make retiree medical coverage unaffordable for many retirees.

Retirees today spend on average 25% of their pensions on retiree medical premiums. PG&E subsidizes the cost of retiree medical premiums up to a negotiated cap that was put in place January 1, 2000; retirees must pay the premium costs that exceed the cap.

In contrast, IBEW-represented physical and clerical employees spend on average 1% of their wages on employee medical premiums. PG&E pays 96.25% of the cost of employee medical premiums, while IBEW-represented employees pay 3.75% of premium costs.

As health care costs continue to rise, some employees may have to postpone retirement because they cannot afford retiree medical coverage. With no change to the retiree cap:

- By 2014, retirees will pay **\$1,235 a month***
- By 2018, retirees will pay **\$1,880 a month***

**Estimates are for retiree + spouse coverage in Anthem Blue Cross, prepared by Towers Perrin, a human resource consulting firm.*

Proposed Changes for Employees — Effective January 1, 2011

There is no magic bullet for the problem of rising health care costs. But improvements are possible. The proposed changes for IBEW-represented employees will reduce the burden of health care costs for our current retirees, commits funds *now* to make health care more affordable for future retirees, and makes a number of improvements in benefits for employees as soon as the agreement goes into effect. These include improvements in vision, dental, and orthodontia benefits, vacation use, and the Retirement Savings Plan (401k).

Employee Medical Plan Premiums

You would pay 3.75% or 7.5% toward medical premiums, depending on the plan you elect. Currently, you pay 3.75% of the cost of medical premiums.

This chart shows current employee and company contributions and what the proposed contribution amounts would be assuming 2009 premium costs. Premium costs change every year — these 2009 figures are for comparison purposes only.

Medical Plans (2009 Rates)	Current — You Pay per Month	Current — PG&E Pays per Month	Proposed — You Would Pay per Month*	Proposed — PG&E Would Pay per Month*
Anthem Blue Cross Network Access Plan (NAP) and Comprehensive Access Plan (CAP)				
Employee only	\$21.73	\$557.78	\$41.29	\$509.24
Employee + spouse	\$45.63	\$1171.34	\$86.70	\$1069.42
Employee + children	\$39.11	\$1004.01	\$74.32	\$916.64
Employee + spouse & children	\$63.02	\$1617.56	\$119.74	\$1476.81
Kaiser Permanente HMO				
Employee only	\$17.50	\$449.21	\$33.25	\$410.12
Employee + spouse	\$36.75	\$943.34	\$69.82	\$861.26
Employee + children	\$31.50	\$808.59	\$59.86	\$738.22
Employee + spouse & children	\$50.75	\$1302.72	\$96.43	\$1189.37
Blue Shield HMO				
Employee only	\$18.27	\$469.04	\$34.72	\$428.22
Employee + spouse	\$38.37	\$984.97	\$72.91	\$899.26
Employee + children	\$32.89	\$844.26	\$62.49	\$770.80
Employee + spouse & children	\$52.99	\$1360.19	\$100.69	\$1241.83

big to print here, but you can see it on-line at www.ibew1245.com. Look for "Company Annual RSP Contributions" on the list of bargaining-related documents on the homepage.

Are my deductibles or office co-payments going to go up?

The company sought plan design changes, but the union successfully defended the current plan designs. The TA contains no changes in deductibles or co-payments.

Are my medical benefits diminished in some other way?

No. In fact, there are improvements. The maximum on the dental benefit is increased by \$500 a year. The maximum on the orthodontia benefit is increased by \$500. Vision benefits are increased by \$250 per eye for Lasik surgery, ultraviolet lenses and photochromic lenses. The TA also provides free generic drugs for about 300 drugs on the Medco list.

I'm still very reluctant to let my medical premium co-payments go up. Why can't I just vote this down and keep things the way they are?

You are free to vote "no." But you can't keep things the way they are. Medical costs continue to rise. When you reach retirement age, your retiree medical premiums could make it very difficult for you to retire.

Aren't you exaggerating the problem?

It's no exaggeration. Medical costs continue to climb at a staggering rate, approximately 8% a year. But PG&E's contribution to retiree medical premiums is capped at \$553 per month (for those insured by Anthem Blue Cross). That means retirees are paying 100% of any premium increases. If you were a retiree-with-spouse-under-65 and insured by Anthem Blue Cross, you paid \$0 per month in 2000, \$334 in 2004, and \$664 in 2009. You will pay an estimated \$1235 in 2014 and \$1880 in 2018. *Per month.*

Does the TA solve that problem?

No, but it's a start. The TA does two very important things. First, for current retirees, it removes the existing cap on PG&E contributions to retiree medical premiums. If the TA passes, PG&E and retirees will share the cost of premium increases, rather than retirees having to pay the entire increase. Second, for current employees (future retirees), it creates Retirement Medical Savings Accounts that the employee can use for medical expenses after they retire.

Slow down. How does this help current retirees?

For retirees who are not yet eligible for Medicare, PG&E will pay an amount equivalent to 65% of the cost of NAP/CAP premiums up to an annual cap, which will be based on years of credited service. Under the current formula, PG&E pays none of the increase. Bottom line: for those with single coverage, the TA brings immediate savings of \$420 a year.

How about current retirees who are eligible for Medicare?

For retirees who are Medicare-eligible (generally speaking, that's age 65 or over), PG&E's payments will be adjusted each year as the cost of Medicare supplemental plans goes up. Bottom line: the TA brings immediate savings of \$180 a year.

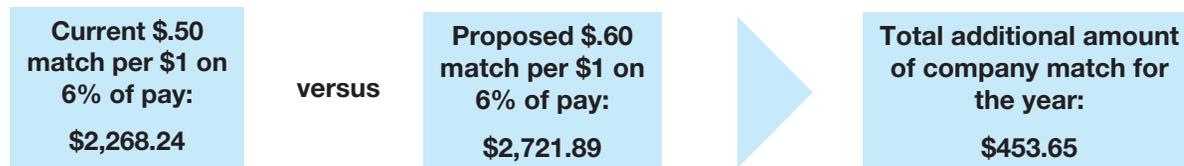
Medical Plans (2009 Rates)	Current — You Pay per Month	Current — PG&E Pays per Month	Proposed — You Would Pay per Month*	Proposed — PG&E Would Pay per Month*
Health Net HMO				
Employee only	\$20.69	\$531.26	\$37.36	\$460.77
Employee + spouse	\$43.46	\$1115.65	\$82.59	\$1018.56
Employee + children	\$37.25	\$956.26	\$70.78	\$873.05
Employee + spouse & children	\$60.02	\$1540.65	\$114.05	\$1,406.59
New Low-Cost PPO (Anthem Blue Cross)				
Employee only	N/A	N/A	\$19.10	\$490.85
Employee + spouse	N/A	N/A	\$40.16	\$1030.77
Employee + children	N/A	N/A	\$34.42	\$883.53
Employee + spouse & children	N/A	N/A	\$55.46	\$1423.45
New High-Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) with Health Savings Account (HSA)				
Employee only	N/A	N/A	\$43.46	\$536.05
Employee + spouse	N/A	N/A	\$91.26	\$1125.71
Employee + children	N/A	N/A	\$78.22	\$964.90
Employee + spouse & children	N/A	N/A	\$126.04	\$1554.54

Higher Retirement Savings Plan (RSP) Match

PG&E will contribute \$.60 for every \$1 you contribute (current match is \$.50) — up to:

- 6% of eligible pay for employees with 3+ years of service
- 3% of eligible pay for employees with 1 - 3 years of service

For example, if an employee with more than three years of service and an hourly pay rate of \$36.35 contributes 6% of eligible pay to the RSP throughout all of 2011, he or she would receive an additional \$453.65 a year through the higher company match:



Before-Tax Advantage

Remember, your contributions for medical premiums are deducted from your paycheck *before* federal and state income taxes are calculated, reducing your taxable income and potentially saving you money.

Example: How Higher RSP Match Offsets Higher Medical Premium Contributions

Because you pay for medical premiums with before-tax dollars, your actual net cost for medical premiums is likely to be 25% to 35% lower than the amounts shown, depending on your personal income tax bracket. In the following example, the chart shows:

- Dollar amount of additional 3.75% increase in cost sharing for Kaiser (after factoring in an estimated 5% reduction in PG&E insurance rates due to the proposed "unbundling" of active and retiree premiums)
- 30% reduction in cost sharing (assuming a personal tax bracket of 30% based on a pay rate of \$36.35/hour)
- Before-tax contributions (no federal or state income taxes are withheld), which reduces taxable income as well as the actual amount you pay for medical premiums
- **Employee realizes a net gain** after factoring in higher RSP match and increased premium cost*

Annual RSP increase (company match)	\$453.65	\$453.65	\$453.65	\$453.65
Kaiser HMO (2009 Rates)	Employee Only	Employee + Spouse	Employee + Children	Employee + Spouse & Children
Dollar amount of annual 3.75% increase in employee contribution for medical plan premium (with adjustment for impact of "unbundling")	\$189.00	\$396.84	\$340.32	\$548.16
Annual before-tax actual cost of employee contribution for medical plan premium <i>* Assumes 30% reduction</i>	\$132.30	\$277.79	\$238.22	\$383.71
Annual total difference using before-tax amount: <i>RSP increase minus increased 3.75% before-tax (30%) contribution</i>	\$321.35 gain <i>(453.65 – 132.30)</i>	\$175.86 gain <i>(453.65 – 277.79)</i>	\$215.43 gain <i>(453.65 – 238.22)</i>	\$69.94 gain <i>(453.65 – 383.71)</i>

continued on following page

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For those who retired prior to 1994, there is additional monthly assistance of \$40 for the retiree and \$40 for the spouse. Bottom line: the TA brings immediate savings of \$660 a year for single coverage.

Do current retirees approve of this agreement?

Many of the retiree leaders have already expressed support because of the relief that the TA will provide to current retirees.

I'm still working so I guess that makes me a "future retiree." Does the TA help me?

Yes. It doesn't solve the problem of retiree medical costs, but it gives you an edge. If the TA doesn't pass, you have no edge at all.

What sort of "edge" does the TA provide me?

Your monthly costs for medical expenses will rise less quickly. If the TA passes, it creates an entirely new way of funding your retirement medical expenses. In place of the current system, where company contributions are capped, the TA requires PG&E to establish Retirement Medical Savings Accounts (RMSA) for you and for your spouse—right away. When you retire, you can draw on these accounts to pay a portion of your retirement medical premiums.

This sounds complicated.

Not really. Let's break it down into two parts: how your RMSA gets funded and how it gets spent.

OK. How does my RMSA get funded?

If the TA passes, PG&E will credit your RMSA with \$5,000 a year after age 45. Plus \$1,000 for each year of service over 15 years. Plus \$7,500 (representing the Retirement Premium Offset Account that was awarded all employees as part of the 2003 General Bargaining). Plus PG&E will credit your spouse with \$5,000 for each year after your (the employee's) 45th birthday. And finally, the company will credit each RMSA with 4.5% annual simple interest.

I hate math. Just tell me what I get.

If you retire at age 55 with 30 years of service, you would have \$91,706 credited to your RMSA. Your spouse (also assumed to be age 55) would have \$69,206 credited to his/her RMSA. If you retired at age 65 with 40 years of service, you would have \$201,416 credited to your RMSA and your spouse (also assumed to be age 65) would have \$168,916 credited to his/her RMSA.

We could take the money and run?

No. The RMSA can only be used for retirement medical premiums. The RMSA is "notional" money, which means the money is guaranteed for your use, but it is controlled by PG&E, cannot be used for any other purpose, and does not become part of your estate.

So PG&E pays all of my premiums and my spouse's premiums until the RMSA runs out?

No, that would deplete your account too quickly and leave you in the lurch later in your retirement. The RMSA can only be used to pay part of your premium.

How much of the RMSA can be used to pay toward my premiums?

