Tom Brown: new rep for Outside Construction

Tom Brown, a veteran hand with 30 years of experience in the trade, has been hired as the new IBEW Local 1245 business representative for Outside Construction. Initiated in 1972, Brown most recently worked out of the Riverside office as a foreman for Par Electric. He has worked at various times as lineman, foreman, and superintendent, giving him wide experience in the trade.

Brown’s utility experience includes stints at Southern California Edison, Nevada Power, and the Department of Public Works in Los Angeles. As an Outside hand, Brown has worked for virtually all of Local 1245’s major signatory contractors.

Brown’s father, Roy Brown, also worked extensively in the trade and served as an IBEW steward.

Brown will oversee operations at Local 1245’s southern dispatch office in Riverside.

Sierra Pacific sues to stop deregulation

In a move applauded by Local 1245, Sierra Pacific Resources has asked a federal court to declare Nevada’s electric deregulation law unconstitutional.

The company hopes to stop the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada from implementing the deregulation law—Senate Bill 438—until the state legislature has a chance to revisit the issue when it convenes in July of 2001.

The lawsuit is the latest move in a...
By Jack McNally, Business Manager

God gave all of us a brain, but sometimes you have to wonder if He skipped a couple of folks.

Take the San Francisco Electrical Contractors Association, the San Francisco affiliate of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA). These people recently decided to hire a law firm to tell them how to defeat Local 1245 in a union representation election at one of their affiliated contractors: Abbett Electric.

OK, I know, corporations hire lawyers all the time to help them defeat unions. But this particular case defies all logic.

NECA is an association of electrical contractors that aggressively promotes its IBEW connection in order to win trust and business, including business from the nation’s utility companies. Listen to how a recent NECA brochure trumpets the association’s long alliance with the IBEW:

"When utilities team with NECA-IBEW line contractors, they find that things aren’t what they used to be, they’re better. With a NECA-IBEW team at your elbow, you’ll be able to take on any project with confidence that your job will be completed safely, on time, and on budget." Makes it sound like this relationship is solid as a rock. But now it appears that if you lift that rock a little bit you’ll find something pretty disgusting underneath. Here’s how.

Local 1245 uncovered this lower form of life:

Over a year ago IBEW President J.J. Barry moved the so-called commercial and industrial Outside Line jurisdiction from the Inside local unions in California and northern Nevada to Local 1245. This move requires that the local Outside agree to negotiate a new agreement with the Operating Engineers.

So NECA, the association of electrical contractors, the great partner of IBEW, is now going to encourage employees to vote down IBEW, and even offer as an inducement the possibility that the employer could voluntarily recognize the Operating Engineers.

This is a strategy for building a sound partnership with the IBEW? I think you could find maggots with a more developed sense of honor than this. And more developed brains, too.

If NECA contractors value the IBEW relationship that has helped create their profits, they need to get their house in order.
Lawsuit targets Nevada deregulation

From Page 1

tug of war over the fate of electric utility service in Nevada. The Public Utilities Commission of Nevada, which has pressed for rapid, radical electric deregulation, recently said it would not allow Sierra Pacific Resources to recover costs previously incurred to serve electric customers. Sierra Pacific says regulatory actions of this sort have been a major factor in the precipitous drop in Sierra Pacific's stock value, which traded for $27 per share last July but dropped below $13 in late March.

"We are deeply concerned about how these regulatory actions will affect Sierra Pacific's ability to continue providing high-quality electric service," said Business Manager Jack McNally. "We've been going through deregulation in California for many years now and we know how tempting it is for regulators to simply ignore service quality issues. That's a dangerous road to travel."

Local 1245 voiced its concerns about deregulation in a meeting on March 28 with the editorial staff of the Reno Gazette Journal. Representing Local 1245 at this meeting was Business Rep. Ray Thomas. Representing Sierra Pacific Resources were Malyn Malquist, chief operating officer; Karl Malquist, corporate communications; Kathleen Drakulich, legal division; and Greg Lambert, distribution marketing.

"I explained that Local 1245 has been dealing with deregulation issues for many years, and that it takes highly skilled people to do this work," said Thomas. "Our members work in customer service, power plant maintenance and operations, gas distribution, and electric transmission and distribution, and they are second to none in their skills and dedication. I expressed our union's belief that the PUCN must not interpret SB 438 in a fashion that harms system reliability."

Thomas said the PUCN's decision to block Sierra Pacific from recovering costs previously incurred will have a big impact on the company, and that eventually that impact "will reach the level of system operations and maintenance."

