Pact aids workers at PG&E plants

A letter agreement negotiated by Local 1245 will provide several options to employees being displaced from four power plants operated by Pacific Gas & Electric Co.

Although the plants were sold in the summer of 1999, PG&E retained responsibility for operating and maintaining the plants for two years. As the time draws near for PG&E to turn over operation and maintenance to the new owners, employees at the Pittsburg, Contra Costa and Potrero power plants in the Bay Area, and the Geyers facility in Lake County, are subject to the demotion and displacement provisions of Title 206 in the labor agreement.

Letter Agreement 00-53, negotiated by Local 1245 and signed by Business Manager Jack McNally on Oct. 19, times the offering of Early Retirement Incentives and Title 206 (displacement) assignments to coincide with job offers from the new employers. By coordinating the timing of these various processes, the union is trying to ensure that power plant employees will have all their options on the table when they have to make a decision.

The power plant employees

Union bargains job security pact for Sierra Pacific water employees

Local 1245 has negotiated a job security agreement for workers in Sierra Pacific Power's water department.

The agreement offers broad protections for affected employees, including retirement bridge enhancement and a one-year ban on layoffs. The pact applies to the Operations group within the Gas & Water Department, work groups providing support services for the water distribution system, and employees in Peaking and Hydro.

"When the company first approached us they only wanted to bargain over the displacement of 42 employees within the Operations portion of their water business," said Local 1245 Business Rep. Ray Thomas. "We believed the scope of the negotiations had to be much broader."

Environmental report: 'Leave hydro alone'

An Environmental Impact Statement found that the best option for the environment—and for electric rates—would be to let PG&E retain control of its hydro-electric facilities, like the dam shown above.
TURN sinks to a new low

By Jack McNally, Business Manager

The so-called consumer group "The Utility Reform Network"—TURN—sank to new lows last month when it slandered our members in a story in the San Francisco Chronicle.

The front page story reported that customer complaints against PG&E ran at a slightly higher rate than customer complaints against other gas and electric utilities. The story explained that the higher rate was probably due to the harsher storms and more difficult terrain found in PG&E's service territory. The story noted that PG&E customer complaints actually went down by a third last year.

In other words, PG&E has been doing a pretty good job. But TURN Executive Director Nettie Hoge, who apparently has trouble understanding even the simplest statistics, said the data showed that PG&E has "a disregard for service and safety and reliability."

This malicious and completely unsubstantiated accusation insults the 13,000 members of IBEW Local 1245 who provide that service.

In fact, TURN Executive Director Nettie Hoge, who apparently has trouble understanding even the simplest statistics, said the data showed that PG&E has "a disregard for service and safety and reliability." This malicious and completely unsubstantiated accusation insults the 13,000 members of IBEW Local 1245 who provide that service.

In fact, TURN has been all over the court, in my opinion, is that the group has no genuine constituency and no positive mission. All it does is bash utilities during regulatory hearings, then collect attorneys fees.

And that's a shame, because consumers need a good advocate. Since 1994, our union has consistently warned that big corporate consumers will benefit at the expense of average consumers, and that unchecked competitive pressures jeopardize service reliability and safety.

Unlike TURN, the members of our union know a safety problem when they see one. In 1995 we mounted massive public protests when we saw PG&E compromising safety and reliability. We believe PG&E deserves credit for big improvements since 1995.

Here's the truth of the matter: Nettie Hoge has done everything possible to undermine those improvements. When PG&E requested funding in its General Rate Case to improve infrastructure, Hoge's group led the resistance.

Hoge's idiotic remarks about PG&E's "disregard for service and safety and reliability" show how far out of touch with reality TURN has become. If TURN is a "watchdog," I think somebody needs to check and see if their rabies shots are current.
Mechanics capture warranty work at Sierra Pacific

By Dale Huntsman

Here in the Reno Fleet Services Department at Sierra Pacific Power Co., we are helping to protect our own jobs by capturing areas of our work which were traditionally performed by outside shops.

Our fleet of utility vehicles is constantly being updated with new vehicles and equipment. Each year, some of the older vehicles in the fleet are replaced with brand-spanking new rigs. Our company has been buying Ford trucks for light to medium vehicles, in all sizes from 4x4 Rangers for Meter Readers to 4x4 F450s and F550s for Troubleshooters and Electric crew Foremen.

These new Fords are covered by factory warranties and therefore we can have warranty-related repairs and adjustments performed by the local Ford dealership. However, we see those vehicles returning to the dealership as an opportunity to capture work that we could be performing.

Ford offers factory training to Mechanics and Technicians working in large fleets where Ford trucks are in use. This training was traditionally available only to Ford dealership Mechanics.

Our Utility Fleet Mechanics have begun the process of attending those training sessions with the intent of becoming Ford Factory-Authorized Warranty Repair Technicians. In fact, we have arranged for Ford factory training instructors to come to Reno to conduct the eight required training modules. Each module is an intensive five-day course covering a specific area of the vehicle systems.

