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Utility Reporter

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UNITY IS STRENGTH

For up-to-the-minute news, see our website: www.ibew1245.com

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SMUD Lineman Roman Guerrero jacks up a new transformer at the Sacramento Convention Center. Story on page 30.



Tom Dalzell
Business Manager

Nearly five years ago, I sat in my kitchen and filmed a video called “Competitive Challenges.” At that time, we could sense the direction of the energy industry starting to change, and we came together to assess the developments that could threaten our jobs. We identified a core set of Competitive Challenges, which is another way to say Existential Threats.

Our Executive Board, to their great credit, funded a project to explore these issues — and that allowed us to do significant research and come up with a game plan. The goal of the video was to communicate what we had learned in a clear, visual way, so our members could weigh in and share their thoughts.

Over the past five years, several of the challenges we outlined then have come to pass.

Deregulation remains a threat in Cal-

ifornia, and has even spread to Nevada, where billionaires are working to change the law so they can make a profit.

New anti-worker justices were appointed to the Supreme Court — and in 2018’s *Janus* decision, they overturned a longstanding precedent and made it harder for public sector employees join a union, and allowed them to opt out of paying their fair share.

The effects of climate change emerged faster than even the most pessimistic scientists were projecting. Devastating, climate-driven wildfires ravaged northern California, driving our largest employer into bankruptcy for the second time in less than 20 years.

And communities throughout California, with San Francisco at the forefront, are trying to municipalize PG&E’s assets, placing the pensions and job security of our members at risk.

In short, it has been a rough five years. But because we did the work upfront to get ahead, we were ready. We built a set of tools that helped to safeguard our jobs and enabled us to fight back. They include:

- Greatly improving our financial reserves, which means that we have been able to fund fights to defend ourselves to a greater degree than we

have had in the past.

- Building strong political relationships in California and Nevada and Washington — and they have helped tremendously.
- Investing in our membership, especially our secret weapon: our organizing stewards. If there’s a fight, we are able to dispatch trained, experienced, hard-working organizing stewards anywhere quickly. They are the backstop to our power, especially in Sacramento.
- Forming new alliances. We have worked with the labor movement, consumer groups and environmental groups to build powerful new coalitions that we wouldn’t have seen as possible five years ago.

We are fighting above our weight, for sure — but we are holding our own. So far, so good. We have been able to engage with all of these challenges and engage well. The commitment of our members and elected leadership to support these efforts, and the good work of our organizing stewards and regulatory lawyers and lobbyists (and a few of us on staff who work on these issues), has meant that we have been able to fend off threat after threat. We cannot let up, by any means. But so far, so good.

Utility Reporter Correction (4th Quarter 2019 Edition)

In the 4th quarter 2019 edition of the *Utility Reporter*, the article on page 30 (“New IBEW 1245-Backed California Law Will Improve Training and Wages for Line Clearance Tree Trimmers”) erroneously states that SB 247 will go into effect in 2021. The actual implementation date for the new law is 2020. We apologize for the error.

\$1 Dues Increase

Effective January 2020, dues for “A” and “BA” members will increase by one dollar. Per capita is \$40.00 for A membership and \$22.00 for BA membership.

— Muriel Moore,
IBEW 1245 Dues Processor



Our seat at the table comes from making our voices heard on Election Day!

IBEWvotes.com is an ongoing effort to encourage all IBEW brothers and sisters to register to vote, stay informed on current events, and participate in their local elections. The consequences of the 2018 elections will have a direct impact on our jobs, schools, families and future. Ultimately, we need our union members to be well informed and get out and vote for policies and candidates who support working families.

YOUR Vote is OUR Voice!

Q IBEW Endorsements



“Why I Vote”

Union construction workers explain the importance of union members participating in the November presidential election in order to protect their jobs, wages, safe work environments, and quality of life for themselves and their families.

This video was produced by State Building and Construction Trades Council of California.

**Check out IBEW 1245’s Endorsements for the March 2020
Primary Election at www.IBEWVOTES.com**

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Stan Zamora

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CALENDAR

February 4-20: Shop Steward Conferences, various locations
February 7: Service Awards, SLO
February 21: Service Awards, Merced
March 6: Service Awards, North Bay
March 20: Service Awards, Sacramento
March 27: Service Awards, East Bay
April 17: Service Awards, San Jose
April 24: Service Awards, San Francisco
April 25: Advisory Council, Vacaville
May 1/May 2: Service Awards, Fresno/Bakersfield
May 6: Keep the Clearance Safety Summit, Vacaville
May 22: Service Awards, Stockton
June 4: Hold the Pull Safety Summit, Vacaville
June 7: IBEW 1245 Day at the Ballpark, Oakland — SOLD OUT
June 12/June 13: Service Awards, Redding/Chico
June 26: Service Awards, Monterey
July 9: Control the Pressure Safety Summit, Vacaville
July 10/July 11: Service Awards, Eureka/Ukiah
July 31: Service Awards, Reno
August 1: Advisory Council, Reno
October 24: Advisory Council, Vacaville



Welcome Home

Whether you are in the market to purchase a home or refinance an existing mortgage, **Union Plus** offers **two mortgage providers** designed to help union families. And, every mortgage provides hardship assistance in case of disability, lay off, lock out, or strike.

Find out more about this and other great Union Plus programs by visiting unionplus.org.

Learn more at unionplus.org



Applications are now being accepted for IBEW 1245's annual Scholarship Program.
 Deadline for applications is March 2, 2020.

IBEW 1245 Scholarship Program



LEARN MORE AND APPLY AT WWW.IBEW1245.COM/SCHOLARSHIPS.

Please join your fellow IBEW L.U. 1245 brothers and sisters for a day at the ballpark!

Sunday JUNE 7 At the Oakland Coliseum

SOLD OUT

Enjoy a left field suite with food and beverage for \$400 each. Tickets are on a first come first serve basis as quantities are limited!

This suite will have included beer, water, some food and snacks at no charge. There will be stands near the suite entrance for alcohol purchases or for other desired food purchases. A menu of specific items in the suite will be emailed out once confirmed by the stadium.

If you are interested in tickets, please contact David Cargot at dc4@ibew1245.com or (916) 708-0831. I can accept PayPal, Venmo, and Zelle.

PLEASE NOTE: There will be no "holds" on tickets. All tickets are secured once payment is received. Tickets are expected to go fast so please try to have payment ready at time of purchase. Your ticket purchase does not include any parking costs associated with the game.

A non-company email will need to be provided at time of purchase so you can be informed of any updates for the game.

We look forward to a memorable day. We hope you can join us!



POINT OF PRIDE: IBEW 1245 MEMBERS TAKE HOME TROPHIES FROM INTERNATIONAL LINEMAN'S RODEO

Linework is a craft with very little room for error, and most linemen aspire to be the absolute best at what they do.

This culture of excellence is on full display every year at the International Lineman's Rodeo in Kansas City, where journeymen and apprentice linemen compete in a series of events designed to showcase their unique skillset. This year's competition was as fierce as ever, with 248 journeyman teams and 321 apprentices all vying to take home one of the big, ornate trophies at the end of the day.

In recent years, IBEW 1245 members have proven to be among the very best in the nation — as evidenced by the collection of rodeo trophies that our union members have acquired by excelling at the competition.

Last year, IBEW 1245 members Dustin

Curry, Jacob "Floppy" Hunt and Jordan Chene came in first place overall, and the team was looking forward to defending their title at the Rodeo this year. But during the qualifier in Livermore earlier this fall, and they didn't score high enough to earn an all-expense-paid ticket from the company to go back to the international competition in Kansas City.

Undeterred, the team decided to pay their own way, so they could once again compete with the best of the best. In an homage to the movie "Talladega Nights," Curry, Hunt and Chene competed as Team ME, and they clearly came to win.

"We're not coming here and wasting what we've spent. We want to get out of it what we put into it, so we tried the best we could," said Curry during a break after completing their events. "I

think, chemistry-wise, this is one of the best rodeos we've done. We've had a blast this whole time."

"We walked away from this one feeling like we've put it out on the line ... it was pretty smooth today," added Hunt. "And when you can do that and run clean, it feels good."

Sure enough, Team ME did not disappoint, coming in 3rd place overall and 2nd in the IOU division.

"I'm just glad it all worked out, because the Livermore Rodeo was after the registration for here, and all the pieces fell into place," said Curry. "It just so happened we got to register — it was just by the skin of our teeth we got to come. So I think it was meant to be, honestly."

Team ME isn't the only 1245 team with a winning reputation to uphold. In 2015, 2016 and 2017, the Local 1245-sponsored team from Turlock Irrigation District team, comprised of Dustin Krieger, Josh Klikna and Steve Johnson, placed first in the municipal division. Despite having an off year in 2018 and leaving the Rodeo trophy-less, they decided to come back again this year to give it another shot. They too found their stride, sailing through each event right up until the end of the day, when they incurred a two-point penalty in the final event.

"We had good times all day," said Krieger. "[If not for that deduction] I think we would have had a good chance at winning the municipality division."

The two-point deduction clearly set them back, but the TID team still managed to nab third place in the municipal

division.

In the apprentice competition, Colton Baker from PG&E, who placed first in the Livermore qualifier, proved that 1245 apprentices can compete with the best as well. He came in 4th place overall and 2nd place in the IOU apprentice division. This was a marked improvement over last year, when he placed 4th in IOU and 6th overall.

Other 1245 competitors that received awards include:

- The PG&E journeyman team of Adam Beene, Anthony Albright and JP Richard, who placed 5th in the IOU division
- The MID journeyman team of Marcus Ilwain, Matt McCurdy and David Word, who placed 4th in the pole climb
- PG&E Apprentice Trent Kaher, who placed 4th in the IOU division
- PG&E Apprentice David Carlon, who placed 5th in the IOU division

"Once again, our IBEW 1245 members demonstrated their exceptional talent and dedication at this year's International Lineman's Rodeo," said IBEW 1245 Business Manager Tom Dalzell. "Seeing our members excel at this competition year after year is such a unique point of pride for Local 1245. And of course, we're thrilled to add to our ever-growing Rodeo trophy collection on display at our union hall in Vacaville."

A hearty congrats to all who competed!

— Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245 Communications Director





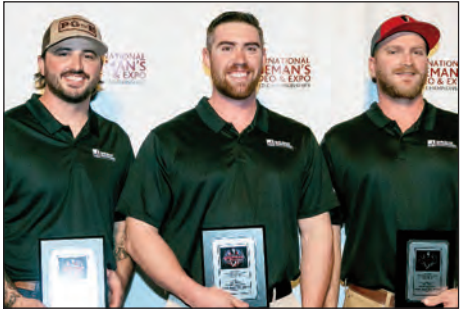
Dustin Curry, Jacob Hunt and Jordan Chene placed second in the IOU competition and third overall.



Steve Johnson, Dustin Kreiger and Josh Klikna placed third overall in the municipal utility competition.



Marcus Ilwain, Matt McCurdy and David Word placed 4th in the Journeyman Pole Climb.



From left: Apprentices Colton Baker, Trent Kaher and David Carlon placed second, fourth and fifth overall, respectively.



Adam Beene, Anthony Albright and JP Richard placed 5th overall in the IOU competition.

Photos by John Storey

LOCAL 1245 MEMBERS NAB FIVE FIRST-PLACE TROPHIES AT THE 2019 INTERNATIONAL LOCATE RODEO

IBEW 1245 members proved themselves to be indomitable at the 2019 International Utility Locate Rodeo, bringing home a whopping five first-place trophies.

More than 65 competitors from dozens of utility companies from all over the world competed in the annual event, which took place on Dec. 13 in Springfield, MO.

The IBEW 1245/PG&E team consisted of Farron Drylie (Grass Valley) and Luke Munoz (Sacramento) who completed in the Gas Division, as well as Thomas Gongora (Fresno) and Gil Grajeda (Sonoma) who competed in the Electric Division. The four competitors secured their spots by placing in the top at the 1245/PG&E qualifier event, which took place earlier this year in conjunction with the 1245/PG&E Gas Rodeo.

The Local 1245 members demonstrated their prowess, with at least one 1245 member at the top of the scoreboard in nearly every event. Munoz placed

first in Gas Event #1, and Drylie placed first in Gas Event #2 and also came in first overall in the Gas



IBEW 1245 members racked up five first-place wins at the 2019 International Locate Rodeo.

competition. Gongora nabbed the first place slot in Electric Event #2, while Grajeda won first place in the daunting 'Locate From Hell' event.

"Competing is always a little nerve-racking, and there was a little extra pressure on us, I think, because of the negative publicity we've gotten over the past couple of years," said Gongora, who competed at the international rodeo last year as well. "But we're proud union members and PG&E workers, so we went out there and gave it our all. We just wanted to show everyone how great we really are."

And indeed they did, as evidenced by the ample collection of awards they brought home at the end of the day.

"We're so proud of how we did... It was almost embarrassing how often we were up on stage during the awards ceremony," Gongora said with a smile. "It felt like every other winner they called out was from PG&E."

Photo courtesy of Thomas Gongora

After Rejecting Last, Best & Final Offer, City of Redding Maintenance Unit Approves Mediated Agreement

After voting down an initial tentative agreement as well as the City's Last, Best and Final offer, IBEW 1245 members in the City of Redding's maintenance unit have ratified a new three-year agreement, which was subsequently approved by the Redding City Council in open session in early December.

The agreement, which was reached through mediation, includes a 3% wage adjustment, effective in the first pay period after City Council approval; a 2% wage adjustment effective in the first full pay period after July 1, 2020; and a 0.5% wage adjustment effective in the first full pay period after July 1, 2021.

To officially recognize that employees in the unit may be required to perform confined space entry and rescue as part of their normal job duties, the City will provide a half percent (0.5%) wage adjustment for all of the IBEW Maintenance classifications to recognize confined space responsibilities (this is included in the 3% adjustment in the first pay period).

To each IBEW Maintenance classification specification, the following language will be added:

"Must be able to enter and work in confined spaces, participate in the Confined Space Program, and perform confined space rescue if needed. To the extent an employee hired by the City prior to the effective date of this Agreement on [insert date] has a disability or medical condition that may impact their ability to undertake such confined space duties, the City agrees to engage in a good faith disability interactive process to determine what reasonable accommodations can be provided to the employee. To the extent such disability or medical condition following the interactive process is determined to preclude the employee from undertaking such duties, the employee will be

exempt from such duties. For job classifications not currently providing confined space duties prior to the effective date this Agreement on [insert date], the City agrees to provide the Union 30 days notice of the assignment of such duties."

All tentative agreements already reached on City Proposals and Union Proposals to date were included in the mediated agreement, as were the terms contained within the Union's Counter to City Proposal #16A, which matched the City's September 18, 2019 Last, Best, and Final Offer City Proposal #16A. The only modification was to have the implementation of the 87.5%/12.5% Group Health and Welfare Insurance Plan take place in Calendar Year 2020 and the 85%/15% Group Health and Welfare Insurance Plan take place in Calendar Year 2022. All other open City Proposals and Union Proposals where a tentative agreement has not been reached were withdrawn, and the union's Unfair Practice Charge pending before the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) was dismissed.

Other highlights of the agreement are the creation of a new classification titled Baler Operator, within the Solid Waste department. The wages for the position were set at the current Truck Driver II + 5%, and the classification will require a California Class B license. Also, in the Solid Waste department was a 2.5% additional incentive to the Transfer Station Operator assigned to the Green Waste/Compost or Floor duties with a minimum of four hours worked in the assignment. The City also agreed to creating a new Working Supervisor classification in the Parks department titled Working Supervisor — Arborist, with wages equal to the other working supervisors.

The City agreed to changes to the Airport classification names (no change in compensation) and reclassified them as: Airport Operations and Maintenance Worker I, Airport Operations and Main-

tenance Worker II, Working Supervisor — Airport Operations and Maintenance. This change reclassifies and Y-rates one of our members into the Airport Operations and Maintenance Worker II classification from Building & Facilities Mechanic. Also, this change added more updated language to the classification's description regarding what these members do on a regular basis.

There was a change to the rest period language adding the following trigger for a rest period. If an employee has worked for six hours or more at the overtime rate during the 16-hour period immediately preceding the beginning of the employee's regular work hours on a workday for an emergency call out, and the overtime event ends between the hours of 2:00 a.m., and 7:00 a.m., the employee shall be entitled to a rest period of eight consecutive hours on the completion of such overtime work.

There were increases to the certification pay for Water Leadworker classification and above who hold certification of 4, and 5 in Water Distribution, and Wastewater Collection Maintenance Worker classification and above who hold grade 3, and 4 in Wastewater Collection.

Per the City's request, the mediated agreement will eliminate the first step of the following classifications: Solid Waste Truck Driver I, Airport Maintenance Worker, Convention Center Maintenance Worker, Public Works Maintenance Worker, Meter Reader, and Mechanic I. The City will also have the option to extend the promotional probation for the position of Working

Supervisor for an additional six months with prior notification to the Union and prior to the end of the initial six month probation period.

The Unit agreed to pick up an additional 1.275% of the normal cost of CalPERS effective January 1, 2020. They also agreed to a PERS contribution of 2.08%, equal to 50% of normal cost at the time of agreement. Effective Calendar Year 2020, employees participating in the Group Health and Welfare insurance will see an increase of 2.5%, and again in Calendar Year 2022 for a total of 5% increase on the premium share, bringing the total co-share ratio to 85/15. For prescription coverage, we also agreed to pick up an additional \$10 co-payment for the one-month supply for Brand only, and \$30 for the 90 days' supply for Brand only.

Smaller highlights of the agreement were an increase of \$100 (total \$650/\$475) to the tool allowance, and an increase of \$100 (total \$250) to the boot allowance, as well as codification of the boot allowance in the agreement.

Along with these were several house-keeping changes, as well as non-economic changes agreed to, that will be incorporated.

The bargaining committee was comprised of maintenance unit members Chris Fleming, Adam Froeber, Darrell McDaniel, John Moore, Luke Pearson, and David Williams, with support from recently retired IBEW 1245 Senior Assistant Business Manager Ray Thomas and myself.

— Dominic McCurtain,
IBEW 1245 Business Rep

New Agreement Approved at City of Gridley

The IBEW 1245 members at the City of Gridley have unanimously approved a new MOU (the City's last, best, and final offer). The new agreement includes a 3% general wage increase retroactive to July 1, 2019, as well as a 3% GWI effective July 1, 2020, and another 2% GWI effective July 1, 2021.

Also included is an annual seven-utility study that will compare the Electrical Lineworker Series with Healdsburg, LMUD, Plumas Sierra REC, Redding, Shasta Lake, Truckee-Donner PUD, and Ukiah. This survey will give the Lineworker Series the better of the general wage increase, or the lower quartile of the seven-utility study. For the retroactive offer to July 1, 2019, the increase to the Lineworker Series will be 16.9%.

In previous negotiations the sick leave cash-out had been eliminated for employees hired after July 1, 2014. This agreement will give those employees the ability to cash out 50% of sick leave at retirement. There was also some language cleanup regarding sick leave usage, and the exchange of one (of three) floating holiday for the fixed Martin Luther King Jr. day as a permanent holiday.

