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**Bob Dean**  
Business Manager

## Knowledge is Power

For generations during the mid- to late-1900s, utility work remained practically unchanged. If a lineman from the 1940s suddenly found himself on a job in the 1970s, it would all look relatively familiar to him.

But times have changed, and so has our industry — and the real change is only just getting started. The energy sector is currently undergoing its largest transformation since its development. If a journey lineman from the 60s showed up on the job today, he would be looking at a very different world than what he knew.



As a hydro operator and union leader who has been working in the utility field continuously for decades, even I find that keeping up with the constant stream of new information is a herculean effort. My staff and I spend countless hours reading, listening, absorbing, analyzing and processing information from dozens

## Find Your Unit Meeting

Visit [ibew1245.com/unit-meetings/](http://ibew1245.com/unit-meetings/) to find the most up-to-date information for your unit. You can also enter your zipcode to find the meeting closest to you. **Please Note:** All Local 1245 unit meetings are open to all Local 1245 members, regardless of employer.

## Updates to Vegetation Management Unit Meetings for 2024

Please note the following changes to Vegetation Management/Tree Trimmer Units #4710, #4722, #4727 and #4726:

Beginning in 2024, the Marin & Napa/Solano LCTT/VMI unit meetings will merge into #4710. (Unit #4722 will be unassigned). The meeting place will be Mary's Pizza Shack on Sonoma Hwy, Sonoma, CA.

Additionally, the Los Padres Division North & South LCTT/VMI meetings will merge into Unit #4727 in 2024. (Unit # 4726 will be unassigned.) The meeting place will be Round Table Pizza in San Luis Obispo, CA.

— Junior Ornelas,  
IBEW 1245 Business Rep

of sources to determine the potential impact that the latest changes could have on our members. Between the clean-energy transition, the influx of new technologies, the policies and regulations governing our work, legislative efforts to undercut our contracts, and the rapid evolution of our grid to accommodate the vast increase in demand, we've got our work cut out for us.

But as we well know in the IBEW, knowledge is power — and I firmly believe that the only way we can get through these transformative years is by arming ourselves with the facts. When we know more, we understand more, we evaluate more, and we come up with more practical solutions to the issues we face as workers and as a union.

I hosted IBEW 1245's first "Grid of the Future" conference earlier this year for precisely this reason — to share knowledge and build power with our union's leaders, stewards and allies. It was an incredibly powerful day, where participants gained a wide range of information on everything from resource adequacy to regulatory maneuvering (see full story on pg 16).

But this is only the beginning. Our

## CALENDAR

### Mark Your Calendars

**March 13:** IBEW 1245 Utility Workers' Lobby Day, Sacramento

**April 13:** IBEW's First Annual South Valley Golf Tournament, Madera

**April 27:** PG&E/IBEW Gas Rodeo, Winters

**May 4-5:** IBEW 1245 Clay Shoot, Dunnigan

**May 11:** IBEW 1245 Soccer Tournament, Ripon

**Oct. 5:** IBEW 1245 Car Show, Winters



## IBEW 1245 Service Awards/Pin Dinners

**Feb. 23:** Petaluma

**March 1:** SLO

**March 15:** Stockton

**March 29:** Eureka

**March 30:** Ukiah

**April 12:** Sacramento

**April 19:** Bakersfield

**April 20:** Fresno

**May 3:** East Bay

**May 10:** Monterey

**May 17:** San Jose

**May 31:** San Francisco

**June 14:** Redding

**June 15:** Chico

**June 19:** Reno



View IBEW 1245's Calendar of Events  
at [www.ibew1245.com/calendar](http://www.ibew1245.com/calendar)

next step is to broaden our public information campaign, to help decision-makers, legislators, regulators and our neighbors know just how hard we work every day to keep the lights on and the gas flowing, how much technical ability is involved, and what that really looks like for the skilled and trained 1245 members that power our communities.

We're planning to gather at the Capitol in Sacramento on March 13th for a large demonstration, rally and Lobby Day. There will be 1245 linemen, troubleman, tree trimmers and gas workers from signatory employers all over Northern California. We will have informational presentations, demonstrations, guest speakers, and direct contact with lawmakers and their staffers to ensure that they understand what we already know — no one can walk in off the street and do what we do. This is our

chance to demonstrate your expertise in the field and showcase exactly what sets 1245 members apart.

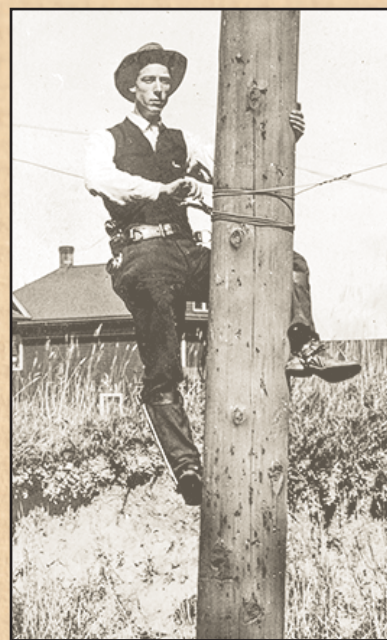
This is just one of many ways that we're working to stay ahead of the curve, to share knowledge, and to protect and defend your jobs from both non-union workers and those from other unions who want to do our work. Standing together as a union, we will shine a light on your hard work, training, skills and dedication to the communities we serve.

The effort we put in today doesn't just support our current members; it also sets up the next generation of utility workers for success.

As the old adage goes, "A society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they know they shall never sit."

This is our moment to plant those trees, so those who come after us can count on the shade.

## DID YOU KNOW... IBEW 1245's origins go back to 1900, when San Francisco linemen first organized IBEW Local 151 to fight for better wages and safer working conditions. They faced fierce resistance from Pacific Gas & Electric and other utilities, and in 1921 their union was



virtually wiped out. But their creative and sometimes heroic struggles helped inspire a new generation of utility workers, who organized IBEW Local 1245 in 1941 to carry on the fight. Under the leadership of Ron Weakley in the 1950s and 1960s, IBEW Local 1245 organized dozens of additional employers and contractors performing utility work, and improved the lives of countless thousands of workers. Today, IBEW 1245 continues to set the standard for wages, benefits and working conditions in the utility industry, and is a recognized leader in safety and organizing.

At left: William S. Junkin working as a lineman in Oregon in the early 1900s, prior to leading the 1913 strike at PG&E. Oregon Historical Society

LEARN MORE AT [www.ibew1245.com/history](http://www.ibew1245.com/history)



## Utility Reporter

January – March 2024  
Volume 73 No. 1  
Circulation: 28,000



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Periodical postage paid at Vacaville and at additional mailing offices. USPS No. 654640, ISSN No. 0190-4965.

**POSTMASTER:** Please send Form 3579, Change of Address, and all correspondence to *Utility Reporter*, P.O. Box 2547, Vacaville, CA 95696.

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# IBEW 1245 Congratulates Ayeta Line School Scholarship Winners

IBEW 1245 is pleased to congratulate Jacob Crim and Rodney Walker, the two newest winners of IBEW 1245's Jairus Ayeta Line School Scholarship\*. Both will attend line school at the Northwest JATC Training Center (VOLTA) in Oregon this spring on an all-expenses-paid scholarship (which includes full tuition, fees, tools, lodging and meal stipend). The union's goal is to have them working for 1245-represented employers shortly after completing the VOLTA program.

Rodney Walker is from Clovis and is the first Black recipient of an Ayeta Scholarship.

In his scholarship application essay on organized labor in America, he wrote:

*"The United States labor movement has been an indispensable advocate for workers' rights. From the early days of industrialization to the complexities of the modern work environment, the movement has fought tirelessly for fairness and safety in the workplace. The movement's history is a testament to the power of collective action. Although the movement faces new challenges in the contemporary world, its core mission remains the same: to unite workers in the pursuit of a more just and equitable working world."*

"This is a life-changing opportunity. I am proud to be able to represent my community and Local 1245 in remembrance of Jairus Ayeta," Walker said. "I know that, with this scholarship, I will be given all the tools and resources that



From left: IBEW 1245 Senior Assistant Business Manager Ralph Armstrong, Scholarship recipient Rodney Walker, Senior Assistant Business Manager Al Fortier, Scholarship recipient Jacob Crim, Senior Assistant Business Manager Bob Gerstle

I need to be successful in this trade. I plan on making the most of this amazing opportunity; learning as much as I can, working hard every day, and constantly improving to be the best that I can be. I know that this is just the beginning, but I'm determined and excited for the journey."

Jacob Crim lives in Valley Springs and received a scholarship after applying three times.

In his essay on the value of unions, he wrote:

*"The Labor Movement completely changed how people live and work in America. It allows people to spend more time with family with work-free week-*

*ends, eight-hour work days and fair wages. It ensures worker safety with non-harming working conditions. It allows kids to be kids by not hiring any child under the age of 18. It allows those to be compensated when they do wish to work more with fair overtime pay. The Labor Movement changed not only the way Americans work, but how they live and enjoy their lives."*

"I'm extremely grateful and excited to go to line school, as this is something I've been working towards for a couple years now," said Crim. "I'm hoping to

gain all of the necessary skills to begin my career as a lineman."

*\*Established in 2020, the Jairus Ayeta scholarship is named in honor of an IBEW 1245 apprentice who was the victim of a fatal workplace tragedy on August 4, 2018 while restoring power at the Carr Fire outside Redding, California.*

**IBEW 1245 will be accepting applications for the next Jairus Ayeta line school scholarship March 1-31, 2024. Additional details can be found here: <https://ibew1245.com/scholarships/>**

## Jesse Green Joins IBEW 1245 Staff as a Business Rep

Nine-year IBEW 1245 member Jesse Green has joined the IBEW 1245 staff as a Business Rep. He will be primarily supporting Outside Line members in the North Coast and North Valley areas.

Before joining 1245, Green spent 15 years working as a wildland firefighter with the United States Forest Service. He decided to shift gears, and in 2015, he was accepted into the Cal-Nev JATC line apprenticeship program. He journeyed out as a lineman in December of 2018, and has since worked in Outside Construction as a journeyman lineman and crew foreman.

"Coming from working for the federal government, to the IBEW — it's been a life-changer for my family," said Green, noting that the generous wages and benefits afforded to him under the 1245 contract means he no longer has to worry about making ends meet.



Jesse Green

Green has served the union as a shop steward and safety steward, and says he is honored to have a chance to join the IBEW 1245 staff.

"I never planned on this career path, but it felt like a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, so I seized the moment to see where it led me," he said, noting how different being a union staffer is compared to working on a line crew. "Being a Business Rep has been more challenging than I expected, but I believe I'm becoming an asset to the team. It has also allowed me to be more present with my kids, which is a priority to me right now."

Green shares his two children, age 10 and 13, with his wife of 17 years. They also have 40-50 chickens, 12 turkeys, two horses and some dairy goats. In his free time, Green enjoys spending time with family, being outdoors, camping, fishing and hiking.

## IBEW 1245 Celebrates Members Who Complete Apprenticeship

A few years ago, IBEW 1245 launched a program to honor and recognize members who complete an apprenticeship. Each new journey-level member receives a limited-edition Carhartt backpack.



IBEW 1245 Business Rep Jerry Camacho presents a journeyman backpack to 1245 member Brian Adams, who recently completed his apprenticeship at PG&E.

## Per Capita Increases in 2024

In accordance with the International Office (IO) of the IBEW, members will see the following per capita dues increases in 2024:

In June of 2024, IO per capita "A" member dues will increase by \$1 and "BA" member dues will increase by \$1. Local dues will remain the same.

In December of 2024, IO per capita "A" member dues will increase by \$2. "BA" member dues will remain the same. Local dues will also remain the same.



## Two-Year MOU Extension Approved at City of Lompoc

On Jan. 9, the IBEW 1245 members at the City of Lompoc ratified an MOU extension by a vote of 65-14. The Lompoc City Council approved the new MOU on January 16.

The two-year agreement includes a general wage increase/cost of living adjustment of 5% for the first year, and 4% for the second year.

The parties agreed to meet and confer during the term of the MOU extension on potential equity adjustments for the following classifications:

- Urban Forestry Line Clearance Reclassification
- Sanitation Workers
- Water Distribution Operators
- Water Meter Technicians
- Customer Service Field Technicians
- Custodians
- Street Division
- Landfill Coordinators: new Series Specification for Landfill Coordinator Trainee to Senior Landfill Coordinator
- Linemen career ladder for the Troubleshooter

Additional monthly contributions for health insurance are \$25 extra to one-party, \$70 additional to two-party, and \$95 to family coverage per month.

The 1245 Negotiating Committee was comprised of members Leo Ramirez, Albert Diaz, Andrew Hernandez, Candance Justice, Ko Sumaryadi, Lori Agbodike, and Travis Border.

— Jaime Tinoco, IBEW 1245 Business Rep



An IBEW 1245 member at the City of Lompoc casts a vote on the MOU.

## New Contract Ratified at Jacobs Technology

The IBEW 1245 union members at Jacobs Technology have ratified a three-year contract. The agreement includes an immediate general wage increase of 7.5% (retroactive to Sept 1, 2023), as well as 5% in 2024, and 5% in 2025. Additionally, the Juneteenth Holiday was added to the list of holidays; the overtime meals allowance increased to \$15.00 from \$12.50; and the union also negotiated five days of funeral pay for members who lose a loved one.

At this property, IBEW 1245 bargains collaboratively with the two other unions on the property (IAM/Machinists and OE3/Operating Engineers). The bargaining committee was comprised of myself and 1245 Shop Steward Bill Van Zuylen for IBEW, IAM Business Rep Pedro Mendez and Shop Steward David Steink for the Machinists, and OE3 Business Rep Niels Ash for the Operating Engineers. The final vote tally was 23-10.

— Cruz Serna, IBEW 1245 Business Rep

## Members Approve New Agreement at Frontier Communications Elk Grove

After a year of contentious bargaining, the IBEW 1245 members working for Frontier Communications in Elk Grove accepted the Company's "Last, Best Final Offer" and have ratified a new agreement by a vote of 27-5.

The agreement includes a series of three retroactive wage increases — 2% retroactive to September 25, 2022, 1.5% retroactive to March 26, 2023, and 1.5% retroactive to September 24, 2023 — as well as future increases of 1.5% effective March 24, 2024, 1.5% effective September 29, 2024, 1% effective March 30, 2025, 2% effective September 28, 2025, and 1.5% effective March 29, 2026.

The agreement also includes the addition of the Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday; increase in standby pay; increase in meal allowance; change to boot reim-

bursement to provide an annual allowance of \$200; increase in the in-charge differential; implementation of a GPS TMS agreement, including coaching prior to discipline and a rolling time period in which infractions roll off the employee's record; and removal of the 90-day limitation for utilization of accrued time for SDI supplementation. The union and company also agreed to end the post-retirement medical benefit once the retiree becomes eligible for Medicare.

These negotiations were particularly challenging, and we are grateful to the bargaining committee members who pushed through, including members Kenny Lawson, Emilion Cisneros, Ryan Stewart, and Matt Quinlan. The were joined on the committee by IBEW 1245 staffers Dylan Gottfried, Dominic McCurtain, and myself.

— Gerald Williams, IBEW 1245 Business Rep

## Four-Year Agreement Approved at City Light & Power

The IBEW 1245 members at City Light & Power have ratified a new four-year agreement. The agreement includes general wage increases based on CPI (2.5% minimum, no maximum), and the next increase will be on June 1. The union also secured doubletime pay for all overtime work, and standby pay will increase to \$3 from \$2.28. The agreement also includes an equity adjustment of \$4, bringing the journeyman lineman rate up to \$68.57. The union negoti-

ated an additional \$75 for work boots (increasing the allowance from \$175 to \$250). Additionally, if the company fails to give employees at least 24 hours' notice before cancelling weekend overtime, the new agreement stipulates that members will be paid two hours of overtime.

The bargaining team was comprised of Shop Steward Tom Cooper and myself.

