Regional Transit Employees Strike

At 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 25, 1979 our members employed by Sacramento Regional Transit District went out on strike.

The major issue leading up to the strike action was the District's insistence that certain provisions of the old agreement be reduced or deleted. These include sick leave, seniority, job bidding promotion, and pension rights. Another primary issue in dispute was the District's refusal to agree to negotiate with respect to changes in days and hours of work. Contrary to the statements issued to the media by the District, wages was not a strike issue.

The strike is 100 percent supported by the membership. Our Negotiating Committee, composed of Business Representative Al Sandoval, Ronnie Ridge, Dave Skog, Ned Fox, and Wes Duvall, met with the District over 13 times. The District continually refused to make any positive movement during the sessions. As a result, our members voted to strike on March 30. However, in a final attempt to get the District to bargain in good faith we agreed to extend the agreement on a day-to-day basis. The District's negotiating committee, at meetings held after the strike vote was taken, still refused to make any rational proposals so we went out on strike April 25.

In support of our strike, the bus drivers employed by the District refused to cross our picket lines to return the buses to the parking lots. They parked the buses across the street which forced management personnel to leave their cozy little offices and drive the buses in the lots. The District has since locked the bus drivers out. The bus drivers belong to the Amalgamated Transit Union.

Kevin Baker Wins...

Local 1245’s $2,000 Scholarship Contest

Kevin Baker was selected by Scholarship Contest Judge Ronald T. Weakley as the winner of Local 1245’s 1979 Competitive Scholarship Contest. As the lucky winner, Kevin will receive $2,000 over a four-year period in the amount of $500 a year. The money will be administered by the Local Union.

Kevin will graduate from Oroville High School at the end of the present semester and he plans to attend the University of California in Santa Cruz. Kevin is the 18 year old son of Arlie and Vernamae Baker.

Arlie is a long-time member of Local 1245. He worked for many years as a Lineman at PG&E, and is presently

(Continued on page two)
Kevin Baker Wins...

$2,000 Scholarship Contest

(Continued from page one) working for the Local as a Business Representative. Brother Weakley served as Business Manager of Local 1245 for 20 years prior to accepting his present position with the Labor Department in Washington, D.C. It was indeed a great honor to have him here personally make the scholarship award presentation. The text of Kevin’s essay is printed below:

The U.S. Constitutional Convention And Its Possible Affects on Labor

by Kevin Baker

A constitutional convention directed at amending the constitution to require a balanced federal budget, although a seemingly noble idea, would have disastrous effects especially to the labor movement. The amendment itself would be impossible to enforce and defeat itself with its implication. Such an amendment would also create economic chaos for the worker. In addition, the result of a constitutional convention taking place today could be horrendous and irreversible not only for the worker, but for all Americans.

If a constitutional convention were held in these emotional and anti-establishment areas that impact on our member’s jobs proudly displays a clenched fist radiating solidarity makes us. The I.B.E.W. logo consists of more than bargaining spirit of Brotherhood alive, while continuing to advance the welfare of all of our members. Solidarity. It is a reminder that Unions are born because of a proven need for electricity that symbolizes Unity and the I.B.E.W. logo is proud to be a part of books that range from $2 to $5 in price and promise to give the reader “inside information” on how to qualify for or increase monthly benefits or get taxes back.

The proposed constitutional convention would be neither beneficial nor intelligent to hold. The purpose of such an amendment would defeat itself because it would cause a deficit through an increase in federal expenses. The proposal is not reasonable and to put it into operation would be an exercise in futility.

Consumer Alert

Watch Out for Social Security Scams

There’s a new breed of fast-buck artists about reminiscent of the old-time hucksters peddling worthless snake oil from the back of a wagon. This time the product comes in a book, not a bottle, but it still lures many dollars from the public.

Art Matsuyama, manager of the San Francisco Sutter Street Social Security office, cautioned buyers to be a bit skeptical of books that range from $2 to $5 in price and promise to give the reader “inside information” on how to qualify for or increase monthly benefits or get taxes back.

He explained that the fast-buck promoters have a large audience, most people can obtain the information they need from free publications put out by the Social Security Administration. There are booklets which cover the social security, Medicare and supplemental security income (SSI) programs and special pamphlets which go into detail about specifics in each.

Small quantities of these pamphlets can be obtained without charge by calling the telephone number listed for social security in the telephone directory. The number to call in San Francisco is 959-3000.

The problem is that the information put out is all too often misleading, outdated or just plain incorrect, giving many readers false hopes of benefits that will never materialize.

“Collect social security at any age,” promises one ad that has run countless times in Sunday newspapers throughout the nation. “Find out how your entire family can qualify for benefits,” says another. The statements in themselves are not entirely false because several million families receive monthly benefits, Matsuyama said. However certain very specific conditions of eligibility must be met first; not everyone at any age can qualify as the ads teasingly imply.

Some ads ask such questions as, “Do you need two social security numbers? Or should you apply for benefits?” While the book may answer “no” to both, the readers usually do not learn these obvious answers until they part with their money.

“Not all of these books or pamphlets are useless,” Matsuyama went on, “but it still lures many dollars from the public.”

Kevin Baker Wins...

$2,000 Scholarship Contest

(Continued from page one)
Special Notice

Bylaw Amendment

The Local Union Executive Board has concurred with the following action submitted by Unit 2412 — San Francisco Local Union Bylaws:

MSC that Article X (ten), Section 6, of the Local Union 1245 Bylaws be changed, first sentence only, to read: “The Business Manager and his assistants shall receive mileage when using their own cars for Local Union business at the rate of seventeen cents (17c) per mile, or they shall have a car furnished them by the Local Union.”

Also that Article X (ten), Section 7, third sentence only, to read: “When a member drives his own car, the cost of transportation to him shall be deemed seventeen cents (17c) per mile.”

The June reading of the proposed Bylaw Amendment shall constitute the first reading and the units will vote by secret ballot under Special Order of Business at the July meeting, pursuant to the provisions of Resolution #6.

PG&E Members

General Negotiations Bulletin

It is almost time for our membership employed by Pacific Gas and Electric Company to submit their proposals for 1980 General Contract Negotiations. The Physical and Clerical Agreements will be open for negotiations on wages, hours, and other conditions of employment.

