Phony Measure:
The “Stop Special Interest Money Now Act,” slated to appear on the November ballot in California, is a deceptive measure. Its true aim is to strip working people and their unions of political power so that corporations can have the field all to themselves. Check back for more info next issue of Utility Reporter.

Tortured and Killed:
A labor organizer who helped expose dangerous working conditions at garment factories in Bangladesh was tortured and killed in early April, ABC News reported. “This depraved act signals the deterioration of an already grim labor rights situation in Bangladesh, which is now the fourth largest exporter of apparel to the U.S,” said Scott Nova, executive director of the Worker Rights Consortium.

Get Those Talks Moving:
The Pappers union in Sweden has threatened to block the shipment of toilet paper from factories in a show of solidarity with the Commercial Employees’ Union (Handels), which has not had much success getting wage negotiations moving with the Svensk Handel retail employers’ association, Labor Start reported.
Paychecks and politics

I

In 1958, corporations declared war on unions in California by putting a “right-to-work” measure on the ballot. By making union dues optional, business leaders hoped to cut off the unions’ revenue stream. It was a power grab, pure and simple. The goal was to neuter unions at the bargaining table.

The Chamber of Commerce led the charge for the “right to work” measure. Unions called it “right to work for less” and opposed it. IBEW Local 1245 was in the thick of that fight.

This November, corporations are going at us again. In 1958 they tried to take away our bargaining power. This time they’re trying to take away our political power. It’s a switch in tactics, and politics matters. Politics matters.

Why should Local 1245 members care about this ballot initiative? Because our paychecks are the ultimate target. Unions exercise power in two basic ways. We use our members’ collective strength to negotiate economic improvements at the bargaining table, and to support legislation and legislators who help us protect these improvements.

Political battles over our rights and our standard of living go on all the time. But let’s just look at two major examples.

In the late 1980s, then-Gov. George Deukmejian abolished Cal-OSHA, the state’s highly-successful worker safety program. California’s unions, including IBEW Local 1245, waged a high-intensity campaign to restore Cal-OSHA through a ballot measure. We won that fight, and made it clear that protecting workers’ safety on the job must be a high priority.

In the mid-1990s, then-Gov. Pete Wilson took aim at the state’s overtime laws, which guaranteed that workers receive time-and-a-half when working beyond 8 hours in a day. Unions mounted a major campaign to elect Gray Davis, who immediately restored those overtime protections when he became governor.

My point is this: politics matters. This new corporate ballot initiative seeks to elbow unions out of the political process. Backers of the initiative claim it would rein in campaign contributions by both unions and corporations. But the wording of the initiative specifically targets union members, while creating a big loophole for corporate campaign contributions. That’s why unions are calling it the Corporate Deception Act.

In 1958, our union helped defeat a vicious assault on the power of working people and our unions. In 2012, we are being tested again. We will spare no effort to defeat the Corporate Deception Act.

PG&E “missed meals” Union files legal complaint

I

BEW Local 1245 filed a legal complaint on March 25 in an effort to resolve a dispute over missed meal provisions in the labor agreement. Last year PG&E announced it would stop paying missed meals to certain employees. Since this time the union has had several discussions with PG&E, formally met with the company and, during general negotiations, proposed new language in the collective bargaining agreement to comply with A.B. 569, a bill enacted in 2010. Unfortunately PG&E declined to reverse its position on this matter, prompting the union’s decision to take legal action. The complaint filed by the union provides for PG&E to resolve this matter without further litigation and we are hopeful the company will consider this opportunity.

Further details are available at www.ibew1245.com/news-PGE/missed_meals_3_29_12.html. New developments will be reported on the website as they become available.

New business reps hired

Several new business representatives have been hired to represent Local 1245 members.

Lloyd Cargo, 30, will be taking over most of the assignment held by retiring Business Rep Darryl Norris, 113. Cargo will represent PG&E Sacramento Division (except the Call Center and Payment Processing Center), and PG&E members in Roseville. Cargo, a PG&E Gas Service Representative, has been a leader in the union’s effort to mobilize young members. In 2011 he served on the bargaining committee for PG&E negotiations, and was one of eight Local 1245 members who gained campaign experience during last year’s recall election in Wisconsin.

Bob Gerstle, 51, is a PG&E electric crew foreman with 32 years of service to Local 1245. He served on the bargaining committee for the recent PG&E negotiations, and in 2009 participated in the “lineman safety summit,” among other union activities. He is slated to begin working for the union in May, representing PG&E members in Sierra Division/Drum and Sierra Division/Colgate, including Hydro and Placerville.

Dave Sankey, a 10-year member of Local 1245, is taking over the assignment formerly held by Bob Dean. Sankey, 37, continued on page 5
Frank Quadros – early PG&E union organizer

Frank Quadros, Jr., one of the early fighters for the union at PG&E, died Dec. 12, 2011 at the age of 86.

Quadros hired into the PG&E Gas Department in 1946 in San Francisco. At the time, the workers there were represented by a CIO union. After serving in the Marines during the Korean War (and winning a Silver Star), Quadros returned to PG&E in 1952.

“I found out that they had had an election and that it was all (represented by) IBEW,” Quadros said in a 2007 interview.

Things were ‘pretty raunchy’ in those early days, Quadros said. “It was like there was no union at all, the company was doing whatever they wanted to do.”

Quadros jumped into the fray, serving as a shop steward, on the grievance committee and then on the negotiating committee. It was there that he met Ron Weakley, the union’s founder and first business manager. He remembers telling Weakley, “The guys want to see some action.”

“He came to a couple unit meetings in San Francisco while I was the shop steward there. I have to hand it to him, the reception was not that good,” Quadros recalled.

“He handled himself very well. He took a lot of crap but he didn’t respond to it. He answered questions but he didn’t let it get to him.”

At one point Quadros felt compelled to jump to Weakley’s defense. After the meeting Weakley took him aside and said, “Quadros, you don’t have to jump in like that, that’s what I’m here for.”

Eventually Weakley took Quadros off the job for 30 days to help organize in San Francisco. In those days, there was no automatic dues deduction from paychecks and union representatives had to personally collect dues from each member every month.

“I signed up quite a few people,” Quadros recalled.

In 1955 Weakley asked Quadros to join the union staff. His first assignment was representing members in the North Bay. Later he was assigned to his old stomping grounds in San Francisco.

“I was back about 6 months and we had a big hullabaloo at 18th and Shotwell (the PG&E yard). Some guys refused to go to work. I said OK. I supported the walkout, which really pissed Weakley off,” Quadros said.

But the walkout helped him sign up 560 new members, he said.

The 1950s were difficult years for the union. As new employees came into the company, they didn’t understand the continued on page 5

Members ratify Alameda pact

Local 1245 members ratified a tentative Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Alameda in February by a vote of 20-5.