Malyn Malquist told the editors that the company's intent was to stop deregulation until the legislature has a chance to further address the issue of fair and equitable implementation of the process.

Both the union and the company stressed the importance of reliable electric service to the health of Nevada's economy, noting that Nevada residents would be the ones to suffer if electric deregulation isn't done carefully.

401k improvements bargained at Sierra Pacific

Responding to the merger between Sierra Pacific and Nevada Power, Local 1245 has negotiated improvements to the 401k plan and to the retirement plan for its members at Sierra Pacific.

The opportunity to make the improvements arose when Sierra Pacific prepared to take action to conform its payroll system to that of Nevada Power. The company found it needed to change pay dates for Sierra Pacific employees represented by Local 1245.

Because the pay dates are a mandatory subject of bargaining, the company entered into talks with the union. In exchange for agreeing to the pay date change, the union negotiated changes to the 401k and retirement plans.

Prior to the change, the company matched 50 cents on the dollar up to 6% for base pay, incentive compensation, out of town, upgrade and shift premium.

The new formula provides that all taxable wages will qualify for the 401k match, namely:

- Base pay
- Incentive compensation
- Out of town
- Upgrade
- Shift premium
- Overtime
- Rest period
- Pager pay
- Any other cash earnings

The change to the retirement plan builds on changes made during general bargaining in 1997. Those changes, which attempted to create a "soft landing" in the event of Sierra Pacific downsizing, provided that affected employees could add up to five "bridge points" to either their age or service or a combination of both, enabling some employees to use "bridge points" to boost them up to age 55, qualifying them for full retirement.

However, the "bridge points" negotiated in 1997 were not included in the formula for calculating the actual retirement benefit for such employees. This year's negotiations produced agreement by the company to include the bridge points in the formula for calculating the retirement benefit for credited service.

Additionally, 26 longer-term employees were given "credited service" for all years from age 25 down to 18 when they were eligible but unable to participate in the retirement plan.
Homicidal governor! Ducky bosses! WTO Two!

While fair trade activists seek to disrupt the World Bank meeting in Washington DC this month (see story at left), the AFL-CIO will be spearheading a parallel campaign to persuade Congress to deny permanent Normal Trade Relations status to China. The AFL-CIO says the US should insist that China end its suppression of freedom of speech, of religion, and of association. The labor federation says it wants to focus the public’s attention on corporate-driven trade and investment systems that drive down global standards for workers while destroying good jobs.

If It Quacks Like a Duck: Unions and civil libertarians last month called on the New South Wales (Australia) government to protect the privacy of office e-mails. The call from the NSW Labor Council and the NSW Council for Civil Liberties for legislation on the issue came after two council workers were fired from Narrabri Shire Council for referring to their superiors as Huey, Dewey and Louie in office e-mails.

Just Joking: Oklahoma Gov. Frank Keating has apologized for saying that “homicide” was the best way to deal with the state’s teachers union. Apparently the infamous murder of federal employees in the Oklahoma City bombing didn’t make much of an impression on the loose-lipped governor.

Resistance Is Futile: The Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU) of Australia scored a breakthrough April 4 in its campaign to cut the work week to 36 hours. Four construction firms signed an agreement to phase in the 36-hour strike that produced a new three-year contract containing wage increases and preserving health benefits. Some 20,000 workers walked off the job over the company’s contract demands for concessions and lack of respect for the workers. The strike, organized by the Society of Professional Engineers in Aerospace/Professional and Technical Engineers Local 2001, was the biggest strike of private-sector professionals in history.

Immigrant Workers Defended: The AFL-CIO Executive Council has called for reforms that will protect workplace rights and freedoms for immigrant workers and hold employers accountable when they exploit immigrant workers. The Council called for replacing the current system of employer verification of workers’ eligibility to work in the United States, and urged a new amnesty program and full workplace rights and freedoms for all workers—immigrant, native born, documented and undocumented.
Local 1245 Stewards
Training Conference

Local 1245 stewards from tree trimming companies, public sector employers, and Citizens Communications met in Sacramento on March 25 for briefings on bargaining strategies, organizing, and the legal rights of employees facing discipline.

Making the trek to Sacramento were stewards from Asplundh Tree, Arbor Tree and Davey Tree, Modesto Irrigation District, Sacramento Municipal Utility District, City of Santa Clara, Citizens Communications, Charter Communications, Tri-Dam Project, City of Shasta Lake, Port of Oakland, and Merced Irrigation District.