The Benefit Agreement will be open for negotiations on the sole subject of adjustments applicable to employees receiving Long Term Disability Benefits.

Our members employed by PG&E are hereby requested to submit their proposals for contract changes at the June and July Unit Meetings.

For a proposal to be considered it must be presented in the form of a motion; seconded and adopted by the Unit; and recorded by the Unit Recorder in the June or July Unit Meeting minutes.

Stiff Penalties for Worker’s Compensation Discrimination

by David P. Mastagni
Attorney at Law
Marsh, Mastagni, & Marsh
edited by Charlie Gadzik

Although workers who get hurt on the job have a legal right to monetary compensation and free medical care, this right is often ignored by unscrupulous employers. Fortunately, stiff fines and criminal prosecution are in store for them if they are caught.

California law is clear. The statute declares that it is the “policy” of the state that there should not be discrimination against workers who are injured in the course and scope of their employment.

Employers aren’t the only ones subject to the law. Insurance companies (which make the actual payment for compensation claims) have been known to threaten an employer with premium increases or policy cancellations unless the employer prevented his workers from asserting their rights. Such threats are illegal. The same applies to claims and safety departments of self-insured companies.

Worker’s Compensation Discrimination can take many forms. For instance, it is unlawful for your employer to discharge you or to threaten you with discharge for filing a compensation claim. It is just as illegal to discipline or threaten you for testifying on the behalf of a fellow employee who is filing a claim.

Threats of discipline or discharge aren’t the only prohibited conduct. Discrimination in “any manner” is forbidden. Examples of such discriminatory conduct are: 1) Demoting an employee, not because he can’t perform the work, but because he’s received a disability rating or compensation benefits; 2) Harassing an employee who decides to be treated by his own doctor instead of a company doctor; 3) Discriminating against an employee in the assignment of work hours, holidays, or vacations; 4) Discriminating against a worker simply because he makes known his intention to file a compensation claim, collect benefits, or testify for a co-worker.

An action doesn’t have to be direct to be illegal. In fact, discrimination could occur even if the employer takes no action at all. For instance, assuming you could do the work, it would be illegal discrimination for an employer not to promote you because you filed a compensation claim or received a disability rating.

What should you do if you feel you are being discriminated against? First tell your shop steward or business representative. They may be able to stop the harassment immediately. If that fails, they may take the case to the Worker’s Compensation Appeals Board (W.C.A.B.). The W.C.A.B. has jurisdiction to award fines of up to $10,000, payable to the employee. In addition, the W.C.A.B. or the worker himself may lodge a criminal misdemeanor complaint against the employer. Such an action may be filed with either the District Attorney or the Division of Labor Standards.

There are time limits on taking action against an employer. You must act within one year from the date of the discriminatory act or discharge. If your complaint is found to be justified, you are entitled to reinstatement and reimbursement for wages and benefits lost as a result of the discriminatory act.

Remember: Fair compensation for an industrial injury is your lawful right. Don’t let an employer talk you into accepting less than you are entitled to. If you have doubts, see your Shop Steward or Business Representative.

SCHEDULE CHANGE

Stewards, please note:

The following conferences have been canceled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salinas</td>
<td>August 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reno</td>
<td>Sept. 22-23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They will be rescheduled.

You will be notified of the new dates as soon as arrangements have been finalized.
Discord in San Diego

Inter Union Gas Workers Conference

by Gary Abrahamson

Sun and strike marked this year’s Inter Union Gas Conference held in San Diego on April 25-26-27, 1979. The strike was made evident when three of the International Unions which participate in this Conference announced their intentions to withdraw their memberships following the meeting. These International Unions, I.B.E.W., SEIU, and OCAW generally account for 80-85% of the total number of delegates in attendance. Apparently, these Unions are objecting to the inclusion of some non-AFL-CIO Unions in the Conference.

This strike was temporarily forgotten as the delegates settled down to the business at hand. The general purpose of the Conference is for the delegates from Local Unions across the United States and Canada, who represent workers in the Natural Gas Industry, to exchange information on problems common to all and their solutions.

In starting out the 3 day Conference, Al Grossberg, Int’l. President, OCAW, gave the keynote speech dealing with the Effects of Deregulation on Bargaining. This was followed by reports from various Local Unions including a report on our Local Union given by Business Representative, Jim McCauley.

The second day of the Conference was taken up by having all of the delegates participate in one of the three available workshops: Service, Clerical, and Distribution. Each workshop attempt to identify and discuss problems and successes in bargaining, job security, new methods and materials, safety, and anything else of interest to Gas Workers. This open forum is especially valuable when the delegates freely participate. The B member delegation from Local Union 1245, which was the most active and vocal, was able to place at least two delegates in each workshop thus promoting this participation.

The final day of the Conference contained the election of the Conference’s Officers for the coming year, some late Local Union reports, and a verbal report by each of the respective workshops and other items of interest were discussed.

The Conference was composed of four Business Representatives: Jim McCauley, Larry Hope, Ray Shepherd, and Scott Thomas; and of four Rank and File members: Jay Burton, Bill Twohey, Jay Kilgore, and Gary Abrahamson. The Conference, which was held at the Kona-Kai Inn, San Diego, was a valuable experience for Local 1245’s delegation to the Conference. The Conference was held April 4-6, 1979 at the Sahara Reno, Reno, Nevada.

Local Union 1245 Delegates Attend...

I.B.E.W. 1979 Utility Conference

Local Union 1245 sent ten delegates to the 1979 I.B.E.W. Utility Regional Conference. The Conference was held April 4-6, 1979 at the Sahara Reno, Reno, Nevada.

The Conference, sponsored by the I.B.E.W. Utility Department, was designed to assist I.B.E.W. Local Unions in doing a better job for the people they represent. The opening day of the three-day session was devoted to introduction of delegates; reports by the Director of the Utility Department, Vincent O’Reilly, and the Utility Department Staff; International Representatives Robert W. Macdonald, Paul R. Shoop, and Robert Bieritz; and discussion of common problems that pertain to clerical, electric, gas and generating jurisdictions. Specific reports and problems pertaining to electrical, generating, clerical, and other jurisdictions were discussed in depth during all-day workshops on the second day of the Conference. On the last day of the session reports were given on the respective workshops and other items of common interest were discussed.