The MOU was subsequently approved by the City Council after General Manager Girish Balachandran, Local 1245 Assistant Business Manager Ray Thomas and Business Representative Al Fortier spoke in favor of the pact.

The agreement calls for general wage increases of 5%, 3%, 2%, and 2% over a 4-year term. It also calls for the City to contribute full Kaiser and Blue Shield premiums in 2012.

In 2013, the City will pay for 85% of the increases in medical premiums, and in 2014 and thereafter, the city will pay for 75% of the increases in premiums.

Effective Jan. 1, 2013, IBEW employees will pay a 1.868% cost-share toward the City’s employer retirement contribution to Cal-PERS.

Serving on the union’s bargaining committee were Mark Regan and Fernando Morales, along with Thomas and Fortier.
Police and firefighters are people we turn to for help in emergencies. Most of the time, they are able to respond with the expertise needed to stop a crime or put out a fire. But if the emergency involves a downed power line or spewing gas, even these professional first responders may find themselves in over their heads.

Rich Lane thinks first responders could use a helping hand. And who better to provide it than IBEW Local 1245? After all, our members deal with electric and gas every day.

When Lane heard that Cal-OSHA and other organizations were getting ready to host a giant Pacific Coast Safety Fest, he decided it was the perfect time to test his idea. IBEW Local 1245 became a co-sponsor of the event, Lane set up a booth, and the Local 1245 First Responder Training Program was officially launched.

“A lot of people came to the Safety Fest to get training on how to comply with various state and federal safety regulations,” said Lane, an Electrical Lineworker and union leader at Turlock Irrigation District. “Between training sessions they visited the various booths set up by vendors with services to offer. We were one of those vendors and that’s how we began making contacts.”

A top supervisor for the U.S. Forest Service immediately saw the value of what the IBEW was offering. “She had 8,000 employees,” said Lane. “She said, ‘You’re going to hear from us.’ ”

Gas Hazards

As an Electrical Lineworker, Lane knows about electricity. But natural gas, not so much. So he was glad to be joined at the IBEW Local 1245 booth by Jerry DeBaca, a long-time PG&E Gas Crew Foreman now working as a Gas Coordinator.

DeBaca estimates that about 150 people visited the IBEW booth during the three-day conference. “We talked to guys from the Army,” DeBaca said. “We had a mail carrier come by, we had contractors working in subdivisions come by.”

DeBaca said the contractor he talked to didn’t see why he would need training on gas and electric hazards. It didn’t take DeBaca long to point out why he might.

“When you’re in a housing tract and you’re lifting tiles with a big forklift to the roof of the house and suddenly you’re encountering some temporary power lines, are you prepared to deal with that?”

Many of those visiting the booth watched the PowerPoint presentation Lane had prepared that illustrated some of the things that can go dramatically wrong when you’re dealing with gas and electricity. Just about everyone took the full-color brochure describing the union’s First Responder Training Program and how to get in touch with it.

“We also wanted people to know that we can tailor our safety presentation to community groups and schools. It’s not just for first responders,” said Lane.

Testing for Interest

The booth at the Safety Fest was a toe in the water for the new program.

“ ‘We’re testing for interest, trying to see if anybody is in need of this,’” says Lane. “But he’s pretty certain the interest is there. He previously put together a similar program with his employer, Turlock Irrigation District, and found there was a demand. He did trainings for the California Highway Patrol, local fire departments, and county sheriff departments, among others.

Lane and DeBaca work in dangerous occupations. They could just watch out for themselves and leave it at that. But like the union they belong to, they are committed to the principle that all workers deserve to come home safe at night, and they are prepared to devote time and energy to turning that hope into a reality.
Jason Tucker had been an apprentice electrician for exactly one day when he was confronted with his first journeyman test.

Cresting a small rise on a busy two-lane thoroughfare in Auburn, Tucker was surprised to see an elderly woman a short distance ahead of him, sprawled in the middle of the road.

“I pulled over the shoulder about 20 yards in front of her and put on my flashers so other vehicles coming over the rise would see my vehicle prior to reaching her,” said Tucker. The speed limit was 45 mph.

As Tucker hurried to the woman’s aid, two vehicles sped by. They swerved to miss the woman but did not stop. When Tucker reached the woman he found her conscious but in great pain.

“She was really scared, very distraught. You can imagine how that would be for an elderly person,” said Tucker.

Tucker identified himself. The woman said her name was Linda, that she was 69 years old, and had fallen and injured herself. The pain was in her lower back.

Tucker decided it would be unwise to try to move her. He called 911 and focused on directing traffic until help arrived.

While they waited, two or three other motorists pulled over to offer assistance. This was a welcome change from the cars that had simply swerved around Linda earlier. But Tucker didn’t see any value in having a bunch more people congregating in the roadway, so he advised them that help was on the way and encouraged them to keep moving.

“The first responder was the Auburn Police Department,” said Tucker, although it’s clear that Tucker himself was the actual “first responder.”

Byron Carroll, 43, has been hired by Local 1245 as a benefits specialist. Carroll worked as a PG&E Corrosion Mechanic and is a 19-year IBEW member. In 2010 he served as a temporary business representative, and in 2011 he served on the bargaining committee for PG&E negotiations, providing valuable expertise on complex benefits issues.

Sonny Hollesen, 48, has been hired to take over the northern assignment formerly held by Ed Dwyer: PG&E North Coast Division, PG&E General Construction—North Coast Improvement District, and City of Willits.

Hollesen, a 28-year Local 1245 member, has been a steward since 1996, served as unit chair in Eureka since 2005, and participated in the 1995 protests against PG&E downsizing.

Dwyer, who became an assistant business manager last fall, will continue to represent members in western Fresno Division (Selma, Lemoore, Coalinga, Dinuba).

Two other business representatives have also recently become assistant business managers: Bob Dean and Joe Osterlund.

And just for the record, Darryl Norris is actually just 63.

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Seniors gear up to fight back in 2012

By Bill Wallace

Republicans demonstrated after their midterm win in 2010 elections that their goal is to legislatively strip away the right to vote, limit a union’s ability to represent workers, and eliminate your pension and benefits. Additionally, the treatment of women and minorities is taking a major step backwards with recent laws and proposed laws.

This attack on workers was a major focus of the Alliance for Retired Americans conference held at the end of February in Las Vegas. IBEW Local 1245 sent five retirees to the conference: Tom Bird, vice president of NARA (Nevada Alliance for Retired Americans) and president of the IBEW 1245 Yerrington retiree club; Mike Davis, IBEW 1245 president; and Ken Rawles, IBEW 1245 Ninth District vice president CARA (California Alliance for Retired Americans); and myself.

Conservative millionaires throughout the nation have funded numerous initiatives that would weaken unions. The right-wing American Legislative Exchange Council, funded in part by the billionaire Koch brothers, is working to restrict the number of people voting in order to increase the right-wing’s leverage. The smaller the number of people voting, the greater the chance that a Republican will be elected. Restrictive voter registration laws have been passed since the midterm elections and seniors and minorities have been denied the right to vote for the most insignificant reasons.