Capturing Work

With these credentials, we will be authorized to perform any necessary warranty repairs and bill Ford for the cost. Capturing this work makes us substantially more valuable to Sierra Pacific and to our Union brothers and sisters. By performing warranty work on our fleet vehicles in our own shop, we are able to quickly return the rig to our fellow employees.

We understand what an inconvenience it is for our crews to pull their personal gear from their truck to send it off to the dealership. At the dealership, warranty work is not necessarily the number-one priority, so the truck could sit there for several days waiting for repairs to begin. Our dealership actually works hard to minimize this down-time, but our co-workers are still working out of someone else’s truck in the meantime.

When we do the warranty work ourselves, usually on the night shift, the down-time is almost invisible because we have the truck back in its usual parking place by morning, ready for use. Our fellow employees may not even be aware that we took it and returned it overnight.

We feel that capturing this opportunity allows us to provide a valuable service to our fellow union members and to Sierra Pacific. It benefits us by broadening our skills and making us more versatile employees. Whenever we make ourselves more valuable to the company, it is more difficult for our work to be contracted out or lost all together.

This opportunity was only possible because of the cooperation of our union and Sierra Pacific Power. Our department’s training budget is being used to pay for this extensive training. We have been working closely with our management to create opportunities such as this and then cooperating to make them a reality.

Dale Huntsman is a Utility Fleet Mechanic at Sierra Pacific Power.
Crocodile tears, crashing planes, & ice cream

Dot.com workers seek union representation

U.S. labor organizers have scored their first major success in the dot-com world as customer service employees at a San Francisco start-up decided to vote on seeking union representation, Reuters reported.

Erin Tyson Poh, representative of The Newspaper Guild-Communications Workers of America, said Nov. 28 that petition to certify union representation for some 36 employees at etown.com and ShopAudioVideo.com had been filed with the National Labor Relations Board.

"Even though it is a relatively small group of people, it is big news for the Internet," Poh told Reuters. "It is a group of new economy workers who have decided to organize."

While the promise of quick growth and stock options was once enough to keep workers satisfied, the dimming luster of dot-corn stocks has led to pressure for better treatment on workplace basics such as health care plans, hours and working conditions.

"We want to work for this company, but we want to have a good environment...customer service is a real hard job," Ruben Cadabes, one of etown's customer service representatives, told Reuters. "This is all about being recognized, and having a voice."

We want to work for this company, but we want to have a good environment...customer service is a real hard job," Ruben Cadabes, one of etown's customer service representatives, told Reuters. "This is all about being recognized, and having a voice."

"We've been in a honeymoon state with the new economy for a couple of years," Poh told Reuters. "But this shows there are workers out there who aren't getting huge stock options and aren't getting big payoffs from venture capitalists."

A nationwide power strike was postponed at the last minute in South Korea Nov. 24 when the Korea National Electricity Workers' Union (KNEWU) agreed to further talks with the government over plans to split up and privatize the national power utility KEPCO. But there are few signs that the government will back down over the power sell-off, union sources say. So strikes are still likely at the beginning of December.

If the industrial action goes ahead, it may merge into a broader general strike to protest the privatization of state-owned companies, the structural adjustment program in the banking industry and the sell-off of the Daewoo motor company. Meanwhile, a sit-in at the headquarters of the power utility KEPCO will continue, according to KNEWU.

Workers protest privatization of Korea's electric industry.

Electric Privatization: Electrical workers representing 13 Latin American countries met in Puerto Rico in September to examine the destructive results of electric privatization. "In countries such as Argentina, the privatization of the electrical industry led to massive layoffs and price increases," wrote Carlos Quios Mendez and Teofilo Reyes in Labor Notes. "In the Dominican Republic, not only has service worsened, but privatization has also meant the destruction of the union at the Dominican Electrical Company."

In Mexico, unions have created the National Resistance Front Against the Privatization of the Electrical Industry.

Grads Win Rights: Reversing a 25-year policy, the National Labor Relations Board ruled that graduate assistants at private universities are entitled to union representation, Labor Notes reported. New York University had argued that graduate students who work as teaching or research assistants are just students—not employees.

The Union Deal: Casino dealers in Las Vegas are moving swiftly to organize for better pay, benefits and job security, the Los Angeles Times reported. Thousands of blackjack, craps, roulette, baccarat and poker dealers from nine casinos have signed petitions requesting a National Labor Relations Board election. Petition gatherers are active at another 15 casinos, and organizers say they are pacing themselves only so that they don’t overwhelm the NLRB with paperwork. Las Vegas has more than 30,000 dealers.
RT takes first in ‘Roadeo’

Sacramento RT Mechanic A’s Mark McKee, Mark O'Brien and Body/Frame Mechanic Howard Zickelfoose brought home a first-place ‘Roadeo’ award from the Northern California Regional Competition held in Fresno on Aug. 5. The RT team achieved the highest score on a 50-question written test, and won first place overall based on a variety of events, including driving and business inspection.