The bargaining committee consisted of Local 1245 members Sandra Ramos, Daniel Howard, and Scott Taylor from the City of Gridley, along with IBEW 1245 Senior Assistant Business Manager Al Fortier, and myself.

— Dominic McCurtain,
IBEW 1245 Business Rep

Members Ratify New Agreement at the City of Lompoc

After almost a year of negotiations, the IBEW 1245 members at the City of Lompoc ratified a two-year agreement with the City on October 29, 2019. The final vote tally was 62 "yes" to 5 "no" to approve the new MOU, which will run through July 2021.

We negotiated a 2% wage increase for 2019-2020 (with retro pay back to September 1), and a 3% wage increase for 2020-2021, with CalPers Tier 1 Classic paying an additional 2% for PERS, and CalPERS Tier 2 Classic paying 1% more for PERS. We are getting a bit of help with Health Insurance starting in July 2020.

The agreement also includes paid rest period language, an additional .50

cents for Shift Differential, and possible equity adjustments through ad hoc negotiations for the Electric Division, Wastewater Treatment Operators, Warehouse and Purchasing, Account Clerks, Treasury Clerks, Account Clerks, and Accounting Techs.

Senior Assistant Business Manager Al Fortier lead the negotiations with my assistance. The Negotiating Committee was comprised of Gary Silbaugh, Travis Border, Dorine Fabing, John Daniel, Chelsea Terrusa, Travis Kalin, Theresa Hernandez, Ko Sumaryadi, Candace Koff and Dick Davenport.

— Jaime Tinoco,
IBEW 1245 Business Rep



Senior Assistant Business Manager Al Fortier explains the negotiated agreement to the members at the City of Lompoc.

New MOU Approved at Lindmore Irrigation District

IBEW 1245 members at Lindmore Irrigation District have ratified a new MOU, which was subsequently approved by the Lindmore ID Board.

The new three-year agreement includes wage increases of 3.5% for January of 2020, 4% for January 2021 and 4% for 2022, with a compaction adjustment for the O&MW2 of .093% with upward effects with a total of 4.43% for 2020 for all classifications. We created the new classification of O&MW3, with a 5% compaction, and we also created a new salary for the Lead with a salary compaction of 47.46% between it and the O&MW3. The three-year wage pack-

age totals 12.43% plus an additional 5% for the promotional advancement to O&MW3, amounting to 17.43% for most of the current employees.

The MOU also includes a new \$150 boot allowance per year, as well as some cleanup language for the grievance procedure, added language for an SDI vote, seniority layoff protection for 12 months, new contracting out protection language, and meet-and-confer over new qualifications/certifications.

Shop Steward Gary Vail helped in the negotiations.

— *Jaime Tinoco,*
IBEW 1245 Business Rep

Members Approve New Agreement at City of Alameda

The members at the City of Alameda (AMP) have voted to approve a tentative agreement on a four-year MOU that includes 9% general wage increases plus equity adjustments up to 13%. The City Council approved the agreement on November 19, 2019.

As part of the agreement, overtime is redefined to include work outside of the regular schedule or on any official AMP holiday. Standby Duty is increased to two hours at the straight time rate per eight hours shift of Standby. Double-time rates will apply when working mutual aid. Compensatory time off max accumulations will be increased to eighty (80) hours. System Operators will receive additional biweekly pay for 10 fixed holidays with no time off. City to pay the cost of written examinations, medical examinations, and license

renewal fees above a Class C Drivers License. Members required to have CDL will receive a differential of \$65 per month. Apprentice Lineworkers will have the ability to receive a 6% premium after successful completion of applicable rubber glove training. Members will receive dollar for dollar City matches of up to 1% of base wages for contributions towards their Deferred Compensation 457 plan. Floating holidays will be increased by 2½ days. Members will receive reduced workday schedules on the days before Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

The negotiations committee consisted of members Mark Regan and James Trotter, along with Local 1245 Assistant Business Manager Al Fortier and myself.

— *Charley Souders,*
IBEW 1245 Business Rep

Local 1245 Members Approve New MOU at AC Transit

The IBEW 1245 members at AC Transit have voted to approve a tentative agreement on a three-year MOU that includes 9% general wage increases plus equity adjustments up to 2% and a \$500 signing bonus. The Board of Directors recently approved the agreement on January 8, 2020.

As part of the agreement, medical coverage will change to CalPERS Medical with no changes to employee cost sharing. New hires after Jan. 1, 2020 will receive bi-weekly District contributions to the deferred compensation 457 plan.

On Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Holiday weeks, there will be minimum guaranteed vacation slots per day on Monday through Friday. Seniority sign up bid language has been updated to remove the pre-assigned shifts. Annual workwear vouchers will be increased to \$525 and tool/shoe allowances increased to \$725.

The negotiations committee consisted of members Dale Brewer, James Fisher, and Kevin Auer, and myself.

— *Charley Souders,*
IBEW 1245 Business Rep



I'M STAYING IBEW STRONG

Beware of "California Empowered" and Their Attempts to Weaken Our Union

We believe that strong unions are the best force for a fair economy and a just society. That's why you and I and thousands of other union members and staff work so hard every day to strengthen our union. And it's exactly why our opponents are willing to spend millions to weaken unions.

We were angered — but not surprised — to learn that an out-of-state union-busting special interest group has begun targeting the members of IBEW 1245 at SMUD and other public sector properties. The group, which calls itself "California Empowered," is being bankrolled by the notorious Mackinac Center, a Michigan-based anti-union think tank that's funded by a small but powerful group of corporate cronies who would like nothing more than to see all unions become a thing of the past.

Over the holidays, these out-of-state opponents of labor began harassing our members at home with a manipulative and disingenuous message about dropping union membership. They claim, "you can stop paying dues and still get all the

benefits of the union contract." But we know the truth — union dues allow IBEW 1245 to have the resources we need to bargain top-notch wages and benefits, uphold and defend our union contracts, and fight for our members when they've been wronged by their employers. If these opponents can trick enough members into dropping their union membership, we will no longer have those critical resources, and our union will become weaker — exactly as they intended.

Don't be fooled by these "California Empowered" representatives. The best way to hold on to the outstanding wages and benefits afforded to you by your union contract is to remain a dedicated and active member of the union.

If you are contacted by California Empowered, let them know that you're sticking with the union — and let your Business Rep or a member of the Volunteer Organizing Committee know right away. Together, we are stronger than any union-busting outfit will ever be.

— *Tom Dalzell,*
IBEW 1245 Business Manager



IBEW 1245 members at SMUD show off their union pride in IBEW 1245 tee shirts.

Free College

The Union Plus Free College Benefit offers working families an accessible, debt-free and convenient higher education opportunity. You, your spouse, children, financial dependents and grandchildren, can all benefit from this exciting program.

Learn more at
unionplus.org

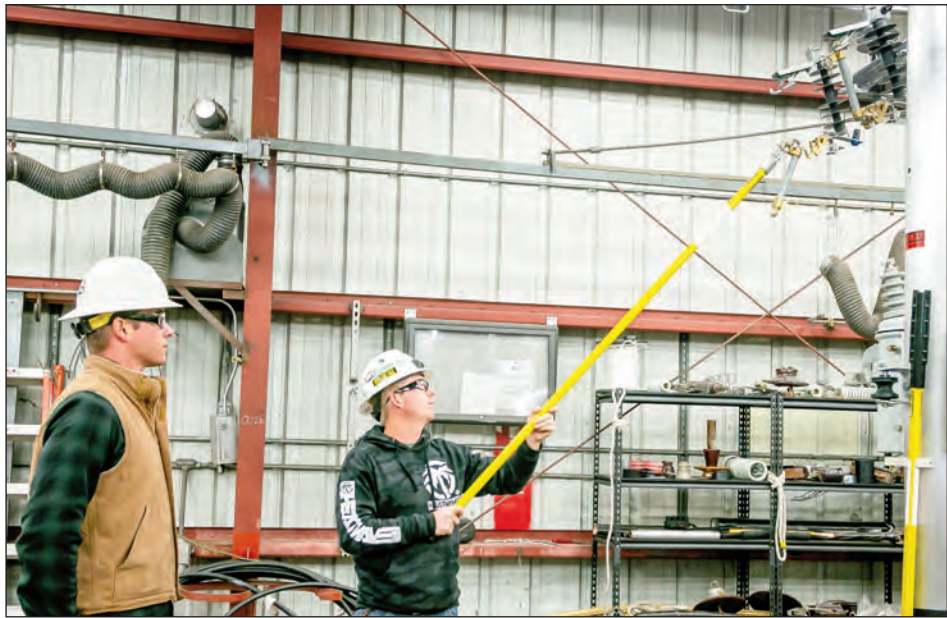


UNIONPLUS





From left: Local 1245 and Local 47 Apprentices Randy Fierro, Matt Zinkl, Sammy Cano, Robby Davis, Adam Beebe, Victor Verissimo, Benito Vasquez, Will Lajocies, Patrick Dhuyvetter, Nathan Pegg, Lucas Filippini, Michael Andreotti, Alejandro Chaparro, Dylan DelCarlo, Erik Aguilar and Klint Williams at the temporary IBEW Apprentice Training facility in Sacramento.



Dylan Delcarlo (right) and Adam Beebe open cutouts.



Apprentices study for an upcoming test.



Apprentice lineman learn about grounding from a JATC instructor at the temporary training facility in Sacramento.

A Glimpse Inside the Cal-Nev JATC's Newest "Classroom"

Fifty years ago, IBEW teamed up with the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) to establish the California-Nevada Power Lineman Apprenticeship Training Program (Cal-Nev JATC), a not-for-profit entity designed to ensure the electrical industry in our region would have a steady supply of qualified workers for generations to come. Over the past five decades, the Riverside, CA-based Cal-Nev JATC has educated, trained and graduated thousands of top-notch linemen, preparing them for rewarding, quality careers in the utility industry as members of IBEW Locals 1245, 47 and 396.

In recent years, the magnitude of work needed to build and maintain a safe and reliable 21st-century grid has increased exponentially, and as a result, the demand for linemen has been growing at a breakneck pace. Because more skilled and trained hands are sorely needed right now and for many years into the future, the Cal-Nev JATC has expanded significantly. Whereas in the past the program has only accepted applicants once per year, applications

were accepted during two different periods in 2019. While the JATC has been increasing its capacity, the Riverside facility simply doesn't have sufficient space to train the volume of linemen required to complete this work.

The Cal-Nev JATC trustees have been working for nearly two years to establish a second campus in northern California in order to train even more apprentices and keep up with the high demand for linemen. The trustees meticulously considered four different properties before finally settling on a 13-acre property in Woodland, CA. Plans are under way for this new state-of-the-art training center — but the grand opening of that facility is still a year away, so in the meantime, the JATC has found a temporary, part-time home in Sacramento, at the site of a former Campbell's Soup Factory. The 6,000 square foot warehouse is far larger than the SMUD training center that the JATC had been using for its Saturday classes and can accommodate significantly more apprentices, as well as the JATC's new Trans Banker transformer simulator.



Alejandro Chaparro (right) and Victor Verissimo work on a transformer while JATC Instructor Ralph Kenyon supervises.

Photos by John Storey

When the *Utility Reporter* stopped by the old soup factory one Saturday in mid-November, 16 apprentices from IBEW Locals 1245 and 47 were on site to complete their classroom hours. They spent their day attending lectures from expert instructors, working on assignments, and gaining hands-on experience through supervised, simulated practicum.

"They are teaching me everything I need to know about my job, what I need to do, and what I need to look out for," said third-step IBEW 1245 apprentice Klint Williams, who currently works at Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Co-op. "I've learned a lot about the history of both the JATC and NECA, and they've taught me everything, from what a groundman does, installing grounds, pulling in wire, and just doing regular line work."

First-step IBEW 1245 apprentice lineman Michael Andreotti also values the time spent at the training facility, noting how it ties into the experience he's gaining on the job.

"The classroom stuff is really good. The teachers are right there, helping you out, and there's a lot of hands-on. We're doing the grounding class right now, and we're going way more in depth than out in the field," said Andreotti, who works currently for Wilson Construction. "We go over a lot more different situations out there. For example, we know what you can use slack box on and what you can use other stuff on. And in here, we're learning all the formulas for the tension through the blocks and all that — so it translates to what we're doing out there."

IBEW takes pride in its apprentice-

ship program, which emphasizes safety on the job, close attention to detail and a thorough understanding of how the distribution and transmission of power works. Both Williams and Andreotti value the wide range of experience, knowledge and skills they're acquiring through the apprenticeship program.

"It's very physical. You are always working with your hands. But you've also got to use your head, you've got to be smart," said Williams. "It's definitely a tough job. I really enjoy that. I like using my head and using my hands."

"I like transmission because you've got helicopters, and big buckets, and crane baskets, and stuff, but I also like distribution because ... there's a lot of different things to take into account for, and you have a lot more to do," said Andreotti.

To learn more about the Cal-Nev JATC, visit www.calnevjatc.org.

— *Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245 Communications Director*

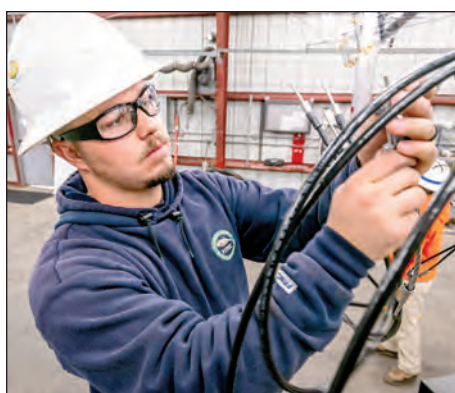


An apprentice lineman takes a written test to verify he's obtained the knowledge he needs to advance through the program.



Dylan Delcarlo (left) and Adam Beebe practice opening cutouts.

Utility Reporter



Klint Williams practices connecting service.



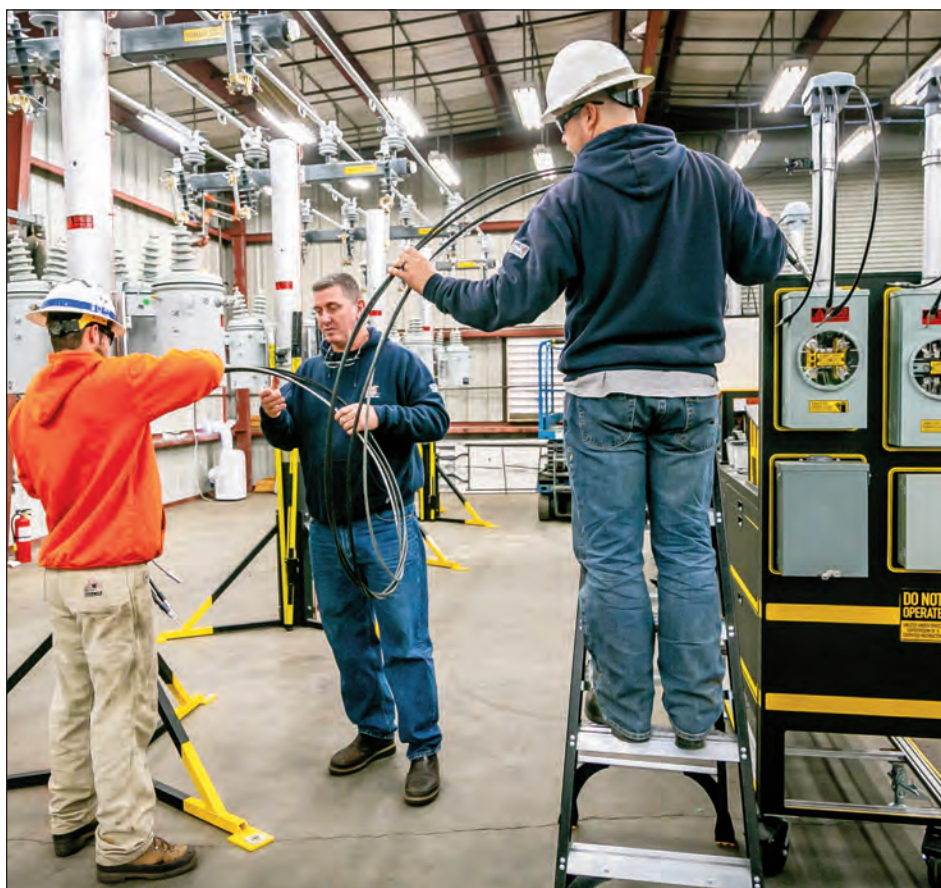
Michael Andreotti connects service.



JATC Instructor Ralph Kenyon (right) helps Michael Andreotti connect service.



Alejandro Chaparro (right) and Victor Verissimo hang a transformer.



Ralph Kenyon helps Michael Andreotti, (orange) and Klint Williams connect service.

IBEW 1245 Members at Lompoc Landfill Resuscitate Man In Cardiac Arrest

It was late in the afternoon on a Friday in December, and as he was wrapping up work for the day, City of Lompoc Landfill Coordinator and IBEW 1245 member Vincent Reyes noticed a patron's truck, which was parked right near the scales in the drop-off area, had been idle for quite some time. He went over to the vehicle to see if the driver needed directions out of the landfill — and found him passed out over the steering wheel, apparently unconscious.

Reyes quickly called for help, and Lead Heavy Equipment Operator Clint Porter, who was nearby talking with another worker, came over to see what was the matter.

"I peered through passenger side window, and when I saw the way the guy's head was slouched over, I knew it didn't look right," said Porter. "The driver's side window was down, so I reached in and shook him to wake him up, and I asked him if he was ok — but he wasn't coming around. When I checked, I couldn't feel a pulse, and it looked like he wasn't breathing."

Within moments, another landfill coordinator and 1245 shop steward, Chelsea Terrusa, was on the phone calling 9-1-1, while Heavy Equipment Operator Amadeo (better known as Ben) Segura, who had heard the emergency call over the two-way radio, rushed down to help attend to the unconscious man in the truck. Segura also tried rousing the man as Porter had, but he remained unresponsive — and then something strange happened.

"He made a sound that I'd never

heard before — I think they call it the 'death breath,'" said Segura. "It sounded almost like snoring, and he suddenly sat straight up with his eyes and mouth wide open. I shook him again and asked again if he was ok, but still no response. So I put my hand up to his nose and mouth to try and feel him breathing —

he wasn't. Then I checked his wrist and his neck, and there was no pulse."

At that point, the landfill workers realized this was a life-or-death situation — and for a split second, Porter went into shock.

"I remember looking at

Ben and thinking, 'What do we do?' ... It felt kind of surreal," he recalled, noting that he'd never been in this sort of situation before. "But then I thought back to the CPR training we'd had — and in a second, that training kicked in, and we just did what we had to do."

Porter reached into the man's truck to try and unlock the door, but it wouldn't open — and that's when he realized the vehicle was still in gear, with the unconscious driver's foot on the break. So Porter first shifted the truck into park, and then grabbed the keys from the ignition and used them to unlock the door.

Working together, Porter and Segura carefully moved the man out from the driver's seat, with Porter hoisting the man by his shoulders and Segura grabbing his legs. They gently set him on the ground, and begin to administer CPR as instructed by the 9-1-1 dispatcher.