— Cruz Serna, IBEW 1245 Business Rep

## IBEW 1245 Members at City of Redding Electric Ratify Three-Year Agreement

The IBEW 1245 members at the City of Redding Electric department have ratified a new three-year agreement, which was approved by the City Council on Nov. 7. The agreement includes general wage increases of 20% for all classifications (except for the Lineman progression and Electrical Technician classification, which will receive a 25% increase) in year one; and 5% in years two and three for all classifications. Additionally, the union secured double-time rate of pay for all overtime.

Other improvements include:

- A new apprenticeship program for Lineman and Meter Technician, with step 1 starting at 65% of the journey level employee.
- Exchange of Columbus Day Holiday (floater) for Juneteenth (fixed).
- Ability for Troubleshooter to defer fixed holidays when

scheduled in their regular work week.

- 3% equity increase to the Troubleshooter classification to permanently set their rate at 8% more than Lineman.
  - Creation of a new classification (Troubleshooter Night Shift) with a wage rate 3.5% above the Troubleshooter (essentially incorporating the existing shift differential into base salary).
  - Standby provision compensation at the following overtime rates: One (1) hour for each weekday (including floating holidays); Two (2) hours for Saturday; Three (3) hours for Sunday and fixed holidays.
  - An agreement that when two linemen are assigned to work without a Working Foreman present, the senior lineman shall be paid at the Working Foreman rate.
  - Increased LTD maximum at 60% of employee salary (new maximum \$8,500/month).
  - \$150 annual reimbursement for custom-fit hearing protection; and increased boot reimbursement to \$400/year.
  - Conversion of existing meal reimbursements into a meal allowance of \$38.50/meal. Additionally, the City agreed to allow direct reimbursement in lieu of \$38.50 during mutual aid work when the meal is reimbursable to the requesting agency.
  - Incorporation of the Substation Electrical Technician and Metering Technician job definitions.
- In exchange for these improvements, the unit agreed to the following:
- Reduced CTO cap from 240 to 160 hours. No addi-

## Two-Year Agreement Approved at Advance Carbon

The IBEW 1245 members at Advance Carbon Products Inc. have ratified a two-year agreement. The agreement includes a 3% wage increase in the first year, and the wage increase in year two will be determined by the San Francisco CPI.

The unit is pleased to have retained their health care plan, which includes zero cost share for the employees.

The bargaining committee was comprised of member Dale Olivera and myself.

— Cruz Serna, IBEW 1245 Business Rep

Continued on next page

January – March 2024



**Members Ratify Three-Year Agreement,** from page 4

- tional CTO can be accrued until such accruals fall below the new cap.
- Increased CalPERS tier 1 employee contribution to the current 50% of normal cost by 1.75% for a total of 3.025% in cost sharing.
  - Increased contribution toward the monthly group health and welfare insurance premium rate of 5% effective calendar year 2024.
- Also incorporated in the agreement were gender-neutral job titles; reorganization of the existing sick leave language; modification of existing alcohol and sub-

stance abuse policy; addition of the City’s ability to offer hiring incentives; some non-substantive clean up due to the removal of the power plant classifications; and an update to the bereavement leave section to align with AB 1949.

The vote tally was 36-4 (90% approval rate with an 88% turnout), with one vote invalid. The bargaining committee consisted of members Chris Bryant, Skyler Carlson, Dustin Hamilton, Glenn Newsome, John Rossie, along with 1245 Senior Assistant Business Manager Dylan Gottfried, and myself.

— Dominic McCurtain,  
IBEW 1245 Business Rep

# IBEW 1245 Member Spotlight

## George Ordonez, Sacramento Municipal Utility District

As a Gas Control Technician at the Sacramento Municipal Utility District, IBEW 1245 member George Ordonez is highly trained to monitor and control the safe transport of pressurized natural gas. The job requires a broad range of physical, technical, and electronic skills and expertise. Like all IBEW 1245 Gas Control Technicians at SMUD, Ordonez has trained for several years on different kinds of software, a wide variety of equipment, and ample emergency response scenarios.

The *Utility Reporter* caught up with Ordonez and his crew at the Campbell’s Soup Co-Generation Power Plant in Sacramento. (Coincidentally enough, the same site once served as a temporary home for IBEW’s Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee during the construction of the new northern California campus.)

Ordonez and his colleagues were working to reestablish a connection to the cathodic protection transmitter so that it can be monitored on the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system.

“Cathodic protection is utilized for protection of corrosion on our pipeline. If our cathodic protection levels are not adequate, they can cause cathodic disbondment,” he explained. “We monitor our levels, whether they’re too negative or they’re zero or positive, to make sure they are within our specs or our procedures.”

Specifically, Ordonez needed to reestablish a connection to the valve because some wires had been frayed during a sandblasting project. Ordonez used a process called ‘pin brazing’ to address the issue.

“It is basically brazing a stud utilizing a battery-operated gun,” he described. “The stud is pulled off of the pipe or the flange of the pipe that we’re replacing, and the arc across will create heat. And once that heat is created, it will drop into the molten solder and fuse it to the actual flange. Then



Gas Control Tech George Ordonez performs pin brazing on a valve.

you’ll connect wires to it to monitor the cathodic protection levels at this valve location.”

As a proud seven-year member of IBEW 1245, Ordonez appreciates and recognizes the value of union representation. The benefits — literally and figuratively — of having a strong union are not lost on him.

“The union fights for our people to have better wages, better benefits, and they fight for our MOU and they help us,” he said.



Gas Field Person Rick Anderson sands paint from a valve before pin brazing.



The pin after being brazed onto the valve



Gas Field Person Jeff Belk tightens a fitting for a valve.



**IBEW 1245 Shop Steward  
Robert Hill, Lead Gas  
Service Rep, PG&E:**

Eye opening is how I will describe my experience during the Inter-Union Gas Conference in Niagara Falls. Hearing the challenges we face as gas workers here in the States and in Canada has broadened my outlook on the natural gas industry as a whole. Although each utility company is run differently, our brothers and sisters share the same passion regarding safety and doing the work the right way. The open discussions at the workshops and the time spent with our fellow gas workers definitely gave me insight and motivation to do more for our current and future brothers and sisters locally. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to experience this conference, and appreciate knowing that 1245 is always well-represented and is looking out for the best interests of its members.

**IBEW 1245 Shop Steward  
Vinh Duong, Gas Service  
Rep, PG&E:**

I am so grateful to have the opportunity to attend the gas conference in Niagara Falls. This was the first union conference I had attended. I gained so much valuable info and also listened to many valuable insights from my brothers and sisters across the nation and in Canada. I learned that many of our brothers and sisters are facing similar challenges and issues to those that we have here. However, as long as we are united together, we will have a bigger voice and it will be much easier to achieve our goals.

**IBEW 1245 Shop Steward  
Gabriel Nieto, GCGT Senior  
Construction Operator,  
PG&E:**

This being my first union conference, I didn't know what to expect. Talking with union brothers and sisters in various fields has broadened my understanding of the crafts we work in. Discussions varied from personal experience to state and federal regulations and how we work through an ever-changing work environment. My big take-away is how we as union members continue to strive for a safe workplace to minimize injuries and accidents. In my work life, I wasn't always a union employee, and am grateful for the opportunity to be a member of an organization looking out for my well-being and my family.

# "We Share the Same Passion"

## Highlights from the Inter-Union Gas Conference

Union members from the six unions that represent gas workers (IBEW, UA, USW, UNIFOR, UWUA, and ICWU-UFCW) came together for the annual Inter-Union Gas Conference in Niagara Falls in late October.

"The Inter-Union Gas Conference is one of the few gas-specific conferences we participate in, and presents the opportunity for gas employees to meet and interact with other gas utility employees and union members from around the United States and Canada," explained 1245 Assistant Business Manager Mike Adayan. "IBEW 1245 is a big supporter of the conference."

IBEW 1245's delegation was among the largest at the conference, and Local 1245 Business Reps Nicole Brooks, Adam Weber, and ABM Mike Adayan facilitated the Transmission and Distribution workshops respectively.

Here, delegates from IBEW 1245 share highlights from the conference.



**1245 Business Rep Nicole Brooks helped facilitate a workshop.**

**IBEW 1245 Shop Steward Jason Frink,  
Gas T&D Equipment Operator, PG&E:**

To say that it was an amazing as well as eye-opening experience would be the understatement of the year.

I sat in on all of the meetings as well as the distribution workshops, which allowed for lots of information to be shared from unions all across the Country as well as Canada. Through the workshops and networking, I was able to bring back a large amount of information to share with my coworkers about safety, the future of gas, and most importantly, how union members have stuck together to negotiate meaningful contracts and benefits.

Talking with members from different unions across the country showed me just how strong we are here at IBEW 1245, which made me proud to be a member wearing the badge at such a huge event.

Last but certainly not least were the friendships I was able to make amongst our officers and members at the conference. Coming together, sharing our common goals, interests and visions will, in my opinion, be invaluable to the future of our industry and union.

**IBEW 1245 Shop/Safety Steward Marty Marshall,  
Gas Serviceman, NV Energy:**

Thank you for the opportunity to attend the Inter-Union Gas Conference; the rapport being built with other utility workers is invaluable.

I enjoyed learning more about the IBEW's response to the war on natural gas across the country and how we are lobbying to educate voters and lawmakers. It's encouraging to hear a positive outlook on the future of natural gas and job security for the future.

I spent my two days in the safety workshop to bring ideas back to NV Energy and Control the Pressure. I'm encouraged to work with the company on a heat stress program. I also learned more about mental health in the workplace and how to reach out if I see [concerns] with coworkers, and also how to seek help if I need it. The general session was informative as to what to look for with the lead-based pipe dope. I had no clue that lead could be traced on a truck years later.

**IBEW 1245 Shop Steward  
Eric Wright, Gas Crew  
Leader, PG&E:**

I'm grateful that I was given the opportunity to attend the Inter-Union gas workers conference. I've been working in the Gas department at PG&E for almost 11 years now, but I'm used to being in a room full of electricians when I'm at other union conferences I've attended, so this was different. One of the key things I immediately noticed was that I was one of the youngest people there. There's a lack of youth on the gas side compared to the electric. In a time where natural gas is being attacked we need to invest in the future to make sure there's workers there for what we're fighting for now. Across the map I learned that we all share similar struggles, but while talking about our struggles we sometimes came across solutions. I'm glad I attended, I had a great experience, I met good people, and learned a lot.

**IBEW 1245 Control the  
Pressure Board Member  
Russel Hires, NV Energy:**

The gas conference was another great success!

Being a CTP committee board member, I participated in the safety workshop both days. I was blown away when I learned that brothers and sisters from Niagara Falls do not get PPE clothing and boot allowance. I was told by a gentleman that he's had the same jacket for 10 years! He freezes his butt off every year. He was blown away when I told him about our allowances for FR clothing and footwear. When I returned home, I discussed this with my fellow brothers and sisters as an example of how good we have it, while the brothers and sisters from Niagara are going to discuss this with their employer and see what they can do for them.

The second thing that really hit me hard was when my brother Brian from PG&E described to the group how dangerous the working conditions have become in California due to street crime, with members being held up at gunpoint. Brian's response was genius — He says they want to start getting more involved with the communities as far as sponsorships for athletics, school job fairs and special events, to show the younger generation that they are not the enemy.

I think all of our gas and electric departments should get more involved with our communities to show them how important our services are.





1245 Business Rep Adam Weber helped facilitate a workshop.

**IBEW 1245 member Roque Guzman, PG&E Gas System Coordinator:**

This conference was really an eye-opening experience full of information. One of the topics that struck me the most throughout the entire conference was a common theme of phasing out natural gas. Before attending the gas workers conference I had no idea how serious and important this topic was, and how much effect it will have in all of our gas worker brothers' and sisters' lives. I appreciated having the opportunity to attend different workshops and hear different perspectives on daily job duties but also new ideas and ways we can improve and keep everyone safe. No matter what the situation might be, our goal will always be safely delivering natural gas.

**IBEW 1245 Shop/ Organizing Steward Britney Morris, Gas Construction, NV Energy:**

Attending the Inter-Union Gas Conference with my fellow brothers and sisters this year brought me great pride. Especially when we discussed safety topics and we were able to share knowledge from our peer-to-peer safety group, Control the Pressure. Hearing the stories of how other gas workers are treated and being provided inadequate PPE also made me realize how fortunate we are to have 1245 advocate for our safety to our companies. It was great being in the Distribution workshop with other gas construction field workers and hearing what does and doesn't work for them. I came home with ideas to share, not only with the local, but also with my management to address some of the challenges we experience on a day-to-day basis. As with any union conference I have had the pleasure to attend, I was proud and grateful that I was able to represent IBEW 1245.

**IBEW 1245 member George Ordenez, Journeyman Gas Pipeline, SMUD:**

Being a first-time attendee, I had no real expectations or understanding of what the conference was about ... I was surprised when I was welcomed with open arms by my IBEW brothers and sisters. I must say I was impressed with the very talented and diverse group of individuals representing IBEW 1245. The event was themed "Natural Gas Workers in An Ever-Changing Environment," and this couldn't be any truer. I learned that many natural gas union workers are all battling the same challenges throughout the nation. It's great to hear that the unions are lobbying to protect and keep gas workers in the field. I'm hopeful my children will have a chance to be second-generation pipeliners, and I'm optimistic our nation's legislation will back a more reliable solution requiring diversity in our electrical grid. Thank you for the opportunity to attend the 2023 Inter-Union Gas Conference.

**IBEW 1245 Shop Steward Tim Yokoo, Gas Service Rep, PG&E:**

From meeting other IBEW members, to other union members, to even other travelers in the hotel, so much shared knowledge occurred. I realized this is one of the best ways to combat the issues we face today as union members. We closed the meeting with an important message on recognizing mental health issues. We must be our brothers' and sisters' keepers in mind, soul, and body. As a union we don't all have to have the same opinion on every issue, we just need to stand together when it counts. Thank you to everyone who help put this together, and stay safe!

**PG&E Aviation Services Flight Core Schedulers and Dispatchers Vote to Join IBEW 1245**

IBEW 1245 is pleased to welcome PG&E's Aviation Services Flight Core Schedulers and Dispatchers, the latest workgroup at PG&E to vote in favor of joining IBEW 1245. This lively and energetic unit of 10 is made up of six dispatchers and four schedulers who are responsible for scheduling and dispatching fixed winged aircraft, helicopters, and drones.

The organizing effort began on October 16, 2023, when PG&E Flight Core Scheduler Jaime O'Reilly contacted the 1245 union hall to inquire about organizing her workgroup at PG&E Aviation Services located at Vacaville Nut Tree Airport. Their main issues at work included safety, wages, and additional assigned duties outside of classification. The organizing

team met with each member of the unit in three separate meetings. By the third meeting, every member of the unit had signed a card in favor of unionization. We filed the petition for union election on December 15, 2023, and the election was held on January 17, 2024. The unit won their election with a vote count of 7-3. The organizing team was

there to witness the vote and the screams of excitement as the news of the election was delivered to the unit. The unit transitioned to our negotiations team on February 8, 2024, to start the process of bargaining, as they will be accreted into 1245's existing physical unit at PG&E.

— Charlotte Stevens,  
IBEW 1245 Staff Organizer



PG&E's Aviation Services Flight Core Schedulers and Dispatchers voted in favor of joining IBEW 1245 on Jan. 17.





# Stand Up and Fight

## 1245 Organizing Training Highlights Member Engagement and Political Power

The IBEW 1245 organizing team welcomed upwards of 70 organizing stewards, prospective organizing stewards, and staff to the final training session of 2023 at the Sunrise Banquet Center in late October. This training was focused on why politics matters; the importance of engaging and mobilizing members; and the difference that the union has made in our own lives.

Senior Assistant Business Manager Anthony Brown welcomed the organizing stewards on behalf of Business Manager Bob Dean (who was traveling on union business), and celebrated the incredible success of the organizing steward program. He pointed out the many victories that our member-driven organizing program has helped achieve — most recently in beating back the union-busting SB 284.

“We are the biggest, baddest local union on this planet,” Brown told the room full of current and prospective organizing stewards. “Our influence extends well beyond the union hall here in Vacaville ... But that strength is tenuous, unless we plan for it, strategize for it and fight for it.”

