

Inside:



# Utility Reporter



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UNITY IS STRENGTH

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PG&E Gas Control Tech Quyen Ha troubleshoots an issue with a valve at McDonald Island in Stockton, CA. Story on page 4.



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# Arcing and Sparking

Tom Dalzell  
BUSINESS MANAGER

## On The Brink

### California's energy infrastructure on the edge of the abyss

California has been a leader on climate change, and for that our policy makers deserve praise. While other states fretted over the politics, we came together to pass bipartisan bills, and our regulatory agencies stood up and enforced them. We now lead the nation in reducing emissions, proving that real change is possible when we work together.

But while we've been making progress in this area, structural flaws in our existing regulatory framework have widened into cracks. And in recent months, several of them have worsened to the point that they are eroding the foundation of California's energy system, threatening to bankrupt our major utilities and destroy the basis for the safe, affordable power we all rely on.

Recent newspaper headlines tell the story — for the second time in less than 20 years, California's utilities have been pushed to the financial brink. In recent weeks, they have lost billions of dollars of market capitalization.

Three policy quirks, each of which started as a small wrinkle in an otherwise well thought-out plan, have grown into major problems that must be dealt with if we are to keep our power system on track and responsive to a changing energy future.

The first has to do with Community Choice Aggregation, a policy that allows entire cities and counties to move away from a utility and attempt to purchase their own power on the open market.

CCAs have cropped up in wealthy communities like Marin, where they promise more green power and then automatically enroll all local customers in their plan. They then pay only 65 percent of the cost of power that the utility had purchased for those customers — and add the remaining 35 percent to the bills of non-CCA customers. This unfairly shifts costs to customers in other communities who end up paying more.

CCAs have also disrupted California's Integrated Resource Plan — our state's framework to ensure we have enough power for everyone and meet our renewable goals. By splintering into many tiny entities, CCAs make it all but impossible to track what kind of power is being used where, and the levels of associated emissions.

Our regulators and legislators know that under current policy, CCAs are unfair to regular customers and that fragmenting the system undermines our ability to work together towards a clean energy future — but they have done nothing to rein them in.

Policymakers also know that utility power customers are paying more than their fair share to cover the costs of those who have rooftop solar — and this is a second source of inequity among our energy policies. Our current Net Energy Metering policy allows rooftop customers to be paid back at extremely generous rates for the power they put into the grid, creating tiny or non-existent bills for them. But that doesn't mean they're not using traditional power — it just means they're generating more than they use during the day, and relying on traditional power at night. Rooftop solar customers also aren't paying to maintain poles, wires, and other components of the grid — even though they use them regularly. The utilities essentially function as a free backup battery for them.

This went without much outcry when rooftop solar panels were few and far between — but as they proliferate (mainly among homeowners in wealthy communities), more and more Californians are being fleeced. Bills for regular customers are going up to cover what the rooftop customers are not required to pay. And in many cases, they are subsidizing not the actual solar customers, but the investment banks that have bought the leases the customers entered into when the panels were installed. This puts unnecessary financial stress on the monthly budgets of hardworking families across the state, and on the system overall. A legislative fix to make the system fair should be made immediately.

Most recently and most seriously, regulators and legislators have ignored the catastrophic implications of California's policy of inverse condemnation with strict liability. Under the law, if utility equipment is found to have caused a fire, the utility is automatically liable for the damage — even if they were not negligent and followed all best practices for avoiding fires.

As unseasonably hot weather and wind events bore down on the state in the late summer, the most devastating wildfires on record broke out in both northern and southern California. Because of the inverse condemnation/strict liability flaw, the state's utilities and

their customers may be on the hook for all the damages associated with them — and it could push them into bankruptcy, undermining the reliability, safety and affordability of California's power supply.

Regulators and legislators will privately concede that inverse condemnation is a terrible, one-size-fits-all policy that creates a disincentive for investors to provide utilities with the capital they need to survive. San Diego Gas and Electric, Southern California Edison and the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power are all facing hundreds of millions or even billions of dollars of liability despite doing nothing wrong, and having worked hard to prevent fires and other disasters. Legislators and regulators know that the doctrine of inverse condemnation with strict liability is flawed, and they know that enforcing it is both unfair and could cause real disruption to our state's economy — but they have not acted.

California's energy infrastructure is the most basic building block of our economy. Every single one of us depends on safe, affordable power to work, live and thrive — every single day. Now is hardly the time for laissez faire, hands-off regulation or legislative lethargy. Our elected officials and regulators need to stand up and face these problems, and face them soon, before the foundation of our system is beyond repair.

## Adam Weber Joins Local 1245 Staff

Sixteen-year IBEW member Adam Weber has joined the Local 1245 staff as a Business Rep. He will be taking over for Randy Osborn, who is retiring this Spring.



Adam Weber

Weber worked at NV Energy as a natural gas crew heavy foreman for the past 15 years. He has served the union in many capacities, most notably as an active member of the Control the Pressure peer safety committee. He has also served as a shop steward and sat on numerous union committees during his time at NV Energy, including labor/management, benefits and bargaining.

Weber is excited to be working with the members at City of Fernley, Frontier — Elko, Lassen Municipal Utility District, Mt. Wheeler Power Company, Plumas Sierra REC, Truckee-Donner P.U.D. and Wells Rural Electric Company.

"The decision for me to come on staff was easy. I want to work with, and for, the industry's best, and the members that IBEW 1245 represents are the elite and best at their jobs," said Weber. "I also love that the IBEW was founded on safety. Every one of us needs to make it home to our loved ones after a long day at work."

### Correction: "BA" Dues Increase in 2018

There will be a \$1 dues increase (from \$20 to \$21) for IBEW "BA" members in 2018, as well as a \$1 increase for "A" members. Apologies for any confusion.

— Muriel Moore,  
IBEW 1245 Dues Processor

Get the latest news at

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

## New Meeting Locations for Tree Units in San Jose, Sacramento and Newark

The following tree units have changed their meeting locations:

**Unit #4713**, San Jose/Utility Tree, will now meet at Mountain Mikes Pizza, 774 El Camino Real, San Carlos, CA.

**Unit #4424**, Sacramento/Wright Tree, will now meet at Mountain Mikes Pizza, 7660 La Rivera Dr.,

Sacramento, CA.

**Unit #4721**, Newark/Davey Tree, will now meet at Round Table Pizza, 24703 Amador St., Hayward, CA.

The meeting dates and times will remain the same.

— Junior Ornelas,  
IBEW 1245 Business Rep



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- March 2:** Service Awards, Stockton
- March 14-15:** Frontline Safety Leadership Training, Vacaville
- March 16:** Service Awards, Sacramento
- March 30:** Service Awards, San Francisco
- Apr 6:** Service Awards, East Bay
- Apr 7:** 7th Annual Sporting Clay Shoot, Dunnigan and Hilmar
- Apr 28:** Advisory Council, Vacaville
- May 14:** Shop Steward Conference, Stockton
- May 15:** Shop Steward Conference, Fresno
- May 16:** Shop Steward Conference, Bakersfield
- May 17:** Shop Steward Conference, SLO
- May 21:** Shop Steward Conference, East Bay
- May 22:** Shop Steward Conference, San Jose
- May 23:** Shop Steward Conference, San Francisco
- May 29:** Shop Steward Conference, Sacramento
- May 30:** Shop Steward Conference, North Bay
- May 31:** Shop Steward Conference, Chico
- June 15:** Service Awards, Fresno



# 7th Annual IBEW NOR-CAL Sporting Clay Shoot



**SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 2018**

Northern California IBEW Locals would like to invite you to enjoy a day of brotherhood with fellow IBEW Union Members, Families, Friends and other Trade Unions. This year due to the growing popularity of the annual shoot, arrangements have been made at two (2) locations to run simultaneously! Both locations have overnight RV parking available and plenty of local hotels to choose from. So, mark your calendar for a Saturday of fun!

\*\*\*\*\*

**Locations:** Raahuagee's Pheasant, Chucker & Sporting Clays 25835 County Road 8 Dunnigan, CA 95937 www.lincraahauges.com **OR** Rooster Ranch Wings & Clays 26166 Kelley Road Hilmar, CA 95324 www.roosterranchonline.com

**Time:** 08:00 – 09:00 Registration (donuts and coffee will be served)  
 09:00 – 09:25 Tailboard and safety briefing  
 09:30 – Shotgun Start  
 NOONISH  
 Luncheon following shoot

**INCLUDED (per shooter)**

- One Hat
- Eye & Ear Protection
- One Raffle Ticket
- Shotgun Shells
- Lunch & Beverages

*(Only registered shooters will receive a ticket.)*

**Awards & Raffle:** to follow luncheon

**Space Is Limited. First Come, First Serve, Basis. Register Today!**  
**Proceeds Will Be Donated To The Boys & Girls Club**

## SPONSORSHIPS/REGISTRATION FORM for IBEW Nor-Cal Sporting Clay Shoot

**EVENT DATE:** Saturday, April 7, 2018

Please select your sponsorship level and fill in the names of your shooters below:

**Yes, I would like to sponsor:**

- Host \$5,000 – Includes 8 shooter registrations
- Co-Host \$2,500 – Includes 4 shooter registrations
- Shotgun Shell - \$2,500 Includes 4 shooter registrations
- Gold - \$1,250 -Includes 2 shooter registrations
- Silver - \$1,000
- Shooting Station - \$750
- Raffle prizes - \$500
- Individual ADULT shooter \$100
- Individual YOUTH shooter - \$75 (15 years or younger)

**Deadline for sponsorships and submission of shooter names is: March 28, 2018.**  
**Onsite registrations will NOT be accepted.**

(Make checks payable to: IBEW Local 1245 (in the memo line add: Nor-Cal Sporting Clay Shoot))

Raahuagee's Pheasant, Chucker & Sporting Clays  
 25835 County Road 8  
 Dunnigan, CA 95937

Rooster Ranch Wings & Clays  
 26166 Kelley Road  
 Hilmar, CA 95324

Please check only one location per registration form. Fill out a separate form if you plan to have shooters at both locations.

**Team Leader:**

Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Shooters:** (Teams are made up of 4 shooters; individual shooters will paired with teams of less than 4)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell# \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_Adult \_\_\_Youth

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell# \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_Adult \_\_\_Youth

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell# \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_Adult \_\_\_Youth

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell# \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_Adult \_\_\_Youth

Mail payment to: IBEW Local 1245, 30 Orange Tree Circle, Vacaville, CA 95687  
 Questions: Call or email: Liz McInnis, 707-452-2720 or ejmh@ibew1245.com

## Unit meeting changes

**Unit #2515**, Modesto, has changed its unit meeting location to Round Table Pizza, 2441 Claribel Rd, Riverbank, CA. The time and dates will remain the same (second Wednesday of the month at 5:30pm).

— Lloyd Cargo,  
 IBEW 1245 Business Rep

**Unit #1110**, Fresno Clerical (evening meeting), has changed its meeting location to Quesadilla Gorilla, 744 P. Street, Ste. 101, Fresno, CA 93721. The meeting will continue to be held the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm.

— Tonya Alston,  
 IBEW 1245 Office Manager

**Unit #1511**, San Jose, has moved its meeting location to Rookies Sports Lodge, 1535 Meridian Ave #10, San Jose, CA. The meeting will continue to be held on the second Wednesday of each month at 5:00pm.

— Casey Salkauskas,  
 IBEW 1245 Business Rep



## Local 1245 members keep PG&E's largest gas storage facility safe and secure

As temperatures plummet and winter frost hits the air, millions of Californians are quick to turn on their gas-powered heaters — and few stop to think about the billions of cubic feet of gas needed to keep California's homes, businesses and other buildings warm through the chilly season.

But the IBEW 1245 members who work at PG&E's McDonald Island gas storage facility think about it every day, and the arrival of colder weather signals that it's time for their facility to switch over from procurement mode to disbursement mode.

"During the summer, we're mostly buying, storing and injecting gas into the [storage cavern]. And then in the winter, we're usually pulling the gas out to meet the needs of the customers," explained Gas Control Technician John Koga. "But sometimes we have to switch it up, for instance if we get a big order of gas in from Canada during the winter."

Situated on a tiny, relatively remote island in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta just west of Stockton, McDonald Island is PG&E's largest gas storage facility, and the Local 1245 members employed there work day in and day out to ensure that millions of Californians have access to the gas they need when they need it, while also keeping the plant in tip-top shape.

"We do instrumentation, controls, and electrical work to maintain the gas storage facility and the natural gas compressor stations," Koga said, explaining the roles and responsibilities of his department. "We deal with a lot of different systems, and new technology is always coming out, so we're trying out

new equipment, different types of programs and different control systems. We get to do a lot; I think it's a really great job to have."

### Island Life

Hidden 5,000 feet below fields of growing potatoes and asparagus, the core component of the McDonald Island facility is the one few people ever see — the massive underground cavern where the gas is stored until it is needed. On the surface, two gas compressor stations (one of which is being rented by PG&E from another company) inject the gas into the cavern, and two gas withdrawal/processing stations pull the gas out, measure it, and feed it into cities and towns all across PG&E's service area. With a maximum capacity of 82 billion cubic feet (BCF), McDonald Island is capable of providing 25 percent of Northern California's winter peak-day gas demand.

The *Utility Reporter* caught up with Koga and his team as they worked through their yearly maintenance inspection on one of the processing stations. After donning the required personal protective equipment, including two sets of gloves and a specialized helmet with a face cover, Koga de-energized the main breaker on the variable frequency drive (VFD) unit, and then double-checked it to ensure that it would be safe to inspect that particular motor.

Down on the lower level of the same station, Gas Control Technician Quyen Ha used a digital valve controller to troubleshoot a minor issue with some of the valves that control the flow of the



Gas Control Tech Hugo Gonzalez (standing) checks in with Operator Joe Hidalgo in the control room.



At left: Senior Maintenance Assistant Linda Sendig

Far left: Gas Control Tech Quyen Ha

Photos by John Storey

# Where the Gas Lives

gas coming out of the natural gas wells. There are 87 such wells on McDonald Island, and the corresponding valves need to be checked and calibrated regularly to ensure that they continue to operate properly.

## In The Office

Like most yards, the McDonald Island team has its own dedicated support staff working behind the scenes to manage the paperwork.

“I do payroll, order materials, keep track of valve cards and records on site, that type of thing,” explained Senior Maintenance Assistant Linda Sendig, noting that many of her responsibilities are similar to those of an Operating Clerk. “But with my classification, I’m on the physical side, and that means I can also operate the forklift. So if we get heavy duty deliveries, I can offload, unload, and deliver materials to other yards if needed.”

Sendig enjoys the fact that her job affords her the opportunity to expand her horizons and get a better understanding of the system that she helps to maintain.

“In the few years that I’ve been here, I’ve been learning more and more about gas pipeline and the materials that are used to keep that pipeline operating safely,” she said.

## Under Control

Over in the control room, Operator Joe Hidalgo sits in front of a mimic panel, an aptly named electronic map that mimics all of the operations going on throughout McDonald Island. His job involves monitoring the entire facil-

ity and keeping a close eye out for any potential anomalies. Between the gas pressure regulation, the various chemicals used to treat the gas, the dehydration system that can get as hot as 1,500 degrees Fahrenheit, and all the other equipment in operation on a daily basis, careful monitoring and attention to detail is key for the plant’s overall safety, as well as the safety of the employees.

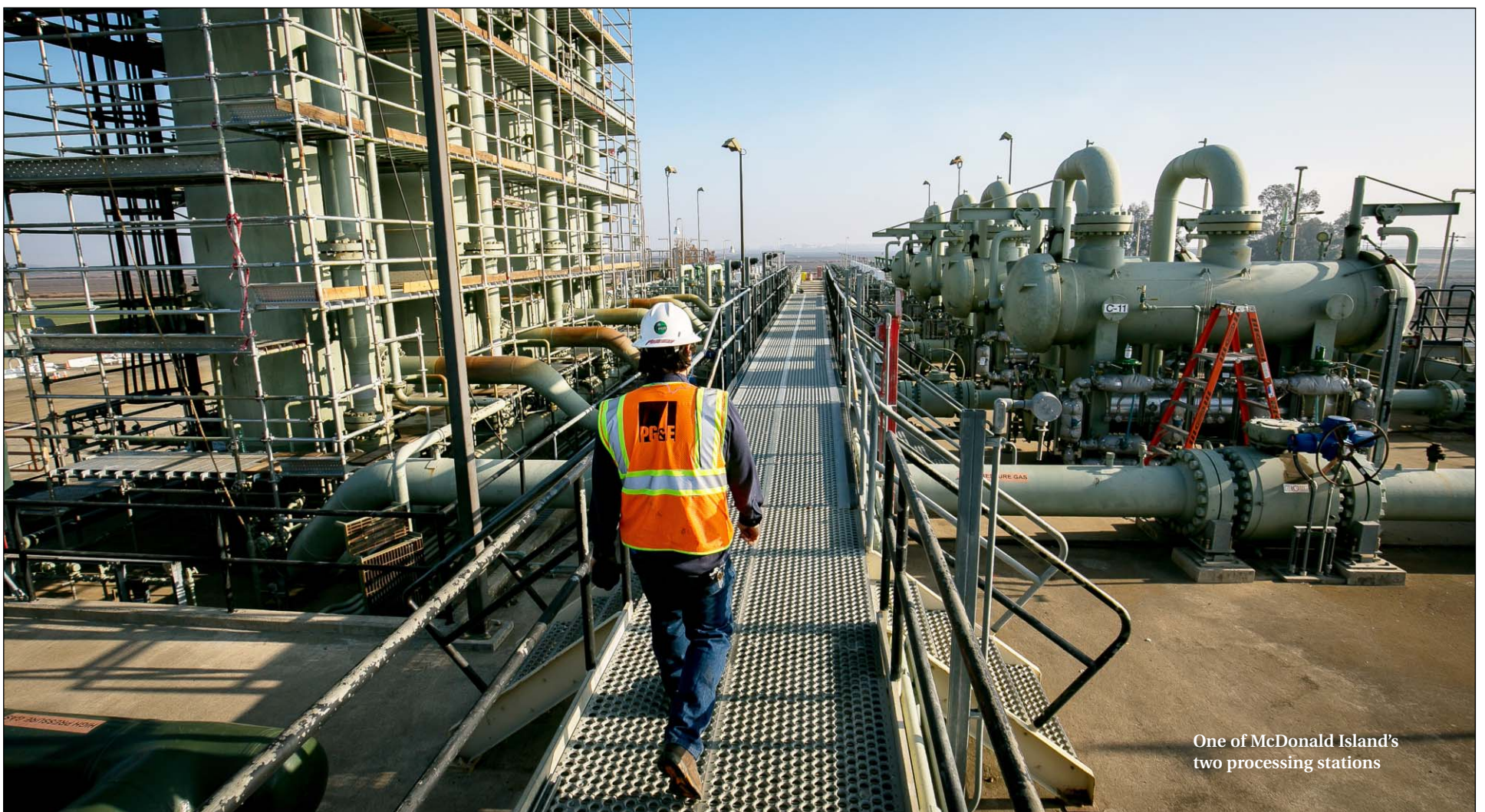
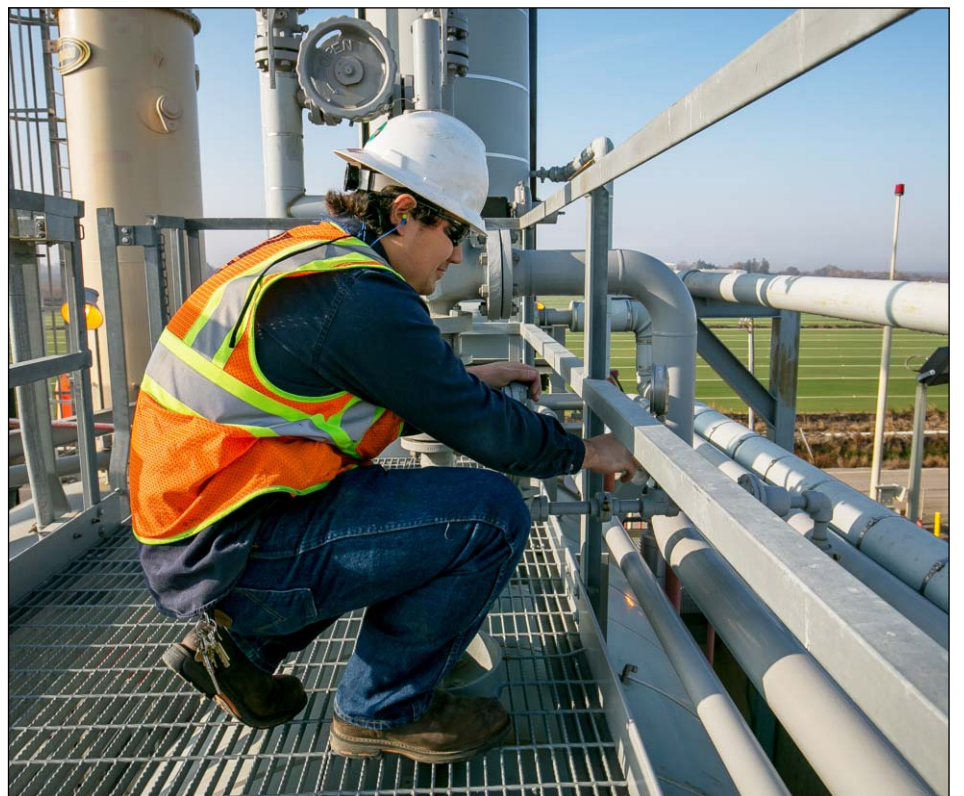
In fact, safety plays a huge role in the jobs that all the McDonald Island employees do. From the leak surveyors to the operators and technicians, every Local 1245 member at McDonald Island has to consider both their own safety, as well as the public’s safety, in the work that they do each day. For example, given that fact that natural gas is odorless, colorless and tasteless, the workers at McDonald Island are tasked with infusing the gas with Mercaptan, an additive that gives off the sulfuric odor that most people commonly recognize as “gas smell.” The addition of Mercaptan to the gas is critical for safety, ensuring that even the smallest of gas leaks can be detectable by scent alone.