"When we first laid him down and I unzipped his sweater to do the chest compressions, I knew right away that

he'd had open-heart surgery, because I felt the scar on his chest," said Segura, who later learned that the victim had a pacemaker and had in fact gone into cardiac arrest behind the wheel that day. "I was really worried that he wasn't going to make it. But he wasn't stiff, and he was still warm ... so I kept doing compressions until the EMTs got there."

Like many other City employees, the IBEW 1245 members at the landfill are required to complete a mandatory CPR training every year — and that training allowed them to act quickly and effectively to assist the victim. Terrusa remained on the phone with the 9-1-1 dispatcher, and Segura performed chest compressions while Porter counted.

"After we got to 50, I wasn't sure if we should be giving him rescue breaths — but the dispatcher said no, just keep on with the compressions, and so we kept going," Porter recalled.

When the paramedics arrived about eight minutes later, the victim — identified by news media as James Williams, Jr., age 84 — was still completely unresponsive, but the EMTs promptly hooked him up to an AED and succeeded in re-starting his heart, while also using a hand-pump oxygen mask to

force air into his lungs. He remained unconscious as they wheeled him off on the gurney, and was put on life support at the hospital — but in a couple days, he was taken off life support and started breathing on his own. He was subsequently transferred to a rehabilitation facility in Lompoc, where he appears to be recovering well.

"The paramedics told us that if we hadn't been there doing CPR, he wouldn't have made it," said Segura. "It was definitely a group effort, everyone did their part that day. We all worked together; we just wanted to make sure he pulled through. People have said, 'You're a hero!' But I just did what I was trained to do."

"After it was over and we went home, I was thinking about it all night," said Porter as he described the extreme jolt of adrenaline he felt. "It was a pretty big rush, really intense."

To express their appreciation, Williams' wife and sister brought some turkeys and potatoes over to the landfill crew a few days later, as a way of saying thank you. In a phone call with Landfill Supervisor Gale Greer, Williams said that he looks forward to being well enough to go down to the landfill himself and show his gratitude to the workers who saved his life.

— Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245
Communications Director

everyday
HEROES

IBEW 1245 members (from left) Ben Segura, Chelsea Terrusa, Clint Porter and Vincent Reyes worked together to save a man's life at the Lompoc Landfill.

Photo by Jaime Tinoco



Forty-Year IBEW 1245 Member Saves Elderly Woman From Choking

It was a day not unlike any other. It was mid-November, and PG&E Electric Crew Foreman Greg Sisemore had gone out with his working resource coordinator to check out a special job they had coming up. After they'd gone over the particulars of the project and it came time for their lunch break, Sisemore's coworker offered to buy him a meal at a local Mexican restaurant in Placerville.

The two were sitting at a table in the restaurant when Sisemore noticed a commotion in the corner.

"There was this little old lady, probably well into her 80s, and it looked like she was choking. Her daughter got up and started yelling, 'Mom, Mom, are you ok?'" Sisemore recalled, noting that no one else in the restaurant seemed to notice what was going on. "I figured I'd better do something, so I went over and asked the woman if she was choking. She nodded yes, and then I asked if she could stand up, and she shook her head no."

Performing the Heimlich maneuver on someone who is sitting down isn't easy, Sisemore explained, but he leaned over and wrapped his arms around the petite, elderly woman and began performing



Greg Sisemore

abdominal thrusts.

"I did the Heimlich one time, and she was so frail, I was worried I might break her! But by the second one, she managed to spit out the piece of meat that was stuck in her throat," said Sisemore who was initiated into the IBEW in 1979. "I asked her if she was ok, and she said yes — and then the whole restaurant applauded. I don't like a lot of attention, so that was odd for me, and a little embarrassing to be honest."

Sisemore stayed with the woman

and comforted her for a while, until he was sure that she would be ok, and then he went back to his table and resumed his meal. He had recently gone through his annual CPR and First Aid refresher course, which is mandatory at PG&E — and as a 35-year employee, he'd taken that course nearly three dozen times. He knows without a doubt that it was the life-saving knowledge and skills he had gotten through PG&E that allowed him to take action without hesitation that day.

"Before the old lady and her daughter left the

restaurant, they came over and thanked me again. She was really grateful, and she said, 'You saved my life!' I didn't really feel like I had, but she definitely wasn't breathing in that moment, so who knows what might have happened to her [if I hadn't been there]," Sisemore said. "Other people in the restaurant came up and said thanks also, and the waitress gave me a big hug, so that was nice. Personally, I didn't think it was a big deal, but my coworker couldn't wait to get to the yard and tell everyone about it."

This wasn't the first time Sisemore had used his first aid training. Back when he was very early on in his career at PG&E, he had to perform the Heimlich on his toddler son who had choked on a cracker that he'd grabbed off the snack table at a Superbowl party.

Of course, the experience in the restaurant with the elderly woman was quite different, especially since he had never met the victim before.

"Doing the Heimlich on someone, well, it's pretty personal," Sisemore said. "It felt kind of weird ... it was a little awkward. But I'm glad I had the training that I got from PG&E so I could help her."

— Rebecca Band,
IBEW 1245 Communications Director

everyday
HEROES

STATE TAKEOVER OF PG&E IS EXPENSIVE AND DANGEROUS

TAKEOVER FACT SHEET

- Victims of wildfires would lose access to wildfire insurance while ratepayers have already paid the premiums.
- All California taxpayers would be on the hook for billions of dollars in wildfire liabilities if a state-owned utility starts another fire.
- Cities and counties would lose hundreds of millions of dollars in taxes and fees PG&E currently pays (in 2019, PG&E paid \$388 million).
- Workers would lose bargaining power and existing pension and retirement benefits; thus creating the risk these workers will choose NOT to work for the successor State Utility or the newly formed city POU.

DETAILS

1. Bad for Future Wildfire Victims

Victims would lose access to wildfire insurance fund created under AB 1054, even though they have already paid the premiums.

2. Bad for Taxpayers

Under inverse condemnation, California taxpayers, not PG&E, would be obligated to pay all damages from wildfires caused by a state-owned utility. For smaller, newly formed POU, customers pay the total amount of wildfire damages, or the city goes bankrupt.

3. Bad for Workers

Today, over 25,000 PG&E employees and their families have a secure pension in a private ERISA qualified plan, retiree medical coverage and other benefits. A state takeover could mean 25,000 California families could lose their hard earned retirement.

- There is no mechanism in CA law to transfer or convert an ERISA pension fund into a multi-employer, publicly held pension fund, as would be needed when California creates a state-owned utility and smaller POU.
- Worse, just the mere proposal of a state takeover will disrupt the bankruptcy process. A state takeover removes PG&E from the AB 1054 Wildfire Fund, forcing the utility to reduce/liquidate the existing PG&E pension funds for operating capital.
- Once the state-owned utility/small POU is established, the only way to replace pension fund is for voters to VOTE to assume additional pension liability to cover these workers. That won't happen.
- PG&E workers will lose bargaining power by being in smaller units.
- They will lose job mobility that they currently have.
- They will lose advancement opportunities and earning power.

4. Bad for Cities

- Cities will lose hundreds of millions of dollars in property tax and franchise fees currently paid by PG&E.
- Takeover will be really expensive— cities have to pay fair market value of distribution/ transmission assets — not market capitalization, which is a lot less.

- Those assets are currently pledged collateral for PG&E's debtor in possession financing that the Commission approved.
- Those assets would be further encumbered by all of the other liabilities, including liabilities to fire victims in the bankruptcy process.

5. Bad for the California Economy, Energy Reliability and Supply, Clean Energy Goals, etc.

- Today PG&E can mass mobilize a huge workforce in emergencies (e.g. a thousand workers to repair infrastructure after an earthquake, wildfire or other disaster.)
- A large IOU is necessary to implement policy to ensure reliable energy supplies, increased use of renewable energy, grid hardening and safety infrastructure.
- Municipalization is effectively another kind of deregulation — the POU would not be regulated by the CPUC, allowing these new POU to choose not to invest in grid safety, reliability etc. With large debt from acquisition cost, there is a strong incentive NOT to invest in the infrastructure.
- State will lose over \$600 million in property taxes and sales/used taxes currently paid by PG&E.

6. Bad for the Customers PG&E Serves

- The mere threat of municipalization will make it harder to exit bankruptcy because investors will be spooked by assets being

sliced off, and the cost of equity and debt will therefore be higher, leading to unnecessarily higher rates.

- The cities that will municipalize will be richer, urban places that have lower fire risk, leaving the less affluent rural riskier places as part of PG&E which will raise the average cost (costs less to maintain urban system than it does a rural system) — rural residential customers pay the same residential rate as urban customers even though they are much more expensive to serve, and this cost spreading would be undermined.
- It will raise overall costs because it will require many duplicate functions which are now centralized (e.g. 20 billing departments instead of 1).
- The IOU and POU will have less purchasing power and therefore higher costs.

7. Bad for the Environment

- PG&E and all utilities are already required to transition to 100% carbon-free electric power by 2045 — and the utilities are on track to meet that goal.
- Spending over \$100 billion to take over PG&E doesn't make our environment better — it just makes Californians poorer.

8. Bad for Everyone

A smaller utility will not be able to absorb costs from catastrophic events, or even modest-sized events.





On the Scene at the Kincadee Fire

Photos by John Storey

On October 23, the Kincadee Fire broke out near The Geysers in Sonoma County, burning more than 120 square miles over two weeks before it was finally 100% contained. As has become standard practice in these types of fires, hundreds of IBEW 1245 gas and electric crews were quickly dispatched to the scene to make the area safe and begin restoration work.

A Complicated Week

The gas service workers arrived first, with about 500 PG&E employees and 100 mutual assistance resources from SoCal Gas and Southwest Gas working to first shut in, and subsequently restore, gas service to approximately 25,000 customers throughout Sonoma County.

"We were told there were some reg stations in the fire zone, and if they were damaged, it could have resulted in serious over-pressurization. So the company erred on the side of safety, and chose to shut in," explained six-year IBEW 1245 member Garrett Markwood, who

works as a gas service mechanic out of PG&E's San Rafael yard.

Markwood's group was initially tasked with shutting in gas in the Cloverdale area, and then restoring service in that same area while other M&C and GC Gas crews shut in service in the other effected parts of the county. Markwood eventually ended up working on restoration in the other areas as well. His team was on site for just about seven days.

"It was all pretty standard for any outage. Long hours, unexpected delays, and a customer base that's eager to get their lives back to normal," said Markwood. "Combine all that with the natural starts and stops, and it makes for a complicated week."

"Right in My Backyard"

As the gas work was wrapping up, the electric crews started arriving to begin the arduous work of replacing and repairing hundreds of burned and damaged poles in and around the footprint of the fire.

PG&E Electric Crew Foreman Scott Schweikl has worked on nearly half a dozen fires over the 16 years he's belonged to IBEW 1245, but this particular one hit quite close to home — the Geyserville yard that he works out of was included in the fire evacuation orders.

"This is my service area... it's right in my backyard," Schweikl told the *Utility Reporter*. "We had kind of the same situation two years ago with the Tubbs Fire. It's touching close to the same area, same conditions, same results. Unfortunately, it's something that we're dealing with more and more."



Scott Schweikl uses his phone to take a photo of a burned transformer.



Crews at the 6am morning tailboard at base camp in Rohnert Park.

When the *Utility Reporter* caught up with Schweikl and his crew, they were working to replace a burned utility pole in the city of Healdsburg, adjacent to the Field Stone Vineyard, which was heavily damaged by the fire.

Schweikl explained some of the unique challenges that come along with working in a fire zone.

"I've got a burned up excavator right next to my pole, and all the other burned up cars and trucks and parts and stuff like that," he said, gesturing to the remnants of several vehicles.

Looking Out for Each Other

In total, 1,400 PG&E personnel were on the scene. IBEW 1245 also had union staffers on site to ensure things went smoothly, assisting members with issues as they arose.

"The primary benefit of having the union in this situation is that we don't have to worry about being compensated correctly for the work we perform, because the union has already negotiated the terms — so we can focus directly on the work we're here to do," said Mark-

wood. "We've got shop stewards and business reps making sure everyone is being treated the way they're supposed to be. If not for the union, I'm sure the situation would have been a lot different up there."

"The union's got your back. We stick together. Everybody's looking out for each other, and we all want the same result," said Schweikl. "We all want what's best for the workers, but we also want what's best for the company too."

— Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245 Communications Director



January – March 2020



PG&E Bankruptcy News



Details of the New Four-Year Agreement at PG&E

After negotiations with the company, IBEW 1245 and PG&E have reached a deal that we believe will provide much-needed stability for our members, with notable improvements to wages and no concessions. We already have a ratified two-year extension in place for 2020 and 2021, so this new four-year agreement will take us through 2025.

Securing this agreement in the midst of one of the biggest and most costly corporate bankruptcies in American history is nothing short of monumental. Traditionally, when companies go bankrupt, it's the workers who end up paying the price — be it through downsizing/mass layoffs, loss of retirement security, and/or enormous cuts to benefits and wages — but due to our diligence and the power we've successfully built together, we've managed to not only keep everything we had, but actually come out ahead in the end. To our knowledge, this has never happened before in the history of American bankruptcy filings. and it speaks volumes to both the enormous power in our union, as well as the inherent value that our members provide to the company and the communities they serve.

We believe that this is an extraordinarily good agreement, especially when we consider all of the competitive challenges we've been up against in recent years, including the company's proposed clerical reductions, threats of municipalization, Distributed Energy Resources intrusion, micro-grids, efforts to scale

back natural gas, and rate pressures that result in cost-cutting and a reduction in force, among other things.

Provisions of the agreement include:

1. Physical and clerical contracts and benefit agreements extended until 12/31/25. (HRA, point-of-service copays, deductible, and out-of-pocket max remain as they are)
2. General wage increase of 3.75% on 1/1/22, 1/1/23, 1/1/24, and 1/1/25. Compounded over the four years, this produces a total increase of 15.86%.
3. No involuntary layoffs of IBEW-represented employees unless agreed to by IBEW. This does not preclude termination of an employee for cause.
4. Municipalization — company will oppose any attempt to municipalize based on our shared belief that municipalization is not in the best interest of PG&E's customers.
5. Freeze the medical insurance premium co-payment dollar amount at 2020 levels for the duration of the extended contract (through 2025).
6. PG&E management and IBEW leadership agree to work together for the mutual benefit of all parties and will focus their attention and skills on improving safety and safety culture at PG&E.

This package was no gift from the company. It is the result of many months of hard work and tireless effort, and it never would have happened without the political power we've amassed and leveraged in Sacramento and beyond. We want to acknowledge each and every member who has helped us build this power, and we also want to recognize the support we've received from Gov. Newsom, who has insisted that any reorganization plan for PG&E must treat PG&E's union-represented employees well.

In our opinion, this agreement reflects a genuine recognition by PG&E management that the company's recovery depends in large part on the hard work of IBEW Local 1245 members who have experienced continuous instability for more than 20 years. With wages, benefits, hours, and working conditions protected for the next six years, our members can concentrate on their jobs.

As of this writing (Jan. 22), our regulatory, labor, and bankruptcy lawyers are still analyzing the ratification issue. Although the agreement is remarkably good and contains no concessions, we would typically submit it to our members in a ratification vote. The intersection of labor law and bankruptcy law raises unique and difficult questions. We will let you know as soon as we have final advice from our various lawyers and we have decided.

— Tom Dalzell, IBEW 1245
Business Manager

Visit page 20 for a behind-the-scenes look at negotiating in bankruptcy.

Protecting Local 1245 Members Affected by Potential CSO/Local Office Closures at PG&E

PG&E filed a General Rate Case with the CPUC in 2018. Part of that filing was a request to close 17 of the 75 CSO/local offices in the PG&E system.

IBEW was not part of an agreement that PG&E has worked out with several GRC intervener groups (including TURN) to approve closure of 10 of the 17 local offices. It is very likely that the CPUC will approve 10 of the office closures that had been requested in the GRC.

We are told that there has been no decision made on which 10 of the 17 CSO offices will close, nor precisely when PG&E and the CPUC will elect to close them. Office closures cannot occur until after the CPUC makes an announcement on the result of the GRC, which is expected around April 2020.

We remain strongly committed to protecting our members from many impacts of these closures.

This includes:

- Avoiding any involuntary layoffs
- Pushing for voluntary severance opportunities
- Finding openings in CSO offices near where affected members live
- Finding opportunities in other lines of progression near where affected members live
- Finding other opportunities for those qualified for other positions



Photos by John Storey

Doing Their Part to Harden Twain Harte

Fire season may be over (for now) — but the monumental task of hardening the grid to protect against future fires is ongoing, particularly in the areas of California that are considered to be at the highest risk of fire.

With a town motto of “More Trees Than People,” the quaint Sierra Nevada community of Twain Harte is unquestionably one of those areas. Known for breathtaking vistas and idyllic, snowy winters, Twain Harte is a mountain lover’s paradise — but its proximity to the Stanislaus National Forest means that it’s surrounded by fire fuel, which is why IBEW 1245 members have been hard at work to harden the grid in order to mitigate the risk of fire in the area.

When the *Utility Reporter* took a trip up to Twain Harte this winter, temperatures were near freezing, and a big snowstorm was looming on the horizon — but despite the blustery weather, PG&E GC line crews were on the job, replacing poles and running new, more fire-resistant tree wire through Twain Harte’s neighborhoods.

“The tree wire itself is not the easiest to deal with compared to what we’re used to,” said Hugo Madrigal, GC line foreman out of the Merced yard. “It’s more work to dead-end it, more rigging, different style grips. A different way

of doing things.”

“It just takes a lot more time than working with regular wire, because of the way you’ve got to strip it and prep it,” added Lineman Mark Vann. “It’s heavier, and there are a lot of different limitations, like on angles and stuff like that. Before [with the bare wire] we could just make it an angle. Now, we’ve got to make it a double arm angle or make it a double dead end. It’s more time consuming.”

In order to sustain the heavier wire, the crews first needed to frame and set new heavy-duty poles. However, replacing these poles — amidst a plethora of trees, on narrow, winding mountain roads — was a far cry from what the Central Valley-based crews were accustomed to. But despite the challenging terrain and blustery weather conditions, they took the work in stride. They knew that once the snow set in, they would most likely have outages to attend to, so they wanted to get as much of the job done, safely and meticulously, before



the storm arrived.

With so many challenges to work around, the members appreciated seeing representatives from their union out on the jobsite. For Madrigal, the foreman, there’s just no way to put a price on the job security that he and his crew are afforded through IBEW 1245.

“[With IBEW representation] management can’t just fire somebody, and I can go to work knowing if something were to happen, I have some backing from the union, so I’m not alone against a billion-dollar company,” he said. “So I have that peace of mind — and that, to me, is worth more than a dollar amount.”

Update on PG&E Benefits Negotiations

In March of this year, IBEW 1245 members at PG&E submitted proposals for our benefits committee. These proposals showed that the majority of our members wanted to protect existing benefits at PG&E.

IBEW 1245 chose not to reopen benefits negotiations for our members at PG&E during 2019. PG&E agreed not to reopen benefit negotiations. This means that there will be no changes to our PG&E members’ benefits.