Brown offered the organizers a comprehensive ‘state of the union’ and answered questions before the organizing



Assistant Business Manager Hunter Stern

stewards delved into a candid conversation on the role that politics plays in the lives of 1245 members. IBEW 1245 Assistant Business Manager and Political Director Hunter Stern offered a broad overview of the various obstacles and opportunities we face in the coming months and years; highlighting the major opportunities to grow our union as investments in manufacturing, clean energy and infrastructure ramp up.

“As utility employees, doing your job well as you do gives us collective power



California Assembly Member Liz Ortega

and strength,” he told the stewards. “It’s not politics — it’s service. It shows our sincerity, which is something that’s lacking in politics.”

Stern emphasized that, in the coming years, politicians will be making countless decisions that will impact the current and future state of our members’ work, and it is essential to do all we can to elect allies that we can count on to stand with us — from the utility districts to the Legislature.

One shining example is Assembly-

member Liz Ortega. A former union organizer and labor leader, Ortega took her strongly-held values with her to the State Legislature, where she’s continued her fight for the Labor Movement.

“I’m 100% with the union. When I’m in the room and unions are not there, I still have their backs,” Ortega told the organizing stewards in the keynote speech she delivered during the training. “This year, one of my first bills was to educate our youth about the real Union Movement of today — and our youth need to know about this, before they are going into the workforce.”

She explained how her bill, AB 800, would establish an added week of workplace readiness to California’s student curriculum, including education around workplace rights, wages, health and safety, and how to organize a union. Her inspiring speech led into a breakout session where the stewards shared how politics affects them in their everyday lives. Many of the members expressed gratitude for the fact that 1245 gave them a pathway to the middle class, and some spoke with deep passion about the role every member can play when it comes to keeping the union strong for generations to come.

“My dad taught me not everyone would understand or agree, but if you



Senior Assistant Business Manager Anthony Brown



Chloe Osmer, Organizing Director of the California Labor Federation



believe in it, you stand up and fight,” said Organizing Steward Nikki Bryant as she recounted her experience growing up with an activist father, and passing that activism along to her own children. “I remember standing in front of the Capitol as a little girl, and wishing that one day I could be in there ... This last year, I got to go in quite a few times! My own kids think it’s incredible.”

The organizers then heard from Chloe

Osmer, the organizing director of the California Labor Federation, which represents more than two million workers in over 1,000 local unions. She applauded the organizing model developed at IBEW 1245 as an example of what local unions ought to be doing across the country to capitalize on the increasingly positive public perception of unions.

“Seventy-one percent of people in the United States are in favor of unions, but

10.1% of workers are in a union,” she pointed out. “We have to change that. We have to make sure that everything we do is connected to organizing.”

With that in mind, the organizers went into their final breakout session of the day, to think through a plan to start connecting with their co-workers around union involvement and political participation. The training concluded with an overview of the various organizing stew-

ard-coordinated events coming up, from charitable community service activities to exciting social gatherings.

To learn more and get involved in IBEW 1245’s organizing steward program, email [organizers@ibew1245.com](mailto:organizers@ibew1245.com).

— Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245  
Communications Director

Eileen Purcell contributed to this article.  
Photos by John Storey



*“We are the biggest, baddest local union on this planet. Our influence extends well beyond the union hall here in Vacaville.”*

— Senior Assistant Business Manager Anthony Brown







# “A Sense of Duty”

## IBEW 1245 Members Help Restore Gas in Washington and Idaho

In early November, an excavator dig-in caused a massive gas outage that left more than 36,000 customers in Idaho and Washington in the cold. The local utility provider, Avista, reported that this is the largest gas outage in the company's history — and they needed help with the colossal restoration effort.

Without hesitation, 80 IBEW 1245 members from the PG&E Gas Service Department embarked on this critical mutual aid assignment.

“With a sense of duty, we quickly mobilized under the guidance of our leadership and our union. We embarked on a 16-hour journey to restore natural gas to the homes of these communities,” IBEW 1245 Shop Steward and PG&E Gas Service Rep Foster Goree reported. “Over the next few days, we worked tirelessly to provide these residents with heat and hot water. This large-scale operation was a great experience that made me truly appreciate the simplest things in life.”

"This being my first big outage, I didn't really know what to expect," said Daniel Flores-Sanchez, PG&E Gas Service Representative and IBEW 1245 Shop Steward. "The people of Washington and Idaho greeted us with open arms. It felt cool to be a part of something so much bigger than ourselves. The folks up there were so grateful for us to be there, they were stopping us at restaurants to say thanks and wished us safe travels home when the job was done."

“The overwhelming gratitude from the community not only reassured me of the significant impact our union and its resources make, but also made me grateful for our dedicated team,” echoed Goree. “I also appreciate seeing the difference we made not only in restoring services, but also in terms of the difference we made to the locals. This was truly a great eye-opening experience.”



Employees from Pacific Gas and Electric, Concord, California, pose for a picture at the end of a lunch break on Tuesday in Lewiston.

Even without heat, those restoring gas services to the Lewiston-Clarkston Valley and the Palouse received a warm welcome from customers.

During a brief visit with utility workers, they were met with honks, shouts of thanks and waves from passersby in cars. The Avista energy company brought in 300 mutual aid responders from around the western United States for a total of 800 workers restoring services.

IBEW 1245 members were featured in the local newspaper. Read the article at <https://bit.ly/LewistonTribuneNov2023>



# IBEW 1245 Successfully Advocates for Safe Work Zone Ordinance in Oakland

With the surge in theft and armed assaults across the City of Oakland, IBEW 1245 members working for the city and the utility are being subjected to an alarming number of violent incidents — and IBEW 1245 has taken a stand to protect the safety of these hard-working individuals.

Together with our allies, Local 1245 helped draft a Safe Work Zone (SWZ) Ordinance, which would enable Oakland Police to clear civilians in work areas, allowing city employees and essential workers (including 1245 members at PG&E and contractors) to perform their essential work free from violence and harassment.

“Over the last couple of years, our members working in the City of Oakland have endured numerous harrowing encounters including shootings, stabbings, and robberies,” said IBEW 1245 Senior Assistant Business Manager Al Fortier. “The SWZ Ordinance is a good first step in addressing violence against essential workers in Oakland who are targeted by criminals because of the tools, equipment and other valuables that they have on their vehicles.”

In anticipation of the Ordinance coming before the City Council, IBEW 1245’s organizing team reached out to more than 200 union members in the City of Oakland via phone, text and email to

urge them to contact the Council in support of the measure, while Business Rep Nicole Brooks got the word out at 1245 worksites across the city. This effort resulted in more than 30 letters to Council members in favor of the ordinance.

The SWZ Ordinance came before the Oakland City Council on Tuesday, December 5, and more than 40 IBEW 1245 members came out to express their support. The Ordinance also received key support from SEIU 1021, the largest union at the City, and UFCW 5, which represents workers at Safeway, Rite Aid and several other employers in Oakland.

More than 20 members from 1245 testified in favor of the SWZ. One of those speakers was Chris Feyling, an IBEW 1245 member and Electric M&C Coordinator who worked for PG&E out of the Oakland Service Center for more than seven years. In his testimony, he explained what the conditions are like for crews working on the streets of Oakland.

“Co-workers have been verbally harassed, sucker-punched from behind, held up and robbed, our vehicles continually get looted, and I had a customer reaching into their waistband because they were not happy with where we had our vehicles parked,” Feyling told the Council. “Times are hard and we understand that, but we should be able to feel safe when on the job and our families should not have to worry about our environment, because they worry enough with the work that we do. This Ordinance will help me stay safe on the job and continue to provide essential gas/electric service to all Oakland residents.”

Other 1245 members shared similar stories with the Council, while opponents of the measure tried to make the misguided argument that the SWZ ordinance was intended to target homeless individuals — but even those opponents acknowledged that essential



IBEW 1245 members and supporters filled the City Council chambers

workers deserve to be able to do their jobs safely.

IBEW 1245 member Michael Patterson, who works for the City of Oakland, responded to the opponents’ arguments by explaining that the perpetrators of these assaults and robberies are part of a criminal organization; they’re not homeless individuals. He also explained how the attacks have become even more dangerous in recent months. Initially, these criminals were just going after tools and equipment; now, they’re also coming after the individual workers and

their personal belongings.

Patterson’s testimony, along with the remarks from Feyling and 18 other IBEW members, struck a chord with the Council members and compelled them to act.

“After about three hours of testimony pro and con, the Oakland City Council unanimously passed the Safe Work Zone Ordinance,” reported Assistant Business Manager Hunter Stern. “Councilmember Fife actually cited Mike Patterson’s remarks when she explained why she supported the Ordinance. The Ordinance was on the Consent Agenda, and we were able to keep all City Council members committed to leaving it there, ensuring its passage.”

“One of the highlights for me was seeing labor come together as one to pass an ordinance that would keep our members safe,” said 1245 Assistant Business Manager Rene Cruz Martinez, noting that 1245 members came from as far as Sacramento and Vallejo to show support for their union siblings in Oakland. “This is what solidarity looks like; we all stand together as one union, no matter what employer we work for.”

“I am so proud of the amazing show of solidarity by our membership,” echoed 1245 Organizer Charlotte Stevens. “Worker safety is the foundation of our union, and we stood together as brothers and sisters to ensure we had an additional tool to make it home safe.”

“It was a hopeful experience to be able to speak in front of the Oakland City Council regarding the importance of safe work zones, and it was encouraging to receive a unanimous vote of approval in response,” added Feyling. “IBEW 1245 consistently fights for the needs of its members, and as a member, I am proud to stand alongside them!”

On Dec. 20, the Oakland Safe Work Zone Ordinance passed again unanimously on its second reading, and is now officially law in the City of Oakland.

— Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245 Communications Director



Thomas Johnson, PG&E Oakland Gas M&C Supervisor, was among dozens of speakers who testified in favor of the Safe Work Zone Ordinance.



IBEW 1245 member Michael Patterson’s testimony resonated strongly with the members of the City Council



IBEW 1245 members, leaders, staff and allies supporting the Safe Work Ordinance at the Oakland City Council meeting on Dec. 5

Photos by Sarah Yoell and Al Fortier





An IBEW 1245 outside line crew from Mountain Engineering worked over the holidays to upgrade a 230KV transmission line located 60 miles from the nearest town of Fallon, NV.

# “Safety, Quality, Production – In That Order”

## IBEW 1245 crew upgrades transmission line in remote Nevada minefields

It takes a special type of worker to move to an extremely remote location for weeks or months on end, over the holiday season to boot, to get a job done — but time and again, IBEW 1245 crews answer the call.

Jake Johnston is one such IBEW member. Johnston, a traveling lineman



General Foreman Jake Johnston is a travelling lineman working in 1245's jurisdiction.

out of Local 111, is working in 1245's jurisdiction as a General Foreman for Mountain Engineering. When the *Utility Reporter* caught up with him and his crew just days before Christmas, they were working on a 75-pole 230kv uprating project between Middlegate and Cold Springs, NV, located about two and a half hours from Reno, and sixty miles from the nearest town of Fallon.

The H-structure transmission line rebuild project spans over 80 miles, and is a critical upgrade to support increased load capacity.

“Especially with the EV kick that’s going on right now, everything turning electric, it’s requiring more out of these transmission lines, and even distribution lines as well,” Johnston explained. “So if we can bring the wires up higher, they can load the line more, and they can pull more power out of it.”

In some places, that means the lines need to go up by 20 feet; in other places they need to go up only five. The base elevation for the job is at about 3,000 feet, and the line goes up to 6,500 feet. The project isn’t without its challenges. Some of the infrastructure has not been changed out since the 1960s or 70s. The variable terrain presents unique conditions, as the members have encountered everything from alkali beds to steep mountaintops.

“We’re looking at huge valleys and tall mountains. This is two-million-year-old rock out here that is just littered with history; there are mines everywhere out here,” said Johnston. “Digging has been a big issue. It’s just solid rock. Down in the alkali beds is where we thought it would be easy, but the sand is like sugar. And if you think about putting sugar in a bowl and trying to dig down into that, what

happens? It just keeps caving in on you.”

The weather has also presented a wide array of challenges.

“Some days it’s sixty degrees out here, other days, it doesn’t get above eighteen. We’ve had everything from wind, rain, snow, ice,” said Johnston. “We’ve had lightning out here, we’ve had thunder, we’ve had it all, especially on these hilltops.”



The most unique aspect of this particular job is that it’s situated more than an hour’s drive from any sort of town, which is a long haul to access food, gas and other necessities — not to mention the nearest medical facility, which is a fact that’s always in the back of Johnston’s mind.

“The biggest thing, especially working out here in the middle of nowhere,



is safety. You're not getting to a hospital off this mountain fast. It's a life flight," he said, referring to the emergency helicopter evacuation that would be needed if anything were to happen to someone on the job. "Our motto is, 'safety, quality production,' in that order — and we don't sacrifice that for anything or anybody. Two weeks ago, we were on a mountaintop setting poles, and the wind started blowing about forty miles an hour, [it became

unsafe] so we shut it down." The location is so remote that even finding a place to stay was not easy. Johnston and other members of the crew ended up at a trailer park that is usually closed down at this time of year. Being away from family and friends over the holidays can be difficult. But the IBEW brotherhood keeps them connected — and serves as a different sort of family to celebrate the season. The owners of the trailer park graciously helped

by throwing them a small Christmas party with a steak dinner and trap shoot. Johnston, a 13-year lineman, began his career non-union, which gives him greater respect for the IBEW and the many benefits that come along with union membership — including the fact that he has the ability to reference the work rules in writing. "The biggest thing that I appreciate about the union ... is the representation that we have as workers. Companies

expect a lot out of you, and some may want you to do things that sometimes aren't right, and we're protected with that contract," said Johnston, who has 'tramped' as a lineman in 43 different states. "I like to look at the contract and the [safety] Red Book. Those are the two bibles when you're working out of this jurisdiction. They're black and white, and they're easy to follow." — Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245 Communications Director



IBEW 1245 crew from Mountain Engineering. From left: Apprentice 1 Kyle Jenner, Groundman Christopher Kaulfers, Journey Lineman Shane ByKonen, General Foreman Jake Johnston, Foreman Billy Dutton, and (in front) Journeyman Lineman Steve Todora.

Photos by John Storey





Every day, hundreds, maybe even thousands, of payments come in and out of PG&E — and the vast majority will, at some point, pass through the West Sacramento bill, print and mail processing center (aka West Sac).

The hard-working IBEW 1245 members at West Sac handle it all — from processing customer payments to delivering employee paychecks and more.

Five-year IBEW 1245 member Mark Velasquez works in payment processing as a utility machine operator, where his job involves receiving and processing commercial and residential bill payments that come through the mail.



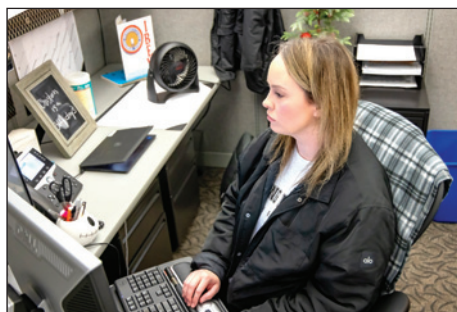
Utility Machine Operator Mark Velasquez

“99% of it is checks, and then there are some customers who still send in cash through the mail,” he explained.

Payment processing at PG&E is incredibly complex, but there’s no task too challenging for the knowledgeable and skilled clerks in West Sac. They work diligently to ensure every payment is properly processed and accounted for, from a small residential check to an enormous electronic payment from a corporate customer.

When there’s a question related to the latter, 12-year IBEW 1245 member and Accounting Clerk Julia Ponce steps in to assist. Ponce works in customer inquiry assistance, also known as the “CIA” department, and although she’s not a secret agent, her job does involve quite a bit of sleuthing.