Sierra Pacific water pact

From Page 1

said Thomas, noting that the sale of the water distribution system will “transfer half of the straight-time work in the company’s Gas and Water Departments” and have a similar effect on other departments that provide support services.

Jobs Will Be Posted

After several negotiating sessions, Sierra Pacific agreed to post and fill 22 jobs to support the distribution system of the new water company.

“Takes the employees first in Gas and Water and Construction, and then the rest of the company, to elect to go with the new water company and actually follow the work,” said Thomas. “It also allows for these same employees to elect the retirement bridge enhancement, providing for up to five additional years of credited service along with post-retirement medical benefits.”

The agreement passed with 92% voting in support.

PG&E pact aids workers at divested power plants

From Page 1

will be notified of their job assignments by Dec. 15. However, report dates will be delayed until the end of the operations and maintenance period, and the letter agreement gives the employees until April 1, 2001 to either accept or decline their Title 206 job assignment.

This delay in reporting is designed to let employees know what their options are up front, but without triggering immediate displacements elsewhere at PG&E.

“Normally, the Title 206 process would produce immediate displacements, creating an ‘A’ list of displaced workers, who in turn could exercise their rights to displace still other workers,” said Local 1245 Assistant Business Manager Roger Stalcup. “Letter Agreement 00-53 modifies this process by providing notice to the affected employees, but without creating immediate displacements.”

If some employees ultimately opt for the early retirement incentive, fewer Title 206 displacements will be necessary—reducing the overall impact of displacements on the rest of the PG&E workforce.

Employees who are displaced by the power plant employees will be notified, but Title 206 assignments will not be developed for such employees until sometime after the end of the operations and maintenance period. The letter agreement notes that a receiving department may decide to absorb some number of those displaced power plant employees rather than continue with further layoffs or displacements.

The Physical Labor Agreement with PG&E that went into effect on Jan. 1, 2000 specifies there is no penalty for early retirement for employees aged 55 years with 30 years of service. Under Letter Agreement 97-53-PGE, power plant employees who are 50 years of age or older will be given five additional years of service or age, or a combination of age and service.

The agreement passed with 92% voting in support.

Sierra Pacific employees in Water Production and Peaking Hydro who were on the company’s original target list for divestiture will receive seven weeks pay as a transition incentive. Those who bid and are awarded one of the 22 new jobs will receive six weeks base pay at the close of sale.

Agreement Highlights

Highlights of the agreement include:

• Buyer to become signatory to the agreement, with all employee seniority transferring over to the new company.
• Two-year term beginning at date of sale.
• Prohibition on layoffs for first year of term.
• Enhanced severance for second year of term.
• A 3.5% wage hike at close of sale and 3% one year later.
• Continuation of the “defined benefit” retirement program.

• Comparable medical/dental/vision plans.
• Comparable 401k savings plans.
• Several classification wage enhancements (where the company determines a substantial change in job criteria is appropriate).
• All Water Production bargaining unit employees retain all bidding rights to the point of the close of sale of the water system, estimated to take place in April of 2001.

Serving on the negotiating committee were Bob White, working foreman, Hydro Peaking; Shop Steward Andy Gebhardt, foreman, Water Treatment; Dennis Bergstrom, SCADA technician; Shop Steward Chip Chadwick, water supervisor; and Shop Steward Bob Wilk, gas pressure operator, assisted by Thomas and Business Rep. Randy Osborn.

December 2000
Electric deregulation has cratered in California, and the situation will probably get worse before it gets better, Business Manager Jack McNally reported to the Advisory Council in Rohnert Park last month.

Rates remain high. Blackouts are predicted for next summer. Investigations continue as everyone seeks someone to blame.

"The whole market is dysfunctional—it's a total mess," McNally said.

McNally used the situation at PG&E's Diablo Canyon power plant to illustrate just how badly policymakers misjudged the effects of deregulation. For the past several years, PG&E has worked very hard to get the cost of power at the Diablo Canyon nuclear plant below 3-cents/kw to be competitive in an open market. But now that the market has arrived, McNally said, the cost of power has far exceeded that amount, making Diablo Canyon extremely attractive by comparison.

PG&E and Southern California Edison have been squeezed between the sky-high wholesale rates they must pay for power, and the frozen retail rates they charge their customers.

These utilities together incurred debts of $5 billion over the summer, said McNally. If the companies have to write off that debt, their stock prices could plummet, and they could even face bankruptcy, he said.

The CPUC is currently considering to what extent, if any, it will allow the utilities to recover those recent losses. PG&E has filed an application for cost recovery.

Peaking Units Needed

Faced with a continuing threat of power shortages, the Independent System Operator is looking for peaking units, McNally said. But power plant construction must run...
a gauntlet of regulatory hurdles, including the CPUC, the California Energy Commission, and various environmental interests.

These hurdles could make it very difficult to get the needed units in place by next summer, McNally said.