Local 1245 Delegates attending the three-day Conference were: Business Manager Dean Coler, Senior Assistant Business Manager Willie R. Stewart, Assistant Business Manager Mert Walters, President Ron Fitzsimmons, Vice President Howard Stiefel, Southern Area Executive Board Member Bob Thomson, Central Area Executive Board Member Red Henneberry, Treasurer Nannette Brownlee, and Business Representatives Ron Van Dyke and Manny Mederos.
**Labor Editors Learn How to Work With The Media**

*Western Labor Press Convention*

**by Dorothy Fortier**

- The W.L.P.A. Convention was held in San Francisco on May 4 and 5.
- Coordinated breakfasts, lunches and dinners for the delegates and invited their respective legislators to attend.
- The Conference was managed by Editor Rollin Post, and Managing Editor of the Utility Reporter, Dorothy Fortier.
- WLPA is an association of people who work in the labor media, holding full time and part time labor editors and public relations directors working throughout the 14 western states.
- The Convention was held to improve labor's image and increase public awareness of the benefits of buying labor with their "look for the union label" campaign. It's bucks versus manpower.
- They had to stress the good things labor does for people: push legislation to improve workers' compensation, disability benefits, equal employment, health and welfare benefits, etc.
- Unions will have to continually solicit the media to get money and a lot of hard work.
- It was concluded that the media will have to remind the public, their members included, of the history of the labor movement. The media have to stress the good things labor does for people.
- Unions will have to continually solicit the media to get money and a lot of hard work.
- The media loves responses to charges, and the responses must be timely. He said, when reporters call Unions for responses to company representatives' statements concerning disputes, Labor's responses are often untimely. He stressed that union officials must fully realize the importance of building good channels of communication with the media.
- The Conference ranged from improvements in workers' compensation to the licensing of general contractors, and from the proposed constitutional convention to charging for telephone information calls.
- Legislative action to improve California's unemployment insurance and workers' compensation benefits, spurred housing for low and middle income families and assurance that other public employees adequate pay raises were high priorities on Labor's agenda.
- It was important to point out that not all bills were discussed. We only talked about those bills that affect Labor.
- The Conference provided delegates with an effective vehicle to move toward obtaining improved legislation for working people. As a united force, we were able to bombard legislators with our views and hopefully sway enough of them to get the legislation passed in California.

**Labor Meets With Elected Officials**

*by Bob Gibbs*

- I attended Labor's annual joint Legislative Conference in Sacramento March 12-14, as a delegate from Humboldt-Dei Norte Central Labor Council.
- Other Local 1245 members present at the Conference, as delegates from our Local or their central labor councils, were: Business Manager Dean Cofer, Assistant Business Manager Bert Walters, President Ron Fitzsimmons, Executive Board Member Bill Peltz, Business Representatives Al Sandoval, Hank Lucas and Gary Hall and Brothers Dick Daugherty and Bill Tomlinson.
- This Conference was jointly sponsored by the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, the State Building and Construction Trades Council of California and the California State Council of Carpenters. It was set up to provide an opportunity for representatives of Labor to review their legislative position and to meet with members of the Assembly and the Senate to discuss key issues.
- The contacts with legislators were made in various ways. In addition to the private meetings that delegates held with legislators, many of the central labor councils is unable to meet the Union's demands because there is only $10.00 in the budget and the Union wants $20.00.
- Unfortunately, we all know the story too well. If the company makes a proposal it is an offer. If the union makes a proposal it is a demand. Union bosses versus company officials, etc. These problems were discussed at great lengths by the delegates and representatives from the media during the Convention in San Francisco on May 4 and 5.

**Stan Jones Testimonial**

- Former Nevada State Labor Commissioner Stan Jones was recently honored at a testimonial dinner sponsored by the Northern Nevada Central Labor Council.
- Assistant Business Manager John Wilder, Business Representatives Darrel Mitchell and John Straika, Sierra Pacific Power Company Advisory Council Member Jay Killigore, and Recording Secretary Kathy Tindall were among the 400 friends and co-workers present at the dinner to salute Stan for his many years of service to the workers of Nevada and organized labor.

- Stan served as Labor Commissioner for twelve years, and as such he administered the duties of his office with dignity and professionalism. He was removed from office by the newly elected Governor in January. He is currently working as a business representative with the Northern Nevada Central Labor Council and his new duties include working with local unions regarding legislation, organizing, and voter registration programs.
- Local 1245 wishes Stan the best in his new endeavors.

**Sierra Pacific Power Company Negotiations**

- We held numerous meetings with Sierra Pacific Power Company. Both the Union and the Company submitted a large number of proposals so we had a lot of items to go over. To date, bargaining is completed on all the non-economic issues (wages, benefits, etc.) during the meeting scheduled the week of the 14th.
- Mt. Wheeler Power Company — Negotiations are scheduled to begin in June. As yet, no proposals have been exchanged.
An In-Depth Look at The Certificated Program

by Larry Hope

Over 500 Local 1245 Shop Stewards are expected to complete a four-day certificated training program this year. The material they study will help them provide better representation for Local 1245 members.

Stewards in the Northern Sacramento Valley were the first to finish the entire program. Business Representative Larry Hope files this report on what they learned during their back-to-back weekend sessions:

The conference opened with a topic of immense importance to union members: political activities. Teaching this segment was Assistant Business Manager Mert Walters, an expert on legislation and political activity. Walters explained how Union advances won at the bargaining table can easily be lost by the election of anti-labor politicians or the passage of bad legislation. He stressed the importance of lobbying, endorsing candidates or propositions, and contributing to campaigns.

Walters speaks from a firm foundation of experience in California politics. He was instrumental in the passage of the Meyers-Milias-Brown Act (which granted bargaining rights to public employees) and is highly respected by California Senators and Assemblymen.

Senior Assistant Business Manager Willie Stewart followed Walters with a report on the Union's progress in bargaining and organizing. He emphasized how vital it is for union members to be involved and not just watch from the sidelines.

In the afternoon of the first day, the Stewards split into two groups. The first group was presented Labor Law for Private Employer Stewards. This session was given by Union attorney Maureen Whelan, who did an excellent job covering the National Labor Relations Act.