Voter fraud amongst Latinos has been cited as the reason for these restrictions. Additionally, the treatment of women and minorities is taking a major step backwards with recent laws and proposed laws.

The current political reality is that elected officials across the United States are trying to destroy collective bargaining, pensions, and unions, as well as Social Security and Medicare. We need to get fired up about this election. Our way of life, which unions helped to create, is evaporating. The middle class is quickly becoming the have-not class and the class of the past.

Republicans want to privatize Social Security and turn over our contributions to private stock brokers. It is important for the future of working people to win this fight. The presidential election is crucial, and the 65+ vote will be crucial in the west. We cannot let our generation be the last generation that is able to retire with a livable income and health benefits.

The theme of the ARA conference emphasized that seniors need to take stock of the political reality and play an active role countering these attacks against workers, the union, pensions and healthcare benefits. It is imperative that we support candidates that reflect the core values of the American union worker.

Being elderly does not necessarily equate to being wiser. Seniors consistently vote against their own best interest. We need to pay attention to the forces that are working to destroy us. We need to ask ourselves: How can a politician’s stance really affect our lives? What are the “unintended” consequences when we vote for someone without considering their stance on economic issues that affect our standard of living?

Our training emphasized opening up an offensive to defeat these attacks on unions, workers and seniors. Workshops emphasized online organizing, getting the facts, and organizing seniors locally. The schedule was intense in teaching us how to spread the truth by educating seniors through personal contact and by the use of social media. The training helped us to better understand the positive impact of Medicare, Social Security and the Affordable Healthcare Act and respond more intelligently to criticism.

Retiree Club Meeting Schedule

You can find the specific dates for each month at www.ibew1245.com/unit_meetings.html

East Bay Chapter: 2nd Thursday each month, 10 a.m., IBEW Local 595, 6250 Village Parkway, Dublin, CA.

San Jose Chapter: 1st Thursday each month, 10 a.m., at IBEW Local 332, 2125 Canoas Garden, San Jose, CA.

Retirees’ Corner

We cannot standby and allow “others” to be disenfranchised. We must stand by our sisters and fight the forces that are treating them as second-class citizens. Collectively we must remember that unions do not exist in a vacuum. When others are attacked and we do nothing, we are the next in line for an attack. An attack on one is an attack on all and success will depend on your involvement.

Bill Wallace is IBEW 1245’s liaison to the national headquarters of the Alliance for Retired Americans and vice-president of the IBEW 1245 San Jose retiree club. On behalf of all five IBEW 1245 delegates, he wants to thank the union for sending them to the ARA convention.

Get the latest news at www.ibew1245.com
Retirees form 1245 chapter in Winnemucca

Local 1245 retirees have organized a Winnemucca chapter of the union’s Retirees Club.

The club will meet on the fourth Wednesday of every month at Round Table Pizza, 1043 W. Fourth St., in Winnemucca. The lunch meetings will start at 11:00 AM and last about two hours, with lots of socializing and pizza.

Local 1245 retirees in the Winnemucca area are invited and encouraged to join the fun. Meetings are open to all Local 1245 retirees, regardless of who your employer was during your worklife.

The officers of the new chapter are Don Rogers, President; Ken Lutzow, Vice President; and Michael Dean, Recording Secretary.

This marks the fourth Nevada chapter of the Retirees Club, including Reno/Sparks, Yerington, and Carson City. There are five chapters in California. Local 1245 congratulates the Nevada retirees on their tremendous achievement.

Art Murray retires

Long-time IBEW International Representative Art Murray greeted his former colleagues at a recent IBEW Local 1245 staff meeting after announcing his retirement. Seated left is President Mike Davis; at right is Business Manager Tom Dalzell. Murray served as a Local 1245 Business Representative and Assistant Business Manager before joining the International’s staff. Murray handled safety issues while he was at Local 1245 and went on to serve a term on the Cal-OSHA Standards Board. Best wishes for a happy retirement, Brother Art!

Congratulations newly-retired members

The Local 1245 Retirees Club congratulates these recently-retired members of the union. We invite you to participate in a Retiree Club chapter in Dublin, San Jose, Vacaville, Santa Rosa, Merced, Reno or Yerington. If you don’t have a chapter nearby, call the union at 707-452-2718 and find out how you can help start one!

Billy Adams 41 years Modesto, CA
Rodolfo Aponio 17 years San Francisco, CA
Linda Balasis 36 years Bakersfield, CA
Carlos Castillo 39 years San Jose, CA
Frank Balcazar 36 years Bakersfield, CA
Linda Balasis 31 years Daly City, CA
Lynn Blodgett 27 years Orovile, CA
Sharon Burnam 22 years Dixon, CA
Richard Kappler 37 years Half Moon Bay, CA

Marilyn Dahl 19 years Placerville, CA
Edith Davis 25 years Mountain View, CA
Mary Demeo 36 years Half Moon Bay, CA
Jimmie Diaz 37 years San Francisco, CA
Lilly Chin 12 years Hayward, CA
Wanda Chin 35 years San Leandro, CA
Lex Christensen 34 years Petaluma, CA
Rita Cornaglia 28 years Chowchilla, CA
Florence Cotton 36 years Dinuba, CA
Michael Coyne 41 years Walnut Creek, CA
John Crittoria 26 years Brentwood, CA
Eduardo Cruz 33 years Sacramento, CA
Kenneth Cunningham 39 years Santa Cruz, CA
Kathleen Cunningham 39 years Vacaville, CA
Jose Recto Cabatic 28 years W Sacramento, CA
Karen Davis 40 years Suisun City, CA
Carlos Castillo 40 years San Jose, CA
Matthew Chastain 25 years Loomis, CA
Utility Reporter

Chyri Lafferty 23 years Tullock, CA
Byron Langan 44 years Modesto, CA
Richard Landucci 40 years Scottsdale, AZ
Frank Lopez 29 years Roseville, CA
Richard Love 17 years Hayward, CA
Lloyd Madansky 22 years Grover Beach, CA
Karen Magee 34 years Paradise, CA
Richard Magill 34 years Cobb, CA
Kenneth Mahouski 37 years Fortuna, CA
Charles Marcus 19 years Vacaville, CA
Richard Martin 33 years Antioch, CA
Paul Markiewitz 39 years Vacaville, CA
Robert Martin 33 years Hollister, CA
Richard Martinez 36 years Yuba City, CA
Hong Khor 14 years Oakland, CA
Robert Kappler 16 years Palo Alto, CA
Homer Knight 42 years Sacramento, CA
Ben La Pena 41 years Eureka, CA
Patrick Harl 19 years Livermore, CA
Debra Encallado 37 years Livermore, CA
Arroyo Grande, CA
Edward Engeldinger 31 years Felton, CA
Francisco Espinosa 40 years Bakersfield, CA
Marsha Fagan 13 years Williams, CA
Michael Francis 16 years Santa Maria, CA
Raymond Gaeta 37 years San Jose, CA
Phillip Geck 34 years Vacaville, CA
Lockey Gehring 41 years Placerville, CA
Raymond Ghiotto 40 years Stockton, CA
Helen Taylor 37 years Sacramento, CA
Helen Taylor 37 years Sacramento, CA
Helen Taylor 37 years Sacramento, CA
Helen Taylor 37 years Sacramento, CA

Cynthia Solomon 23 years Oroville, CA

Dear IBEW Local 1245 members,

I am writing to inform you that I have decided to retire from the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. I have served as a Local 1245 Business Representative and Assistant Business Manager before joining the International’s staff. My time with the union has been fulfilling and deeply meaningful.