The conference focused on the nuts and bolts of union representation:

- Local 1245 staff attorney Tom Dalzell reviewed the entire process of bargaining, from gathering proposals, to researching issues, to tactical considerations in bargaining equity adjustments.
- Business Rep. Dennis Seyfer discussed the union's experiences in "interest-based" bargaining, an approach that emphasizes a more open style of bargaining in the pursuit of mutual gains.
- Business Rep. Landis Marttila discussed the challenges of organizing the remaining non-union tree trimming contractors.
- Business Rep. Frank Saxsenmeier offered an extensive review of employee rights to due process under the US Supreme Court's Weingarten decision and the California Supreme Court's Skelly decision.

Photos: Pages 6-7
Local 1245 Stewards
Training Conference

Tree trimmers: Davey Tree, Asplundh Tree, Arbor Tree, and Sacramento Municipal Utility District.

Citizens Communications

Port of Oakland

Merced Irrigation District

Charter Communications, Tri-Dam, City of Shasta Lake

Modesto Irrigation District
Sacramento Municipal Utility District

City of Santa Clara

Staff attorney Tom Dalzell discussed bargaining strategy.

Sacramento Municipal Utility District

Participants

Alexander, Bob
Aquillio, Joe
Arellano, Hector
Armstrong, Mary
Auldridge, Steve
Brizzee, Gary
Caballero, George
Celli, Kurt
Correia, Martin
Cox, Ed
Cuthberson, David
Danver, Alan
Darlington, Dennis
Davisson, Forrest
Dixon, Rich
Gartner, Peter
Greenwood, Guy
Greer, Tom
Holopinek, Terry
Hubers, Gary
Keller, James
Kennedy, John
King, Phillip
Lawton, Sheila
Lovercheck, James
Martin, Larry
Morrison, Dave
Mount, Chuck
Mouw, Forrest
Muraca, Ralph
Murray, Don
Quigley, Mike
Rose, Mark
Sheldon, Stephen
Shephird, John
Southerland, Scottie
Stoffer, Gary
Stout, Mike
Suarez, Gilbert
Tanaka, Eric
Torres, Arthur
Trujillo, Angel
Uphoff, William
Vandermeer, David
Velasquez, Miguel
Vipond, David
Wallace, Bill
Watson, Dan
Weathers, Frank
Winters, Brian
Wright, Rod

Arbor Tree
Asplundh Tree
Charter Communications
Citizens Communications
City of Santa Clara
City of Shasta Lake
Davey Tree
Merced Irrigation District
Modesto Irrigation District
Port of Oakland
Sacramento Municipal Utility District
Tri-Dam Project

Business Rep. Frank Saxsenmeier offered a detailed explanation of Weingarten and Skelly rights.
Directory of Local 1245 Business Representatives

Lynn Allen
P.O. Box 3441
Reno NV 89505
Home Office: (775) 834-5838
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 375
- Sierra Pacific Power
- Truckee Donner Public Utility District
- Plumas-Sierra
- AVISTA

Ken Ball
740 Fairfax Dr.
Salinas CA 93901
Home Office: (831) 424-2800
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 351

Bill Brill
P.O.B. 24643
San Jose CA 95154
Home Office: (408) 379-1825
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 320
- Special Assignments
- Relief Assignments

Tom Brown
P.O. Box 3948
Apple Valley CA 92307
Home Office: (760) 961-8152
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 363
- Outside Construction (Southern Area)

Phil Carter
P.O. Box 1060
Rocklin CA 95667
Home Office: (916) 832-1752
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 357
- PG&E: Central California - Placerville to Marysville, including General Construction & Hydro
- Davey Tree
- Asplundh Tree
- EPA-PROVCO
- Nevada Irrigation District
- Yuba County Water Agency

Ed Caruso
P.O. Box 1647
Pittsburg CA 94565
Home Office: (925) 432-6578
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 353
- PG&E: Central California - Clovis to Dinuba, including General Construction
- City of Healdsburg
- Davey Tree
- EPA-PROVCO (subject pole work)

Wayne Greer
P.O. Box 705
Broderick CA 95605
Home Office: (510) 921-8664
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 359
- Sacramento Municipal Utility District
- City of Roseville

Mike Grill
P.O. Box 20933
Bakersfield CA 93390-0333
Home Office: (661) 669-7972
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 378
- PG&E Central Calif. - Coalinga, Lemore & Areas South, including General Construction
- Pipe Line Operations
- Davey Tree
- Asplundh Tree
- Citizen's Communications/Needles
- Lindmore Irrigation District