While your bargaining committee and I like some of the proposed improvements that other members submitted, we realize that the bankruptcy filing by PG&E suggests that any potential improvements would need to be looked at by bankruptcy committees. This could risk jeopardizing many of the hard-earned benefits our members already enjoy. It is primarily for that reason that we agree with carrying

Utility Reporter

over our current benefit agreements with PG&E. The bankruptcy agreement that was subsequently reached after this process concluded (see page 14) will lock in all benefits through 2025.

- The medical premium co-share will remain at 7.5%.
- The medical deductibles and out of pocket maximums will not increase.
- The amount of HAP credits available will not change.
- Dental and Vision coverage will remain with no premium co-share.
- The Life insurance, Pension, 401k and LTD benefits will remain as they are currently.

— Tom Dalzell, IBEW 1245 Business Manager

Renewing Henry Miller's Dream

at the IBEW
International
RENEW/NextGen
Conference



During the conference, the 1245 delegates got to visit the Henry Miller Museum and learn about the IBEW's founders.

In mid-October, eight young organizing stewards from IBEW 1245 attended IBEW International's 2019 RENEW/NextGen conference in St. Louis, Missouri. The four-day conference is specifically designed for up-and-coming IBEW activists, giving them the tools and knowledge they need to learn and grow into the leaders of the future.

As has become a tradition within the IBEW, the conference kicked off with a day of service at a local park in St. Louis.

"Over 400 IBEW members went to the park to help with trash pickup. Everyone split up and covered the grounds," Local 1245 Organizing Steward Brittney Santana reported. "I love that whenever IBEW members have a conference, we always try to give back to the city that hosts."

In addition to the day of service, the conference also featured a wealth of informative workshops and plenary sessions. The Local 1245 delegation endeavored to attend as many different programs as possible, and each one found the sessions to be exciting and impactful.

"One of the many highlights for me was a workshop I attended on Implicit Bias," said Organizing Steward Bridgette

Thomas. "The instructor of this particular workshop was engaging and 'in your face.' He really made us take a look at ourselves and see if we displayed any type of bias, whether it be knowingly or unknowingly. It was a real eye-opener."

"My absolute favorite training was 'From Bystander to Upstander' with sister Amanda Pacheco," said Organizing Steward Thomas Mora. "She was able to use her ability to connect with each and every one of us members in attendance by sharing personal situations she has been in, as well as allowing others in attendance to share their experiences in sticking up for their fellow brothers and sisters."

Organizing Steward Ramon Gonzalez was also moved by that workshop.

"It's critical to understand the importance of speaking up and intervening in difficult situations — but also knowing how to go about it," he said, reflecting back on the session. "If we see someone being harassed or unintentionally being disrespected, it's crucial to speak up and have each other's backs — because that's what being in a union is about."

The conference also presented the young leaders with an opportunity to

meet and connect with IBEW members from various locals, both near and far.

"The highlight of the event was being recognized by other locals for the hard work our local does across all the States. The IBEW in Hawaii praised our local and said they modeled their union's program after the work 1245 is doing," said Organizing Steward Griselda Fernandez. "I came back home with a different outlook in my participation with the union."

Each attendee left the conference feeling empowered about their role in strengthening the IBEW and the Labor Movement as a whole.

"In listening to the speakers, one thing that stood out to me was the fact that Millennials as an age group have the highest support for unions," said Organizing Steward Vanessa Mejia. "It gives me hope that we will continue to be active and engaged and help grow support for unions and increase our membership."

"It was a great experience seeing all the young leaders from across the United States and Canada," said Local 1245 Staff Organizer Rene Cruz Martinez, who accompanied the 1245 delegation. "I was inspired to see how engaged they were in the plenary and workshops."



The IBEW 1245 delegation at the 2019 RENEW/NextGen conference

Solidarity in Action: Local 1245 Organizing Steward Stands with Rite Aid Workers in Fresno



On Nov. 14, IBEW 1245 Organizing Steward Pete Sandoval (blue shirt, far right) joined a picket line in solidarity with UFCW Local 8 Rite Aid workers in Fresno who are fighting to maintain hard fought health care benefits.

Local 1245 Organizing Stewards Join UDW Child Care Provider Union Organizing Blitz

In late October, ten IBEW 1245 Organizing Stewards participated in a three-day organizing blitz to support the United Domestic Workers (UDW-AFSCME) as the endeavor to give a voice to California's struggling childcare providers. This is the second UDW childcare organizing blitz that Local 1245 supported in 2019 (read about the last blitz and learn more about the campaign at <http://bit.ly/child-care-organizing>).

After completing a one-day training with UDW, the organizing stewards split into teams and canvassed hundreds of care providers in Contra Costa, Sacramento, and the Merced/Modesto area, successfully bringing dozens of providers into the union. Below, the stewards share their experiences on this campaign in their own words.

"I felt privileged to help people realize how important unions are. The voice of one rarely gets heard, but the voice of many is loud and strong. There was a lot of positive feedback when



Tracy Amaro and Isaac Mazon

people realized how much more power they have when they stand together."

— Isaac Mazon, mechanic, PG&E Fresno

"It was concerning for me that many childcare providers shared similar concerns and stories regarding how subsidized childcare agencies can make it so difficult for childcare providers to simply get paid. Most childcare providers that I have spoken with were afraid of retaliation. But with the thought of rising and banding together as a union, the majority were willing to join and become members."

— Joseph Loc Hoang, gas service rep, PG&E Modesto

"One worker we met at the door was hesitant to open the door to strangers. She opened it a crack and we introduced ourselves. One she heard we were with the union, she threw the door open, took a visible deep breath and said, 'Oh my God, thank you for being here, we NEED a union!' That was a turning point for me — these workers just told me they needed the work WE were doing. They cannot leave their kids to advocate for themselves. Their calling is to care for



Kristen Rasmussen and Joseph Hoang

our children. Our job is to make sure they receive a living wage and a voice in the Capitol."

— Kristen Rasmussen, customer service rep, PG&E Stockton

"This campaign hit me because my own childcare provider started her center with my five children. She cared for them throughout their childhood years, and now she employs one of my daughters at her building center. I've seen first-hand the struggles my childcare provider went through. I appreciate their work and the love for the children they care for, and I'm proud to have contributed to this campaign."

— Nilda Garcia, utility worker, PG&E Sacramento

"A lot of the providers in this area are



Nilda Garcia

in contact with each other and already meet periodically to discuss issues they face. The providers were very receptive and were happy this is happening."

— Anthony Seemster, materials handler, PG&E Stockton

"I learned a lot about what child care providers go through and the process for subsidy care — it's so much! [Before this campaign] I had no clue the struggles the child care providers went through. It was eye-opening to hear some of their stories and it led to great conversations. This was my first campaign talking about forming a union and it was a good experience. Some of the child care providers I spoke to didn't have any issues with the current system but still liked the idea of having a larger voice and uniting together."

— Tracy Amaro, routine field clerk, PG&E Lakeville

"Across all of California during the three-day blitz, a total of 925 new members joined the union and 327 signed authorization cards. It was a great show of solidarity across many different unions and different trades, working together as one team to help better the lives of very important people who do a valued role raising the children of our communities."

— Phuong Tran, gas service rep, PG&E Fremont

Local 1245 Organizing Stewards Attend IBEW International Legislative and Political Affairs Conference

Lead Organizing Stewards Alvin Dayoan, Kristen Rasmussen and Melissa Echeverria, as well as Assistant Business Manager Hunter Stern, represented Local 1245 at the IBEW International Legislative and Political Affairs Conference in Washington DC in mid-November. The conference was packed with exciting plenaries from powerful lawmakers, including House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, former Vice President Joe Biden, and Senator Bernie Sanders, among others.

After the inspiring speakers, the IBEW attendees went down to Capitol Hill to speak directly with legislators and their staff on the issues that matter most to the union and its members.

"Our briefings included a wide variety of topics to discuss on behalf of the working families of the IBEW to ensure that their lives are improving and that we are powering a strong economy that works for everyone," Echeverria reported. "Alvin and I had the pleasure of having a discussion with Congressman T.J. Cox. I am his constituent for CD 21 and upon entering his office, he had 'Welcome IBEW' signage and a bowl of Sun-maid raisins, to represent the people of the Central Valley, which I thought was

Utility Reporter



From left: Melissa Echeverria, Alvin Dayoan, and Kristen Rasmussen

a very nice touch. Our meeting with the Congressman included [discussion of] the PRO Act, of which he is a co-sponsor, as well as support of Davis Bacon language, and the repeal of the Cadillac Tax."

"It is really important to discuss these policies and educate those that have the ability and power to move a bill into a reality, because not only does this set the tone for our upcoming generations of union electrical workers, but it also sets a standard for the working class in the United States," added Dayoan.

The experience in the nation's Capitol had a monumental impact

on the delegates from Local 1245

"I paused to take a moment to internalize that I was at the single most important place in the country lobbying for our members at the Capitol," said Echeverria. "This is the place where the country's lawmakers discuss, make and approve legislation. This magnificent building is the icon of the American people and government, and I am so incredibly proud and honored to have been given the opportunity to represent our Local."

"I am very thankful for IBEW 1245 for acknowledging me with this opportunity of a lifetime," echoed Dayoan. "I am forever grateful and will remember this moment for the rest of my life."

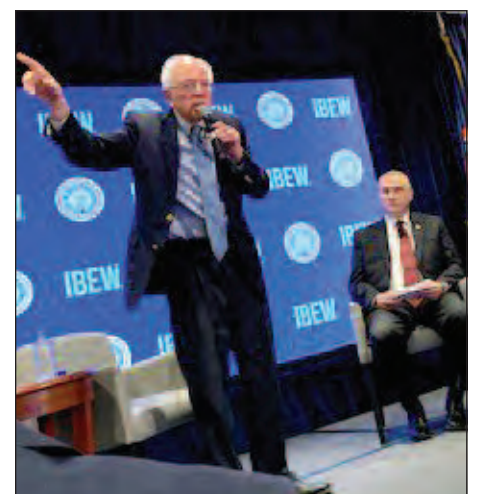
Photos by Alvin Dayoan



Joe Biden (left) with IBEW International President Lonnie Stephenson



Speaker Nancy Pelosi



Sen. Bernie Sanders



Unstoppable: Organizing Stewards Celebrate Successes and

Powerful. Dedicated. Inspired. Focused. Involved. Motivated. Committed. Passionate. Awesome. Enthusiastic.

These are just some of the words that the 2020 class of IBEW 1245 organizing stewards used to describe themselves as they kicked off the year at their annual convening, which took place at Weakley Hall in late January.

“It’s amazing to just be in a room with so much passion and energy! There was a mixture of everything — from PG&E employees to [public sector] employees, people under the age of 30 to retirees of 15+ years, physical employees to clerical employees,” Lead Organizing Steward Ashley Nelson reported from the kick-off. “But although we’re all so different in many ways, we all found the same common ground: passion for this movement, love for our union, and the determination to fight the good fight.”

“I love the diversity in the room. It felt we were one, a powerful one,” echoed Lead Organizing Steward Arnaldo Lizarraga. “The energy in the room felt unstoppable. It is hard to describe.”

Now in its seventh year, the organizing steward program has continued to evolve and grow at a breakneck pace. When the program began in 2014, there were just 28 members, but the numbers have multiplied year after year, and this year’s class is the biggest to date, with a whopping 162 members, including 53 who are new to the program this year.

As the organizing stewards went around the room sharing their most impactful organizing experiences from the past year — ranging from the passage of critical legislation, to the election of a union-friendly Republican in a special State Senate election, to supporting other unions’ ongoing efforts to give a



voice on the job to family child care providers — first-time Organizing Steward Vashawn Perkins, a PG&E gas service rep out of Sacramento, was blown away.

“I didn’t realize how strong this group is, how much power it has to pass [legislation] and get things done,” said Perkins, a father of three. “I’m still learning about laws and politics and all that, but I can see how all these things are going to be beneficial for us and for my kids — because it’s my family that’s being supported by the union as well. That’s what makes me want to get involved.”

Over the course of the day-long training, as the organizing stewards heard from a number of speakers, including Ignacio Cardenas from the child care providers’ organizing campaign, as well as Local 1245 Business Manager Tom Dalzell, and senior staffers Bob Dean, Doug Giroaurd, and Hunter Stern, one very clear theme came through — appreciation for all of the work that the organizing stewards have done and continue to do

to strengthen our union and the labor movement as a whole.

As nearly all the speakers emphasized, that strength is what allowed our union to be the first in history to achieve significant gains for its members during a massive employer bankruptcy. Historically, workers at bankrupt companies are forced to endure enormous cuts to wages and benefits, widespread job losses, elimination of retirement security, and even a complete cancellation of the collective bargaining agreement. But Local 1245 managed to secure wage improvements, guaranteed benefits and retirement, and 100% job security — with zero concessions.

“We achieved things that no union has ever achieved in a bankruptcy, coming out stronger,” Dalzell told the organizing stewards at the kick-off. “There are a number of factors that let us do this. But the one that is more important than all of the rest combined is right here in this room — it’s you, our organizing stewards.”

“Nothing but good

things happen by your efforts in building our political capital,” Giroaurd added, after delivering a detailed presentation to the organizing stewards on how the power they built facilitated an exceptionally positive outcome for 1245 members in the PG&E bankruptcy. “I can’t thank you guys enough, please keep up the great work.”

Additionally, several notable leaders — including California State Senator Maria Elena Durazo, California Labor Federation Leader Art Pulaski, IBEW International Vice President John O’Rourke, Sacramento Central Labor Council Executive Director Fabrizio Sasso, and Fresno Labor Council Executive Director Dillion Savory — sent in video messages to express their appreciation, respect and admiration for the organizing stewards. Perhaps the most impactful video messages came from elected officials that IBEW 1245’s organizing stewards helped elect, including California State Senator Brian Dahle, Nevada State Senator Yvana Cancela, and SMUD Board member Rosanna Herber.

After all virtues had been extolled, the organizing stewards got down to brass tacks, and began to strategize the various ways they can utilize their power to make an even bigger difference for even more working families in 2020, with guidance from staffers Hunter Stern, Eileen Purcell, Fred Ross and Rene Cruz Martinez.

“The catharsis piece of the day was recognizing the limitless possibilities Local 1245 has in its sights that this impossibly important 2020 election year gives us,” reported Lead Organizing Steward Kevin Krummes, who has been part of the program since its inception.

And the fresh faces were equally as enthusiastic, ready to make a difference in the single most effective way possible —



Business Manager Tom Dalzell



l Gear Up for a Big Year

through direct, one-on-one connections with their fellow workers, neighbors, voters and decision-makers.

"I love talking, meeting new faces, hearing peoples' stories, where they are, where they've been, so I think that's the most exciting part of all this for me," said new Organizing Steward Maria Renteria. "I've always wanted to be involved, but I've had stuff kind of blocking me in the past. This year, I decided to take that step and jump in! I'm really excited to be a part of everything."

— Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245
Communications Director



Photos by John Storey

Special thanks and recognition to this year's Lead Organizing Stewards:

Rhianna Thomas
Alvin Dayoan
Charlotte Stevens
Kevin Krummes
Nilda Garcia
Steve Marcotte
Serena Moss
Kim Camatti
Melissa Echeverria
Laquania "Q" Thompson
Brandon Fosselman
Miguel Pagan
Ashley Finley
Brittney Santana
Rachel Ramirez
Julie Gonzalez
Kristen Rasmussen
Mark Goodwin
Rodrigo Flores
Phuong Tran
Melissa Fernandez
Kurene "KT" Turner
Mike Patterson
Arnaldo Lizarraga
Veronica Rivera
Rita Weisshaar



Vashawn Perkins



Ashley Finley



Arnaldo Lizarraga



Maria Renteria

On Friday, January 24th, 2020, shortly before the larger organizing steward kick-off began, we welcomed our first-time organizing stewards for a brief orientation at the Holiday Inn Express in Vacaville. I was joined by Lead Organizing Stewards Alvin Dayoan (Sac CCO) and Melissa Echeverria (Fresno CCO), who assisted in facilitating the training. We kicked off the training with introductions, giving everyone in the room an opportunity to get to know one another. Ten of the new organizing stewards were retirees from PG&E and Santa Clara — they started the round of introductions and set the tone for the morning. It was filled with high energy and recognition for their years of service (which ranged from 2 to 40 years) with the IBEW.

We then briefly went over the types of campaigns, events and programs our organizing stewards have been a part of in the past. Having the shared experiences from Alvin and Melissa really helped shape the hands-on examples of the work the organizing stewards do. As our program continues to grow, we embraced this opportunity to showcase the unique union family we have cultivated over the years. As they merged with the seasoned stewards for the full kick-off at the union hall, we were pleased to see how some of them had already built relationships, and the energy from the orientation clearly transferred into the kick-off. It was a great day.

This time of the year reminds us how far we have come as a local and all of the achievements we have accomplished. Looking forward to an even better 2020.

— Rene Cruz Martinez, IBEW 1245
Staff Organizer

Negotiating in Bankruptcy:

Dalzell Takes the Advisory Council Behind the Scenes

When the IBEW 1245 Advisory Council convened for its first meeting of 2020, just three days after the provisions of the deal between 1245 and PG&E had been announced, there was one question on everyone's minds — how did the union and its members manage to come out ahead in the biggest and mostly costly bankruptcy in American history?

As Business Manager Tom Dalzell, flanked by senior staffers Bob Dean and Hunter Stern, explained to the Council and other attendees, achieving this landmark agreement was anything but certain. In fact, at the beginning of the bankruptcy, the company clearly expected the union to take significant concessions.

"The first time we met with PG&E after they filed for bankruptcy, they said to us, 'How much is Local 1245 willing to give back to get the company out of bankruptcy?' Our answer, of course, was, 'Nothing!'" Dalzell recounted to the Advisory Council. "And then we had two more meetings with them where they handed us, on paper, proposals to change the pension plan, to cut benefits, and to renegotiate the contract ... So things were not looking good."

What the company had failed to realize at that time was that Local 1245 had seen the writing on the wall years earlier, and had been working to build power in multiple ways to ensure that the union would be well-positioned to defend our members in the instance of bankruptcy.

Local 1245's army of organizing stewards — or as Dalzell refers to them, the "sea of blue," because of the impression they make when they descend upon the Capitol in their union tee shirts and flood every legislative office simultaneously — proved to be the cornerstone in 1245's power-building endeavor. Thanks to their overwhelming influence in the Capitol in recent years and their ability to make (or break) legislation, 1245 has established a reputation as a force to be reckoned with. The power amassed by the organizing stewards came into play early on in PG&E's Chapter 11 proceedings, when the court gave IBEW 1245 a seat on the all-important Unsecured Creditors Committee (UCC).

Local 1245 was joined on that committee by more than a dozen banks and other corporate entities that are owed monies by the company. Local 1245 staffer Doug Girouard, whom Dalzell describes as "the smartest person to ever work for our Local," was appointed to represent 1245 on the UCC — and quickly became its de facto leader, due to his extensive knowledge, as well as the power that 1245 has in the Capitol. In fact, when a group of representatives from the UCC, including Girouard, went into California Senate Majority Leader Bob Hertzberg's office, the Senator boldly proclaimed that IBEW 1245's voice was the only one that mattered in



Tom Dalzell

the room.