I want to express my gratitude to everyone who has supported me throughout my career. I have had the privilege of working with incredible individuals, and I am grateful for the opportunity to have served alongside them.

Please accept my resignation effective immediately. I look forward to continuing to support the union and its members in any way I can.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
Noticias de Podadores de Árboles para el Despeje de Líneas

Right Tree Service comenzó sus operaciones en el Condado de Humboldt el 10 de marzo de 2012, donde Davey Tree Surgery había estado operando por más de 20 años. Davey informó que retuvo ocho de los 45 empleados debido a trabajos del sistema de confiabilidad. Wright contrató a la mayoría de los empleados restantes; unos pocos decidieron no trabajar con Wright.

Los empleados que fueron despedidos fueron notificados que sus beneficios médicos serían cancelados a partir del 26 de febrero de 2012 aunque continuaron trabajando para Davey Tree Surgery hasta el 29 de febrero inclusive. La cancelación temprana ocasionó problemas con las farmacias a finales de febrero. Trabajando en conjunto con el sindicato, la compañía accedió a cubrir estos costos.

La próxima transición en SMUD de Wright Tree Service a Asplundh Tree Expert está generando muchas llamadas de los miembros que previamente habían sido empleados por Asplundh Tree Expert, Utility Tree Service y Trees Inc. ya que aquellos despedidos “con causa” de cualquier subsidiaria de Asplundh no pueden ser contratados por Asplundh. Más de un contratista protestó la adjudicación de la licitación de SMUD, sosteniendo que ahora la totalidad de los contratados de despeje de líneas de SMUD habían sido adjudicados a una compañía: Asplundh. Las protestas fueron rechazadas por SMUD.

PG&E continua adjudicando directamente trabajos de proyectos a contratistas en North Valley que no pertenecen al sindicato. Estos contratistas pagan salarios y beneficios por debajo de los que paga la industria. Uno de ellos fue responsable directo por la caída de un pino de gran tamaño sobre una línea de 230KV que produjo un incendio hace algunos meses; fueron temporalmente retirados de los terrenos, pero están participando actualmente en actividades de pre-licitación. Todos estos contratistas tienen problemas de seguridad.

Un operador de tierra de Family Tree Service fue despedido por la caída de un abeto que ocasionó un apagón en el área de Garberville. El operador sostiene que las medidas disciplinarias anteriores, utilizadas como etapas progresivas que llevaron a su despido, fueron inventadas por la compañía. El operador admite que ocasionó el apagón, pero sostiene que no fue entrenado para cortar árboles y que su capataz estaba escaldando los vanos más tarde, cuando sucedió el accidente. Al solicitar la documentación sobre las medidas disciplinarias previas, la compañía suministró una lista de ellas pero no suministró ninguna copia de las advertencias.

El sindicato se reunió con Asplundh Tree Expert, Trees Inc., Utility Tree, y Wright Tree Service en las oficinas de Mediación Federal (Federal Mediation, FMCS por sus siglas en inglés) en Oakland el 7 de marzo de 2012. Llegamos a un acuerdo tentativo. Se llevarán a cabo reuniones de introducción en todos los patios para explicar la oferta. Las papeletas de votación ya fueron enviadas por correo a los miembros. El 20 Torneo Anual Gold Cup de Fútbol del IBEW 1245 se llevará a cabo en el parque Mistletoe Soccer Park en Ripon, California. El evento fue ampliado a 14 equipos. El sindicato tendrá una reunión de Capitanes de Equipo el 16 de abril en Vacaville para hablar sobre las reglas y procedimientos del torneo.

PG&E continúa adjudicar proyectos directamente a no-union contractors en el North Valley. Estos contratistas tienen bajo-industria wages and benefits. One of them was directly responsible for felling a large pine through a 230KV resulting in a fire several months ago; they were temporarily removed from the property but are attending pre-bids now. All of them have safety issues. A Family Tree Service groundman was terminated for felling a fir tree and causing an outage in the Garberville area. He maintains the previous discipline used as progressive steps leading to his termination was fabricated by the company. He admits he caused the outage but claims he was not trained to fell trees and his foreman was two spans away climbing when the accident happened.

When documentation of the past discipline was requested the company produced a list of the alleged discipline but no actual copies of the warnings. The union met with Asplundh Tree Expert, Trees Inc., Utility Tree, and Wright Tree Service at the Federal Mediation (FMCS) office in Oakland on March 7, 2012. We reached a tentative agreement. Roll-out meetings will be conducted at all yards to explain the offer. Ballots have been mailed to the members. The 2nd Annual IBEW 1245 Gold Cup Soccer Tournament will be held at Mistlin Soccer Sports Park in Ripon, CA. The event has been expanded to 14 teams. The union will have a Team Captain Meeting on April 16 at Weakley Hall in Vacaville to discuss the rules and procedures for the tournament.

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Special Events

• Soccer Tournament -May 12, 2012, Mistlin Sports Park, Ripon, CA
• Clay Shoot – June 12, 2012, Dunnigan, CA
• International Lineman’s Rodeo – October 10-14, 2012, Overland Park, KS
• The 16th Annual IBEW 9th District Softball Tournament will be hosted by Local 595/Dublin at Big League Dreams Park in Manteca, CA. It will be held August 11-12. We should be scouting for teams now.

An expanded version of this report can be found on the Local 1245 website at www.ibew1245.com.

Organizing

We signed the following contractors in the month of March:

California Outside Line Construction Agreement

• America Site Builders, LLC – Texas
• Shimmick Construction – Oakland, CA
• Atlas Civil dba MGE Energy – Paso Robles, CA
• Roadway Engineering – Ceres, CA

San Francisco Chapter of NECA Trolley Agreement:

• KVA Electric
• Shimmick Construction

Substation, Communication, Relay Test Technician (Specialist) Agreement:

Out of Work Books as of March 29, 2012

Lineman 76 299
Apprentice Lineman 9 71
Equipment Man 5 39
Groundman 1 23 175
Fabricator Tech 8 48
Cable Splicer 3 8

Total 124 640

Out of Work Books as of March 29, 2012

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PG&E General Construction crews worked in the hills high above Calaveras Reservoir in late February to upgrade electric capacity for the new Calaveras Dam.