Mike Haentjens
P.O. Box 1032
Pismo Beach CA 93449
Home Office: (805) 469-4546
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 361
- PG&E Coastal Area - King City to Cupertino & San Jose, including General Construction
- Charter TV
- Arbor Tree
- Asplundh Tree
- Davey Tree

Gary Hughes
P.O. Box 7125
Stockton CA 95277
Home Office: (209) 463-7754
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 364
- PG&E Central Calif. - Madera to Stockton, including General Construction and CGT
- Asplundh Tree
- EPA-PROVCO

Dan Lockwood
1063 El Moro Avenue
Los Osos CA 93402
Home Office: (805) 528-4930
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 362
- PG&E Coastal Area South of King City, including General Construction, and Diablo Canyon Power Plant
- Arbor Tree
- Davey Tree

Jim Lynn
P.O. Box 25486
Fresno CA 93729-5488
Home Office: (559) 323-4239
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 345
- PG&E Central Calif. - Clovis to Dinuba, including Fresno Call Center and General Construction
- PG&E Gas Transmission (PGT)
- Asplundh Tree
- Davey Tree
- EPA-PROVCO

Kathy Maas
PMB 278 2570 Ocean Ave.
San Francisco CA 94132
Home Office: (415) 586-8353
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 366
- PG&E North of San Jose, including General Construction, San Jose Call Center, San Francisco Call Center, and San Ramon Learning Center
- Asplundh Tree

Bob Martin
P.O. Box 4790
Walnut Creek CA 94596
Home Office: (925) 754-2341
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 203
- Technology

Landis Marttila
P.O. Box 4790
Walnut Creek CA 94596
Home Office: (415) 469-9903
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 304
- Outside Construction (Northern Area)
- Tree Trimming Companies

Debbie Mazzanti
1909 Lafayette St.
Alameda CA 94501
Home Office: (510) 521-6915
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 350
- PG&E East Bay - Hayward, Fremont, Livermore, including General Construction and San Francisco General Office
- Davey Tree
- Asplundh Tree

Junior Ornelas
P.O. Box 2231
Fresno CA 95696
Home Office: (559) 323-4239
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 344
- Special Assignments

Jack Osburn
P.O. Box 1589
Marysville CA 95901
Home Office: (530) 742-6119
Union Hall: (925) 933-6060 ext. 369
- Citizen's Communications
- Bella Vista Water District
- City of Gridley
- City of Redding (Electric & Maintenance)
- City of Shasta
- Clear Creek Community Services District
- Lassen Municipal Utility District
- Oroville-Wyandotte Irrigation District
- Richvale Irrigation District
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Home Office</th>
<th>Union Hall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roy Runnings</td>
<td>P.O. Box 436 Cobb CA 95426</td>
<td>(707) 928-4572</td>
<td>(925) 933-6060 ext. 324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• PG&amp;E Coastal Area - North of Cloverdale, including General Construction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Adelphia Communications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Resort Improvement Dist. No. 1 (Shelter Cove)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Davey Tree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• EPA-PROVCO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank Saxsenmeier</td>
<td>P.O. Box 639 Sonoma, CA 95476</td>
<td>(707) 933-6060 ext. 338</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A/C Transit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• City of Alameda</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• City of Berkeley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• City of Oakland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• City of Willits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• City of Santa Clara</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Port of Oakland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Northern California Power Agency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennis Seyfer</td>
<td>P.O. Box 161719 Sacramento CA 95818</td>
<td>(916) 683-1772</td>
<td>(925) 933-6060 ext. 372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• City of Lodi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Merced Irrigation District</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Modesto Irrigation District</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• South San Joaquin Irrigation District</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tri-Dam Project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• United States Bureau of Reclamation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Western Area Power Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sacramento Regional Transit District</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lula Washington</td>
<td>P.O. Box 5027 Richmond CA 94805</td>
<td>(510) 223-7135</td>
<td>(925) 933-6060 ext. 381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• PG&amp;E East Bay - Richmond, Antioch to Oakland, including General Construction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Davey Tree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric Wolfe</td>
<td>P.O. Box 4790 Walnut Creek CA 94596</td>
<td>(925) 354-4410</td>
<td>(925) 933-6060 ext. 216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Communications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Relief Assignments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Manager/ Financial Secretary</td>
<td>Jack McNally P.O. Box 4790 Walnut Creek 94596</td>
<td>(925) 933-6060 ext. 212</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Staff</td>
<td>Darrel Mitchell Senior Assistant Business Manager P. O. Box 4790 Walnut Creek 94596</td>
<td>(925) 933-6060 ext. 322</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bob Choate Assistant Business Manager P. O. Box 4790 Walnut Creek 94596</td>
<td>(925) 933-6060 ext. 305</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tom Dalzell Staff Attorney</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dorothy Fortier Assistant Business Manager P. O. Box 1613 El Cerrito CA 94530</td>
<td>(510) 848-6714</td>
<td>(925) 933-6060 ext. 315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Art Murray Assistant Business Manager P. O. Box 4790 Walnut Creek 94596</td>
<td>(925) 933-6060 ext. 233</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roger Stalcup Assistant Business Manager P. O. Box 4790 Walnut Creek 94596</td>
<td>(925) 933-6060 ext. 311</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Union members pack IWC overtime hearing