Ponce describes her role as “payment locator detective.” She deals primarily with large, complex transactions, making sure every electronic payment is credited to the correct customer



Accounting Clerk Julia Ponce

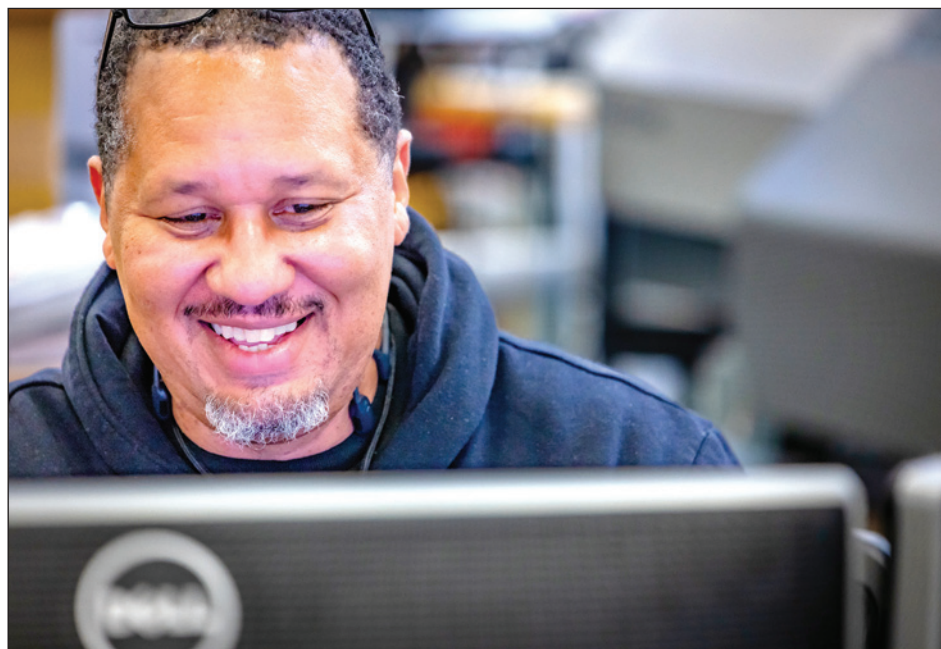
account.

In addition to processing incoming payments, West Sac is also where most of the company’s outgoing checks are printed and mailed.

“We print over 95% of the checks that PG&E prints... from payroll, or the accounts payable department, or the customer energy efficiency rebate department, customer refund, non-energy billing... They’re all done in our department,” explained IBEW 1245 member Jeff Johnson, who works as the sole account clerk in the bill printing & presentment department.

Checks aren’t the only thing that’s printed in West Sac. The facility is now home to PG&E’s Printing and Graphics Services or “PAGS” (formerly known as Reprographics) department, which relocated to West Sac and rebranded following the closure of the SF General Office. PAGS is a completely full-service print shop, producing everything from training manuals to building signage.

“Within this particular department, we have three different areas,” explained Senior Reprographics Lead Shamir Seay, a ten-year mem-



Senior Reprographics Operator Shamir Seay

Photos by John Storey

ber of IBEW 1245. “We have our printing, which is the reprographics part of it, we have large format, and we have our finishing department, which any kind of drilling, binding, folding, numbering, cutting, cooling, laminating, hole punching.”

When the freshly printed parcels are ready for their final destination, they head down to the Pony Express Department.

“Pony Express delivers company mail

mostly to the Northern California area and Fresno. We drive a lot of miles to get people their stuff, like a very small UPS,” explained 15-year IBEW 1245 member Adam Ciu, who works as a Pony Express Light Truck Driver. “We also do the payroll out of here, and we deliver calibrated tools. We do anywhere from 200 to 300 miles a day on the road, depending on what route we’re on, delivering in the fog and the rain and sometimes even the snow.”

## The Union Difference

Without the unsung heroes at West Sac, nearly every aspect of the company would come grinding to a halt. These dedicated workers appreciate that IBEW 1245 is looking out for them while they perform their essential work.

“This is my first union-represented job,” said Velasquez. “I really love the brotherhood of the whole union itself, knowing that someone has your back and your best interest, even when you’re not present. That sense of security is really huge for me personally, because a lot of the times there are little bits and pieces that the average person wouldn’t know, or wouldn’t pay attention to.”

“We love the union. They fight for us



Utility Machine Operator Gail Maddalena



PPC Department, from left: Front row – Utility Machine Operators Jaycee Cano, Eva Olazaba, and Raymond Anderson. Middle row – Utility Machine Operators Martin Sedano, Kira McQuay, Ari Ponce, Elisa Clayton, and Rainier Diaz. Back row – Utility Machine Operators Zach Whaler, Mark Valasquez and Dakota Baker



Reprographics/PAGS Department, from left: Reprographics Operators Shellsey Perry, Sherri Perkins, and Dominique Kinos, Job Coordinator TeAna Z. Cooper and Senior Reprographics Operator Shamir Seay





**Pony Express Department Light Truck Drivers, from left: Alysia Gonzalez, Adam Ciu, Curt Ledward, Adrian Americano, and (sitting) Routine Field Clerk Greg Husakow**

and give us what we think we deserve, and we can always turn to them if we have issues,” said Ponce. “I just became a shop steward because ... I really want to fight for our coworkers to get the best wages, safety, health insurance, just to be able to help them.”

For Ciu and his fellow Pony Express drivers, the union difference is exceptionally clear.

“There was a point in time, six or seven years ago, where the company was going to shut our department down... And the union really stepped up [to save our jobs],” said Ciu. “Now, we’re busier than we’ve ever been and doing more work than we’ve ever done.”

Seay also appreciates having an advocate in his corner, and negotiated a line

of progression in his sights.

“If the company was not treating us correctly, you have that support to get something done,” he said. “And I would have to say I like that there’s the opportunity to grow. At PG&E, you have a career pathway that you can see, based on the union showing you that path.”

“They get you a good competitive wage, make sure you’re taken care of,” added Johnson. “I’ve been in union and I’ve been in non-union [jobs.] Where it’s non-union, if you don’t work, you don’t get paid, you don’t have paid vacation, you don’t have paid holidays... Whereas with the union, you’re able to take that time off and spend it with your family.”

— *Rebecca Band, IBEW 1245 Communications Director*



**Utility Machine Operator Gehrig Garcia**



**Reprographics Operator Shellsey Perry**



**Reprographics Operator Dominique Kinos**



**Utility Machine Operator Brooke Lilley**



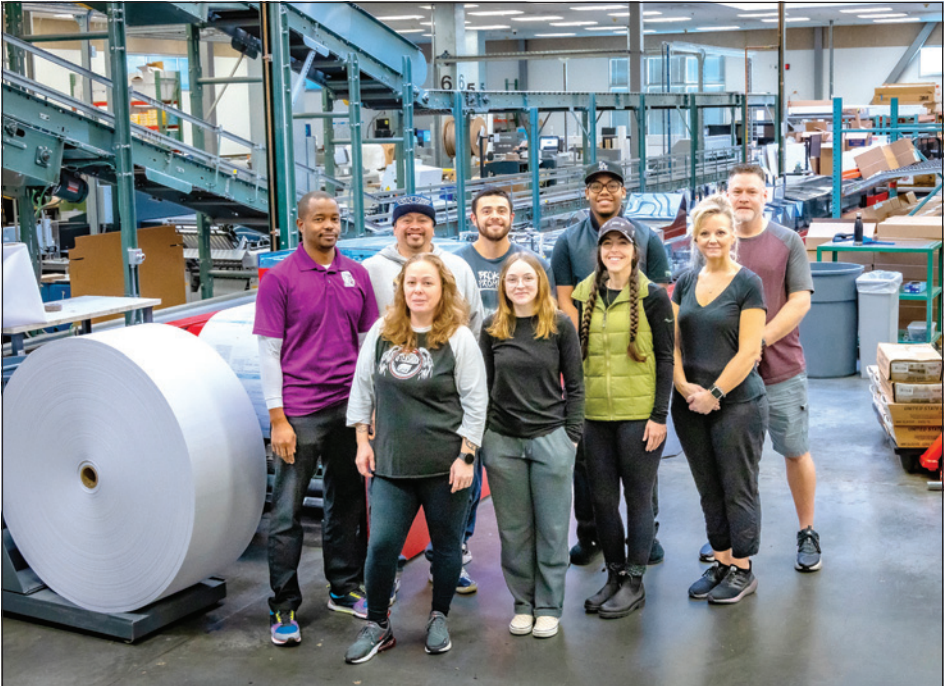
**Reprographics Operator Sherri Perkins**



**Utility Machine Operator Tina Marez**



**Customer Fund Management Department, from left: Front row – Utility Machine Operator Danielle Lopez, Accounting Clerks Rhonda Johnson, Anna Enriquez, David Le, and Kelley Talbot. Back row – Accounting Clerks Julia Ponce, Sherri Sandbeck, Eshe Stephens, Eugene Patrick and Ed Flores**



**Bill Print Department, from left: Front row – Utility Machine Operators Tina Marez, Brooke Lilley, Heather Prevel and Gail Maddalena. Back row – Computer Operator James Kibiro, Utility Machine Operators Calvin Masuda, Gehrig Garcia, and Daryll Edwards and Accounting Clerk Jeff Johnson**



# "GRID OF THE FUTURE"

## IBEW 1245 hosts conference to address the rapid transformation of the utility industry

As the energy sector confronts the daunting challenges of climate change, ever-morphing political and economic landscapes, and emerging technologies, IBEW 1245 remains committed to sharpening our understanding, strengthening our partnerships, shaping solutions and mobilizing our resources to better serve our members and our communities.

The infusion of billions of dollars in infrastructure funding at the federal, state, and local level brings tremendous opportunities — as well as challenges — and the best way to meet this moment proactively is through forward-thinking strategy and labor-management collaboration.

This was the impetus for IBEW 1245's inaugural "Grid of the Future" Conference — a unique series of candid panel discussions between IBEW 1245 leaders, corporate CEOs, and utility policy experts who are charting the course for a just and sustainable energy future.

More than 150 union leaders, stewards, members and allies, including leadership of the national Union of Electrical Workers in El Salvador (STESEC), came to-

gether for the conference, which took place on Jan. 26 in Vacaville.

IBEW 1245 Business Manager Bob Dean welcomed the attendees, remarking on how the utility industry's current wave of rapid transformation has come after decades of near-stagnation. He explained how he and the senior staff at 1245 have been working to continuously stay on top of the latest advances — from wind power, to solar, to battery storage, to distributed energy resources, and more.

"If there's an electron running through it, that's our work," Dean emphasized, underscoring that knowledge is the key to ensuring that IBEW members continue to have the unique skills and training to meet the demands of an ever-changing energy landscape. "Our job is to give young men and women the same opportunity we've had, the opportunity to change their lives in this industry — but we can only do that if we are prepared."

Dean introduced IBEW International Vice President Dave Reaves, who presented a broad overview of IBEW's critical role in the transition to a clean-energy grid.

"IBEW, through its skilled and trained members, is on the forefront of this ever-evolving landscape," Reaves said, underscoring that our union has been leading the charge on zero-emissions solutions. "IBEW stands as a beacon of progress, actively contributing to the technologies that define the grid of the future."

The first panel discussion of the day featured PG&E CEO Patti Poppe, NV Energy CEO Doug Cannon, and SMUD CEO Paul Lau, and was facilitated by 1245 Business Manager Bob Dean.

The conversation kicked off with each CEO sharing what keeps them up at night when they think about the industry as a whole and where it's heading. The discussion touched on many burgeoning aspects of the energy sector, including electrification of transportation, new generation, diversifying the workforce, and the use of artificial intelligence within the utility industry.

Following the CEOs in conversation with Dean, IBEW 1245 Senior Assistant Business Manager Dylan Gottfried engaged in an insightful Q&A with CAISO CEO Elliott Mainzer. The interview focused on the current and future of our energy market, especially as it pertains to resource adequacy in the face of increased demand. They also discussed regionalization, renewable portfolio standards, battery storage, integration of renewables, cybersecurity, and more.

In the afternoon, PG&E Executive VP Jason Glickman, NCPA General Manager Randy Howard and IBEW 9th District Rep Micah Mitrosky discussed what comes next for the utility industry. IBEW 1245 Senior Assistant Business Manager Bob Gerstle facilitated the discussion, which focused on the various utility components involved in meeting California's ambitious climate change goals. The conversation touched on offshore wind, EVs, re-purposing existing power plants to save jobs, and innovative renewable solutions.

In the final panel of the day, Legislative Advocate Scott Wetch joined IBEW's regulatory attorneys, Mark Joseph and Rachel Koss, for a deep dive into California's legislative and regulatory landscape. IBEW 1245 Senior Assistant Business Manager Anthony Brown served as the moderator, where the discussion ranged from deregulation, to municipalization, to CCAs, to attempts by other trades to hone in on IBEW work, to the newly enacted Senate Bill 410, which aims to speed up customer connections to the grid.

Dean closed the day-long conference by reminding the attendees that we are well-positioned for this new energy future, but we must not rest on our laurels.

"It's a good time to be in the IBEW, but maintaining what we have isn't going to be easy," he said "We will fight, and by forming coalitions we can fight harder. Our knowledge is our strength."

*Eileen Purcell contributed to this report.*

*Photos by John Storey*



Business Manager Bob Dean



IBEW International Vice President David Reaves



IBEW 1245 Business Manager Bob Dean, SMUD CEO Paul Lau, NV Energy CEO Doug Cannon, PG&E CEO Patti Poppe





1245's Bob Gerstle with NCPA General Manager Randy Howard, PG&E Executive VP Jason Glickman, and IBEW 9th District Rep Micah Mitrosky

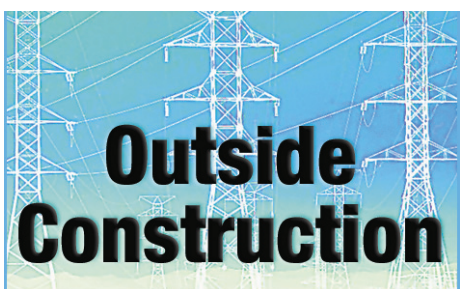


CAISO CEO Elliot Mainzer with Assistant Business Manager Dylan Gottfried



IBEW 1245's Anthony Brown with Legislative Advocate Scott Wetch, Attorney Rachel Koss and Attorney Mark Joseph





The amount of Outside Line work completed by 1245 members over 2023 is nothing short of astounding. Our membership has risen to meet every challenge with great resiliency and pride. From the winter storms at the start of 2023, to completing hundreds of miles of underground cable installation, you showed up and met the challenge head-on.

In 2024, we are seeing some of the same obstacles at our feet. Winter in Northern California and Nevada has brought rain and snow that will impact work plans. We are prepared to face this as we always do, keeping safety as the top priority.

### California

At the close of 2023, we saw the typical work slowdown, due to budgets and weather. PG&E announced that they had reached their 350-mile undergrounding goal this year, a point of pride for many of our OSL members who worked long hours so PG&E could adhere to its commitment to harden their infrastructure. As PG&E plans for 2024, IBEW 1245 will continue to supply the qualified work force to meet PG&E's current and future needs. This quarter we added a new Business Rep to the OSL team. Jesse Green is a journeyman lineman who completed his apprenticeship through Cal-Nev JATC and has worked most of his career in California of Nevada. He will be focusing on the North Coast and North Valley of 1245's jurisdiction.

Local 1245 staff is continuing to provide Construction Organizing Membership Education Training (COMET) classes at the Cal-Nev JATC Woodland CA facility. The COMET class gets deep

into our union history, roots and core values as IBEW members. The main message we convey during the presentations is the importance of organizing ALL unrepresented electrical workers into the IBEW. We've received positive feedback from the apprentices attending the training class, most of whom were unaware of the IBEW's rich history and core beliefs. If our newest members don't know our history and where we



Senior Assistant Business Manager  
Ralph Armstrong

have been, how will these future leaders carry on the IBEW banner for the future?

The Fresno bi-monthly informational meetings continue to take place on the second Tuesday of every other month at 6pm at Round Table Pizza, 5702 N. First St. in Fresno. The remaining meetings for this year will take place on March 12, May 14, July 9, Sept 10, and Nov 12.

### Nevada

Wasatch is providing NV Energy with dock hands who are currently supporting the Reno, Carson City, Fallon, Winnemucca and Elko yards. Dock crews are in these same yards, plus a crew in Hawthorne working on a 60KV rebuild as well. Wasatch crews are currently working on two transmission projects. One distribution was completed, and a two-year, 6,500 pole project has begun and is going well. Wasatch is also providing dock hands and dock crews for both North & South Lake Tahoe on numerous different projects.

