McNally, Stiefer re-elected to top posts

Business Manager Jack McNally and President Howard Stiefer were re-elected to the union's top leadership positions in mail ballots counted June 22.

For McNally and Stiefer, both in office since 1980, the election marks their seventh consecutive election victory. Both ran unopposed.

Local 1245 has faced formidable challenges since elections were last held in 1995, most notably the coming of electric industry restructuring. Under McNally, the union has vigorously defended the job security of its members through effective intervention with the California Public Utilities Commission and through a strategic partnership with Pacific Gas & Electric Co., the union's principal employer.

Also running unopposed for re-election were Vice President Jim McCauley, Recording Secretary Ed Mallory, Treasurer Mike Davis, and Executive Board members Chris Habecker and Anna Bayless. Kathy Tindall won re-election with 57% of the vote in a contested race for Northern Area Executive Board member, while John Mendoza edged off two challengers to win the Executive Board Member at Large seat with 42% of the vote. Mendoza was originally appointed in 1997 to fill a vacancy on the Executive Board.

Advisory Council elections featured several contested positions in which incumbents were defeated. For Clerical-At-Large, Arlene Edwards captured 60% of the vote in defeating incumbent Linda Jurado. For Citizens Utilities Co. of California, Mike Meno edged out incumbent Monte Nelson by one vote. Harvey Iness received 57% of the vote in defeating incumbent Ray Thomas to represent Shasta PG&E, City of Redding, Lassen MUD, Shasta Dam Area PUD, and Bella Vista Water District.

In contested races where there was no incumbent running, Archie Taylor won 78% of the vote to represent Pacific Gas Transmission, Tom Rowley won 54% of the vote to represent Outside Construction, and Connie Bibbs won 55% of the vote to represent Sacramento Regional Transit.

Prudential out at PG&E

The lucrative contract to provide health insurance for PG&E employees will be yanked from Prudential as the result of repeated employee complaints about poor treatment and administrative bungling.

Local 1245 spearheaded a formal investigation of Prudential's service when union members registered numerous complaints about service. Although Prudential was given an opportunity to address the problems, the union and company ultimately decided to go with United Healthcare when Prudential's contract expires at the end of this year.

For more information, check out the union's electronic bulletin board at PG&E.
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**Business Manager & Executive Editor**
Jack McNally

**President**
Howard Stiefer

**Executive Board**
Jim McCauley
E. L. "Ed" Maloy
Anna Bayless
Chris Habeecker
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Eric Wolfe

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**LABOR AT LARGE**

**Rolling the union on...**

**Mad Miners:** Several hundred striking miners marched 500 kilometers to Kiev in the Ukraine last month to demand payment of massive wage arrears. The miners asked for fair treatment for all public sector employees who have not been paid. Forty-five of Ukraine's 276 mines were on strike in mid-June, union leaders said. The miners are owed on average eight months in back wages, according to LaborStart, an Internet news service.

**Puerto Ricans Protest:** The Greater Committee of Labor Organizations, which claims 58 Puerto Rican unions with at least 150,000 government workers and thousands more in the private sector, voted June 28 for a strike of unspecified duration to protest the government's sale of a majority interest of the publicly-owned telephone company.

**Auto Activism:** Strikes forced the shutdown of nearly all of General Motor's North American assembly plants and cost the company about $1.2 billion in the second quarter. The strikes at the United Auto Workers and Delphi Flint East are largely over fears that the automaker plans to reduce the plants' employment, or close or sell the parts factories.

**Puerto Ricans Protest:** The Greater Committee of Labor Organizations, which claims 58 Puerto Rican unions with at least 150,000 government workers and thousands more in the private sector, voted June 28 for a strike of unspecified duration to protest the government's sale of a majority interest of the publicly-owned telephone company.

**Pilots Settle:** Air France planes began returning to the skies June 11 after a devastating 10-day pilots’ strike that threatened to disrupt the World Cup soccer tournament, Reuters reported. The pilots agreed to accept share options on a voluntary basis in return for taking a pay cut in a seven-year scheme. The carrier dropped plans to introduce a two-tier pay scale which would have put junior pilots permanently in a low salary bracket.

**Share the Wealth:** Pilots at Northwest Airlines voted to strike over the lack of progress on a new contract, Labor Notes reported. They say management was glad to have them as partners when they took concessions to help the airline survive in the early 90s, but doesn’t want them as partners now that the airline is making record profits. The pilots can’t legally strike until a mediator declares an impasse and a 30-day “cooling off period” is observed.