The old dam’s got to go. At the time it was built, in 1925, the Calaveras was the largest earthen dam in the world. But it sits on an earthquake fault and is now considered seismically unsound.

After their tailboard the PG&E crews fan out across the hills, putting rollers in place and pulling in 4-ought conductor to replace the existing 4-ACSR (“acsr”). The 12kv line will provide more electric capacity for the new dam’s equipment and pumps.

The views are spectacular up here above the Calaveras Valley. The place feels remote, a feeling that is reinforced by some hard history.

text continues on page 12

Utility Reporter
Calaveras continued from previous page

Eric Arnold

Tom Smithwick, left, and Ryan Rodriguez

Don Wamsley

Todd Walker
Calaveras CPUC hearing continued from previous page

PG&E General Construction

Eric Arnold, in the bucket, and Ryan Rodriguez

Eric Arnold, in the bucket, and Will Soria

Eric Arnold

Ryan Rodriguez

Todd Walker

continued on next page
The first effort to build a dam here ended in failure, when the structure collapsed before construction was completed. A worse tragedy struck on Father’s Day 1963, when the reservoir swallowed two men out for a short flight in a single-engine Ercoupe. No one saw the plane go down, but suspicion fell on the Calaveras Reservoir and the children of one of the men returned several times over the years to cast red roses on the water’s surface.

The bodies were recovered in the 1990s after a drought shrank the reservoir and uncovered the plane’s wreckage. But today this valley’s troubled past seems to recede a little further as the sun streams through a break in the clouds and the IBEW members check the sag on the new lines they’ve pulled in.

To a lineman, perfect sag is a thing of beauty.

“It looks great,” says Cisco Schaff, a five-year member of IBEW Local 1245. “And you couldn’t be in a finer place.” The new dam is expected to be operational in 2015.
Pushing Back

By Eric Wolfe

Everything is connected.

Last year IBEW Local 1245 members traveled to Wisconsin, Florida and Ohio to help other unions fight back against Republican-led assaults on workers’ rights. Now Republican legislators in some states are having second thoughts about continuing their attack on labor.

Take Minnesota. Republicans have majorities in both chambers of the state legislature, and were widely expected to pass “right-to-work” legislation this year. But it hasn’t worked out that way. How come?

Right-to-work laws, as most union members know, forbid union security clauses in union contracts. In other words, a union cannot require employees to pay union dues, even though the union is required by law to represent those same employees.

Unions have a name for people who enjoy the benefits of having a union but skip out on paying their fair share: free riders. And we also have a name for these anti-union laws: right-to-work-for-less.

Supporters often claim that right-to-work laws attract business and improve a state’s economy. But research does not bear this out.

Lonnie Stevans, Professor of Information Technology and Quantitative Methods at Hofstra University, compared the business formation and economic growth of right-to-work states with non-right-to-work states using recent data from the U.S. Small Business Administration. After controlling for several variables, Stevans found that a state’s right-to-work law has no influence on economic growth, no influence on employment, and no influence on business capital formation.

Negative Impact on Wages, Benefits

But Stevans did find one point of influence: having a right-to-work law is correlated with a decrease in wages.

This finding is confirmed by Gordon Lafer of the Economic Policy Institute. His research found that right-to-work laws lower wages for union and non-union workers by an average of $1,500 a year. Right-to-work laws also decrease the likelihood that employees will get health insurance or pensions through their jobs, Lafer’s research shows.

Lower wages have the indirect effect of undermining consumer spending, which in turn threatens economic growth. For every $1 million in wage cuts to workers, $850,000 less is spent in the economy, according to Lafer’s research. And that drop in spending translates into a loss of six jobs.

But corporations are more concerned about their immediate bottom line than the long-term health of the economy. It’s almost human nature: managers don’t like to share power with workers, and top managers prefer to see company revenues go into executive bonuses rather than wages.

Politicians Having Second Thoughts

So what’s going on in Minnesota? Why are Republicans there suddenly having second thoughts about pushing through a right-to-work (for less) law when they have the votes to do so? In a word: it’s about survival.

They saw what happened next door when Gov. Scott Walker of Wisconsin tried to strip public workers of their collective bargaining rights. Two state senators have already lost their jobs in special elections, thanks to a vigorous recall campaign that was assisted by members of our union, Local 1245.

Other anti-union Wisconsin legislators are being targeted for recall this year. And over one million voters have signed petitions calling for Gov. Walker’s recall, too. A special election is set for June 5.

Similar story in Ohio. Thousands of union members, including a delegation from Local 1245, mounted a huge campaign to repeal a Republican-backed bill that stripped union members of their rights. The repeal effort was wildly successful—over 60% of the voters backed the unions.

What message has this sent to Minnesota legislators who’ve been considering a right-to-work (for less) bill? “There is a tremendous fear of the political ramifications — it boils down to that, nothing more or less,” Minnesota State Senator Dave Thompson told the New York Times.

Some Republican lawmakers in Michigan wanted to push right-to-work legislation in their state, but Gov. Rick Snyder, also a Republican, wants no part of it. In Utah, where Republicans control the state Legislature, an anti-union proposal to restrict collective bargaining never made its way out of a committee.

Here’s the take-home lesson: everything is connected. What we do matters. We fought back, and the union bashers have been forced to reconsider their attacks.

But the threat is far from over. In California, anti-worker forces have put a measure on the November ballot to restrict the rights of unions to engage in political activity. (See “Paychecks and politics,” page 2).

Local 1245 will be providing more information on this threat as election season approaches. We’ve sent small delegations to fight for union rights in other states. Now the time has come to mobilize to defend our rights right here in California.
**The Token Bearers**

By Mike Cottrell

*The Utility Reporter is proud to bring you the next installment in this lineman's novel by Local 1245 Executive Board member Mike Cottrell.*

**Chapter 4**

**Eureka, California 1954. And a dream of Fancy in Houston during the Great Depression.**

It was six in the morning as he rolled the unit to a stop in front of the hall in Eureka. Aileen and the girls were asleep and he gazed over at her and then to the back seat at the girls. I will have a job tomorrow and a place to park the trailer today girls. He lit the cigarette and waited for someone to come in and he would get on the books and have a clearance to go to work and he dozed off and dreamed. Fancy was walking down the street in Houston. The place looked warm and inviting so he sat his grip down and blew into his hands and re-gripped his suitcase and tramp bag and walked over and sat one down then turned the knob and pushed the door open. She was filling the salt and pepper shakers and already knew he was broke by the look in his eye and wasn’t in the mood to tell him yes or no, just exhausted to see all the people without during this depression. He sensed she knew he was broke and wondered how to get something out of her in fair trade.

“I can do anything you want me to do and better than most.”