Additional Medical Plan Choices

All current medical plans will be available at 7.5% of the total premium cost. In addition, PG&E will offer two new plans:

- New Low-Cost PPO Plan — you pay 3.75% of premium cost
- New High-Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) with Health Savings Account (HSA)—you pay 7.5% of premium cost
 - PG&E will make a federally tax-free contribution to your HSA, which you can use to pay for eligible health care expenses (excludes amounts you pay toward the premium)
 - You can make federally tax-free contributions to your HSA up to IRS limits, which change yearly
 - You can use the HSA to pay for qualified health care expenses for you and your eligible dependents — even if your dependents aren't enrolled in your medical plan
 - You never forfeit unused amounts — the money in your HSA is yours to keep, whether you change medical plans, retire or leave PG&E

Better Health Care Benefits

In addition to two new medical plan options, you'll receive:

- **300+ free generic prescriptions** through the Medco mail-order program (available for all Anthem Blue Cross plans except HDHP)
- **Better Vision Service Plan (VSP) benefits**
 - Contact lenses or eyeglass lenses covered every 12 months (contacts currently covered at \$75 in lieu of eyeglasses and exam)
 - \$150 contact lens allowance every 12 months
 - \$150 frame allowance every 24 months (currently \$115)
 - New coverage for ultraviolet and photochromic lenses
 - New lasik coverage, up to \$250 per eye (lifetime maximum)
- **Better dental benefits**
 - Increased orthodontia benefit of up to \$2,000 per lifetime (currently \$1,500)
 - Higher dental annual maximum benefit of \$2,500 (currently \$2,000)

Improved Vacation Eligibility — Effective January 1, 2010

New hires will be eligible to take accrued vacation after reaching regular status (current vacation eligibility is 12 months of service).

Proposed Changes for Future Retirees — Effective January 1, 2011

The way things are now, PG&E payments toward retiree medical premiums are capped. Retirees pay 100% of all increases in premium costs, and future retirees will face the same situation.

The Tentative Agreement changes the equation: the costs of medical inflation will be divided between the retiree and the company. PG&E will establish a new, tax-free Retiree Medical Savings Account (RMSA), a company-funded account that future retirees can use to pay part of their retiree medical premiums.

These accounts consist of "notional" money, which means the money is guaranteed for the retiree's use, but is controlled by PG&E, cannot be used for any other purpose, and does not become part of the retiree's estate.

Features of the RMSA include:

- Same eligibility requirements for retiree medical benefits as today (at least age 55 with 10 years of credited service)
- Company contributions will be based on years of credited service — PG&E will pay:
 - \$5,000 a year starting at age 45 (or later if hired after 45) for an employee and spouse/domestic partner (up to \$10,000 per couple)
 - Additional \$1,000/year beyond 15 years of credited service (employee only)
 - Up to an additional \$7,500 based on years of credited service at the time of retirement (replaces \$7,500 RPOA50; employee only)
- The RMSA will be credited with 4.5% interest, calculated annually, starting at the end of the year you reach age 46
- Benefits are retroactive, so if you retire in 2011 or later, you'll receive the RMSA as if it had always been in place

Using the RMSA

Future retirees can use the RMSA to pay a portion of retiree medical premiums, with the withdrawal rate decreasing by year:

Non-Medicare Retirees & Spouses/Domestic Partners		Medicare Retirees & Spouses/Domestic Partners	
Can use RMSA to pay for this % of medical premiums:		Can use RMSA to pay for this % of medical premiums:	
2011	65%	2011	33%
2012	63%	2012	32%
2013	61%	2013	31%
2014	59%	2014	30%
2015	57%		
2016	55%		

Before you are Medicare-eligible, the account can be used to pay 65% of your premium in 2011. That percentage drops 2% a year for five years, down to 55% of the premium.

How about when I become eligible for Medicare?

At that point, your insurance premiums will be lower. Your RMSA can be used to pay 33% of the premium in 2011, dropping 1% a year, down to 30%.

There's all that math again. Can't you just tell me if I'll be a lot better off?

You will be better off with the TA than under the current system. A retiree who is not yet Medicare eligible would see an immediate savings of \$430 a year for single coverage. A retiree who is Medicare eligible would see an immediate savings of \$420 a year for single coverage. See the charts "RMSA: Medicare-Eligible" and "RMSA: Not-Medicare-Eligible" on page 8 to track what your monthly savings would be in future years.

I worry about how my spouse and dependents will cope with medical expenses when I'm gone.

The TA has some advantages regarding spouses and dependent children. Retirees can draw on their RMSA to pay their dependents' premiums. And future surviving spouses/domestic partners will be able to draw down their RMSA until age 65, an improvement over the current situation, where surviving spouse/domestic partner gets zero supplement from PG&E after RPOA funds are exhausted.

I looked at those RMSA charts and it looks like I'm still going to pay a lot of money. And what happens when my RMSA money runs out?

The TA does not completely "solve" the problem of rising medical costs for retirees. (The union would deserve the Nobel Prize in Economics if we

continued on next page

Long Tough Negotiations



Jack Hill, Donna Ambeau, Mark Newman



Graciela Nunez, Bryan Carroll, Mike Scafani, Stu Neblett



Jennifer Gray, Dee Green, Ed Dwyer



Dorothy Fortier and Tom Dalzell

Dependent Eligibility for the RMSA

The RMSA can only be used to pay a portion of retiree medical premiums for eligible retirees and dependents. PG&E will pay no RMSA benefits for dependents when:

- **You divorce** — your spouse will lose RMSA benefits immediately
- **You marry after retirement** — your new spouse will not be eligible for RMSA benefits
- **You die**
 - You lose RMSA benefits
 - Your surviving spouse keeps RMSA benefits until age 65
 - Your dependent children can use your spouse's RMSA benefits until your spouse reaches age 65 (if you have no spouse, then your dependent children receive no RMSA benefits)

If You're Retiring in 2010 — One-Time Choice of RMSA or Cap

If you're retiring in 2010 and you're eligible for retiree medical benefits, you'll have a one-time, irrevocable choice of the new RMSA or the company cap:

- **During 2010 = existing cap**
- **At 2011 Open Enrollment = choice of new cap or RMSA from that point forward**

Eligible PG&E employees retiring in 2011 or later will receive the RMSA because the company cap will no longer apply.

Example — What You Would Pay with the Cap versus RMSA

This example shows **monthly retiree premium costs** for the non-Medicare Anthem Blue Cross Network Access Plan (NAP) for a non-Medicare retiree with 25+ years of credited service. Figures are projections only.

Anthem Blue Cross PPO (NAP/CAP)	Retiree Only — You Pay:		Retiree + Spouse/Domestic Partner — You Pay:	
	Cap	RMSA	Cap	RMSA
2011	\$413.03	\$377.21	\$866.33	\$792.15
2012	\$467.10	\$430.67	\$979.89	\$904.41
2013	\$525.51	\$465.12	\$1102.53	\$976.76

Proposed Changes for Current Retirees — Effective January 1, 2011

Today, retirees pay all the costs of medical inflation. Under the proposed settlement, PG&E would share the cost of inflation until a new cap is reached.

Benefits for those Not Yet Eligible for Medicare

Non-Medicare retirees and dependents will receive:

- Same medical plans as today, plus new Low-Cost PPO Plan and new High-Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) with Health Savings Account (HSA)
- 300+ free generic drugs through Medco mail-order program (for all Anthem Blue Cross plans except HDHP)
- Higher company cap — PG&E will pay an amount equivalent to 65% of cost of NAP/CAP premiums up to the annual cap, which will be based on years of credited service
 - Non-Medicare retirees and non-Medicare dependents must pay at least 28% of their total plan premiums, and total PG&E contributions cannot exceed the new annual cap
- RPOA50 and RPOA25 will continue

Example: Non-Medicare Retiree with 25+ Years of Service

The new maximum annual cap for a non-Medicare retiree with 25+ years of credited service and his or her non-Medicare dependents will be:

- \$13,000 per retiree — and
- \$13,000 per spouse — and
- \$13,000 total for dependent children

For non-Medicare retirees with 10 to 25 years of credited service, PG&E will pay 50% to 65% of the cost of NAP/CAP premiums, scaled proportionately depending on years and months of credited service — up to the annual cap. For example, a non-Medicare retiree with 10 years of credited service will receive an amount equivalent to 50% of annual NAP/CAP premiums until retirees with 25+ years of credited service reach the new annual company cap. The more years of credited service you have (up to 25 years), the more PG&E will pay toward your retiree medical premium.

Benefits for Those Eligible for Medicare

Medicare-eligible retirees and dependents will receive:

- Same medical plans as today
- 300+ free generic drugs through Medco mail-order program (for all Anthem Blue Cross plans)
- Higher annual company cap — for 2011, PG&E will pay \$95 a month (about 80% of Retiree Optional Plan premium) — and

continued on following page

continued from previous page

could do that!) But the TA does accomplish two things. First, it provides a significant reduction in how much you pay each month (and when you're on a fixed income in retirement you'll appreciate the importance of those savings). Second, it buys time. We think the TA puts us in a better position to bargain additional improvements in the future.

That's not much of a guarantee.

The only guarantee is that, under the current cap, PG&E won't pay a dime more toward a retiree's medical premium than it does right now. The TA removes that cap. There are no fairy-tale endings to this story. But this TA makes significant improvements and creates a better framework for future negotiations. You never get down the road if you don't take the first step.

Note: This Q & A does not cover all issues. For additional information, please read the "Highlights" beginning on Page 4.

- Pre-1994 retirees and spouses/domestic partners would receive an additional \$40 a month starting in spring 2010 (total \$80 a month per pre-1994 couple)
- PG&E also will pay a monthly increase of an amount equivalent to the average increase of all PG&E Medicare plans (including an adjustment to the \$95 mentioned above), up to the new annual cap, which will be based on years of credited service
- RPOA-50 and RPOA-25 will continue

Example: Medicare Retiree with 25+ Years of Service

The maximum annual cap for a Medicare retiree with 25+ years of credited service and his or her non-Medicare dependents will be:

- \$2,500 per retiree — and
- \$2,500 per spouse — and
- \$2,500 total for dependent children

For Medicare retirees with 10 to 25 years of credited service, PG&E will pay \$30.40 to \$95 a month, scaled proportionately depending on years and months of credited service — up to the new annual cap. For example, a Medicare retiree with 10 years of credited service will receive a monthly contribution of \$30.40 (about 32% of \$95). This is a per-person amount, so a Medicare-eligible couple will receive \$60.80 a month. PG&E will increase this amount by the weighted average increase of all PG&E Medicare plans until Medicare retirees with 25+ years of service reach the new annual company cap. The more years of credited service you have (up to 25 years), the more PG&E will pay toward your retiree medical premium.

Benefits Differ by Medicare Status

PG&E will pay separate amounts for retirees, spouses and dependents, based on Medicare status.

Example: Medicare Retiree with 25+ Years of Service and non-Medicare Dependents

The maximum annual cap will be:

- Medicare retiree — \$2,500 per year, plus
- Non-Medicare spouse — \$13,000 per year, plus
- Non-Medicare children — \$13,000 per year

Questions?