**Spies Strike:** Some 250 undercover police spies went on strike in Mexico City in April, according to Mexican Labor News and Analysis. The agents spy on activities such as demonstrations and marches for Mexico City’s Secretary of Public Security. They struck when the agency cancelled much of their Saturday and Sunday work, costing them overtime pay.

**Some 120,000 union members in South Korea staged a two-day strike in late May to protest widespread layoffs that were prompted by International Monetary Fund austerity measures, Labor Notes reported.**

---

**Redding members assist strike**

Local 1245 members in Unit 3217, raised $427 in personal contributions to assist striking nurses at Redding Memorial Hospital.

The union members, employed in the city's Electric Department and shop, delivered the money to the nurses union—Local 716 of the California Health Care Employees, an affiliate of the Laborers union.

Walking picket with the nurses were Local 1245 Advisory Council member Ray Thomas, and his father Leland Thomas, a past president of Local 1245.

Helping with the collection of money, and delivering donuts and sodas to the strikers, were members John Roberts, Jim Ferguson, John Trunnel, Paul Sydow and Floyd Perry.

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**Accident claims life of Bruce Benedict**

PG&E Lineman Bruce Benedict was fatally injured by electrical contact near Lincoln, Ca. on June 9. The crew was straightening a distribution pole when the primary conductor parted, fell to the ground, and struck Benedict, resulting in the fatal injury.

It is believed that Benedict lifted the stiff legs on the line truck while the boom was still attached to the pole. It is suspected the resulting movement of the pole caused the conductor to part and fall to the ground.

The fatality is being investigated by the company, CalOSHA and Local 1245.

Benedict had 26 years with PG&E and was 49 years old. He is survived by his 21-year-old son. The union extends its condolences to the family and friends of Brother Bruce Benedict.
McNally, Stiefer re-elected

From PAGE ONE


Winning uncontested races to fill vacant Advisory Council seats were Kit Stice, who replaced Keith Burkhart for the Sacramento PG&E position, and Mike Stout, who replaced David Pittman for the Irrigation Districts position.

A complete list of winners appears below.

Advisory Council

San Joaquin PG&E: DAVID SCOTT
Costa Valleys PG&E: DAN LOCKWOOD
Pipeline Operations PG&E: NO CANDIDATE
City of Santa Clara, San Jose Div. PG&E: BILL WALLACE
AC Transit District, East Bay Municipalities: LARRY RODRIGUEZ
East Bay & Materials PG&E, Foster Wheeler: RICH COWART
San Francisco & General Office PG&E: BERNARD SMALLWOOD
Stockton PG&E, City of Lodi: GROVER DAY
Sacramento Regional Transit District: CONNIE BIBBS
Pacific Gas Transmission Co: ARCHIE TAYLOR
Humboldt PG&E: LEE R. THOMAS, JR.
Shasta PG&E, City of Redding, Lassen MUD, Shasta Dam Area PUB, Bella Vista Water District: HARVEY INNESS
Sierra Pacific Power, WP Natural Gas-South Lake Tahoe, CP National-Elko

Electoral Results

De Sabla PG&E: BOB LOVETT
Drum PG&E, Plumas Sierra REC, City of Roseville: TERRY ANDREUCCI
Colgate PG&E, City of Gridley, Yuba County Water Agency: JIM EDWARDS
North Bay PG&E, City of Healdsburg: JIM FINLEY
Sacramento PG&E, Calibration & Testing: KIT STICE
Sacramento Municipal Utility District, GEO/Coldwater Creek Operating Coop: ART TORRES
Water & Power Resource Services/Western Area Power Admin., US Gov't: NO CANDIDATE
Citizens Utilities Co. of California: MIKE MENA
General Construction PG&E: JOE OSTERLUND
Tree Trimmer Companies: BOB IRWIN
Clerical at Large PG&E (except GO clerical): ARLENE EDWARDS
San Francisco General Office Clerical PG&E: NO CANDIDATE
Irrigation Districts: MIKE STOUT
Outside Construction: TOM ROWLEY
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Region 2: NO CANDIDATE

POIN OF VIEW

Nevada's phony electric market

Jack McNally, IBEW 1245 Business Manager

Now it's Nevada's turn. Electric restructuring has been rocking California for several years, raising serious concerns about service reliability, safety, worker dislocation, and equitable treatment for consumers. Unfortunately it appears that Nevada hasn't learned much from California's experience.

The Nevada legislature ignored input from Local 1245 when it passed Assembly Bill 366. This bill laid out the general framework for electric restructuring, leaving the details to be worked out by the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada (PUCN).