While Girouard worked his magic with the UCC and in the Capitol, Dalzell and Dean were busy cultivating relationships with other major players in the bankruptcy — including an extremely well-funded group of bondholders who, at that time, had submitted a competing plan of reorganization to the courts in an effort to seize control from the stockholders who had quietly taken over the company's board during the spring. While the company and its stockholder-controlled Board continued to insist that 1245's members would have to give up their hard-fought and well-deserved wages and benefits, the bondholders (several of whom have anti-union track records) presented a generous package that was significantly more favorable to the union and its members — and Dalzell was able to use that offer as leverage with the company.

Additionally, Gov. Newsom — a long-time friend and ally to Local 1245 — played a very significant role in getting the company to agree to the terms that the union had sought.

"The Governor put everything that he had on the line for us," Dalzell told the Advisory Council. "He met with executives from PG&E to urge them to secure a fair agreement with us, and indicated that any path out of bankruptcy must ensure that our members are taken care of."

Between the UCC appointment, the Governor's declaration, the bondholders' offer, and the power that 1245 demonstrated time and again in the Capitol, PG&E leadership eventually realized that they have no choice but to work with 1245 to come to a deal. The negotiation process was a far cry from the traditional type of bargaining that the union usually does, as it was within the context of the bankruptcy proceedings and not under the standard NLRB rules. But in the end, Local 1245 succeeded in securing notable wage increases, locking in all benefits including out-of-pocket health care costs, and guaranteeing no layoffs without cause — something that has never been in a 1245 union contract before.

"Local 1245 and its members are coming out of bankruptcy stronger and better than going in. And I can tell you exactly how many times that's happened in American labor history, which is zero," Dalzell told the Advisory Council. "Workers almost always get screwed in bankruptcy, and that is not happening here."

"This is my 150th Advisory Council meeting, and I've never been happier or prouder of 1245 than I am right now," Dalzell added. "We're not overconfident, just proud of what we've done. We've seen what works, and we're going to keep at it."

Details of the bankruptcy deal can be found on page 14.

— Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245 Communications Director

2020 Organizing Stewards Take the Oath

In what has become an annual tradition, the newest class of IBEW 1245 organizing stewards were officially inducted during the January Advisory Council meeting in Vacaville. Local 1245 President Cecelia De La Torre administered the oath to the massive group of more than 150 stewards, and Lead Organizing Steward Alvin Dayoan was selected to address the Council on behalf of the 2020 class.

"[As an organizing steward] I've participated in solidarity campaigns, political campaigns, and member-to-member campaigns that have been life-changing — not only to myself, but to the labor movement ... I'm very thankful to IBEW 1245 for allowing me to be a part of history," Dayoan told the union's leadership.

"I would like to thank our business manager, Tom Dalzell, for his vision with the organizing steward program. I'm thankful for the IBEW 1245 staff, the exceptional hard work of our business reps, our advisory council, our executive board, and all of our IBEW friends and family, for your enormous support!"

"The first organizing stewards were named and trained in 2014. That is our everlasting power wherever we go," Business Manager Tom Dalzell emphasized. "That's how we defeated billionaires in Nevada. That is the power we work off of in Sacramento, in San Francisco, everywhere we go!"

Learn more about the organizing stewards on page 18.



Alvin Dayoan



President De La Torre administers the oath to the 2020 class of organizing stewards.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Photos by John Storey

Advisory Council Remembers Jack Hill



Hill's wife, Kathy

IBEW 1245 leaders commemorated the legacy of longtime IBEW 1245 activist Jack Hill, who passed away in December of 2019 at the age of 88.

"Jack was a comedian, to say the least," said former Executive Board member Mike Scafani, who served on the 2002-2003 benefits negotiating committee with Hill. "He always had a story to tell, and it was the highlight of our day. The committee members would look forward to going to a meeting with Jack, just to hear his stories."

"His stories are what I remember most of all -- his stories of being in the service, and his colorful language that always surprised me," echoed 1245 President Cecelia De La Torre, who also served on the bargaining committee with Hill. "His favorite story he would tell was how he met his wife. He just loved telling that story."

As a token of gratitude for all of the time and effort that Hill and his family gave to the Local, Business Manager Tom Dalzell presented his wife, Kathy, with a framed photo of her late husband.

"Jack dearly loved the local, almost to the detriment of our marriage," she told the Advisory Council with a smile. "He truly believed in the cause, and willingly gave his time."

View Brother Hill's full obituary on page 34.



IBEW 1245 leadership presented Jack Hill's widow with a framed photo to honor his commitment to the union.

New Advisory Council Members Sworn In

Three new members of the Advisory Council were sworn in by IBEW 1245 President Cecelia De La Torre at the January Advisory Council meeting. Brandon Fosselman represents PG&E Clerical in the southern area; David Williams represents Shasta Division of PG&E, City of Redding, Lassen Municipal Utility District, City of Shasta Lake, and Bella Vista Water District; and Nick Corey represents Transcanada.

From left: Brandon Fosselman, David Williams and Nick Corey are sworn in by President Cecelia De La Torre.

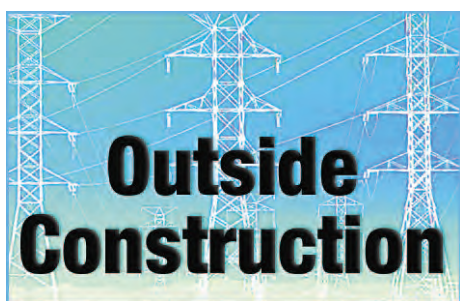


Garrett Lefebvre Wins Quarterly Photo Contest



Congrats to IBEW 1245 member Garrett Lefebvre, who has won our quarterly photo contest! His unique image depicts helicopter-assisted linework. Lefebvre is an outside construction groundman who was initiated in 2019. He was unable to attend the quarterly Advisory Council meeting to accept his \$500 prize in person, so it has been sent to him by mail.

All IBEW 1245 members in good standing are eligible to enter up to five original, high-resolution photos into the contest each quarter. All submissions may be sent to RGB1@ibew1245.com. Please put "photo contest" in the subject of the email, and include your full name and member number or date of birth to confirm eligibility.



WORK PICTURE

California

2019 was a record year for employment in Local 1245's Outside Line Construction group. Over the past year — which really began in December of 2018 and was full bore all the way through the end of 2019 — Local 1245 saw a record number of more than 7,000 dispatches, as well as record man-hours, which would be difficult to replicate in 2020. In 2019, most of the contract linemen were working six and seven 12-hour days, and Local 1245 appreciated the call for workers during this time especially with all the uncertainty at Pacific Gas and Electric as they navigate through the bankruptcy process. It was a very busy year for everyone!

2020 is starting out a little differently than 2019, with rather large reductions in the contracting workforces and hours being reduced to five 10-hour days for most contractors. We are expecting to see some more reductions through the first quarter of 2020 which is a result of a couple factors. PG&E is behind on job packages and with all the changes within the company, their 2020 work plan is not where it should be. Local 1245 at this time believes that we will continue to see this slow down for the next two to three months, before we will start to see the work come back — but not to the same numbers we saw in 2019.

This doesn't mean the work has dried up, and we continue to expect increases in the future as the work is here and hasn't gone away. We are in the middle of Northern California storm season, inspection work is expected to begin in late February for some of the fire areas, the 2020 arrestor program will begin shortly, and there is still a significant amount of fire hardening work that needs to be completed that is part of PGE's 15-year plan (which is now in year 14). Initial estimates calculated a little over 7,000 miles of line in the most critical fire areas that needed to be rebuilt or hardened to reduce the fire risk. Simple math would indicate that in order to meet those objectives, there would need to be 500 miles of rebuilding and hardening per year to reach the 7,000-mile goal in 14 years. The 2020 goals for this project are between 175 to 195 miles, which seems to be a tall task given the delayed start in the first part of the year. Even if this goal is achieved, it seems to be, from a mathematical standpoint, pushing larger numbers into future years.

With the reduction in hours and days after the demand that was put on the workforce 2019, for the most part there seems to be a sense of relief among many we have spoken to as it gives them

time to recharge themselves. 2019 didn't go off without incident, as we did lose two young journeymen in two separate events who came here to help with the issues we faced. These linemen who paid the ultimate price will be missed by family and friends, and their passing is a stark reminder of how dangerous this industry is.

Nevada

All of 2019 work in Nevada has been difficult to man, mainly due to the payment of quadruple sub and seven days a week in California. The work had slowed



Ralph Armstrong

toward the end of the year, and it is uncertain whether or not it will carry over into the new year. Some of the utilities in the surrounding area are starting to perform some fire hardening work in wake of the fires and related litigation in PG&E's territory.

PAR has doc crews and linemen in North & South Lake Tahoe working for Liberty Utilities. They also continue to work on NV Energy fire safety projects in Tahoe and Elko. In 2020, NV Energy and Liberty Utilities are looking to expand this program, creating even more work for our outside contractors. PAR has been working on the tier three fire inspections, creating approximately 6,500 repair tags to be completed. PAR will be staffing up to complete this work in the time allotted by NV Energy.

PAR has completed their 120 KV transmission line between the Steamboat substation and the new South Meadows Sub. PAR is well under way with two 4-25KV cutovers that were supposed to be completed by the end of the year but have been pushed back due to the fire inspections.

Wasatch still has 40+/- doc linemen working at various locations for NV Energy. Wasatch also has a doc crew in Yerington & Winnemucca and a transmission crew. There are 7+/- sub techs and one tele-data tech working for NV Energy's substation group all over the system. Wasatch has completed their work on the 132 line without incident. NV Energy has requested Wasatch provide a quote for Troubleman in Tonopah. There is no language for this classification in our OSL contract or safety and working rules for trouble work. I instructed Wasatch to let NV Energy

know that if they wanted something like that, it would have to be a line crew.

Titan has one crew working on gray wire replacement in Carson City for NV Energy. Titan has also been awarded a 4-25KV cutover in Reno. This project should carry them through the end of the year.

Summit is working on the TRIC 120 KV loop transmission line in the TRIC industrial park. This project is approximately 10 miles of 120 KV. This project is moving along well with completion near the end of the year, with another section to be completed by the end of January.

TW Powerline has wrapped up their pole replacement job for Truckee Donner PUD.

Unit Meetings

Our unit meetings have been well attended for the most part with the increased numbers of workers in the jurisdiction as well as the increased number of apprentices who have been indentured into the program and working in the jurisdiction. Unit meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month at IBEW Local 1245 Ron T. Weakly Union Hall in Vacaville.

Business Representatives

All of Local 1245's OSL business representatives have been very busy handling all the issues that come with the increased number of workers in the jurisdiction. With the reductions we are seeing, we anticipate an increase in issues associated with that. There are three business reps in the field for OSL that are available to answer questions or handle issues if they arise.

- Ralph Kenyon (Northern Area)
- Casey Kelley (Nevada and the Sierras)
- Richard Ingle (Southern Area)

Safety and Red Book Update

Red Book is in the final stages of the review process, and we are anticipating final approval from the full committee. Once this final approval is done, we will be working to get them to the printers, and then out for distribution to those who want or need them.

JATC

CalNev JATC opened apprentice applications in October of 2019 for a 10-day period, during which there were almost 1,000 applications that were submitted and eligible for the interview

process. The first round of interviews is scheduled for the last week of February, and then will continue approximately every month until all are interviewed. The recent slow-down in work in 1245's jurisdiction has resulted in reductions to the apprentices as well, and there is now a backlog of apprentices out of work. New entrants into this program are dictated by the demand for apprentices in the field, and although interviews will take place as stated above, there may be a delay in new classes until the number of apprentices that are out of work are back working and the need for new apprentices is present.

Current apprentices report:

- 629 outside line apprentices are currently registered in our JATC program
- 8 traveling "hot" apprentices are in Cal Nev's jurisdiction
- 225 apprentices are working out of local 1245
- 317 are working out of Local 47, and 27 are working out of Local 396
- 55 are unemployed, 8 are not available to work for various reasons, and 6 are on a leave
- 83 apprentices graduated to journeyman lineman in 2019
- 326 new apprentices were indentured as outside line apprentices in 2019

The CalNev JATC has closed on a 13-acre property in Woodland CA, located at the intersection of Santa Anita Drive and Tanforan Avenue. This property will be the site of the new 12,000 sq. foot state-of-the-art Northern California & Nevada Joint Training Center. This has been a several-year process and the fourth site we've explored before finally landing this one. Plans are underway and a general contractor has been chosen. We hope that this facility will be completed either at the end of 2020 or beginning of 2021.

As we work on building this new facility to handle the increased load of apprentices in Northern California, we have also set up a temporary Northern California Cal-Nev JATC Training site location in Sacramento CA, at the previous site of a Campbell's Soup facility (see more on page 8-9). The building is 6000 sq. ft. which will allow us to handle the increased volume of apprentices and install our new Trans Banker transformer simulator.

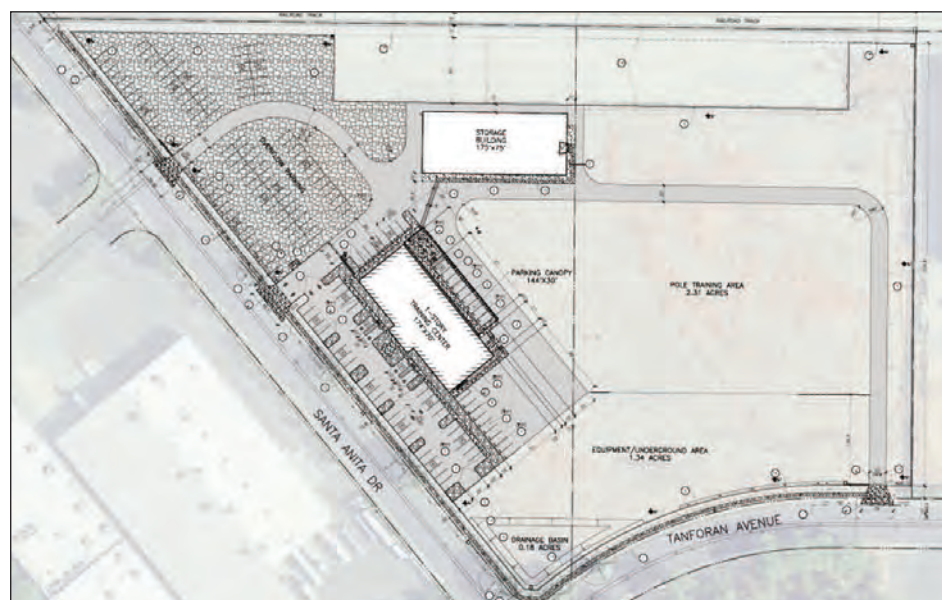
The address is 6200 Franklin Blvd, Sacramento, CA 95824. To get to the building: If you're coming from Hwy 99 take the 47th off-ramp and head West on 47th. Once you cross Franklin Blvd take the first driveway on your right. The parking lot is 100 yards off of 47th on the left. The training facility is the larger of the two steel buildings. (See drawing at left.)

EVENTS CALENDAR

- First Aid & CPR is the second Saturday of every month at our Riverside and Sacramento facilities.

DISPATCH

Please call the hotline after-hours for daily counts related to actual numbers on the Books.



Map of the temporary training facility at 6200 Franklin Blvd.

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SB 247 in Action: Line Clearance Tree Trimmers Receive Major Wage Increases Under New Agreement

It was a wild ending to an already very busy 2019 for the Line Clearance Tree Trimming (LCTT) groups. In 2019 we saw a major increase in new vegetation workers (from around 1,500 to well over 4,000 and still growing) as well as new contractors in Local 1245's jurisdiction. This increase did not come without issues, as many of the new contractors and members have never been involved with a union before. All four of our LCTT business representatives have had their hands full and have been very busy dealing with all these issues.

The other major change to the members in the LCTT group has been the passing of SB 247, which was signed into law on November 11, 2019 by Governor Newsom and went into effect on January 1, 2020. This new law has been a game changer for our members! Under SB 247, a Line Clearance Tree Trimmer will make no less than first-step apprentice as determined by the California Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) Electric Utility Lineman's posting. This posting is the same one that is used by all the Outside Line Contractors in our jurisdiction, and includes a major wage increase for most LCTT workers, as well as things like double-time for all overtime, and a daily per diem which is paid everyday regardless of where they report to work. IBEW Local 1245 and Business Manager Tom Dalzell played an instrumental part in getting this language added to SB 247 and should be commended for this effort, as many of these changes would never have happened otherwise.

Since the passing of the bill there was lot of work that went into getting compensation package outlined in the law into all the new agreements (at the time, we had 60 agreements set to expire on Dec. 31, 2019). Since this new law covers the whole state of California, it was critical to align ourselves with the two other sister IBEW local unions to the south of us, Locals 47 and 465, which have LCTT agreements as well, in order to get the whole state on the same economic packages, allowing workers to move around between the different jurisdictions without losing any of the paid benefits. All three Local Unions met with 10 of the largest LCTT prime con-

tractors in our jurisdiction and began negotiations in late October, and finally reached a tentative agreement on December 3, 2019.

Highlights of the new agreements are:

- Wage increases for all classifications, with the Journeyman LCTT receiving roughly a 45% wage increase
- NEBF and NEAP are now the retirement plans with \$7.85 an hour to the NEAP. NEBF replaces the current Money Purchase Plan in the old agreement
- LineCo coverage with a \$1 an hour contribution into an HRA benny card
- Double time for all overtime
- \$50 a day per diem for most classifications
- Commitment from the contractors to work towards a standardized LCTT training program

Since the agreement was reached, we have been working to get all our signatory contractors signed to it, which has meant answering tons of questions (it seems the new requirements are difficult for some to understand). As of this writing, we have about 90% of the agreements signed and returned, and we continue to work with the other 10% to get them signed as well.

As we move forward with the SB 247 implementation, we don't expect this to go without issues and we will be working hard to resolve them as they arise. It's a great way to start 2020 and with real changes that are expected to improve many lives.

Northern Area

This last quarter has been very busy in the northern area, with the main focus being SB 247. This was a major change in the Vegetation Management program and is a big increase in wages and benefits for most areas. We met with the tree contractors to discuss the new bill and entered into contract negotiations. This was a very intense process. Not only was Local 1245 involved, but we also had local 47 and local 465 in on this too. There were a lot of changes

made to the contract to keep in line with the requirements of SB 247.

One of the major changes pertains to paid vacation/time off. This was very concerning to the members and it took a lot of explaining to help them understand how the new unpaid time off works. There were a lot of questions on the new contract, and some of them we are still working out, but overall this is the biggest improvement that we have seen in the Vegetation Management program in many years.

Unit meeting attendance has been record-breaking these past few months, mostly because of the changes in the contract. It has been very impressive to see our members step up and get involved in the process and voice their opinions. We have started up a new unit meeting in the Oroville area and the turnout has been impressive. We have had a lot of the V.C. members show up to the meeting and become more involved in the union.