- Send an e-mail to HRBenefitsQuestions@exchange.pge.com
- Call (800) 788-2363 for the HR Service Center
- Call IBEW Local 1245 Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier at 707-452-2709

TABLES

"Company Annual RSP Contributions" table can be viewed on-line at www.ibew1245.com

Effects of Premium Copay Increase					
Medical Plan	Current Plan		Proposed Plan		
	*2011 Projected Premium (Blended)	Employee Paid Portion	*2011 Projected Premium (Unblended)	Employee Paid Portion	Increase in Employee Portion
Blue Cross (NAP or CAP)					
Employee only	\$675.94	\$25.35	\$648.90	\$48.67	\$23.32
Employee + Spouse/DP	\$1,419.47	\$53.23	\$1,362.69	\$102.20	\$48.97
Employee + Child(ren)	\$1,216.70	\$45.63	\$1,168.03	\$87.60	\$41.98
Employee + Family	\$1,960.23	\$73.51	\$1,881.82	\$141.14	\$67.63
Blue Shield					
Employee only	\$568.40	\$21.31	\$545.66	\$40.92	\$19.61
Employee + Spouse/DP	\$1,193.62	\$44.76	\$1,145.88	\$85.94	\$41.18
Employee + Child(ren)	\$1,023.11	\$38.37	\$982.18	\$73.66	\$35.30
Employee + Family	\$1,648.33	\$61.81	\$1,582.40	\$118.68	\$56.87
Health Net					
Employee only	\$643.79	\$24.14	\$618.04	\$46.35	\$22.21
Employee + Spouse/DP	\$1,351.99	\$50.70	\$1,297.91	\$97.34	\$46.64
Employee + Child(ren)	\$1,158.83	\$43.46	\$1,112.48	\$83.44	\$39.98
Employee + Family	\$1,867.02	\$70.01	\$1,792.34	\$134.43	\$64.41
Kaiser (North or South)					
Employee only	\$544.37	\$20.41	\$522.60	\$39.19	\$18.78
Employee + Spouse/DP	\$1,143.18	\$42.87	\$1,097.45	\$82.31	\$39.44
Employee + Child(ren)	\$979.88	\$36.75	\$940.69	\$70.55	\$33.81
Employee + Family	\$1,578.69	\$59.20	\$1,515.54	\$113.67	\$54.46

* 8% Medical inflation assumed
* Assumed Blending of rate

Effect of General Wage Increase 1/01/2011		
If you earn Hourly Wage	* + 4%	You will receive GWI / Month
\$15.00		\$104.00
\$17.00		\$117.86
\$19.00		\$131.73
\$21.00		\$145.60
\$23.00		\$159.46
\$25.00		\$173.33
\$27.00		\$187.20
\$29.00		\$201.06
\$31.00		\$214.93
\$33.00		\$228.80
\$35.00		\$242.66
\$37.00		\$256.53
\$39.00		\$270.39
\$41.00		\$284.26
\$43.00		\$298.13
\$45.00		\$311.99
\$47.00		\$325.86
\$49.00		\$339.73
\$51.00		\$353.59
\$53.00		\$367.46
\$55.00		\$381.33

*4% GWI already negotiated for Physical Employees for the year 2011.
Clerical wage increase to be negotiated in 2010 for 2011.

RMSA (Medicare Eligible)				
Year	Current Method		Proposed Method	
	Projected Premium	Retiree Portion	Retiree Portion	Difference (Savings to Retiree)
2011	\$369.74	\$282.67	\$247.73	\$34.94
2012	\$399.32	\$312.25	\$271.54	\$40.71
2013	\$431.26	\$344.19	\$297.57	\$46.62
2014	\$465.77	\$378.70	\$326.04	\$52.66
2015	\$503.03	\$415.96	\$352.12	\$63.84
2016	\$543.27	\$456.20	\$380.29	\$75.91
2017	\$586.73	\$499.66	\$410.71	\$88.95
2018	\$633.67	\$546.60	\$443.57	\$103.03
2019	\$684.36	\$597.29	\$479.05	\$118.24
2020	\$739.11	\$652.04	\$517.38	\$134.66
2021	\$798.24	\$711.17	\$558.77	\$152.40
2022	\$862.10	\$775.03	\$603.47	\$171.56
2023	\$931.07	\$844.00	\$651.75	\$192.25
2024	\$1,005.55	\$918.48	\$703.89	\$214.60
2025	\$1,086.00	\$998.93	\$760.20	\$238.73

All amounts are per month 8% Medical inflation assumed

RMSA (Not Medicare Eligible)					
Year	Current Method		Proposed Method		
	Projected Premium	Employee Paid Portion	Projected Premium	Employee Paid Portion	Difference (Savings to Retiree)
2011	\$675.94	\$413.03	\$1,077.75	\$377.21	\$35.82
2012	\$730.02	\$467.11	\$1,163.97	\$430.67	\$36.44
2013	\$788.42	\$525.51	\$1,257.09	\$490.26	\$35.24
2014	\$851.49	\$588.58	\$1,357.65	\$556.64	\$31.94
2015	\$919.61	\$656.70	\$1,466.27	\$630.49	\$26.20
2016	\$993.18	\$730.27	\$1,583.57	\$712.61	\$17.66
2017	\$1,072.63	\$809.72	\$1,710.25	\$769.61	\$40.11
2018	\$1,158.44	\$895.53	\$1,847.07	\$831.18	\$64.35
2019	\$1,251.12	\$988.21	\$1,994.84	\$897.68	\$90.53
2020	\$1,351.21	\$1,088.30	\$2,154.43	\$969.49	\$118.80
2021	\$1,459.30	\$1,196.39	\$2,326.78	\$1,047.05	\$149.34
2022	\$1,576.05	\$1,313.14	\$2,512.92	\$1,130.82	\$182.32
2023	\$1,702.13	\$1,439.22	\$2,713.96	\$1,221.28	\$217.94
2024	\$1,838.30	\$1,575.39	\$2,931.07	\$1,318.98	\$256.41
2025	\$1,985.37	\$1,722.46	\$3,165.56	\$1,424.50	\$297.95

Notes: All amounts are Per Month 8% Medical inflation assumed

Line Clearance Tree Trimmers



Front row, from left: Juan Cruz, Asplundh; Brian Clark, Trees, Inc.; Tim O'Conner, Trees Inc.; Pete Ely, Davey; Dale Evenson, Asplundh; Jose Duarte, Trees Inc; Miguel Gonzalez, Asplundh. Back row, from left: David Chapman, Davey; B. John Simms, Davey; C. Roberto Hernandez, Asplundh; Steven Peeples, Davey; James Lococo, Davey; F. Miguel Inigues, Davey; G. Juan Cervantes, Trees Inc.; H. Virgil O' Neal, Davey.

Primera fila, de izquierda a derecha: Juan Cruz, Asplundh; Brian Clark, Trees, Inc.; Tim O Conner, Trees Inc.; Pete Ely, Davey; Dale Evenson, Asplundh; Jose Durate, Trees Inc; Miguel Gonzalez, Asplundh. Segunda fila, de izquierda a derecha: David Chapman, Davey; B. John Simms, Davey; C. Roberto Hernandez, Asplundh; Steven Peeples, Davey; James Lococo, Davey; F. Miguel Iniques, Davey; G. Juan Cervantes, Trees Inc.; H. Virgil O' Neal, Davey.

Tree trimmer stewards briefed on key issues

Local 1245 stewards employed by tree trimming contractors met at Weakley Hall in Vacaville on May 16 for updates on a variety of key issues facing employees in the workplace.

Among the issues reviewed at the Line Clearance and Vegetation Control Shop Stewards Training Conference were:

- Workers' Compensation
- Family and Medical Leave Act
- California Paid Leave Act
- Weingarten Rights
- Heat Illness Prevention Act
- Grievance Handling and Shop Steward Etiquette

IBEW 1245 Money Purchase Pension Plan Administrator Derek Hobbs updated attendees on the current investment market.

Attending the conference were:

Juan Cervantes, David Chapman, Brian Clarke, Jose Duarte, Pete Ely, Dale Evenson, Miguel Gonzalez, Timothy O'Conner, Virgil O'Neal, Steven Peeples, John Simms, Juan Cruz, Jim Lococo, Miguel Inigues, and Roberto Hernandez, along with IBEW staff members Carl Lamers, Junior Ornelas and Ray Thomas.

Representantes Sindicales de Trabajadores en la Poda de Árboles Reciben Información Importante

Los representantes sindicales del Local 1245 empleados por los contratistas para la poda de árboles se reunieron

el 16 de mayo en Weakley Hall en Vacaville para recibir información actualizada sobre diferentes tópicos importantes relacionados con su entorno laboral.

Entre los tópicos que se discutieron en la Conferencia de Entrenamiento para Representantes Sindicales para la Poda de Árboles y Control de la Vegetación Cerca de Líneas Eléctricas estuvieron los siguientes:

- Compensación del Trabajador
- Ley de Ausencia Familiar y Médica
- Ley de Ausencia con Pago de California
- Derechos Weingarten
- Ley de Prevención de Enfermedades Causadas por el Calor
- Manejo de Quejas y Protocolos para Representantes Sindicales

Tree Trimmers: Protect Your Seniority

To all Local 1245 Line Clearance Tree Trimmers and Vegetation Control Members:

Local 1245 wants to remind you of the importance of your Local 1245 "Union Seniority." which is governed by your current 1245 membership initiation date.

If your current employer loses your contract area to another contractor who is signatory to Local Union 1245, your Union Seniority protects you in two major ways: 1. Union Seniority determines the priority in which Union Members are retained by the new employer. 2. Union Seniority determines the level of PTO or vacation you shall receive with the new employer.

Subject to the Bylaws of IBEW Local Union 1245, you must not let your membership lapse for 3 months or more if you want to retain your current initiation date. Simply put, if you become 3 months or more in arrears with your dues payment, you will lose your former initiation date, and receive a new date, which will affect the benefits of your Union Seniority.

Derek Hobbs, administrador del Plan de Jubilación de Aportación Definida del IBEW 1245, informó a los participantes sobre el estado actual del mercado de inversiones.

En la conferencia participaron:

Juan Cervantes; David Chapman; Brian Clarke; Jose Duarte; Pete Ely, rep-



Brian Clark, Trees Inc.



Jose Duarte, Trees Inc.

If you are off of work due to injury, Family Medical Leave, Military Leave etc, you may pay non-working dues by contacting the Union at (707) 452-2700. Also, it is very important to remind newly hired employees to fill out their membership packets as soon as possible in order to secure their respective Union Seniority dates.

*Ray Thomas
Senior Business Representative*

Proteja su antigüedad

A todos los trabajadores de limpieza de líneas, poda de árboles y control de la vegetación que son miembros del Local 1245:

Una vez más, el Local 1245 quiere recordarles la importancia de su "Antigüedad en el Local 1245 del Sindicato", la que es gobernada por su fecha actual de iniciación como miembro del Local 1245.

Si su presente empleador pierde su área de contrato a otro contratista, que también opere con personal del Local 1245, su antigüedad en el Sindicato lo protegerá de dos formas importantes: 1. Su antigüedad en el Sindicato determina la prioridad con que los miembros del Sindicato son retenidos por su

representante del Consejo Consultivo; Dale Evenson; Miguel Gonzalez; Timothy O'Connor; Virgil O'Neal; Steven Peeples; John Simms; Juan Cruz; Jim Lococo; Miguel Iniguez; y Roberto Hernandez, junto con los representantes del IBEW Carl Lamers, Junior Ornelas y Ray Thomas.



Tim O'Conner, Trees Inc.



Pete Ely, left, Davey Tree steward and tree trimmer representative on the Local 1245 Advisory Council, confers with Dale Evenson, Asplundh Tree.



Davey Tree Shop Steward Jim Lococo, left, receives his 25-year service watch from Senior Business Rep. Ray Thomas as Business Rep. Carl Lamers enjoys the moment.

nuevo empleador. 2. Su antigüedad en el Sindicato determina la cantidad de tiempo con paga sin trabajar, o tiempo de vacaciones, que usted recibirá de su nuevo empleador.

De acuerdo con los Estatutos del Local 1245 del Sindicato IBEW, usted no debe dejar que expire su condición de miembro del Local durante 3 meses o más, si desea retener su fecha actual de iniciación en el Local. En forma más simple, si usted deja de pagar sus cuotas de miembro durante 3 meses o más, perderá su antigua fecha de iniciación y recibirá una nueva fecha, lo que afectará los beneficios de su antigüedad en el Sindicato.

Si no puede trabajar debido a alguna lesión, o por motivo de un permiso de ausencia de tipo médico o familiar, o de servicio militar, usted puede reducir la cantidad que debe pagar por sus cuotas si llama al Sindicato por el teléfono (707) 452-2700. También es muy importante recordarles a los nuevos empleados, acabados de contratar, que deben llenar sus documentos de miembro del Local tan pronto como sea posible, para así poder establecer sus fechas respectivas de iniciación y su antigüedad en el Sindicato.