Recently the PUCN adopted rules that open up metering, billing, collection, and customer service to competition. These rules prohibit incumbent utilities like Sierra Pacific Power from providing these services. The PUCN will permit an incumbent utility to offer these services through an affiliate, but has not yet decided whether to permit the affiliate to use the parent utility's name. The PUCN has also not yet ruled on who will be the provider of last resort.

If these rules stand, it will radically alter the way that electricity—an essential service—is delivered to the citizens of Nevada. And Nevada citizens are not going to appreciate the consequences of these changes once they become known.

What happens when you take the utility out of the customer service end of the business? When you have a service-related problem, a separate company will take your call. That company will then have to turn around and call the distribution utility to take action.

Can anyone really believe this fragmentation of responsibility will produce better service? It is far more likely that service reliability, safety and timely response will suffer.

How could Nevada chart a course so likely to harm the interests of its citizens? Easy—the citizens weren't consulted.

This restructuring is being driven by out-of-state interests who see a profit opportunity by setting up low-wage, non-union operations in Nevada, or by taking the business out of state altogether. (Imagine how efficient the emergency response will be when you try to explain your problem to a customer service representative working for minimal wages in Nebraska or Alabama.)

When you start reducing the workforce, and downsizing the skills of those who perform the work, you are starting on a path that leads to disaster for consumers—as we learned during the huge outages of 1995 in California.

But the PUCN doesn't seem overly concerned about Nevada consumers. In fact, the PUCN wants to assign itself the authority to choose an electric service provider for the consumer, even if the consumer would prefer to keep the status quo.

In the telecommunication industry, if you change a consumer's long distance carrier without asking permission, it's called slamming. And it's against the law. Now the PUCN wants to give itself the power to hand utility customers over to companies they didn't choose. That's slamming—by the very Commission that is supposed to protect the ratepayers from such practices. We can only assume that the Nevada legislature approves such practices.

What sort of market is it where state legislators and their lackey commissioners allocate to themselves the right to divide up the spoils of competition? It's a phony market, and it will bring nothing but phony benefits.

What sort of 'market' is it where state legislators and their lackey commissioners allocate to themselves the right to divide up the spoils of competition? It's a phony market, and it will bring nothing but phony benefits.

July 1998 Utility Reporter 3
Union honors members for long-time service

Bakersfield
March 13, 1998

35 Years
Errol Montgomery (left) is congratulated by Business Manager Jack McNally.

30 Years
Stanley Stensrud (left) is congratulated by Business Manager Jack McNally.

25 Years
Jeronimo Adame, Daniel Barraza, Dante Borradori, Charles Claffy, Bruno Dinelli, John Erreca, Manuel Gonzalez, Louie Hinojosa, Randy Klassen, Larry Moon, Daniel Morin, Filemon Rodriguez, Ken White

20 Years
In Sacramento: heated battles over worker rights

Daily Overtime, SB 680 and AB 15

For over 80 years, daily overtime regulations protected California workers from the ill effects of long working hours. In 1996, Governor Wilson eliminated daily overtime regulations through action of the Industrial Welfare Commission. The IWC’s action rescinded the right of workers to democratically vote for a workday of longer than eight hours. The California Labor Federation sponsored two pieces of legislation that would restore daily overtime pay for approximately 8 million workers. SB 680, carried by Senator Solis (D-El Monte), was passed by the Legislature last year and vetoed by the Governor. Senator Solis sought a veto override. This effort failed.

AB 15, a companion bill being carried by Assemblyman Wally Knox (D-Los Angeles) is pending a vote on the Senate Floor and then will go back to the Assembly for a concurrent vote.

Justice for Part-timers, SB 1968

Twenty-one members of the California State Senate believe employees deserve equal pay for equal work, whether they work full-time or part-time. SB 1968 by Hilda Solis (D-El Monte) would guarantee wage and benefit parity for part-time workers. The bill passed out of the Senate by a 21-16 vote. Senate Costa (D-Fresno) was the lone Democratic to vote against the bill. All you part-time PG&E Call Center employees in Fresno might want to contact Senator Costa and ask him to explain his vote.

Family Sick Leave, AB 480

Working people are under increasing pressure to cope with the competing demands of job and family. When a child gets sick, some workers face a horrible choice: take care of your child or cope with the competing demands of job and family. When a child gets sick, some workers face a horrible choice: take care of your child or work. AB 480, sponsored by Assemblymember Wally Knox (D-Los Angeles) carries AB 480, which, if passed, would grant workers the right to use half their accumulated sick leave to care for an ill child. AB 480 made its way to the Senate floor. But when the bill was taken up for a floor vote in May, it failed by one vote. Senator Ayala (D-Chino) refused to vote for this family friendly legislation.