On NVE property, Summit Line Construction completed a wood-to-steel pole rebuild in December. At Topaz Lake Substation, civil crews completed building foundations and ground grid. R2 is returning to the Topaz Lake job to lay rock around substation. Summit has also completed the Truckee Substation fiber installation on Liberty property, while Mountain Engineering line crews are nearing completion of a 75-pole 230KV H structure rebuild in Fallon, NV area (full story on page 12).

### SWIP North

On December 14, 2023, the California

Independent System Operator (CAISO) voted unanimously to assume joint control of entitlements on the soon-to-be-constructed Southwest Intertie Project (SWIP) North and existing One Nevada (ON) transmission lines.

SWIP North is a permit- and shovel-ready 500 kV transmission line totaling roughly 285 miles in length, which will serve as a tie between Idaho and Central Nevada. In existence today, is approximately 231 miles of 500 kV transmission (composed of the One Nevada ON transmission line and DesertLink transmission line). Upon completion of SWIP North, this line will be over 500 miles in length, spanning from north of Twin Falls, Idaho to south of Las Vegas, NV.

The construction of the SWIP North line will be a joint venture with Idaho Power, and is contingent on Idaho Public Utilities Commission (IPUC) approval by September 2024, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) reaffirmation, and other regulatory steps.

This project, along with a multitude of others slated for construction in the next few years, will draw many resources to Nevada and will provide hundreds of jobs to IBEW members. California will be faced with numerous projects as well, opening the opportunity for members across the country to work in our jurisdiction.

### Supporting Members in Need

Whenever IBEW 1245 members need support, whether it's due to work-related or non-work-related incident/accidents or losses, our staff is committed to being there for them. As members experience challenging situations in their lives, we go out of our way to bring a piece of our brotherhood to them during rough times. As we all know, our membership always steps up to the plate and helps monetarily when we "pass the hat" to collect funds for our brothers and sisters in need. Almost every single time, when we visit with the member and hand over the proceeds from those collections, the member gets teary eyed and is at a loss for words. It is in those most trying times when our members gain a deeper understanding

that they are part of something bigger than all of us.

### Safety First

At the last Red Book quarterly meeting, the committee discussed a multitude of incidents, from motor vehicle incidents (MVI) to a crane tip-over (not in our jurisdiction). The MVI is something we are all too familiar with. Slowing down and assessing our conditions will help to prevent this. However safe we may be by focusing on our own driving, we must contend and take into consideration the other drivers as well.

### Traffic Control Wage Increases

Effective January 1, 2024, all members working under the IBEW/NECA Traffic Control Agreement received a wage and HRA contribution increase across all classifications. This increase structure is different from previous years. Upon ratification of the new agreement July 1, 2024, all future increases will occur on January 1.

### Lineco

January 1st brought a \$0.25 increase to the cost of LINECO. Depending on the agreement, it may be covered by the contractor. Other agreements will require the increase to be split (50/50) between contractor and member. Please reference your agreement or contact an Outside Construction representative if you have any questions.

### Community Outreach

We have been getting more involved in community outreach events such as school career days, climbing school visits, and labor festivals. If you have any events that you believe would mutually benefit from IBEW participation, please reach out.

### Dispatch

IBEW 1245 dispatch office hours are 7am to 4pm and the last application will go out at 3:30pm. The dispatchers have returned to the dispatch office now that the remodel project is near completion. The improved dispatch lobby will aid in faster signing and processing of paperwork. A few additional items will be completed over the next couple of months. We will be adding monitors to show open calls and a kiosk to fill out applications.

When arriving at the union hall to sign or re-sign the books, you will be prompted to fill out a half-sheet of paper that includes your name, email address and phone number. Please write clearly, as that is the only way to get your application to you. If your information is incorrect or illegible, it will delay your process. When uploading your documents, please make sure you are sending us the most current and valid information. Please do not re-enter Dispatch until you receive an email to do so. If you have any questions, please call our main office number 707-452-2700.

PAY YOUR DUES ONLINE →

**Pay your dues online, check your spot on the books and more.**

Outside Line members ("A" members) are urged to use our online service to check your hours worked, check your spot on the books, update your personal information, and pay your dues online.

<https://ibew1245.com/ourunion/pay-dues-online/>

**QUICK LINKS**

- NEWS CENTER
- SIGNING THE BOOKS



2023 Dispatch numbers:

- 442 Apprentice Lineman calls
- 2316 Groundman calls
- 958 Flagger calls
- 596 Line EQ Man calls
- 217 Fab Tech calls
- 24 Cable Splicer calls
- 278 Sub Tech calls
- 2764 Journeyman Lineman calls

Total year-to-date calls for 2023 = 7,595

We currently have 314 on the Lineman book 1 and 2, and 1213 on the Groundman books.

LaborPower Mobile App

IBEW Local 1245’s LaborPower app allows members to check their position on the books, update contact info, pay dues, and more. You can find it in the app store of your mobile device.

Red Books

We are currently waiting to approve changes to the Red Book. Once approved, we will print another batch of books. There were a couple of issues that will require a bigger discussion with all the major utilities — namely around grounding of the covered tree wire, as there are differences of opinions from utility to utility on how this needs to be performed to ensure compliance with OSHA standards. More to come.

Examining Committee

The 1245 Examining Committee has changed their meeting date to the first Tuesday of every month starting at 5pm at the 1245 Hall in Vacaville. The committee continues to be extremely busy dealing with issues related to safety or other wrongdoings by workers in the local’s jurisdiction. This is not a good trend, and we as a membership must do better.

IBEW 1245’s dispatch policies state that if a member is discharged due to any safety violation, they will be placed on a dispatch hold until they meet with the Examining Committee to determine follow-up actions if needed. Everyone

needs to stay focused on safety and quality; there is no room in this industry to work unsafely or perform substandard work that can potentially lead to a safety issue.

Know the Rules

It’s important for all 1245 members as well as travelers to this local to educate themselves on the rules and requirements of the IBEW Constitution, as well as Local agreements and safety rules for the areas you may be working in. Failure to understand these requirements could lead to charges filed for violations of these rules under Article XXV, Misconduct, Offenses and Penalties of the IBEW Constitution.

Apprentice privileges continue to be suspended to journeymen who are involved in unsafe work practices while having an apprentice on their crew. These suspensions are shared across the country to every JATC, as well as every Outside Line local, and won’t be lifted until the Journeymen involved in the incident meet with the trustees of the JATC where the incident occurred. This affects the journeymen’s ability to work, as there are few jobs that don’t have apprentices.

As a Journeyman Lineman, it is your responsibility to train and mentor apprentices for the future of this trade and make sure they are being taught correctly, with safety at the forefront. Keep this in mind whenever you have an apprentice working with you.

Cal-Nev JATC

Apprentice report as of Dec 27, 2023:

- 631 outside line apprentices registered in the Cal/Nev JATC program
- 0 traveling apprentices in Cal/Nev’s jurisdiction
- 222 apprentices working out of Local 1245
- 288 working out of Local 47
- 26 working out of Local 396
- 51 unemployed
- 20 suspended, 13 on medical hold and 11 on a leave
- 173 apprentices graduated to

Journeyman Lineman in 2023

- 133 new apprentices indentured in Outside Line in 2023

The JATC typically opens up the lineman apprenticeship application process in the Spring, so if you’re considering applying, please review the Cal-Nev JATC requirements for applying at [www.canevjatc.org](http://www.canevjatc.org).

Substation Technician Apprenticeship

The Cal/Nev Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (JATC) is pleased to announce the launch of a new Substation Technician apprenticeship program. Apprentice Substation Technicians assist journeymen in building and maintaining electrical power Substations and Switchyards. Every project is complex, challenging, rewarding, and requires careful management of a skilled team of professional power workers. The construction, operation, and maintenance of substations and switchyards involves special skills and advanced technologies. In addition, workmanship must be of the highest quality because the station and switchyard will operate unattended for 30 years or longer when the project is done.

The substation tech apprenticeship program at the California-Nevada JATC is similar to the lineman program, as it combines supervised, structured on-the-job training with related classroom instruction to prepare apprentices for skilled employment within the industry. Wages are paid during the on-the-job phase of training and increase as progress is made in the program. The

JATC opened up its first application period for this new program in late January and plans to accept more applicants in the future.

Learn more about the program at <https://www.calnevjatc.org/templates/template5/?page=395>

CPR & First Aid

CPR and First Aid classes are scheduled for the second Friday of every month at the Woodland and Riverside facilities. If you are interested and want to sign up for this class, visit [www.calnevjatc.org](http://www.calnevjatc.org). Click on the Web Services tab, then Class Schedule. If you do not already have a web account with the JATC, you will need to create one. Class availability is based on first-come, first-served basis.

Injured Workers Fund

The balance of the injured workers fund as of Dec 26, 2023 was \$958,824.12. In the three months prior, the fund paid out \$157,200 in disability payments.

The Summary Plan Description (SPD) and Application can be found on the union’s website <https://ibew1245.com/outside-line-injured-workers-fund/>

New Organizing

The following contractors have organized with 1245 this quarter:

California Outside Line Construction Agreement:

- Munsch Excavation Inc.

Traffic Control Agreement:

- Arborworks, LLC dba Pathfinder DRX



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 the East Bay, the North Bay, 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!

Arguello, Jose 21 years Manteca, CA	Garcia, Kimberly 17 years Penn Valley, CA	Ramsey, James 43 years So. San Francisco, CA	Teagarden, Annette 39 years Bakersfield, CA
Brewer, Anthony 29 years Sacramento, CA	Gravink, Steven 32 years Woodland, CA	Reardon, Timothy 22 years Union City, CA	Villalobos, Karen 31 years Oakland, CA
Cabezut, David 42 years Fresno, CA	Harris, Kent 46 years Paso Robles, CA	Rodriguez, Delma 11 years San Jose, CA	Walsh, Jeanne 17 years South San Francisco, CA
Calderon, Theresa 10 years San Jose, CA	Henderson, Sandra 39 years Concord, CA	Salaiz, Dennis 39 years Manteca, CA	
Cordova, Alfonso 40 years Escalon, CA	Kadota, Wendy 32 years Paso Robles, CA	Scott, James 4 years Lakeport, CA	
Creer, Sharon 31 years Hercules, CA	Montenegro, Manuel 34 years Winters, CA	Smith, Bruce 38 years Lake Havasu City, AZ	
Dydo, Gregory 22 years Vacaville, CA	Quinn, James Jr. 3 years Browns Valley, CA	St Martin, Vickie 31 years Stockton, CA	
Freeman, Kellie 31 years Benicia, CA	Ramirez, Luis 50 years San Francisco, CA	Steward, Richard 12 years Orland, CA	



IBEW Local 1245 outside line members working for Dars Cox Construction lay underground conduit for PG&E in Cottonwood, Calif. Photo by John Storey

Congratulations Retirees!

We want you to STAY CONNECTED

to IBEW 1245.



# Vegetation Management

## LCTT and VMI Members Look Forward to a Busy 2024 After End-of-Year Layoffs and Contractor Assignment Changes

One thing we've learned is that change is not only inevitable; it is a constant occurrence.

2023 was a challenging yet rewarding year for the IBEW 1245 Line Clearance Tree Trimming and Vegetation Management representatives, as we've made some significant strides to improve in areas of communication and engagement with members and contractors alike. Our goal as a staff was to focus on the areas that needed the most improvement, starting with our internal processes and procedures. We've focused more on having better consistent communication in our unit meetings; we're holding meet-and-greets with contractor leadership; we're expanding on the LCTT program at the JATC; we're growing our "Keep the Clearance" peer-to-peer safety committee; and we're working with our admin staff to improve onboarding of members and contractors who are signatory with Local 1245.

### Line Clearance Tree Trimmer (LCTT) Updates

In mid-October, PG&E announced their year-end budget changes for 2023 and the beginning of 2024. Even though PG&E announced new bids going out systemwide for 2024, we expect the work to start immediately and remain steady through October. The last quarter of 2023 for Line Clearance Tree Trimmers came to an end, like it did a year ago, when PG&E announced their budgetary changes in early November. We were then met with the challenge of mass layoffs systemwide (varied by contractors and area), and in some cases portability challenges of seniority due to layoffs and

hiring rules within the contract.

IBEW 1245 Business Manager Bob Dean and Senior Assistant Business Manager Ralph Armstrong were able to



Assistant Business Manager Mark MauMau

reach out to PG&E and reduce the number of layoffs projected. But we always encourage LCTT members to take caution and plan for any unforeseen changes. It is also important to note that during layoff transitions, we must maintain professionalism by ending our relations on good terms with previous employers, as there are no guarantees for hire or re-hire. It is the sole discretion of PG&E to decide which contractors are awarded work within their jurisdiction. We encourage all members to continue attending your Local 1245 unit meeting to get the most accurate and current information concerning these and all other union matters.

### Safety

The "Keep the Clearance" peer-to-peer safety committee is focused on expanding by including the JATC presence and continuing to recruit new safety stewards from every contractor. KTC is also focused on meeting with all contractors for safety pitch presentations with the goal of building a more safety-minded culture.

Safety (SIF) investigations have been on the rise, and are closely monitored by PG&E. Vehicle accidents have been a main topic of discussion centering on distracted driving, which has plagued the workforce. We expect contractors to take a more proactive approach to solve this ongoing problem. One industry solution being discussed is installing additional cameras inside company vehicles.

### JOINT APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING COMMITTEE (JATC)

Cal/Nev JATC has re-applied for another federal grant for LCTT members who need to be certified with a Class "A or B" Commercial Driver's License. Qualifying member participants can now be reimbursed directly by the JATC with proof of course completion and receipt. More information updates will be posted as needed on the Cal/Nev JATC website.

Craig Merck has been named the Assistant Director for the Cal/Nev JATC over the Line Clearance Tree Trimmer Program. He has over 25 years of tree experience in the pacific northwest and has been an intricate part of the Cal/Nev JATC the past year. We know that he and

his team will do an exceptional job.

Per PG&E Policy, the Oroville operator qualification is still in effect for all field personal performing Line Clearance Tree Trimming work on PG&E property. Cal/Nev JATC continues to put on selective preparatory training classes on Saturdays at the Woodland Training Center. Training is voluntary and all participants must be enrolled with the JATC, no exceptions.

We are grateful for a great year in 2023, and we look forward to having continued success by representing the very best members once again in 2024. 1245 Reps and Cal/Nev Line Clearance Tree Staff are meeting quarterly to strengthen our relationship and the industry. One way to do this is the planning of a Tree Jamboree that is expected to take place in 2024. Date, place, and time to be determined.

### Vegetation Management Inspector (VMI) Updates

VMI work has been volatile over the past year, and the last quarter of 2023 was no different. After a gradual incline of work for most of 2023, budget changes were announced by PG&E, and it's been a challenge finding work for displaced members. PG&E continues to hire internally as well for these classifications.

Although the reduction of force was less severe than last year, it has still caused concerns among the VMI membership over job security and consistency of this work long-term. PG&E has announced the new bids throughout its entire system for 2024, and it's looking very positive.

### Pole Test & Treat (PT&T) Updates

The fourth quarter was busy for Pole Test and Treat members, as work has been steady with fewer work stoppages and portability work outside of the 1245 jurisdiction due to lack of work on PG&E property. We're continuing to hold monthly informational meetings as well as quarterly in-person meetings for the employees working for Davey and Osmose Pole Test and Treat contractors. This membership has solid unit leadership and has shown a steady growth in involvement.

— Mark MauMau, IBEW 1245 Assistant Business Manager

### Northern Area

This last quarter of 2023 was challenging to say the least. In mid-October the sub-contractors were getting calls from PG&E stating that they were

behind schedule, and they needed to pick up the pace to get all their required work done on time. Just as they were trying to get the new work schedule set up, they got another call from PG&E, just one week later, stating that they were almost out of money on the vegetation management side, and the budget was being readjusted for each company and their areas. This readjustment required all companies to implement massive layoffs across the board. We contacted each company to let them know that they needed to follow the contract on the layoff procedure. We started receiving calls almost immediately from the members stating that the contract was not being followed. We had to work with each company separately on their list of employees to make sure that the proper layoff procedures were followed. There are still a few grievances that are active for improper layoffs, but most of the issues have been resolved.