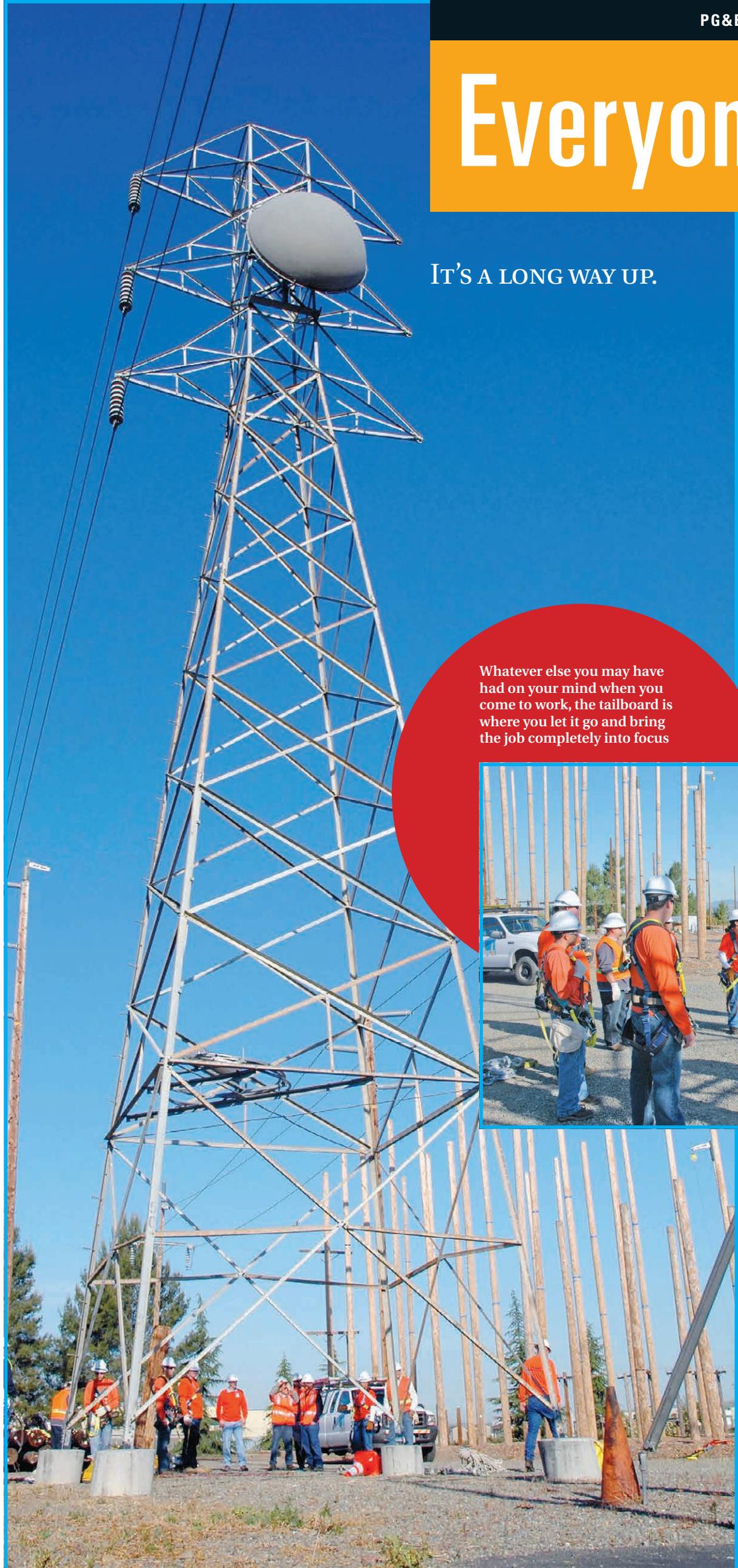
*Raymond S. Thomas Representante
Principal de Negocios*



Travis Bess has just finished setting the load line for the dish removal.



Keith Herrmann (BELOW) sends up the grunt bag ... and it is put to use.



Everyone

IT'S A LONG WAY UP.

Whatever else you may have had on your mind when you come to work, the tailboard is where you let it go and bring the job completely into focus



Who is Responsible

Story & Photos by Eric Wolfe

IT'S A LONG WAY DOWN.

That's the first thing you have to get used to – and the last thing you should ever forget – when you're up in a telecommunications tower hanging over a sea of nothing. And learning how to work safely at those heights is the first order of business if you plan to make a living as a telecommunications technician.

Working so far off the ground is “kind of unnatural,” Sam Kingsbury tells nine trainees at a PG&E tower training class in Livermore. Just about everything else Kingsbury says during the training is geared to make you feel more comfortable about working at heights—but not *too* comfortable.



Classroom instruction by Sam Kingsbury.

The trainees at the April class include seven IBEW members—four utility workers and three apprentice communications technicians, along with two engineering techs affiliated with the Engineers and Scientists of California.

On Day One of the week-long class they review the Code of Safe Practices. They discuss helicopter safety. They inspect their harnesses. And there's no

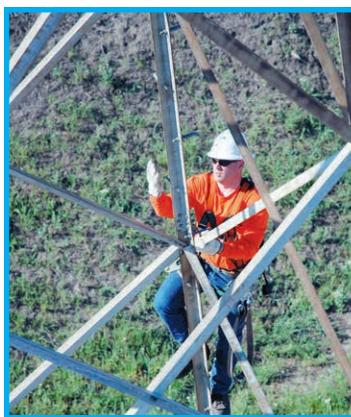
avoiding it, even on the first day, they get onto the tower. Today, Day Two, they'll go back up the tower to practice lowering and raising a dish. (Later in the week they'll take a test and practice hurt-man rescue procedures.)

All trainees are required to be 100% tied off during their first day up the tower.

continued on next page



Theresa Laita makes her way up the tower.



Telecomm Tech and class instructor Sam Kingsbury gives it a thump, making sure his next grip point is securely anchored.



Travis Bess works on rigging the dish, observed by Theresa Laita (face behind dish) and Sam Kingsbury.



Johnny Hallum is first in position, but the others are on their way.



Travis Bess maintains 3-point contact on his way up the tower.



Theresa Laita

Apprentice Comm Tech Theresa Laita is the only woman in the class but the only person who seems to notice is the reporter. Being a woman in a Physical classification, while still somewhat rare, doesn't attract the same kind of attention it would have 20 or even 10 years ago.

And that's fine with Laita, who doesn't pay any attention to it herself. She's already had 9 years of experience with a communications company, as a switch technician and field technician. In fact, the company was the local carrier for a PG&E facility and “that's how I got to know some of the Title 200 techs” at PG&E, she says.

“I loved what I did,” she says, which made it hard to change employers. But her company had been bought twice, raising concerns about job security. She came over to PG&E for two reasons: “Stability and [opportunities for] growth, and PG&E had both.”

She got off to a rocky start in the training class: On the first day she didn't have the right boots and wasn't allowed on the tower. So Day Two of the class was her first time climbing, and she doesn't mind sharing how she felt. “I was extremely nervous.”

But this is where the class's emphasis on confidence, communication and teamwork paid off. “What made me comfortable,” she says, “was everybody seemed at ease up there, so that made me feel all right.”



Wes Padgett

Utility Worker Wes Padgett will tell you right out: he didn't get into climbing because of a love of heights. He's not much of a risk-taker, has never even ridden a roller coaster.

He got into tower work, he says, “because I needed a job.”

He's been at it a while now, and says with a shrug, “You get used to it.”

He's spent time in the construction trades, including tower construction. He says this is his fourth certification class in five years, but his first since hiring on at PG&E in February.

He's looking forward to becoming a Comm Tech and gaining the job security that comes with a skilled position at a stable employer.



Travis Bess

Apprentice Comm Tech Travis Bess came to PG&E last September “for everything it offers.”

Previously he worked in the car industry (and we all know how things are going right now in *that* section of the economy).

“They take good care of you,” he says of PG&E, as he lists the union-negotiated benefits like health care, retirement “and everything else.”

Bess, who has one daughter and a son on the way, says “You'd have to be pretty stupid to leave a company like this.”

Everyone, continued from previous page— a safety precaution as they adjust to the “unnatural” altitude. On the second day most of them are ready to climb without the safety line.

THE TAILBOARD

But it’s not the safety line or any other piece of gear that ultimately keeps you safe. It’s the attitude and the understanding you bring to the job. And that’s where the morning tailboard comes in. Whatever else you may have had on your mind when you come to work, the tailboard is where you let it go and bring the job completely into focus.

“Experience shows the tailboard contributes to a safer work environment,” says Kingsbury, who is co-leading the training session with Tech Crew Lead Daryl Kehres. “A tailboard,” Kingsbury says, “must be conducted at the start of the job and whenever conditions at the job site change,” such as the arrival of a new crew or new equipment.

The tailboard gives the foreman an opportunity to spell out the potential hazards of a job and the measures that might be taken to protect against the hazards. He or she will discuss the assignments for each crew member and their responsibilities in emergency situations. It’s up to crew members to ask questions if necessary “to be absolutely clear on their responsibilities,” Kingsbury says.

A hand shoots up. “How do you organize your tools so you don’t drop stuff?”

Your belt has tool slots, Kingsbury points out. But he also makes it clear that he prefers a different method: “If you’re on my job you’re not carrying tools up or down. We have grunt buckets, we should use them.”

“Whoever’s in charge figures out the order you want to bring things up in,” says Kehres. “You don’t want everything in one bucket, but don’t want 10 buckets up there.”

Kehres explains how the person in charge can expedite the process.

“I’m going to lay out all the lines in the order I want them to go up. I’m going to keep things busy as possible on the ground,” he says.

There’s a very good reason to be well-organized before you go up. It’s a lot easier than organizing things after you’re up high where you’re contending with background noise from traffic, trains, planes, wind and who-knows-what-else.

“A good tailboard will cut down on screaming down, ‘I need this, I need that,’” says Kingsbury.

EVERYONE IS RESPONSIBLE

Tailboards mean getting prepared for the safest, most efficient execution of the job possible. But they also mean being prepared for the possibility that something might go wrong.

Who’s going to dial 911? Who’s going to

Every member of the crew has a responsibility when it comes to safety and is expected to exercise it. Everyone has a voice, and is expected to use it.

meet and orient emergency personnel?

Time and again the point is made: every member of the crew has a responsibility when it comes to safety and is expected to exercise it. Everyone has a voice, and is expected to use it.

It’s a philosophy that has evolved from painful experience. Kehres makes the point with a story about the capstan tugger.

Many years ago, he says, an employee was pulling cable in a basement. The cable was going around a capstan tigger. The line was too small, pulled too tight. The crew members thought it didn’t look right.

“The foreman said, ‘If you can’t handle it I’ll get someone who can.’”

The foreman wasn’t listening to what the crew was saying, and someone was about to pay a price.

“If that line parts for some reason and recoils, you need to be someplace that’s out of the line of fire,” Kehres explains. In this case, the employee got hit in face and suffered major vision loss. “He couldn’t see well enough even to work in warehouse,” Kehres said.

Knowing how much weight a line can bear, and how much it will have to bear,

isn’t just a theoretical problem. It’s an issue that any telecomm worker climbing a tower can expect to face.

“Once the dish is hanging on there and the wind comes up, you’ll go from having 250 pounds up there to having 500 pounds,” Kehres says.

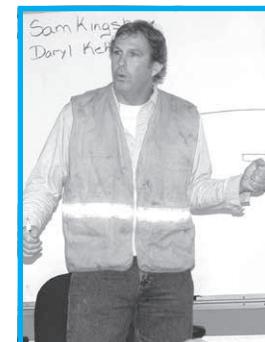
Kingsbury and Kehres continue to take questions and give pointers until there’s nothing left to do but gear up and climb. Both of these instructors are clear about what sort of attitude they believe is needed to make a job successful.

“You can either be grumpy or you can be positive,” says Kehres. “The key is to be talking to one another, helping one another.”

“It’s good work, it’s fun work,” says Kingsbury. “The sun is shining, it’s a beautiful day.”

And with that, the trainees head out to the tower to grab hold of their first dish.

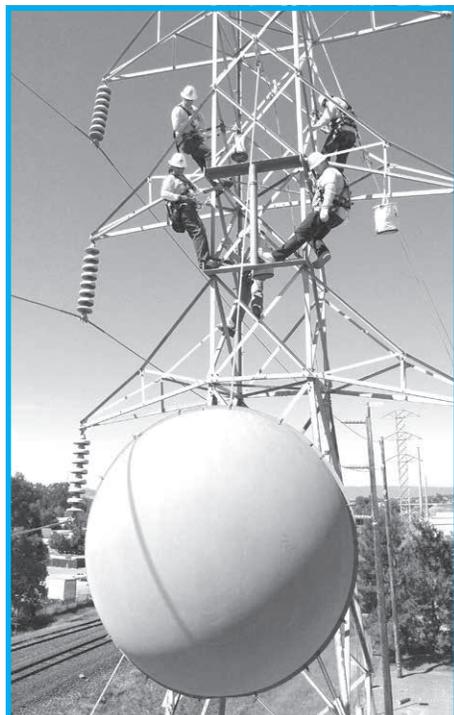
Classroom instruction by Daryl Kehres.