Union members rallied in force to defend overtime premium pay at a March 31 meeting of the California Industrial Welfare Commission.

Over 800 union members, including many from Local 1245, filled the hearing room, the balcony, the overflow room and the hallway to protest plans by the IWC to exempt some classes of employees from overtime pay.

“The solidarity demonstrated by union members made the difference in defending daily overtime pay,” said Art Pulaski, leader of the California Labor Federation. “We thank Jack McNally and every Local 1245 member who took the time to stand up.”

The IWC proposal sought to weaken overtime protections in three areas: for employees receiving stock options, for “managerial” employees, and for computer professionals.

The stock option proposal was pulled from the agenda at the start of the meeting, prompting a five-minute standing ovation from the hundreds of union members present. The managerial exemption was tabled after testimony was taken. The proposal concerning computer professionals was referred to an IWC subcommittee, known as a wage board.

The proposals could come up for consideration again when the IWC meets again on April 14.

Unions maintain that the IWC proposals violate the spirit and the intent of the overtime protection law passed last year and signed by Gov. Davis. The law says: “The Legislature affirms the importance of the eight-hour day, declares that it should be protected, and reaffirms the state’s unwavering commitment to upholding the eight-hour day as a fundamental protection for working people.”

Threat to Unionized Workers

Even unionized workers who enjoy contractually-protected overtime premiums could suffer if the IWC succeeds in eroding current law. When ex-Gov. Pete Wilson used the IWC to eliminate daily overtime pay in 1998, the Machinists union suddenly faced employer proposals to take away the eight hour day in 31 contracts. Nursing home owners followed suit.

The California Labor Federation maintains that the IWC proposal would amount to a pay cut for hardworking Californians. Consider the many California workers who get small holiday bonuses. Under the IWC proposal, these workers would be denied hundreds and thousands of dollars in overtime pay if they got a Thanksgiving turkey or $25 supermarket Christmas gift certificate.

Alston-Maxwell joins 1245 staff

Tonya Alston-Maxwell has joined the Local 1245 staff as an administrative assistant at the Walnut Creek headquarters.

Alston-Maxwell is a recent arrival in California. She was previously employed by First Union Bank in New Jersey, where she worked as a recruiter in the bank’s Human Resources department.

She is not exactly a stranger around the union hall; she’s been working for Local 1245 as a temporary employee since last November. In her permanent position she will be assisting Senior Assistant Business Manager Darrel Mitchell.

We’re happy to have Tonya Alston-Maxwell on board.
Labor agreement reviewed

Assistant Business Manager Art Murray (above, right) met recently with apprentices at the Joint Apprenticeship Training school in Riverside to familiarize the members with the terms and conditions of the current union contract.

New Outside Construction Journeyman

Joint Apprenticeship Training Program Coordinator Chris Larsen (left) presented a watch to Scott Hudelson, who recently attained journeymen status after completing the apprenticeship program.

Through a comprehensive 7,000-hour training program, the Riverside-based training center is turning out the skilled journeymen who will form the backbone of the new century’s skilled utility construction workforce.

Outside Negotiating Committee

Local 1245 members on the Outside Construction Bargaining Committee came to union headquarters in Walnut Creek to prepare for negotiations with the National Electrical Contractors Association for a new labor agreement.

Representing Local 1245 on the committee are (from left) Assistant Business Manager Art Murray, Vern Brown, Jeff Johnstone, Jim Rowley, and Senior Business Rep Landis Marttila.

Outside Work aplenty

There is work aplenty in the southern area for Outside Construction hands, reported Business Rep. Tom Brown.