Mercaptan is just one example of the countless safety-oriented processes that occur at McDonald Island every day. Natural gas may get a bad rap sometimes, but the truth is that gas power plays a key role in California’s transition to more renewable energy, and the Local 1245 members at McDonald Island pride themselves on the work they do to contribute to a safe and reliable pipeline.

— Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245  
Communications Director



Gas Control Tech John Koga checks a gauge.



One of McDonald Island’s two processing stations

# THE ROAD TO SALT SPRINGS

## PG&E GC Hydro crew repairs access road washed out by storms

**W**hen you work in Hydro, heavy storms can be a blessing and a curse.

While the big rain and snow storms that walloped California last year seemed like a welcome reprieve from the state's lengthy drought, those storms also resulted in a number of landslides, including a hefty one near Panther Creek that took out the only access road to PG&E's Salt Springs Hydroelectric Powerhouse.

"It started out as a small mudslide on the roadway, but by the time we got up here, the whole thing had just let loose," explained PG&E GC Hydro Working Foreman Shawn Genereux. "The road and everything went down the hill, so we had to start making repairs down at Tiger Creek [powerhouse], and then work our way up to this point."

The *Utility Reporter* caught up with Genereux and his crew at the Panther Grade slide, nestled deep in the woods, about 35 minutes from the small mountain town of Pioneer, CA, in Amador County. The crew had been on that job for about nine weeks, aiming to complete the work and ensure access to Salt Springs would be available before the snows hit again.

"Last year, they had to put in a bypass road — which was about 3.5 to four miles longer — and they got that put in, but it's still not really usable if it snows," explained Genereux. "They ended up using a helicopter a couple times to fly in there last year. So this is a very critical road to get into Salt Springs."

The first part of the repair project

involved large-scale excavation just to get to the bottom of the slide. Then, the crew had to dig out a bench before they could move in an estimated 9,000 tons of rock to fill the hole.

"At this point, we have a total of three benches, with a French drain at each bench that connects to a main line, which drains completely out to the dissipater at the bottom of the hill,

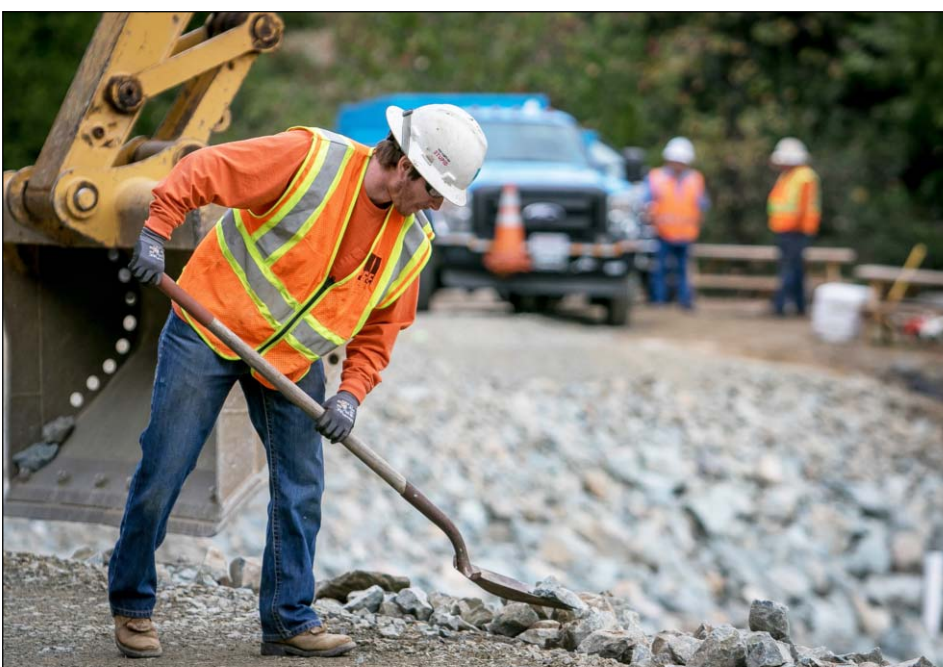
and then that drains out to the creek," said Genereux. "Now all we have left are the fine details. We have a rock wall to finish putting in on the bank side, we have a culvert to put in uphill of the slide, and we have some blocks to put alongside the downhill side to keep vehicles from going over the edge."

— *Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245 Communications Director*

The crew, from left: Alex Smith, Brent Leonard, Dan Bellar and Shawn Genereux. Not pictured: Mike Peirano, who was instrumental in the project, but on vacation when the *Utility Reporter* visited the site.

Photos by John Storey





## CPUC revised Proposed Decision on the PG&E Joint Proposal on the Diablo Canyon Power Plant closure, and its effect on the Bonus Retention Program

In August of 2016, an Initial Joint Proposal was submitted by PG&E to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) requesting \$350M (25% of annual pay) for employee retention, and three additional line items — 1) DCPD closure in 2024-2025, 2) local money to the county to offset future tax loss, and 3) replacement of power.

In November of 2017, an Administrative Law Judge presented a proposed decision (PD) to the CPUC, which recommended \$160M for employee retention, and an opinion/changes to the other three line items of the original Joint Proposal.

In January of 2018, the CPUC unanimously voted yes on a revised proposed decision. The revised PD authorized \$211M (15% of annual pay) for employee retention, and addressed the three additional line items.

The CPUC revised PD caps the annual retention bonus at 15%, which is less than 25% the parties had originally asked for. The company and union will meet to decide the path forward.

This news is disappointing to all of us, but especially the men and women who work so hard to make DCPD one of the best run plants in the world. We will be communicating with you, our members, on a regular basis as more information comes out. It is our goal to keep everyone informed so that each of you will be able to make the best possible decision for you and your family's future. We will be at the Canyon to talk to individual members, we will host a call for all members at DCPD to answer your questions, and we will keep you informed as we move forward with negotiations. Please contact us with any questions you may have.

— Bob Dean, IBEW 1245 Senior Assistant Business Manager

# DOT Drug Testing Now Includes Semi-Synthetic Opioids

The Federal Department of Transportation (DOT) issued a new ruling mandating the inclusion of four new semi-synthetic opioids (pharmaceutical pain medications) as part of federally mandated drug testing that began January 1, 2018. These new drugs are in addition to the existing panel that are already included in testing, which includes marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, phencyclidine (PCP), and opiates.

The four opioids are oxycodone, oxymorphone, hydrocodone and hydromorphone. Some common brand names for these semi-synthetic opioids include OxyContin®, Percodan®, Percocet®, Vicodin®, Lortab®, Norco®, Dilaudid®, Exalgo®.

## FAQs

**What if I have an active/current prescription for one of these semi-synthetic opioids?**

Be proactive in ensuring that your prescribing physician knows what type of safety-sensitive work you currently perform. This is important information for your prescribing physician to consider when deciding whether and what medication to prescribe for you. It is important for you to know whether your medications could impact your ability to safely perform your work.

For example, don't just provide your physician a job title, but describe your exact job function(s) or ask your employer for a detailed description of your job function that you can give to your prescribing physician.

**What if I test positive while holding a current prescription for an opioid?**

According to DOT Rule 49 CFR Part 40 Section 40.135 subpart G:

After getting results of the drug test the Medical Review Officer (MRO) must:

1. Tell the employee if the test was positive and for which drug(s) the specimen tested positive.
2. Allow five business days for the employee's physician to contact the MRO to see if the prescription can be

changed to one that won't make the employee medically unqualified or does not pose a safety risk.

**What if I have an old/inactive prescription for one of these semi-synthetic opioid medications?**

If your prescription is not active, speak with your physician and alert them ASAP to the fact that you perform safety-sensitive work. *If you test positive with an inactive prescription it will be considered a positive test, and you will be subject to your employer's existing drug and alcohol policy; possibly including discipline.* Your physician may be able to issue you a new prescription or alter the prescription to one that will not make you medically unqualified to perform safety-sensitive work.

**What if I have a current prescription for Medical Marijuana?**

The Department of Transportation's Drug and Alcohol Testing Regulation –



49 CFR Part 40, at 40.151(e) – *does not authorize "medical marijuana" under a state law to be a valid medical explanation for a transportation employee's positive drug test result.*

## For PG&E employee members:

- PG&E DOT-covered employees include Commercial (Class A and B) Drivers, Aviation employees and Gas operations, call center and dispatching operations, maintenance and emergency response personnel.
- The November 13, 2017 DOT ruling includes testing for these four opioids: oxycodone, oxymorphone, hydrocodone and hydromorphone.
- Some common names for these semi-synthetic opioids include: OxyContin®, Percodan®, Percocet®, Vicodin®, Lortab®, Norco®, Dilaudid®, Exalgo®.
- Beginning January 1, 2018, PG&E will begin testing for these four opioids in addition to the current panel of THC, cocaine, PCP, opiates, and amphetamines as part of its DOT Compliance random drug testing protocol.

- For DOT-covered PG&E employees that have a current prescription for one of these new opioids, this test will be a verified negative test, with a safety concern to the company.

- For DOT-covered employees that do NOT have a prescription, this will be treated as a positive test and the current process for a DOT positive test outlined in LA 04-16 would apply.

If you test positive with a valid current prescription, the test will be considered a verified negative test with a safety concern.

This safety concern means that PG&E will not let you do safety-sensitive work (for up to five days) until your prescribing physician has changed your prescription to one that won't make you medically unqualified to do safety-sensitive work. That is why it is important to be proactive and speak with your physician in advance of a random DOT drug test.

## Additional Resources

<http://ibew1245.com/2018/01/16/dot-drug-testing-now-includes-semi-synthetic-opioids/>

## Merced GSR Performs Heimlich on Choking Customer

When IBEW 1245 member Shannon Baptista showed up for a pre-arranged overtime shift on Saturday, Dec. 30, she assumed it would be a day like any other.

Baptista, a Gas Service Rep who has been working for PG&E out of Merced for six years, was called out for an IR on a tag issued by Energy Partners. They had turned the gas off after identifying a potential hazard with a water heater, so Baptista went out to the home in Planada to follow up on the issue.

When she arrived at the location of the tag, she was greeted by an elderly woman who spoke no English, only Spanish. Baptista doesn't speak Spanish, and she was unable to communicate with the customer to figure out where the water heater was located, so Baptista called up her colleague, Steven Pineda, to help her translate over the phone. With Pineda's help, she was able to find the water heater, which was located outside around the back of the house.

Baptista had stepped out to examine the water heater, and was still on the phone with Pineda, discussing the high CO concentration with flame distortion that she observed, as well as the fact that the propane water heater had been connected to a natural gas hook-up, when suddenly she heard a strange noise.

"I looked up and saw [the customer] gagging, holding on to her throat, and no noise was coming out. She couldn't take a breath," Baptista said. "I ran back up the stairs, and I was asking her, 'Are you ok? Are you ok?' I still had the phone in my hand, so I hung up with Steven and dialed 9-1-1."

Baptista knew that the customer was choking and that she needed to take action right away, so she dropped the phone on the ground before she even had a chance to speak with the 9-1-1 operator, and attempted to help the elderly customer clear the obstruction from her airway.

"I didn't even tell her I was going to do it. I just went behind her [and started to perform First Aid]. I was nervous, because she was an old, frail lady and I was hitting her as hard as I could on her back," Baptista said, referring to the sharp blows between the shoulder blades that are administered as a first step for choking victims. "Mean-

while, her husband was sitting at the kitchen table with his back to her. He never even turned around through the whole thing; he had no clue that she was choking, I found out later he has trouble hearing."

When the five blows to her back failed to dislodge the food from the customer's throat, Baptista wrapped her arms around the woman to perform the Heimlich Maneuver.

"It didn't take much. It was just one [abdominal thrust], and she started coughing and it came out. It looked like a piece of tortilla," Baptista recalled. "It was scary, but I was relieved that it didn't take much effort to get it out."

Like all PG&E GSRs, Baptista is trained in CPR and First Aid, which is what enabled her to act quickly and effectively when confronted with a life-threatening situation. And while she says that she simply did "what anyone in that situation would have done," she also feels that the universe intended for her to be there at that precise moment.

"If I hadn't been there when she was choking, her husband might not have noticed until she lost consciousness, because he never even turned around during the whole commotion," said Baptista. "I do believe that I was sent there for a reason. Especially since I was on a POT assignment, I wasn't even supposed to be working that shift!"

"I was really impressed by how quickly and without hesitation Shannon sprang into action," said Steven Pineda, Baptista's colleague who had been on the phone helping to translate. "One second she was telling me the information that she wanted me to relay to the customer, and the next second she was attending to the customer who was choking on food. This experience forced me to think about a situation that I had never been in — and I have since thought of what I should do if I ever encountered a situation like that. I hope anyone who hears about this does the same, because I now feel more prepared for that type of emergency."

— Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245 Communications Director



Shannon Baptista

Applications are now being accepted for IBEW 1245's annual

## Scholarship Program



Learn more and apply at [www.ibew1245.com/scholarships](http://www.ibew1245.com/scholarships).





Foster Wheeler bargaining committee members (from left) Devin Mun, Victor Aviles and Richard Blaine review a proposal during negotiations. Photo by Al Fortier

## Members Unanimously Approve Successor Agreement at Amec Foster Wheeler Martinez

On Nov. 13, IBEW 1245 members unanimously ratified its Tentative Agreement with Amec Foster Wheeler Martinez by a vote of 12-0. Amec Foster Wheeler Martinez (AFWM) is a 150 megawatt capacity power plant in Martinez, CA that provides power to a local petroleum refinery.

IBEW 1245 negotiating committee members Devin Mun, Victor Aviles, Richard Blaine and Business Representative Al Fortier met with the company Oct. 24-26 and negotiated a three-year successor agreement to the Collective Bargaining Agreement that expired on October 15, 2017. The union negotiated wages increases of 3.5% in each year of the agreement for our members who maintain and operate the plant.

In addition to wage increases, the union negotiating committee also bargained several other improvements to the agreement. Under the Call-Outs/Report Pay article of the new agreement, employees who are called back to work will receive an additional hourly allowance of \$15.00 per hour for all hours of call-in, while also improving on the stand-by pay for operators, working foreperson pay, and meal allowances. The company and our membership agreed to convert vacation and sick leave to a paid time off (PTO) policy. As a part of the conversion, the union members agreed to freeze their existing

sick leave balances in a separate bank. Employees can use the banked sick leave when on long-term disability, or cash out when they leave the company. One of the few concessions gained by the company was a reduction in the company contribution to the employee's 401k plan, from 6% to 5%.

The company continued its trend of asking for increases in medical contributions. The company increased the employee share of the premium contribution to the medical insurance plan by 1% in the second and third year of the agreement, from 20% to 22%. But the union got the company to agree to contribute an additional \$750/\$1000/\$1500 (single, spouse, family) in the first year of enrollment into the health savings accounts (HSA) of members who enroll into the high deductible health plan. Additionally, the company will contribute another \$750/\$1000/\$1500 to the HSA annually. The company also agreed to meet in 2018 to confer over better and less expensive medical providers and plan options.

Amec Foster Wheeler and IBEW 1245 also agreed to include in the Collective Bargaining Agreement a bonus program that pays up to 6% lump sum annually to each employee. Bonus language previously existed as a side letter.

— Al Fortier, IBEW 1245 Business Rep

## Local 1245 Members at City Light and Power Unanimously Ratify Six-Year Agreement

On Jan. 3, 2018, Local 1245 membership at City Light and Power, Travis Air Force Base unanimously ratified a table agreement by a vote of 5-0.

The table agreement was reached with the company in late December with full support of the committee, and was overall very positive. Some key features of the agreement include:

- A six-year term, in effect until Dec. 31, 2023
- Annual wage increases based on CPI with a minimum of 2.5% effective July 1, 2018
- Improved language for temporary

upgrades and permanent promotional opportunities

- Improved sick leave carry-over provisions
- Improved compensation and language for stand-by duty and new anticipated emergency crew stand-by language
- Reasonable paid time for CDL A medical exams

The negotiating committee consisted of Shop Steward/CL&P Maintenance Electrical Worker (Lineman) Tom Cooper and Business Representative JV Macor.

— JV Macor, IBEW 1245 Business Rep

## Modesto Irrigation District Members Ratify New Five-Year Agreement

The three IBEW 1245-represented bargaining units at Modesto Irrigation District overwhelmingly ratified a five-year agreement. The Utility Services and Maintenance unit voted 168 yes/4 no, the Professional and Supervisory unit vote 6 yes/0 no, and the Administrative, Technical and Clerical unit voted 21 yes/0 no.

The new agreement includes a 3% wage increase each year, along with several important gains, including:

- Improvement to the size of bargaining team
- Removal of cap on time taken for union leave
- Improvement related to salary on promotion for grandfathered employees

- Double-time
- Overtime meal expense parity among the three bargaining units
- Addition of two vacation days after 34 years of service
- Improvement to bereavement leave
- Improvement to employee educational and professional development activities

The bargaining committee was comprised of Mike Gomes, Travis Weese, Jessica Cullins, Bryan Jones, Stephen Carlson and Rich Behler. The sub-committee was comprised of Karri Daves, Mike Anderson, Tony Moore, Adam Master-son, Dave Rippetoe and Dave Ferreira.

— Sheila Lawton, IBEW 1245 Business Rep

## Members Approve One-Year Agreement at USBR

The IBEW Local 1245 members employed at the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) Mid Pacific Region have ratified a one-year agreement, effective Jan. 1, 2018.

Ninety-five percent of the membership participated in the ratification vote. The agreement was ratified on Nov. 22, 2017, with 99% voting Yes to 1% No. View the official vote tally [ibew1245.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/usbr-vote-tally-2017.pdf](http://ibew1245.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/usbr-vote-tally-2017.pdf).

The agreement includes a 3% wage increase for all IBEW 1245 represented classifications, which went into effect on Jan. 1, 2018.

The negotiating committee consisted of Murray Janisse, William Trathen, Diana Ridenour, Patrick Severin and myself.

— Sam Glero, IBEW 1245 Business Rep

## Members Ratify New Agreement at Trayer

IBEW 1245 members at Trayer Engineering overwhelmingly ratified a two-year agreement on October 4, 2017. The final vote tally was 23-2.

The new agreement includes general wage increases of 2.75% in the first year and 2.5% in the second year, and pension increase of .50% in both years. Health care is 100% paid platinum style through Kaiser, and the members also secured 100% paid dental and vision,

along with a \$75,000 life insurance policy. The agreement also includes enhanced safety language, which requires the company to provide new and/or replacement safety glasses and safety boots each year, should they become damaged.

The bargaining committee was comprised of Shop Stewards Arnaldo Lizarraga and Paul Wofford.

— Cruz Serna, IBEW 1245 Business Rep



From left: Enos Drummond, Crew Supervisor; Tom Cooper, Shop Steward/CL&P Maintenance Electrical Worker (Lineman); Jorge Contreras, General Maintenance Worker; Jed Marsh, Maintenance Electrical Worker (Lineman); Phillip Pointer, Maintenance Electrical Worker (Lineman)



# MARIA, MARIA

## Local 1245 members from Western Area Power Administration assist with post-hurricane restoration in the Virgin Islands

Just a few short days after Hurricane Maria devastated nearly everything in its path, the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), which is part of the U.S. Department of Energy, quickly deployed two dozen linemen to the U.S. Virgin Islands to begin the arduous task of restoring power to the area.

The contingent of journeymen linemen – which included seven IBEW 1245 members from WAPA’s Sierra Nevada region, as well as other linemen from around the country – were stationed in St. Thomas for two full months as they worked tirelessly in exceptionally difficult conditions to help re-energize the island and get it back on its feet.

### Maria’s Toll

The team from WAPA was tasked with repairing and heating up the transmission system from the St. Thomas power plant to its four main substations (one of which was connected to St. John via a submarine cable, so their work would enable that small island to regain power as well).

This is fairly commonplace work for experienced linemen, but when they arrived on the island of St. Thomas in late September, they quickly realized that the job would be anything but ordinary. Even those with a wealth of post-storm restoration experience were blown away by the extent of the damage.

“I worked [restoration] after Hurricane Sandy, but this was completely different,” said 19-year IBEW 1245 member Brian Adams, who works as a line foreman for WAPA out of Redding. “With Sandy, there was still some infrastructure and power within driving distance. But when we got to St. Thomas, there was nothing — no power at all anywhere throughout the island. The amount of work that was needed just to get their basic infrastructure — water desalination facilities, hospitals, that kind of stuff — back up, it was amazing to me.”