We have also had a huge increase of people come into the area for the enhanced vegetation management (EVM) work. The Asplundh corporation is back working in the area for PG&E to help get all this work done. They have brought in over 500 crews, with more on the way. We have been meeting with them at their training seminars to get them signed up with the union. It's very impressive to see a yard appear overnight with 80 crews. They stay there for a few weeks and then pack up and move again. They are getting a lot of work done, but there is still a long way to go. Most of the prime contractors are using sub-contractors to try to get back on schedule. There are a lot of subs out there and it can be quite difficult to keep track of them all. It seems we have new contractors signing up every week. A lot of these contractors have never worked with a union before and it can cause a lot of confusion. We have been trying to meet with them one-on-one and explain the process of getting the employees signed up and making sure the companies are doing the reporting



Jeremiah Hodges

for their benefits. Most are very cooperative and want to make sure that they do things right.

As we go into this new year, we expect the work load to increase even further. Things aren't going to slow down for a while. There is plenty of work out there for good qualified people and we are expecting, with the new wages and benefits, a big increase in the number of people wanting to move here.

Central Area

ASPLUNDH TREE EXPERT (Nevada Energy) — The Company has been having a problem with keeping everyone staying put with the change in the rates in California. Many hands have jumped ship and pulled stakes from Nevada to catch the California Gold Rush. We know the company had to meet with the utility to discuss rates in order to meet the demands of keeping their personnel from leaving their positions for other jobs. This problem may continue to exist for a while, until the rates in Nevada get moved up to somewhere near the California rates.

MOWBRAY (PG&E & SMUD) — Crews continue to assist Davey Tree Surgery in the East Bay. SMUD crews have been staying busy working 10-hour shifts. The company has expanded the crews at SMUD. We have lots of interest in the opening of the bid at SMUD which opened in November. We expect to hear who was awarded the contract soon. Unit Attendance has been high due to the expected changes related to SB 247.

MOUNTAIN ENTERPRISE (Liberty Energy & PG&E) — Mountain has numerous crews working all over the PG&E system. In Placerville and Auburn, the company has ramped up by hiring a lot more crews and utilizing more sub-contractors in their areas. The company installed video cameras in company vehicles. The new system seems to have helped them correct bad habits while driving company vehicles. The system records sudden motion that can help prove someone's innocence. The company has been participating in the IBEW 1245 Safety Roundtable and has embraced the discussions for the purpose of the meetings. Unit meeting attendance has been very high due to the negotiations for the 2020 agreement.

DAVEY TREE SURGERY & POLE TEST & TREATMENT — We're currently

continued on page 26

January – March 2020

Outside, from page 23

All 1245 OSL members are encouraged to sign up and register a personal account through the Local 1245 website. Once registered, you will be able to check your books status, make changes to personal information, pay union dues and even check on available jobs without having to call the dispatch office for this information. This is a very useful tool for our OSL members.

Please call the hotline for details on all available calls!



La ley SB 247 en acción: los podadores de árboles para el despeje de líneas reciben aumentos salariales importantes según el nuevo acuerdo

El 2019 tuvo un final muy ajetreteado en un año que de por sí fue un año de mucho trabajo para los grupos de podadores de árboles para el despeje de líneas (LCTT por sus siglas en inglés). En 2019 vimos un aumento importante en nuevos trabajadores para el despeje de vegetación (pasaron de ser alrededor de 1,500 a más de 4,000 trabajadores y el número sigue creciendo), así como un aumento en nuevos contratistas en la jurisdicción del Local 1245. Este aumento trajo consigo problemas, ya que muchos de los nuevos contratistas y miembros nunca antes habían estado involucrados con un sindicato. Nuestros cuatro representantes de negocios de LCTT han estado muy ocupados manejando todos estos asuntos.

El otro cambio importante para los miembros del grupo LCTT ha sido la aprobación de la ley SB 247, que fue aprobada el 11 de noviembre de 2019 por el Gobernador Newsom y entró en vigor el 1º de enero de 2020. ¡Esta nueva ley ha sido un cambio importante para nuestros miembros! Según la ley SB 247, un podador de árboles para el despeje de líneas no puede ganar menos que un aprendiz del primer nivel, según lo publicado por el Departamento de Relaciones Industriales de California (DIR) para Linieros de Servicios Eléctricos Públicos. Esta publicación es la misma que utilizan todos los contratistas externos de líneas eléctricas en nuestra jurisdicción, e incluye un aumento salarial importante para la mayoría de los trabajadores de LCTT, así como temas como el pago doble por las horas extra, y un viático diario que se paga todos los días, independientemente del lugar donde trabajen. El Local 1245 del IBEW y el Gerente de Negocios Tom Dalzell jugaron un papel clave en lograr que se agregara esta cláusula a la ley SB 247, y debemos reconocerlos por este esfuerzo, ya que de otra manera muchos de estos cambios nunca hubieran sucedido.

Desde el momento en que se aprobó el proyecto de ley trabajamos mucho para lograr incluir el paquete de compensación en la ley en todos los nuevos acuerdos (en ese momento, teníamos 60 acuerdos que tenían como fecha de vencimiento el 31 de diciembre de 2019). Como esta nueva ley aplica en todo el estado de California, era crítico alinearnos con los otros dos sindicatos locales hermanos del IBEW al sur, los Locales 47 y 465, que también tienen acuerdos LCTT, para lograr que todo el estado tuviera los mismos paquetes económicos, permitiendo a los trabajadores moverse entre las diferentes jurisdicciones sin perder ninguno de los beneficios pagados. Los tres sindicatos locales se reunieron con 10 de los principales contratistas de LCTT de nuestra jurisdicción y las negociaciones comenzaron a finales de octubre. Finalmente se llegó a un acuerdo provisional el 3 de

diciembre.

Los aspectos más destacados de los nuevos acuerdos son:

- Aumentos salariales para todas las clasificaciones, donde el trabajador del LCTT recibe un aumento salarial de aproximadamente 45%
- NEBF y NEAP son ahora los planes de jubilación con \$7.85 por hora para el NEAP. NEBF reemplaza el actual Plan de Contribuciones Fijas en el antiguo acuerdo
- Cobertura de LineCo con una contribución de \$1 por hora en una tarjeta HRA
- Pago doble por todas las horas extra
- \$50 de viáticos diarios para la mayoría de las clasificaciones
- Compromiso de los contratistas para trabajar en un programa estandarizado de capacitación LCTT

Desde que se logró el acuerdo, hemos estado trabajando para que todos nuestros contratistas signatarios lo firmen, lo que ha significado responder a toneladas de preguntas (parece que los nuevos requisitos son difíciles de entender para algunas personas). En el momento de escribir este informe, cerca del 90% de los acuerdos han sido firmados y devueltos, y seguimos trabajando con el otro 10% para que también los firmen.

A medida que avanzamos con la aplicación de la ley SB 247, esperamos que aparezcan otros problemas y trabajaremos arduamente para resolverlos a medida que surjan. Esta es una excelente manera de comenzar 2020 y con cambios reales que esperamos que cambien muchas vidas.

Zona norte

Este último trimestre hemos estado muy ocupados en la zona norte, y nuestro principal objetivo ha sido la ley SB 247. Este fue un cambio importante en el programa de manejo de la vegetación y representa un aumento significativo en los salarios y beneficios para la mayoría de las zonas. Nos reunimos con los contratistas de poda de árboles para discutir el nuevo proyecto de ley y entablamos negociaciones de contrato. Este fue un proceso muy intenso. No solo estaba involucrado el Local 1245, sino que los Locales 47 y 465 también formaban parte de estas negociaciones. Se hicieron muchos cambios en el contrato para cumplir con los requisitos de la ley SB 247.

Uno de los cambios principales se refiere a las vacaciones pagadas y al tiempo libre. Esto era muy importante para los miembros y tomó mucho tiempo explicarles y ayudarlos a entender cómo funciona el nuevo tiempo libre no remunerado. Hubo muchas preguntas sobre el nuevo contrato, y todavía estamos trabajando en algunas de ellas, pero en general esta es la mayor mejora que hemos visto en el programa de manejo de la vegetación en muchos años.

La asistencia a las reuniones de la unidad en estos últimos meses batió el récord, debido principalmente a los cambios en el contrato. Ha sido muy impresionante ver cómo nuestros miembros se presentan e involucran en el proceso y expresan sus opiniones. Hemos iniciado una nueva reunión de la unidad en la zona de Oroville y la participación ha sido impresionante. Muchos de los miembros del Control de vegetación se presentan a la reunión y se involucran más en el sindicato.

También hemos tenido un enorme incremento en el número de personas que han llegado a la zona para trabajar en EVM. La empresa Asplundh está trabajando de nuevo en la zona de PG&E para ayudar a completar todo este trabajo. Han traído más de 500 cuadrillas, y hay más en camino. Nos hemos reunido con ellos en sus seminarios de capacitación para que se inscriban en el sindicato. Es muy impresionante ver cómo aparece un patio con 80 cuadrillas de la noche a la mañana. Se quedan allí por unas semanas y luego empacan y se mueven de nuevo. Están completando mucho trabajo, pero todavía queda mucho por hacer. La mayoría de los contratistas principales están utilizando subcontratistas para tratar de ponerse al día con su programa. Hay muchos subcontratistas trabajando y puede ser bastante difícil hacerles seguimiento a todos. Parece que cada semana se inscriben nuevos contratistas. Muchos de estos contratistas nunca han trabajado con un sindicato y esto puede causar mucha confusión. Hemos intentado reunirnos con ellos individualmente y explicar el proceso de inscripción de los empleados, y asegurarnos de que las empresas están generando los informes de los beneficios de los empleados. La mayoría están muy dispuestos a cooperar y quieren asegurarse de que hacen las cosas bien.

A medida que entremos en este nuevo año, esperamos que la carga de trabajo aumente aún más. Las cosas no van a calmarse por un tiempo. Hay mucho trabajo disponible para personas calificadas y esperamos, con los nuevos salarios y beneficios, un



Kevin Escalante

aumento importante en el número de personas que desean mudarse para acá.

Zona central

ASPLUNDH TREE EXPERT (Nevada Energy) — La Compañía ha estado teniendo problemas con mantener a sus empleados debido a los cambios en las tarifas en California. Muchos empleados han abandonado sus trabajos y se han mudado de Nevada para aprovechar la “Fiebre del oro” de California. Sabemos que la compañía tuvo que reunirse con la empresa de servicios públicos para discutir las tarifas para que su personal no abandone sus puestos de trabajo por otros trabajos con mejor paga. Es posible que este problema continúe por un tiempo, hasta que las tarifas en Nevada suban y se aproximen a las tarifas de California.

MOWBRAY (PG&E & SMUD) — Las cuadrillas continúan ayudando a Davey Tree Surgery en East Bay. Las cuadrillas de SMUD han estado ocupadas trabajando en turnos de 10 horas. La compañía ha ampliado las cuadrillas de SMUD. Hemos recibido muchas muestras de interés en la apertura de la licitación en SMUD que se abrió en noviembre. Esperamos saber pronto a quién se le adjudicó el contrato. La asistencia a la unidad ha sido alta debido a los cambios esperados relacionados con la ley SB 247.

MOUNTAIN ENTERPRISE (Liberty Energy y PG&E) — La compañía Mountain tiene numerosas cuadrillas trabajando en todo el sistema PG&E. En Placerville y Auburn, la compañía ha aumentado su ritmo de trabajo contratando

continúa en la página 26



Brad Ritter

Photos by John Storey



David Juarez Photos by John Storey

trying to work on a Grievance Review Meeting for February or March 2020. We have several matters to discuss with the committee. Unit meeting attendance has been very high due to the changes in law regarding SB 247. The membership has been waiting for us to complete the negotiations to see how we ended up. Everyone has been very happy with the changes in the new agreement.

Many members in the Pole test and

Treat group inadvertently received a letter discussing the changes due to SB 247 from Local 1245, which led to some confusion. Unfortunately, the bill did not apply to this work group; it was intended for the LCTT group and had to do with fire mitigation type work only. We have spent a lot of time explaining the confusion to this group and the intent behind the bill.

OSMOSE — All quiet with our PT&T membership at this time.

WRIGHT TREE — (PG&E Martinez/ Napa, SMUD, Truckee Donner PUD) — Most crews have been working 10-hour shifts. Unit meeting attendance has been active due to SB 247. We had a few issues regarding progressions in Napa.

Sub-contracting has been elevated to numbers that Local 1245 has never seen. This work is continuing with over 50+ contractors working on PG&E property. All this work is IBEW work, and covers three Local Unions, 1245 in Northern California, 47 in Southern California, and 465 in San Diego.

Bay Area

Line clearance tree trimmers are extremely happy and grateful for the wage and benefit increases. There is some concern expressed over mandatory overtime provisions. Some supervi-

sors are mischaracterizing elements of the new tree agreement (e.g. the \$50 per diem will only be paid if individuals are assigned to another headquarters). The members have been well briefed on the agreement and tend to discount misstatements.

Hundreds of imported line clearance tree trimmers are being signed up at the two-day PG&E trainings in American Canyon and Fairfield. Few problems with the imported crews so far. Nelson Tree has reneged on their per diem agreements with their 70 employees who were working here in November and December and are now back home.

Southern Area

The end of the year was very busy, with SB 247 being passed by Governor Newsom. Then negotiations started with the tree companies, Local 47, and Local 465. We adopted some of the language from the Outside Line contract and benefits for our LCTT members. Credit to Ralph Armstrong and our brothers from Local 47 and Local 465 — we came up with a great package for our members.

Never was so much accomplished as far as wages and benefits — kudos to everyone involved in making this possible. History was made for tree trimmers

in California. We have been getting calls from our members about wages and benefits and unit meeting attendance has been much greater. I am hoping for an easy transition into this new agreement. Tree companies have been understanding and have asked for our help in explaining to their employees about vacation, holidays and sick leave. We have been making rounds to different yards explaining our new agreement.

For the most part our members are excited about what is happening and look forward to receiving higher wages and better benefits. I believe that now we will attract more qualified tree certified line clearance people, because of the better wages and benefits. This was a long time coming and I am proud to be a part of this momentous agreement that our great union IBEW 1245 was able to pass with the hard work of so many. I look forward to 2020 being a great year for us all.

PG&E is starting some training procedures that they want all the tree contractors to follow, in order to be on the same page. We need standard training, and the tree contractors will work with IBEW Local 1245 and IBEW Local 47 and IBEW Local 465 in the months to come to achieve this goal. We will report on this matter further as it is rolled out.

SB 247, a partir de la página 25

muchas más cuadrillas y utilizando más subcontratistas en sus áreas. La compañía instaló cámaras de video en los vehículos de la empresa. El nuevo sistema parece haber ayudado a corregir malos hábitos al conducir vehículos de la empresa. El sistema registra movimientos repentinos lo cual puede ayudar a demostrar la inocencia de alguien. La compañía ha estado participando en la Mesa Redonda de Seguridad del IBEW 1245 y se ha involucrado en las discusiones de las reuniones. La asistencia a las reuniones de la unidad ha sido muy alta debido a las negociaciones para el acuerdo de 2020.

DAVEY TREE SURGERY & POLE TEST & TREATMENT — Actualmente estamos intentando programar una reunión del Comité de resolución de quejas para febrero o marzo de 2020. Tenemos varios asuntos que discutir con el comité. La asistencia a las reuniones de la unidad ha sido muy alta debido a los cambios por la ley SB 247. Los miembros quieren que finalicemos las negociaciones para ver los resultados finales. Todos se han mostrado muy satisfechos con los cambios del nuevo acuerdo.

Muchos miembros del grupo "Pole Test and Treat" recibieron por error una carta del Local 1245 donde se discutían

los cambios debidos a la ley SB 247, lo que trajo cierta confusión. Lamentablemente, el proyecto de ley no se aplica a este grupo de trabajo y la carta iba dirigida al grupo LCTT y tenía que ver solamente con el trabajo de tipo mitigación de incendios. Hemos pasado mucho tiempo explicando a este grupo la confusión y el propósito del proyecto de ley.

OSMOSE — Todo está en calma en lo que se refiere a nuestros miembros de PT&T en este momento.

WRIGHT TREE (PG&E Martinez/ Napa, SMUD, Truckee Donner PUD) — La mayoría de las cuadrillas han estado trabajando turnos de 10 horas. La asistencia a la reunión de la unidad ha estado activa debido a la ley SB 247. Los miembros han estado esperando los resultados de las negociaciones para el nuevo acuerdo. Tuvimos algunos problemas con respecto a los ascensos de clasificación en Napa.

La cantidad de subcontratistas ha aumentado a números nunca vistos en el Local 1245. Este trabajo continúa con más de 50 contratistas trabajando en instalaciones de PG&E. Todo este trabajo es del IBEW, y cubre tres sindicatos locales, el 1245 en el norte de California, el 47 en el sur de California, y el 465 en San Diego.

Bay Area

Los podadores de árboles para el despeje de líneas están extremadamente felices y agradecidos por los aumentos de salarios y beneficios. Hay cierta preocupación por las disposiciones obligatorias relativas a las horas extra. Algunos supervisores están explicando erróneamente los componentes del nuevo acuerdo de los podadores de árboles (por ejemplo, dicen que los \$50 de viático diario solo se pagarán si los

individuos se asignan a otra sede). Los miembros han sido bien informados sobre el acuerdo y tienden a ignorar las declaraciones erróneas.

Cientos de podadores de árboles para el despeje de líneas importados están siendo inscritos para recibir las capacitaciones de dos días de PG&E en American Canyon y Fairfield. Hasta ahora ha habido pocos problemas con las cuadrillas importadas. Nelson Tree ha renegado de sus acuerdos de viáticos diario con sus 70 empleados que trabajaron aquí en noviembre y diciembre, y que ahora están de regreso en su sede.

Zona Sur

El final del año estuvo muy ajetreado con la aprobación de la ley SB 247 por el Gobernador Newsom. Luego comenzaron las negociaciones con las compañías de poda de árboles, el Local 47, y el Local 465. Adoptamos para nuestros miembros del LCTT, parte del lenguaje contractual del contrato Externo de Líneas y sus beneficios. Le damos nuestro reconocimiento a Ralph Armstrong y a nuestros hermanos del Local 47 y del Local 465 que lograron un gran paquete para nuestros miembros.

Nunca se había logrado tanto en cuanto a salarios y beneficios — felicitaciones a todos los involucrados en hacer esto posible. Fue un logro histórico para los podadores de árboles en California. Hemos estado recibiendo llamadas de nuestros miembros sobre salarios y beneficios, y la asistencia a las reuniones de unidad ha sido mucho mayor. Espero tener una transición fácil hacia este nuevo acuerdo. Las compañías de poda de árboles han sido comprensivas y han pedido nuestra ayuda para explicar a sus empleados acerca de las vacaciones, días feriados y permisos por enfermedad. Hemos



estado visitando diferentes patios explicando nuestro nuevo acuerdo.