She just stared and kept filling the shakers

“My name is Fancy and I’m a lineman by trade, but things are slow.”

She still did not reply. He sat his things down on the floor by the counter and looked at the pie case.

“I can peel and cut apples for you, or I can kill, pluck, gut, and butcher chickens, too.”

She did not answer.

“Well then how about I borrow some hot water and a few crackers from ya’ and that bottle of catsup over there and I’ll just sit down here and make myself some tomato soup.”

“That’s funny.”

“Yeah and the truth of the matter is that usually when you come in a place and buy a meal you get that stuff free, but since I can’t afford the meal I wonder how that works.”

“You mean how it works that you would get catsup, crackers and hot water free without buying a meal?”

“Yeah. That’s what I’m wondering.”

“I can answer that.”

“You can?”

“The answer is, no, that stuff is not free.”

“Well how ‘bout a cup of coffee then until my brother in St. Louis straightens up, and he’s a hunchback.”

“Why don’t you just say you can make wisecracks till I either feed you or call a cop?”

“I can do that, too. That way it’ll be either a free meal or a warm place to sleep tonight and if I’m lucky, maybe both.”

“How long since you ate?”

“I’m not sure, but long enough my stomach thinks my throat’s been cut.”

“I’ll feed you. But you will have to work it off. I’ve got some dishes in the back and other things to do around here.”

“Where’s them dishes or that food, I’m dyin’ to get to one of ’em so I can start on the next.”

“I’ll feed you first, and then put you to work.”

“Yesss ma’am!”

When the hall opened, Buddy went in and signed the books and was given his choices to work. He asked about the overtime jobs and took the wood pole high line that was paying the most money. There were jobs left on the days calls and getting out on the job of choice was no problem.

She asked him did he get one and he said yes a good money job. She asked him where the trailer parks were and he told her the ones on the end of town sounded like the best and that is where most of the linemen and their families were staying. They went and found them and moved in the best looking one and he started setting up the trailer and she found a swing set for the girls to play on and the little one asked her if this was their new place and she said yes honey until we move again, this is home. Then while the girls played on the swing set she went to check out the laundry room to see how it was laid out and thought

*The job was almost always with them on or off, just the way they are. Hard and competitive, callused and conniving against each other to pull stunts and tricks was part of it all. It was just the way of the tramp lineman.*
it was a little dingy and decided it would have to do and went back and started cleaning the house once he had taken all the blocks out to get the trailer level.

Late in the day, the men started coming in from work and some came by to see whom the new trailer belonged to and some knew Buddy and he knew some of them and it always seemed to be that way. An old friend would call and tell of a new job with better money and time and it always seemed to be the same. No matter where you might be, the grass was always greener on the other side of the fence, so just quit where you are now and go for the gold. Tramps and boomers taking everything they owned and moving to more money. Never mind the kids or buying land or saving a hell of a lot. It was as much about seeing the country as any of that as long as the money was better than the last job. That was the central view of all of them, having more money on your paycheck than the other lineman and making sure you got as much overtime as anybody else got. It was the competitive way of the lot of them, out doing each other and beating the other one to the books to get on the money faster than somebody else. Then laughing and tee-heeing all the while waiting on the others to show up just to discover you were already there and way ahead of them in money. Friends would call friends when the books were clear and not call the enemies they had made in the trade—many job problems handled at the bar after work or in the trailer park. The job was almost always with them on or off, just the way they are. Hard and competitive, callused and conniving against each other to pull stunts and tricks was part of it all. It was just the way of the tramp lineman. They wanted nothing else in the world but this freedom to roam and make money and build and destroy reputations unwillingly and willingly. In hatred or good humor whatever one's nature or convictions tendered him in the course of chasing the work and making one's way.

Fried potatoes and onions smelled in the evening air and kids played and dogs from different states mingled and annoyed each other's yards and invaded the landlord's rose bushes and rummaged in the garbage cans to be stoned and kicked and cussed and no leash law prevailed to stop their freedom and times were good here for linemen and their families. After dinner and talking with the other men on the job about some of the conditions and equipment, ranging from mules to 'A' frames Buddy sat in the yard with his girls and played until dark. The game was jacks and he was winning and he was glad to have gotten them all there from Kansas City safe and sound and he turned in to get up early and show-up on the new job.

“Buddy, Buddy wake up, I’ve got the coffee ready and your eggs are on, get up it’s time to go to work”.

“Huh, okay okay, I’m awake. I’ll be right out.”

He came out and sat at the table and she slid the toast and jelly and eggs under his nose and poured the coffee and handed him a spoon for the sugar.

“You can have the car today.”

“I can?”

“Yeah, I’m riding with Kenny and his wife’s name is Hazel, they live in number four. See if she needs to go anywhere and stop and get a quart of oil and put in it. We ran out on the road and it needs one. Get me some woolies, mine all have holes in them and just get one pair until pay day.”

He dressed and put his line boots on by the door, gave her a kiss and hug and she said to be careful and he said he would and unlatched the door and she handed him his lunch box.

“I’ll leave the key under the seat after I get my tools out of the turtle hull.”

“Okay, love you”, she said and drew her head back from the crack in the door and closed it and went back to bed after she checked the girls.

When he got down to four they were warming up the car and the others were showing up and starting to pile in. Kenny opened the trunk and they put their lunches in and Buddy put his tools in one side. He shook hands with Mickey and Kenny and his little brother Pete.

They sped off and Kenny started hauling ass like there was no tomorrow.

“Gotta hurry the hell up and get the hell out there so the boss won’t fire one of his own kids,” joked Mickey.

Kenny pulled the car to the side of the road and reached over the seat and grabbed Mickey by the shirt.

“I’ve about heard all that kid-ding about me and my dad I’m gonna’ hear, Mickey.” Nothing more was said and he drove them on to the job.

_Fried potatoes and onions smelled in the evening air and kids played and..._
Rekindling the Fire

Local 1245 members are under attack. The only question is, what are we going to do about it?

Local 1245 unit leaders, meeting in Vacaville on March 14-15, made it clear they don’t intend to back down in the face of anti-union hostility.

Some people try to portray union members as “a bunch of communists” because we stand up for our rights, said Bill Trathen, a 10-year IBEW member at the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

“But you look around you can see guys walking around with American eagles on their shirts. I got a flag on my truck. I’m a veteran. I’m damn proud to be an American, but I’m going to stand up for my rights, too. And everybody else’s,” said Trathen.

Business Manager Tom Dalzell summoned the unit leaders to Weakley Hall to help the union respond to what he called “the toughest challenges that this local has ever face.”

Those challenges include withering assaults on our members at the bargaining table, and a political climate that has become increasingly “anti-worker, anti-middle class, anti-pension, anti-benefit, and anti-wage.”