Cal-OSHA Standards, AB 2800

Cal-OSHA currently has the authority to reduce penalties for employers who violate workplace health and safety rules. All too often the result is that employers who put their workers in danger by breaking Cal-OSHA standards receive minimal fines—barely a slap on the wrist. AB 2800, which was being carried by Dick Floyd (D-Wilmington), would have made employers pay if they injured their workers, by limiting Cal-OSHA’s ability to reduce penalties. When the bill came up for a floor vote, Assemblyman Machado (D-Linden) and Cardoza (D-Merced) abstained. The bill died on the Assembly Floor.

Enhanced Age Discrimination Protections, AB 1643

By the year 2005 over half of the workforce will be 40 years of age or older. In the last five years, almost 15,000 claims of age discrimination have been filed, and these claims continue to grow. AB 1643, introduced by Assemblywoman Escutia (D-Bell) and co-sponsored by the Labor Federation, would provide greater protection to our aging workforce. The bill, which passed out of the Assembly this spring and now heads to the Senate Industrial Relations Committee, would overturn a California Court of Appeals case which made it harder for employees to prove age discrimination. The bill would declare the intent of the Legislature that the use of salary as the basis for differentiating between employees when terminating employment may be found to constitute age discrimination. Discrimination against older workers should be fought with the same tools and vigor as other forms of discrimination.

Minimum Wage Increase, AB 1684

AB 1684, authored by Assemblymember Floyd, would raise the minimum wage to $6.75/hour beginning Jan. 1, 1999 and would require that the minimum wage be indexed annually.

Penalties for Employers, AB 2800

AB 2800 would prohibit an employer who repeatedly violates occupational safety and health standards from receiving any adjustment in civil penalties on the basis of good faith. This bill failed passage on the Assembly floor.

Benefit Increases for Disabled and Unemployed Workers, SB 495, SB 570, SB 1909, SB 233

SB 495 (Rosenthal, D-N. Hollywood) would increase the maximum weekly State Disability Insurance to $490.00 from the current cap of $336.00. This is an excellent time to give injured workers some additional money; the Unemployment Compensation Disability Fund, funded entirely by workers contributions, is flush with over $1.2 billion.

SB 570 (Solis, D-El Monte) would increase workers' compensation benefits for workers with temporary or permanent disability. A bit of background: in 1995 the legislature reformed the workers' compensation system. The changes were expected to save money for employers, in the form of reduced workers' compensation expenses, and workers, in the form of benefit increases. The savings were intended to be divided equally. But due to uncertainty about how great the savings would be, insurers and employers resisted increasing benefits until they could quantify the value of the reforms. Five years later, things have not worked out fairly. Employers, who were expected to save $1.5 billion, have in fact saved over $10.5 billion in the last three years. Meanwhile, workers have won benefit increases of just $513 million.

State Disability and Workers' Compensation to Immigrant Workers, SB 1933

Don't workers who have paid into the State Disability Insurance (SDI) program deserve the benefits of this program if they are injured on the job, regardless of their immigration status? Shouldn't employers who break the law by failing to carry workers' compensation insurance be punished for it? That's what Senator Johnston (D-Sacramento), along with 20 of his Senate colleagues, believe.

This May, the Senate passed SB 1933. The bill would permit the State to continue to provide SDI and workers’ compensation insurance to immigrant workers. As part of the federal welfare reform programs, Governor Wilson has targeted SDI and workers’ compensation as two “public benefit” programs that should be denied to immigrant workers. The reality is that SDI and workers’ compensation are not public benefits, and the Governor is once again attacking immigrant workers.

July 1998
Harold "Tuffy" Johnson met his future wife, Sonya, after World War II when she hailed his cab and he drove her to work. The enterprising Johnson found out when her shift ended, picked her up, and a romance blossomed.

When Sonya accompanied Johnson to a Boy Scout event, she was surprised to learn that her cabbie boyfriend was one of the featured attractions—walking the tightrope. "I didn't know you could do that," she told him.

That was just one of the things she didn't know about Tuffy Johnson.

Before "settling down" to a steady job at Pacific Gas & Electric in 1951, Johnson had more careers than a polka has steps. At the tender age of 12 he was singing for the customers at his parents' dance hall in Sacramento. In 1932, after turning 15, he worked on a ranch picking hops.

For Johnson, the world of work was like a candy shop. He had to taste it all. Or at least try.