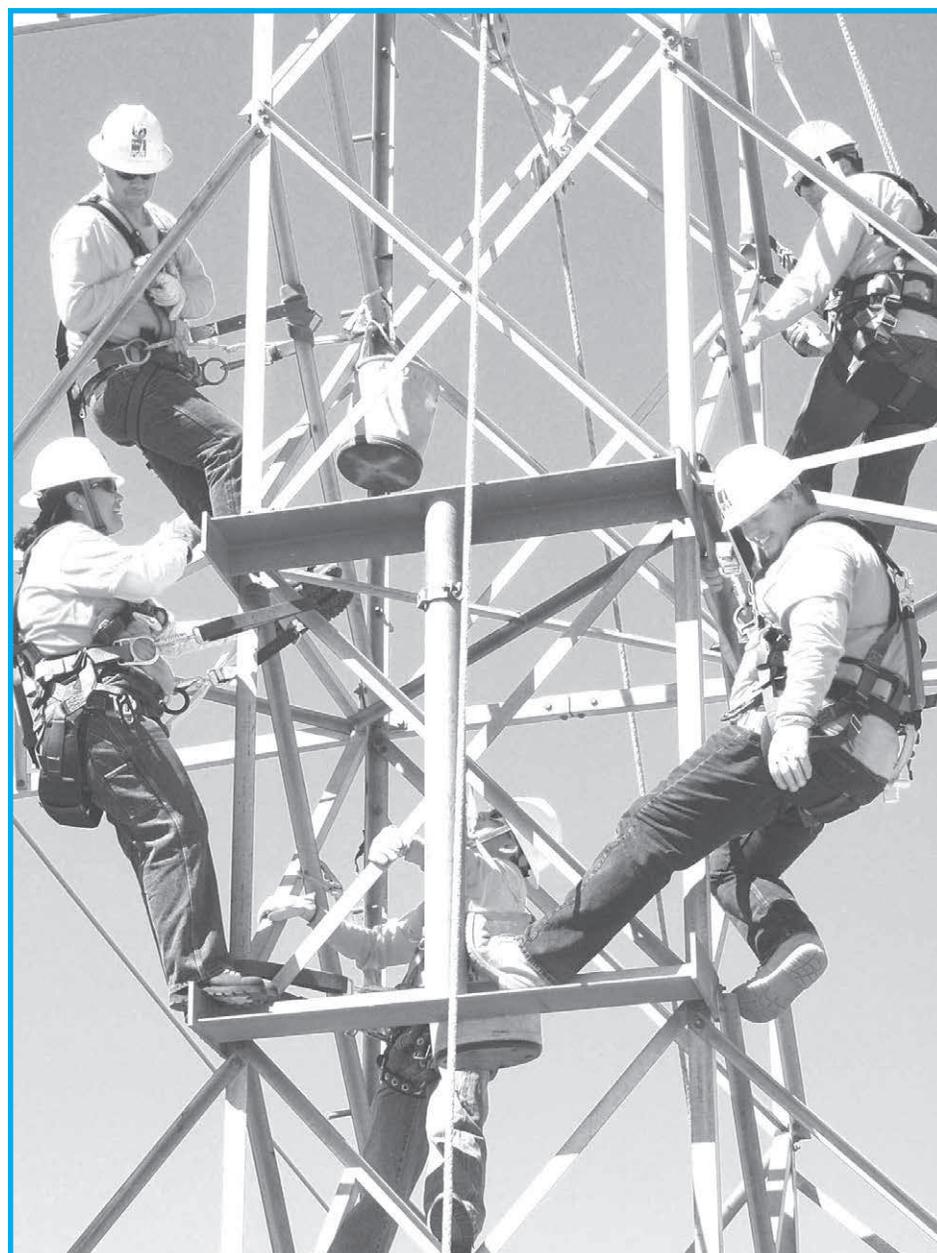
Training class crew, from left, Theresa Laita, Apprentice Comm Tech; Johnny Hallum, Utility Worker; Ryan Sparacino, Engineering Tech 2 (ESC); Keith Herrmann, Sr. Engineering Tech (ESC); Harold Schultz, Apprentice Comm Tech; Kyle Bennett, Utility Worker; Travis Bess, Apprentice Comm Tech; Scott Lien, Utility Worker; Wes Padgett, Utility Worker; Daryl Kehres, Tech Crew Lead B; and Sam Kingsbury, Telecomm Tech.



Patrick Windschitl, Senior Instructor, operated the bucket for the photo session. Thanks Patrick!



The dish begins a controlled journey down ... bringing smiles all around.



NV Stewards, from page 1

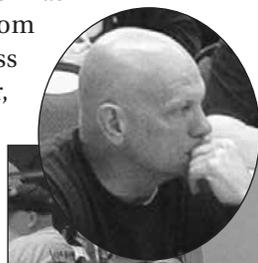
ence included safety, in particular the use of personal protective equipment, and the proper use of company computers.

Leading the conference was Business Manager Tom Dalzell, Assistant Business Manager Dennis Seyfer, Business Rep. Randy Osborn, and Dale Huntsman, a former bargaining committee member, now retired.

Advisory Council Representative Michelle Ramsey and Dominic Tanzi.



J.B. Wines, right, and Assistant Business Manager Dennis Seyfer listen to presentation on Cash Balance retirement plans.



John East



Mike Grimm (third table back) speaks up during stewards conference in Reno.

Attendees:

Ramsey, Michelle
Weisshaar, Rita
Furman, Adrian
O'Rayeh, Lynn
Grimm, Mike
Tanzi, Dominic
Ackerman, Gary
Helton, Rob
Radar, Chuck
Roberts, Paul
Pellett, Rich
Waremuth, Bruce
Gross, Reto
Lyday, Dan
Moler, Dana
Retzer, Will
Hildebrand, Scott
Thomas, Denver
Stahl, Smiley
East, John
Johnson, Eric
Bailey, Gary
Puff, Richard
Wines, James
Wilson, John
Gillespie, Chris
Henriod, Jeff
Kelly, Louis
Gordon, Kristen
Urrutia, Steve
Richardson, Jim
Wiles, Paul
Cornell, Tom



Safety Committee Report

Movement on maps?

There may be some movement on the issue of up-to-date maps for PG&E gas crews, which has been an on-going concern of the Local 1245 Safety Committee.



Ralph Armstrong

Lack of access to accurate maps has led to potentially dangerous breaches of gas pipes in the field (see "Inaccurate Maps Pose Danger" in the May-June 2009 Utility Reporter). The topic was again brought up to PG&E at the June 10 Joint Health and Safety Meeting.

PG&E is looking at the problem as a mapping issue as well as researching possible test methods that could be used on existing steel pipe to aid in ruling out the possibility of plastic pipe being inside the steel. The Local 1245 Safety Committee at its May meeting discussed the trend of utilities going to electronic mapping and the problem of having to rely on inaccurate paper maps during the transition.

The Safety Committee welcomed its Utility Reporter

newest member at the May meeting: Dan Boschee of Frontier Communications.

The new accident reporting procedure for unit meetings is getting off to a slow start. Only two report forms from units were received for the May meeting, which was held May 27.

"These forms should be filled out during all unit meetings and returned to the safety committee each month," said Ralph Armstrong, chair of the Safety Committee. New forms and guidelines are available on the website for downloading and printing.

"Units should start using them as part of their unit meeting and submit them to this committee whether or not there are accidents or concerns. This should be a standard reporting practice at every unit meeting every month," said Armstrong.

The Safety Committee discussed an ATV accident that occurred when the operator of the ATV was maneuvering along a dirt road while holding onto some steel slings that were riding on a rack at the front of the vehicle. One of the front tires of the ATV drove off the edge of the dirt road which caused the ATV to start to roll over. As the employee jumped off the ATV to avoid going over with it, he landed on his feet but fell forward striking his face on a jagged rock.

The Safety Committee also discussed a pit bull attack on a meter reader, whose hand was severely damaged. A neighbor was finally able to get the dog off by shoving a stick down its throat after pinching its nostrils, which caused the dog to open its mouth.

One near miss was reported at the May meeting. The Safety Committee is encouraging everyone to report all near misses to the committee through our IBEW1245 Safety Matters web page.

Anyone with a near miss should sanitize the report to omit names and companies as the intent of reporting a near miss is to provide others with information about potential hazards that members find in the field in order to provide awareness to others of those hazards.

Please refer to the Safety Committee report on the Local 1245 website for other

topics of concern discussed by the committee, including a potentially hazardous situation involving a tree crew, an update on FR clothing, the use of painters to install grounds in substations and on towers, new personal warning systems for track workers, and a likely uptick in OSHA enforcement due to new funding from the Obama Administration.

Safety Committee

Members of the IBEW Local 1245 Safety Committee are Al White, Pacific Gas & Electric; Bob Burkle, City of Santa Clara; Michael Gomes, Modesto Irrigation District; Art Torres, Sacramento Municipal Utility District; Sergio Munoz, Asplundh Tree; Dan Boschee, Frontier; Darryl Rice, PG&E; and Business Rep. Ralph Armstrong.

Check out the safety information on our website at:
www.ibew1245.com/safety-section/safety.html

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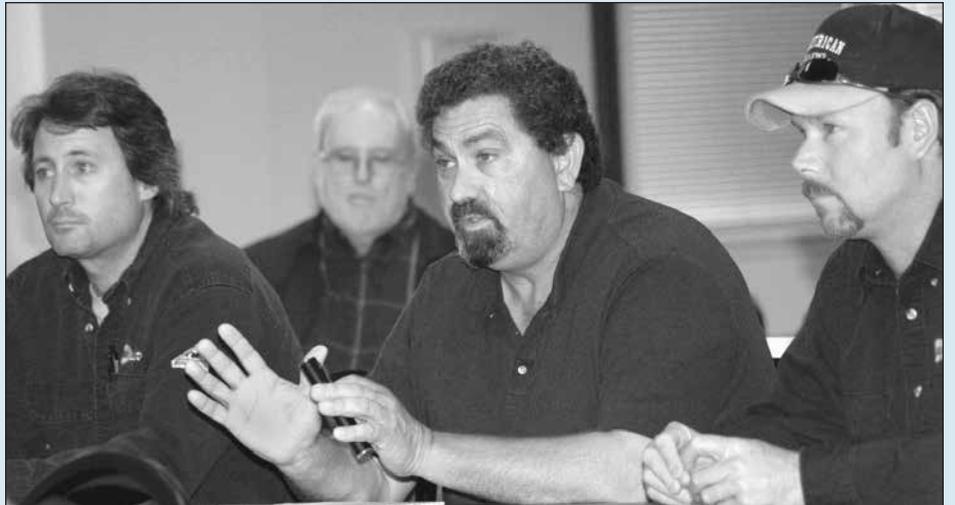
Call 1-877-436-4641 or visit:
UnionPlus.org/Goodyear



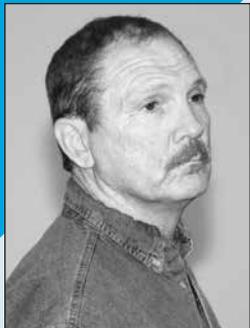
Safety Summit

Linemen tell us what needs to change

“When the IBEW was founded it wasn’t to get more money. It was to get the employer to stop killing them.”



Don Kreuter speaks up, flanked by Tim Shaughnessy, and Steve Jensen. All are SMUD.



PG&E Transmission Troubleman Russ Rylee, who chaired the meeting, kept the discussion on topic and moving.

With these words, Business Manager Tom Dalzell opened a “safety summit” on April 30 with linemen from nearly a dozen employers throughout the union’s jurisdiction. Dalzell made the purpose of the gathering clear: too many fatal accidents, too many serious injuries, too many near-misses.

“There’s a lot of experience here,” Dalzell pointed out. The challenge we face is two-fold. What do we say to employers about what they can do to improve safety? And what do we say to our younger members to help them stay focused on safety?