### No Easy Feat

Although their equipment had been shipped out prior to the storm, the linemen still faced innumerable challenges when it came to simple logistics, which became quite apparent when a bucket truck needed to be repaired.

“Being on the island, we couldn’t just call over to the [mainland] and say we have issues with equipment. It was a lot harder than that,” said Adams. “It took about two-and-a-half weeks to get a replacement bucket shipped from Altec to St. Thomas. If we’d been anywhere else, we could have it the next day. But there was no UPS, no FedEx, and not a lot of flights going in or out, and that made it really difficult.”

Supplies and materials proved to be one of the biggest challenges that the crews faced each day, simply due to the fact that there was so little on hand, and acquiring the necessary parts and pieces involved both tenacity and ingenuity.

“We were setting a lot of poles, so we ended up re-using all the wire we could get from the downed poles, but our biggest issue was with the other stuff, like bolts, nuts, flat washers and insulators,” Adams explained. “We showed up so quickly after the storm that FEMA hadn’t yet gotten all the materials there. Once the materials started to trickle in, there were also a lot of other linemen showing up



who needed it too, so every day was a mad dash to get to the warehouse in order to get what we needed for the day.”

The crews faced other challenges as well, both natural and man-made. They had to contend with steep, rocky terrain and downed vegetation, which made digging pole holes more difficult, as well as unpredictable weather, with high temperatures and humidity close to 100%, intermixed with massive tropical rainstorms that would blow in aggressively and dump inches of rain in a matter of minutes. Navigating the roads also proved to be no easy feat. In St. Thomas, residents drive on the left side of the street – which can take quite a bit of getting used to for individuals who’ve spent their entire lives driving on the right. Traffic control was difficult, and roadway hazards were everywhere, but fortunately the crews managed it well and returned home with no accidents or injuries.

Despite all these challenges and more, the WAPA team still managed to complete their mission safely and ahead of schedule, which allowed them to use their remaining time working on other aspects of the electrical system that needed repair.

Life on the Island

Nearly all of the housing accommodations in the Virgin Islands were destroyed in the hurricane, so during their two-month stay in the Caribbean, the WAPA crews were housed on a boat — three different boats, to be precise. When they first arrived, they were stationed on the SS Wright, a logistics support ship on loan to FEMA during the aftermath of the hurricane. The quarters were far from spacious, with 70 men to a room, sleeping in triple-bunks and sharing just four bathrooms. After a few weeks, Adams and his crew were relocated to the Ocean Constructor, a small cargo ship with shipping containers that had been converted into living quarters. After spending 10 days on that ship, they were able to move over to a cruise liner that had been dispatched to house the crews and other aid workers, and those accommodations were downright luxurious, particularly compared to the first few weeks on the SS Wright.

Despite the less-than-ideal condi-

tions at times, along with the 13-hour workdays and no days off, Adams and his crew had no complaints, especially after witnessing what the residents of St. Thomas had to contend with, and how well they managed it all.

“These people had just been through two back-to-back hurricanes, and yet the vast majority of the people we met were very, very nice, and very happy to see us there, working to get the system restored,” said Adams. “They went on every day like it was just the same, even though many of them were living in homes with no roofs. They seemed to take it all in stride. They’re strong people, they just kept on going where others might have just given up... and they were so gracious and willing to help.”

Adams recalled one unique experience with some of the locals that really resonated with him.

“When we were staying on the SS Wright, there was no place to sit down and relax; you could either lay in your cot or sit in the cafe, which was always crowded and noisy,” said Adams. “We started going over to this little local restaurant that was right near the boat, and we built a good relationship with the owner and bartender ... so on days when we’d come in late, they had food prepared for us. Now this wasn’t food that they made in the restaurant; they were bringing it from their homes, and remember they didn’t have any light or electricity! Truthfully, the food on the ship was pretty much always the same thing, cooked in bulk, so to come in and have this local island food prepared for us, it was awesome and delicious. The fact that they were doing that for us ... I just thought that was a really neat experience.”

“It was nothing we would have expected from them, because we knew how much they’d lost in the storm, and that they had very little,” Adams continued. “But they were so kind to us. Almost everyone we met down there was willing to help any way they could. And I got a kick out of learning about their culture, it’s very unique and I’d never experienced anything like that before.”

— Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245 Communications Director

Photos by Brian Adams



## PG&E Aerial Patrollers Vote to Join IBEW 1245



PG&E Aerial Patrollers from left: Steven Cullen, Brad Gutnik, Paul Bonini, Hondo Loble, Daniel Gadek, and Doug Wild. Not Pictured: Dominik Leven

On Thursday, October 19, PG&E’s aerial patrollers voted to join IBEW 1245 in a secret ballot election. All members of the unit participated, and the vote was a unanimous Yes.

“We are excited to move ahead and continue this journey,” said Paul Bonini, one of the seven aerial patrollers. “I am also very glad that our team came together to all vote in favor.”

Aerial patrollers perform airborne monitoring of PG&E’s gas distribution/transmission system, which is an integral part of protecting public safety. Their home base is the Bishop Ranch campus in San Ramon; flights are conducted out of the Buchanan Field Airport in Concord.

The patrollers utilize Light Detection and Ranging technology a.k.a. LiDAR to identify and report a variety of observations, which are then investigated by ground patrollers (which is already a 1245-represented classification). According to the company’s website, PG&E’s aerial patrols exceed the mileage required by the Code of Federal Regulations by 4.5 times on average, which in 2016 added to over 123,000 total miles. Prior to 2017, the aerial team was employed by a contractor, however PG&E brought them all on as bona fide employees in January.

“I am very grateful to work for Pacific Gas and Electric. The extensive and positive history the IBEW has with PG&E made this an easy decision for me,” said Bonini.

He expressed that his main motivation for organizing was to take advantage of the greater voice at work that IBEW members enjoy. Fellow Aerial Patroller Daniel Gadek echoed these sentiments.

“I have wanted to join IBEW Local 1245 because it has a long history of working for the common man. I believe it will give our team a collective voice and a seat at the table in regards to safety, wages, [and] scope of work,” said Gadek. He and his coworkers hope to clarify proper lines of progression in bargaining, and aspire to improve their team’s workflow by better outlining their individual duties and job descriptions.

“Our team has been through a lot and grown tremendously over the past four years,” he added, and says they are ready to head forward “in the hopes that we will have some say over our careers and our futures.”

— Rick Thompson, IBEW International Lead Organizer



## PG&E Aircraft Pilots Say “Yes” to IBEW 1245

On Nov. 27, a unit of PG&E fixed wing aircraft pilots voted Yes to join IBEW Local 1245. The election, which was administered by mail-in ballot, resulted in a 7-1 decision for union representation. All eight pilots returned ballots.

The pilots work within the Aviation Services department, which is part of Gas Operations at PG&E. They each perform one of two roles at the company: operating either jet passenger flights or gas pipeline patrol flights. The group wanted to address a number of issues in collective bargaining, but with few represented classifications they could easily compare themselves to, the organizing committee faced a unique challenge.

“I found the most significant obstacle to organizing was being able to effectively communicate the roles of unions [to my colleagues],” explained Gary Major, who was one of

the first pilots to reach out to IBEW with interest in organizing.

Major drew upon his experience as a representative with an airline pilots’ union, as well as guidance from our staff, to find examples in the PG&E contract of how IBEW has tackled problems similar to their own. For more unique issues, the organizing committee and 1245’s staff met a number of times to brainstorm potential solutions.

Now that the election is over, the group will meet with Local 1245’s staff to form their bargaining committee and begin drafting their first proposals. The issues they wish to address are related to scheduling inconsistencies, discipline and evaluations, and disagreement with management over the scope of job duties and assignments.

— Rick Thompson, IBEW International Organizer



IBEW 1245 members at Advance Carbon Products. Front row, from left: Maung Maung Aung, Minh Thach, Walter Deras, Dale Oliveira, and Tuan Su. Back row, from left: Nyi Maung, Vinh Vong, Phuong Le, Winifred Reyes, Pedro Lopez, Mariano Ruiz, Ricardo Garcia, Tan Tint Ing, Erlito Rago, Nick Hannon, Michael Yuen, and Tommy Phan



Dale Oliveira



Nyi Maung



Tommy Phan

At Advance Carbon Products Inc. (ACP) in Hayward, CA, a small but dedicated team of IBEW 1245 members work diligently to craft specialized carbon-based components for a wide range of high-tech applications, including robotics, electrical motors, and aerospace equipment, as well as petrochemical and semi-conductor-specific products.

### Meticulous Work

Local 1245 member Dale Oliveira originally worked in ACP's brush department, but was transferred over to the mechanical department, where he runs lathes, mills, grinders and diamond saws. When the *Utility Reporter* caught up with him, he was precision grinding a part for an aircraft compressor.

"This product requires a specific tolerance and finish in order to warrant this type of process," Oliveira explained. "It was originally cut from a solid billet that was tested for its purity, because this happens to be a very expensive form of carbon, due to its molecular

structure, which makes it harder [than some of the other forms of carbon that we work with]."

But even a harder type of carbon is still pretty fragile, and Oliveira's work requires the utmost skill, especially given the fact that he's working within specs of .0002 inches — a fraction of the width of a single strand of human hair.

"We take pride in our ability to do that, whereas other companies haven't found a solution that would enable them to make this part," said Oliveira, noting that ACP's process is highly proprietary. "We're pretty proud of the fact that we came up with the solution to be able to machine this part."

## Carbon Copy

### Local 1245 members produce specialized components at Advance Carbon Products

Oliveira and his co-workers must be extremely meticulous in their work to ensure that it lives up to the company's very high standards.

"We have to be very careful, because we do not want any chipping in any of our parts," he said. "We actually scan them under a magnification device, in order to make sure that when the customer gets it, it is chip-free."

### Very Unique

ACP is a family-run company, and Oliveira appreciates the quality management and mentorship he's received as an employee.

"This company is very unique. They

treat us well, and my boss is quite knowledgeable and friendly. He's been willing to show us bits of information he's acquired during his time here," he said.

While the employees at ACP don't often butt heads with the bosses, Oliveira is still grateful to have the union on his side. He noted the many benefits that the IBEW has helped to secure for him and his co-workers through negotiation and arbitration, including fair wages, quality medical coverage and job security.

"I've only been here for about three-and-a-half years, but from what I've seen, the union really seems to have a bona-fide interest in our work environment," he said. "I think highly of my union rep, Cruz Serna. He's come out here on many occasions to talk with the employees about any issues that we may have. We, the employees of ACP, feel grateful to be represented by a union that takes interest not only in the bigger companies, but the smaller ones as well."

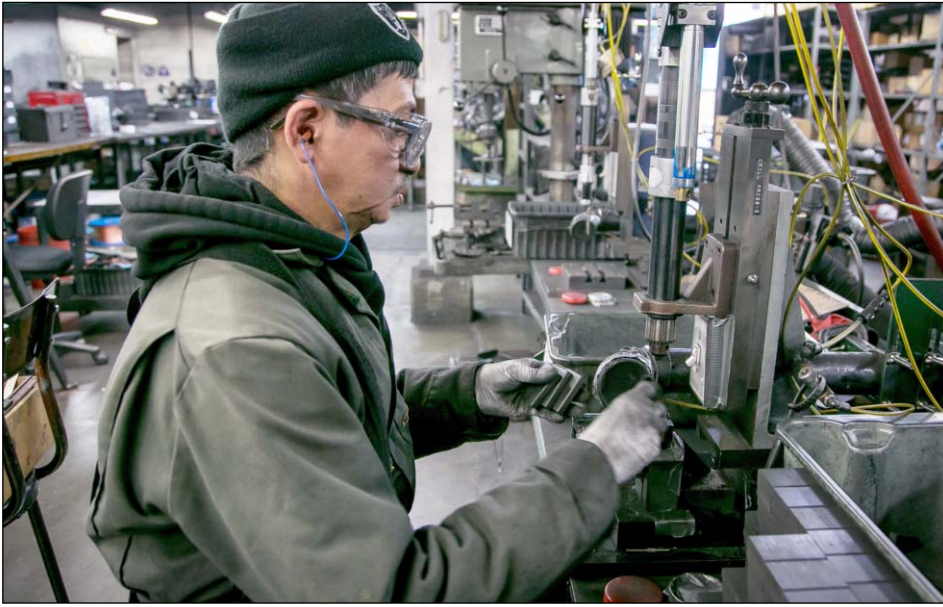
— Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245 Communications Director



Winifred Reyes



Michael Yuen



Tuan Su



Nick Hannon and Pedro Lopez

Photos by John Storey



Richardo Garcia



Vinh Vong



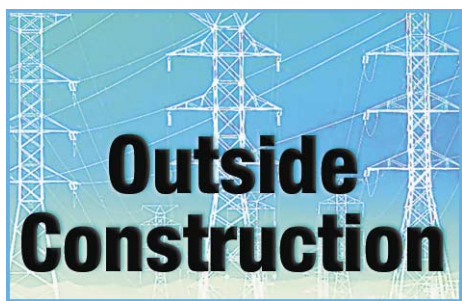
## New Agreement Approved at Advance Carbon

IBEW 1245 members employed at Advance Carbon Products in Hayward have unanimously ratified a three-year contract by a vote of 15-0.

The new agreement includes an immediate 2.7% wage increase, based on the latest Consumer Price Index (CPI), which went into effect on Nov. 25, 2017. Members will also receive wage increases in 2018 and 2019, based off the CPI, with a minimum of 1% and maximum of 4%. The company will continue to pay 100% bronze level insurance, with the option to select a better level with a cost share. Additionally, the company will provide anti-fatigue mats at the request of the employee. The members are pleased to have preserved their 100% employer-paid health care coverage.

The negotiating committee was comprised of Shop Steward Phuong Lee and Local 1245 member Dale Oliveira.

— Cruz Serna,  
IBEW 1245 Business Rep



## WORK PICTURE

As we move in to 2018, the overall work picture for Local 1245 construction looks very good, with a projected increase of about 30% in electric distribution work, and increases



Ralph Armstrong

in other types of work as well. Some of this is due to work that wasn't completed in 2017 due to the fires in Northern California, which put some projects on hold while resources were used to address those emergency needs. Towards the end of 2017, Local 1245 would routinely run unfilled calls, however those did slow down as we entered the holiday season.

In 2017, Local 1245 dispatched 2,992 calls, which is nearly 600 more calls than in 2016. Of those calls, 1,265 were for journeyman linemen, which is also a significant increase from the 992 dispatched in 2016. This number is important because of all the standing calls we experienced towards the end of 2016, at least 90% of them were in the journeyman lineman classification. With the increase in projected work in 2018 we can expect to see even more of the same, especially if the industry continues to experience the same level of natural disasters as we saw in 2017. Having plenty of work would seem to be a good problem to have, however, we need to make sure we can man this work with a well-qualified workforce.

## California

We are continuing to host lots of safety orientations, job and yard visits. We have had an increase in reports of pay issues where an employer lays off a

member over text, the member is owed monies, yet they are not paid in full at time of layoff.

**Wilson** is running 13 distribution crews in the Bay Area to the Sierra Mountains. They are also running five transmission crews from Dixon to Cameron Park.

**Abercrombie Pipeline** has all but finished the shoefly project at the Oroville Dam. There still running one crew, finishing up odds and ends.

**Cupertino Electric** is leading the MHP (Mobile Home Parks) project in northern California, with 27 parks in construction. They are currently running 3-5-man line crews. (There are several civil contractors — **CSI, Fidelis Green, Veteran Power** — that are also in the process of completing phase 1 of the MHP project.)

Cupertino just started a project in Dixon where they will do all the below ground work also. The company has line crews in the San Jose and San Carlos area, doing CCM work. They are also in the middle of completing their arrestor project in Kingsburg area.

**Underground Electric**, an offshoot of Underground Construction, are up to two electric crews now. They are working mostly on underground cable replacement in the Sacramento area.

**PAR Electric** has crews all over the state. There are four cell site crews, Turlock crews, the Feather River project and Greenville. The PG&E tower painting project for 2018 will be double the towers of 2017. This tower painting work will be about 1,000 towers in 2018, and another 1,500 in 2019. We are trying to find ways to maintain a workforce with all the other work out there that will stabilize and meet the need of the customer. There is more to come on this.

**Hotline** is currently working on three substations in Northern California. One of the Subs is the V5 Sub for a data center in Santa Clara. They are also running two-line crew, and two splicer crew.

**Henkles & McCoy** has a 14-mile transmission project that includes pole replacement and a reconductor. They are also working on four substation projects throughout our jurisdiction.

## Nevada

**Titan Reno** has one crew that has been staying busy on small projects for NV Energy.

**PAR** has two crews working. One is in Reno for NV Energy staying busy on small projects, and the other is in North Lake Tahoe working for Liberty Utilities on new business and maintenance work on a T&E basis.

**Cache Valley Electric** is working on two substations — one in Mason Valley and one in Smith Valley NV. Completion date is Feb. 15, but material issues may delay completion.

**Wasatch** has 14 doc linemen and five doc sub-techs working at various locations for NV Energy. Wasatch also has 17 miles of 120kv w/ distribution under-build in Smith Valley.

**Titan Wyoming and Newman Electric** have completed their 4/25kv cutovers and moved on.

**Summit Line** is currently working on

a five-mile section of 120kv line at the Reno-Tahoe industrial park, west of Reno. This project is slated to be completed in March, but material issues may delay that.

**NV Energy** has put out a couple of bids. One is two miles of 120kv underground and a 129 pole 4/25kv cutover in Reno. Work picture for Nevada is looking good for this year, with lots of talk about some substantial substation and transmission projects, and some good distribution work as well.

**Liberty Utilities** has put out a 30 pole 120kv pole replacement job and a small 120kv UG project in Truckee for a new commercial complex.

## POLE TEST and TREAT

The new five-year pole test and treat agreement was ratified by the membership in mid-December. The Osmose work group ratified the agreement with 100% yes vote, and the Davey Test group was a lot closer, with a 51% yes vote for ratification. The big difference between the two work groups is the way the companies were structured, with regards to the number of members who will now receive paid vacation.

## GRIEVANCES

As mentioned in every report, we deal with issues daily, most of which are resolved in a day or two and in the first steps of the process. Sometimes they go a little longer and further, however our reps do a good job of getting resolution before needing to go too far.

Towards the end of 2017, we had a couple of issues that took a little longer than normal, but we were able to close out one that resulted in a contractor donating to the OSL injured workers fund for a violation related to the misuse of the foreman classification.

We are currently dealing with another case in Nevada related to the misuse of the referral process and not clearing a few members through dispatch as required. We feel this situation will be resolved quickly.

Paycheck issues continue to be the number one problem. It's amazing that, with all the technologies out there, we continue to see paychecks wrong or not processed in the time specified in the collective bargaining agreement.

As always, since we share the same agreements, Local 1245 and Local 47 continue to support each other during Labor Management when grievances make it to that step.

## JATC

It's been almost two years since the Cal Nev. JATC has been open for applications. This was mostly due to the number of applicants that were obtained when the processed was opened last. We expect to see the application process open again sometime in the next couple of months. Just like last time, there will be a 10-day period that it will be open so anyone wanting to apply will want to make sure they have everything they need to apply. There will be one change to the application requirement, and we are waiting on the final approval from the DOL before opening the application period. The

new requirement will make it mandatory to have a CDL in order to apply. If you are interested in applying please visit [www.calnevjatc.org](http://www.calnevjatc.org) routinely for information.

Given the need for skilled manpower, the JATC has done a good job of bringing in new apprentices. There are, on average, around 350 to 360 apprentices indentured in the program. This is for all steps, and in 2017 there were 115 new apprentices indentured into that number, while 69 graduated to Journeyman Lineman. As we increase the numbers of new apprentices (we have been bringing in around 90 over the last couple of years), we would think that the total number in the program would increase. However, the rate of applicants who get indentured and then wash out due to various reasons is higher than we would like.

## LINECO

On January 1, 2018 Lineco premiums went up another \$.25 an hour. This is the third increase in as many years. For the OSL agreements, as well as the pole test agreements, the contractor will pick up those increases for 2018.

## EVENTS CALENDAR

- First Aid & CPR is the 2nd Saturday of every month at our Riverside and Sacramento locations.

## ORGANIZING

The following contractors have been organized and signed the CA Outside Line Construction agreement in the last quarter of 2018:

- Cedar Creek Corporation
- Cal Pacific Constructors Inc.

## INJURED WORKERS FUND

As of December 31, 2017, the balance of the Injured Workers Fund was \$1,148,134.11.

As the Fund balance continues to rise, the Trustees are constantly looking at new ways this money can benefit the outside line membership who pay into the fund.

**Effective March 1, 2018**, the fund will offer parental leave benefits and non-work disability benefits. The details, including the eligibility requirements, were mailed during the last week of December 2017 to all active outside members who are working under the CA Outside Line Construction agreement.

If you did not receive a copy or if you have any questions, please contact Liz McInnis at (707) 452-2720 or [EJMH@ibew1245.com](mailto:EJMH@ibew1245.com).

## DISPATCH

Please call the Hotline after hours for daily counts related to actual numbers on the Books.