Southern California Edison has begun its pole replacement project, and work is proceeding all out. Work also continues at other utilities, including San Diego Gas & Electric and the City of Anaheim.

Contractors at work include Henkels McCoy, Pouik & Stienle, Sturgeon, Diversified and Hot Line. Par Electric has begun a high line job in Bakersfield.

Outside Construction

New Outside Construction Journeyman

Joint Apprenticeship Training Program Coordinator Chris Larsen (left) presented a watch to Scott Hudelson, who recently attained journeymen status after completing the apprenticeship program.

Through a comprehensive 7,000-hour training program, the Riverside-based training center is turning out the skilled journeymen who will form the backbone of the new century’s skilled utility construction workforce.

Outside Negotiating Committee

Local 1245 members on the Outside Construction Bargaining Committee came to union headquarters in Walnut Creek to prepare for negotiations with the National Electrical Contractors Association for a new labor agreement.

Representing Local 1245 on the committee are (from left) Assistant Business Manager Art Murray, Vern Brown, Jeff Johnstone, Jim Rowley, and Senior Business Rep Landis Marttila.

April 2000 11
Making time for safety

**Time.** What is time? Most of us have lots of things to do every day. Therefore we must have some type of schedule. A schedule is how we allocate time. One thing we need to allocate time for is safety.

When we are trying to meet a deadline, hurrying to get things done, or trying to finish projects, the pressure is on. Maybe we are short of time. And just maybe it is because we did not allocate our time as best we could have.

When we are rushing and hurrying, it seems that is when most accidents occur. Auto accidents, slips and falls, slips of memory—these can lead to all kinds of mishaps.

So when we get out of bed to start our day, let us allow plenty of time to accomplish what we want to get done safely. Allow ample time to do these things, and whether we are conscious of safety or not, safety will come more readily with proper planning of our time. We will be more able to avoid rushing and thus avoid accidents at home, at work, and at play.

Eyes on the road, please

What are they doing up there? You’ve seen it before—that car just in front of you. Swerving, slowing, speeding up. Are they impaired? Yes! But not with any substance. It’s that thing sticking out of the driver’s head. A cell phone!

Don’t join this growing legion of drivers. When you need to talk on the phone, try to pull over to a safe place to stop. Or at least get into the slow lane and try to limit your phone conversation to when you are in flowing traffic. That is, when you are not having to negotiate stop lights, sharp turns, or passing situations.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, out of 7 million crashes in 1995, nearly 25% of them involved some form of inattention.

That was five years ago. Think of how many more cell phones there are on the road now!

Current members of the Local 1245 Safety Committee are: Stoney Burke, Alameda Power & Telecommunications; Keith Hopp, Pacific Gas & Electric; Ralph Muraca, City of Santa Clara; Mark Rose, Davey Tree; Al White, Pacific Gas & Electric; Rod Wright, Modesto Irrigation District; and Assistant Business Manager Art Murray.

Going to work shouldn’t be a grave mistake.

Workers injured on the job will recover more of their lost wages if the California legislature heeds labor’s call to increase Workers Compensation benefits.

Senate Bill 996, Fairness for Injured Workers, would increase the temporary disability benefit, the permanent partial disability benefit and the life pension benefit for injured workers. The bill, sponsored by the California Labor Federation, is being carried by Senator Patrick Johnston.

Injured workers testified before Johnston’s committee last month about the hardships they face due to inadequate compensation. Steve Duncan, the lone survivor of the Tosco refinery fire near Martinez last year that killed four workers, criticized provisions of the state law that prohibit injured workers from suing negligent employers.

Unions say the legislation is needed because the Workers’ Compensation reform bill of 1993 disproportionately aided employers at the expense of injured workers. The 1993 bill was designed to generate substantial savings, which were to be divided equally between employers and injured workers.

But things have not worked out that way. Employers, who were expected to save $1.5 billion each year, have in fact saved over $10.5 billion in the last three years. Meanwhile, workers have experienced benefit increases less than $500 million each year, but these were basically paid for by reductions in stress and post-termination claims and a cap on vocational rehabilitation benefits.

A RAND Civil Institute for Civil Justice report, Compensating Permanent Workplace Injuries, concludes that all injured workers experience significant wage loss following a disabling injury and that current benefits are grossly inadequate.