En su mayor parte, nuestros miembros están entusiasmados con lo que está sucediendo y aguardan sus salarios más altos y mejores beneficios. Creo que ahora atraeremos a más personas calificadas certificadas para el despeje de líneas, debido a los mejores salarios y beneficios. Esto ha debido suceder hace mucho tiempo y estoy orgulloso de ser parte de este acuerdo trascendental que nuestro gran sindicato IBEW 1245 logró que se aprobara gracias al arduo trabajo de muchas personas. Espero que 2020 sea un gran año para todos nosotros.

PG&E está iniciando algunos procedimientos de capacitación que quieren que todos los contratistas de árboles cumplan, para ser todos consistentes. Necesitamos capacitación estándar y los contratistas de poda de árboles trabajarán con el IBEW Local 1245 y el IBEW Local 47 y el IBEW Local 465 en los meses venideros para lograr este objetivo. Informaremos sobre este tema más adelante a medida que se vaya desplegando.





Units lend a helping hand

All of the following unit donations to various charitable organizations from October through December 2019 were approved by the IBEW 1245 Executive Board.

Carson City Retirees donated \$250 to for the Backpack Buddies program in Gardnerville, NV.

Lompoc Unit #1218 donated \$500 to the Brice Fabing Bikes 4 Kids fundraiser.

Ukiah Unit #3714 donated \$500 to the Mendocino Workers Memorial Fund.

MC to approve the donation request of \$250.00 from the **Community Fund of USBR/Keswick Unit #3218** for the Nor Cal Striders in Redding, CA. Vote: Unanimous; Zamora and Hudelson absent with excuse.

Modesto Irrigation District Unit #2518 donated \$250 to Community Hospice Foundation in Modesto and \$250 to American Cancer Society in Modesto.

Stockton Unit #2511 donated \$200 to Hospice of San Joaquin/Tree of Lights, \$150 to St Mary's Dining Hall in Stockton and \$150 to Ed Stewart American Legion Hall #803.

Community Fund of Sacramento Regional Transit Unit #3011 donated \$100 to each of the following organizations: Susan G. Komen for the Cure, Boys & Girls Club of Greater Sacramento, Sacramento SPCA, Sacramento Habitat for Humanity and Mary House/Loaves & Fishes.

Lakeport Unit #3715 donated \$400 to the Westshore Little League.

North Bay Retirees donated \$500 along with \$350 in matching funds to the Geyserville High School Sports Program.

Santa Cruz Unit #1513 donated \$500 to the Live Oak Little League in Santa Cruz.

USBR Folsom Unit #3012 donated \$250 to Antelope High Boys Basketball and \$250 to Cordova High Drama.

Plumas Sierra Unit #3514 donated \$250 to Horses Unlimited in Cromberg, CA.

Sacramento Unit #3811 donated \$250 to the Wildlife Care Associates in North Highlands, CA.

Burney Unit #3213 donated \$250 to Intermountain Junior Rodeo Association and \$250 to Intermountain Youth Sports.

Hayward/Fremont Unit #2314 donated \$500 to the Tito Fuentes Baseball Academy in Napa, CA.



Lompoc Unit Raises Money for Member Fighting Cancer

IBEW 1245 members at the city of Lompoc hosted a BBQ fundraiser for an IBEW 1245 member who is fighting cancer and has been off work for several months.

"Maria Salasar organized the event with the help of our members and city staff," Local 1245 Business Rep Jaime Tinoco reported. "Tony Vickery, Isaac Rodriguez and JD Aguilar grilled tri-tip for the sandwiches, and Melinda Wall, Fernando De Los Reyes, Theresa Luna, Theresa Hernandez and Bridgett Hernandez helped with serving & prep work."

The unit raised \$1,983 for our member in need.

Lompoc Unit Supports Annual Bikes 4 Kids Drive

In what has become an annual tradition, IBEW 1245's Lompoc unit co-sponsored the 13th annual Brice Fabing Memorial Bikes 4 Kids drive in 2019. IBEW 1245 member Dorine Fabing and her husband started the drive in memory of their son, Brice, who died in 2005 at the age of 17.

The Lompoc unit donated \$500 from the Community Fund to support the drive. Additional funds were raised from other groups and through a variety of activities throughout the year.

In December, the funds were used to purchase more than 115 bikes and hel-

metts, which were given away to children throughout the Lompoc community.

"We are extremely proud that we were able to give back to our community in a small but rewarding way and remember Brice on this 14th-year anniversary of his passing," the Fabings wrote in a statement. "Without your continued support for the program and to Brice's memory, many kids wouldn't have received such a special Christmas this season."

Read the full story <http://bit.ly/2sMjEYY>



From left: IBEW 1245 member Lesa Keasler, IBEW 1245 member Dorine Fabing, and her husband Mark Fabing (retired former 1245 member) at the Bikes 4 Kids drive in Lompoc.

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Working in a Winter Wonderland **TRUCKEE DONNER PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT**

Lineman Ed Atkins uses the snow blower to clear a substation.

Known as one of the country's most popular and remarkable winter-travel destinations, the greater Tahoe-Truckee area attracts thousands of tourists from all over the world during this time of year. For Truckee's visitors and residents alike, reliable access to electricity and water are often taken for granted — but in a town that averages more than 204 inches of snow per year, and at- or below-freezing temps 228 nights per year on average, keeping the faucets running and the heat on is no small feat.

Fortunately, the hard-working IBEW 1245 members at Truckee Donner Public Utility District (TDPUD) are on the

job, day and night, in sun and snow, to ensure access to critical utility service in this glittering, remote winter wonderland.

Whatever the weather, the show must go on

For the IBEW workers at TDPUD, extreme cold and snow plays a big role in the nature of their work during the winter (and year-round, as temps can drop down into the 30s on spring and summer nights as well). They're almost always preparing for the next weather event and the potential impacts it might have on the equipment and service in

the area.

Ed Atkins is a journeyman lineman whose journey at TDPUD began almost 21 years ago. He's part of the team that's responsible for building and maintaining the electric infrastructure in the district — and as a utility first responder, he knows that he needs to be ready to jump into action in a moment's notice.

"Our trucks are stocked up, fueled up, and chained up if need be, so if any trouble calls come in, we're ready to roll," he said. "When it snows, we are in the mountains clearing substations, making sure that we have access to the equipment so we can get to it in an emergency."

side buildings and outside when necessary," he explained.

And when the power goes out, customer service reps like Anabel Sanchez serve as the first point of contact for customers — a job that is especially demanding during periods of extreme weather like drought and snow.

"It's always different situations," she said in describing how her job keeps her on her toes.

Responding to Changing Needs in the District

The Truckee-Donner area is seeing a lot of new development, and TDPUD workers are actively involved with overseeing the plans for commercial building boom and the impact new construction has on infrastructure.

"The developer comes with an idea, they submit it to our engineers, our engineers come up with a plan, and then I make sure the developer adheres to the engineer's plans. I'm responsible for adherence to company policies and procedures," explained TDPUD Substation Lineman and Inspector Shannon Hoyt.

The Union Difference

For Christian, being part of the union means being part of a brotherhood. He reflected on the training he received through the union and how important that is to keeping workers safe on the job, and how that experience has advanced his career.

"I'm very proud I took the course that I did. I wouldn't be where I'm at [without the union apprenticeship]," he said. "[I value] the camaraderie that you

Inside those substations, technicians are also hard at work to keep critical equipment up and running, performing upgrades as necessary. When the *Utility Reporter* caught up with Electrician and Meter Technician Foreman Shane Christian, he was working on a new SCADA system upgrade.

"We take care of all the controls in the substation, all the metering in a district, all of the motor controls, all the building maintenance with electrical. In the winter, we focus on the in-



Lineman Kevin Simpson shovels snow at a substation.

get with the other guys that have been through the programs, whether it's a linemen apprenticeship or an electrician apprenticeship."

Hoyt, who has previously worked at non-union companies, can quantify the union-difference first-hand.

"Coming into the union has been drastically different," he said. "Having

that sense of security for one, and I also have an honest working wage that I can support my family on — and I can actually help give back to my community, because I have the resources to do that."

IBEW 1245 recently negotiated a new contract with TDPUD, and the workers spoke about the importance of collective bargaining, and having a strong, en-

forceable contract that includes quality wages and benefits.

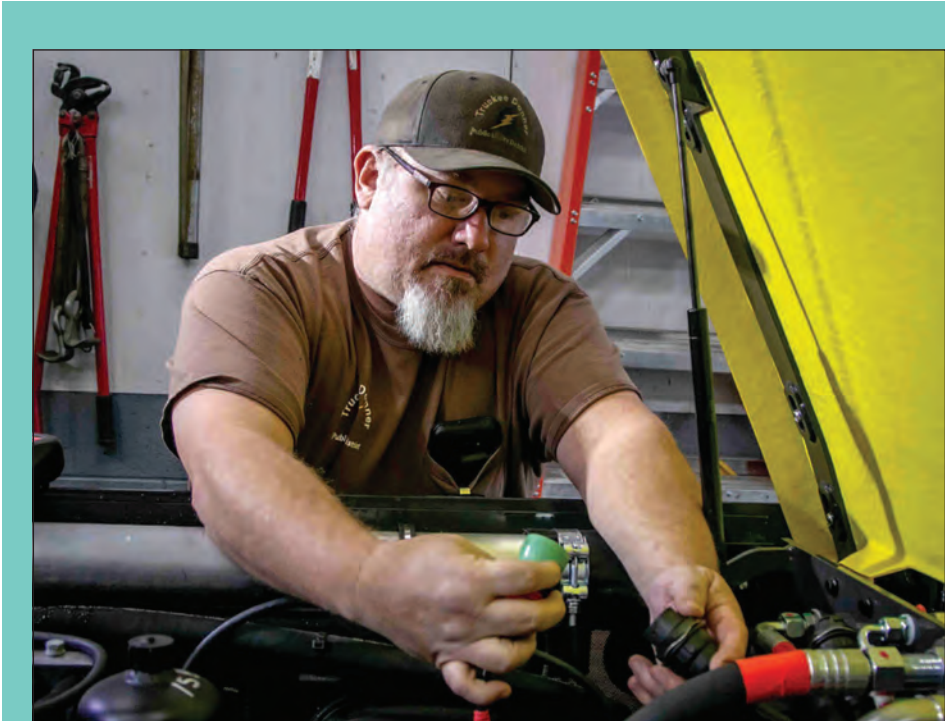
As a parent to a young child, Sanchez expressed the confidence she has in doing her job knowing that the union has her back and understands her needs.

"We're protected against unjustified things that could happen," she explained. "I'm very happy with the out-

come of the new contract."

Atkins summed up what it means to be union strong: "It's amazing the strength in numbers and knowing somebody's got your back on things. And I think the collective bargaining is just an amazing thing."

Photos by John Storey



Chuck Gazso fixes a snow blower in the shop.



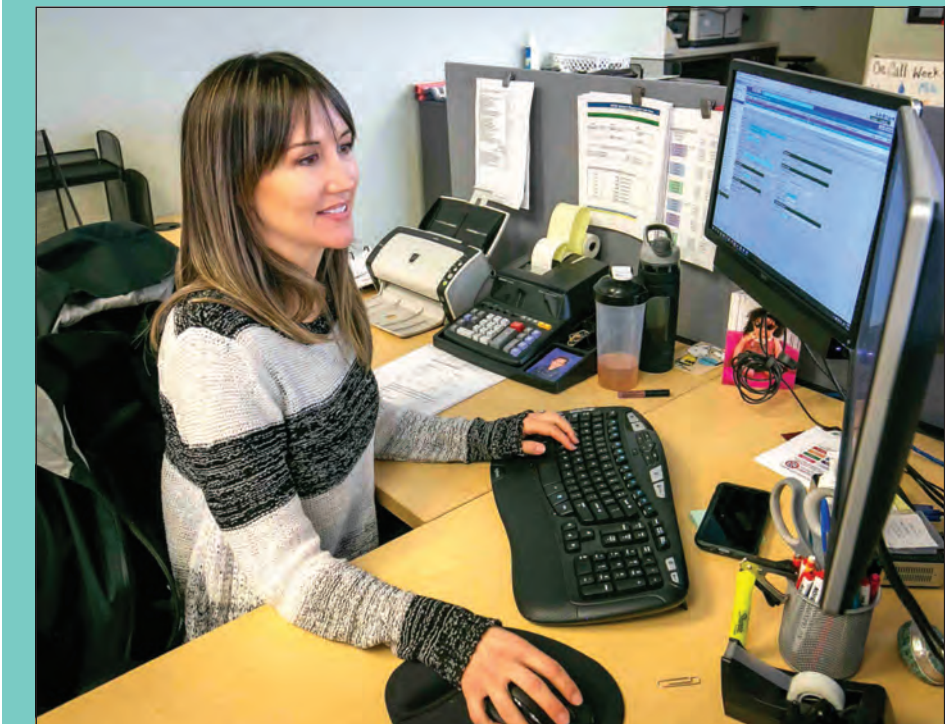
Customer Service Rep Anabel Sanchez



Electrician Scott Clayton



Electrician David Emery



Karen Rehkop works in the office.



Shane Christian at a pump station

IBEW 1245 Members at SMUD Help Power Up Sacramento Convention Center Expansion



A crane moves the transformer into an underground vault.

Photos by John Storey



SMUD lineman Ryan Malmberg guides one of the transformers onto the skates.

If you've passed through downtown Sacramento recently, chances are you've seen the major expansion and renovation project that's currently underway at the Sacramento Convention Center. Once complete, the convention center will boast a footprint of more than 240,000 square feet, with a brand new 40,000-square-foot ballroom and 15,000-square-foot outdoor plaza.

As expected, the massive expansion project comes with some massive power needs. In January, IBEW 1245 members from Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) were called in to install two network transformers to supply the load for the convention center renovation. Each transformer weighs approximately 12,000 pounds, so the crew got a bit of assistance from a crane operator.

"[The crane] is going to lower them into our vault, and then we're going to skate them in on tanks and rollers to get them in place," explained SMUD network cable splicer foreman and 13-year IBEW member Joe Dray. "And then we're going to test the transformers today to ensure they're good."

Getting the transformers into the vault involved an extraordinary amount of pre-planning. SMUD had to coordinate with the City to shut down 14th Street for a full seven hours in order to accommodate the 100,000-pound crane and its supporting counterweight trucks (which allow the crane to lift the transformers up 95 feet to get into the vault). Given the vault's location in the center of the job site, SMUD also had to work closely with two different superinten-



Joe Dray

dents on the renovation project to facilitate the process. Additionally, they had to check in with the League of California Cities, which has offices adjacent to the job site at 14th and K streets, regarding garage access and other logistics.

And the crane work is only part of the project — getting the transformers into their rightful places inside the vault presented a whole separate set of challenges.

"We use bottle jacks to jack up the transformer to be able to get them on skates," Dray explained. "So once the crane sets the transformer down on the skates, we're going to push that transformer far enough to get it over the ledge to be able to jack it back up to move the skates in front. And then we



Ryan Malmberg (left) and Joe Vaughn guide the transformer into place.



SMUD linemen move the transformer into the vault.



Ryan Malmberg signals the crane operator.



SMUD linemen, from left: Joe Vaughn, Hans Heuer, Ryan Malmberg, Joe Dray, Mark Howton, Roman Guerrero, Matt McMullen, and Jason Philpot

have to push it far enough again to be able to get the skates and back in all the way into the vault, and then we're able to push it into the vault on the tanks and get it lined up."

The team from SMUD handled the job with

aplomb, meticulously ensuring that every step is completed correctly and safely, so the \$200-million-dollar renovation project can move forward.

— Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245
Communications Director



Todd Acker of Washoe Co. Senior Services (far left), accepted the \$250 donation from Reno/ Sparks Retirees Club President Ron Borst. Also pictured: 1245 retirees Frank Istrice, Vickie Borst, and Retirees Club Secretary Bob Vieira

Reno/Sparks Retirees Donate to Meals on Wheels

IBEW 1245's Reno/Sparks Retirees Club donated \$250 from the Community Fund to the local Meals on Wheels. "This donation will feed a senior for more than nine weeks!" reported Retirees Club President Ron Borst.

Yerington Retirees Club Presents Donation to Wreaths Across America

The Yerington IBEW Local 1245 Retirees Club made a donation to the Wreaths Across America in honor of our veterans who gave a portion of their lives for our country.

The laying of wreaths in Nevada is organized by the Nevada Veterans Coalition and is coordinated across America annually on the second Saturday in December in over 1,000 locations simultaneously at 12pm. Presenting the donation is veteran and retiree Frank Reger representing the IBEW Retirees Club.

The laying of the wreaths was December 14, 2019 at the Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Fernley, NV starting at 9am. There are over 8,500 veterans interred at the Fernley cemetery and the Coalition.

— Thomas "T" Bird, IBEW 1245 Retirees Club



Winnemucca Retirees Support Domestic Violence Services' "Abundant Tree" Christmas Program

The IBEW Local 1245 Winnemucca Retirees club made a generous donation to the Abundant Tree Christmas program through Winnemucca Domestic Violence Services, which is dedicated to providing victims of abuse and their children with a safe environment free from violence. The donation will provide dinners for several families.

Treasurer Michael Dean presented the checks on behalf of the Retirees' Club.

— Thomas "T" Bird, IBEW 1245 Retirees Club



Retiree Perspective: Never-Ending Brotherhood

Recently my mother passed away and services were held for her. Of course, my many family members were with us, as well as many, many friends.

But along with those, were members of our "Brotherhood" — certainly "friends" — but also "Brothers."

I wish to thank them very much and want them to know that they being there meant so very much to me.

I recently retired and am no longer a "dues paying" member. However, I will always be very grateful for all that our Union has done, and continues to do, for me, my family and for all of our Brothers and Sisters throughout the course of our lives and for those that have preceded us all. And I am most assured and satisfied that our Union will continue to be there "down the road" for our Brothers and Sisters of the future. I will always be most proud that I am a part of this Brotherhood. And as I was reminded so kindly this last week, I will continue to be considered as part of this very special Brotherhood for all of my life.

Throughout the course of our busy



John Petrovitz retired from PG&E in 2018 after 43 years. This photo was taken at his last IBEW 1245 pin dinner in 2015.

daily lives, we may not always take the time to appreciate just how important our Union has been for us. It may not be readily visible for us — as it is not possible to see every action or deed that our Union has performed since its inception on behalf of our many Brothers and Sisters over these many years of its history. But its purpose and mission has always been steadfast and I believe it will always continue to be, due to the strength of its members and of its leaders who have dedicated their lives to the betterment of "working men and women". Its integrity in this endeavor is absolute and continues to be exhibited for us all every day.

And I wish now to take this moment to express my most personal gratitude for our Union. To my most special Brothers who took time to be with my family and I, I wish to express my most sincere and deepest appreciation and say that your most thoughtful act reminds me and will forever proclaim: our Union truly is a "Never Ending Brotherhood."

Thank you all so very much!

— John Petrovitz,
IBEW 1245 retiree



Local 1245 Communications Director Rebecca Band (center) gave an insightful presentation to the Sacramento/Vacaville Retirees Club in October.

Photo by Rene Cruz Martinez

Local 1245 Communications Director Walks Retirees Through Union's Digital Communications Program

On Oct. 10, IBEW 1245 Communications Director Rebecca Band gave a special briefing to a group of 15 IBEW 1245 retirees from Sacramento, North Bay and East Bay.