In an effort to gain some control over electric supply, the CPUC may try to return some amount of generation to regulated utilities. There also has been interest expressed in the state legislature for gaining more control over power supply.

This renewed interest in regulated generation could put the brakes on efforts to force PG&E to auction off its hydro assets (see story, page 1, "Leave Hydro Alone"). It could also cool any enthusiasm regulators might have had for the divestiture of PG&E's Diablo Canyon nuclear facility.

Regulatory Changes

Even as California re-examines how it wants electric power delivered, the state may also shake up the way power is regulated. The Independent System Operator and the Power Exchange, the two non-profit agencies created to administer the electric marketplace, are being closely scrutinized in light of the recent price spikes.

These two agencies have functioned as "stakeholder" groups, where a voice in policymaking is given to independent power producers, utilities, and other interested parties, said McNally, who is a member of the ISO's Board of Governors. Some of these parties have used their position on the ISO to pursue their own interests at the expense of the public interest, McNally said.

One idea now in circulation is to replace the ISO and PX with a CPUC-type structure with appointed members who do not have a vested interest in the industry.

The union continues to closely monitor all regulatory and legislative developments. As the various players consider their next move, "Our members are still left hanging out there and it looks like it could remain that way for awhile," McNally told the Advisory Council.
Environmental report: 'Leave hydro alone'

From Page 1

the report says, "would avoid all of the auction's significant negative environmental impacts."

Spin-Off Unlikely

While Local 1245 has vigorously opposed auctioning the plants, the union supported a "settlement agreement" drafted last summer by PG&E that proposed transferring the hydro assets to an unregulated subsidiary of PG&E. Such a transfer, the union determined, would have fewer harmful effects on employees than an auction.

However, PG&E recently withdrew its support for the settlement agreement, apparently over financial concerns related to the collection of Competition Transition Charges.

Meanwhile, Gov. Gray Davis was expected to announce on Dec. 1 his plan for dealing with California's electricity problems. The fate of hydro will almost certainly be one of the topics the governor addresses.

Legislative Action Possible

The California legislature may also jump back into the fray. State Senator Steve Peace, who co-authored the 1996 deregulation bill, last month proposed that the legislature create a $2 billion state budget reserve to deal with energy problems.

"We want to assure that there is public sector potential—that we can be a participant with capital," Peace told the San Francisco Chronicle. "That could be a public power initiative, a take over of the transmissions system, or we could gain control of energy generation."

While Peace made no specific policy proposals, he has clearly grown disenchanted with the failed promises of electric deregulation and is looking for ways the public can reassert some control over an essential service.

"We don't want to be captives of the private capital market," he said.

However, the California legislature may find it difficult in 2001 to re-regulate the electricity resources it deregulated back in 1996. Electric markets are taking on a regional and national character, and regulatory authority has gravitated toward the federal government.

Just last month the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission weighed in on California's electricity woes, calling California's deregulated power market "dysfunctional" and the prices it generates unreasonable. FERC is likely to order changes in California's electricity markets by the end of the year.
Bakersfield  
October 7, 2000

Shop Steward Conferences

San Francisco  
October 14, 2000
Merry Christmas

LOCAL 1245 OFFICE
FRONT ROW, FROM LEFT: CHRISTY MCNALLY, BUSINESS MANAGER/FRONT LINE VICE PRESIDENT; MIKE DAVIES, TREASURER; MARCO MENDOZA, EXECUTIVE BOARD; HOWARD STEFFER, PRESIDENT; KAI MALLORY, RECORDAR

Merry Christmas
LOCAL 1245 OFFICERS & EXECUTIVE BOARD

FRONT ROW, FROM LEFT: CHRIS HABECKER, EXECUTIVE BOARD; JACK MCNALLY, BUSINESS MANAGER/FINANCIAL SECRETARY; JIM McCauley, VICE PRESIDENT; MIKE DAVIS, TREASURER. BACK ROW, FROM LEFT: JOHN MENDOZA, EXECUTIVE BOARD; ANNA BAYLESS, EXECUTIVE BOARD; HOWARD STIEFER, PRESIDENT; KATHY TINDALL, EXECUTIVE BOARD; ED MALLORY, RECORDING SECRETARY.
Happy Holidays!

Terry Andreucci
Drum, PG&E, Plumas Sierra REC, City of Roseville

Rich Cowan
East Bay & another PG&E, Foster Wheeler

Grounder Day
Stockton PG&E, City of Lodi

Jim Edwards
Colgate PG&E, City of Greeley, Yuba County Water Agency

Jill Faulcy
North Bay PG&E, City of Healdsburg

William Graham
Sacramento Regional Transit District

Harvey Hess
Shasta PG&E, Redding, Lassen M.U., Shasta Dam Area PUD, Bella Vista Water District

Steve Jamieson
PLO, PG&E, C.P. Nat'l Needles Div. & Henderson District

Linda Jurado
Clerical at Large PG&E (except GO clerical)