All 1245 OSL members are encouraged to sign up and register your own personal account through the Local 1245 website. Once registered, you will be able to check your books status, make changes to personal information, pay union dues and even check on available jobs without having to call the dispatch office for this information. This is a very useful tool for our OSL members.

# Do It Online

ibew1245.com

Check your spot on the books

Check your hours worked

Pay Your Dues Online

# UTILITY SAFETY LEADERSHIP

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SAFETY LEADERSHIP | INCIDENT PREVENTION | HUMAN PERFORMANCE | STANDARDS & OPERATIONS

## Frontline Utility Safety Leadership Training Program

It has been estimated that 65% of utility industry frontline employees will be leaving the industry within the next five years. This is creating even greater demand for well-trained and experienced leaders.

The Frontline Utility Safety Leadership Training program has been developed to provide utility leaders and safety professionals with the training they need to help fill this experience gap. This program provides the tools and confidence utility leaders need while promoting improved productivity and safety in frontline operations. Frontline instructors facilitate a collaborative learning process and cover the four key areas of leadership and safety.

### Register now for these 2018 Frontline classes:

- **Safety Leadership | March 14-15, 2018**  
<https://www.membership.usoln.org/assnfe/ev.asp?ID=375>
- **Human Performance | October 10-11, 2018**  
<https://www.membership.usoln.org/assnfe/ev.asp?ID=376>  
Each two-day module is \$799 and includes onsite lunch.

**IBEW 1245 Discount:** Receive a \$100 discount by using the discount code "VACA18" when prompted during online registration.

The classes will take place at IBEW 1245, 30 Orange Tree Circle, Vacaville, CA 95687

#### Participant Benefits:

- World-class leadership training designed specifically for the utility industry leaders
- The opportunity to learn alongside peers and colleagues from across the country in a highly collaborative environment
- A workbook with lessons learned and tools for implementing in the field
- Earn CUSP Points for active Certified Utility Safety Professionals
- A Certificate of Completion for each module completed

**Learn more:** <https://frontlineutilityleader.com/about>

## What Employer Misconduct Rises to the Level of "Serious and Willful"?

When an employee's industrial injury is caused by the serious and willful misconduct of the employer, Labor Code section 4553 allows for the employee's compensation to be increased by one-half upon a petition for penalties to the Workers Compensation Appeals Board. The California Supreme Court has determined that the one-half increase applies to every benefit or payment provided to the applicant under Division Four of the Labor Code, including medical treatment payments, medical-legal fees, vocational rehabilitation costs, and all indemnity benefit payments. As the penalty is due to quasi-criminal conduct, Workers' Compensation insurance does not cover employer serious and willful misconduct; and the penalty is assessed directly against the employer.

Serious and willful misconduct petitions claim injury through either the employer or his managing representative, or general superintendent's violation of a Cal/OSHA safety order, or the failure of the employer to provide a safe working environment under Labor Code section 6400. Safety Orders are contained within Division 5 of the

Labor Code. Should the injured worker believe that the employer committed serious and willful misconduct, he must file his petition within one year of the date of injury.

To prove an employer's violation of a safety order, the injured worker must show (1) the specific manner how the order was violated; (2) how the violation proximately caused the injury to the applicant; and (3) either — the safety order and the conditions of its violation were actually known and violated by a specific individual; — or where the condition making the safety order applicable was obvious to the employer or his representative as designated under Labor Code section 4553, and the failure of that individual to correct the problem constituted reckless disregard for the consequences.

Labor Code Section 6400 requires every employer to furnish employment and a place of employment that is safe and healthful for its employees.

*Lab. Code § 6400. To prove employer serious and willful misconduct for an unsafe environment, an injured employee must prove that the employer (1) knew of the dangerous condition; (2)*

*knew that the probable consequences of the condition would involve serious injury to an employee; and (3) deliberately failed to take action.*

For a single instance of serious misconduct, the injured worker must show with reasonable particularity that the reckless disregard for safety was made by a person in the managerial class of the employer. Where obvious, fixed, and long-maintained conditions of hazard exist, the courts have inferred that the conditions were known to members of the managerial class, and can be proved by circumstantial evidence, including evidence of prior injuries arising from similar circumstances.

Courts have required egregious conduct by the employer to be considered serious and willful misconduct. Serious and willful misconduct involves conduct of a quasi-criminal standard, and are acts that are either likely to result in serious injury, or with a wanton and reckless disregard of their possible consequences. The misconduct requires an intention to do harm, making it the antithesis of negligence of any degree. A willful failure to protect an employee

from likely injury has been found sufficient to meet the standard. This standard is applicable both in violations of the Safety Orders as well as a violation of Labor Code section 6400.

Under Labor Code section 4551, an injured worker can be penalized, upon petition by the employer, for his own serious and willful misconduct which caused injury. If the employer proves that the employee's own misconduct caused his injury, the otherwise recoverable compensation may be reduced by up to one half upon a findings and award by the Workers' Compensation Appeals Board.

*Gregory Gomez is an attorney with Mastagni Holstedt, A.P.C*



## Tree Trimmer Negotiations Wage On

The five-year tree trimmer agreement expired on Dec. 30, 2017. IBEW 1245 and its line clearance tree trimmer negotiating committee spent four days meeting with several tree employers during the months of October and December in an attempt to negotiate a new agreement, however, talks broke off in late December as both sides were too far off on proposals. The terms of the agreement, wages, health care increases, sick leave, apprenticeship and mandatory overtime are the major areas that remain unresolved. These issues have a financial impact under the total compensation of any proposal, which is where the difficulty lies.

Negotiations were scheduled to resume on Jan. 9, 2018, however they were pushed out as the union continues to try and find ways to resolve these issues. These negotiations have been difficult, but Local 1245 and its bargaining committee will continue to work hard to get a resolution.

### Northern Area

Things were busy for the tree department in the North towards the end of 2017, particularly given the year-end push for the tree companies to get all their work completed before the end of the year. This had the crews running all over the place, with some shipped out of town to help other areas get caught up. A few crews were left wondering if they were going to be at home for the holidays, or whether they were going to be stuck out of town. As far as we have heard, most people did get to make it home.

This was also the time of year that a lot of people wanted to take vacation to spend time with their families. With the work load that the tree companies had, it was hard for the employers to give time off and still complete their schedule. Some vacations were canceled, but most were honored.

Although negotiations for tree trimmers are ongoing, we did settle a new contract with Osmose and Davey for the pole test and treat members. It includes a raise in their pay, increase in their NEAP account, and vacation for their treatment and restoration technicians. Both Davey and Osmose members voted to approve the new five-year contract. I have met with most of the members in my area since I have taken over this assignment, and I plan on meeting the rest very soon. It has been kind of a struggle finding where all the yards are, because of the crews constantly on the move, trying to finish up their year-end work. Now that the new year is here, hopefully the yard-jumping will settle down and I will be able to meet the rest of the members.

### Central Area

**Asplundh Tree Expert** (Nevada Energy) — Work continues in Fallon, Carson City, & Reno. Grievance activity

picked up in Reno & Carson City. All open grievances have been scheduled to the next Grievance Review Committee in January. Members have been submitting proposals for contract negotiations.

**Mowbray** (PG&E & SMUD) — The complaining about the lack of gear has subsided now that the company has started supplying new equipment. We had an issue regarding vacation owed due to portability from the previous contractor. The company claims they lost the union seniority dates we had delivered to them in 2015, 2016 and now 2017. We plan on meeting with them over this issue. Crews continue to get work from Davey Tree Surgery in the East Bay & Sierra Division. We have a termination grievance in Placerville where the company took action against five employees for leaving the job to go on a vacation that had been approved by their supervisor. While en route on their way home, the supervisor informed the members of a problem of their request for vacation. The supervisor had instructed the group to disengage the GPS because the company had called CHP to report the company vehicles as stolen. None of the employees followed the order, and drove home, parking the vehicles where they normally leave them when not in use. This grievance is in process.

**Mountain Enterprise** (Liberty Energy & PG&E) — Mountain has crews working for Liberty Energy in South Lake Tahoe & Truckee, and numerous crews working all over the PG&E territory. The company has been awarded a large contract by PG&E to clear areas from the fires system-wide.

**Davey Tree Surgery** (Pole Test & Treatment) — The GRC Committee is still working on a few open grievances from 2017. We're now working on setting the date for mid-February 2018. All crews in Diablo and Sierra have been working nine-hour days, except for Mission & East Bay, where they were working eight-hour shifts.

**Davey Tree Surgery** (City of Santa Clara) — The contract had been with the city, waiting for approval by the Board. After several meetings, the City of Santa Clara agreed to cost adjustments that provided the additional funding that would match the state prevailing wage determination (which was required). If not approved, there was a chance that Davey Tree may have walked away from the contract, which would have had an impact on nine of our members. By approving these adjustments, our nine members all will receive a wage increase, as well as back pay from July 1, 2017 to Dec 31, 2017 and a few other things, bringing them in line with the tree master agreement. Depending on classification & benefit package, some members could benefit substantially. The key thing here is that there is now no more secondary existing

contract. All the wages and benefits are all the same, just like the Master Agreement.

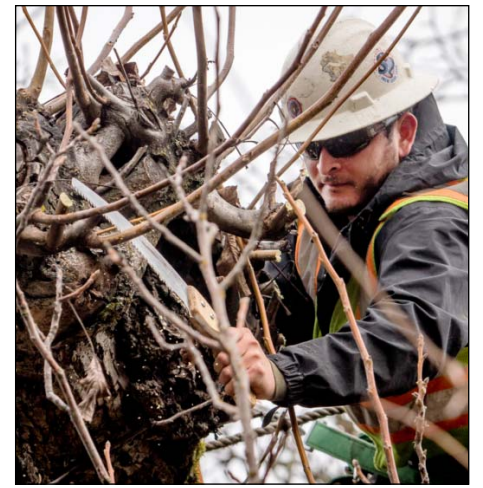
**Osmose** (Pole test & treatment) — We reached a table agreement on Oct 10, 2017, which includes vacation for all hands, an issue that has been hugely important for the employees, as well as the addition of three paid sick days for all employees, and increase to the pension. The vote was overwhelmingly in support of the new contract.

**Utility Tree Service** (Golden Gate, De Anza, San Jose & the Peninsula) — Subcontracting continues system-wide. We're still working on a few open GRC matters. We expect to secure a meeting in February 2018.

**Utility Tree Service** (Northern area) — Crews have been working out of Winters, Williams, and Dixon. We had a member that became ill on the job and was taken to the hospital via an ambulance. The company had not attempted to address this matter that took place on the job. We're directing the member to the proper legal assistance to help him through this ordeal. Somehow no workers' compensation claim was ever filled out. UTS is still issuing work to Mario's Tree Service & Synergy Tree Service.

**Synergy Tree Service** — Crews continue to work in Mountain View and the Peninsula. We continue to have progression issues that are currently being addressed by the company. On Oct. 23, we had a fatality (fall) in San Jose with Ramon Ayala, FMA. Brother Ayala was very good hand with over 16 years of experience, and was well-respected among his peers. He was a well-known soccer coach in the community, a father, a brother, and a husband. He'll surely be missed! This incident is still under a Cal-Osha investigation. PG&E is involved, and the CPUC has been participating in the investigation as well.

The company questioned how the Lineco Medical works as to the contribution on part of the company. The



Miguel Orozco from Utility Tree

information has been forwarded which applies to all contractors performing work system-wide.

**Wright Tree** (SMUD) — All the crews had been working in downtown Sacramento before all the holiday festivities. The Joe Cooper fatality that took place earlier in the year is still under a Cal-OSHA investigation. We are expecting this be finalized soon. All crews continue to be working eight-hour shifts.

### Southern Area

It has been a very busy time. The tree companies have been hard-pressed to stay on schedule and are sending crews from different yards to areas that they are behind. This created some hardship for members during the holidays, as members had to be away from families, and vacation issues came up.

We were asked by PG&E to be part of the SIF investigation team regarding the Ramon Ayala fatality. We had a lot of meetings over the course of the last three months of the year, as well as a couple of site visits of the accident. A lot of time put into coming up with the facts. We met with OSHA and Synergy at the site and at Synergy yard, and we talked with the groundman who was working with Ayala on the day of the accident.

A Task Force Committee with PG&E and tree contractors has been established, to look into some industry best practices.

We have a grievance with Trees Inc. for bringing in non-union sub-contractors doing unit and CEMA work on PG&E property.

## Work Accident Claims Life of Local 1245 Tree Trimmer

It is with great sorrow that we announce the passing of IBEW 1245 member and Line Clearance Tree Trimmer Ramon Ayala. Brother Ayala, age 49, was working for Synergy in San Jose when he was involved in what appears to have been a 14.5-foot fall on Monday, October 23.

Ayala suffered numerous severe injuries as a result of this fall and was on life support and in an induced coma while these injuries were assessed. His medical team eventually determined that there would be no coming back from these injuries. He was subsequently taken off life support on Sunday, October 29. Ayala was an organ donor, which allowed some of his organs to be donated to others in need.

Ayala leaves behind a loving partner, Alma, and their family, which consisted of her three children and one of his own. A viewing was held on Nov. 8, and the funeral was on Nov. 9, at 1:00 pm at Oak Hill Funeral Home in San Jose.

Brother Ayala is the fourth tree trimmer to lose his life while working in IBEW 1245 jurisdiction over the past 12 months. The investigation into this incident is still ongoing.



# Comienzan las negociaciones de los salarios de los podadores de árboles

El acuerdo de cinco años de los podadores de árboles venció el 30 de diciembre de 2017. El IBEW 1245 junto con el comité de negociación de los podadores de árboles para el despeje de líneas pasaron cuatro días en reuniones con varios empleadores durante los meses de octubre y diciembre, en un intento por negociar un nuevo acuerdo. Sin embargo, las conversaciones se interrumpieron a finales de diciembre ya que las propuestas de ambas partes eran muy distintas. Los términos del acuerdo, los salarios, los aumentos en los costos de atención de la salud, las ausencias por enfermedad, la formación de aprendices y las horas extras obligatorias son los principales temas que permanecen sin resolver. Estos asuntos tienen un impacto financiero sobre la remuneración total de cualquier propuesta, y esto es la raíz del problema.

Las negociaciones fueron programadas para reanudarse el 9 de enero de 2018, sin embargo, se retrasó la fecha hasta el 25 de enero mientras el sindicato continúa intentando encontrar maneras de resolver estos problemas. Estas negociaciones han sido difíciles, sin embargo, el Local 1245 y su comité de negociación seguirá trabajando arduamente para obtener una resolución.

## Zona norte

En lo que se refiere a árboles, las cosas estuvieron muy movidas hacia finales de 2017, especialmente dado el empuje de fin de año para que las compañías de árboles completaran todo el trabajo antes de fin de año. Por esta razón las cuadrillas estaban apuradas por todas partes, y algunas se enviaron fuera de la ciudad para ayudar a otras zonas a ponerse al día. Algunas cuadrillas no estaban seguras de poder regresar a su casa tiempo para las festividades, o si iban a tener que quedarse fuera de la ciudad. Según lo que hemos escuchado, la mayoría de la gente sí regresó a su casa.

Esta es también la época del año en la que mucha gente quiere tomar vacaciones para pasar tiempo con sus familias. Con la carga de trabajo que tenían las compañías de árboles, era difícil para los empleadores darles tiempo libre y aún poder completar su programa. Algunas vacaciones fueron canceladas, pero la mayoría sí se cumplieron.

Aunque las negociaciones para los podadores de árboles continúan, hemos podido firmar un nuevo contrato con Osmose y Davey para los miembros que trabajan en pruebas y tratamientos de postes. El contrato incluye un aumento en sus salarios, aumento en su cuenta NEAP y vacaciones para sus técnicos de tratamiento y restauración. Los miembros tanto de Davey como de Osmose aprobaron por votación el nuevo contrato de cinco años. Me he reunido con la mayoría de los miembros en mi zona desde que he asumido esta tarea, y estoy pensando en reunirme con el resto muy pronto. Ha

sido una especie de lucha encontrar los patios, porque las cuadrillas están constantemente en movimiento, tratando de terminar sus trabajos de final de año. Ahora que llegó el año nuevo, esperamos que los cambios de lugar de los patios disminuyan y así podré reunirme con el resto de los miembros.

## Zona central

**Asplundh Tree Expert** (Nevada Energy) — Los trabajos continúan en Fallon, Carson City y Reno. La actividad de manejo de quejas repuntó en Reno y Carson City. Todas las quejas pendientes han sido programadas para la próxima reunión del Comité de Revisión de Quejas en enero. Los miembros han presentado propuestas para la negociación del contrato.

**Mowbray** (PG&E y SMUD) — La queja sobre la falta de equipo se han calorado ahora que la compañía ha empezado a suministrar equipos nuevos. Tuvimos un problema con respecto a las vacaciones pendientes debido a la movilidad del contratista anterior. La compañía afirma que perdió las fechas de antigüedad del sindicato que le habíamos entregado en 2015, 2016 y 2017. Tenemos planes de reunirnos con ellos sobre este asunto. Las cuadrillas siguen recibiendo trabajo de Davey Tree Surgery en el East Bay y la División Sierra. Tenemos una queja sobre despidos en Placerville donde la empresa tomó medidas contra cinco empleados por dejar el trabajo para irse de vacaciones, que habían sido aprobadas por su supervisor. Cuando iban camino a casa, el supervisor les informó a los miembros sobre un problema en su solicitud de vacaciones. El supervisor les había llamado para decir que desactivaran el GPS porque la compañía había llamado a las patrullas CHP para informar que algunos vehículos habían sido robados. Ninguno de los empleados acató la orden. Siguieron a sus casas, y estacionaron los vehículos donde normalmente los dejan cuando no está en uso. Este reclamo está en curso.

**Mountain Enterprise** (Liberty Energy y PG&E) — Mountain tiene cuadrillas trabajando para Liberty Energy en South Lake Tahoe y Truckee, y numerosas cuadrillas trabajando en todo el territorio de PG&E. A la compañía se le adjudicó un contrato importante de PG&E para despejar las zonas de los incendios en todo el sistema.

**Davey Tree Surgery** (Pole Test & Treatment) — El Comité de Resolución de Quejas (GRC) sigue trabajando en algunas pocas quejas pendientes desde 2017. Ahora estamos trabajando para que la fecha sea a mediados de febrero de 2018. Todas las cuadrillas en Diablo y Sierra han estado trabajando nueve horas al día, excepto en el caso de Mission y East Bay, donde trabajan turnos de ocho horas.

**Davey Tree Surgery** (Ciudad de Santa Clara) — El contrato se había firmado con la ciudad, se espera su aprobación

por la Junta. Después de varias reuniones, la ciudad de Santa Clara llegó a un acuerdo sobre los ajustes de costos para los fondos adicionales necesarios para cumplir el salario vigente definido por el estado (que era obligatorio). Si no se aprobaba, existía una posibilidad de que Davey Tree hubiera abandonado el contrato, lo que hubiera tenido un impacto en nueve de nuestros miembros. Al aprobar estos ajustes, nuestros nueve miembros recibirán un aumento salarial, así como el pago retroactivo a partir del 1º de julio de 2017 al 31 de diciembre de 2017 y algunas otras cosas, poniéndolas en consonancia con el acuerdo maestro de los podadores de árboles. Según su clasificación y el paquete de beneficios, algunos miembros podrían beneficiarse considerablemente. Lo más importante de esto es que ahora no hay más contratos secundarios vigentes. Todos los salarios y beneficios son los mismos, tal como el acuerdo principal.

**Osmose** (Pole Test & Treatment) — El 10 de octubre de 2017 llegamos a un acuerdo en la mesa, que incluye vacaciones para todos los trabajadores, un asunto que ha sido enormemente importante para los empleados, así como la adición de tres días de ausencia por enfermedad con pago para todos los empleados, y el aumento de la jubilación. La votación fue abrumadoramente en apoyo del nuevo contrato.

**Utility Tree Service** (Golden Gate, De Anza, San Jose y la Península) — La subcontratación continúa en todo el sistema. Todavía estamos trabajando en unos pocos asuntos pendientes en el Comité de Revisión de Quejas. Esperamos fijar una reunión para febrero de 2018.

**Utility Tree Service** (Zona norte) — Las cuadrillas han estado trabajando desde Winters, Williams y Dixon. Uno de nuestros miembros se enfermó en el trabajo y fue llevado al hospital en una ambulancia. La empresa no ha intentado abordar este tema que tuvo lugar en el trabajo. Estamos recomendando al miembro la asistencia jurídica debida para ayudarlo durante estos momentos difíciles. Por alguna razón nunca se hizo un reclamo de compensación laboral. UTS sigue entregando trabajo a Mario's Tree Service y Synergy Tree Service.

**Synergy Tree Service** — Las cuadrillas continúan trabajando en Mountain View y la península.

Seguimos teniendo problemas de ascensos que la compañía está abordando actualmente. El 23 de octubre tuvimos una fatalidad (caída) en San Jose con Ramon Ayala, FMA. El hermano Ayala era un trabajador muy bueno con más de 16 años de experiencia, y era muy respetado entre sus compañeros. Él era un conocido entrenador de fútbol en la comunidad, padre, hermano, y esposo. ¡Lo extrañaremos mucho! Este incidente está aún bajo investigación de Cal-Osha. PG&E está involucrado, y la CPUC también ha participado en la investigación.