Dalzell’s challenge was quickly embraced by the linemen in attendance. Union staff was present, but stepped aside as the linemen took on the issue in a wide-ranging discussion moderated by Transmission Troubleman Russ Rylee. Sometimes they agreed with one another, sometimes they disagreed, but they listened closely to each other and took everything seriously.

Their discussion included topics like self-discipline on the job, the role of foremen, and the tension between rules and productivity. They discussed apprenticeship training, attitudes among younger workers, and apprentice-journeyman ratios. They discussed the role of personal protective gear, inappropriate cell phone use, and the need for prompt reporting of accidents and near-misses to the Local 1245 Safety Committee so that we can learn from each other’s mistakes.

They also raised some concerns about the attitudes and practices of management at some Local 1245-represented employers.



Left: Al Fox, PG&E



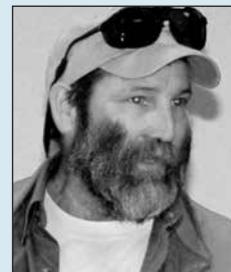
Dan Parmenter, PG&E



Stephan Dale, PG&E



Steve Ward, PG&E



Bob Ramos, PG&E



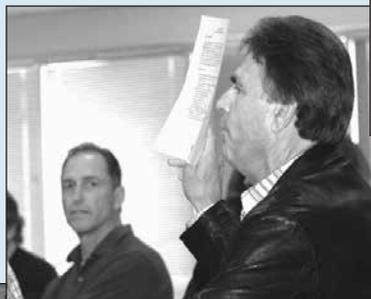
“Safety is a matter of habit. And you have to start out with the right habits,” said former Business Manager Jack McNally.



Left: Dan Mayo, PG&E, applies some body language in describing a safety issue.



Below: Don Wamsley, PG&E



Below: Geary Weaver, PG&E



Dan Linn, PG&E



Right: Bob Springer, Truckee-Donner PUD



Business Manager Tom Dalzell opens “Safety Summit” with several dozen linemen at Weakley Hall.

The discussion itself was on a confidential basis to encourage a frank exchange of opinions, and it yielded a bountiful harvest of ideas that have now been distilled into a series of recommendations. Those recommendations are listed on this page.

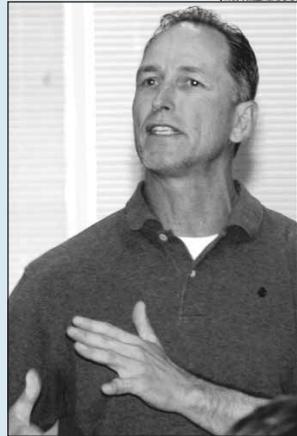
Local 1245 thanks all the linemen who took a day of their time in a focused effort to make our work safer. You came from PG&E, NV Energy, SMUD, Truckee-Donner PUD, the City of Redding, Lassen MUD, Santa Clara, Alameda, Modesto Irrigation District, and Turlock Irrigation District and your efforts are a credit to the founding mission of the IBEW, set forth more than a century ago: to help our members return home to their loved ones each day after work with their bodies intact.



Ralph Armstrong, Safety Committee Chairman, speaks up.



Mike Gomes, Modesto ID



Mark Rolow, PG&E



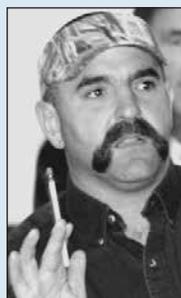
Todd Walker, PG&E



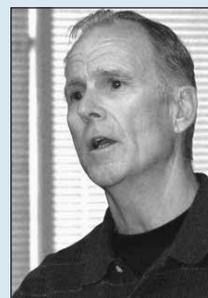
Bob Gerstle, PG&E



Ed VanDerhorst, left, and Ron Moon listen to a point made by Al Benegar, right. All are PG&E.



Laine Mason, PG&E



Rick Smith, NV Energy



Rich Lane, Turlock ID



Al Fortier, Alameda Power, makes a point as J.D. Sotelo, left, and Willie Bouzek, both PG&E, think it over.

Fifteen Safety Recommendations

These recommendations will be used to guide discussions with employers and among ourselves as Local 1245 tries to reduce the incidence of death and serious injury on the job:

- 1) Hiring freezes and then massive hiring programs of apprentice linemen cause unworkable journeyman-to-apprentice ratios. The only way to avoid these unworkable ratios in the future is to keep hiring small numbers of apprentices every quarter no matter what.
- 2) Let foremen be foremen, and support them. Line work is not a tea party, and tea party manners don't keep crews safe or productive.
- 3) For companies and agencies that rubber-glove, maintain hot-stick and climbing proficiency, even at the expense of lost productivity.
- 4) Beware of non-traditional supervisors. They don't know good work, safe work, or proper procedures. Analyze why those in the craft are not willing to become supervisors and fix the problems.
- 5) Beware of the illusion of safety. Double-belting and other fall protection help, but heights are still heights. Rubber-gloving is safe, but high voltage is still high voltage.
- 6) Consider extended apprenticeships, longer probationary periods, less automatic progression – especially during times of upside-down ratios.
- 7) Try to find apprentice candidates with greater mechanical skills. Be sure that apprentices understand the commitment to service that linemen must have, and the strain that this can cause on expectations of normal family life.
- 8) Reinstate the groundman position in utilities that have eliminated it. Apprentices who have worked as groundmen on crews make better apprentices.
- 9) Develop refresher courses for linemen and foremen.
- 10) If an apprentice is having a problem, don't pass the apprentice from crew to crew. Work on the problems.
- 11) Restrict if not prohibit use of personal cell phones (voice and text) during working hours.
- 12) Beware of short-cuts by go-to crews condoned by go-to supervisors.
- 13) Provide more training for potential Troublemakers and Troublemakers. Too often, they have never seen a new type of device until there is trouble with it.
- 14) Be careful about safety rules. If they are seen as weapons for petty supervisors or as too harsh for small offenses they will undermine the safety message and encourage under-reporting of near-misses and accidents.
- 15) Linemen, Foremen, and IBEW Local 1245 all should be more involved in preserving and protecting the craft and safety.

Climbing Methods Committee: A Progress Report

By Larry Pierce

The Climbing Methods Committee has met twice since the last report. Here is an update on those two meetings.

The committee met on May 20 at PG&E's Livermore Training Center. The committee included 15 IBEW bargaining unit members from climbing classifications throughout the system.

The IBEW members were a cross section which included both Journeyman and Apprentices from GC, Division, and Transmission. Also invited were vendor representatives from Bashlin, Jelco, and Buckingham.

The vendors were each given two hours to show their training films and perform on-site training on the proper use of their respective "fall restraint" tools. The bargaining unit climbers practiced using the equipment and were each issued one set of tools from each company. They were each asked to take the fall restraint systems back to the field for a four-week trial and to fill out an assessment form grading each piece of equipment after multiple uses. They did so.

The committee met again on Monday, June 22 at Livermore. We reviewed the assessment forms returned by those charged with performing the field testing. The committee determined that Buckingham's "Bucksqueeze" and Jelco's "Pole Choker" were scored almost identically and were both preferred over Bashlin's "Lariat" tool. The Committee determined that further testing of the "Bucksqueeze" and the "Pole Choker" was needed prior to making any decisions on adoption of their use.

The Company will procure additional sets of these two tools and the future field tests will be expanded in both time and numbers. The Apprentices will be dropped from the field testing and between thirty and forty additional Journeymen will be involved in the next round of field tests which will be eight weeks in duration. The committee also redesigned and expanded the assessment questionnaire to include more relevant information and to provide a greater range of detail on the questions.

This committee is also involved in assessing the use

continued on page 17

Retirees' Corner



Jack Hill, who first served on a Local 1245 bargaining committee in 1967 (count 'em - 42 years ago), represented retirees on the Benefits Committee this year, along with former Business Manager Perry Zimmerman.

Pact would boost benefits

Relief!

Retirees had something to cheer about on June 11 when Business Manager Tom Dalzell convened a meeting of Retiree Club leaders to discuss the Tentative Agreement on PG&E benefits.

"We got out from underneath the cap," Dalzell told the retirees, referring to the cap on company contributions to retiree medical benefits that has been in place since 2000.

For retirees not yet eligible for Medicare, PG&E will pay 65% of the NAP/CAP premium up to an increased

cap of \$13,000 a year, effective in 2011.

For retirees eligible for Medicare, company payments toward the premium will be adjusted each year based on the average increase in post-65 plans. The increased payments do not become effective until 2011, but the benefit level in 2011 will incorporate adjustments for inflation from 2010 as well as 2011.

There will be additional assistance for those who retired prior to 1994. These are the 2700 or so retirees who retired before the cap was negotiated and believed they would have fully-paid coverage for life. This additional assistance, which takes effect no later than June 1, 2010, provides \$40 a month for the retiree and \$40 for the spouse.

Retirees were glad to learn of the Tentative Agreement-and glad to have had a voice at the table.

"I'd like to thank Tom Dalzell for allowing retirees to have two people on the negotiating committee for these negotiations," said East Bay Retiree Club President Mike Silva. Silva was referring to Jack Hill, president of the



Mike Silva, president of the East Bay Chapter of the Local 1245 Retirees Club and the longest-serving retiree officer, praised the agreement.



Retirees rally at the PG&E Shareholder Meeting in May.

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 Coco's Restaurant, 1501 Farmers Lane, Santa Rosa.

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

South Bay Chapter, and former Business Manager Perry Zimmerman, both of whom served on the committee.

Dalzell said the retirees themselves deserved major credit for the breakthrough in negotiations, citing their long campaign of letter-writing and their rally at the PG&E Shareholders

Meeting in May. "Your actions have been determined but respectful, and that has given you tremendous credibility with the company," Dalzell said.

The Tentative Agreement is explained in detail on the Local 1245 website at www.ibew1245.com. Ratification will be by mail ballot in August.

Retiree Club members, waiting for the meeting to start, anticipate the good news.



Jack Henning, labor leader

Jack Henning, one of the great orators of the American labor movement who led the California labor movement for a quarter-century, died June 4. He was 94.

Henning brought his considerable speaking skills to hundreds of union rallies, demonstrations, conferences and picketlines. When IBEW Local 1245 held a massive rally at the California Public Utilities Commission in December 1994, Henning stirred the crowd into a near frenzy with a blistering indictment of both PG&E and the CPUC.

Henning derided the CPUC for failing to properly regulate PG&E, calling its supposed regulatory control "a fraud and a fiction." But he reserved his strongest invective for PG&E, which had recently reduced its IBEW workforce by about 3,000 people and was preparing to forcibly lay off over a thousand more.

"If PG&E fires 5,000 people the people should fire PG&E," Henning thundered, suggesting the time had possibly come for "public ownership of the utility."

Public ownership was a favorite theme of Henning, who seldom passed up an opportunity to criticize the excesses of capitalism and its exploitation of workers. He could-and did-use almost any occasion to launch into a sweeping analysis of workers' struggles. But he spoke with such fiery conviction that union members were invariably swept up in his oratory even if they did-

n't catch all the particulars.

But Henning was more than an orator. He was a practical man with sharp political instincts. Gov. Edmund G. (Pat) Brown named Henning director of the state Department of Industrial Relations in 1959. Three years later, he became United States Undersecretary of Labor and later served as U.S. ambassador to New Zealand.

He was elected executive secretary-treasurer-the top leadership position in the California Labor Federation-in 1970. Despite facing a reign of Republican governors during 18 of those years, he helped engineer legislative gains that amassed nearly \$4.2 billion for the state's worker's compensation, unemployment insurance and unemployment disability insurance programs, benefiting millions of California workers.

During his speech at the 1996 Federation convention, Henning delivered a thundering defense of political liberalism that was his farewell address after 26 years as executive secretary-treasurer of the California Labor Federation. The loudest, longest cheers followed Henning's closing words:

"And if by a suspension of the laws of nature I were young again, I would follow no other course, no other flag but the flag of labor."

Read the complete remembrance of Jack Henning on-line at www.ibew1245.com/newsarchive-docs/Henning_6-4-09.pdf



Jack Henning, right, fires up the crowd at an IBEW Local 1245 rally in 1994. Waiting their turns to speak are, from left, then-Business Manager Jack McNally, then-ESC Business Manager Ben Hudnall, and soon-to-be California Labor Federation leader Art Pulaski.