After leaving the hop fields he became a firefighter for the State Division of Forestry in Los Gatos, Hollister and San Andreas, working his way up to foreman. For a while he was also director of the Florin Fire Department.

Meanwhile, show business still beckoned. Although adulthood had sabotaged his soprano voice, Johnson developed other entertainment skills: He could juggle, and he could walk the wire. So he organized the Johnson & Bocklich Circus, which also featured goats, ponies, dogs, a seal—even an elephant.

"All trained," Johnson points out. As the country moved closer to war, Johnson found work at McClelland field, was transferred to Panama, then returned home to join the Army Air Force. An injury quickly put an end to his military service, so he went into the taxi business.

"I've been up and down like a slot machine," Johnson says of his many careers.

When Sonya accompanied Johnson to a Boy Scout event, she was surprised to learn that her cabbie boyfriend was one of the featured attractions—walking the tightrope.

"I didn't know you could do that," she told him.

That was just one of the things she didn't know about Tuffy Johnson.
TUFFY JOHNSON'S SONG

My name is Tuffy Johnson.
I'm a foreman on this crew.
And I am here to tell you
there's nothing we can't do.
We can run a service, dig a ditch
or hank a meter, too.
And there's a damn good reason
'cause we've got a damn fine crew.

Now down in San Francisco
there's a man named Mr. Black.
He really is a smiling
as he stacks up all the jack.
'Cause no matter how rough, no matter how tough,
he knows we'll see it through.
And there's a damn good reason
'cause we've got a damn fine crew.

Now if you'd like to join us
and you think you've got the stuff,
And you won't start a whinin'
when the going it gets rough.
Then come along and join us
and we'll all welcome you.
And you will be a member of
a mighty damn fine crew.

When he hired on at PG&E, it might have appeared that he was settling down. And in a way he was. He stayed with the company 28 years, working his way up to light crew foreman and finding time along the way to serve as a shop steward for the union.

But Tuffy Johnson didn't settle down the way most people settle down. While working at PG&E, he found time to start a concession business on the side, providing refreshments for football games, company picnics, and the like. He says he never let his business ventures interfere with his job, and no one ever complained. He even hired some of his fellow PG&E employees to assist in his concessions business.

It's hard to imagine how they found the energy for work on the side. In those days, utility work was extremely demanding. "The first 10 years was all hard hand labor," says Johnson.

Then something happened that changed life dramatically for Johnson and his co-workers.

"We had a big job on Franklin Boulevard—it was the first time we saw a backhoe," Johnson recalls. Someone remarked: "We have to get one of those."

Prior to that technological breakthrough, a crew of four might do one long service a day, or perhaps two or three short services. But with a backhoe digging all the ditches, a crew might do over 30 services in a day.

"PG&E was a wonderful company to work for. I really enjoyed it," says Johnson. "It was like the circus—you moved to a new place every day."

Johnson was happy to be at PG&E in part because he knew what life was like without a union. In his youth he worked on a construction job in San Francisco where the men walked loads of cement up sloping planks to the higher floors because there were no elevators.

"If you dumped a load, you were automatically fired," Johnson recalls. That experience made a big impression. "I'm a strong believer in unions," he says.

Running a concession business wasn't the only way Johnson filled his spare time while working at PG&E. He also wrote songs and, after retiring from PG&E in 1979, he took up the banjo. Among his compositions are "The Banjo Man" and "Open Up the Pearly Gates, Here Comes the Banjo Man."

His marriage to Sonya produced three children: Gary, Paul and Patty. Sonya died in 1986, after spending 40 years with the cabbie who drove her to work, and in recent years Johnson has had to give up the banjo. The hands that once juggled balls in the circus just don't respond the way they used to.

Johnson doesn't seem too bothered by it, though. "I've been fortunate enough to do everything I ever wanted to do," he declares.

But even at age 81, Tuffy Johnson isn't the sort to give up show business entirely. A few months ago he called up Local 1245 and left a message—in song.

It went like this:

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July 1998    Utility Reporter   7
**Health and Safety**

**Know Your Rights**

If you are injured on the job...

If you are injured on the job you have a right to see your own doctor. You must have a blue card (the one available from the union) or a company form on file. If you have that card or form on file and you choose to see your own doctor, that doctor is the one who makes the determination about any treatments, restrictions and whether you are able to work. Do not allow any supervisor to keep you from seeing your own doctor if you have the card/form on file. And absolutely do not allow a supervisor to prescribe medical treatment (including compresses) for you.