The second group learned about public agency labor law from attorney Hank Marsh. Many Stewards commented that Hank has a way of explaining difficult Labor Law in everyday language and as a result they learned a great deal. The Stewards appreciated the fact that Hank was interested in relating the law and not in trying to impress them with a lot of legal terms.

Sunday, the second day of the conference, opened with skits of grievance situations in which Shop Stewards could find themselves. The first skit found the Business Representatives playing the roles as follows: Dave Rossi - Shop Steward, Arlie Baker - Business Representative, Rich Halner - Foreman, Skip Harris - Personnel Manager, and Larry Hope - Grievant.

The Business Representatives enacted several skits, then the Stewards were called upon without notice to react. They did an excellent job in reacting to real situations.

The afternoon of the second day was headed by Business Representative Manny Mederos, who handles higher steps of the PG&E grievance procedure out of the Union's Walnut Creek office. Manny covered the steps of the grievance procedure which occur after it leaves the Shop Steward. He stressed the importance of getting facts and keeping detailed notes. Manny's discussion lead into a film on arbitration, which depicted the progress of a real grievance from the first step all the way to arbitration and the arbitrator's decision.

The final day of the conference began on the following Saturday. The morning session was devoted to the Safety Responsibilities of the Steward. Assistant Business Manager Tony Morgado covered accident reporting and headed a question/answer period. Tony was followed by Paul Chown of the University of California Labor Studies Center. Chown covered the California Occupational Safety and Health Act. His talk generated a great deal of interest because it focused on Steward's rights and responsibilities.

The afternoon of the third day was headed by Union attorney David Mastagni. Mastagni discussed the Worker's Compensation Law. He explained the employee's rights under the law, legal recourse if threatened or coerced for reporting a claim, the legal status of refusing to work an unsafe job, and the procedure to follow when someone gets injured on the job.

Sunday was the fourth and final day of the conference. Business Representative Charlie Gadzik gave a detailed overview of the structure and operation of the Union. He talked about the International Union and its role in relation to the Local Union.

The afternoon session was led by Norm Amundson, head of the UC-Berkeley Labor Studies Center. Norm gave an extensive overview of the history of the labor movement, including some interesting facts about Local 1245's history. The afternoon ended with a showing of the film, "The Inheritance".

The conference closed late in the afternoon. After four days of instruction, the Stewards went home better trained and better able to represent the membership.

Chico: Business Representative Rich Halner (left) had the switch roles in his essay on business management and productivity. Business Representatives Larry Hope (right) and Arlie Baker acted as the grievant and the rep. (Editor's note: Photos of the Stewards' skits did not turn out.)

Chico: Stewards were taught accident reporting procedures by Assistant Business Manager Tony Morgado.

Chico: Nearly sixty Stewards took part in the four day conference.

Utility Reporter—May, 1979—Page Six

Training Program

"Interesting and informative — an excellent program!" These words sum up the way most Stewards feel toward the Union's Certificated Stewards Training Program, which is now being presented throughout the Local's jurisdiction.

The four day program covers a variety of topics ranging from Arbitration to Union Organizing. Stewards have responded enthusiastically to the program, as shown by the evaluation cards they've filled out after attending each segment. On a scale of 1 to 5, they gave the program a near perfect score of 4.6.

Better representation is the goal of the program. Stewards can take what they've learned back to the workplace.

Labor Law Taught

Stewards meeting in both Reno and Stockton finished the first half of the Local 1245 Certificated Training Program. Each group spent two full weekend days studying subjects like Labor Law, Worker's Compensation, Safety and Arbitration.

While gamblers in the surrounding casinos were risking their pocketbooks, Nevada area Stewards were learning how to make their workplaces safer. Paul Chown of UC-Berkeley's Labor Studies Center explained the workings of OSHA and showed Stewards how OSHA could

North Area First to Earn

Forty-five northern area stewards became stewards to complete the 1979 Local 1245 Certificated Program. They came from several different employers, i (Lassen and South Lake Tahoe Divisions), Glenn-Colusa Irrigation Districts, PG&E General Construction, Colgate, Shasta, and Drum Divisions.

A challenging schedule calling for back-to-back meetings the Stewards finished the program so quickly, they completed a week's work within a week. This is how stewards spent much of their time in the North Area.
Training Program Gets High Marks from Stewards

"Interesting and informative — an excellent program!" These words sum up the way most Stewards feel toward the Union’s Certified Stewards Training Program. Each group spent two full weekend days studying subjects like Labor Law, Worker’s Compensation, and Safety. While gamers in the surrounding casinos were risking their pocketbooks, Nevada area Stewards were learning how to make their workplace safer. Stewards meeting in both Reno and Stockton finished the first half of the Local 1245 Certified Stewards Training Program. Group members gave an entire afternoon of instruction covering Worker’s Compensation law. Union attorney David Mastagni, an expert in the area of Worker’s Compensation law, gave the Reno area Stewards a thorough description of the protections available to a hurt employee.

North Area Stewards First to Earn Certificates

Forty-five northern area stewards became the first of an expected five hundred stewards to complete the 1979 Local 1245 Certified Stewards Training Program. They came from several different employers, including the City of Redding, CP-National (Lassen and South Lake Tahoe Divisions), Citizens Utilities Company, Paradise and Glenn-Colusa Irrigation Districts, PG&E General Construction and PG&E’s DeSable, Colgate, Shasta, and Drum Divisions.

A challenging schedule calling for back-to-back weekend sessions was the reason that the stewards finished the program so quickly. It required them to work nineteen consecutive days without a break. This kind of sacrifice is common among shop stewards. They spend much of their time in other ways, too numerous to mention here, and do a better job for the members.

Despite safety measures, industrial accidents do happen, and few employees are aware of the Worker’s Compensation rights they are entitled to when they get hurt. To help inform the members of their rights, Stewards were given an entire afternoon of instruction covering Worker’s Compensation law. Union attorney David Mastagni, an expert in the area of Worker’s Compensation law, gave the Reno area Stewards a thorough description of the protections available to a hurt employee.

Both the Reno and Stockton conferences spent a day on Labor Law and Labor History. These subjects are taught by University attorneys and instructors from the University of California at Berkeley. The final day of Stockton’s two-day conference was devoted to grievance investigation techniques. Procedure for getting the facts and taking good notes were illustrated by the use of skits during the morning conference. Stewards spent the afternoon learning about the higher steps of the grievance procedure and observing an arbitration film.
m Gets High Marks from Stewards

and do a better job for the members.