Local 1245 is not simply fighting back on particular issues, Dalzell said, but preparing to build a union strong enough to carry that fight into the future. Local 1245 has mobilized retirees to defend their medical benefits, deployed young members to other states to gain campaign skills, helped linemen, gas workers and tree trimmers organize peer-to-peer campaigns to improve worksite safety.

The union has also worked to strengthen ties between members by organizing soccer tournaments, golf tournaments, bowling competitions, and clay shoots, among other events.

“We’ve tried many things that we’ve not tried before—trying to rekindle some of the early fire that started this union in the 1940s and 1950s,” said Dalzell.

Dalzell puts unit leaders at the heart of this new effort. At the conference, he set out three broad goals for them in 2012:

• Create bigger and better unit meetings. How do we make them better attended and more relevant?
• Find new ways to connect with members who will never attend a unit meeting. The union hall used to be the place where members connected. Can we find additional options in the era of social media?
• Make our union relevant in the community. Can we counter negative propaganda about unions by being a more prominent and positive presence in the places where we work and live?

Something in the Air

Conferences can be boring affairs, where someone pontificates up front and people nod off in the back row after the coffee wears off.

This conference felt different. There was something in the air besides the smell of lunch. People bought into the idea that these issues really matter.

The agenda, crafted by union activist Lorenzo Arciniega, barreled forward from one topic to the next. Unit leaders were seated around a dozen small tables where everyone’s ideas could find an audience. The best of those ideas were then shared with the whole group in plenary sessions deftly guided by Turlock Irrigation District Unit Chair Aaron Baker.
Baker’s unit is a story in itself. Attendance at Turlock unit meetings is routinely over half of the membership. At one recent meeting, attendance was two-thirds. This stand-out performance may be due in part to the unit’s newness. Organized just a decade ago, many members in Turlock still have fresh memories of the effort it took to gain union representation.

Forged in Struggle
Read about the hard-fought campaign to organize a union at Turlock Irrigation District at www.ibew1245.com/Group_Profiles/Turlock_Irrigation_District.pdf

But the unit also made a conscious decision to tap younger members for positions of authority. Baker, who just turned 33, was recruited for the unit leadership post by previous unit chair Rich Lane, 55, who continues to play a mentoring role.

Baker’s experience showed at the conference. He didn’t work from a script, just paced around the room, nudging the conversation forward with questions, keeping the focus on the challenges ahead, at times referring to his unit’s bitter battle with management at TID.

“They’re trying to take everything away—our pay scale, retirement, medical. They’re hitting everything they can think of,” Baker said. “They don’t understand what we do, they don’t understand the sacrifice we make when we go out on Christmas Day to put the power back on or the clerks answer the phones after hours. This is a major fight.”

Baker was speaking from his own experience, but to make a larger point.

“It’s important to get your members not only to the meetings but getting them involved in other areas, too. Politics, community—it’s all going to make a difference,” he said.

Organization in Transition
At times the unit leader conference seemed like an advertisement for an organization in transition. Young unit leaders, including a contingent of youthful-looking line clearance tree trimmers, were mixed together with old-guard union stalwarts like Novato Unit Chair Ione Snyder, East Bay Clerical Chair Donna Ambeau, Reno Chair Dana Moler and Tahoe Chair Smiley Stahl.

The conference’s invited speakers put many different faces on the transition now underway at the union.

• Political media guru Eric Jaye described how unions will increasingly rely on social media to communicate with our members and recruit public support for our campaigns.
• Retiree activists Ron Borst, Rita Weisshaar and Tom Bird gave first person accounts of their protracted battle to defend retiree medical benefits at NV Energy.
• Kim Oaxaca talked about the highly personal journey that led her to create the Facebook support network called PG&E Wives. (See an excerpt of her presentation at www.ibew1245.com/video-files/videos.html.)
• IBEW lobbyist Scott Wetch described a hostile ballot measure that will strangle unions in red tape if members do not mobilize now to defeat it in November.

In the closing plenary session, the unit leaders were clearly jazzed by the things they had heard. But there was also a clear-eyed recognition that hard work will be required to build the union of the future.

“This has been great, but the proof’s in the pudding,” said Placerville Unit Chair Jeff Campodonico. “We’ve got to implement these ideas and get our name out there as a union, let the public know who we are and what we do.”

“If we don’t do it nobody’s going to do it for us,” said Gary Moeckli, Redding Unit Recorder. Others fought in the past to create a union that delivers the good wages and benefits we enjoy today, he said. “We’ve got to get out and fight and keep it going.”

Educating Our Own
Educating our own members about the union’s role in their lives is a major part of the challenge that unit leaders face.

If members don’t start paying attention and getting involved, said Diablo Canyon Unit Chair Ron Greenlee, then five years from now IBEW members will be wondering what happened to their wages and benefits, and will ask why the union didn’t do anything about it.

“Well, we’re the union, they’re the union,” said Greenlee.

Don’t be intimidated, start with something small, suggested Michelle Benuzzi, the Local 1245 Advisory Council representative for NV Energy and other Nevada employers. Benuzzi recounted how she had used her own money to print up some union t-shirts, and discovered she had created a hot item. The Executive Board then loaned her money for a second production run.

Members in your area have skills, Benuzzi said. Find out what they are and think of ways those skills could be used to advance the union.

After posing for a group photo out...
Building a Stronger Union
By Lauren Bartlett

Remember: There is a "U" in Union!

What can U do?
U can get involved
U can attend your local meetings
U can read your collective bargaining agreement
U can read the IBEW Bylaws and IBEW Constitution
U can read your Union Boards. Get knowledge and stay informed!
U can vote in elections of officers
U can vote during contract negotiations. Voting is your Voice!
U can write proposals during negotiations. Your ideas are important!
U can volunteer, and dedicate your time
U can become a shop steward or officer
U can get to know the people who represent you

SHOW THE UNION WHO U ARE AND REMEMBER: THERE IS A U IN UNION!

Lauren Bartlett
Lauren Bartlett is a steward, Advisory Council member, and Unit Recorder for Unit 3011 (Sacramento Regional Transit).

Huge turnout
The following unit officers and special guests attended the unit officer conference, along with much of the Local 1245 staff.

