

# UTILITY REPORTER



**GETTING READY FOR 'CUSTOMER CHOICE'**  
Adrienne Franks, Customer Service Representative at PG&E's San Francisco Call Center, is one of several dozen employees trained several months ago to field calls from customers inquiring about their option to select an Energy Service Provider other than PG&E. In December the company accelerated training in an effort to have CSRs trained by the now-delayed Jan. 1 start-up date.

*More San Francisco Call Center Photos  
Pages 6-7*

## Competition startup put off to March 31

**T**he long-awaited opening of an electric market in California was delayed by three months when officials announced last month that they could not meet the Jan. 1 deadline set by the state legislature.

The delay was attributed to problems with the new computer systems to be utilized by the Power Exchange (PX) and the Independent System Operator (ISO). Tests in December revealed numerous problems with the way the agencies' computers track power sales and settle accounts.

Jeffrey Tranen, chief executive of the ISO, said the system had crashed due to discrepancies in data input by buyers and sellers of power. It is a significant problem because the computers eventually must be able to flawlessly execute the results of thousands of trades each day.

Smooth operation of the PX and ISO are indispensable to the creation of an electric market. The state authorized the expenditure of up to \$300 million to create the two new agencies, but the delay makes it likely that additional funds will be needed to get the agencies up and running.

The delay had no apparent impact on Local 1245 members other than to heighten the suspense—and in some cases anxiety—surrounding the transition to a market.

In recent weeks Pacific Gas and Electric has been accelerating the training of Customer Service Representatives to prepare them for an influx of calls from customers curious about their options in a competitive market. The CSRs are required by state regulation and by company policy to maintain an attitude of complete neutrality with respect to energy service providers attempting to compete with PG&E.

Tranen told the San Jose Mercury News that March 31 rather than April 1 was selected as the new target for launching the market because, "We don't want to be the April Fool's Day project."

## Regional training conferences set for Local 1245 stewards

January 24

Public Sector Stewards  
Radisson Hotel Sacramento  
500 Leisure Lane  
Sacramento, CA 95815

January 31

PG&E Santa Rosa  
Hilton Hotel  
3555 Round Barn Blvd.  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

February 21

PG&E Bay Area  
The Savoy at the Boundary Oak  
3800 Valley Vista Road  
Walnut Creek, CA 94598

March 14

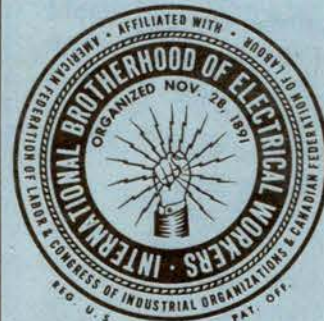
PG&E Fresno  
Cedar Lanes  
3131 N. Cedar  
Fresno, CA 93703

March 21

PG&E Sacramento  
Holiday Inn Capitol Plaza  
300 J Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

April 4

PG&E Salinas  
Ciolino's  
1200 Olmsted Road (at Hwy 68)  
Monterey, CA 93940



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Global Solidarity  
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### CALENDAR

January 24  
Public Sector Stewards  
Training Conference

January 30  
Service Award Dinner  
Redwood Valley, Ca.

January 31  
PG&E Stewards  
Regional Training Conference  
Santa Rosa, Ca.

January 31  
Service Award Dinner  
Santa Rosa, Ca.

February 7-8  
Advisory Council  
Concord, Ca.

February 13  
Service Award Dinner  
Salinas, Ca.

February 14  
PG&E Stewards  
Regional Training Conference  
Salinas, Ca.

February 20  
Service Award Dinner  
San Francisco, Ca.

February 21  
PG&E Stewards  
Regional Training Conference  
San Francisco, Ca.





UTILITY  
REPORTER

January 1998  
Volume XLVII  
Number 1  
Circulation: 26,800

(510) 933-6060

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Published monthly at 3063 Citrus Circle, Walnut Creek, California 94598. Official publication of Local Union 1245, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, AFL-CIO, P.O. Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

Second Class postage paid at Walnut Creek 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 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

Single copies 10 cents, subscription \$1.20 annually.