Steward's reactions to the Worker's Compensation and Safety segments provide a good example of how they are using their new knowledge. After hearing Paul Chown's advice on how to deal with workplace hazards, a Reno area manufacturing steward declared, "It looks like we're going to be busy at Lynch Communications!"

One Steward remarked that the program has been needed in this division for a long time. Although Steward's training has been done in the past, it has never been conducted in the formal consistent manner of the current program, which was initiated by Business Manager Cofer at the request of Stewards and members.

Sprinkled among the compliments to the program were a few criticisms and suggestions for improvement. Many Stewards felt that more time was needed to cover the subjects properly.

Unfortunately, the time allotted to each subject has been limited because there is so much material to be covered by the program. After the current program is finished, advanced courses will be offered to allow a more detailed review of the subject matter.

In the meantime, Stewards can look forward this year to several more conferences scheduled in locations across Local 1245's jurisdiction.

nd Worker's Compensation in Reno and Stockton

be used to reduce hazards.

Despite safety measures, industrial accidents do happen, and few employees are aware of the Worker's Compensation rights they are entitled to when they get hurt. To help inform the members of their rights, Stewards were given an entire afternoon of instruction covering Worker's Compensation law. Union attorney David Mastagni, an expert in the area of Worker's Compensation law, gave the Reno Stewards a thorough description of the protections available to a hurt employee.

Both the Reno and Stockton conferences spent a day on Labor Law and Labor History. These subjects are taught by Union attorneys and instructors from the University of California at Berkeley. The final day of Stockton's two-day conference was devoted to grievance investigation techniques. Procedure for getting the facts and taking good notes were illustrated by the use of skits during the morning conference. Stewards spent the afternoon learning about the higher steps of the grievance procedure and observing an arbitration film.
East Bay Long Time Members Honored

By Veodis Stamps

The Holiday Inn in Concord was the setting for the annual East Bay service Awards Dinner. The Dinner was held to honor Local 1245 Members with 20 or more years of Membership in the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

After a get acquainted and renew old friendships hour, introductions were made and dinner was served.

The award recipients and their guests were addressed by Business Manager Dean Cofer. In his address he expressed his profound appreciation for the support of I.B.E.W. Local 1245, and cited the progress of the local and its recent accomplishments.

Following his talk, Business Manager Cofer, with the assistance of East Bay Business Representatives Veodis Stamps, Scott Thomas and Jim McCauley (who also acted as Master of Ceremonies), made the award presentations.

The members listed below were eligible to receive awards.


A Special Thanks From...

San Jose Unit 1511, Mike Davis and Orv Owen

At the April 17, 1979 Unit Meeting of San Jose Unit 1511, the drawing was held for our fund raising raffle in behalf of Brother John Berry. The winners were:

1st Prize: Bill Wallace, City of Santa Clara
2nd Prize: Harvey Thornton, PG&E North Bay
3rd Prize: Joe Farrone, PG&E San Jose

Cindy Naranjo, San Francisco General Office drew the winning tickets. We want to thank all of those people who participated in this raffle and especially those who helped with the ticket sales.

We feel that the money our members raised will be very helpful in assisting Brother John Berry.

Again Local 1245 and Unit 1511 would like to thank all of our Brothers and Sisters who helped us to make our raffle a tremendous success.

EDITOR’S NOTE: This letter was received from the Berry family. It is in appreciation of San Jose Unit 1511’s sponsorship of a fund raising raffle in behalf of John Berry. John is a Local 1245 member who was stricken by polio.

Words cannot express our thoughts and gratitude for the kindness and goodwill expressed by so many people.

As you know, this money will be put to good use in John’s recovery program. His progress has been slow but he is progressing and hope fully he will be home for weekends in a short while.

John’s own determination is a key factor in his recovery and knowing that people care and have done so much, certainly has helped his determination.

We would like to thank each person who took part in this drawing personally, but as you know, this is impossible to do. We know that a lot of work and time is involved in getting something like this off the ground and we will never be able to thank everyone enough.

Everyone’s concern and kindness has helped us to see a brighter tomorrow.

Thank you all so very much.

John, Kathy & Kevin Berry
Workers Need Unions
by Dorothy Fortier

Jack O'Shea has been a member of Local 1245 over 25 years, and he served as a Shop Steward in East Bay Division for 20 years, prior to retiring from Pacific Gas and Electric Company in 1978. Jack started work at PG&E as a Laborer in 1937, and in later years he worked as a Relicf Operator at Gas Holder Station in East Bay Division at Oakland. Jack lives in Oakland with his wife, Lou, and their teenage granddaughter. When asked if he was enjoying his retirement, he replied "extremely." Jack spends a lot of time gardening and tinkering around the house, and he loves to socialize with his old friends. The evening I first met Jack, he, Red Henneberry, Bob Houchins and Veodis Stamps were discussing the "good old days". Of course, Veodis, who has only been the Business Representative assigned to handle Oakport for about 8 years, and Bob, who has only been serving as a Shop Steward at Oakport for 15 years found it difficult to compete with Red and Jack at telling stories about the "good old days".

There was no doubt in my mind that Jack and Red knew what they were talking about when they said "there was nothing good about the good old days until the Union came on the property." Jack said it was nothing for a supervisor to tell him to break-in a new employee and then promote the new worker over him. Being replaced by a worker without qualifications or seniority just because the worker was a friend of one of the bosses was a frequent occurrence.

Jack recalled a specific incident when he was working as a Pressure Operator one winter. He said one of the supervisors told him that he was going to give his job to an employee with less seniority and transfer Jack to another assignment. The other worker was the boss' friend. However, the Plant Superintendent happened to be a fair person and when Jack told him what was going on he made sure Jack got to keep his job. In those days, unless you happened to luck out and get a fair supervisor you could forget about seniority rights. . . there were no guarantees.

At the supervisor's discretion, employees were told when they had to work and how long; what their days off would be; what job duties they were to perform; what employees would be promoted; etc. Employees had no guaranteed rights. If an employee got caught talking about joining a Union he would be fired.