Jim Edwards
Colgate PG&E, City of Gridley, Yuba County Water Agency

Mark Rose
Irrigation Districts

Dennis Morrison
Citizens Communications

Joe Osterlund
General Construction PG&E

Dan Parmenter
Sacramento PG&E, Calibration & Testing

Rich Perry
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Region 2

Bob Quinn
San Francisco & PG&E General Office

Larry Rodriguez
AG Transit, East Bay Municipalities

Mark Taylor
Coast Valleys

Lee Thomas Jr.
Humboldt PG&E

Art Torres
Sacramento Municipal Utility District,
GEO/Coldwater Creek Operating Coop

Bob Vieira
Sierra Pacific Power, WP National G&G, Lake Tahoe, CP National E&I

Bill Wallace
City of Santa Clara, San Jose Div. PG&E

Malco Scott
San Joaquin PG&E, CAPCO, Chowchilla Water District

Mike Stout
Imperial Irrigation Districts

Archie Taylor
Pacific Gas Transmission Co.

Lee Thomas Jr.
Humboldt PG&E

Local 1245 Advisory Council
Ergonomic standard issued

Overcoming more than a decade of resistance from employers and corporate-backed politicians, working people have finally won federal standards to protect them from repetitive motion injuries.

The Clinton administration last month issued rules that it claims will prevent 460,000 injuries a year. The regulations will require companies to provide ergonomics training and redesign offices and assembly lines.

Labor unions hailed the new standards as a long-overdue step toward combating repetitive motion injuries. Corporations estimated that the new rules will cost them anywhere from $18 billion to $120 billion a year.

OSHA Director Charles Jeffress, however, called those estimates vastly inflated, and said the new standard could actually save American corporations $9 billion annually by reducing lost workdays, medical bills, and workers compensation costs.

Corporate cost projections also ignore a very significant non-cost item: the pain and suffering endured by the estimated 1.8 million workers injured each year by repetitive motion jobs.

The rules, covering 102 million workers at six million American work sites, come after a bitter decade-long struggle. Congressional Republicans have been adamant in their opposition to any ergonomics standard and have stalled progress on the issue for many years.

As recently as October a major budget bill was blocked by Republican lawmakers at the last minute because the bill contained the controversial standard.

“We think the rules are the most significant action that OSHA has ever taken to protect workers. Musculoskeletal disorders are the biggest source of workplace injuries in this country.”

Peg Seminario, AFL-CIO

Exposure to chemicals

Most all companies deal with chemicals on a daily basis, whether it's fuels for vehicles, pesticide control, vegetation management, or cleaning or office chemicals.

Each chemical has a material safety data sheet (MSDS) which explains what the chemical is, its use, storage and application instructions and, most important, first aid and exposure protection information.

It’s your legal right to read the MSDS sheet before using the chemical in question and to be properly instructed on its use.

Remember, don’t expose yourself to risk if you don’t know what you’re dealing with.

Fighting high blood pressure

Exercising is one of the best things you can do to help control high blood pressure.

Over time, regular exercise lowers blood pressure, which in turn lowers your risk of diabetes, artery damage, heart disease, stroke and kidney disease.

Regular moderate aerobic exercise, walking, swimming, or cycling for 20-30 minutes every other day is most effective and generally safe.

An obvious concern may be the perceived risk of heart attack since exercise initially raises blood pressure. Actually, only 4% of heart attacks happen during physical exertion, usually in people who are sedentary or suddenly undertake a strenuous activity like running.

Get your health care provider’s OK before starting an exercise program, especially if it involves weight lifting.

“Our health plan is, we believe in reincarnation.”

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.
An attractive, full color calendar for the year 2001 (12" x 12") reproducing 12 paintings by Ralph Fasanella is available. Fasanella, who died in 1998, was one of America's most important worker-artists. His themes—work and worker's dignity—reflect his lifelong involvement in the labor movement.

AFL-CIO President John Sweeney says the calendar "represents a significant contribution to our movement and helps get our message to the public."

ORDERING INFORMATION

Special price for union members is $10.95 plus $3.00 for shipping. Mail checks payable to: 1199/SEIU's Bread and Roses Cultural Project 330 West 42nd Street, 7th floor New York, NY 10036 For quantity orders, call Bread and Roses 212-631-4565 or fax 212-695-0538.
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**December 2000 15**
Obstacles face welfare moms seeking jobs

Despite the hoopla surrounding the passage of welfare reform in 1996, the problem of poverty is still very much with us, and women and children remain the chief victims.

Many welfare reformers are now focused on implementing "welfare-to-work" programs. Unfortunately, many obstacles still stand between welfare mothers and jobs.

Research indicates that many welfare mothers have insufficient education and lack recent job experience. These are obstacles to obtaining jobs, and they are also obstacles to earning a decent wage when a welfare recipient does land a job.

Welfare-to-work programs, however, do not encourage meaningful training for welfare recipients. Instead, such programs tend to focus on short-term training.