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*Workers here and abroad*

## Rolling the union on...

**'I Won't Ride':** When high-school senior Sara Shomber learned that her Columbus, Ohio, school field trip's transportation was on a sub-contracted school bus, she refused to ride. "I will not ride on a school bus that is sub-contracted. Contract buses are not safe, and the drivers are not as qualified," said Shomber, daughter of union members. She marched straight into the administrator's office and reported the same thing.

OAPSE/AFSCME Local 336 took up the issue, noting that the collective bargaining agreement with the schools required that the work be assigned to OAPSE members. School authorities agreed, and now all students in the Columbus public schools will be transported by union drivers.

**Tree Trimmers Organize:** Seventy workers at Davey Tree Surgery Co. won card check recognition last month and are now members of IBEW Local 47.

Davey has a contract to maintain and clear trees from Southern California Edison's power lines.

**Political Pressure Pays:** The Sheraton Corp. Will build a 500-room convention center hotel in downtown Sacramento, Ca., and already has signed a card-check agreement with the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees. More than 150 union members, including about 50 HERE members, packed a recent hearing at which City Council members voted 8-0 for Sheraton over a competing bid from Marriott, which had refused a card check agreement.

**Temp Workers:** The National Association of Temporary and Staffing Services, an employer group, is mobilizing against a proposed NLRB rule change that would make it easier for temporary workers to join unions, Labor Notes reported. The Labor Board is considering changing a rule which effectively makes it impossible for workers referred to a job by a temp agency to join a union. Currently, such workers must get permission from both the employer and the temp agency to join an existing bargaining unit where they are working.

**Independence!:** The Korean owners of a Tijuana, Mexico factory have agreed in principle to cut ties to a government-controlled union with which they had signed a secret contract and to recognize an independent union formed by plant workers. The preliminary agreement, if formalized, would be historic. Never before have workers in any of Mexico's 2700 tax-free maquiladora assembly plants succeeded in forming an independent union with no ties to the main government-controlled labor federation.

**Help is Coming:** Canadian Steelworkers have

agreed to provide funding to the Frente Autentico del Trabajo (FAT) labor federation in Mexico to support its efforts to organize Mexican workers affected by the North American Free Trade Agreement. During their biennial national policy conference the Canadians committed to funding about \$70,000 in 1998 in income support for Mexican workers who are terminated or who lose wages in labor disputes.

**Santa's Bag:** Santa Claus led a parade of about 100 janitors to three downtown Sacramento buildings cleaned by Somers Building Maintenance and delivered bags filled with the janitors' holiday wishes: dignity, respect, decent wages, and family health care. The parade was held to draw attention to the bleak Christmas faced by low-wage workers at Somers who have been trying to unionize with SEIU Local 1877. They have suffered threats, intimidation and firings during the almost three-year drive.

**Pacific Rim Solidarity:** UC Berkeley's Center for Labor Research and Education on Jan. 29-30 will host its second annual global conference: "Human rights and Labor Solidarity—Working in the Pacific Rim." The conference will bring together labor leaders, human rights activists and academics from the US, Thailand, Burma, South Korea, Indonesia, South Africa, Russian and elsewhere to discuss the causes of and solutions for worker repression in the Pacific Rim.

**So Long, 'Wimpy':** Former Machinists President William Winpisinger died of cancer last month. Winpisinger, who retired in 1989, was a blunt-spoken advocate of progressive ideals and one of the labor movement's most colorful figures.

### 1998 Shift Premiums: Pacific Gas & Electric

See Section 110.2 and 110.7 of the Physical Contract and Sections 11.2 and 11.7 of the Clerical Contract. Premiums are based on a 1997 weighted average straight-time hourly rate of \$23.28.

**Second Shift Premium**  
\$1.09

**Sunday Second Shift Premium**  
\$3.26

**Third Shift and Sunday Premium**  
\$2.17

**Sunday Third Shift Premium**  
\$4.34

**Relief Premium**  
\$22.36

#### 1998 Nuclear Premiums

**Certified Fuel Handler Premium**  
\$1.74

**Reactor Operator License Premium for Senior Control Operator and Control Operator**  
\$4.34

**Reactor Operator License Premium for Nuclear Operator**  
\$3.47

**Senior Reactor Operator License Premium for Senior Control Operator & Control Operator**  
\$5.46

#### 1998 Remote Reporting Expense Allowance

See Section 202.21(c) of the Physical Contract

**Less than 15 Miles**  
**15 Miles or More**

**\$14.50**  
**\$20.25**

#### 1998 Personal Vehicle Expense Allowance

See Section 201.6 of the Physical Contract and Section 15.2 of the Clerical Contract.