The membership is very concerned about this happening again in the future, since this is the second year in a row that this has occurred. I told them that we are communicating with PG&E about this problem and are trying to work out some sort of resolution to prevent this in the future.

Anvil will no longer be working in the Lake County area. AERI will be taking over that area after the first of the year. We have been assisting the members there in getting their applications submitted with AERI. This is an area that has seen the greatest number of contractors switching in and out in the past couple of years. It is very frustrating for the members working there having to switch companies so often.

The Redding area is also seeing some big changes. Maximus is only covering half of that area now, and Wright Tree is coming back to pick up the other half of the area. At the time of this writing, all the details have not been worked out yet, but the membership there is looking forward to seeing Wright back in the area.

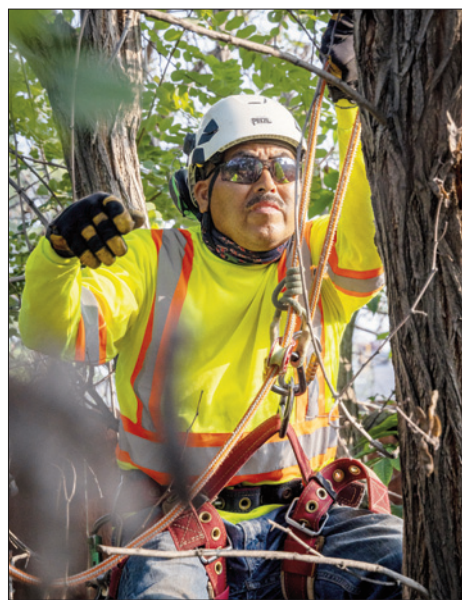
Mountain Enterprise had a 100-foot bucket truck hit a patch of ice and slide off the road and lay over on the passenger side. Fortunately, they were going very slow and there were no injuries. It did launch a SIF investigation with PG&E to find out what were the causes of the accident, and what can be done to prevent it in the future. It looks like Mountain will be launching a "Co-Driver" program where the passengers in the vehicle will be communicating with the driver about upcoming conditions to help the driver navigate. They are still working out the details of this program, but it should be ready to put into place very soon.

— Ray Banfill, IBEW 1245 Business Rep

### Central East Area

In the Central East, there were many changes at the end of 2023. One of the most significant changes was the announcement that ACRT would no

continued on page 22



Line Clearance Tree Trimmer Salvador Navarro

Photo by John Storey



## Los miembros LCTT y VMI esperan un 2024 ocupado después de los despidos de fin de año y los cambios en la asignación de contratistas

**A**lgo que hemos aprendido es que el “cambio” no solo es inevitable, sino que estamos sujetos a cambios constantes.

El 2023 fue un año desafiante pero gratificante para los representantes de los Podadores de árboles para el despeje de líneas y del Manejo de la vegetación del IBEW 1245, ya que hemos logrado algunas mejoras importantes en las áreas de comunicación y participación tanto con los miembros como con los contratistas. Nuestro objetivo era enfocarnos en las áreas que necesitaban mejorar, comenzando por nuestros procesos y procedimientos internos. Nos hemos centrado más en tener una mejor comunicación coherente en nuestras reuniones de la unidad; estamos celebrando reuniones con los líderes de los contratistas; estamos expandiendo el programa de Podadores de árboles para el despeje de líneas (LCTT) en el Comité Conjunto de Capacitación de Aprendices (JATC); nuestro comité de seguridad entre compañeros “Mantenga la Distancia” está creciendo; y estamos trabajando con nuestro personal de administración para mejorar la incorporación de los miembros y contratistas que son signatarios del contrato del Local 1245.

### Información sobre los Podadores de Árboles para el Despeje de Líneas

A mediados de octubre, PG&E anunció sus cambios presupuestarios de fin de año para 2023 y principios de 2024. Aunque PG&E ha anunciado nuevas licitaciones en todo el sistema durante 2024, esperamos que el trabajo comience inmediatamente y se mantenga estable hasta octubre. El último trimestre para los Podadores de árboles para el despeje de líneas llegó a su fin, tal como hace un año, cuando PG&E anunció sus cambios presupuestarios a principios de noviembre. En ese momento nos enfrentamos al desafío de despidos masivos en todo el sistema (que variaban según los contratistas y las zonas), y en algunos casos desafíos de transferencia de la antigüedad debido a los despidos y las reglas de contratación que forman parte del contrato.

Bob Dean, Gerente de Negocios del IBEW 1245, y Ralph Armstrong, Gerente Asistente de Negocios Senior, pudieron comunicarse con PG&E y reducir el número de despidos proyectados. Pero siempre aconsejamos a los miembros LCTT tener precaución y planificar cualquier cambio imprevisto. También es importante tener en cuenta que

durante las transiciones de despidos, debemos mantener la profesionalidad y terminar nuestras relaciones en buenos términos con los empleadores anteriores, ya que no hay garantías de contratación o re-contratación. Es a criterio exclusivo de PG&E decidir a qué contratistas se les adjudica un trabajo dentro de su jurisdicción. Invitamos a todos los miembros a continuar asistiendo a su reunión de la unidad del Local 1245 para obtener la información más precisa y actualizada sobre estos y todos los demás asuntos sindicales.

### SEGURIDAD

El comité de seguridad entre compañeros “Mantenga la Distancia” (KTC) está enfocado en expandirse al incluir la presencia del Comité Conjunto de Capacitación de Aprendices (JATC) y continuar reclutando nuevos delegados de seguridad de cada contratista. El comité KTC también está enfocado en reunirse con todos los contratistas para realizar presentaciones de seguridad con el objetivo de desarrollar una cultura más orientada a la seguridad.

Las investigaciones de seguridad de lesiones y fatalidades graves (SIF) han aumentado, y están siendo vigiladas de cerca por PG&E. Los accidentes de vehículos han sido un tema principal de discusión centrado en conductores distraídos, que ha plagado a la fuerza laboral. Esperamos que los contratistas adopten un enfoque más proactivo para resolver este problema continuo. Una de las soluciones que se está discutiendo en la industria es instalar cámaras adicionales dentro de los vehículos de la empresa.

### COMITÉ CONJUNTO DE CAPACITACIÓN DE APRENDICES (JATC)

El JATC de California/Nevada ha solicitado nuevamente otra subvención federal para los miembros LCTT que deben tener una Licencia de Conducir Comercial Clase “A” o “B”. Los miembros participantes que cumplan los requisitos podrán recibir un reembolso del JATC al presentar un recibo y una prueba de que han finalizado el curso. Se publicarán más actualizaciones de información según sea necesario en el sitio web del JATC de California/Nevada.

Craig Merck ha sido nombrado Subdirector del JATC de California/Nevada a cargo del programa de los Podadores de árboles para el despeje de líneas. Tiene más de 25 años de experiencia en la industria del despeje de líneas en el noroeste del Pacífico y ha sido una parte esencial del JATC de California/Nevada

el año pasado. Sabemos que él y su equipo harán un trabajo excepcional.

Según la política de PG&E, la calificación de operador de Oroville sigue vigente para todo el personal de campo que realiza trabajos de poda de árboles para el despeje de líneas en instalaciones de PG&E. EL JATC de Cal/Nev continúa impartiendo clases selectivas de capacitación preparatoria los sábados en el Centro de Capacitación de Woodland. La capacitación es voluntaria y todos los participantes deben estar inscritos en el JATC, sin excepciones.

Estamos agradecidos por el gran año que tuvimos en 2023, y esperamos continuar teniendo éxito representando a nuestros excelentes miembros nuevamente en 2024. Los representantes y el personal de los Podadores de árboles para el despeje de líneas de California/Nevada del Local 1245 se reúnen trimestralmente para fortalecer nuestra relación y la industria. Una manera es la planificación de un evento Tree Jamboree previsto en 2024. La fecha, hora y lugar están por determinarse.

### Noticias de Inspectores de Manejo de Vegetación (VMI)

El trabajo de VMI ha sido volátil durante el último año, y este último trimestre no fue diferente. Después de una disminución gradual del trabajo durante la mayor parte de 2023, PG&E anunció cambios presupuestarios, y ha sido un desafío encontrar trabajo para los miembros desplazados. PG&E sigue contratando internamente para estas clasificaciones.

Aunque el impacto de la reducción de la fuerza laboral fue menos severa que el año pasado, todavía ha causado preocupación entre los miembros de VMI sobre la seguridad laboral y la regularidad de este trabajo a largo plazo. PG&E ha anunciado las nuevas licitaciones en todo su sistema para 2024, y el panorama se ve muy positivo.

### Noticias de Pole Test & Treat (PT&T)

Los miembros de Pole Test and Treat tuvieron un cuarto trimestre ocupado, ya que el trabajo ha sido constante, con menos paros de trabajo y menos transferencias fuera de la jurisdicción del 1245 debido a la falta de trabajo en instalaciones de PG&E. Seguimos teniendo reuniones informativas mensuales, así como reuniones trimestrales en persona para los empleados que trabajan para los contratistas Davey and Osmose Pole Test and Treat. Estos miembros tienen un sólido liderazgo de

la unidad y la participación de los miembros ha mostrado un crecimiento constante.

— Mark MauMau, Gerente Asistente de Negocios de IBEW 1245

### Zona norte

Este último trimestre de 2023 fue difícil y me quedo corto al decirlo. A mediados de octubre, los subcontratistas recibieron llamadas de PG&E en las que indicaban que estaban atrasados en el cumplimiento del programa, y que necesitaban incrementar el ritmo para terminar todo el trabajo necesario a tiempo. Justo cuando estaban tratando de establecer el nuevo programa de trabajo, recibieron otra llamada de PG&E, apenas una semana después, diciendo que casi no tenían fondos para el trabajo de gestión de la vegetación, y estaban reajustando el presupuesto para cada compañía y sus zonas. Este reajuste requirió que todas las compañías aplicaran despidos masivos generalizados. Nos pusimos en contacto con cada compañía para hacerles saber que tenían que cumplir el contrato en cuanto al procedimiento de despido. Casi inmediatamente comenzamos a recibir llamadas de los miembros diciendo que el contrato no se estaba cumpliendo. Tuvimos que trabajar con la lista de empleados con cada compañía por separado para asegurarnos de que se cumplieran los procedimientos de despido correctos. Todavía hay algunas quejas pendientes por despidos indebidos, pero la mayoría de ellas se han resuelto.

Los miembros están muy preocupados de que esto vuelva a ocurrir en el futuro, ya que este es el segundo año consecutivo en que ha ocurrido. Les dije que estamos en comunicación con PG&E sobre este problema y estamos tratando de encontrar algún tipo de solución para evitar que suceda en el futuro.

Anvil ya no trabajará en la zona del condado de Lake. AERI se hará cargo de esa zona después del primero de enero. Hemos estado ayudando a los miembros en esa zona a presentar sus solicitudes de empleo a AERI. En esta zona han entrado y salido un gran número de contratistas en los últimos dos años. Es muy frustrante para los miembros que trabajan allí tener que cambiar de compañía con tanta frecuencia.

También hay cambios importantes en la zona de Redding. Maximus ahora solo cubre la mitad de esa zona, y Wright Tree está de regreso para cubrir la otra mitad. Al momento de escribir este artículo, aún no se han definido todos los detalles, pero los miembros están deseosos de que Wright regrese a la zona.

Un camión grúa de 100 pies de Mountain encontró hielo en el camino, patinó, se salió de la carretera, y se volcó sobre el lado del pasajero. Afortunadamente, iban muy despacio y no hubo heridos. Se inició una investigación SIF (Incidentes Graves y Fatalidades) con

continúa en la página 22



## Árboles, from page 21

PG&E para determinar cuáles fueron las causas del accidente, y cómo prevenirlo. Parece que Mountain lanzará un programa de copiloto donde los pasajeros en el vehículo se comunicarán con el conductor sobre las condiciones que se avecinan del camino para ayudar al conductor a navegar. Todavía están elaborando los detalles de este programa, pero debería estar listo para su puesta en marcha muy pronto.

Esperamos que las cosas vuelvan a la normalidad en 2024. Si lo que estamos escuchando es cierto, deberíamos tener un primer trimestre muy ocupado.

— Ray Banfill, IBEW 1245  
Representante de Negocios

## Trees, from page 20

longer be a VMI contractor for the Central Valley. Over my nearly 20 years of service, ACRT has been one of PG&E's only prime contractors in the area. Although they did lose the Central Valley, they are still in operation in other areas of the PG&E system.

There has also been a change in LCTT contractors as well in the Central Valley. Mario's Tree Service will no longer be working on the Central East service area. Arborworks has been awarded all the areas previously worked by Mario's Tree Service. This change will be one of the most complex to navigate, as the transition from one company to another is never an easy process. There will be hundreds of employees who had previously been employed by Mario's, now needing a position to fill with the new contractor, and some may be out of work until a plan can be put into place on how to retain as many employees as possible. Arborworks, who has its own employees and needs to get them to work as well, will have a complicated task of making a good faith effort in trying to absorb as many of the previous Mario's employees.

Changes in vegetation management contractors are inevitable, as there will always be competition for work. But even though there are changes in vendors, the biggest change has been the layoffs by far. This is our second year having these end-of-year layoffs, which put our members in a very difficult situation. Many are excited for a new year — a new start, and a new budget which will put our people back to work.

Unit meetings are going strong, and members continue to show up faithfully. Unit meetings are the best place for our members to grow and learn about what the union is all about, and I believe 2024 is going to be our year. My plan for 2024 is to have more face-to-face, one-on-one time with our membership. I want to have more events and member participation, and the key to that is eye-to-eye conversations with our members. That's how we grow a greater unity amongst the 1245 brother and sisterhood!

In Reno, NV, our members are coming up on a new contract negotiation. Contract negotiations are always an

## Zona Central Este

Hubo muchos cambios en la zona Central Este a finales de 2023. Uno de los cambios más significativos fue el anuncio de que ACRT ya no sería un contratista de VMI en Central Valley. Durante mis casi 20 años de servicio, ACRT ha sido uno de los únicos contratistas principales de PG&E en la zona. Aunque perdieron la zona de Central Valley, todavía operan en otras zonas del sistema PG&E.

También ha habido un cambio en los contratistas de LCTT en Central Valley. Mario's Tree Service ya no tendrá operaciones en la zona de servicio de Central East. Arborworks ganó la licitación de todas las zonas que anteriormente esta-

exciting time for our members. We have high hopes for this new contract. The unit meeting has drawn a lot of attention and members are eager to get their proposals in, with most focusing on better wages, better health care, and greater retirement security. Our members also have great ideas on how to better their working conditions with changes to our current contract language. The goal for the next few meetings is to plan our proposals for the upcoming negotiations.

— Francisco Ferreyra,  
IBEW 1245 Business Rep

## Central West Area

Grievance activity has picked up with several LCTT and VMI contractors. We continue to work on resolving all open grievances as we hold Labor Management meetings throughout the system. We try to reach resolutions on most matters as quickly as possible.

PG&E announced budget changes in November to the LCTT and VMI workers and sub-contractors who would be most impacted by mass reduction in the workforce. The membership was not happy to hear this information. The prime contractors placed their subs on lay off until further notice, which put many of our contractors in a difficult predicament. The impact was less than it was last year, and some contractors tried to continue to perform work as long as they could, prior to implementing layoff notices. PG&E also informed the union of new bids in LCTT throughout the entire system for 2024.

PG&E has continued to perform assessments of apprentices, climbers and foremen performing Line Clearance Tree Trimming on PG&E property. This has been going on since the first of the year, and will continue indefinitely.

Safety (SIF) investigations have continued throughout the system. Any contractor that's involved in an accident/incident is responsible for the investigation, which is closely monitored and administered by PG&E and the Contractor Committee. Vehicle accidents continue to be a huge part of these investigations, and distracted driving remains a major topic of discussion.