In fact, most education programs do not qualify as "work-related activities" in the work quotas established by the 1996 federal welfare reform act. In other words, pursuit of meaningful education and training will disqualify you for welfare assistance. This restriction puts welfare mothers on the fast track to dead-end low-wage jobs.

Additional Barriers

Recent research is uncovering another set of barriers to work, including learning disabilities, severe bouts of depression and experiences with domestic violence.

Between 10% and 31% of welfare recipients are currently victims of domestic violence, according to studies cited by Randy Albelda of UMass Boston. Four out of ten current recipients have less than a high school diploma.

"Helping women overcome barriers to employment will take time, quality counseling, and long-term training, something welfare reform is discouraging or prohibiting," says Albelda, who teaches at UMass Boston.

Two-thirds of welfare recipients are children being raised, most often, by a mother on her own. Welfare-to-work programs have little chance of success unless they provide support services that these mothers need, such as health insurance, transportation, and childcare.

Since many jobs available to welfare-to-work mothers do not provide health insurance, states allow women to stay on Medicaid, but typically only for one year after leaving welfare.

Some states have recognized the transportation challenges mothers face—getting children to and from day care and school, and getting themselves to and from work in a timely fashion. And some states are trying to solve this problem with loaner cars, work vans, and public transportation vouchers. In rural areas, however, the problems are much more difficult since adequate transportation is just not there.

Quality Childcare a Problem

Policymakers likewise recognize the need that welfare recipients have for childcare services, but the solutions offered so far are troubling, according to Albelda.

"Very few states pay any attention to the quality of care. Any care seems to do for poor mothers."

In Massachusetts, Albelda says, the state encourages mothers to find low-cost caregivers with reimbursements of $15 a day. Parents are justified in worrying about the quality of childcare that can be had at such prices.

California took an important step forward this year in addressing the issue of childcare quality when the legislature enacted a labor-sponsored bill to improve training for childcare workers. But finding quality childcare at affordable prices will be a huge obstacle for welfare-to-work programs for years to come.

Low Wages

And then there's the problem of wages. Finding a job in today's economy does not necessarily mean attaining economic self-sufficiency.

Women with little formal education and sporadic job training have never been well-served by the US labor market. Women have a very hard time supporting themselves, let alone families, on wages from waitressing, sales clerking, cleaning hotel rooms, or even assisting administrators. Yet these are exactly the kinds of jobs welfare-to-work mothers are likely to get.

Unfortunately, mothers leaving welfare to work are more likely than other mothers to find themselves in a work environment that is hostile to their family needs.

According to a recent report in the American Journal of Public Health, nearly half of women who had never been on welfare got sick leave and vacation pay at their jobs. But only 24% of women who had been on welfare for under two years enjoyed these benefits, and just 19% of women who had been on welfare more than two years received such benefits.

Union builds on FMLA law

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1070 in Indianapolis won contract language that allows the employee, not the employer, to decide whether to use his or her sick, vacation or personal leave time when taking leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act, or to take unpaid leave, the Labor Project for Working Families reported.

In addition, employees may use their sick leave to care for a family member during FMLA leave.
Reflections on the old year, and the new

By Ory Owen

With the arrival of another holiday season, many seniors will be reflecting on the blessings of our great nation. We will reflect on the many beautiful and loving memories of the holiday season, and hopefully be able again to share the spirit and joys of Christmas with our family members and friends.

Unfortunately, there are many seniors who are alone, and many who are homeless this holiday season. Many may be overcome by grief and depressed, particularly when their children live far away or their spouses, family members and friends have passed away.

If you are aware of seniors who are alone or homeless, please contact the Senior Centers in your area and they will provide assistance and programs to assure seniors will not be alone and will be able to share the joys and spirit of this holiday season with other seniors.

As the old year closes, I and millions of other senior citizens are concerned about what the new year will bring to the table. We are extremely excited about the formation of the "Alliance of Retired Americans" and its great potential for all Americans.

We are also concerned about political decisions and activities regarding Social Security and Medicare benefits.

Striped of its rhetorical cloak, the Social Security debate is about values and human needs. It's about protecting our kids. It's about the duty we all have to remind people that the stock market that goes up like a rocket can come down like a rock.

Social Security is important to every American family and has worked well for 65 years. Yet this most successful and popular American social program is under continuous attack from the right wing of American politics. Wall Street trading firms, private banks, and financial corporations have poured millions of dollars into a concerted effort to "privatize" the Social Security system, and by so doing, to siphon off billions of "public dollars" into their pockets.

All of us should stand firm and keep alert to protect and insure our Social Security and Medicare programs.

Keep the faith!

Check your mail in January for Retiree Survey!

Local 1245 in January will send out a survey to you, our retired members, asking for personal information about your living conditions and financial status.

This survey is completely confidential and anonymous—you will not put your name on the survey.

The purpose of the survey is to help us in future negotiations with your former employer.

Help us help you. Please return the survey promptly!

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.

Congratulations!