Jack still remembers how far away from the Union meeting place he would have to park his car when the Union first started organizing. He said he would park at least 8 blocks away and then he and his friends would walk the rest of the way to the meeting. They had to always be careful not to let the stoolies catch them attending a Union meeting because they knew if they got caught they would be fired.

Jack may not be a Local 1245 Shop Steward anymore, but he is one of the best organizers I have ever met. No one in their right mind, after listening to the horror stories about the good old days before Local 1245 came on the property, could ever believe that the Company would take care of them if it didn't have to. The contract is what entitles an employee to fair and equitable treatment—not a supervisor's whims.

Jack knows his Union has done a lot for him. He laughed and added "I bet I am the only man who the Company had to pay overtime to after I was retired. My Union contract provided that if I was bypassed for overtime, I would be entitled to the money just as though I had worked. Well I was bypassed just before I retired and the Company had to pay me. Do you think they would have sent me a nice check for overtime if my Steward on the job hadn't filed a grievance for me? I don't."

The "good old days" weren't so good before the Union came on the property, says retired member Jack O'Shea, pictured above with his wife, Lou. Jack thinks every worker should belong to a Union. He emphasized how important it is to participate in union activities and to back the actions of the union you belong to. Jack O'Shea is 100% union. He believes young workers ought to thank their lucky stars they belong to Local 1245, and added that he has never regretted being a member and never will.
During the period March 22 through April 25, applications for membership were received from the following persons:

SAN JOAQUIN DIVISION
Charlotte, J.L.
Cotner, C.A.
Doherty, M.O.
Fisher, B.J.
Gillespie, J.F.
Gurland, L.L.
Lucas, D.E.
Mocie, T.E.
Schafer, R.A.

COAST VALLEYS DIVISION
Gonzaga, L.G.
Hey, K.R.
Vera, D.A.
Watt, C.J.
Taylor, G.E.
Wicklette, C.R.

TELEPROMPTER OF LOMPAC
Heckman, R.J.
Ibay, K.R.

Attard, M.A.
Arana, D.N.

SAN FRANCISCO DIVISION
Carlson, C.P.
Cooper, M.W.
Dellagatta, D.A.
Herrero, C.M.
Johnson, B.J.

SAN JOSE DIVISION
Haas, J.D.
Carlotti, R.D.
Ronsonet, J.E.

FRANCISCO DIVISION
Barlow, M.W.
Greminger, K.A.
Stowell, R.M.

BARLOW, R.E.
Bell, W.L.

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTION
Collins, T.W.
Liu, R.
Low, R.

EAST BAY DIVISION
Barba, R.M.
Brown, Z.J.
Brown, P.L.

CONCORD TV CABLE
Emmer, O.T.
Gary, G.J.
Rosenau, J.E.

SAN FRANCISCO DIVISION
Andersen, K.W.
Andersen, L.E.
Arau, D.N.
Attard, M.A.
Carrillo, R.D.
Calcote, R.J.

Lmittel, D.N.
Ehrlich, R.G.
Elcham, G.A.
Harlen, J.P.
Kiez, E.J.
Kern, D.V.
Kinsella, C.A.
Law, D.M.

Lettier, M.A.
Monteleva, P.A.

Sierra Pacific Power Company
Sierra Pacific Power Company
San Francisco Gas and Water Operations Department.

---

Letter of Agreement Summaries

Editor’s Note: Members of Local 1245 who wish to receive a copy of the full text of a letter of agreement shown below may do so by submitting a written request to the Local Union.

SSPPC No. 79-9: Establishes a special temporary revised schedule of work days and work hours for the incumbent Gas Pressure Operator and Gas Utilitarian in the Gas and Water Production Occupational Group.

SSPPC No. 79-10: Provides for the re-classification of an Apprentice Lineman, Reno to a Meter Reader Collector, Reno.

---

Utility Reporter—May, 1979—Page Ten

BARGAINING ROUNDPUP

CITY OF GRIDLEY

Our dispute with the City of Gridley was appealed to the Third District Court of Appeal. Opening briefs will be submitted shortly after May 20.

CITY OF HEALDSBURG

On April 24, a Notice to the City of our desire to open negotiations. Negotiations are in progress.

GLEN-COLUSA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

Our suit concerning the District’s refusal to formally recognize Local Union 1245 was heard in the Glenn County Superior Court. We are presently awaiting the judge’s decision. In the meantime, bargaining is in progress on wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment.

MODESTO IRRIGATION DISTRICT

Our suit concerning the District’s refusal to properly recognize Local 1245 as the bargaining representative is pending in the Stanislaus County Superior Court. In the meantime, we are negotiating on the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding covering hours and other conditions or employment.

ORANGE COVE IRRIGATION DISTRICT

Our suit over the District’s unfair labor practices is pending in the Fresno County Superior Court.

TRI-DAM IRRIGATION DISTRICT

Our suit concerning the District’s unfair labor practices is pending in the Fresno County Superior Court.

CITIZENS UTILITIES COMPANY

Negotiations are at an impasse.

PACIFIC TREE EXPERT COMPANY

Union is in the process of preparing to submit the Company’s last offer to the membership for vote.

CP NATIONAL (Medical)

Negotiations are in progress.

CP NATIONAL (Lassen)

Negotiations resulted in a 7.6 percent general wage increase effective March 1, 1979, and improvements in the shift differentials.

SIERRA PACIFIC POWER COMPANY

Bargaining is in progress.

REGIONAL TRANSIT

The strike is settled. Our members returned to work on May 15 after ratifying a new offer by a vote of 57 to 12.
Local 1245 Honors Loomis and Lee

We Get Letters...

EDITOR’S NOTE: Local 1245 sponsored one new Eagle Scout’s attendance at the Eagle Scout Recognition Banquet held in San Francisco at the St. Francis Hotel on February 15. The young man we sponsored, John Finger, sent the following letter to Business Manager Dean Cofer and Business Representative Skip Harris expressing his appreciation to the Local.

“I am writing to thank you both again for sponsoring me at the Eagle Scout Banquet at the St. Francis Hotel on February 15. It was truly an enjoyable experience and I will never forget it.

Mr. Cofer, my only regret was that you could not be there with me. Mr. Harris is a great guy. I had many interesting conversations with him about the Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. I am enclosing some of the pictures that my mother took at the banquet. Once again, I really appreciate what your Union did for me.