Among other provisions, SB 996 would do the following:
- Increase the maximum weekly temporary disability benefit from $490 to $651 per week.
- Increase the minimum weekly permanently partially disabled benefit from $70 to $100 per week.
- Increase the maximum weekly permanently partially disabled benefit to $200 per week when the final adjusted permanent disability rating is greater than 70%, for injuries occurring on or after 1/1/2001.
- Increase the maximum weekly permanently partially disabled benefit to $230 per week, regardless of disability rating, for injuries occurring on or after 1/1/2001.
Each year, more than 600,000 workers in America suffer from crippling back injuries and repetitive strain injuries. These disabling injuries are the nation's biggest job safety problem. RSIs affect workers in virtually every industry and occupation.

It doesn't have to be this way. Ergonomic solutions to these problems are well-known and must be implemented. OSHA has issued a proposed ergonomics standard to protect American workers. But some employer groups are trying to block the proposal from becoming law.

American workers make the following demands to Stop the Pain!

♦ A final OSHA ergonomics standard now. The rule-making process and implementation of the standard should proceed without delay.

♦ Action by employers to fix hazardous jobs that cause crippling back injuries or Repetitive Stress Injuries.

♦ Fair compensation for workers crippled by back injuries or RSIs. Insurers and employers must recognize work-related RSIs and provide speedy compensation to injured workers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Zip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sign and mail this petition to your US Representative and US Senators, and send a copy to:

AFL-CIO Department of Occupational Safety & Health
815 - 16th Street NW
Washington, DC 20006
Survey reveals working women’s priorities

This year America’s women will be the deciding factor in scores of political races around the country. And when millions of working women go to the polls in November, these will be their priorities: equal pay, paid family leave, health care and retirement security.

The priorities revealed by the survey should come as no surprise to anyone familiar with the stresses that working families face. Working women in particular shoulder a heavy burden in America’s families, work places and communities.

Working women around the country say that if they are to meet their obligations at home and at work, they need more time, pay and benefits. And their top legislative priorities in this all-important election year are equal pay, paid family leave, health care and retirement security.

The survey found that:

Most working women today—69%—feel secure in their jobs. But the frantic pace of today’s economy continues to put a strain on working women—many of whom are working odd hours and schedules other than those of their spouses and partners. Most working women (60%), and an even higher percentage of working women with children under the age of 18 (67%), say they work at least 40 hours a week—including some 15% of working women who say they work more than 40 hours a week. But what is most surprising is the number of working women who say they are working irregular schedules and shifts that are different than their spouses’ and partners’.

More than one in four working women (28%) say that at least part of their working hours are in the evenings or on the weekends—and this also is true of women with children under 18 (26%).

The women most likely to work irregular schedules are working women who earn less than $25,000 a year (42%), single women (40%), women with a high school education or less (38%) and women under the age of 30 (35%).

Equally startling is that nearly half of all women who are married or living with someone (46%) say they work a different schedule than their spouses or domestic partners do.

Among married women with young children, the figure rises to 51%.

“Good economic times” notwithstanding, surprising numbers of working women are doing without the basic benefits they need to care for their families. While a majority of working women receives basic health, pension and sick leave benefits on the job, remarkably high numbers are doing without. At the same time, most working women do not have paid family leave or child care benefits.
Programs affecting seniors at risk

By Orv Owen

It is no secret that the votes of seniors in this year’s election may be the most important votes in their lifetime.

The future of programs affecting seniors are at risk. Social Security, Medicare, Long Term Care, and reform of the managed care industry as well as the most needed prescription drug benefits will be in harm’s way.

The makeup of the next Congress and the next President will be critical to the preservation of these senior programs.

Most of the incumbents in Congress will be too busy running for reelection to accomplish any meaningful legislation this year. And, unfortunately, there’s little doubt that when the next Congress takes office, many of those who oppose our traditional senior programs will be back. They will continue to push their goals to privatize the Social Security system and replace the traditional fee-for-service Medicare program with vouchers.

Older Americans want Social Security and the traditional fee-for-service Medicare programs to remain intact, and we want and need a universal and comprehensive prescription drug benefit under Medicare.

In order to keep secure the current programs, we must elect candidates to public office who share our concerns and vision. I certainly recognize that many people are bored by and tired of listening to candidates and political pundits with their endless rhetoric.

However, we cannot be complacent. We must keep challenging these candidates seeking our trust and our votes. The alternative is unacceptable and the consequences undesirable. Contact the candidates that are seeking your trust and put their feet to the fire on these issues affecting seniors, our children and grandchildren. It’s our future that we’re talking about—and theirs.

Keep the faith!