The Local 1245 Retirees Club congratulates these recently-retired members of the union. We invite you to participate in—or start!—a Retirees Club chapter in your area.

Sandra Baldry, 15 years
Nicasiños, CA

Arcadio Santiago, 38 years
Newark, CA

Manuel Santos, 21 years
San Luis Obispo, CA

Suzanne Stafford, 4 years
Mill Valley, CA

Marvin Sterni, 38 years
Stockton, Ca

Lynne Sunderland, 37 years
Anderson, CA

Jeffrie Van Hook, 30 years
Richmond, CA

Vickie Wilson, 11 years
Redding, CA

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## IBEW Local 1245

### Unit Meeting Schedule: January - June 2001

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<th>CITY</th>
<th>UNIT #</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>UNIT CHAIR</th>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>TIME</th>
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<td>4013</td>
<td>The Brass Rail, Hwy 395</td>
<td>M. Nelson</td>
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<td>Round Table Pizza, 2908 McMurry Dr., Anderson</td>
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<td>Carson City Fire Dept Station 5</td>
<td>W. Keating</td>
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<td>PG&amp;E Downtown Office</td>
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<td>Laguna Town Hall, 3020 Renwick, Elk Grove</td>
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<td>Stockman’s Hotel, Elk</td>
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<td>Ely Fire Dept, Meeting Hall</td>
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<td>Fort Bragg Service Center, Fort Bragg</td>
<td>G. Fernandez</td>
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<td>Cedar Lanes, Cedar &amp; Shields</td>
<td>C. Habeker</td>
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<td>Swiss House, 535 Mill St.</td>
<td>T. Gilbert</td>
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<td>P. Earl</td>
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<td>Hollister</td>
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<td>Straw Hat Pizza, 191 A San Felipe</td>
<td>J. Vermilyer</td>
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<td>Mountain Mike’s Pizza, 525 S. Hwy 49</td>
<td>B. Boitano</td>
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<td>Senior Center, 527 Konocti Ave.</td>
<td>B. Dawson</td>
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<td>Fleet Reserve, 788 D. St.</td>
<td>David Meyers</td>
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<td>Round Table Pizza, Kettleman Lane</td>
<td>B. Fisher</td>
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<td>Stacoteo, 1245 Bridge St.</td>
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<td>Branding Iron, 640 W. 16th St.</td>
<td>P. Galan-Wert</td>
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<td>F. Maclay</td>
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<td>Pollock Pines/Fresh Pond</td>
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# Unit Meeting Schedule: January - June 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITY</th>
<th>UNIT #</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>UNIT CHAIR</th>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portland, OR/PG&amp;E GTNW</td>
<td>3025</td>
<td>PG&amp;E GTNW Office</td>
<td>S. Corey</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>5:30pm</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Red Bluff</td>
<td>3214</td>
<td>The Green Barn, #5 Chestnut</td>
<td>H. Iness</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>5:30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Redding, City of</td>
<td>3217</td>
<td>Labor Council, 900 Locust St.</td>
<td>J. Kropholler</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>5:30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Redding/Davey/Tree</td>
<td>4419</td>
<td>Round Table Pizza, 900 Dana Drive</td>
<td>G. Suarez</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>6:30pm</td>
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<td>Redmond, OR</td>
<td>3024</td>
<td>PG&amp;E GT Headquarters</td>
<td>R. Huffstater</td>
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<tr>
<td>Redwood City/Asplundh</td>
<td>4711</td>
<td>Mountain Mike's Pizza, 120 El Camino Real</td>
<td>D. Sanchez</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>5:30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reno, NV</td>
<td>3311</td>
<td>IBEW LU 401, 2713 E. 4th St.</td>
<td>W. Paterson</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>7:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richmond</td>
<td>2318</td>
<td>La Strada Rest., 2215 Church Lane, San Pablo</td>
<td>C. Jackson</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>4:30pm</td>
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<td>Richmond/E. Bay Clerical</td>
<td>2301</td>
<td>La Strada Rest., 2215 Church Lane, San Pablo</td>
<td>D. Ambeau</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
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<td>Riverside/Outside Line So.</td>
<td>4912</td>
<td>1074 La Cadena Drive #5</td>
<td>J. Johnstone</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
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<td>Roseville, City of</td>
<td>3512</td>
<td>Fast Freddies Pizza, 130 Main St.</td>
<td>T. Bakke</td>
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<td>Sacramento</td>
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<td>Florin Odd Fellows, 8300 Florin Rd.</td>
<td>J. Macias</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
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<td>Sacramento Clerical</td>
<td>3801</td>
<td>Sacto Central Labor Council, 2840 El Centro</td>
<td>T. Castanon</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>2412</td>
<td>Ship Clerks Union Local 34 Hall, 4 Berry St.</td>
<td>J. Petrovich</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
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<td>San Jose</td>
<td>1511</td>
<td>Straw Hat Pizza, 1535 Meridian Ave.</td>
<td>F. DeAquinuanda</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
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<td>San Luis Obis./Pismo Beach</td>
<td>1215</td>
<td>Round Table Pizza, 1055 Olive St.</td>
<td>T. Castanon</td>
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<td>San Luis Obispo/DGPP</td>
<td>1220</td>
<td>Margie's Diner, 1575 Calle Joaquin</td>
<td>L. Moon</td>
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<td>Santa Clara, City of</td>
<td>1411</td>
<td>Vesuvios Restaurant, 3044 El Camino</td>
<td>B. Wallace</td>
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<td>Santa Cruz</td>
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<td>VFW Post #7263, 2263 7th Ave.</td>
<td>A. Freitas</td>
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<td>Santa Rosa</td>
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<td>Round Table, Steele &amp; Cleaveland</td>
<td>L. Stubblefield</td>
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<td>Selma</td>
<td>1120</td>
<td>San's Mexican Restaurant, 2163 Park St.</td>
<td>P. Sandoval</td>
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<td>Selma/Asplundh</td>
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<td>Sacto Muni Utility District</td>
<td>R. Hufstader</td>
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<td>Shasta - USBR</td>
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<td>Keswick Dam Rd.</td>
<td>G. Huber</td>
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<td>Sonora</td>
<td>2511</td>
<td>The Peppery, 13494 Mono Way</td>
<td>B. Owens</td>
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<td>South Lake Tahoe</td>
<td>3314</td>
<td>Sacto Regional Transit</td>
<td>L. Stubblefield</td>
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<td>Spanker, WA/Rosalia</td>
<td>3027</td>
<td>Harvest Restaurant, Spanker, WA</td>
<td>J. Felts</td>
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<td>P. Rigg</td>
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<td>Stockton</td>
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<td>Ed Stewart Am. Leg. Post #803, 3110 N. West Ln.</td>
<td>A. Bayless</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susanville</td>
<td>4012</td>
<td>Grande Cafe, 730 Main St.</td>
<td>J. Deal</td>
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<td>Templeton</td>
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<td>The Pizza Place 105 Main St.</td>
<td>G. Burk</td>
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<td>Topock</td>
<td>1313</td>
<td>PSEA Rec. Room, Topock Station</td>
<td>K. Fiel</td>
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<td>Turlock</td>
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<td>Jura's, 146 N. Golden State Blvd.</td>
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<td>Ukiah</td>
<td>3714</td>
<td>The Wright Stuff Pizzadome</td>
<td>K. Wilson</td>
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<td>Vacaville</td>
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<td>140 Browns Valley Parkway</td>
<td>B. Yaws</td>
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<td>Walla Walla/PG&amp;E GTNW</td>
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<td>M. Prior</td>
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<td>Walnut Creek/Concord</td>
<td>2316</td>
<td>3063 Citrus Circle, Walnut Creek</td>
<td>B. Bolan</td>
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<td>Wasco</td>
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<td>Hong Kong Rest., 912 7th St</td>
<td>To Be Named</td>
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<td>Wells R.E.C.</td>
<td>3319</td>
<td>Silver Sage Senior Citizens Ctr., 1st St., Wells NV</td>
<td>C. Swett</td>
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<td>Woodland</td>
<td>3814</td>
<td>American Legion Hall, 523 Brush Street</td>
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**WANT TO KNOW THE LATEST? ATTEND YOUR UNIT MEETING!**