La compañía cuestionó cómo funciona Lineco Medical en lo que se refiere a la contribución por parte de la empresa. La información ha sido remitida, y se aplica a todos los Contratistas que ejecutan trabajos en todo el sistema.

**Wright Tree** (SMUD) — Todas las cuadrillas habían estado trabajando en el centro de Sacramento antes de las festividades. La muerte de Joe Cooper que ocurrió a comienzos de año aún se encuentra bajo investigación de Cal-Osha. Estamos a la espera de que esto finalice pronto. Todas las cuadrillas continúan trabajando turnos de ocho horas.

## Zona sur

Ha sido una temporada muy ocupada. Las compañías de árboles han estado en apuros para cumplir con el programa y están enviando cuadrillas de diferentes patios a zonas que están retrasadas. Esto creó serias dificultades para los miembros durante las festividades, ya que los miembros tuvieron que estar lejos de sus familias, y surgieron problemas de vacaciones.

PG&E me pidió que fuera parte del equipo de investigación de SIF en referencia a la muerte de Ramon Ayala. Hemos tenido muchas reuniones durante el transcurso de los últimos tres meses del año, así como un par de visitas al sitio del accidente. Se ha invertido mucho tiempo para entender qué sucedió. Nos reunimos con OSHA y Synergy en el sitio y en el patio de Synergy, y hablamos con el operador de tierra que estaba trabajando con Ayala el día del accidente.

Se estableció un Comité de Trabajo con PG&E y los contratistas de árboles para estudiar algunas de las mejores prácticas de la industria.

Presentamos una queja con Trees Inc. por incorporar a sub-contratistas que no pertenecen al sindicato para ejecutar trabajos de la unidad y CEMA en las propiedades de PG&E.



Keyvi Vega from Utility Tree

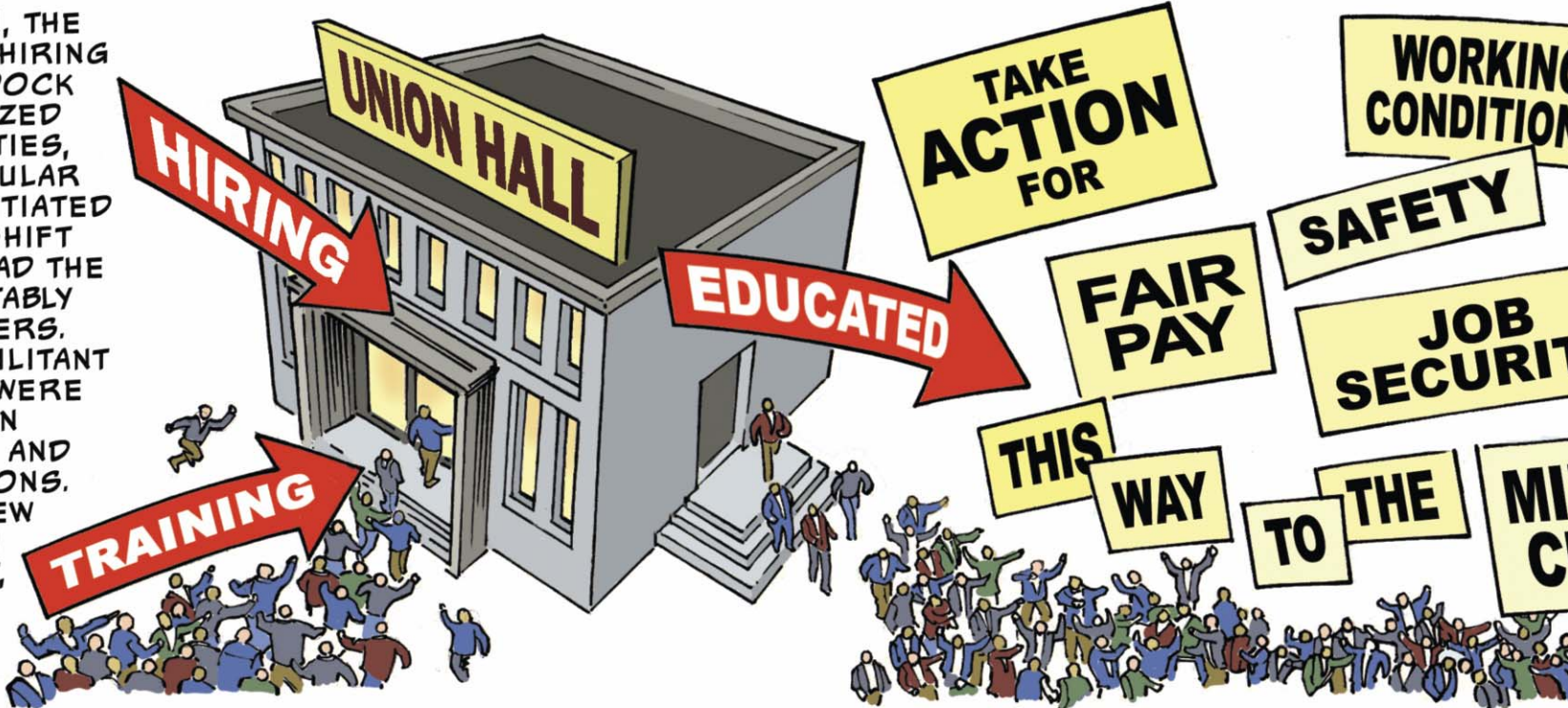
Photos by John Storey

MEET HARRY BRIDGES. HE FOUNDED THE INTERNATIONAL LONGSHORE AND WAREHOUSE UNION (ILWU) BACK IN 1934, AND LED IT UNTIL HE RETIRED IN 1977. HE WAS A SMART AND DETERMINED GUY, AND WHEN HE SAW THAT NEW TECHNOLOGY WAS BRINGING BIG CHANGES TO HIS INDUSTRY, HE TOOK ACTION TO GET HIS MEMBERS...

# A SHARP

IN THE 1930S, WORKING CONDITIONS ON THE DOCKS WERE TOUGH. THE ECONOMY WAS IN RUINS AND THE BOSSES CALLED ALL THE SHOTS. WORKERS HAD TO REQUEST WORK DAILY, AND WORK DAYS COULD LAST 36 HOURS OR MORE. TO KEEP CONTROL OVER THE WORKERS, THE BOSSES CREATED A COMPANY-RUN "UNION" AND REQUIRED WORKERS TO CARRY "BLUE BOOKS," WHICH THE WORKERS REFERRED TO AS FINK BOOKS.

FOR A GENERATION, THE UNION MANAGED THE HIRING AND TRAINING OF DOCK WORKERS, EQUALIZED WORK OPPORTUNITIES, FORMALIZED A REGULAR WORKFORCE, AND INITIATED A 6-HOUR WORK SHIFT WHICH HELPED SPREAD THE WORK MORE EQUITABLY AMONG THE WORKERS. THE UNION AND ITS MILITANT WORK STOPPAGES WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN IMPROVING WAGES AND WORKING CONDITIONS. BUT WHEN THE NEW MACHINES, SUCH AS THE FORKLIFT, CAME TO THE DOCKS, EVERYTHING CHANGED.



IN THE LATE 1950S, DELEGATES FROM ALL OF THE LONGSHORE LOCALS MET TO DEBATE THE MERITS OF EACH APPROACH AND EVENTUALLY CONCLUDED THAT THEIR GUERRILLA RESISTANCE WOULD NEVER BE ABLE TO STAVE OFF THE TECHNOLOGY. THEY CAME UP WITH A NEW MECHANIZATION AND MODERNIZATION AGREEMENT WHICH ALLOWED THE EMPLOYERS TO INCORPORATE NEW MACHINERY INTO THE WORKPLACE AND CHANGE WORK RULES ACCORDINGLY. IN EXCHANGE THE UNION WOULD SECURE FINANCIAL COMPENSATION FOR WORKERS WHO WERE DISPLACED BY THE MACHINES, AND ENSURE THAT THE JOBS THAT REMAINED WERE BETTER, SAFER, AND HIGHER-PAYING.



# RE of the MACHINE!



IN 1933 A GROUP OF LONGSHORE WORKERS DECIDED THEY'D HAD ENOUGH. THEY WALKED OFF THE JOB IN SAN FRANCISCO AND DESTROYED THEIR FINK BOOKS IN PROTEST.

SOON ALL THE PORTS ON THE WEST COAST WERE INVOLVED IN A LONG, BRUTAL STRIKE. IT ENDED WITH A FEDERAL SETTLEMENT THAT GAVE ILWU THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE THE DOCKS ON THE WEST COAST.

FOR LONGSHOREMEN, THE MECHANIZATION OF THEIR INDUSTRY WAS A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD. FORKLIFTS DID THE HEAVY LIFTING AND MADE JOBS SAFER, BUT THEY ALSO REPLACED MANY OF THEM ALTOGETHER.



THE UNION WAS AT A CROSSROADS. WHILE BRIDGES RECOGNIZED THAT THERE WAS NO WAY TO STOP THIS NEW TECHNOLOGY, MANY MEMBERS OF THE ILWU WANTED TO TRY AND FIGHT OFF THE MECHANIZATION. THEY STILL BELIEVED MILITANT WORK STOPPAGES WERE THE BEST APPROACH, BUT BRIDGES HAD A MORE FORWARD-THINKING PERSPECTIVE-- HE KNEW THOSE MACHINES WERE HERE TO STAY, AND HE THOUGHT THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION WAS TO NEGOTIATE A SETTLEMENT FOR HIS MEMBERS--A "SHARE OF THE MACHINE."

## MECHANIZATION & MODERNIZATION AGREEMENT OF 1960

IN THE WINTER OF 1960, WORKERS VOTED TO APPROVE THE REVOLUTIONARY AGREEMENT BY A MARGIN OF 2-TO-1. THE DEAL SPARKED CONTROVERSY-- SOME SAID THE UNION MEMBERS GOT TOO MUCH, WHILE OTHERS BELIEVED THEY SHOULD HAVE FOUGHT FOR MORE. REGARDLESS, BRIDGES SAW THERE WAS NO STOPPING THE MACHINES, AND TOOK THE FIGHT TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE TO DO ALL HE COULD TO PROTECT HIS MEMBERS' LIVELIHOODS.

RIGHT NOW, IBEW 1245 IS FACING A SIMILAR SITUATION. NEW TECHNOLOGIES--SUCH AS SMART METERS, DRONES, DISTRIBUTED ENERGY RESOURCES, LOAD PUSHING TECHNOLOGY, COMPUTERS AND WEB APPS--ARE ALREADY CHANGING THE FACE OF OUR WORK AND THERE IS CLEARLY NO STOPPING IT. WE'D BE WELL ADVISED TO STUDY WHAT BRIDGES AND THE ILWU DID, AND MAKE THE MOST OF OUR NEGOTIATING POWER.



**I'M STAYING IBEW STRONG**

# IBEW 1245's Public Sector Organizing Campaign

**BUILDING LEADERSHIP AND CAPACITY**

On Feb. 26, 2018 the US Supreme Court (SCOTUS) is expected to hear oral arguments on *Janus v. AFSCME* — a legal case that threatens to eliminate the right of unions to collect “fair share fees” in the public sector. The CEOs and powerful moneyed interests backing the case have one goal — to weaken unions and the Labor Movement so that they can get even richer at the expense of working families. The notoriously anti-union governor of Wisconsin put it succinctly when he said their intention is to “divide and conquer.”

The predictions are bleak, as both legal and labor experts believe that SCOTUS is poised to rule against working families in this case. Make no mistake — *Janus* is just one part of a concerted and far-reaching scheme to take away our ability to stand together for a voice at work and a better way of life. The corporate special interests are attacking our rights and our union so they can cut themselves an even bigger slice of the pie, and leave us with just the crumbs. We must fight back.

## Building Power Through Member Engagement

In anticipation of the SCOTUS decision in 2018, IBEW 1245 launched a

twelve-month internal organizing drive, with the goal of reaching all of our 2,500+ public sector members employed at 34 public sector employers. The centerpiece of the plan revolves around the development of Volunteer Organizing Committees (VOC) at every employer. The VOCs are comprised of member-leaders who have committed to holding one-on-one, face-to-face conversations with their co-workers, sharing their stories about the concrete difference that the union makes in their lives, and inviting their fellow members to re-commit to the union by signing voluntary membership cards.

Over the past six months, IBEW 1245 business representatives, organizers and VOC members have identified and trained more than 153 leaders at 22 of our public sector properties, and the results have been nothing short of phenomenal. VOC members have completed one-on-one conversations and card signing drives at 11 public sector employers, and as of this writing, outreach is nearly complete at 11 additional properties. The City of Lodi, the City of Lompoc, Merced Irrigation District, and Sacramento Regional Transit are among the properties that have completed the drive, and all succeeded in getting 93% or more of the members to re-sign with the union. Some properties actually

achieved 100%! To date, we've engaged 76% of our membership, and are on pace to re-sign over 90% of our current membership in the public sector. We have also distributed over 2,000 “I'm in!” t-shirts and 3,000 stickers so the members can proudly show how they feel about the union.

## Talking About the Union Difference

**“A career with excellent benefits and retirement”**

**“The union saved my life because of the healthcare plan”**

**“Because of my membership in my 1245 union, I'm able to have the opportunity and security to provide for my wife and kids”**

**“My rep and co-workers saved my job when I was falsely accused”**

**“I value the brotherhood”**

These are just a few of the many union-made differences that Local 1245 members have personally articulated during the course of the campaign.

members each took assignments, began holding conversations with their co-workers, and tracked their progress. To date, our Redding VOC members have held more than 200 one-on-one conversations (89% of the active workforce), resulting in 188 (94%) who have signed the new cards. With fewer than 25 conversations to go, we aim to complete the effort in Redding before their February unit meeting.

At Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) the organizing drive has gained tremendous traction, thanks to the work of organizing stewards and VOC leaders Kim Camatti, Eli Escamilla, Larry Gonzalez and Justin Hirschi, along with the 51-member VOC. Camatti, a



The VOC from Merced Irrigation District with Business Rep Sheila Lawton



The VOC at Sacramento Regional Transit (SRT), with IBEW 1245 Business Manager Tom Dalzell, Business Rep Sheila Lawton, and Organizers Eileen Purcell, Steve Gallow and Fred Ross

While these individual stories are at the core of our engagement effort, perhaps the most powerful display of the union difference came from SMUD VOC member Kim Camatti, who held up the 16-page pocket-sized SMUD contract from 1970, and compared it to the 120-page contract from 2017 — a visual depiction of the rights that they've won over 47 years of bargaining. Members, especially from the line department, were enthralled by the 1970 contract, and the contrast between then and now was incredibly compelling. The VOC at SMUD found this display so useful that they asked the union for an extra 100 copies of the little 1970 contract to share with co-workers.

“The most effective message with co-workers has been laying out all the benefits we get through the union — the right to organize/collective bargaining, double time, sick leave, rest period, pension, employer paid 401k, etc, and explaining the difference in doubletime-pay compared to time-and-a-half-pay work. One day alone is enough to pay for all those benefits... and it's tax deductible,” said Justin Hirschi, a journeyman lineman and VOC member from SMUD.

“We've focused on member unity, what we have in common and what we stand to lose,” added Camatti.

## Case Studies

Our 20-member VOC at the City of Redding is a case in point. Together with the members, our organizing team developed a detailed departmental map and converted it to wall charts. The VOC

materials/warehouse specialist, spearheaded the drive after attending two trainings sponsored by the union. Escamilla, Gonzalez and Hirschi, all experienced journeymen linemen, joined with Camatti and have galvanized their peers through one-on-one conversations. SMUD is IBEW 1245's largest public property, with 553 members. As of this writing, 76% of our SMUD members have re-signed as voluntary dues-paying members. Camatti and Escamilla joined IBEW 1245 Staff Organizer Rene Cruz Martinez to share our organizing model and experience with 550 delegates at the annual Electrical Workers' Minority Caucus (EWMC) in Detroit, Michigan in January of 2018.

On January 9, we held our third VOC meeting at the Modesto Irrigation District, following their monthly Unit Meeting. We provided updates and shared wall charts which listed all of the MID members' names alphabetically. The VOC members identified each of their co-workers' departments, and took assignments, logging them on the wall charts and their personal tracker. They kicked off the campaign by filling out and submitting their own cards. They reached more than a third of their members in just the first 48 hours, with 90 cards signed and returned right off the bat!

## Tough Questions

While the results of the one-on-one conversations have been outstanding, the VOC members have certainly encountered more than a few tough ques-

tions — not the least of which is “What has the union done for me lately?”

“How about the negotiated benefits we’ve received over the past 40 years?” Camatti said. “Hot meals, paid rest periods and something as simple as decent work gloves, apprenticeship programs, safety trainings and more.”

“[The union] has helped give us raises, better health benefits, representation when work issues arise, and a safer place to work,” noted Escamilla.

For Karri Daves, the lead VOC member at Modesto Irrigation District, the answer is simple. “Look at our new five-year contract with 3% wage increases, double-time and no take-aways on our

medical or retirement; we just voted it!”

At the City of Redding, a member expressed frustration with the fact that “The union takes my dues and tells me to vote for some candidates I don’t like.” Electric Substation Foreman and VOC member Jeff Torres responded, “[The Union] always looks to support the most labor-friendly candidates. If you don’t like the candidates for other reasons, then vote your conscience.”



The VOC from SMUD attended a training at Weakley Hall in 2017.



IBEW 1245 Organizing Steward Kim Camatti and Staff Organizer Rene Cruz Martinez presenting our Public Sector Campaign at EVMC.

## Reaping the Rewards, Strengthening the Brotherhood

One of the direct outcomes of the organizing drive has been identifying new “spark plugs” within our membership, and inviting them to take leadership roles. In the process, members have dug into their union history, lifted up their own stories, rediscovered the camaraderie of the brotherhood and stretched themselves to take on tasks they never thought they were capable of.

“We’re giving members the chance

to take ownership of their union,” declared veteran IBEW 1245 Organizer Fred Ross.

When asked what the best part of the campaign has been for her, Camatti replied, “Realizing how much of an IBEW brotherhood there really is here at SMUD. Watching our Volunteer Organizing Committee members (who are ALL field employees) step-up in helping to get 553 employee signatures as volunteer dues-paying members ... And having the opportunity in helping create a more impactful IBEW presence of our unity onsite.”

VOC member and journeyman lineman Hirschi declared, “So many of our former union brothers/sisters have lived and died to create all the rights we enjoy today. Thank you for giving me

the opportunity to stand united with my union brothers and sisters to help fight to maintain those rights!”

Our work has garnered the attention of others outside of our local as well.

In addition to presenting our organizing model to the EVMC, IBEW 1245 organizers and lead VOC members have shared it with the Alameda Central Labor Council, the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, the Northern Valley Labor Federation, the California Labor Federation, and SEIU Local 2015. We have also been contacted by many more local unions and labor councils. In mid-February, we will meet with the leadership of IBEW’s 9<sup>th</sup> district to share our strategy and results.

— Eileen Purcell, IBEW 1245 Staff Organizer

### As of Jan. 21, 2018, the following properties have completed their one-on-one conversations and cards:

1. **City of Lodi:** 36 of 37 (97%) VOC = 4
2. **City of Lompoc:** 151 of 161 (94%) VOC = 18
3. **TDPUD:** 47 of 49 (96%) VOC = 2
4. **Lassen MUD:** 23 of 23 (100%) VOC = 2
5. **SRT:** 186 of 195 (95%) VOC = 16
6. **City of Oakland:** 19 of 19 (100%) VOC = 1
7. **Merced Irrigation District:** 81 of 87 (93%) VOC = 11
8. **City of Willits:** 4 of 6 (67%)
9. **Shelter Cove:** 8 of 8 (100%)
10. **City of Ukiah:** 13 of 13 (100%)
11. **City of Berkeley:** 8 of 9 (88%) VOC = 1

### The following properties are still in the process of completing their outreach. Here are their results to date:

1. **City of Redding:** 200 out of 224 (89%) VOC = 21
2. **City of Healdsburg:** 33 of 57 (58%) VOC = 8
3. **SMUD:** 420 of 553 (76%) VOC = 51
4. **City of Alameda:** 15 of 24 (62%)
5. **AC Transit:** 27 of 29 (93%)
6. **Port of Oakland:** 17 of 36 (47%) VOC = 2

### The following properties recently launched or will be kicking off their efforts in early 2018:

1. **City of Santa Clara:** began on Jan. 3, 2018. VOC = 6
2. **City of Vallejo & GVRD:** VOC = 10
3. **NCPA:** still building their VOC
4. **Modesto Irrigation District:** 116 of 255 (45%) VOC = 19+
5. **City of Roseville:** Still building their VOC

— Eileen Purcell, IBEW 1245 Staff Organizer



City of Redding VOC with Business Rep Charley Souders



VOC members at Modesto Irrigation District sign up for assignments.

# UNION TIME

## The 2018 class of organizing stewards gears up for the fights ahead

Organizing is the lifeblood of the union movement. It is through organizing that our union was born. It was organizing that enabled us to negotiate our earliest contracts, not to mention all of the subsequent gains we've made at the bargaining table ever since. It is organizing that gives us our collective power, and organizing will be what sustains and strengthens our union for years to come.