The presentation included an overview of the Local 1245 website and social media platforms. The retirees

were especially interested in her detailed digital media walk-through, and appreciated learning how to easily locate PG&E Bankruptcy news and updates. Band covered a lot of ground and even gave the retirees a glimpse at the Facebook metrics that track the reach and engagement of each post on

the union's Facebook page. She also invited retirees to send her stories, photos and event announcements to post online.

The retirees really appreciated this offer and the enthusiastic presentation.

— Fred Ross,
IBEW 1245 Staff Organizer





North Bay Retirees Support Geyserville New Tech Academy Sports Program

IBEW 1245's North Bay Retirees Club passed the hat and raised \$350 for Geyserville New Tech Academy's Sports Program. This is in addition to a previous donation of \$850, for a total of \$1,200 (the majority of those funds came from Local 1245 retirees.)

In January, Local 1245 Retiree Lee Grosman presented the check to Geyserville Education Foundation President Laura Equitz. Retirees Fred Kramer and Ken Rawles were also present.

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, Cotati, Merced, Sacramento/Vacaville, Reno/Sparks, Yerington, Carson City and Winnemucca. If you don't have a chapter nearby, call the union at 707-452-2718 and find out how you can help start one!

Amstutz, William 36 years Gilroy, CA	Giese, Larry 35 years Redwood Valley, CA	McBride, Robert 35 years Alameda, CA	Schlocker, Jeffrey 23 years San Mateo, CA
Andreoli, Samuel Jr. 38 years Concord, CA	Gilliland, Todd 35 years Napa, CA	McCarthy, Michael 40 years Fremont, CA	Scott, Eric 23 years Merced, CA
Avalos, Jo Ann 16 years San Jose, CA	Gonzales, Alex 50 years Aptos, CA	McDermott, Michael 23 years Colusa, CA	Sept, John 15 years Auburn, CA
Avalos, Maryellen 24 years Corcoran, CA	Hashim, Ronny 25 years Bakersfield, CA	McMenamy, Cynthia 23 years Springfield, MO	Sherwin, Larry 35 years Atascadero, CA
Bennett, Kelly 17 years Bakersfield, CA	Hough, Douglas 40 years Vallejo, CA	McQuade, Glen 36 years Keaau, HI	Sondersen, Garland 52 years Rodeo, CA
Bullard, William 49 years Pebble Beach, CA	Jennings, Curtis 34 years Sacramento, CA	Millery, Chantal 25 years Oakland, CA	Stowell, Douglas V 39 years Pismo Beach, CA
Cajita, Robert 40 years Apple Valley, CA	Laguna, John 23 years Morro Bay, CA	Millery, Chantal 25 years Oakland, CA	Tambunting, Ildefonso, Jr. 39 years Hayward, CA
Cantrell, Lawrence 39 years Big Bend, CA	Lambert, Carolyn 10 years Milwaukee, WI	Milne, Paul 16 years Tehachapi, CA	Thomas, Tony 39 years Stockton, CA
Castle, William 16 years Livingston, TX	Lehane, Michael 19 years San Francisco, CA	Phillips, Denise 27 years Stockton, CA	Vargas, Berta 25 years Fresno, CA
Castle, William 16 years Livingston, TX	Lewis, Cheryl 43 years Elk Grove, CA	Purnell, Robert 35 years Clovis, CA	Vaughn, Franklin 34 years Dover, AR
Chong, Michael 39 years San Ramon, CA	Libby, Dennis Jr. 30 years San Luis Obispo, CA	Rittenhouse, Wrenn 31 years Napa, CA	Webb, Jennifer 31 years Santa Rosa, CA
Dickson, Emma 47 years San Francisco, CA	Lopes, Michael 30 years Sunnyvale, CA		
Dodson, Ron 39 years Benicia, CA	Luer, Scott 39 years Reno, NV		
Dongallo, Fernando 27 years Bay Point, CA	Macaulay, Timothy 38 years Millbrae, CA		
Eichhorn, Gregg 38 years Fairfield, CA	Massey, Kent 47 years Orland, CA		
Finetti, Stephanie 29 years San Francisco, CA	McArthur, Mickie 8 years North Bend, OR		

Utility Reporter

Evaluating the Candidates

Seniors have shown themselves to be the most dependable voters, but they don't always vote in their own best interest. They tend to vote for candidates based on social issues they favor or a familiar candidate, rather than on issues important to their economic well-being. We must be careful we don't install a legislator who would create laws that are detrimental to the economic security of workers and ourselves. The most important bias seniors should have when voting is their long-term economic security.



Bill Wallace

It is important we look past the 'D' or the 'R' and seriously evaluate which issues the candidate believes are important and pay close attention to the issues that are not addressed. Are they talking about social issues that will get your attention, but leave out the economic policies they favor? Are they talking about guns or abortion and making sweeping non-specific claims about making life better for you?

It is important that we look beyond the surface issues to determine the goals of a candidate. If elected, how will a specific candidate affect your economic bottom line? You may disagree with some of the policies of a candidate, but if your economic success and your retirement security is supported, this is the most important consideration.

Consider this — In the recent two-year election cycle, when one party had complete control of both houses and the Presidency, they tried to take away healthcare for the neediest of our country. They managed to pass a tax bill that shifted two trillion of your money into the hands of the already wealthy. They are now talking about reducing Social Security and Medicare to pay for the tax shortfall they created. To ensure you elect a legislator that represents your best interest, know where they stand on the economics before you cast your vote.

— Bill Wallace,
IBEW 1245 North Bay Retirees Club

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Corb Wheeler

It is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of IBEW 1245 brother Corb Wheeler, who passed away the evening before his 84th birthday. Brother Wheeler was initiated into the IBEW in 1969 and worked as a business rep and assistant business manager at IBEW Local 1245 from the early 70s until the late 90s.

"He was a mentor for me as long as he worked for 1245. I don't know if 'wry' or 'sardonic' is the best word to describe his manner, but he was both," said IBEW 1245 Business Manager Tom Dalzell. "Local 1245 is better and its members are better off because of Corb's work."

"He kept the brotherhood close to his heart and wanted all to become members. He believed that together we can accomplish more than when we are divided," said former Business Rep Bob Martin, who developed a close and long-lasting friendship with Wheeler. "I remember that he was always in a learning mode, seeking to discover new things. I confess, he taught me a lot about being patient and not wanting things done now ... He was a great leader."

"An Excellent Representative"

Brother Wheeler held many assignments as a Local 1245 staffer over his lengthy career — but it was the work he did as business rep in the North Bay that left a lasting impact on former Business Manager Jack McNally.

"Corb organized a very effective shop steward system in the North Bay. The shop stewards and mem-

bers had nothing but praise for him," said McNally, who was working as a business rep when Wheeler first came on staff. "I remember Corb had all the qualities of an excellent representative."

McNally also recalled that it was Wheeler who recruited and developed Howard Steifer into a shop steward. Steifer went on to rise up through the ranks to eventually become president of the union in 1981. It was around that same time that Wheeler was appointed to the position of assistant business manager.

In addition to his vast array of PG&E rep assignments, ranging from Mission Division to Pipeline Operations, Brother Wheeler also helped organize several shops into the IBEW in the late 80s and early 90s, and he served on numerous committees, including Bargaining, Pre-Review, Review and Fact Finding Committees.

"When I came on staff as the staff attorney in 1981, Corb was handling PG&E Fact Finding. More than anyone else, Corb took me under his wing to explain the ins and outs of the PG&E contract," Dalzell recalled. "The first arbitration that I did for Local 1245 was at SMUD, and I did it because our outside counsel had concluded that there was no chance of winning and declined the invitation to present the case. Hank Lucas, the Business Representative at SMUD at the time, felt strongly about the case. I



Corb Wheeler, circa 1981. (via Utility Reporter archives)

sat down with Corb, the SMUD MOU, and the grievance file — even though SMUD was not in Corb's assignment. But he read the file, read the MOU, and quickly identified the factual and contractual arguments. I presented the case and won the case that outside counsel had dismissed as unwinnable — all thanks to Corb."

Positive Attitude

In 1987, after 18 years on the job, Brother Wheeler suffered a stroke. He was off work for about six months, but upon receiving clearance from his doctor, he returned to his post enthusiastically, where he remained until the late 90s.

"His positive attitude about life — even with adversity — was one of his greatest attributes," said Martin.

When he came back to work, he helped former Communications Director Eric Wolfe, who was new to the staff at that time, acclimate to the union.

"Corb was very helpful to me when I traveled in his assignment area for the *Utility Reporter* way back in the early 1990s. He introduced me to people at various job sites and tried to acquaint me with the types of issues that business reps encounter in the field," said Wolfe. "I remember Corb as being calm and methodical in his work, someone who really wanted to

do right by the members."

An Oklahoma native, Brother Wheeler's family moved to a farm in the Sacramento area while he was still in school. After graduation, Wheeler joined the US Air Force, and served three years as Special Ops in Korea during the war. He retired with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and subsequently received the Air Force Cross, two silver stars, and a medal from the French Government. In 2014, he wrote about his military experience for *110 Magazine* (available at <http://bit.ly/Corb-Wheeler>).



According to his friends and colleagues, he enjoyed spending time outdoors during his free time. He was a frequent fixture at union-sponsored camping, boating and fishing events, as well as poker runs.

Brother Wheeler's spouse, Sharlene, passed away just six months before he did. They resided in the East Bay, and he is survived by his children, Mark, Mike and Cindy.

— Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245 Communications Director

Jack Hill

Jack B. Hill passed away peacefully on the morning of Dec. 25th, 2019, at the age of 88 in San Jose, CA. Jack was born in 1931 and raised in Clarkston, Washington, where he grew up with his beloved family. Jack entered the Navy during the Korean War and served for four years as an aviation ordinance man aboard the *USS Princeton* and *USS Oriskany* aircraft carriers. He moved to the Bay Area, where he worked for Pacific, Gas and Electric for 35 years. There he met his wife Kathy to whom he was married for 52 years.

Jack was initiated into IBEW Local 1245 in 1966. He was a dedicated trade unionist serving the union membership in various roles throughout his career. Just months after joining the local, Jack was serving a shop steward and soon after became the Clerical-at-Large representative on the Advisory Council, and in the mid-1970s served

as a union business representative for two-and-a-half years.

He remained active with the union well into his retirement. Jack utilized the negotiating and organizing skills that he acquired over his career in the IBEW to gain improvements in retiree pensions and medical benefits.

After retiring from PG&E in 1987, he joined the South Bay Chapter of the Local 1245 Retirees Club. Jack made a point of visiting every chapter of the Retirees Club and coordinated a mail campaign to get PG&E retirees to contact the company about problems they were having making ends meet. After receiving thousands of postcards, PG&E agreed to increase pension payments for retirees.

In addition to his union activism, Hill also fought for the rights of senior citizens. He served on the board of directors of the Congress of California Seniors, and as a Vice President of

California Alliance for Retired Americans, worked with the Council on Aging, and was a member of the SIRS 38.

In 2008, Jack was one of two pensioners selected to be a part of the Local 1245 Bargaining Committee. A key issue in those negotiations was the rising cost of medical care that was consuming an increasingly large share of pension checks.

An avid lover of the outdoors, Jack loved to tell tales of his pheasant hunting with his beloved bird dogs. Having raised two daughters and been a father figure to many, Jack looked after his grandchildren and a slew of neighborhood kids and friends who all looked up to him and felt his warmth and generosity.

Jack had lifelong friends and continually made new friends wherever he went. He was preceded in death by his mother Mildred, father Clarence, sisters Dorothy, Lora Jeane, and Do-



Jack Hill

ris, and brothers Meryl and Claude. He is survived by his wife Kathy, and daughters Kim, Jody, and Jill, 6 grandchildren and two great grandchildren. A Memorial Service was held Jan. 2, 2020 in San Jose. Jack was buried with his family in Vineland Cemetery, Clarkston, WA.

— Roy San Filippo



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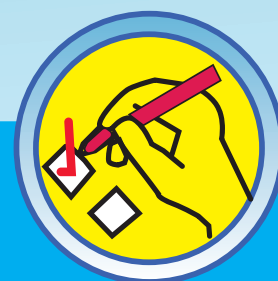
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**VOTE BY MAIL
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MARCH 3, 2020**

For endorsements, visit
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in your community,
contact your local Labor
Council.

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YOUR VOICE

COMPLETE THE 2020 CENSUS

A complete census count shapes our community and our future through funding services we rely on. The census is a critical tool and CA cannot afford an undercount.

MARCH: All households will receive postcards on how to complete the survey online

APRIL 1: CENSUS DAY

MAY: Follow up begins by phone or in person

**FOR U.S. CENSUS 2020 INFORMATION
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**FOR CALIFORNIA LABOR CENSUS
INFORMATION VISIT:
calaborfed.org/calaborcounts**



WILDFIRES

CLIMATE CHANGE--WHATEVER YOU MAY THINK OF THE SCIENCE, WE ARE SEEING IT IN ACTION. IT'S HOTTER, DRIER, AND WINDIER

AND IT'S MORE EXTREME WITH EACH PASSING YEAR. 10 YEARS AGO, 15% OF PG&E'S TERRITORY WAS CLASSIFIED AS HIGH FIRE RISK. TODAY, THAT FIGURE IS UP TO ALMOST 50%.



PAST DROUGHTS HAVE WEAKENED TREES, MAKING THEM VULNERABLE TO THE BARK BEETLE AND OTHER PESTS. CALIFORNIA HAS 150 MILLION DEAD TREES--A BIG SOURCE OF FUEL FOR FIRES.



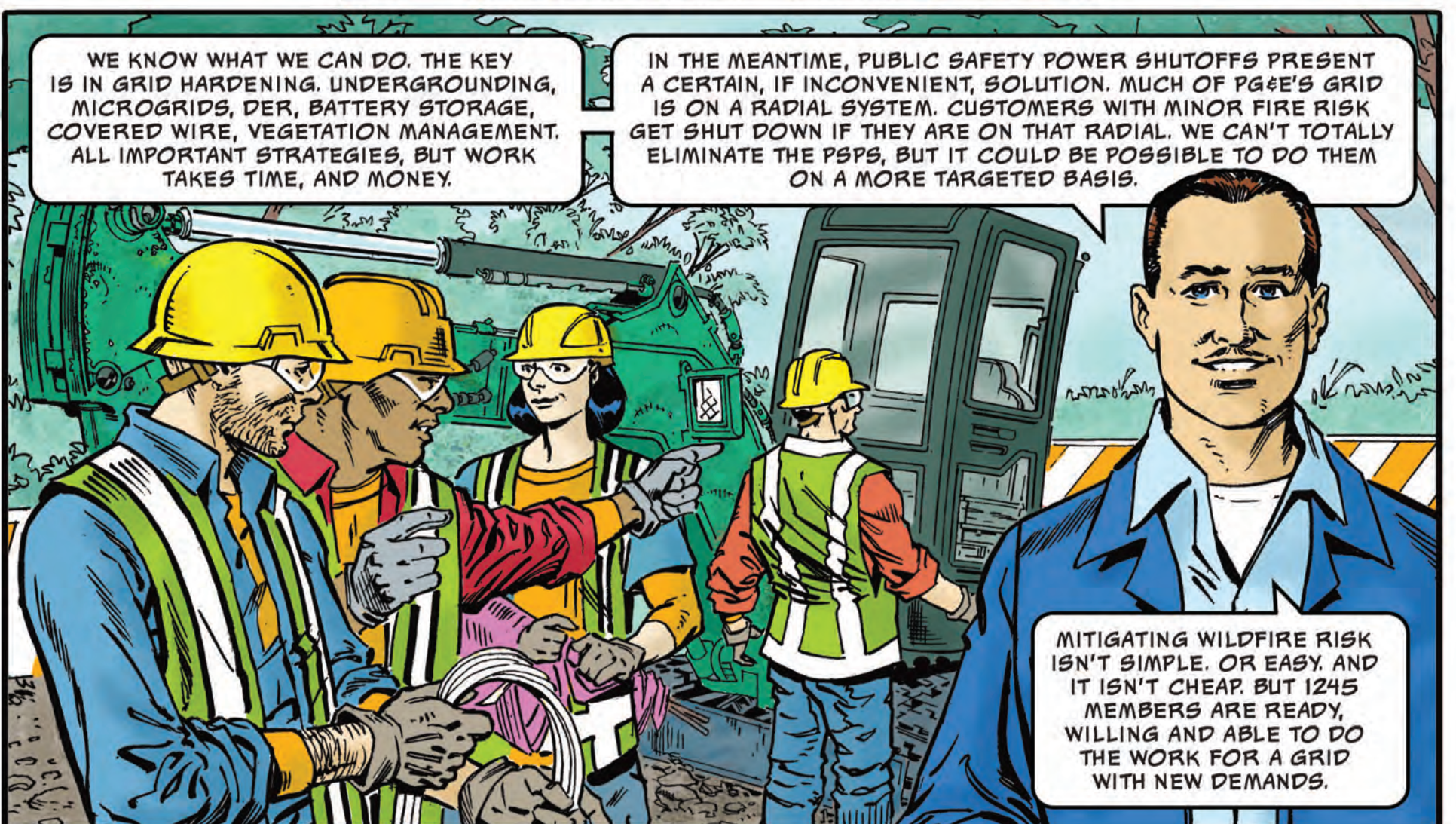
FEDERAL AND STATE FOREST PRACTICES HAVE LET UNDERBRUSH GROW UP IN FORESTS--WHICH MEANS MORE FUEL FOR FIRES.

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND PRACTICES HAVE ALLOWED 45% OF NEW CONSTRUCTION TO BE IN URBAN WILDLAND INTERFACE AREAS, WHERE FIRE IS MOST LIKELY.

ALL OF THIS ADDS UP TO A VERY HIGH-RISK PROFILE FOR UTILITIES.



GRIDS ARE LARGE AND COMPLICATED MECHANICAL SYSTEMS. THEY CAN'T BE FAILSAFE.



WE KNOW WHAT WE CAN DO. THE KEY IS IN GRID HARDENING. UNDERGROUNDING, MICROGRIDS, DER, BATTERY STORAGE, COVERED WIRE, VEGETATION MANAGEMENT. ALL IMPORTANT STRATEGIES, BUT WORK TAKES TIME, AND MONEY.

IN THE MEANTIME, PUBLIC SAFETY POWER SHUTOFFS PRESENT A CERTAIN, IF INCONVENIENT, SOLUTION. MUCH OF PG&E'S GRID IS ON A RADIAL SYSTEM. CUSTOMERS WITH MINOR FIRE RISK GET SHUT DOWN IF THEY ARE ON THAT RADIAL. WE CAN'T TOTALLY ELIMINATE THE PSPS, BUT IT COULD BE POSSIBLE TO DO THEM ON A MORE TARGETED BASIS.

MITIGATING WILDFIRE RISK ISN'T SIMPLE. OR EASY. AND IT ISN'T CHEAP. BUT 1245 MEMBERS ARE READY, WILLING AND ABLE TO DO THE WORK FOR A GRID WITH NEW DEMANDS.