All Local 1245 unit meetings are open to all Local 1245 members, regardless of employer. Members may attend more than one unit meeting per month, although you will have voting status at only one meeting per month.

December 2000 19
Ukiah, Ca.
September 9, 2000

50 Years

Dallas Pearson (right), accompanied by his wife, accepts 50-year award from Asst. Business Manager Bob Choate.

The Honorees

50 YEARS
Pearson, Dallas
Rowland, Edgar H. Jr.

35 YEARS
Bilderback, James
Hennigan, Bob
Olsen, Robert

30 YEARS
Bethel, Henry F. II
Birkhofer, Larry
Crandall, Harold
Foster, Samuel
Gould, Elmer R. II
Jones, Roy M. III
Leary, David

Lozano, Pedro
Mick, Larry
Patrick, A. J.
Schuldt, Lawrence
Stanley, Elmer
Todd, Gerald
Woodson, Gary

25 YEARS
Greco, Robert
Wilson, Kenneth

20 YEARS
Bressdud, Edward
Cantrell, Jennifer
Crawford, Robert
Duffey, Suzanne
England, Bennie
Escude, Julio
Gescheider, Marc
Gordon, Gary
Hines, Steven
Johns, Gary
Kenneally, Ronald
Knaup, Mark
Knowles, Thomas
Lahr, Delbert
Ohien, Dean
Orem, Neil
Pedroja, John
Prine, Patrick
Shirley, Rosetta
Shuss, Ron
Sterbenk, Valerie
Stevenson, Richard
Stewart, Thomas
Tillman, Gerlad
Veon, Thomas
Weiper, Rodney
Williams, Paul

20 Years

30 Years