**\$.325 per mile**



WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF CONGRESS ALLOWED BOSSES TO PAY FOR OVERTIME WITH COMP TIME INSTEAD OF TIME-AND-A-HALF?

HUCK/KONOPACKI LABOR CARTOONS - OCT

KONOPACKI  
©1997



## January 1st marks end of 8-hour day

It's official. California workers will no longer be entitled by law to time-and-a-half pay for working more than eight hours in a single day.

The loss of this important and historic labor protection is a sad day for working people, and can be blamed directly on California's Industrial Welfare Commission, acting at the behest of Gov. Pete Wilson. Employers are no longer required to pay premium pay unless a worker puts in more than 40 hours in a week.

Meanwhile, Republicans in the US Congress are still trying to abolish the 40-hour protection. If they succeed, American workers will no longer have any federally-mandated overtime protection, leaving union contracts

as virtually the only way to hang on to overtime protections.

As a result of the new rules in California, employers will be able to order longer workdays for millions of workers in the state. Previously employers had to have the consent of a large majority of employees at a worksite before it could institute schedules with longer workdays, such as four 10-hour days.

Now employers will be able to unilaterally force employees to work 10-hour days, 12-hour days, or even longer, without paying overtime.

### Rules Spell Trouble

The new rules spell trouble for employees on several fronts:

- Some employees will

undoubtedly find it more difficult to locate childcare providers who can accommodate the extra hours.

- Workplace stress and fatigue can be expected to rise as employees put in longer hours.

- Safety problems could increase as more and more workers "work tired."

- Employees who relied on overtime compensation to pay their bills, or buy a little "something extra" will find they now get straight pay for those extra hours rather than time-and-a-half.

- Union members who enjoy time-and-a-half and double-time provisions in their labor agreements may find themselves under increasing pressure from employers to make concessions in overtime rules.

## New Year's Surprise

Jack McNally, IBEW 1245 Business Manager

January 1, 1998 was the Big Day that didn't happen.

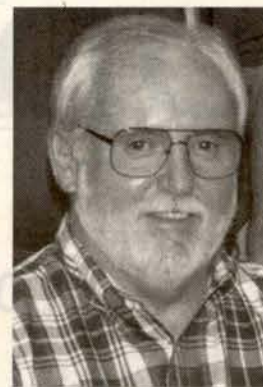
The New Year was supposed to bring a new electricity market to most of California. Newspapers and trade journals were chock full of stories about the Big Day.

For large users of electricity it was to be the fulfillment of a dream: they would finally be allowed to cut deals directly with generators of their choice or purchase electricity through the Power Exchange at market prices. The large users, independent generators, power brokers, and others were chomping at the bit, waiting for the gun to fire on Jan. 1 so they could take off and make their killing in the new electric marketplace.

But it wasn't to be. At least not yet. On Dec. 22, the Power Exchange (PX) and the Independent System Operator (ISO) informed the public that they were not ready to fire up the new customized computer and communications system that is needed for the market to function. A week later they announced that they would be ready not later than March 31st.

In all fairness to these agencies, it was a tall order. To build a customized system from scratch, in less than a year for the seventh largest economy in the world, was asking a little much.

The objective remains: to establish two organizations—the PX and ISO—each with its own main office and backup office, with all four locations to be linked by computer. The computer and communications hardware and software are to do the sched-



uling of hourly pricing of electricity, scheduling of transmission access for all customers, and the billing and settling of charges. This is no easy task.

Criticism has been voiced by some—with little or no experience in this field—who thought it should be a piece of cake to put this market in place. But it wasn't. The large users, commissioners, legislators, and the market-ers are certainly concerned to get this job finished, and concerned that it be done right. I don't blame them.

So the Big Day didn't bring "The Market." However, it did bring a little ironic twist in this on-going saga. January 1st was to be the day that the big users would begin reaping the benefits of deregulation, while prospects for residential and small business ratepayers in the market were less bright.