If you do not have the blue card or form on file, the company may take an employee to see a panel physician, but after 30 days you may switch to your own doctor. The first doctor an employee sees for the injury may be the key to the Worker's Comp claim.

If you sign a release of information, the company has the right to see your entire medical history. That means all of your medical history. You do not have to sign such a medical release. Medical releases should be limited only to information about the current injury.

The supervisor may accompany an employee to the panel doctor and go in to see the doctor before and after the employee does. The purpose is to explain what is involved in the employee's job and to find out about the prescribed treatment and job restrictions, if any.

The supervisor should absolutely not go into the doctor's office during the examination. Get a blue card from a shop steward or the appropriate form from your supervisor or the company's Human Resources department if you wish to see your own doctor in case of an on-the-job injury. The card/form must be on file with your employer 30 days prior to any industrial injury. Always keep a copy for yourself and give the original to your supervisor.

It is against the law for an employer to harass an employee as a result of an industrial injury.

If you are having problems with the company regarding an industrial injury, you have the right to seek legal advice for your claim. If in doubt, talk to a shop steward or call the union.

**Common sense answers**

**'Bill of Rights' needed for health care**

A recent study conducted by the Lewin Group projected that up to 12.5 million more people will lose health care coverage over the next five years if nothing is done to stop the decline.

In addition, a majority of Americans believe that insurance plans often compromise the quality of care to cut costs and increase profits. Nearly half say that they or someone they know has had a bad experience with an HMO.

These facts lead to the inescapable conclusion that there is a crisis of confidence in American health care coverage. Local 1245 members can help efforts to address this crisis by urging their Congressional representatives to support H.R. 3605 and S. 1890—the Patient Bill of Rights.

The Patient Bill of Rights Act of 1998 ensures that every American family has the quality health care they deserve.

These rights—the right to a specialist for the care you need, the right to emergency room care, the right to appeal of a health care decision with which you disagree—represent common sense answers to the real life problems experienced by working families across the nation.

With these bills, Congress would extend to the nearly 170 million Americans in private health plans the same protections recently afforded the 90 million beneficiaries of federal health programs by the President's executive memorandum.

The cost of these basic consumer protections are negligible. An independent study by Coopers & Lybrand for the Kaiser Family Foundation puts the costs of the President's Consumer Bill of Rights provisions at $31 per year for the average family policy. This translates into premium increases of less than one percent—well below the industry's latest estimate of 15.5% to 30.2%. Those HMOs already doing the right thing will see no cost increase.

Unions are the largest organized group of managed care purchasers and consumers. Together, AFL-CIO unions represent more than one in four Americans with employer based coverage.

**Thank you for service**

Bill Hunt and Pete Ely are rotating off the Local 1245 Health & Safety Committee. We want to thank them for their active service in monitoring safety issues and in contributing to this column.

New committee members will be appointed in the near future.

**Be Water Safe**

The snow pack has started to melt and high water is inevitable in rivers and streams. The canals are now full, with irrigation season well underway. Although a canal, stream or river looks like a good place for a swim on a hot summer day, it can be very dangerous.

Summer heat

Statistics show that 25-50% of all adolescents and adults who drown or die by other means while swimming or boating consumed alcohol beforehand.

Drink plenty of water or liquids with electrolytes while working or playing in summer weather.

Have a safe summer!

*There is a very upset inspector from OSHA to see you, sir.*

**Summer heat**

Summer weather is here and with it the lure of the great outdoors. That means it's time to get out the sun screen. It's especially important to use sun screen between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.

When enjoying the outdoor weather, please remember: don't mix alcohol and water.
Seniors call for expansion of Medicare

Hundreds of senior citizens, including members of the Local 1245 Retirees Club, jammed into the cavernous Unitarian Church in San Francisco on June 26 to call for the improvement and expansion of the Medicare system.

The massive town hall meeting, which featured speeches by Bay Area Congresswomen Nancy Pelosi and Barbara Lee, included sharp criticism of the President’s Bi-Partisan Commission on Medicare.

Among the proposals under consideration by the Commission are: raising the eligibility age, increasing co-payments and out-of-pocket costs, increasing premium rates, and privatizing the system through the establishment of vouchers and medical savings accounts. Such actions “would completely unravel the very delicate safety net that we will have upon our retirement,” testified Hollice Holman, a member of SEIU Local 250.

Many speakers, including Rep. Barbara Lee (D-Oakland), called for the expansion of Medicare into a universal health care system covering all Americans, starting with President Clinton’s plan to cover Americans beginning at age 55.

Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-San Francisco) said the country needs “to look at improving and expanding services covered by Medicare—including long-term care.”