Nowadays, IBEW Local 1245 has become synonymous with organizing, thanks in large part to our extraordinary and dynamic Organizing Steward program. This relatively new program has cemented Local 1245's place as one of the most effective organizing locals in the Labor Movement, both locally as well as nationally. The program empowers rank-and-file members to get involved in issues and campaigns that truly matter to working families, enables them to hone their leadership capabilities, and equips them with the tools and skills they need to fight – and win – for workers.

At the dawn of this decade, IBEW Local 1245's Organizing Steward program was little more than a pipe dream in the mind of Local 1245 Business Manager Tom Dalzell. It grew out of the NV Energy fight led by retirees, as well as the PG&E clerical contract fight in 2009



Photo by Marissa Nagore



Photo by John Storey

and 2010. With the vision of Dalzell, the enthusiastic endorsement of the Local 1245 Executive Board and the talent of veteran organizers Fred Ross and Eileen Purcell, the Organizing Steward program was born. It was tailored as a hands-on, intergenerational leadership development program that placed stewards in live campaigns. The first Class of 28 organizing stewards was inducted in 2014. Over the past five years, the program has exploded in both size and reach, and on January 26, 2018, Local 1245 welcomed a whopping 111 Organizing Stewards — our largest class to date — to Weakley Hall for the annual kick-off and orientation.

Approximately half of this year's class are newcomers to the program. Many of the first-year stewards, like Cinnamon "Cindy" Stafford, were recruited into the program by other organizing stewards who see their potential as future leaders.

"I've been with the company for 17 years, but I never really knew about the union and what it actually does for the employees before," said Stafford, who works in PG&E's credit department in Stockton. "I'm just now realizing what the union does for me. For instance, when I would get a raise, I used to think the company just gave it to me — I didn't realize that all our raises are all because the union negotiates for them. When you aren't that involved with the union, then you don't know this stuff, until someone sits down next to you and starts explaining it to you. I'm sure there are others just like me who just don't know, and I hope that, as an organizing steward, I can help educate them."

Felicia Martinez is another first-year organizing steward. In 2017, as a prospective organizing steward, she worked on a union organizing campaign at San Diego Gas & Electric, and found the experience to be both empowering and inspiring.

"I'm excited for the opportunity to become more involved in the union, and to help others get the same rights and benefits that I have," said Martinez. "I've had a union job my whole adult life, and it's given me so much — it's allowed me to provide not just for my child, but also



Business Manager Tom Dalzell

Photo by John Storey

for my own mom and my two brothers. I know I have it pretty good, and I just want to pay it forward and continue to help others, and know that I made a difference in their lives."

In what has become a tradition, the organizing steward orientation kicked off with a rousing sing-a-long, led by Staff Organizer Eileen Purcell on the accordion, Local 1245 retiree Jim Lappin on banjo and musician Francisco Herrera on the guitar.

Local 1245 Business Manager Tom Dalzell welcomed the packed house of stewards with some words of gratitude and motivation.

"[The Organizing Steward program] has changed the character and culture of this union. We have made it much more powerful, and we have become an example for other unions. I can't go anywhere in the United States without people asking about this program," Dalzell told the stewards. "We're facing some of the toughest fights we've ever faced, but

now we have this powerful weapon that was not in our arsenal before. I couldn't be prouder. Thank you for all of the work you do!"

The first activity allowed the stewards to get to know one another. They broke out into groups, introduced themselves, shared their personal stories and talked about some of the concrete differences the union has made in their lives.

"I value the stability that we have. I was in and out of different jobs my whole life until I got in with the union," said Mark Goodwin. "And I like the solidarity, the whole feeling of working people standing together."

"The union has changed my life. It's been really eye-opening for me," said Alvin Dayoan. "I appreciate that the union gives us job security and great benefits, and also the right to have a voice and organize!"

"Before I started working at PG&E, I didn't really like unions," said Georgette Carrillo, who has been part of the Orga-



The 2018 organizing stewards

Photo by John Storey

nizing Steward program since its inception. “But once I got a good union job, I was like, ‘Who wouldn’t want this? It’s great!’”

After the initial ice breaker, the group got right down to brass tacks. Staff Organizers Fred Ross, Eileen Purcell and Rene Cruz Martinez discussed the goals and some of the important campaigns that the organizing stewards will be tasked with in 2018, including building power in the public sector, and working to elect more worker-friendly candidates to office in this key election year. IBEW International Lead Organizer Rick Thompson shared the details of some new worksites that we hope to bring in to the IBEW, and called on the stewards for their support to grow our union’s ranks this year.

The stewards had the unique opportunity to screen a powerful film called “Union Time,” which tells the story of

the lengthy, contentious and often violent fight for worker justice and union representation at Smithfield Foods, a massive meat processing facility in North Carolina. The workers fought for more than a decade to win union representation in the face of an extremely hostile employer — but with the right organizing tactics and a dedicated team of member-leaders, they ultimately prevailed and won their union in 2008.

The next breakout session focused on the importance of having one-on-one conversations with other union members at work, to help them better understand the value of the union and the importance of getting involved. Eighty-three of the organizing stewards committed to recruit and bring one non-steward to the February 24th training on Janus and attacks on Labor Movement. Altogether, 165 members will be giving up a Saturday to build a stronger union.

At the end of the day, the stewards broke out into groups by region, and discussed activities, approaches and tactics to increase member engagement within their specific areas. Each steward left with a sense of purpose, a better understanding of the critical nature of the union movement, and an assignment to

begin their important work right away. “We don’t just talk about it. We learn by doing,” said longtime Organizer Fred Ross. “That’s the underpinning of this program, and that’s what solidarity is all about.”

— Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245  
Communications Director

*Before I started working at PG&E, I didn’t really like unions. But once I got a good union job, I was like, ‘Who wouldn’t want this? It’s great!’ —Georgette Carrillo*



Photo by Nilda Garcia



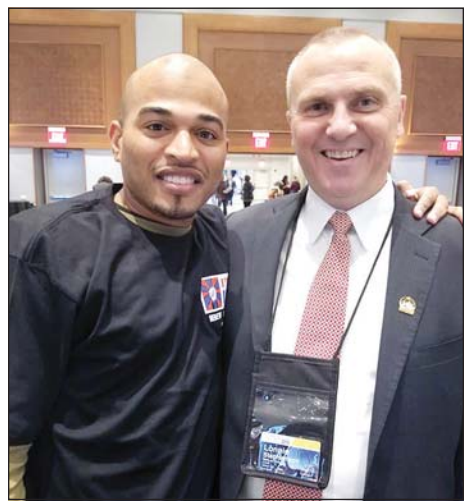
## Highlights from the 28th Annual EWMC Conference

IBEW's Electrical Workers Minority Caucus (EWMC) held its 28th annual conference on Jan. 10-14, 2018 in Detroit, MI. This year's theme was *Transforming the Dream to Reality: Achieving Political, Economic, Racial and Social Justice*.

More than 550 IBEW delegates from across the United States and Canada attended this year's conference. Local 1245 sent 19 delegates to the conference, including 13 rank-and-file members from both public and private sector employers, 50% of which were first-time attendees.

The week-long event kicked off with a special pre-conference hosted by RE-NEW (Reach Out and Engage Next-Gen Electrical Workers), which unique programming geared specifically towards younger members.

"We had many great speakers at RE-NEW. One that stood out to me was a youth educator who was discussing the importance of educating our youth about the benefits of a union," said Brittney Santana, who works as a first field clerk for PG&E out of Fresno. "She mentioned in her speech that sometimes college isn't for everyone, sometimes kids want to go directly into a career path. This really hit home for me, because I had planned to go to college, but my parents had discussed the importance of finding a union job and encouraged me to apply to PG&E. Luckily, I got the job, just four months out of high school, and have been a part of the IBEW for 10 years now."



Brian Huffman with IBEW International President Lonnie Stephenson

PG&E Customer Service Rep Brian Huffman was also moved by that same speaker.

"I'm one of those individuals who wasn't cut out for college. I wasted a lot of time and money, knowing college wasn't for me," said Huffman. "I want to reach out to the children in the high schools and give them the union option ... working in a trade can be a wonderful choice for their future. I am truly fired up about getting active in the community, not only my community, but other communities in need."

"Having gone to the RENEW conference, I recognize the need to build mem-



Volunteering at the food bank

bership, grow our ranks and create new opportunities," added PG&E Gas Service Rep Joseph Stewart. "The larger our numbers, the farther our reach will be."

The full EWMC conference began on Thursday, Jan. 11 with a Day of Giving. Delegates had the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of community service projects throughout the Detroit area.

"During our Day of Giving, we volunteered at Gleaners Food Bank. Some of our tasks were to bag apples, sort potatoes, and pull inventory of non-perishable items onto pallets to be delivered," said Melissa Echeverria, who works for PG&E out of Fresno. "Over the course of the day, we were able to positively impact thousands of families in Detroit and give back to the community. It felt like such an accomplishment."

"I enjoyed the day of service the most. Giving back to the community leaves such a good feeling in your heart, knowing you left the city a better place than when you got there," added PG&E Customer Service Rep Alyssa Fernandez. "Just knowing that our work helped impact so many families made me feel appreciative of the opportunity to make a difference."

The EWMC delegates also gave back to the Detroit community through direct financial contributions.

"I enjoyed the positive responses from the attending union members that were willing to donate money to a local charity in Detroit," said SMUD Lineman Elias Escamilla. "The money that was donated from all the brothers and sisters attending the conference totaled over \$8,000. Altogether, including the match from EWMC National, we were able to donate over \$17,000. This proves that if we work together, we can make things happen and make a difference."

The EWMC plenary sessions and workshops began the following day. Local 1245 Staff Organizer Rene Cruz Martinez and Organizing Steward Kim Camatti of SMUD addressed the full conference delegation during a plenary session on Right to Work (RTW) and *Janus v. AFSCME*. They reported on the work that IBEW 1245 has been doing with our public-sector members, shared best practices, and emphasized the importance of being proactive in advance of the *Janus* decision by the US



Kim Camatti addressing the EWMC delegates

Supreme Court, which is expected this spring.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to attend this conference and to share my worksite story, showcasing our organizing efforts with the 'Right to Work is Wrong' campaign at my workplace," said Camatti, a materials specialist and leader of the Volunteer Organizing Committee at SMUD. "What I learned most throughout the event was a concrete definition of 'brotherhood.' Even though I've been an IBEW member for many years, this conference and the focus on community service, unity and coming together for the common good — regardless of title, age, gender, etc. — really showed me what 'brotherhood' truly means."

On the final day of the conference, delegates had the opportunity to attend multiple workshops on a wide variety of topics.

"At the Labor Law workshop, it was interesting to learn how the National Labor Relations Act came about," said Nilda Garcia, who works for PG&E in Sacramento. "The class got to participate in an exercise with the instructor, Attorney Gayle Hamilton, a professor at Wayne State University. We went over scenarios of protected, unprotected or illegal issues, and she helped us better understand the differences. This was important info for me to take back and use to educate my peers."

"The second workshop that I was able to attend was my favorite; 'The Power of Our Personal Stories,'" said Stewart. "We first established a common ground; what we all want out of our professional

lives to help make us happy. Once we agreed that everyone wants the same thing — ability to take care of family, be loved, accepted and prosperous — we were able to share why being in a union helped further that goal. We then discussed why our work with IBEW organizing has had such a strong and lasting impact on us, and were asked to tell a personal story that defined the point we started to feel so passionately about it. [At first] I did not know what the speaker meant by, 'the POWER in our personal stories' but I understand now. The stories from my union brothers and sisters were POWERFUL! I feel I am a better person, employee, and union member having been able to attend this workshop."

Our delegates traveled back home on Sunday, filled with a renewed sense of purpose.

"This conference gave me hope, it inspired me, it energized me! To be in a room full of 600 other delegates who are just as passionate and determined about growing and caring for our union as I am made me want to cry," said Fernandez.

"With an overwhelming number of eloquently spoken speakers and informative workshops throughout the week, one would think the message from the conference would get convoluted, but it didn't," said David Ly, who works at PG&E's San Jose call center. "The message was clear. I now understand the mission of EWMC. We must unite, inform our members, educate them about the benefits of unionized labor, and promote minority representation. All of this starts at the local level."

"This conference opened my eyes to the incredible strides we are taking to make the IBEW all-inclusive to gender, race, sexual orientation, and people with disabilities," said PG&E Customer Service Rep Ashley Nelson Finley. "I feel so energized and ready to share all that I have learned with my fellow brothers and sisters. 2018 is such an important year, and I feel that this conference was just what I needed to get me 'fired up and ready to go!'"

*Rene Cruz Martinez contributed to this report.*



The delegation from Local 1245



# Retirees' Corner



## Winnemucca Retirees Present Donation to Humboldt County Senior Center

On Jan. 17, 2018, the Winnemucca Battle Mountain IBEW Retirees Club presented a donation to the Humboldt County Senior Center. Retirees Club Treasurer Michael Dean presented the check to Senior Center Board Treasurer Charlie Beringer.



## Winnemucca Retirees Support Vietnam Vets

Members of the IBEW Local 1245 Winnemucca Retirees Club presented a donation to the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) Post #744 in Winnemucca, NV to help the post further its mission in support of Vietnam Veterans. Winnemucca Retirees Club Treasurer Michael Dean presented the check to Post President Denny Parquette. Local 1245 retiree Jack Pardick is holding the IBEW banner on the left.

— Thomas "T" Bird, IBEW 1245 Retirees Club

## My Best Friend

*Was the poles climbed, she said today,  
The tenacity, drive and overtime pay,  
That put us in the state we're in,  
I must take exception to that my friend.  
Friend being that wonderful wife,  
Who propped me up all of my life.  
Like others I've heard say as well,  
Without her I would have just a ticket to hell.  
She wrapped me up in layers of love,  
Gave me kisses and encouraging shoves,  
Knowing best for the ones we serve,  
Always healing and settling our nerve.  
Was about the bag, the tools and trade!  
Warm spot in the cab, place in the shade!  
But she was working the Homefront too!  
Twisting hair, hauling children to school!  
Paying bills with incredible wit,  
Filling plates and settling fits!  
All that stuff counted as well,  
To keep us from the grip of hell.  
49 years pretty soon then,  
I was overrated thanks to my friend!*

Dedicated to my best friend!

— Mike Cottrell, IBEW 1245 Executive Board member

## Congratulations newly-retired members

The Local 1245 Retirees Club congratulates these recently-retired members of the union. We invite you to participate in a Retiree Club chapter in Dublin, Cotati, Merced, Reno/Sparks, Yerington, Carson City and Winnemucca. If you don't have a chapter nearby, call the union at 707-452-2718 and find out how you can help start one!

Airey, Ronald 49 years Aptos, CA	Hong, Darrell 25 years San Francisco, CA	Merrida, Bryan 34 years Woodland, CA	Ramsey, Allan 31 years Corvallis, Montana
Azevedo, John 34 years Morro Bay, CA	Hopper, Doug 46 years Oroville, CA	Mumphrey, Valerie 36 years Campbell, CA	Ricardy, Richard 44 years Yuba City, CA
Barba, Alberto 28 years Watsonville, CA	Hubbard, James 7 years Shady Cove, OR	Naito, Patricia 11 years Honolulu, HI	San Pedro, Susan 11 years Daly City, CA
Baxter, Richard 13 years Martinez, CA	Ihle, Jim 34 years Paradise, CA	Nelms-O'Connell, Ginger 19 years Selma, CA	Seward, Robert 36 years Mckinleyville, CA
Bell, Rex 39 years Palermo, CA	Javelos, Joan 30 years Mokelumne Hill, CA	Noetzel, Jeffrey 25 years Reno, NV	Shirey, Beverly 32 years Stockton, CA
Cataline, Russell 18 years Cobb, CA	Kazakos, Theodore 37 years Merced, CA	Nowlin, William 19 years San Francisco, CA	Shertenlieb, John 31 years Fresno, CA
Caviness, Patricia 33 years Vallejo, CA	Kehres, Daryl 32 years San Luis Obispo, CA	Noyes, Tim 33 years Petaluma, CA	Sumpter, Elizabeth 4 years Sacramento, CA
Comer, William 42 years Clovis, CA	Knight, James 35 years Atascadero, CA	Oglesby, Daniel 38 years Creston, CA	Tuck, Debra 6 years Spokane, WA
Dasch, Eric 27 years Salem, OR	Lamm, Kathryn 7 years Reedley, CA	Powell, Gary 27 years San Lorenzo, CA	Tuck, James 38 years Spokane, WA
De Leon, Sylvia 44 years Arroyo Grande, CA	Lawson, Douglas 33 years Santa Margarita, CA	Ramirez, Celia 37 years Fresno, CA	Walker, Anthony 25 years Pontotoc, MS
Digirolamo, Phillip 19 years Santa Cruz, CA	Little, James 23 years Paradise, CA	Ramirez, Debora 19 years Sacramento, CA	Weiper, Rodney 37 years Kelseyville, CA
Flores, Cisto 42 years San Mateo, CA	Long, Cheri 15 years Sutter Creek, CA	Ramirez-Appelt, Maria Arlene, 3 years Folsom, California	Woodson, G 47 years Kelseyville, CA
Garrett, Lesley 30 years Rohnert Park, CA	Long, Julia 10 years Los Osos, CA		
Gonzalez, Marcial 31 years Santa Rosa, CA	Loop, Donna 24 years Hopland, CA		
Greer, Mark 16 years Ripon, CA	Lynn, Susan 13 years Stockton, CA		
Hom, Robert 42 years San Francisco, CA	Mercurio, John 35 years NiPomo, CA		

**Congratulations Retirees!**  
**We want you to Stay Connected**

**to IBEW 1245.**



All of the following unit donations to various charitable organizations from October through December 2017 were approved by the IBEW 1245 Executive Board.

**Sacramento Regional Transit Unit #3011** donated \$250 to the Susan G. Komen for the Cure in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness month.

**Sacramento Regional Transit Unit #3011** donated \$250 to MaryHouse c/o Loaves & Fishes.

**Placerville Unit #3813** donated \$500 to the Shriners Hospital for Children in Sacramento.

**SMUD/Wright Tree Unit #4424** also donated \$500 to the Shriners Hospital for Children in Sacramento.

**San Jose/Utility Tree Unit #4713** donated \$500 to the Hollister Tremors Girls Quakes Soccer Team.

**Sacramento/Trees Unit #4717** donated \$250 to the Supreme Athletics Baseball Club in Yuba City.

**Bakersfield/Trees Unit #4724** donated \$250 to the Freedom Middle School Fundraiser for the Girls Volleyball Team.

**Fresno Clerical Unit #1110** donated \$500 to the Fresno Teachers Association for their potential strike.

**Fresno Clerical Unit #1111** donated \$250 to the Central Valley Community Foundation Honor Flight.

**Salinas Unit #1211** donated \$250 to the Monterey Christian School Agriculture Club.

**Stockton Unit #2511** donated \$200 to Saint Mary's Dining Hall and \$200 to San Joaquin Hospice Tree of Lights.

**Reno Unit #3311** donated \$500, along with the request for up to \$350 in matching funds to the Evelyn Mount Christmas Food Drive.

**Roseville Unit #3512** donated \$250 to Bayside Military Outreach and \$250 to Gathering Inn.

**Rocklin Unit #3515** donated \$250 plus \$175 in matching funds to Rocklin Youth Lacrosse Club, and \$250 plus \$175 in matching funds to Child Advocates of Placer County.

## Lompoc Unit Supports Local 1245 Member with Premature Baby in NICU

When IBEW 1245 member Gustavo "Goose" Lopez's baby was born six weeks premature, weighing just three pounds, the doctors told Lopez and his family that the baby would need to stay in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) in Santa Barbara for at least two weeks. "At first, we had no idea how we could afford to drive to Santa Barbara and see our son every day," said Lopez, who works in the Street Division for the City of Lompoc. The drive from Lopez's home to the hospital in Santa Barbara is about 100 miles round trip.

Lopez' father decided to approach the union to see if they might be able to help. Without hesitation, the IBEW 1245 Lompoc Unit used money from the unit's Community Fund to issue Lopez a \$150 gas card, ensuring that the Lopez family would be able to make the drive to see their baby in the NICU.

"Receiving the gas card helped us immensely," said Lopez. "We are extremely grateful and appreciative that the union was able to help us during one of our biggest times of need."

The baby, Lorenzo Robert Lopez, was released from the hospital after two weeks. He is now a healthy eight-month-old with no developmental delays or issues.



Baby Lorenzo Lopez in the NICU



Baby Lorenzo Lopez at eight months  
Photos courtesy of Gustavo Lopez

**Ukiah Unit #3714** donated \$250 to Wil-lits Sober Grad night and \$250 to Willits Senior Citizens Center.

**Watsonville/Davey Tree Unit #4723** donated \$500 to the Everet Alvarez High School Girls' Soccer Team.

**Yerington Retirees Club** donated \$250 to the American Legion Wyatt Post #9.

**Carson City Retirees Club** donated \$250 to the Back-Pack Buddies program of Douglas County.

**North Bay Retirees Club** donated \$250 plus \$175 in matching funds to both the Santa Rosa Neptune Swim Club and the Santa Rosa Stallions Football team.