But with the delayed opening of the market, the "big guys" didn't get anything on January 1, while residential and small business ratepayers—the "little guys"—got the 10% rate cut mandated by the legislature. They didn't have to call, sign up, or agree with anybody on anything—just enjoy the 10% cut.

And so passed the Big Day. Now we wait for the next one.

## Tragedy strikes family of retired member

Tragedy struck the life of retired member Everett Harriman early this year when his daughter and her family were killed in an accident.

Lost in the accident were Kathy Lynn Harriman, 35, her husband Allen Taylor, 36, daughter LaDawna Marie, 11, and son Roger Harriman Riley, 3.

Everett Harriman is a retired Local 1245 member who worked in PG&E General Construction in the Chico area.

Local 1245 members can assist Brother Harriman's family by contributing to the Harriman Memorial Fund. Contributions can be made to **Account 128-266871** and sent to:

**Harriman Memorial Fund**  
**Bank of the West**  
**2626 Oro Dam Blvd.**  
**Oroville, CA 95966**

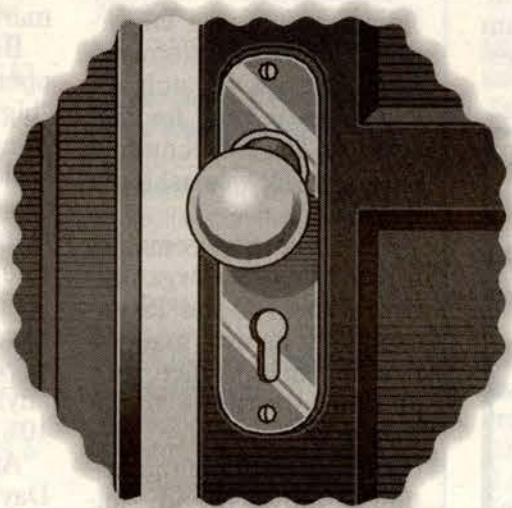


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# Unionists map strategy for global solidarity

**N**early 400 unionists and activists from 20 countries convened in San Francisco in November to denounce global corporations for their role in the erosion of workers' rights, public services, and living standards throughout the western hemisphere.

"In the name of 'free trade' our freedoms and rights are being systematically subverted," the activists noted in the final declaration from the Western Hemisphere Workers' Conference Against NAFTA & Privatizations. They called for a common "day of action" in April to oppose the extension of NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) and destruction of public services.

The conference, held Nov. 14-16, featured workers and union activists from Central and South America, Mexico,

Canada and the United States. The meeting coincided with a recent victory for labor on trade issues: the blocking of "fast track" authority for President Clinton to negotiate new trade agreements. This "fast track" authority would have made it impossible for Congress to add labor or environmental protections to future treaties negotiated by the President.

One country the US hopes to gain a "free trade" agreement with is Chile. Chilean unionist Luis Mesina, general secretary of the Bankworkers Union of Chile, warned conference participants that free trade agreements make it harder to combat the abuse of workers.

The AFL-CIO, which worked hard to defeat "fast track", was represented at the conference by Stan Gacek, International Relations Director for the West-

ern Hemisphere. Gacek stressed the importance of including enforceable labor rights provisions in all trade agreements.

## Local 1245 Members

Several Local 1245 members assisted with the conference. Millie Phillips provided logistical support while San Francisco Unit Chair David Walters participated in drafting the final declaration. Robin David was convenor for the utility workers' workshop. Also representing Local 1245 were Cesar Custodio, Advi-

sory Council member Bernard Smallwood, Belmont Unit Chair Bob Quinn, and Business Rep. Hunter Stern.

The conference grew out of a resolution by the 21st convention of the California Labor Federation, and the on-going efforts of the Federation's Executive Secretary-Treasurer (retired) John Henning to focus attention on the need for a global labor movement to respond to the increasingly global nature of capital.