IBEW 1245 members in both the Maintenance and Electric bargaining units converged on the steps of City Hall in late 2008 to show their support for their IBEW 1245 negotiating committees.

Redding, from page 3

negotiating table. As for the City of Redding, the general fund is running a deficit of around 4.6 million dollars. Many of our Maintenance membership at the City of Redding are funded via the general fund.

On April 23, after some 8 months of difficult negotiations, the City and Union negotiating committees negoti-

ated a contract extension (May 1, 2009 through May 1, 2010). The extension called for wage equity adjustments for Building and Trades and Electrical Technician classifications, and ad-hoc negotiations over a Water Distribution job classification, but with no general cost of living increases through the term. The City Manager did agree to apply the value of the City's former 2% cost of liv-

ing adjustment to saving a full-time IBEW 1245 public works maintenance position, a job which had been slated for elimination amidst budget cuts.

Probably most significant to our membership was the fact that on April 23, the City had agreed to remove from the negotiating table their two most controversial proposals, the 10% employee health and welfare co-pay for active employees, and the elimination of City contribution to retiree medical for newly hired employees. These are benefit concessions that the City's Police, Fire, and SEIU labor organiza-

tions had agreed to in past negotiations, in whole or in part.

On April 27, the IBEW Maintenance bargaining unit voted overwhelmingly to accept the tentative agreement for a contract extension.

General bargaining for the Electric bargaining unit is expected to resume in the near future.

These are tough economic times, but the IBEW membership in both the Electrical and Maintenance Units at the City of Redding deserve much credit for having the foresight in demanding equitable retiree medical benefit treatment of future hires within their bargaining units.

A special thanks to those members who served with me on IBEW 1245's Maintenance negotiating committee:

Randy Amaral (Streets), Chris Fleming (Parks), Darryl Hughart (Electric Techs), Mike Carnahan (Solid Waste), Gary Moeckli (Airport), Matt Cervenka (Storm Drains), and Dave Guadagni (Water Distribution).

Ray Thomas is Senior Business Rep. for Local 1245

PG&E "missed meals" update

PG&E plans to soon begin collecting time records for "Group 3" employees covered under Letter Agreement 09-10, according to union representatives on the Missed Meals Committee.

Group 3 employees received offers during the spring in connection with PG&E's on-going effort to ensure compliance with California state labor laws concerning missed meals in the wake of recent court decisions. Two previous groups have already been processed.

Group 3 consists of current or former bargaining unit employees who worked through their lunch and missed a meal between June 1, 2004 and Aug. 31, 2007, but did not receive a

missed meal payment.

The records PG&E will be collecting are needed to address those members who have appealed their missed meal offer. The company will use a contractor and local clerical employees to collect these records, depending on the number and location of the records.

Of the 6,339 members and former members who received offers under LA 09-10, 4,373 accepted the offer and most, if not all have been paid. Appeals were made by 670 others.

A second phase of Group 3 employees is slated to begin receiving offers from the company, perhaps as early as July. There are approximately 5,000 members and former members in this group.

Diablo Firefighters agreement

IBEW Local 1245 and PG&E on May 7 reached agreement in Diablo Canyon firefighter negotiations for increased wages. The agreement provides for a skills premium of an additional 4% over present wages, applied to everything.

The 4% premium will kick in for present incumbents with a lump sum payment retroactive from signature date until SAP payroll can apply it appropriately. New hires or bidders into the department will have two years to get

the appropriate skills, at which point the 4% will kick in for them.



PG&E recently acquired this new truck for Diablo Canyon Firefighters, who are responsible for fire safety at the nuclear power plant.

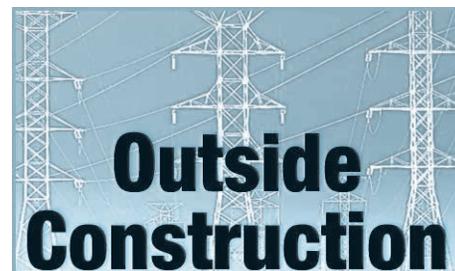
Climbing, from page 15

of full body harnesses. Currently, there are eleven different models of body harness in use by several departments. A sub-committee consisting of four or five individuals from the Climbing Methods Committee will be traveling to the Buckingham manufacturing facility in New York in July. This group will include one bargaining unit line-man named by the union. They will do on-site product development working

with Buckingham to design a more universal body harness that will be user friendly across departmental lines and enhance safety. Both management and union members will be involved in this effort.

Local 1245 was represented at these two meetings by Larry Pierce and Mike Saner.

Larry Pierce, former Assistant Business Manager, has been advising the union on this issue.



Groundman Flagger training on-line

By Ron Cochran

We have found a vendor to complete the Groundman Flagger training online. This training can be completed through the Internet. The Cal-Nev JATC will be reimbursing students upon completion. We are holding OSHA ET&D 10-hour classes June 27 & 28. The Cal-Nev JATC supplied credentialed instructors to teach this course. These will be considered special skills calls in 2011.



Ron Cochran

Injured Workers Fund

The Injured Worker Fund continues to increase. There were fund changes made. The death benefit increased from \$5k to \$10k. A fund audit and tax preparations incurred cost to the fund.

Apprentice News

We currently have less than 242 Outside Line apprentices in the Cal-Nev JATC program. We have only 17 working in Northern California; 217 are working in Southern California and 1 working in



A crew picture from the Transbay project on the San Francisco side of the bay. Cupertino Electric is doing the work.

Nevada. We currently have a few unemployed.

Work Picture

Work is slow right now. 2010 should be a record year by all reports. Hundreds of miles of T-lines proposed, several substation projects proposed.

Jurisdictional Issues

We continue to battle one inside contractor performing our work in jurisdiction. These issues will probably continue until there is economic recovery.

Safety

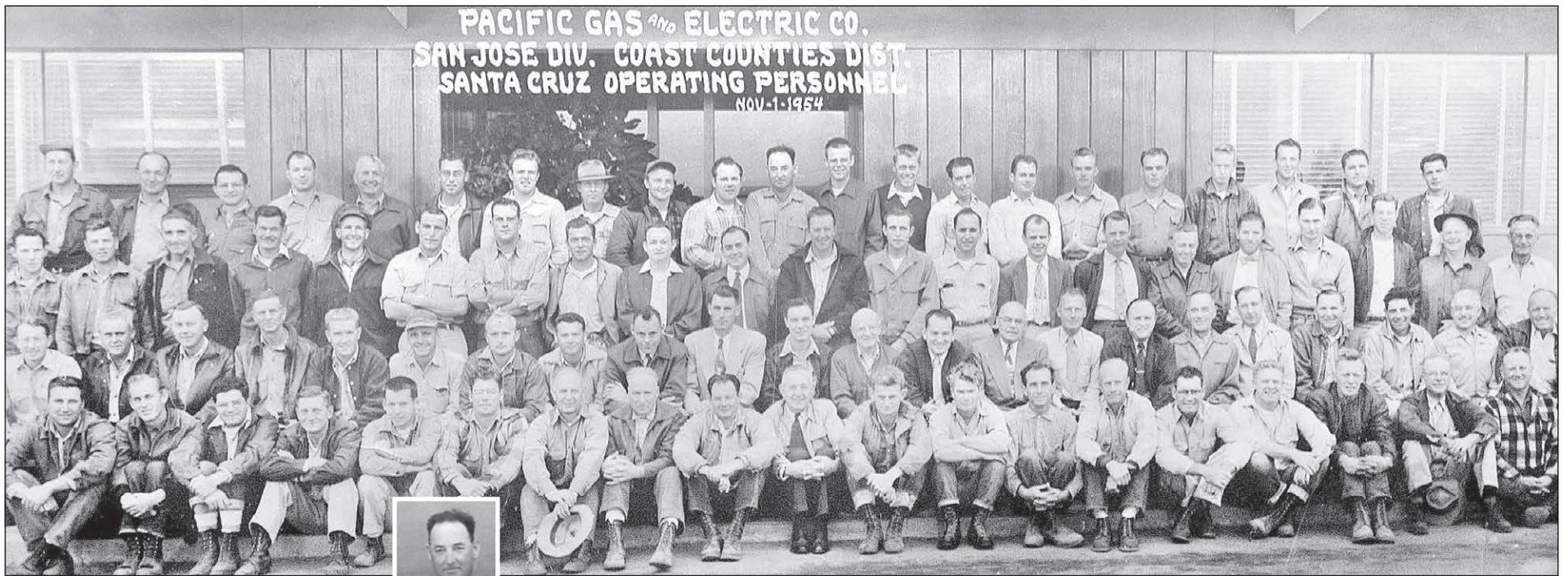
The Red safety book revisions are complete and the safety book is scheduled to be reprinted.

401K

The language in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) is in place and the NECA contractors have agreed to start payroll deductions as the members elect to. The fund is scheduled to start July 1, 2009. The fund presentation will be held at the July 8th unit meeting—please attend.

Working Agreements

The Republic ITS and Outside Side Line agreements are out to be printed.

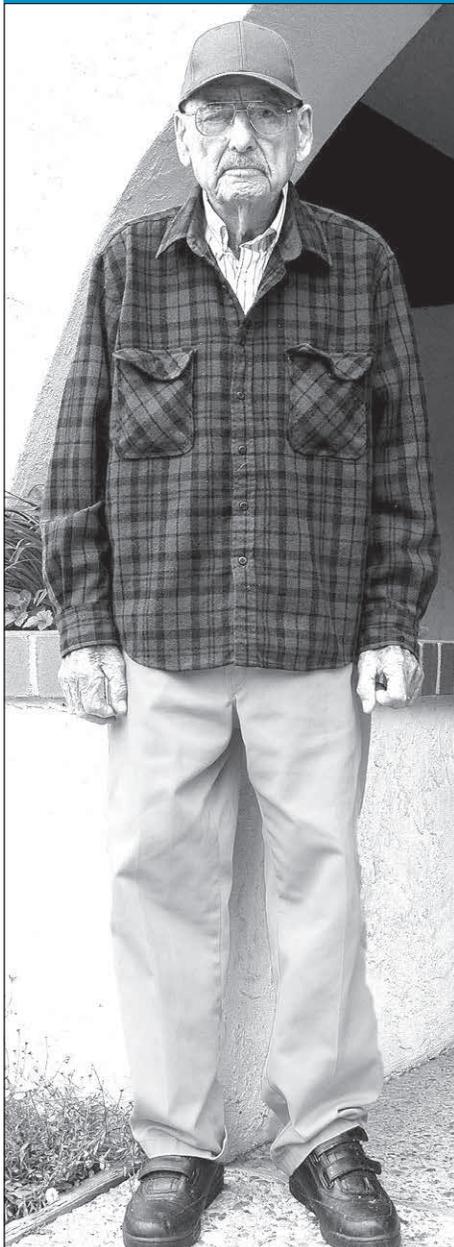


Harrell in 1954, along with the Coast Counties Division.

Still truckin'

By Eric Wolfe

Former driver Charles Harrell going strong at 98



Charles Harrell in April 2009, still truckin' and still speaking his mind.

Charles Harrell never had much formal education, but in his 98 years on the planet he's pretty confident he got as good as a person could get in his chosen field—driving utility trucks.

He certainly wasn't lacking confidence when he strode into the Santa Cruz office of Coast Counties Gas & Electric in 1945.

"I went to Pacific Avenue. I told them I loved to drive trucks," he recalled during a recent interview. "There were four people to be hired. I took the examination."

Nowadays, of course, you need a commercial drivers license to drive a utility truck. Nowadays you're required to have vision in both eyes. But back then, Harrell said, "Motor Vehicles" didn't care what kind of license you had, and he knew he could drive perfectly well with his one good eye.

"I could do anything at that time," Harrell says. "Even if I didn't have *any* eyes I could have done it."

That day on Pacific Avenue launched Harrell on a 30-year career of public service that is still remembered by some old-timers at PG&E—even though Harrell has been retired for 32 years.

QUIT SCHOOL 3RD GRADE

Charles Harrell was no spring chicken when he started working for the utility. He was 34 years old in 1945.

"I quit school in third grade. There wasn't any jobs in Santa Cruz at that time—cement shop, telephone company were the only jobs around," he recalls.

Eventually he ended up working at a tannery. Wages ran about 30 cents an hour.