Other speakers noted that they planned their retirement in good faith around existing Medicare arrangements.

“If Medicare were to change in any way—by increasing the age at which one becomes eligible, or raising premiums or co-payments—it will knock me right off the playing field,” testified Rita Bridges, executive secretary of the Congress of California Seniors. “My carefully planned and earned retirement would have to come to a crashing halt.”

Medicare is widely acknowledged to be far more efficient than health care delivery in the private sector. Medicare averages just 3% in administrative costs, compared to 7-30% in the private sector.

Health Access California, a major sponsor of the June town hall meeting, favors the expansion of Medicare through progressive financing. Health Access California believes the following steps could help assure Medicare’s long-term stability without sacrificing benefits:

- Slow down efforts to force all Medicare patients into managed care.
- Stop the medical savings accounts experiment, which encourages the healthy and wealthy Medicare patients to take money out of the insurance plan and leaves sicker and less wealthy patients in a weakened insurance plan.
- Increase the Medicare tax as needed to keep the system solvent.
- Reduce tax breaks for corporations and the wealthy.
- Consider removing the cap on SSI taxes on individuals who earn over $67,000 a year.
- Apply the Medicare tax to unearned as well as earned income.

Privatized Social Security would cut benefits

Proposals to partially privatize Social Security would result in smaller guaranteed benefits than the retirement program now promises, according to a Congressional report released last month.

One plan, devised by a privately convened study group of Republican and Democratic lawmakers, would slash by a third the benefits due to a worker with average income retiring at age 65 in 2025, the Congressional Research Service study said.

Another proposal, by Senators Bob Kerrey and Daniel Moynihan, would reduce the same worker’s benefits by 11%.

Ironically, these proposals seek to “save” Social Security at a time when many experts believe the Social Security system is in no financial danger.

Those who project a Social Security “crisis” to arrive in 2032 base their projections on an annual economic growth rate of just 1.49%, even though the economy has grown at an annual average of 3.5% for the past 75 years. If future growth is anywhere near the average for the 20th century, Social Security will remain solvent indefinitely, without tax increases or benefit cuts.

Nonetheless, the National Commission on Retirement Policy has absurdly recommended that the eligibility age for Social Security be raised to 70. If it ain’t broke...
FINANCIAL STATEMENT

IBEW LOCAL 1245

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED
DECEMBER 31, 1997

March 11, 1998

To the Officers and Members of the
International Brotherhood of Electrical
Workers, Local No. 1245
Walnut Creek, California

We have audited the accompanying statement of Financial Position arising from cash transactions as of December 31, 1997 and the related Statements of Cash Receipts and Disbursements of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local No 1245 for the year and quarter ended December 31, 1997. These financial statements are the responsibility of the union's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material statement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

As described in Note 1, these financial statements are prepared on the cash basis of accounting, which is a comprehensive bases of accounting other than generally accepted accounting principles.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the cash transactions of Local No. 1245 for the year and quarter ended December 31, 1997 and its net assets at December 31, 1997 in accordance with the basis of accounting described in Note 1 to the statement.

DALMAS ACCOUNTANCY CORP.
Certified Public Accountant

March 11, 1998

To the Officers and Members of the
International Brotherhood of Electrical
Workers, Local No. 1245
Walnut Creek, California

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DALMAS ACCOUNTANCY CORP.
Certified Public Accountant

March 11, 1998
FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Refunds and reimbursements:
Loan payments - Energy Workers Center:
  Interest 20,018.60
  Principal 20,133.00
  Union Shopper 6,584.25
  Other receipts 2,682.84
  Automobiles sales 20,033.00
  Lords Electric settlement 3,000.00

International portion of receipts:
  "A" members' per capita 259,404.80
  "BA" members' per capita 2,661,472.20
  Initiation fees 36,927.07
  D.B.A.F. fees 432.00
  Reinstatement fees 12,910.72
  Agency fees 37,601.45
  Difference in fees 10.00
  Difference in per capita 1,232.20
  Total receipts 11,941,025.96
  Total balance and receipts 17,740,984.56

Disbursements, per Page 10 of Schedule of Disbursements
9,635,520.97

Cash balance, December 31, 1997, Details in Statement of Financial Position
$ 8,105,383.53

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL NO. 1245
SCHEDULE OF CASH DISBURSEMENTS-UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS
For the Year Ended December 31, 1997

Staff expenses:
  Salaries 2,894,028.57
  Expenses 267,949.40
  Automobile expenses 12,731.58
  Administrative expenses 2,334.64
  Fitness plan 1,344.82
  Automobile purchases 264,883.84
  Total 3,433,792.87