The "conference call" issued by the San Francisco Labor Council laid out the rationale for calling unionists together:

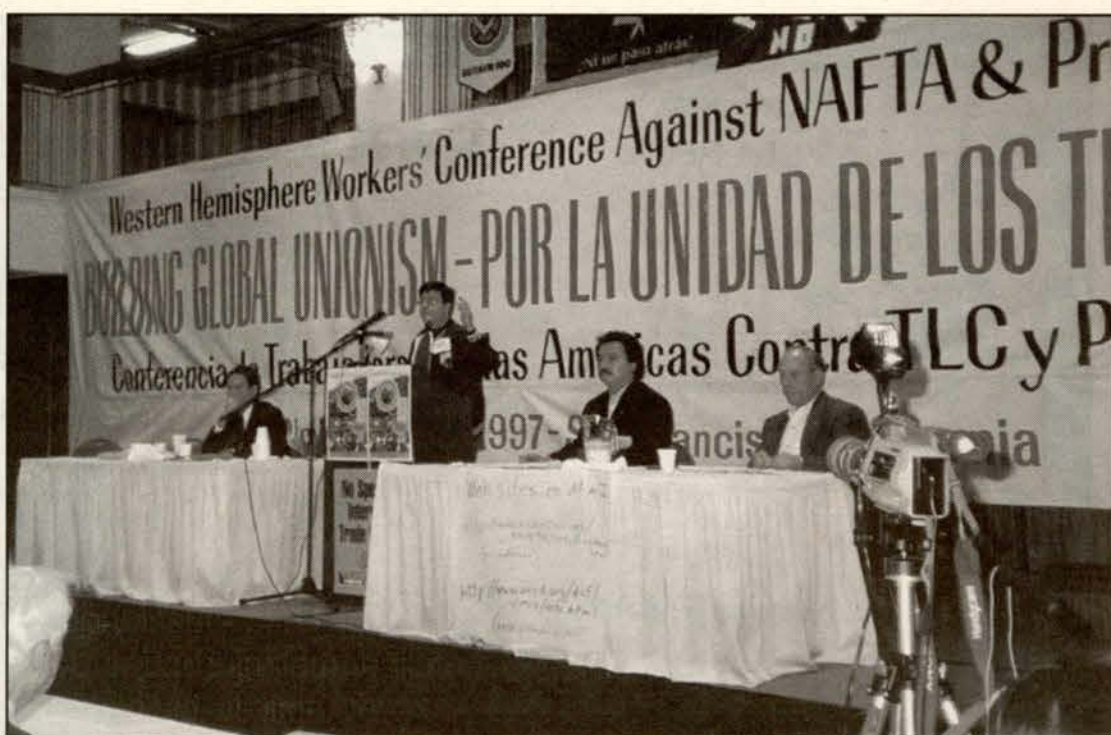
"We were told by so-called experts that the North American Free Trade Agreement would bring new jobs and new prosperity to millions. The real record is much different. The trilateral Commission for Labor Cooperation established by NAFTA admitted

in June 1996 that real wages had dropped in Mexico, Canada, and the US. In all three countries, the gap between the rich and poor has widened significantly.

"A global union response is desperately needed," the conference call continued. "Capital has no boundaries or borders. Exploitation has no borders and workers should accept no borders in uniting to defend our interests and our gains."

Another IBEW member participating in the conference was Frank Mannie, a Navaho Indian who serves as president of the AFL-CIO organization representing indigenous nations. Mannie, who addressed the conference's opening session, utilized a Navaho proverb to illustrate that an association of like-minded unionists can grow into something of strength and power.

**"Capital has no boundaries or borders. Exploitation has no borders and workers should accept no borders in uniting to defend our interests and our gains."**