"I helped form the union at the tannery. We got laid off a couple days for that," he remembers. "It was the butchers union. I was a steward for a while. I had to get up and tell our boss what we wanted. A couple times we shut the plant."

He thought he would go to war when

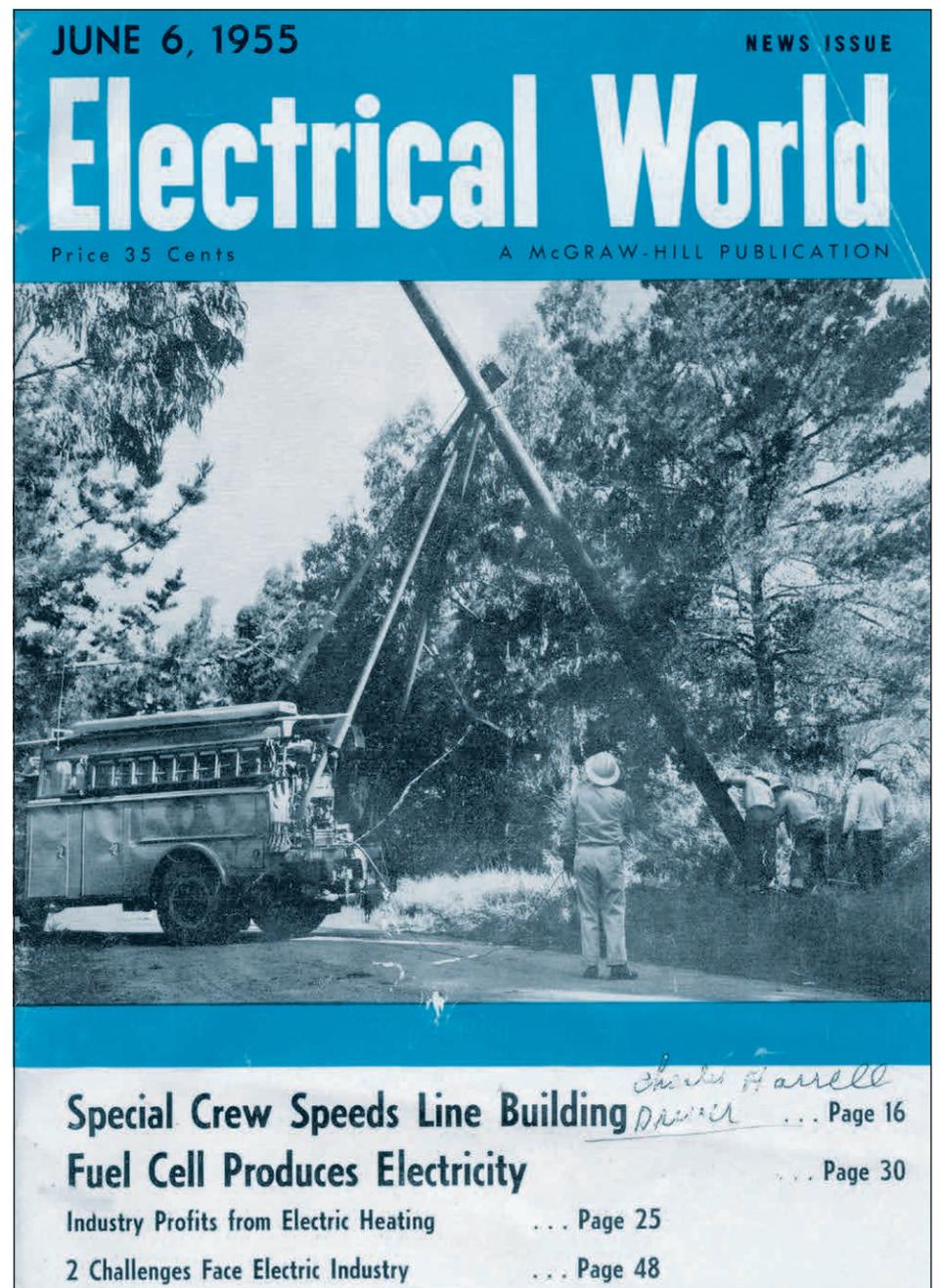
World War II broke out, but was retained at the tannery because the work was considered defense-related. When the war ended, Harrell had a conversation with himself.

"I said, 'I got to get a better job than this.'"

His father was already working at Coast Counties Gas and Electric. Not

long after Charles hired on, the utility was absorbed by PG&E. This brought about a change you'd expect a truck driver to appreciate: "The equipment was brought up to date when PG&E took over," Harrell recalls.

Over the years he worked as a Laborer, Groundman, Clerk/Driver Heavy, Senior Line Truck Driver and T&D Driver.



PG&E did a feature story on a specialty line crew in its magazine Electrical World in 1955. Harrell was driver for the crew.

According to his daughter, Anne, Harrell became the go-to guy when PG&E was introducing new trucks.

"They always gave him the new model of the truck. I guess they thought he could handle it," she says.

Harrell can't remember how many different trucks he handled through the years, but agrees it was a lot.

His memory of the various foremen he worked with, though, is perfectly clear.

"We had real good foremen. Ted Bailey was one of them. He'd direct where I'd back up. I had controls to lift the boom and lower it down."

Sometimes the truck "would go sideways" when the boom went up. Harrell pointed out they could use some outriggers for balance.

"Some of the trucks had them but none of ours did. When you pick up a pole it's pretty heavy and the truck goes back and forth." Harrell gestures to show you what it was like. It's obvious he remembers the experience *real* clear.

"HILLY COUNTRY"

In the 1950s Harrell was part of a specialty crew that was hailed by PG&E's Electrical World magazine as "a key factor in improving construction efficiency."

"Under the method devised by Coast Counties Gas & Electric Co. a crew of seven with a digger and line truck set practically all poles required in one district" for new distribution lines and extensions as well as some transmission lines, the article said. "In hilly country or on muddy roads the digger can go in where the line truck cannot."

Calling it "hilly country" is a bit of an understatement. Harrell says the terrain in Santa Cruz County could be very challenging to a line crew.

"Sometimes digging a pole would take all day. You'd run into rock and everything else," he recalls.

The terrain could be challenging for the truck driver as well.

"One time I was driving back and forth all day driving up the side of a hill. At the end of the day we got back and all the wheels were loose," he says. Another time, "the boss wanted to go up the side of a hill. You had a lot of electric wires. Running that was dangerous."

Harrell believes he inherited something of a sixth sense from his mother, who "could read tea leaves and say how things would turn out." Whether it was a sixth sense or just good old-fashioned defensive driving, Harrell had a knack for spotting trouble ahead when he was behind the wheel of a truck.

One time, he says, "I backed a truck up to dig a hole and set a pole, and I saw some trees and knew something was wrong."

When he says he "saw some trees," he means he saw them in his mind, like a vision. What was wrong soon became evident: the brakes didn't work.

"Everybody disappeared off the back of the truck," he recalls, amused by the



Charles Harrell around the time of his retirement

INNOVATOR

But don't get the idea that Harrell spent all his time trying to foresee the future. Sometimes he was directly engaged in trying to create it.

"We dug holes with hand shovels," he says. "We had a two-bladed shovel to loosen the dirt. I had the garage heat the ends and bend them in and they'd hold the dirt. I came up with about a hundred ideas. I'd let the linemen know and they'd let the office know."

Electric Crew Foreman J. D. Sotelo nods and smiles when he is told about Harrell's claim a few days later. "You had a spade, a spoon, a tamp, and a digging bar. Charlie could have been one of the guys who innovated that spoon."

Sotelo remembers Harrell well.

"I recall Charlie as a pleasure to work with because he was so knowledgeable. He had experience. A guy like him gave you a comfort level—knowing there was somebody on the ground who knew what he was doing," Sotelo says. "If you were an apprentice, he didn't mind telling you, 'Hey kid, are you sure you don't want to use this tool instead?'"

Back then, Sotelo says, PG&E had T&D drivers.

"It was a classification that personnel took pride in being good at—being a good operator, being knowledgeable, keeping their trucks clean and stocked."

T&D drivers could close jobs out, write credit and debit requisitions and relieve behind foreman's clerks when they went on vacation.

memory of guys scrambling to get off a runaway vehicle. Harrell got the truck stopped with the handbrake. "It was right by a big canyon," he remembers. "The truck would have been gone."

"Now we no longer have that classification," Sotelo says. "We sometimes have personnel that float from truck to truck. There's a diffusion of responsibility."

As a result, a truck may not get the same level of personal attention. A truck needing repairs may not get noticed as quickly as it did back in Harrell's heyday.

FLOODS & FIRES

One thing that hasn't changed, though, is the challenging weather that the Santa Cruz area seems to specialize in: fires in summer, floods in winter.

"I worked overtime every winter" resetting poles, Harrell recalls. "Sometimes you'd get a pole set and down come a tree and we'd have to start all over again."

"Once in Felton I worked three days around the clock. The fire department cooked us some food. There was a hotel down there. The room they gave me, the roof was leaking and the bed was all wet."

Harrell requested another room and got it.

He remembers a flood when water ran waist deep on Pacific Avenue in Santa Cruz.

"I had high boots. I had to check out the buildings on Pacific Avenue. The basements had water in them, pretty much to the top of the meters. We had to make sure everything was alright before we turned the power back on," he recalls.

"I worked one day, one night, and one day and by then you didn't know what you were doing—you had to rest."

One place on Rio Del Mar was out of power three weeks before crews could get to them and restore power, he recalls.

Then came the dry summers.

"We put out fires. We were protecting power houses. The trees above it might fall on it," he says. "I saw flames shoot right up the trees. They had prison-

ers from jail helping put out fires (and PG&E people protecting equipment."

"A GOOD COMPANY"

A confident man doesn't mind sharing his ideas. Charles Harrell wasn't shy about speaking his mind—then or now.

"If there was anything dangerous I'd let the linemen know and they'd let the office know. Like here," he adds, gesturing toward the common living area of the senior facility he now calls home. "If the food's no good I go down there and let 'em know. I had a piece of meat I could hardly chew. I told one of the ladies (on staff), 'Here, you try chewing this.'"

But chances are, the staff there is glad to have a guy like Charles Harrell around. At 98 his memory is good, his speech is animated and he has the presence of an old truck driver who wouldn't mind getting behind the wheel again if he was just given the chance.

In fact, for a number of years he maintained his mobility by riding a motorized wheel chair along the sidewalks of Santa Cruz. Sotelo remembers in past years driving down Seventh Avenue in Santa Cruz and "seeing Charlie traveling in his motorized wheelchair, and I'd think: 'All right, Charlie's still going.'"

Harrell's memories of the linemen and foremen he worked with are equally fond.

"We were good friends. We always worked together. The foreman would help dig the hole. It was a very good company to work for," he says.

Charles Harrell doesn't get around so much anymore. But he can still walk around the senior facility and entertain visitors with tales of a time when he was the best truck driver PG&E ever had. At least that's what somebody said about him once, and he never forgot it.

It was probably the highest compliment anyone ever could have paid a guy with one good eye and a third grade education who had the confidence to succeed at something he loved.



Among Harrell's co-workers in Santa Cruz around the time of his retirement were, from left: Ralph Spuhler, Sub Foreman; Joe Shumake, Lineman; and Chuck Moore, T&D Driver ...



Additional Santa Cruz crew photos from the Harrell era can be viewed at www.ibew1245.com/newsarchive-docs/Harrell.pdf

...and Tim McQuillan, Field Foreman; Bud Conley, Lineman; Gilbert Santos, Sub Foreman; and Eric Nystrom, T&D Driver. (Photos courtesy of Charles Harrell)

The PG&E Benefits Agreement

**Retirement
Savings Plan**



**Lifting
the cap**

It's Your Turn to Decide.

Orthodontia

Dental



The union has negotiated a new benefits agreement with PG&E.

The IBEW Local 1245 bargaining committee has endorsed the agreement.

Vision

But the final say belongs to you.

**Free
generic
drugs**

- ✓ Read up on the agreement at: www.ibew1245.com.
- ✓ Weigh the pros and cons. What does the agreement mean for you both now and in the future?
- ✓ Attend unit meetings this summer.
- ✓ VOTE! Ratification is by mail ballot during August.



**Vacation
use**

**Retirement Medical
Savings Account**