Research and Education:
  Subscriptions and publications 18,527.81
  Public relations 359.13
  Scholarship fund 2,050.00
  Total 22,936.94

Office salaries:
  Administration office salaries 244,712.04
  Bargaining unit salaries 442,620.84
  Total 687,332.88

Office expenses:
  Rent 119,942.86
  Telephone 73,005.39
  Postage mail and meter service and expense 66,429.21
  Supplies 66,429.21
  Equipment maintenance 13,486.71
  Data processing 111,841.82
  Equipment rental 947.03
  Utility reporter 116,712.48
  Miscellaneous 29,957.09
  Bank charges 845.86
  Furniture and equipment purchases 29,957.09
  Utilities and jointarium 3,114.50
  Christmas cards 321.50
  Storage 5,247.00
  Total 764,500.34

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL NO. 1245
SCHEDULE OF CASH DISBURSEMENTS-UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS
For the Year Ended December 31, 1997

Salaries Paid or Reimbursed 3.433,792.87
Expenses 2.894,028.57
Total 6.327,821.44

Committee salaries and expenses:
  Executive Board meetings $ 8,155.39 $ 11,454.74 $ 19,610.13
  Advisory Council 12,162.69 69,286.22 71,448.91
  Trustee Committee 4,654.30 1,283.28 5,937.58
  Review Committee 3,116.49 1,378.06 4,494.55
  Safety Committee 6,783.41 7,858.76 14,642.17
  Steward expense 3,509.05 19,291.82 22,800.87
  Other conferences 14,768.36 64,764.37 79,532.83
  Labor Management 2,175.38 16,086.29 18,261.67
  Central Labor 236.91 27,087.81 27,324.72
  Organizing 456.83 456.83
  Executive Board Trial Bd. Expenses 442.62
  Grievance/FF/LIC 493.78 3,381.11 3,874.89
  Total 55,020.25 184,283.21 243,303.46

Various Other Committees:
  City Union 1,457.60 7,516.00 8,973.60
  Sierra Pacific Power 665.28 19,969.61 20,634.89
  U.S. Bureau of Reclamation 424.90 2,110.30 2,535.20
  Outside Line 8,189.05 5,954.05 14,143.10
  Sacramento Muni Utilities District 1,737.36 1,737.36
  Regional Transit 27.90 27.90
  C.P.U.C. Campaign 33.13 33.13
  Retirees 4,692.00 4,692.00
  Executive Board meetings 784,520.25 184,283.21 968,803.46
  Executive Board meetings 116,492.00 3,381.11 119,873.11
  Total 2,065,285.91 2,468,795.78 4,533,081.69

Difference in per capita 1.235.20 2.409.26 3.484.46
Difference in fees 10.00
Difference in per capita 1.235.20

Reinstatement fees 12,910.72
Agency fees 37,601.45

City of Oakland 499.00 1,373.47 1,872.47
City of Berkeley 660.57 660.57
City of Berkeley 660.57 660.57
City of Berkeley 660.57 660.57
City of Berkeley 660.57 660.57

Loan payments - Energy Workers Center: Administration office salaries 244,712.04
Bargaining unit salaries 442,620.84
Total 687,332.88

Office expenses:
Rent 119,942.86
Telephone 73,005.39
Postage mail and meter service and expense 66,429.21
Print room/printing 66,429.21
Supplies 66,429.21
Equipment maintenance 13,486.71
Data processing 111,841.82
Equipment rental 947.03
Utility reporter 116,712.48
Miscellaneous 29,957.09
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Christmas cards 321.50
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Total 764,500.34

See NEXT PAGE

July 1998 Utility Reporter 11
Unworthy

How could the Union save THAT clerk?
Everyone knows that SHE'S a jerk!
How could the Union help THAT slob?
He's so unworthy for the job!
Why doesn't the Union work for ME?
I'm so "perfect." Can't they see?
Why can't the Union let ME decide?
What kind of service they'll provide?
Why can't the Union let THEM rot?
Cause THEY deserve what they got!

But when the tables have been turned,
And I'M the one Management BURNED!
be screaming and I'll sure shout,
And demand the UNION, Go all out!
To protect ME and MY rights!
To stand together in the fight!
Remember SISTER
and BROTHER,
We must ALL work for each other.
The clerk, the jerk, and the slob,
Still deserve to have a job.
To worry where Union effort is spent,
Makes US no better than MANAGEMENT!

From "The Action"
APWU Local 635

"So when it came to a vote I said, 'A union, who needs it?''"