— Junior Ornelas,  
IBEW 1245 Business Rep

ban a cargo de Mario's Tree Service. Este cambio será uno de los más complejos de administrar, ya que la transición de una compañía a otra nunca es un proceso fácil. Habrá cientos de empleados que previamente habían sido empleados por Mario's, que ahora necesitan un puesto con el nuevo contratista, y algunos podrían estar sin trabajo hasta que se pueda poner en marcha un plan sobre cómo retener a la mayor cantidad de empleados posible. Arborworks, que tiene sus propios empleados y necesita que ellos trabajen también, tendrá una tarea complicada de hacer un esfuerzo de buena fe para tratar de absorber a los empleados que antes trabajaban para Mario.

Los cambios en los contratistas de gestión de la vegetación son inevitables, ya que siempre habrá competencia por el trabajo. Pero a pesar de que hay cambios de compañías, el mayor cambio ha sido los despidos. Este es nuestro segundo año de despidos de fin de año, que colocan a nuestros miembros en una situación muy difícil. Muchos tienen esperanzas de que el nuevo año traiga un nuevo comienzo y un nuevo presupuesto que ponga a nuestra gente de nuevo a trabajar.

Las reuniones de la unidad van bien, y los miembros siguen apareciendo fielmente. Las reuniones de la unidad son el mejor lugar para que nuestros miembros crezcan y aprendan sobre el sindicato, y creo que 2024 será nuestro año. Mi plan para 2024 es pasar más tiempo reuniéndome en persona con nuestros miembros. Quiero organizar más eventos y tener una mayor participación de los miembros, y la clave para eso son las conversaciones en persona con nuestros miembros. ¡Es así como fomentamos una mayor unidad entre los hermanos y hermanas del 1245!

En Reno, Nevada, se acerca una nueva negociación del contrato para los miembros. Las negociaciones del contrato son siempre un momento emocionante para nuestros miembros. Tenemos grandes esperanzas para este nuevo contrato. La reunión de la unidad ha atraído mucha atención y los miembros están ansiosos por presentar sus propuestas, y la mayoría se centran en mejores salarios, mejor atención médica y mayor seguridad de jubi-

lación. Nuestros miembros también tienen buenas ideas sobre cómo mejorar sus condiciones de trabajo a través de cambios en el contrato actual. El objetivo de las próximas reuniones es planificar nuestras propuestas para las próximas negociaciones.

— Francisco Ferreyra, IBEW 1245  
Representante de Negocios

## Zona Central Oeste

La actividad de quejas se ha intensificado con varios contratistas de LCTT y VMI. Continuamos trabajando para resolver todas las quejas abiertas mientras llevamos a cabo reuniones de sindicato y gerencia en todo el sistema. Tratamos de resolver la mayoría de los asuntos lo antes posible.

PG&E anunció cambios presupuestarios en noviembre para los trabajadores y subcontratistas de LCTT y VMI, que serían los más afectados por la reducción masiva de la fuerza laboral. Los miembros no estaban contentos de escuchar esta información. Los contratistas principales suspendieron a sus subcontratistas hasta nuevo aviso, lo que puso a muchos de nuestros contratistas en una difícil situación. El impacto fue menor que el año pasado, y algunos contratistas trataron de continuar realizando el trabajo por el mayor tiempo posible, antes de emitir los avisos de despido. PG&E también le informó al sindicato que habría nuevas licitaciones de LCTT en todo el sistema en 2024.

PG&E ha seguido realizando evaluaciones de aprendices, escaladores y capataces que realizan poda de árboles para el despeje de líneas en instalaciones de PG&E. Esto ha estado sucediendo desde el inicio del año, y continuará indefinidamente.

Las investigaciones SIF (Incidentes Graves y Fatalidades) han continuado en todo el sistema. Cualquier contratista que esté involucrado en un accidente o incidente es responsable de la investigación, que es supervisada y administrada de cerca por PG&E y el Comité de Contratistas. Los accidentes de vehículos siguen formando una gran parte de estas investigaciones, y los conductores distraídos siguen siendo un tema importante de discusión.

— Junior Ornelas, IBEW 1245  
Representante de Negocios

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# IBEW 1245 VOTES!



**The 2024 Primary Election in California is March 5, 2024, and all Local 1245 members are encouraged to exercise their right to vote.**



With so many large-scale changes facing the utility industry and the labor movement, IBEW 1245 remains focused on identifying and backing candidates who understand and support our positions on labor and energy policies. We are a single-issue organization, and the well-being of our members is our single issue. The candidates that have earned 1245's endorsement have demonstrated their commitment to protecting our work, our wages, our benefits, and our rights on the job.

**View IBEW 1245's endorsements for US Congress, State Senate, State Assembly, ballot measures and key local races in your county at [www.ibew1245.com/endorsements](http://www.ibew1245.com/endorsements) or click the "IBEW Votes" button at [www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com).**

## **Learn where and how to vote**

<https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/where-and-how>

## **Wondering if your ballot has been received?**

In California, you can track your ballot at [WheresMyBallot.sos.ca.gov](http://WheresMyBallot.sos.ca.gov)





# In The Driver's Seat

IBEW 1245 members participate in emergency vehicle operator training



IBEW 1245 member and PG&E Compliance Inspector J.P. Polsgrove



IBEW 1245 member and PG&E Compliance Inspector Chad Oliver

Statistically, the most potentially hazardous thing that IBEW 1245 members do every day isn't working around energized power lines or gas mains; it's getting behind the wheel of a vehicle. Some 1245 members drive hundreds of miles per day across the service territory, where they regularly encounter ever-changing conditions, unexpected obstacles and challenging off-road terrain.

As utility first responders, understanding and practicing safe driving techniques is a critical skill, not just for 1245 members' own safety, but also for the safety of others on and around the road.

To better prepare for anything they may come across while driving, IBEW 1245 members at PG&E now have the opportunity to participate in the Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC), administered by the State of California's Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) in collaboration with the state

college system.

The training, designed for police officers, firefighters, EMTs, park rangers and other emergency responders, provides skills and knowledge, as well as practical simulations, to ensure that emergency response drivers are prepared to handle their vehicles safely in any situation that may arise. The day-long training includes a classroom lesson and a written test, followed by hands-on practice behind the wheel in a controlled training environment.

■ ■ ■

The *Utility Reporter* caught up with a group of IBEW 1245 linemen from PG&E at a recent EVOC training in Oroville, CA.

IBEW 1245 member and PG&E Compliance Inspector Chad Oliver explained what he hoped to gain from the session.

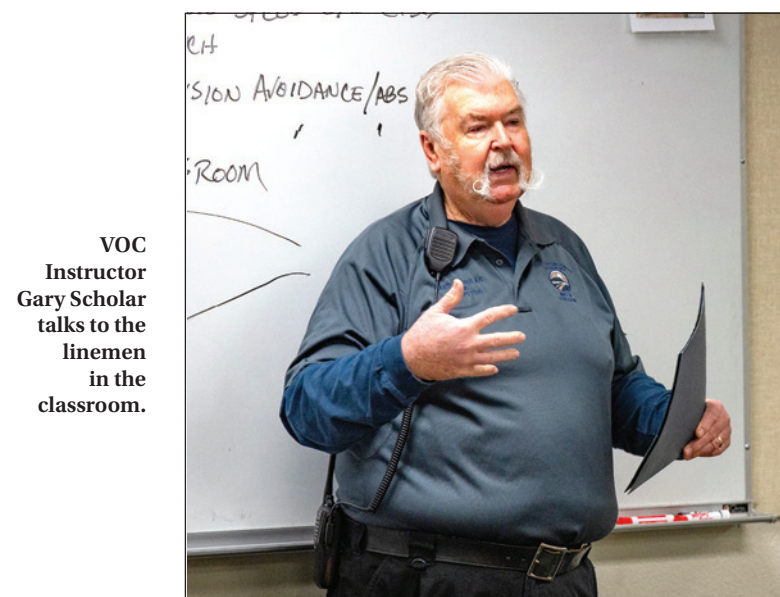
"I want to get a little more experience with high-speed slides and understeer and oversteer — especially in the snow, in the mud, in the gravel and the off-road conditions we face daily," said Oliver. "In our department, we are mostly driving Ford F550 single bucket trucks. And those are a lot more challenging than these [vehicles used for the training simulation]. They steer a lot better, but they also have a whole lot of top weight."

The EVOC training took place at Butte Community College. After an eye-opening lesson in the classroom, the participants headed out to the large, sprawling swath of land behind the campus, which presents an optimal environment to facilitate simulations that mimic dangerous road conditions. EVOC uses unique approaches that allow participants to practice safe driving techniques in a controlled environment. Course Instructor Gary Scholar explained one such simulation program.





Members practiced handling vehicles in the “the skid pan.”



VOC Instructor Gary Scholar talks to the linemen in the classroom.



IBEW 1245 linemen from PG&E in Fresno attended the EVOC training at the Butte County Law Enforcement Academy in Oroville.

“We have the ability of using a large flat surface — we call it the skid pan — and we have cars that are designed to lose traction. So we can simulate, at 12 or 15 miles an hour, what a vehicle feels like at 70 or 80 mph,” said Scholar, explaining how this approach keeps the training participants safe while allowing them to experience the feel of a true-to-life highway driving scenario. “Even though we’re going slow [during the simulation], the feeling that you get, the muscle memory that you develop here, it comes into play in real-life driving.”

The session also included hands-on training in obstacle avoidance.

“We’re trying to simulate something like a vehicle coming in front of them, or a kid on a bike, or something fell out of a truck,” Scholar explained. “They get to practice emergency evasive maneuvers, so they learn how to get around that obstacle without losing control of the vehicle.”

For IBEW members, having a safe, controlled environment to practice the most hazardous parts of the job is an essential part of the union’s safety culture. Trainings like this are integral to the continued improvement of member safety, and thanks to the collaborative approach that our union has with PG&E and other employers, IBEW members have frequent opportunities to acquire additional skills and training that keep them safe on the job.

■ ■ ■

At the end of the day, the participants left the EVOC training with a wealth of knowledge, hands-on experience, and a new understanding of the way they handle their vehicles.

“We’re all linemen, so we know there’s a lot of [potential] dangers and challenges that arise with energized work. But we also put a lot of miles on the road,” Oliver

said, underscoring why the EVOC training is just as important as other types of safety trainings. “I think there’s going to be a lot that people take what they learn from this class and actually input it into their personal lives.”

Oliver emphasized that he appreciates how hard IBEW 1245 works to keep its members safe, not just through trainings like EVOC, but also through a wide range of safety-related policies that have been implemented over decades of bargaining as a result of the union holding the company to the highest possible safety standard.

“Without the union, none of this works,” he said, referring to the increase in EVOC trainings and other programs. “We’re where we are with safety because of our union fighting for us.”

*Photos by John Storey*





IBEW 1245 leadership with Salvadoran union leaders from STESEC

# IBEW 1245 Renews Sister Relationship with Salvadoran Electrical Workers' Union (STESEC)

On Friday, January 26, IBEW 1245 welcomed the union leadership of the Salvadoran Union of Electrical Workers (STESEC), reviving the formal sister relationship that began in 2016.

STESEC Secretary General Julio Santos and Secretary of Culture and Membership Development Alvaro Flamenco represented the Salvadoran union at the IBEW 1245 Conference on the Grid of the Future and at the quarterly IBEW 1245 Advisory Council Meeting.

Secretary General Santos has worked as a lineman and substation system operator for nearly 40 years, and Flamenco works as a mechanical engineer at El Salvador's largest hydroelectric plant.

"These men lead the union at great personal risk," IBEW 1245 Senior Advisor Eileen Purcell explained. "Secretary General Santos was threatened with disciplinary action and possible termination if he left the country to visit our union, notwithstanding contractual language allowing them the right to conduct union business. Their courage and commitment are exemplary."

Tension in El Salvador has been on the rise due to the two-year "State of Exception" imposed by the Administration of Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele. This edict has resulted in the suspension of individual and collective civil rights. Arrests and firings of union leaders and their supporters have become more and more commonplace as worker advocates and trade unionists are under increased scrutiny, both from the government as well as from their employers.

Originally, STESEC had planned to send a four-person delegation for a week-long visit to 1245. But the trip was cut down to two days, due to the employer's refusal to allow union time off, even though it is guaranteed by the contract. Two of the delegates were blocked from participating at all.

Alfredo Ortiz Lopez, one of the veteran labor leaders who pioneered the sister relationship with 1245, was barred from attending. In a heartfelt and touching note to 1245, he wrote, "It is not easy to be a trade unionist in El Salvador."

■ ■ ■

When they finally arrived and had the opportunity to meet with the leadership of IBEW 1245, STESEC leaders Santos and Flamenco extended fraternal greetings from their membership and gratitude for IBEW 1245's solidarity and support as the union movement in El Salvador faces daunting challenges under the current "State of Exception."

"[Your solidarity] makes a profound difference as we continue the struggle for basic rights, and the preservation of our collective bargaining agreements," Santos said. "We cannot deny that the current anti-union political climate has impacted membership levels. But we are in the fight for the long haul."

1245 Business Manager Bob Dean recalled

the first time he and Santos met, back in 2017 when STESEC sent its first delegation to the union hall. Later that year, Dean joined then-Business Manager Tom Dalzell and Eileen Purcell on a trip to El Salvador to cement the sister relationship.

"I was greatly impressed and inspired by their struggle to build a union through a Civil War, and successive governments that were incredibly hostile to worker rights," said Dean. 'Hostile' includes the bombing of union headquarters, the arrest of union leaders, and threats and intimidation against workers organizing for their basic rights — conditions similar to the challenges the founders of IBEW 1245 faced 83 years ago."

In turn, Santos and Flamenco were greatly impressed by the working relationship between corporate leader-



STESEC Secretary General Julio Santos addresses IBEW 1245 Advisory Council accompanied by Jose Artiga (SHARE), Alvaro Flamenco (STESEC), and IBEW 1245's Eileen Purcell.

ship and the union, as well as by 1245's model of membership engagement, especially the union's Organizing Steward program.

Several Organizing Stewards expressed gratitude to the Salvadoran brothers for their courage, and new friendships were established.

The delegation and IBEW 1245 exchanged gifts, including IBEW 1245 staff jackets celebrating their "honorary membership" of our union.

"Though our time has been short, we return to El Salvador with many ideas that we hope to replicate," said Flamenco.



Salvadoran labor leaders with IBEW 1245's organizing team





Julio Santos presenting Bob Dean gifts



Julio Santos and Alvaro Flamenco presenting a gift to IBEW 1245 President Cecelia de la Torre

“..we are in the fight for the long haul.”

— STESEC Secretary General Julio Santos



Flamenco and Santos with SHARE Executive Director Jose Artiga and IBEW 1245 Sr. Advisor Eileen Purcell

In his closing remarks, Santos declared, “From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you for your solidarity and the sister relationship. And we invite you to visit us in El Salvador.”

The two delegates returned safely to El Salvador on Sunday. On Monday,

they presented themselves at work — so far, they still have their jobs! They returned fortified and determined to continue the struggle for working people.

*Eileen Purcell contributed to this report.*  
*Photos by John Storey*



Santos presenting IBEW 1245 Business Manager Bob Dean gifts



Business Manager Bob Dean presented a plaque celebrating the sister relationship between IBEW 1245 and STESEC.



IBEW Organizing Stewards with Salvadoran labor leaders

### Timeline of IBEW 1245 and STESEC’s Sister Relationship

- **2015:** Exploratory meeting with the Executive Board of the Salvadoran Union of Electrical Union (STESEC) and IBEW 1245 Organizer Eileen Purcell in El Salvador, facilitated by the SHARE Foundation
- **2016:** Visit to El Salvador by IBEW 1245 Assistant Business Manager Bob Gerstle and Organizer Eileen Purcell, along with delivery of PPE
- **2017:** Visit to IBEW 1245 by five-person delegation from STESEC
- **2017:** Visit to El Salvador by then-IBEW 1245 Business Manager Tom Dalzell, Sr. Assistant Business Manager Bob Dean, Organizer Eileen Purcell
- **2018:** Visit to El Salvador by then-IBEW 1245 Business Manager Tom Dalzell, Sr. Assistant Business Manager Bob Dean, Organizer Eileen Purcell to formalize Sister Relationship and first regional meeting of Electrical Workers’ Unions. IBEW Advisor Sheralyn Wright and IBEW Director of Education Amanda Pacheco join regional meeting.
- **2019:** COVID interrupts in-person exchanges
- **2023:** Delivery of PPE to El Salvador via the SHARE Foundation
- **2024:** Business Manager Bob Dean renews contact and facilitates delegation visit by STESEC to IBEW 1245 for first *Grid of the Future* conference and Advisory Council meeting





In his quarterly address, IBEW 1245 Business Manager Bob Dean updated the Advisory Council on a wide array of important matters — including PG&E’s General Rate Case, the ongoing fight to secure and protect 1245 work, the extension of operations at Diablo Canyon, and utility use of unmanned aerial vehicles or “drones” — and explained how these issues could impact our membership in the coming months.