Sincerely,
John Finger

Skip Harris (right) congratulates John Finger (center) and his father.

Local 1245 Supports Davis-Bacon Act

The Local Union Executive Board, at its March 1979 meeting, voted unanimously to go on record in opposition to any legislation to repeal the Davis-Bacon Act.

The Davis-Bacon Act was first passed in 1931 to prevent the undercutting of wage standards by contractors on federal building projects. It was later amended to cover other public works projects and to protect fringe benefits.

Davis-Bacon was designed to protect prevailing standards of construction workers, to provide equality of opportunity for contractors, and to prevent disruption of local economies.

Under Davis-Bacon, contractors on federal construction projects are required to pay workers in each construction project no less than wage rates prevailing in the local area for each craft engaged on like projects.

The U.S. Department of Labor determines prevailing rates in the locality of the project for like projects and makes these known before contract bidding.

The chief advantage to unions is that carpetbaggers and union-busters can’t use the taxpayers’ money to undercut union wage standards. This results in benefits to the community too. It makes for a stable workforce. It forces contractors paying union wages to be efficient in their management, and it allows the federal government the benefit of highly skilled, well-motivated workers who do a good job. Moreover, it protects local contractors from being undercut by phony low bids.

How can you help our brothers and sisters employed in the construction industry? Write letters to your state senators and district house member. Let them know that you are very concerned about the current drive to get Congress to repeal the Davis-Bacon prevailing wage act.

Sample Letter

“I am very concerned about the current drive to get Congress to repeal the Davis-Bacon prevailing wage act. In these times of high unemployment and runaway increases in the cost-of-living, I can’t see why anybody in Congress would want to undercut the paychecks and job conditions of workers. I don’t want Davis-Bacon repealed.”

Because of the opponents’ plan to repeal Davis-Bacon a piece at a time, it can come up anytime in any committee of either the House or Senate. So, send letters to your representatives as soon as possible.

We Get Letters...

Group Life Insurance and Long Term Disability Plan

Under the provisions of the Benefit Agreement negotiated between Local 1245 and PG&E, any fulltime or regularly scheduled part-time employee is eligible to become a member in the group life insurance feature of the plan upon completion of six months of continuous service and the attainment of regular employee status, provided the employee is under 64 1/2 years old.

The amount of a member’s normal life insurance coverage is twice his or her annual rate of pay (rounded to the next higher $100), excluding overtime pay and all forms of special compensation. The cost is 4¢ a month per $100 of insurance. Lesser coverage is optional at the time of enrollment.

An employee who is a member of the group life insurance plan is automatically eligible for long term disability coverage at no additional cost. Under the provisions of the Long Term Disability Plan, initial benefits (up to 50 percent of the employee’s regular wages) are payable to an eligible participant who is disabled, and has been off work for a cumulative total of six months as a result of such disability.

Please do not bypass your opportunity to enroll in the Life Insurance Plan. You cannot be covered for Long Term disability unless you are a member of the Life Insurance Plan. No statement of health or a medical examination is required if an employee joins within 90 days after becoming eligible. An employee who joins after the 90-day period will be required to complete a statement of health and may be required to submit to a medical examination at the employee’s expense.

To join, an employee must fill out and submit to PG&E an application form supplied by PG&E authorizing deduction of monthly premiums from the employee’s pay check, and naming a beneficiary. A member may change the beneficiary at any time by submitting a change of beneficiary form to PG&E.

Copies of the Benefit Agreement are available upon request. Ask your Business Representative to give you a copy. Your Business Representative will be glad to explain it to you.
Report on the Perils of P.C.B.'s
by IBEW Utility Department

Monsanto Chemical Company was the sole domestic producer of askerel (Askerel) and voluntarily stopped production in October 1977, one year before mandated by law. Monsanto and many manufacturers of electrical equipment using "askerel" use their own trademark names: Arclor, Aeskato, Akselco, Intermeth, Kremelnite, No-Fume, Peconol, P.K., Pyrotec, and Santotherm.

PCB compounds have been accumulating in the environment for more than 45 years. In commercial production since 1929, the colorless, odorless, syrupy PCBs were once widely used in industry as softeners in plastics, paints, and rubbers, as additives in printing ink and as oils used in the preparation of laboratory slides.

Because of increasing questions about the salutary effects of PCBs, their use has been confined almost exclusively to the electrical industry. This has been in transformers, capacitors, and cable in which the compound is sealed.

The characteristics of PCBs are: Heavier than water; High dielectric strength; Nonflammable and nonexplosive; Not susceptible to deterioration by oxidation; and low co-efficient of expansion than mineral oil. PCBs will, however, vaporize and disperse when subject to high heat, such as in a building fire or electric arc. If they are in a sealed container and vaporize, they may expand or rupture the container and vaporize, they may expand or rupture the container as many of us have experienced.

There was little concern about PCBs until 1968 when an estimated 1,600 Japanese came down with a baffling and painful ailment labeled as "rice oil poisoning." Their symptoms occurred after they had eaten rice oil accidentally contaminated by PCBs.

These symptoms were skin eruptions (dermatitis), vomiting, stomach pain, and rapid breathing. In Japan banned the use of the compounds and suddenly, everyone was aware of their presence. By 1972 PCB's had been found in every major river system in the United States. The compound had either been discharged directly into the water or had been washed into the rivers by drainage from junked electrical equipment.

The major concern with askerel or PCBs is that the compounds present on the environment are not those observed due to the use of PCBs. Askergels are a very slow rate of biodegradation, such that they increase in concentration as they move up through the food chain. This is biological accumulation.

There is no known lasting feature in handling askergels since it is unlikely that anyone is likely to spillage or encounter askergels on their skin within the environment. The long term health effect of PCBs on humans is still unknown, but the General Electric Company in New York has admitted that at least 65 employees in its capacitor plant have come down with the same symptoms exhibited by the Japanese victims of rice oil poisoning. Similar symptoms, especially dermatitis, have been found in other work locations in which personnel are or were involved in handling high concentrations of PCBs.

The chemicals have also been found to cause cancer in laboratory animals. Presently under investigation is the incidence of liver cancers among those people exposed to PCB concentrations over an extended period.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency has given the final rule for disposal and recycling standards for effective April 18, 1978. These regulations prescribe disposal and marking regulations only. Their intent is to protect the environment from further contamination by PCBs.