Seniors ‘get on the bus’ to protest drug price-gouging

To help publicize the shameful price-gouging that seniors experience when buying necessary medications, a group of New Hampshire senior citizens embarked on a bus trip to buy medications in Canada, where the cost is significantly lower than in the United States.

The January bus trip, led by former talk-show host Phil Donahue, was timed to attract the attention of presidential candidates stumping in the state.

The seniors stopped at the New Hampshire campaign headquarters of five presidential candidates to ask them to “get on the bus” for lower drug prices.

Among those on the bus were Russell and Suzanne Woodard of Piermont, NH, who spend more than one-fourth of their $1,400 monthly income on medicines. Like countless other seniors, when they can’t afford to pay for a prescription, they cope by reducing their daily dosage or delaying filling the prescription.

The couple saved nearly $600 on the drug-buying expedition to Canada.

"Unfortunately, we can’t go to Canada every time we need to fill prescriptions," Russell Woodard said.

According to Public Citizen, one out of three Medicare recipients—14 million older adults and people with disabilities—have no private prescription drug coverage, and Medicare covers only those medicines administered in a hospital setting. In addition, many more seniors have inadequate or insecure insurance coverage with high deductibles and copayments and low annual caps.

President Clinton has proposed a Medicare drug benefit, but his plan falls short of guaranteeing fair prices.

Make a Date...

The Local 1245 Retiree Club invites you to join us for companionship, discussion and projects. Current meeting locations are:

East Bay Chapter: meets 2nd Thursday each month, 10 a.m., at Local 1245 headquarters, 3063 Citrus Circle, Walnut Creek, CA.

San Jose Chapter: meets 1st Thursday each month, 10 a.m., at Local 332, 1870 Stone Ave., San Jose.
Gary Mai: Diligent. Conscientious. 100% Union.

For Gary Mai, being a Local 1245 business representative came down to three things: Bargaining, bargaining, and bargaining. The affable Mai, who retired from the union staff last month, represented Local 1245 members at eight different employers. He often bargained three labor agreements a year in a union assignment that stretched from Fresno in the south to Shasta Dam in the north.

"It seemed like I was always at the bargaining table," said Mai. "It's a bargaining assignment.

In the popular imagination, union negotiators are guys with long cigars who pound tables with oversized fists. But that's not Gary. Slender and soft spoken, Mai's bargaining style emphasized substance over theatrics, persuasion over bombast. Where possible he tried to convince managers that "they could run their operations better" through good relations with the union.

Mai succeeded in building cooperative relationships with many employers, but acknowledged that "some chose to fight."

At the time of his retirement Mai represented employees at Merced Irrigation District, Modesto Irrigation District, Tri-Dam Project, South San Joaquin Irrigation District, City of Lodi, City of Shasta Lake, the United States Bureau of Reclamation, and the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA).

Business Manager Jack McNally praised Mai's role as chair and chief negotiator for the five IBEW local unions who represent employees of WAPA, a federal agency responsible for federal power projects in the western states.

"Gary did a great job dealing with that group of people, and also in dealing with our public sector," McNally said. "We're going to miss him."

Mai happily shares credit for union successes with the stewards he worked with.

"My assignment area was so spread out I depended a lot on stewards to do the day-to-day stuff," Mai said. "I had some really good stewards."

Like Bill Chambers, a steward at the Bureau of Reclamation's Keswick Dam in the Redding area.

"He acted on my behalf for many many years," said Mai. "He was the rep up there. I couldn't have handled that property without Bill."

It's understandable that Mai would have an affinity for union stewards. He became one himself around 1970 at the City of Lodi, where he worked first as a groundman, then lineman, then estimator. In addition, Mai said he served as unit chair "forever."

When he was approached about joining the union staff, Mai was skeptical. The labor agreement at the City of Lodi did not require the employer to give an employee leave for union service. If things didn't work out, Mai could have found himself unemployed.

"Micky Harrington was my rep at the time and he kind of goaded me into it," Mai recalled.

An accomplishment that Mai rates among the most satisfying of his union career was a contract arbitration that pitted Mai and staff attorney Tom Dalzell against the Bureau of Reclamation. The union prevailed, and the experience left Dalzell with a high opinion of Mai.

"He is smart. He is 100% union. He is dedicated. He is diligent and conscientious," said Dalzell during a staff gathering in Mai's honor. "And he doesn't believe his own b--- s---."

Mai, who was raised in a union household, said he plans to remain a member of Local 1245. Beyond that, his plans are simple:

"I'm gonna play golf with Frank Hutchins."