## 1245 Member George Orozco Recounts Harrowing On-The-Job Assault



IBEW 1245 member George Orozco grew emotional as he recounted the story and aftermath of a stabbing on the job that nearly took his life.

Orozco, who was working for PG&E in traffic control at the time of the assault, expressed his appreciation to IBEW 1245 staffers Mike Tilden and Gerald Williams for their support while he recovers physically and emotionally from the harrowing experience.



## IBEW 1245 Welcomes Delegates From Sister Union in El Salvador

Union leaders from STESEC (the utility workers’ union in El Salvador) expressed their appreciation to the leadership of IBEW 1245. These brave leaders were nearly barred from visiting 1245, as their current government’s heavy-handed “State of Exception” has put increased pressure, scrutiny and restrictions on

them as union activists. They refused to back down, risking their jobs to make the trip.

“From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you for your solidarity and the sister relationship — and we invite you to visit us in El Salvador,” said STESEC Leader Julio Santos.

The leaders of STESEC and 1245 exchanged gifts, and 1245 granted STESEC leaders honorary union membership with a plaque and 1245 jacket.

Full story on page 26.

*Photos by John Storey*



## 2024 Organizing Stewards Sworn In



President Cecelia De La Torre administered to oath to the 2024 class of organizing stewards. 2024 marks the 10th anniversary of the organizing steward program. “Ten years is a



big accomplishment,” said President De La Torre. “We started this program with only 28, here we are right now with 119 organizing stewards. Thank you all for what you do!”



Longtime Organizing Lead Serena Moss delivered the address on behalf of the steward class.



## Member Perspective



Arnaldo Lizarraga

In the heart of Berkeley, I found myself standing shoulder to shoulder with my IBEW 1245 union brothers and a group of dedicated co-workers, ready to take on the challenge of a 10k run at the Berkeley Half Marathon. Little did I know that this experience

## Uniting in Stride: A Journey at the Berkeley Half Marathon

would not only test our physical endurance but also strengthen the bonds of camaraderie that define our union.

The idea of participating in a half marathon had initially seemed daunting, but the prospect of doing it alongside my fellow union members transformed the challenge into an opportunity for growth and solidarity.

The course itself wound through the picturesque streets of Berkeley, each step a testament to the resilience and determination that unites us as a union. We embraced the challenge with open hearts, pushing ourselves beyond our comfort zones. The rhythm of our footsteps echoed the synergy that comes from working together towards a common goal.

Participating in a marathon isn't just about physical fitness; it's a metaphor for the challenges we face in our professional lives. By taking on this challenge

together, we proved that the bonds forged within our union extend beyond the workplace. The experience wasn't just about running; it was about pushing boundaries, overcoming obstacles, and growing together.

I encourage every member of our union to consider taking on a similar challenge. Whether it's a 10k, half marathon, or any endeavor that pushes your limits, the rewards are not just physical but extend to the bonds formed

along the way. Together, we can inspire one another to reach new heights and conquer challenges we never thought possible.

In the end, the Berkeley Half Marathon wasn't just a race; it was a celebration of unity, determination, and the belief that together, as a union, we can achieve greatness.

— Arnaldo Lizarraga,  
IBEW 1245 Organizing Steward,  
Shop Steward and Unit Chair



Lizarraga and his crew of 1245 members from Trayer Engineering completed the 10k run at the Berkeley Half Marathon.



## Units lend a helping hand

All of the following unit donations to various charitable organizations from October 2023 through December 2023 were approved by the IBEW 1245 Executive Board.

**San Rafael Unit #3711** donated \$500 to Marin Foster Care.

**City of Santa Clara Unit #1411** donated \$500 to the Salvation Army of Santa Clara.

**Turlock ID Unit #1126** donated \$500 to the Denair Lions Club.

**Tiger Creek Unit #2519** donated \$500 to the Pine Grove STEM Elementary Science Camp.

**City of Lompoc Unit #1218** donated \$250 to the Fabing Bikes 4 Kids/Brice Fabing Memorial Fund.

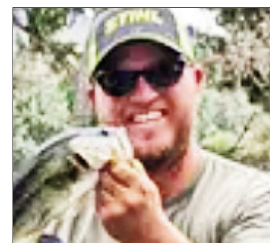
**Frontier Unit #4014** donated \$500 to the Mesa Verde Basketball team in Citrus Heights.

**Modesto ID Unit #2518** donated \$500 to the Awesome Spot Park in Modesto.

**Santa Cruz Unit #1513** donated \$500 to Guardian Revival.

## Support for IBEW 1245 Member Fighting Brain Cancer

Twelve-year IBEW 1245 member and NV Energy Journeyman Lineman Greg Frizzell is battling brain cancer, and is currently undergoing radiation and chemotherapy. Brother Frizzell, his wife Trina, and their children Mia and Luke, could use assistance to cover medical bills, pay for travel needed to receive treatment, and offset lost wages. Please contribute what you can using the link <https://www.gofundme.com/f/supporting-greg-frizzell-in-beating-brain-cancer>



**gofundme**







# Local 1245 Members Join EWMC International Day of Service

The Electrical Workers Minority Caucus (EWMC) held its annual International Day of Service on Saturday, November 18. IBEW 1245 members from the EWMC Solano County Chapter participated by volunteering in the Fresno and Sacramento communities.

In Fresno, members assisted in setting up and serving dinner to the homeless at the Poverello House. In Sacramento, volunteers participated in various activities at Saint John's Program for Real Change and Loaves and Fishes, included painting, organizing a warehouse, cooking lunch, and

preparing for the upcoming holidays, as well as cutting turkeys for Thanksgiving at Loaves and Fishes. Overall, the day was a success and our members were pleased to give back to the communities where they live and work. — Laquania "Q" Thompson, IBEW 1245 Organizing Steward



IBEW 1245 members volunteered at the EWMC International Day of Service.



## IN MEMORIAM

### Leland Neva



Leland Neva with Ashley

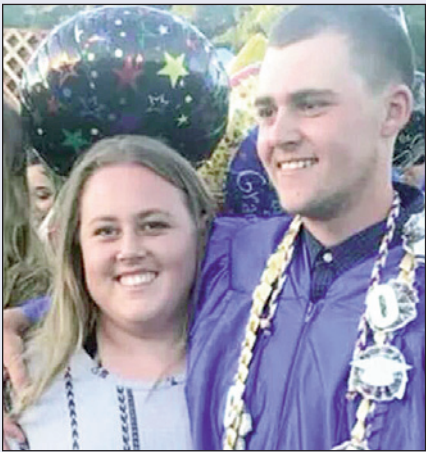
We are saddened to report the passing of new IBEW 1245 member Leland Neva. Brother Neva passed away on Nov. 7 after complications from a motorcycle accident a week prior. "I guided Leland on his journey to becoming a brother and he was so grateful for the opportunities 1245 had given him," his friend and fellow IBEW 1245 member Joe Bosch wrote just after Neva's passing. "Leland was a huge member of his community in Oroville California, a combat vet, a member of the American Legion chapter 95 and president of the Legion riders chapter 95 (a motorcycle group within the American Legion)." Brother Neva had recently started working as a 1245 Outside Line flagger prior to his accident. He leaves behind a fiancée and five children, and his family could use our support during this heart-breaking time. Please contribute what you can using <https://www.gofundme.com/f/leland-neva-and-family-support>



## IN MEMORIAM

### Kimberly Renee Mitchell

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the untimely death of Kimberly Renee Mitchell on Dec. 26, 2023. Kimberly was born on July 21, 1995, in Santa Rosa, California. Kimberly grew up in Cloverdale, California, and graduated from Cloverdale High School in June 2013. Kim played volleyball, basketball and softball all four years of high school. She was an exceptional athlete and known for being a team player with a big smile and an infectious laugh. Kim is survived by her parents, Greg and Erika Mitchell; brother, Kamrin Mitchell; grandmother, Catherine Mitchell; uncles, William Mitchell, Damian Knecht and Jacob Cole; Aunt Emilia Cottrell Cardenas; and many cousins. Kim was preceded in death by her Grandpa (Papa) Dewain Mitchell; grandfather, Homer Knecht; grandmother, Liz Cottrell; and Aunt Velika Weiskopf. Kim worked for Donohoo Inc. for many years. In her spare time she played co-ed softball. We are so grateful to have had this beautiful young woman in our lives for 28 years.



Kimberley Mitchell (left)

— cross-posted from Lake County News

The family could use our support during this devastating time. Donations can be using link <https://www.gofundme.com/f/kimberly-renee>

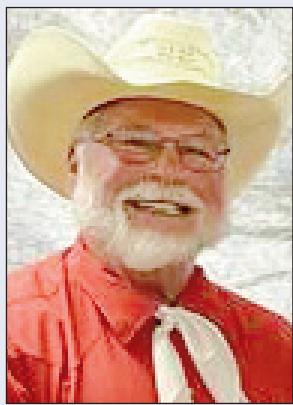




## IN MEMORIAM

### Dennis Steven Walter

Initiated into IBEW 1245 in 1971, retired in 2007



Dennis Walker

**D**ennis “Denny” Steven Walter, 76, died Saturday, Dec. 9, 2023 after a short illness. He was born Aug. 8, 1947, in Durango, Colorado, and worked for PG&E before his retirement. He served in the Navy from 1964-68 and received the Bronze Star for his service in Vietnam. He also was a member of the Sonora Elks Lodge and the Tuolumne County Sheriff’s Posse. Denny loved spending time in the mountains camping, hunting and barbecuing, and he was always willing to lend a hand and gave the best hugs to his many friends, always with a smile on his face.

Denny is survived by his wife of 57 years, Ellyn “Elly” Walter; his son Kurt Walter, of Sonora; his daughter, Donna (Walter) Mittry, and her husband, Matt Mittry, of Sonora; six grandchildren, Stephanie and Thomas Dawson, of Ridgecrest, Scott and Hailey Mittry, of Sonora, Shelby Brennan and Dillon Murphy, of Sonora, and Kyle Walter, Owen Walter, Jacob Walter all of Massachusetts; three great-grandchildren; and nine siblings. He is preceded in death by his father, Charles Walter (1989), mother, Carrie Walter (1987) and son Steven Walter (2020).

— Cross-posted from *The Union Democrat*

## IN MEMORIAM

### Arthur Duncan Cruickshank

**A**rthur Duncan Cruickshank, a beloved husband, father, uncle and grandfather, lost his battle to cancer and was called home to Jesus on January 7, 2024. Arthur was born on November 18, 1948 in Dayton, Ohio to Charles and Milred Cruickshank. The family relocated to El Sobrante in 1956 when he was 8 years old. Art attended De Anza high school in Richmond, CA where he met his sweetheart Melody and later married her on December 9, 1967. After starting a family they moved to Shasta County, where he resided at the time of his death.



Arthur Cruickshank

Art is survived by his wife Melody Cruickshank of 56 years, two sons Richard (Rachael) Cruickshank and Jason Cruickshank. His grandchildren: Brandon, Andrew, Justin(deceased), Jason Jr., James, Aiden, Addison and Shelby. Great-grandchildren in order of age: Bryson, Jac, Charli, and Katie. His “gift from God” Charley (3 year old cocker-jack dog) and many nieces, nephews and friends.

Arthur was known for his devotion to his family, dedication to his career and love of classic cars. He worked for PG&E for 42 years and was a member of the Local IBEW 1245 for 57 years. Art enjoyed many years at Kool April Nights showcasing his latest builds with his two sons, fishing the lakes and spending quality time with his friends and family. He was known as the “rock” of the family and a leader in all aspects of his life.

Details of his celebration of life will be released by family at a later date. We ask you to keep his family in your prayers.

— Submitted by Melody Cruickshank, cross-posted from <https://www.redding.com/obituaries/pyrk0686208>

## IN MEMORIAM

### Salvador Reyes

**W**e are saddened to announce the sudden passing of IBEW 1245 member Salvador Reyes (Chava). Brother Reyes was a ten-year member of IBEW 1245 who worked as a Service Representative for PG&E in the Fresno Contact Center.

“Our family lost a great son, husband, uncle, cousin, dad, brother and wonderful friend to many,” his family wrote. “Chavita was always there for anyone. He was the one calling family members one by one just to check in and see how they were doing. He was the one to make you laugh at family gatherings. The list goes on and on, Chavita was a great man with a huge heart and he made sure that you know that he loved you. We will all miss you Salvador Reyes.”

Brother Reyes leaves behind a loving wife, Beatriz, and three young children, one of whom has been undergoing leukemia treatments for the past two years. The family could use our support during this heartbreaking time. Contributions can be made using the link <https://www.gofundme.com/f/salvador-reyes-chava>.



Salvador Reyes (Chava)



## IN MEMORIAM

### Kyle Jay Bennett

**W**e deeply regret to announce the passing of 29-year IBEW 1245 member Kyle Bennett, who lost his battle with Clear Cell Sarcoma on Jan. 16, 2024 at the age of 49. Prior to his illness, Brother Bennett worked for PG&E as a Telecom Technician in San Luis Obispo.

His family writes:

*He fought so hard to stay hopeful and optimistic throughout his entire cancer journey and ultimately his one wish was that he would not suffer. He battled everything from wound infections, kidney stones, chemo side effects and lastly his heart and lungs shutting down along with his cancer spreading. He suffered the entire 10 months on his journey as he battled it with humor, laughter, and a smile. He shined his light wherever he went and touched so many people along the way. His humor was defiantly his super power.*

*As devastating as cancer is, Kyle always said it had a beautiful side too. You quickly realize how precious life is and how often we get tripped up on things that absolutely do not matter in the end. We met amazing, kind, caring, outstanding people along the way. From cleaning staff, food service workers, nurses and doctors so many kind souls graced us while we walked this path. It honestly has changed our life in ways many will never have an opportunity to experience.*

*We will take all these lessons and we hope you will too, please let the people you love know how much they mean to you. Spend time with one another because time is the only thing you will never be able to get back. Go into the world and be a light and make someone laugh in Kyle’s honor. Kyle is no longer suffering as his body has been restored and we are quite sure he’s surfing with Jesus himself.*

Brother Bennett’s wife, Jenny, and their three children could use support during this difficult time. Please contribute what you can using the link

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/in-memory-of-kyle-bennett>



Kyle Bennett



## IN MEMORIAM

### Timothy McEwen

Initiated into IBEW 1245 in 2006

**T**imothy “Tim” Daniel McEwen, born March 20, 1956, passed away Saturday, December 9, 2023 at his residence in Sonora, California. He was 67 years old. No other details were available at time of publication.

— Cross-posted from *MyMotherLode.com*

View 1245 obituaries and death notices at <https://ibew1245.com/news/obituaries/>. To submit an obituary, email [info@ibew1245.com](mailto:info@ibew1245.com)





Dylan Passanisi's winning photo

## Dylan Passanisi Wins Quarterly Photo Contest

**I**BEW 1245 is pleased to congratulate three-year IBEW 1245 member Dylan Passanisi, who has won the quarterly photo contest! Passanisi works as an apprentice lineman for PG&E. He was unable to accept his award in

person, so his prize check has been issued to him by mail. All IBEW 1245 members in good standing are eligible to enter up to five original, high-resolution, safety-compliant photos into the contest

each quarter. Submissions should be sent to [RGB1@ibew1245.com](mailto: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.