**Turlock Irrigation District Unit #1126** donated \$250 to Pitman Softball and \$250 to Bikes for Kids.

**Winnemucca Retirees Club** donated \$250 to Senior Citizens of Humboldt and \$250 to Vietnam Veterans of America #744.

**Salinas Unit #1211** donated \$250 to Pajaro Valley Youth Sports.

**Hollister Unit #1219** donated \$500 to the Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation.

**City of Santa Clara Unit #1411** donated \$500 to the Salvation Army of Santa Clara.

**East Bay Clerical Unit #2301** donated \$250 to Eura-Dells Court and \$250 to Oakland Rebels.

**Oakland Physical Unit #2311** donated \$500 to the Alameda County Food Bank.

**Modesto Irrigation District Unit #2518** donated \$500 to the Wilson Elementary School baseball fund.

**Santa Rosa Unit #3712** donated \$250 to Roseland Community Center and \$250 to Santa Rosa Stallions Youth Football.

**Susanville Unit #4012** donated \$250 to Salvation Army and \$250 to Lassen County Toys for Tots.

**Redding/Davey & Utility Tree Unit #4419** donated \$250 to Western Service Workers and \$250 to Good News Rescue Mission.

**South Lake Tahoe Unit #5231** donated \$500 to the Live Violence Free program at the Tahoe Women's Center.

## Local 1245 Members at NV Energy Raise Funds for Evelyn Mount's Holiday Food Drive

In what has become an annual tradition, IBEW Local 1245 members at NV Energy came together over the holidays to support Evelyn Mount's holiday food drive. Mount is well known in the Reno community for her tireless efforts to collect and distribute food for needy families.

Local 1245 member and NV Energy Fleet Mechanic John Wilson has been spearheading the effort for several years, and noted that "the generosity this year was phenomenal." The Local 1245 members raised more than \$4,000, and received an additional \$3,000 from the company, for a grand total of \$7,000. The money

was used to purchase a wide variety of groceries, including turkeys, side dishes and desserts, which were all delivered to

Mount the week before Christmas, enabling her to provide meals for 360 local families in need.



Pictured from left: Jeff Shoemaker, Rachel McManus, David Thieme, Katie Nannini, John Wilson, Dorine Shaner, Evelyn Mount, Carl Shoemaker (retiree), Local 1245 Business Rep Pat Waite and NV Energy Labor Relations Manager Nanette Quitt Photo by Joe Nannini, courtesy of NV Energy

# City of Roseville Members Prepare Care Packages for the Troops

IBEW 1245 members from the City of Roseville supported the Bayside Military Outreach program for the second year in a row by assembling holiday care packages for our deployed troops. Local 1245 Assistant Business Manager

Jennifer Gray joined City of Roseville Unit Officers, including Chair Gary Kidder, Vice Chair Mike Barton and Recording Secretary Brian Boyd, to present Bayside Church with a donation of \$250, to assist with the cost of supplies and postage.



From left: Jennifer Gray, Gary Kidder, Mike Barton, Bayside Military Ministry Leader Shannon Holt, Brian Boyd



Unit Recorder Brian Boyd



Unit Chair Gary Kidder



Vice Chair Mike Barton with his wife Sandy



## Fresno Charity Bowl Raises Money for Local 1245 Members Who Lost Homes in North Bay Fires

On Sunday, Dec. 10, IBEW 1245 members and their families enjoyed an afternoon of bowling at our Ugly Holiday Sweater Charity Bowl in Selma, CA. Over 35 people were in attendance and together, we were able to raise more than \$500 for our Lo-

cal 1245 brothers and sisters who lost their homes in the North Bay fires.

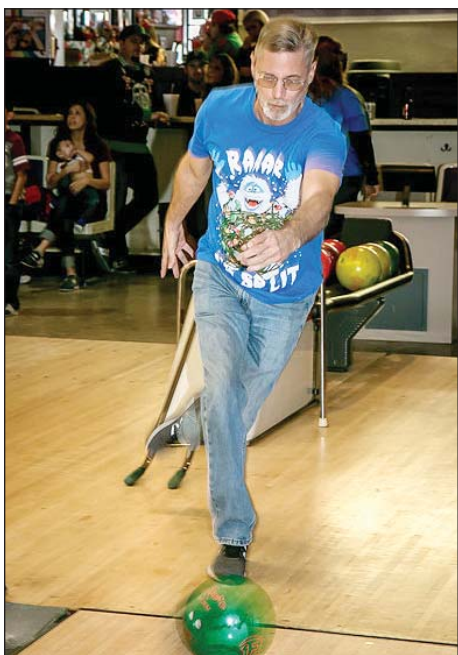
Several lucky bowlers left the event with exciting raffle prizes, including a TV, gift cards, and a spa package. It was a wonderful afternoon of fun and solidarity, and the Fresno Organizing Commit-

tee welcomed the opportunity to come together to help our fellow members who need all the support that they can get this holiday season.

— Ashley Nelson Finley, IBEW 1245 Organizing Steward  
Photos by John Storey



Organizing Stewards Ashley Finley (left) and Que Thompson (right) announced the raffle winners.



# AL SANDOVAL MEMORIAL COMPETITIVE SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST

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

1. The grant will be as follows:

Twenty-five hundred dollars (\$2,500.00) per year, up to four (4) years, as long as a C (2.0) average is maintained and the parent maintains their membership in good standing in Local Union 1245.

2. In order to be a candidate in this contest, you must be a son or daughter, natural, legally adopted or a legal ward of a member of Local Union 1245. You must also be a high school student who has graduated or is graduating in (the year of the contest). **A copy of your diploma or a letter from your high school stating that you will graduate in 2018 must be attached to your scholarship application.**

3. The Scholarship Grant will be made only to that candidate who intends to enroll full-time in any college certified by their State Department of Education and accredited by the Local Accrediting Association.

Responsibility of Scholarship Recipient: Scholarship winner must begin their studies in their next term or, at the very latest, in January of the following year

4. Applications may be secured by addressing the Recording Secretary of Local Union 1245 or by calling the Union Office or by using the form printed in the *Utility Reporter* or downloaded from the Local's website ([www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com))

5. Checks will be paid directly to the college upon presentation of tuition bills to the Local Union.

6. All applications shall be accompanied with a written essay, not to exceed five hundred (500) words, on the subject designated by the Executive Board.

7. Essays should be submitted on 8 1/2" x 11" paper, on one side, preferably typed and doubled spaced with applicant's written signature at the conclusion of the essay.

8. **Applications and essays must be mailed to I.B.E.W., Local Union 1245, P.O. Box 2547, Vacaville, California 95696, by REGISTERED CERTIFIED MAIL ONLY, and be post-marked no later than the first Monday in March of each year.**

9. Each year the scholarship shall be presented at the Advisory Council meeting in April; the Judge and a guest and the recipient and parents shall be invited, at Local Union expense, to present and receive the Scholarship Award.

A suitable trophy or plaque shall be purchased by the Local Union to be presented to the scholarship recipient.

**NOTE: The topic for the 2018 Al Sandoval Memorial Competitive Scholarship essay is: "Why is the right wing in America determined to destroy all trade unions?"**

## APPLICATION FOR THE AL SANDOVAL MEMORIAL COMPETITIVE SCHOLARSHIP

Sponsored by

**LOCAL UNION 1245**  
**INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS, AFL-CIO**  
P.O. Box 2547 • Vacaville, CA 95696 • Telephone: (707) 452-2718

I hereby make application to enter the Competitive Scholarship Contest sponsored by Local Union 1245, I.B.E.W., AFL-CIO:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last) (First) (Initial)

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Name of Parent \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Work Location \_\_\_\_\_

I graduated or will graduate from \_\_\_\_\_ High School

Which is located at \_\_\_\_\_

I expect to attend \_\_\_\_\_ College or School

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

This is to certify that the above named candidate is currently enrolled as a student at: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ and has or will be graduating \_\_\_\_\_, 2018.  
(School Name) (Month and Year)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Official's signature and position)

This is to certify that I am a member in good standing of Local Union 1245, I.B.E.W. and the Candidate, whose name is signed

to this application is my \_\_\_\_\_ and has or will graduate during the term  
ending \_\_\_\_\_, 2018.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent's Signature and Card No.)

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can earn an Associate Degree with  
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# IBEW 1245 Scholarship Application 2018

Which IBEW 1245 Scholarship are you applying for? (please check one)

Ron T. Weakley (Trade/vocational/line school ) Scholarship  Roger Stalcup (Community College) Scholarship  Survivor's Scholarship  Veteran's Scholarship

## Applicant's Personal Information

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant's Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you (or a family member) hear about the IBEW 1245 Scholarship?: \_\_\_\_\_

## Union Membership Information

Name of current IBEW 1245 member \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to current IBEW 1245 member (son, daughter, grandson, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Current IBEW 1245 member card number \_\_\_\_\_

If you are the surviving family member of a deceased member, please list the IBEW 1245 member's name and approximate dates of their membership in IBEW 1245 and your relationship to that member. \_\_\_\_\_

## Veteran's Information

List information of your service in the Armed Forces of the United States. (include branch, dates of service, any locations of deployment etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Were you honorably discharged? (Please submit copy of your DD214) \_\_\_\_\_

## Educational Background

Name of High School from which you graduated or will graduate: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of High School (City, State): \_\_\_\_\_

Attendance dates at High School (from Month/Year to Month/Year): \_\_\_\_\_

Date (Month/Year) you received or will receive a degree/diploma from High School: \_\_\_\_\_

High School GPA (if it's been many years since you graduated you may just enter "Not Applicable"): \_\_\_\_\_

Have you or will you have attended College for at least one year as of December 2017?: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of College you have or will have attended at least one year as of December 2017. If more than one, list the one you have most recently attended: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of College (City, State): \_\_\_\_\_

Attendance dates at College (from Month/Year to Month/Year): \_\_\_\_\_

Major/Field at College: \_\_\_\_\_

Date (Month/Year) you received your degree/diploma at this College (skip if not applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

If you have attended more than one College, add additional explanation with College names, dates, degrees here: \_\_\_\_\_

College Grade Point Average – Average/Scale (skip if not applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

If you will be entering Graduate school in the Spring of 2018, please provide us with additional information about your college degrees, certifications and work experience (as applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

College Test Scores. I have taken the SAT, ACT or another college test:  
SAT, total score: \_\_\_\_\_ ACT, total score: \_\_\_\_\_ GRE, total score: \_\_\_\_\_

## Certification and Signature

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Utility Reporter

## College and Career Information

In 2018, I plan to attend: \_\_\_\_\_

Intended major: \_\_\_\_\_

1.) First Choice School. List the Name of the School and Location (City and State): \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been accepted at this school?: \_\_\_\_\_

2.) Second Choice School. List the Name of the School and Location (City and State): \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been accepted at this school?: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your anticipated graduation date? (enter month/year e.g. 06/2018): \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly outline your career goals, while addressing the following: Explain why you want to pursue a college education. How will this education contribute towards your immediate and/or long term career plans? \_\_\_\_\_

## Employment, Awards & Activities

**EMPLOYMENT.** Provide information on up to three jobs you have held (include name of employer, your job/title, dates of employment). Describe why these jobs are most important to you. If you do not have any employment to list, enter "Not Applicable" in the Employment #1 section below.

Employment #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Employment #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Employment #3: \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMUNITY SERVICE.** provide information on up to three Community Service projects you have been involved with. Please include a brief description of the project, dates of your involvement and why the project was meaningful to you.

Community Service #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Community Service #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Community Service #3 \_\_\_\_\_

**AWARDS.** Provide information on up to three special honors, awards or certificates you have received (include dates). Describe and explain why each award is especially meaningful to you. If you do not have any awards to list, enter "Not Applicable" in the Award #1 section below.

Awards #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Awards #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Awards #3: \_\_\_\_\_

**ACTIVITIES.** Provide information on up to 5 extracurricular activities (internships, sports, clubs) in which you have participated on a consistent basis. Highlight any leadership positions you have held. (Include dates).

Activity #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity #3: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity #4: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity #5: \_\_\_\_\_

## Letters of Reference

We encourage applicants obtain and submit this letter or reference on their own. However, if your reference requires that the letter remain confidential, you may nominate a reference and have them confidentially submit a letter. Submit letters to IBEW 1245 Scholarship Committee, 30 Orange Tree Circle, Vacaville, CA 95687

By checking this box you certify that the letter was written by a teacher or other adult familiar with your achievements and abilities.

## Scholarship Essay

Please submit an essay of approximately 500 words describing your relationship with the union and the labor movement. In what ways has it personally affected your life and your family's life? Explain why you believe you are a good choice for this IBEW 1245 scholarship.

## Estimated Financial Need

List the total anticipated dollar amount you will need for the year. Include the cost of tuition and expenses such as books, transportation and housing: \_\_\_\_\_

Enter your total household income (estimate) \_\_\_\_\_

Enter total number of people in your household \_\_\_\_\_

Provide any additional information that you believe would be helpful to the Scholarship Committee in assessing your personal or financial need. \_\_\_\_\_

# ADVISORY COUNCIL

Nathan Datus has assumed the Advisory Council seat representing Stockton Division. He was formally sworn in by Local 1245 Vice President Anna Bayless Martinez at the Advisory Council meeting in January.



## Organizing Stewards Inducted

On the heels of a dynamic and inspiring orientation (see pages 22–23), the fifth annual class of organizing stewards was formally inducted at the Advisory Council meeting in January.

Business Manager Tom Dalzell highlighted the key role that the organizing stewards have played in a number of recent critical efforts, including the successful campaign to stave off a precipitous shutdown at Diablo Canyon. He also underscored the positive momentum and notoriety that the program has garnered in recent years. Staff Organizer Rene Cruz Martinez followed up by pointing out the explosive growth that the program has undergone in just a few short years.

“We started with 28 organizing stewards five years ago, last year we had 83, and now we have 111!” Cruz Martinez told the Advisory Council. “These members are stepping up to help on all the fights we are facing. Everyone is

energized and fired up!”

“When I attended my new employee orientation at PG&E six-and-a-half years ago, all I remember is that I was a union member now, I would pay dues and have a contract,” longtime Organizing Steward Nilda Garcia told the Advisory Council. “But the organizing steward program has taught me about the ‘why’ of our dues and our contract. I’ve been educated, energized, and given the tools to go out and motivate others. My union changed my life by empowering me and giving me that spark.”

“Being an organizing steward has been one of my greatest achievements ... it molded me into the person I am today.” added Lead Organizing Steward Laquania “Q” Thompson. “This program has taught me that we have to work hard for what we believe in, and we must continue to fight for what’s right. If we get knocked down, we always get right back up and keep going.”



The Advisory Council conducted a collection for SMUD Substation Cable Splicer Joseph Vaughn, whose daughter recently passed away. His colleague and fellow VOC member Kim Camatti (pictured here, holding the collection bag) spearheaded the collection. The union raised just under \$1,000 for Brother Vaughn and his family.



Nilda Garcia told the Advisory Council what being an organizing steward means to her.



Vice President Anna Bayless Martinez administers the oath to the new class of organizing stewards.

Photos by John Storey

## ***“Share of the Machine” Video Premieres at Advisory Council***

**A**s a follow-up to the unique re-telling of the life of ILWU leader Harry Bridges, which was featured at the last Advisory Council meeting, Local 1245 premiered a new video about Bridges and the ILWU’s Mechanization and Modernization Agreement of 1960. The video, which is based on the two-part history series “A Share of the Machine,” offers an insightful look at how the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) addressed new technology and mechanization which threatened their members’ jobs in the decades following the Great Depression.

“One of the biggest issues we are facing as a union is the accelerated growth of technology replacing jobs ... whether it be applications replacing clerical workers, or artificial intelligence that may be replacing operators, or robotics in all lines of work. In deciding how to respond to this issue, we started looking to history, and the example that stood out for us was from Harry Bridges and the ILWU,” Business Manager Tom Dalzell told the Advisory Council as he introduced the video. “In the 1930s and 40s, there were thousands of stevedores unloading ships, but then containerization came along, and by the 1950s, many of those unskilled jobs were being replaced by fewer skilled jobs. As the leader of a militant union, Harry had two choices — try and fight the new technology by shutting down the ports, or do what he can to help the members. Ultimately, he decided to negotiate the best he could for as many people as he could. This video is a capsule of what he did.”

Watch the video at <http://bit.ly/ShareMachine>. Read part two of “A Share of the Machine” on page 32, and check out the comic strip on the same topic on page 18.

## **Jordan Skarda Wins Quarterly Photo Contest**

**L**ocal 1245 member Jordan Skarda is the winner of the quarterly photo contest. Brother Skarda works for PG&E out of Pismo Beach. The unique and eye-catching composition of this image helped him to secure victory and the \$500 cash prize.

All active Local 1245 members in good standing are eligible to enter the contest. Submit high-resolution, work-related photos to [rgb1@ibew1245.com](mailto:rgb1@ibew1245.com). Limit five photo submissions per member, per quarter.



# LONGSHOREMEN IN 1960 FOUND A WAY TO DEFEND THEMSELVES IN AN INDUSTRY BEING TURNED UPSIDE DOWN



A longshoreman handles a load of barrels.



By Eric Wolfe

*All photos courtesy of International Longshoremen and Warehousemen Union.*

## NEW APPROACH TO JOB SECURITY

In April of 1957, the problem of mechanization was taken up by the longshore caucus, a regular meeting of delegates representing all the longshore locals. This caucus was similar in its form and function to the IBEW 1245 Advisory Council (originally called the Policy Committee), which Weakley had created in the early 1950s to provide a strong voice for rank-and-file members.

The longshore caucus decided that the term “mechanization” should be used to describe any change in methods of work that replaced human labor, whether any mechanical devices were involved or not. Research indicated that only a small portion of cargo operations had been mechanized so far, but the trend toward mechanization was clear.

The delegates saw two basic approaches for dealing with the problem. The first was to hold tight and try to keep the maximum number of men on the job, as they had always done before. But the minutes from that 1957 caucus meeting indicated serious doubt among the delegates that such a strategy could work for much longer:

“Realistically, the specific terms and language of the contract hold little

promise of permitting the union to maintain the status quo as an answer to the problem of mechanization.”

In the second approach considered by delegates, the union would agree to modify the working rules and standard gang sizes that got in the way of efficiency improvements. In exchange, the union would seek specific protections for the current workforce, including:

1. Guarantees against speedup of individual longshoremen.
2. Guarantees of safety.
3. Guarantees against layoffs of the basic workforce, meaning those longshoremen who were currently “registered”.
4. No reduction in take-home pay.
5. Shortened work shift.

During three full days of contentious debate, the delegates came to the conclusion that to continue guerrilla resistance through job actions and stonewalling at the bargaining table was “a losing battle.” They believed the general economic climate did not bode well for a prolonged strike over an issue where public support for the workers would be unlikely. Nor were they optimistic

that arbitrators would agree to protect the use of “unnecessary” men—the so-called “witnesses”—which meant that existing grievance process could not be counted on for job security.

Perhaps the most persuasive argument of all was this: Employers had succeeded in making many operating changes in recent years and the workers had nothing to show for their militant resistance. No positive benefits or gains, the delegates concluded, “had accrued to the men from the changes already put into effect by management.”

It was time for a new approach to job security. The delegates at this caucus had glimpsed the broad outlines of such a strategy. But could they convince their fellow longshoremen to embrace it? And could union negotiators actually deliver the goods when they sat down with employers at the bargaining table?

## ECONOMIC SECURITY

When you’ve fought hard for something it can be hard to give it up.

Each of the rules protecting longshoremen on the waterfront served some important purpose when it was

first proposed and fought for. The rules were treasured by the workers because many of them remembered the conditions that had prevailed before, and the struggle involved in winning the rules that changed those conditions. Establishing large gangs, setting a limit on the size of sling loads—these and countless other rules had made difficult work more tolerable. More than that, these rules were living proof that organized longshoremen could be masters of their own destiny, at least as far as their work life was concerned.

But times change. Industries change. In many cases the original need for a particular rule had disappeared with the adoption of other contract provisions, or the rise of new methods for doing longshore work. The rules belonged to a world that was vanishing. But could the men be persuaded to give them up?

Fundamentally, the rules were about protecting job security, or more fundamentally, about protecting the men’s economic security. The union had to find a way to trade in the old rules for some other form of economic security.

The union had two basic arguments why workers should get compensated for mechanization and modernization.

First, the unionized workforce “owned” the traditional work rules, not just in some metaphorical way, but as a vested economic interest that amounted to a property right. If employers wanted to take that “property” back, they needed to pay the workers for it.

Second, it was longshoremen on the ground who provided the muscle for this industry; they were as much a part of it as the bosses. If mechanization was going to enrich the bosses, the longshoremen wanted their “share of the machine.”

In all likelihood, employers would have won this fight to mechanize their indus-

For more on Bridges and the working conditions for longshoremen before and after the MMA, visit <https://youtu.be/Kkbo7svtgp8>



Harry Bridges, with cigarette hanging out of his mouth, and other union leaders at the waterfront.





With the introduction of clamp bridles and the clamp lift jitneys in the hold, discharge of newsprint became faster, easier ... and safer for the longshoremen.

try, whether the longshoremen went along with it or not. But it would have been a long and costly battle. The genius of Harry Bridges was that he offered the employers an attractive alternative to war: Mechanize and profit, but also take care of the workers. Everybody wins.