Askergels must be disposed of through incineration or other means which emphasize environmental control of askergels. Generally the regard for personal safety is secondary. All of the available literature has included what safety measures have been taken. These have been set out, however, within economic limits. Allows the use of unrefined clothing, cleaning, and washing have varied widely. Typical of voluntary PCB handling procedures are as follows:

1. Precautions shall be taken to ensure that no askergel gets into the environment.
2. Breathing of vapors especially above 121 degrees F should be avoided and should be worn.
3. Avoid direct skin contact by the use of non-porous aprons or overcoats or overcoats or overcoats. If skin contact occurs, wash the skin with soap and water, especially before eating, smoking, drinking or touching other parts of the body; hand cleaner and paper towels also used.
5. The wash and water paper towels must be in a container specified for PCB disposal.
6. Eye contact with askergel, flush the eye for 15 minutes and consult a medical authority.
7. Skin irritation caused by askergel contact can be relieved by the application of ointment cream.

To date, only three approved incinerators, available in New York, California, Texas, and New Jersey. There are six approved landfills. It is then evident that there will be massive storage of these compounds and only disposal becomes economically feasible.

Lacking on OSHA Standard, industry is compelled only to follow the EPA standard. Thereby our concern and question. How do we protect ourselves from this "cancer suspect agent"?

The industry guidelines and employee directives made available to our International Office all emphasize environmental control of askergels. Generally the regard for personal safety is secondary.

PCB's and mixtures until disposal becomes economically feasible.

Report on the Perils of P.C.B.'s
by IBEW Utility Department

Respirators

NIOSH Warns Users of Scott Apparatus of Failure of Regulator Diaphragms

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health said health officers April 27 to advise users of Scott Air Pack II and IIA and Pressure Pack II and IIA self-contained breathing apparatus manufactured by Scott Aviation, Lancaster, N.Y., that regulator diaphragms have split or become obstructed the flow of air from the regulator when the user should check the regulator diaphragm after using it and when checking its operation, they should not obstruct the flow of air from the regulator when the user should check the regulator diaphragm after using it and when checking its operation, they should not obstruct the flow of air from the regulator. The institute has shown that at least 10 percent of the units examined have ruptured or punctured diaphragms.

The investigation was begun by NIOSH following the death of three Lubbock, Tex., firefighters who were wearing this particular respirator. NIOSH said, "Users should examine the regulator for possible damaged diaphragms and replace those diaphragms in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. The user may check the diaphragm after each use by closing both the main line and bypass valves and blowing through the regulator outlet port. It should be possible to maintain a slight positive pressure in the regulator. The user should check the regulator diaphragm after each use and during regular inspections of the complete apparatus.

"If it is known that failure occurs during assembly, storage or use of the respirator, therefore extreme caution may be employed when using the respirator," the institute stated.

NIOSH cautioned users of the apparatus that, when checking its operation, they should not obstruct the flow of air from the regulator when the user should check the regulator diaphragm after using it and when checking its operation, they should not obstruct the flow of air from the regulator.

Further technical information is available from Richard M. Ronk, Chief, Respirator Section, Testing and Certification Branch, NIOSH, 446 Chestnut Ridge Road, Morgantown, W.Va. 26505; telephone (304) 599-7337.

Respirators

NIOSH Warns Users of Scott Apparatus of Failure of Regulator Diaphragms

Survey of Scott Air Pack II and IIA self-contained breathing apparatus manufactured by Scott Aviation, Lancaster, N.Y., that regulator diaphragms have split or become obstructed the flow of air from the regulator when the user should check the regulator diaphragm after using it and when checking its operation, they should not obstruct the flow of air from the regulator. The institute has shown that at least 10 percent of the units examined have ruptured or punctured diaphragms.

The investigation was begun by NIOSH following the death of three Lubbock, Tex., firefighters who were wearing this particular respirator. NIOSH said, "Users should examine the regulator for possible damaged diaphragms and replace those diaphragms in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. The user may check the diaphragm after each use by closing both the main line and bypass valves and blowing through the regulator outlet port. It should be possible to maintain a slight positive pressure in the regulator. The user should check the regulator diaphragm after each use and during regular inspections of the complete apparatus.

"If it is known that failure occurs during assembly, storage or use of the respirator, therefore extreme caution may be employed when using the respirator," the institute stated.

NIOSH cautioned users of the apparatus that, when checking its operation, they should not obstruct the flow of air from the regulator when the user should check the regulator diaphragm after using it and when checking its operation, they should not obstruct the flow of air from the regulator.

Further technical information is available from Richard M. Ronk, Chief, Respirator Section, Testing and Certification Branch, NIOSH, 446 Chestnut Ridge Road, Morgantown, W.Va. 26505; telephone (304) 599-7337.

Respirators

NIOSH Warns Users of Scott Apparatus of Failure of Regulator Diaphragms

Survey of Scott Air Pack II and IIA self-contained breathing apparatus manufactured by Scott Aviation, Lancaster, N.Y., that regulator diaphragms have split or become obstructed the flow of air from the regulator when the user should check the regulator diaphragm after using it and when checking its operation, they should not obstruct the flow of air from the regulator. The institute has shown that at least 10 percent of the units examined have ruptured or punctured diaphragms.

The investigation was begun by NIOSH following the death of three Lubbock, Tex., firefighters who were wearing this particular respirator. NIOSH said, "Users should examine the regulator for possible damaged diaphragms and replace those diaphragms in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. The user may check the diaphragm after each use by closing both the main line and bypass valves and blowing through the regulator outlet port. It should be possible to maintain a slight positive pressure in the regulator. The user should check the regulator diaphragm after each use and during regular inspections of the complete apparatus.

"If it is known that failure occurs during assembly, storage or use of the respirator, therefore extreme caution may be employed when using the respirator," the institute stated.

NIOSH cautioned users of the apparatus that, when checking its operation, they should not obstruct the flow of air from the regulator when the user should check the regulator diaphragm after using it and when checking its operation, they should not obstruct the flow of air from the regulator.

Further technical information is available from Richard M. Ronk, Chief, Respirator Section, Testing and Certification Branch, NIOSH, 446 Chestnut Ridge Road, Morgantown, W.Va. 26505; telephone (304) 599-7337.