NAME UNIT UNIT NAME
Alberts, Rita 1411 City of Santa Clara
Ambeau, Donna 2301 East Bay Clerical
Arroyo, Jose Manuel 4712 Trees Inc. - Fresno
Atkins, Edward 3309 Truckee Donner PUD
Baker, Aaron 1126 Turlock ID
Bartlett, Lauren 3011 Sacramento RTD
Beede, Craig 3309 Truckee Donner PUD
Bennuzi, Michelle 3311 Reno
Bibbs, Constance 3011 Sacramento RTD
Bird, Tom Reno Retirees
Blanton, Judith 1511 San Jose Physical/Clerical
Borst, Ron Reno Retirees
Brown, Ashley 4717 Wright Tree - SMUD
Camarcho, Jerry 1217 Templeton
Campodonico, Jeff 3813 Placerville
Casey, Justin 4423 Davey Auburn
Casey, Kelley 5231 Cal Peco
Cervantes, Juan 4718 Trees Inc. - Stockton
Cook, Kenneth 4716 Davey Tree - Concord
Crow, Tracy 2515 Modesto
Cuevas, Ricardo 4711 Asplundh-Mtn. View
Curtis, Raymond 3912 Fresh Pond (SMUD)
Danieli, Richard 1113 Madera
Daves, Karri 2518 Modesto ID
Davis, Kevin 3511 Auburn
Day, Josh 4717 Wright Tree - SMUD
De La Torre, Cecelia 2511 Stockton
DeBaca, Jerry 2317 Antioch
Del Grande, Dennis Santa Rosa Retirees
Earl, Patrick 1311 Hinkley
Eaves, Mike 3812 Vacaville
Ely, Peter 4720 Davey Tree - Red Bluff
Estes, Alfonso 2318 Richmond
Felicich, David 1216 Santa Maria
Flores, Rodrigo 1122 Merced ID
Fowler, Cheril 3512 Roseville
Franks, Adrienne 2301 East Bay Clerical
Frasu, Mike 3510 Loomis
Galgados, Ricardo 4710 Davey Napa
Garcia, Henry 3213 PGE - Burney
Garcia, Robert Guest - Lompoc
Garcia, Rosario A. 4718 Trees Inc. - Stockton
Gomez, Marcelino 4711 Asplundh-Mtn. View
Gray, Jennifer 3801 Sacramento Clerical
Greenlee, Ronald 1220 Diablo Canyon
Hall, Brian 1221 Buellton
Hasten, Joseph 2551 SSID
Holt, Jeffrey 3512 Roseville
Hopp, Keith 3611 Marysville
Hurtado, Estanislao 4710 Davey Napa
Janisse, Murray 3218 USRB - Keswick
Jessen, Michael 3417 Paradise - Chico
Johnston, Douglas R. 1511 San Jose Physical/Clerical
Johnston, Jim 3214 Red Bluff
Jones, Earl 3316 Fallon
Jones, Vincent 2412 San Francisco
Kilgore, Wayne 3313 Yerington
Krumsus, Kevin 3801 Sacramento Clerical
Laird, Joel 3317 Winnemucca
Lancaster, Kevin 3813 Placerville
Langelier, David 2519 Tiger Creek Powerhouse
Languren, Salvador 4721 Davey Tree - Fremont
Lassus, Randall 2316 Concord
Lay, Christine 3811 Sacramento
Lewis, Jim 4714 Davey Tree - Placerville
Marquardsen, Susan 2511 Stockton
Mayo, Daniel 1123 Merced
McDonald, Andrew 2551 SSID
McNutt, Caleb 1223 Dynegy
Middleton, Zach 4423 Davey Auburn
Miranda, Roman 1219 Hollister
Moeckli, Gary 3217 City of redding
Moler, Dana 3311 Reno
Moore, Dan 2318 Richmond
Neblett, Stuart 3214 Red Bluff
Nelli, Bruce 2317 Antioch
Noonkester, James 2510 Manteca
Ortega, Juan 4721 Davey Tree - Fremont
Osborne, Todd 1217 Templeton
Pence, Lewis 2519 Tiger Creek Powerhouse
Petersen, Gary 1220 Diablo Canyon
Pimentel, Margaret 1112 Bakersfield
Pirie, John 2316 Concord
Prince, Tana 1111 Fresno
Rawles, Ken Santa Rosa Retirees
Ricard, Julius 2319 Mirant
Roberts, Paul 3313 Yerington
Sakaguchi, Maria 2515 Modesto
Sala, Charles 5231 Cal Peco
Sandoval, Pedro 1111 Fresno
Sandy, Angelo 1216 Santa Maria
Sawyer, Christina 3315 MT, Wheeler - Ely
Scherer, Mark 1223 Dynegy
Sharp, Dean 3218 USRB - Keswick
Simms, John 4716 Davey Tree - Concord
Skilern, Tim 3314 South Lake Tahoe
Snyder, Ione 3711 Marin County
Snyder, Paul 3217 City of redding
Stahl, Percy 3314 South Lake Tahoe
Stockel, Joseph 3812 Vacaville
Stubblefield, Lem 3712 Santa Rosa
Swanson, Brennen 1221 Buellton
Thomas, Robert 3716 Napa-Vallejo
Timoco, Jaimie Guest - Lompoc
Thrathlon, William 3012 USRB - CVO/Folsom
Wallace, Robert 3613 Oroville
Washburn, Dan 4015 Burney - Frontier
Weisshaar, Rita Reno Retirees
Williams, John 1411 City of Santa Clara
Zumstein, Chad 1126 Turlock ID
The competitive juices were running high when the black limo pulled up to Yosemite Lanes in Modesto and disgorged a raucous party of IBEW 1245 members from the Turlock Irrigation District. They'd come to Modesto for the Second Annual Local 1245 Bowling Tournament, and more specifically to avenge last year's defeat at the hands of Modesto Irrigation District.

Mike Gomes, a member of last year's winning team, offered this succinct prediction of who would come out on top this year: "MID, of course."

To the victors there would be spoils: a bottle of Jack Daniels, a set of IBEW-monogrammed poker chips and, most importantly, a full year of bragging rights.

The tournament consisted of three rounds, followed by a championship round between the top team from each company.

The play was a little ragged to start. There were gutter balls. There were faults. There were gap-toothed splits.

But amidst all the cat-calling, high-fiving, fist-pumping, and war whooping, a serious number of bowling pens got knocked down. Is it possible that people's aim improved with the arrival of each new pitcher of beer?

No one's aim was better than TID's Ken Gross, who threw a spectacular turkey—three straight strikes—in the 10th frame of the final game, putting his team in the championship round against MID's Ken McHale, Wade Wilkinson, Rick Turner and Victor Madrigal.

After that, there was no stopping the TID avengers. Although the lead sawed back and forth in the middle frames, emerging victorious in the end was the TID team of Ken Gross, Troy Borges, Rick Brenes, Aaron Baker and Jeff Campodonico, who had been drafted from PG&E for the occasion. (Campodonico's brother Gregg is a lineman and bowler—for TID.)

TID members took some ribbing for turning to PG&E for talent. But attracting participation from other Local 1245-represented groups has been part of the plan from the very start. Besides Campodonico, this year's new recruits included City of Lodi members Josh Raymos and Cody Ellis.

The MID victory predicted by Gomes earlier in the day didn't materialize. But when you're enjoying beers together, the line between victor and vanquished gets a little fuzzy.

As Gomes put it, "We're just trying to build relations, keep the different companies together and keep good relations going."
But amidst all the cat-calling, high-fiving, fist-pumping, and war whooping, a serious number of bowling pens got knocked down. Is it possible that people's aim improved with the arrival of each new pitcher of beer?