## MECHANIZATION AND MODERNIZATION

The Mechanization and Modernization Agreement (MMA) was signed in October of 1960. Employers gained the right to put in any new machine or method they wanted, and the right to change existing work rules that limited efficiency. However, safety could not be compromised, there could be no speed-up, and the work could not be "onerous." The grievance process remained in place for the union to enforce these

protections.

The agreement acknowledged that during the "normal cycle of operations" not all men on the clock would be working all the time, but employers would no longer be obliged to pay "witnesses" if their jobs were no longer necessary. The agreement provided a transition period during which, for example, the old sling-load limits would still apply, but would be eliminated for changed operations or where new operations developed.

Besides the continuing protection against speedup and unsafe or onerous work, registered longshoremen got specific economic guarantees, including a trust fund for the exclusive use of longshoremen who were registered at the time the agreement was signed, and a generous early retirement and death benefit contribution, as well as a handsome pay-out for those who worked until normal retirement.

In addition, there was a flat guarantee

against laying off registered men. This provision was made easier by a freeze on registering new men, as well as by new rules that made it easier for registered men to shift from one area to another.

Balloting on the MMA took place in December, with final results announced on January 3, 1961. All but one local supported the agreement. The overall vote was 7,882 in favor, 3,695 opposed.

## A PROVEN WEAPON

The MMA was revolutionary for its time. It was also controversial, but that hasn't stopped other unions, including our own, from adopting elements of Bridges' strategy.

For example: In 1990, IBEW 1245 reversed its long opposition to the use of rubber gloving on energized electric lines at PG&E. The union convened a group of linemen to study the issue. Af-

ter addressing various safety issues, the union allowed the use of rubber gloves. No PG&E linemen on the payroll at that time were required to adopt the new practice, but anyone who did received a pay premium. It was the IBEW 1245 equivalent of getting a "share of the machine," or in this case, a share of the money that the new work practice was going to save the company.

Another example: In 1993, when PG&E was seeking to radically downsize its workforce, IBEW 1245 negotiated voluntary severance and early retirement incentives that helped protect the workforce against forced layoffs as the company restructured. Whether longshoremen in the 1960s or electrical workers in the 1990s, the union is what gave workers the strength to take care of their own in a time of industry restructuring.

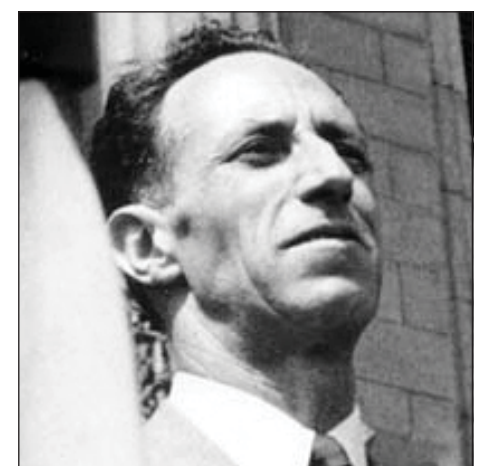
The world of work will continue to undergo profound and rapid transformation. As surely as the longshoremen did 60 years ago, IBEW 1245 members have in their favor a proven weapon for defending their livelihoods: the power of a union.

*Eric Wolfe was communications director for IBEW 1245 from 1990-2016. Robin Walker, Librarian/Archivist for ILWU, provided generous access to the ILWU's document and photo archive for this article.*

Eric Wolfe's history of IBEW 1245, *Fist Full of Lightning*, is available through the union office, or online: <http://bit.ly/FistFullOfLightning>



Harry Bridges speaks to longshoremen at a Labor Day rally in 1947.



Harry Bridges: Protecting the members' livelihoods meant more to him than defending outdated work practices.



Don Creten



Patrick Dinneen



In a rural, mountainous area known as Topaz Ranch Estates in Wellington, NV, a line crew from NV Energy was tasked with upgrading a transformer on the 204 line out of Anaconda substation in Yerington, about 30 miles northeast.

“We’re taking down a CSP [completely self-protected] transformer, which used to be internally fused, and we’re replacing it with a new transformer,” explained NV Energy Line Foreman Aaron Van Winkle. “We’re upgrading it from a 15kva to 25kva and adding some protection, fusing it for troubleshooting purposes later so it’ll be a lot easier. We also upgraded it for multiple services, for load.”

Although transformer replacement is a fairly basic and commonplace task, Van Winkle and his crew recognized that the job, like most that they do, came with its fair share of challenges, from the oncoming traffic to the fact that the line remained energized while they were working.

“You always gotta keep your head in the game,” he said, “whether you’re climbing, setting poles... it all has its risks.”

But Van Winkle appreciates the fact that he has the union to look after his safety and provide him with the necessary training.

“I love the union. I’ve been in for 15 years, and it’s done good for me, provided me a good living, and great training,” said Van Winkle. “When we see people coming here from other places, it makes us realize what 1245 actually does for us.”

*Photos by John Storey*

# Head in the Game

## NV Energy line crew replaces transformer in western Nevada



Aaron Van Winkle



John Durham



Linemen from NV Energy, left to right: John Durham, Jesse Peeler, Don Cretens, Dave Stevens, Aaron Van Winkle, Randy Menesini, and Patrick Dinneen

## Members Unanimously Approve New Agreement at Mt. Wheeler

IBEW 1245 members at Mt. Wheeler Power have unanimously approved a new four-year agreement by a vote of 14-0. The Board of Mt. Wheeler has also approved the agreement, which went into effect on Jan. 1, 2018.

The agreement includes annual wage increases of 2.75% in 2018, 2.5% in 2019, 2.5% in 2020 and 2.25% in 2021. The 401k match will increase by 1% at the start of 2018 and another 1% in 2020. This brings the company contribution to 15%, with an employee contribution of 10%. Additional improvements include an annual boot allowance (previously, it was every three years), and double-time for callouts worked after 10pm (weekends and holidays were already double-time). The employee portion of the medical premium will increase from 11% to 13% in 2018, and to 15% in 2020.

The bargaining committee was comprised of members Mike Venturino and Tandy Haslem.

— Randy Osborn, IBEW 1245 Business Rep



Mt. Wheeler Bargaining Committee members Mike Venturino and Tandy Haslem

## Another Chance to Shut Down Nevada's Bogus "Energy Choice" Initiative

Our Nevada members may remember seeing Question 3 — the measure that opened the door to energy deregulation and massive job loss throughout the state — on the ballot in 2016. It was approved by voters, in no small part because the ballot language vastly oversimplified the sweeping nature of this change. It read, in its entirety:

"Shall Article 1 of the Nevada Constitution be amended to provide by law for the establishment of an open, competitive retail electric energy market that prohibits the granting of monopolies and exclusive franchise for the generation of electricity?"

Who wouldn't vote for that? But Question 3 was the proverbial "Loaded Question," designed to tempt Nevadans into believing they were earning a new Constitutional right by voting yes. Ultimately, its sponsors deceived voters into giving a thumbs up to completely deregulating Nevada's retail and wholesale energy markets — and they offered no information on its devastating impact.

The measure is back for another vote this November, because Nevada law requires changes

*continued on page 36*

## Business Rep Randy Osborn bids farewell to the union

### Took a Licking, Kept on Ticking

After 18 years on staff at IBEW Local 1245, Business Rep Randy Osborn will be retiring from the union this spring.

Osborn started his career as an apprentice pipefitter welder with the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing, Pipefitting and Sprinkler Fitting Industry (more commonly known as the UA). After he topped out of his apprenticeship, he went to work for Sierra Pacific Power (now known as NV Energy). He was assigned to the construction of the Valmy Power Plant, where he worked as a welder. Once construction of the plant was complete, Osborn decided to stay and work at the power plant that he helped build, and was initiated into the IBEW in September of 1985.

Osborn worked for Sierra Pacific for 15 years, and was consistently active in the union, serving as a shop steward, unit chair, and member of the bargaining committee.

"Randy had back-to-back negotiations with Sierra Pacific where the CEO was hell bent on busting local 1245. I can't remember any tougher negotiations in my 37 years with 1245," remarked IBEW 1245 Business Manager Tom Dalzell. "Randy took everything that the CEO and his hired gun negotiator dished out. He was bloodied but unbroken. Our members at Nevada Energy have a strong contract and a strong relationship with the company thanks to the fortitude and courage of a welder from eastern Nevada. He took a licking, but kept on ticking."

Osborn joined the staff of Local 1245 in 2000, and has been serving members throughout the Sierras and on the Nevada side of the union's jurisdiction ever since. His last assignment was geographically enormous — extending from Lassen Municipal Utility District on the western

end, all the way out to Frontier Elko on the eastern side, which is a long seven hour-drive from the union hall in Vacaville. As a result, Osborn has spent quite a bit of time in the car, but despite the extensive travel, he's enjoyed his years with the union immensely.

"I've got a ton of fond memories of fun and good times with the members, especially at BBQs and social events," said Osborn.

Of course, being a business rep isn't all fun and games. Osborn handled his fair share of grievances, including one very unusual one that sticks out in his mind.

"My most memorable grievance was the Viagra grievance," Osborn recalled with a smile. "This was several years ago, after the company had put quantity limits on Viagra in its prescription drug plan. We had one member who filed a grievance because he said that 14 Viagra pills per month wasn't enough. The funniest part was, when it came time to argue the case, his wife showed up at the hearing, instead of him!"

For Osborn, leaving the union is bittersweet.

"I'll miss the people. I've met a lot of good people here. I want to give a special thank-you to [Senior Assistant Business Manager] Ray Thomas — he was instrumental in me coming on staff, he trained me, and he's given me a bunch," said Osborn. "But I'm looking forward to spending more time with my wife and family. I've got fish to catch, and hunts to go on."

— Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245 Communications Director



Randy Osborn

### Ray Thomas pays tribute to the kicker of chairs

I went to work for IBEW 1245 in the Nevada assignment in 1998, and in 1999 I had my first opportunity to work with Randy Osborn on the Sierra Pacific divestiture negotiations. The State of Nevada legislature required that Sierra Pacific Resources either focus their business on the generation of high voltage electricity, or the transmission and distribution of high voltage electricity. Sierra Pacific chose the latter, determining to sell off their three generating facilities at Tracy Clark, Fort Churchill and Valmy.

Along with Randy, employee representatives joining me on 1245's committee were Mark Chidwick, Lee Soukup, John East, John Mauldin, and Grant Garrison.

Prior to the commencement of our 1999 general negotiations for the divestiture sale of these generating facilities, Sierra Pacific Resources HR leadership offered that the divestiture negotiations could more smoothly if we utilized "mutual gains" negotiations practices, rather than the traditional adversarial negotiations process. To that end, the company offered to bring in a professor from Cornell University to teach both the union and company committee members how the mutual gains process works. Local 1245's committee agreed to sit through the three-day training, maintaining our right to return to adversarial negotiations in the event the mutual gains weren't working for us. The company agreed and scheduled the training.

During the training, one main element of mutual gains negotiations stressed by the Cornell professor was for both sides to pare down the number of proposals they presented to one another. Further, the professor was adamant to both committees that the proposals we did present should represent constituent "needs," and not "wants," this way both parties would know what was truly important to the other. To this end, Local 1245's committee reduced our number of proposals in order that we followed the professor's training.

At the first mutual gains negotiations session, Local 1245 presented our pared down proposals, explaining in detail the importance of each. In turn, the company's first proposal, in stark contrast to the training they had just received from the Cornell University professor, was

essentially the elimination of sick leave time off, and the elimination of any accumulated sick leave hours employees had in their sick leave hours bank. This is where things got interesting.

Immediately after the company put its not-so "mutual gains" proposal on the table, Randy Osborn stood up and kicked a chair further than I believed a human possibly could. That chair flew into the wall of the third floor general office building and ricocheted into another chair in the vicinity. Needless to say, we all knew the gig was up, and that the company's committee was not in compliance with the mutual gains concept we had just spent days learning. With Randy's chair kicking exclamation point, the parties returned to traditional bargaining. I would like to note that while we shared his anger and disappointment, most of Local 1245's committee members, including yours truly, were a little taken aback at Randy's assault on the company's office furniture, except for Lee Soukup, who I remember was boasting a satisfied smile on his face during the entire event.

While Local 1245's committee negotiated an excellent agreement with the company, maintaining all our benefits including sick leave and sick leave accrual, we were fortunate that the divestiture never came to fruition. On behalf of Local 1245, Randy and I joined Nevada State AFL-CIO Executive Secretary-Treasurer Danny Thompson in testifying against deregulation in Nevada. Ultimately the Nevada State Legislature made the right decision when they stopped power company deregulation in Nevada.

I recognized Randy as a fighter when I first met him at the Valmy generating facility where he was an IBEW Local 1245 shop steward. I soon learned that he was an intelligent man with strong math skills, and I also heard that he was a "so-so" welder. I appreciated working with Randy, I know he gave his all for the membership, and, at least in one episode, when his keen intelligence didn't prevail, I witnessed him send a chair into flight.

Best of luck in retirement to both Randy and Jan, you've both earned it!

— Ray Thomas, IBEW 1245 Senior Assistant Business Manager

# “The world should have more people like Rich Cowart”

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of former IBEW 1245 Business Rep Rich Cowart at the age of 72. Brother Cowart served on staff at the Local from 2001 until he retired in 2008, representing members in Eureka, Ukiah, Lakeport, Ft. Bragg, NCPA, Shelter Cove and Willits.

Cowart was initiated into the IBEW in 1972, and worked as a troubleman and electric crew foreman for PG&E out of the Concord yard for many years. He was an active shop steward and served on numerous union committees, as well as the union's Advisory Council. Cowart was also instrumental in the development of the union's memorial wall, which was first erected in Walnut Creek in 1997.

“Rich was always willing to volunteer for almost anything the union had going on,” said former Business Manager Jack McNally. “He volunteered for union-sponsored events, picket lines, and demonstrations — including the demonstration in San Francisco on the

lay-offs and the CPUC's restructuring the utilities in California. He was a good man.”

“Rich Cowart was one of those members who always seemed to be around,” recalled former Communications Director Eric Wolfe. “He was really engaged in the mission.

He was very soft-spoken, but he was rock solid whenever he talked about the union. I think he was a true believer in the best sense of the word.”

“He was definitely one of the good guys,” added IBEW 1245 Administrative Assistant Karen Kiley.

“Rich broke me in as green shop steward years ago,” said Local 1245 member Jimmy Lozano, who works for the City of Ukiah. “Always confident, told it like was, wouldn't back down during negotiations and always made himself available for me and the [City of Ukiah Electric Utility] guys.”



“Rich was always there to help with his mental database and numerous local contacts,” said Business Rep JV Macor, who currently represents much of Cowart's former assignment area. “Rich became my go-to contact for history and knowledge regarding NCPA, Ukiah, Wil-

lits and Shelter Cove. My information-gathering sessions were never without eye-opening results and, best of all, no meeting would be without a lineman story or two.”

“Rich's dedication to helping others in the struggle to gain a better work life extended beyond electrical workers. During the 1990s, Rich took personal time off to assist Local 1245 during the Asplundh strike and the Arbor Tree informational picket line in Auburn,” said Business Rep Landis Marttila. “Rich was a very tough guy but he had a very gentle way of interacting with folks. He had a quiet laugh and was a natural leader. The world should have more people like Rich Cowart.”

When he wasn't working or volunteering his time with the union, Cowart enjoyed cooking, mixing cocktails and cruising around in his bright red Crown Victoria. Some of his colleagues jokingly nicknamed him “Fire Marshall Bill” because of that unusual, eye-catching car.

Never one to shy away from helping others, Cowart continued to give back in retirement, serving his local community of Cloverdale in a myriad of ways — as a member of the Board of the Clover-

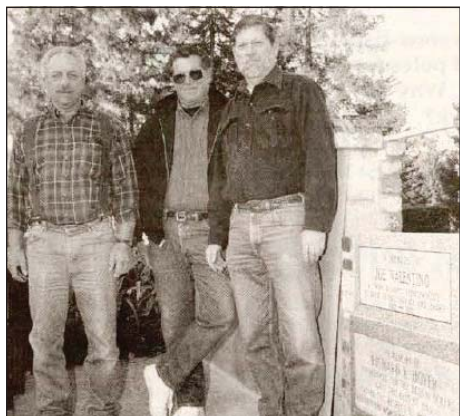
dale Senior Center, working with VITA doing tax preparation for low-income individuals, and serving as a founding member of the Cloverdale Democratic Club. He was recently nominated for Sonoma County's “Jefferson Award” which recognizes local individuals that demonstrate excellence in community leadership and civic engagement.

According to various sources, Cowart was volunteering at his local Senior Center, helping victims of the North Bay firestorm, when he began feeling unwell. He went in to seek medical treatment, and tragically never recovered. He passed away at Healdsburg General Hospital on Oct. 21.

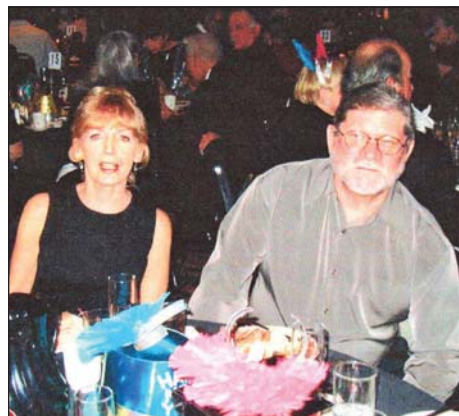
— Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245  
Communications Director



Rich Cowart's union staff photo from 2004



Cowart (far right) at the unveiling of Local 1245's original memorial wall in the late 90s



Cowart with his wife at a New Year's party in 2004

## Nevada's Bogus “Energy Choice” *continued from previous page*

to the state constitution to be passed twice by voters — and for good reason. The so-called “Energy Choice Initiative” will wreak havoc on Nevada's economy by harming small business, killing jobs now and for years to come, undoing important regulations that protect consumers, and undermining our clean energy goals — all in the name of “clean energy” and “choice.”

A closer look reveals dangerous consequences. By promising voters the right to choose their electricity provider “from a competitive retail electric market” and that they “shall not be forced to purchase energy from one provider,” Question 3's sponsors opened the door to any and all energy providers who want to do business in our state. They have no responsibility to serve the public, no responsibility to ensure that all Nevadans are served, no responsibility to charge reasonable rates and no responsibility to make sure your service is reliable.

Perhaps more important for voters to consider is the information Question 3's authors left out. Currently, customers can choose NV Energy, a provider Nevadans know and trust. But if the proposed changes are approved, the system will be flipped: energy providers will choose which customers they serve, instead of

customers choosing their providers. This does not bode well for residential customers, especially those in rural areas, who are generally less preferred than corporate and industrial power consumers.

In addition, without the regulations in place now, there will not be any safeguards for low-income or other vulnerable customers, even if they want to keep their current energy provider. And the initiative left the establishment of any requirements for new providers up to the state legislature.

Question 3 also failed to inform voters about the hundreds of Nevadans who will lose their jobs now and in the future as a result of this measure, including many IBEW members. With new, free-wheeling energy providers dominating the small market, IBEW 1245, which represents NV Energy workers and line contractors in the north, as well as IBEW 396, which represents the workers at Nevada Power, Valley Electric and line contractors in the South, could each immediately lose at least 150 good, middle class jobs with full benefits. Additionally, IBEW members from other locals stand to lose a number of jobs in transmission, substation and distribution work. And a significant portion of jobs filled by workers building natural gas-fired and

renewable geothermal power plants are also at risk, along with the loss of ongoing infrastructure projects for the state. Over the next three to seven years, the measure would strip hundreds of thousands of hours of work from Nevada IBEW members who maintain and build infrastructure projects.

And while the measure claims to support “clean energy,” the constitutional changes would threaten current and future solar projects. As it stands now, IBEW utility locals can build these solar projects, producing energy for Nevadans that comes from Nevada facilities. In fact, NV Energy has already built several of their own solar plants with IBEW manpower, and purchases power from a number of other solar plants that were also built by IBEW members. But if Question 3 is approved this fall, new, shovel-ready solar projects will come to a halt, and future solar projects in the pipeline — and the jobs that come with them — will be in jeopardy.

And that's just the tip of the iceberg. Should this measure pass again in November, it could lower the quality of life for all Nevadans in significant ways, hurting taxpayers and small businesses that depend on reliable and safe energy. Other construction workers will no longer be needed to build the power plants required to ensure adequate elec-

tric supply, cities will lose revenue from franchise fees that NV Energy pays annually, and counties will lose significant revenue from property tax. The loss in revenue to local government could result in a change in staffing levels and significantly reduced service levels, affecting the things we all use, such as roads, parks, libraries and public safety.

Finally, higher power costs for small and medium-sized businesses—which support middle-income jobs in the area—could lead to additional job loss, scaled back work hours, or a combination of both. Higher power costs also mean fewer dollars available for employee salaries and benefits. For residents, this will mean tightening the belt and reducing spending on basic needs like housing, food, health care, and transportation, as well as entertainment and discretionary spending, all of which fuel our local economy.

The good news is we can still stop this damage from happening. When Nevadans go to the polls this November, they have the opportunity to place the public good over the financial interests of new providers that are not bound to serve the public. Voters should vote “No” on the “Energy Choice Initiative” and keep our economy working for all Nevadans.

— Hunter Stern, IBEW 1245  
Business Rep