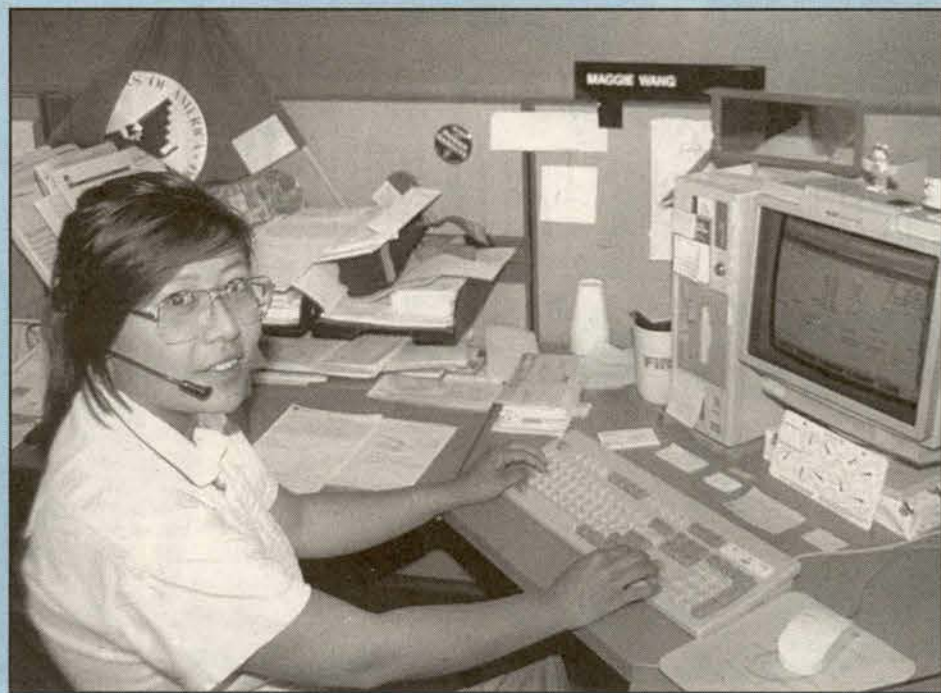


San Francisco Unit Chair David Walters addresses the conference.

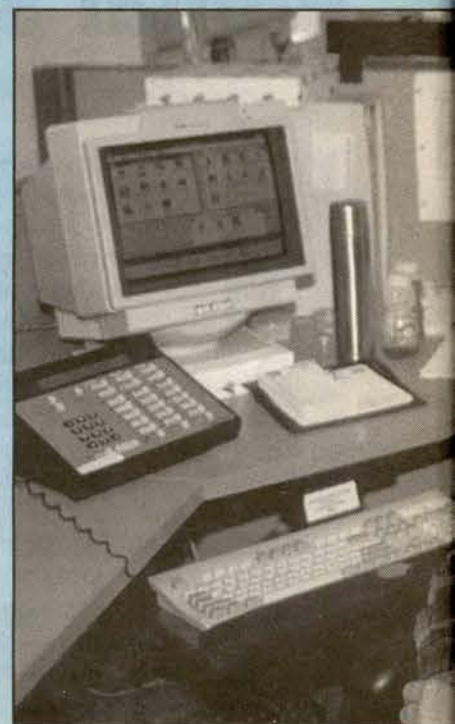


The Local 1245 delegation to the conference included, from left, Bob Quinn, Hunter Stern, David Walters, Millie Phillips, Bernard Smallwood, and Robin David. Not pictured: Cesar Custodio.

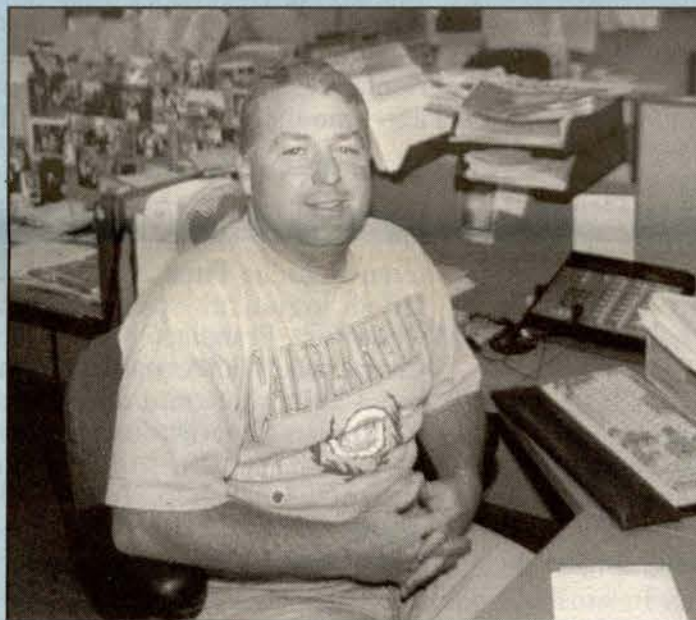




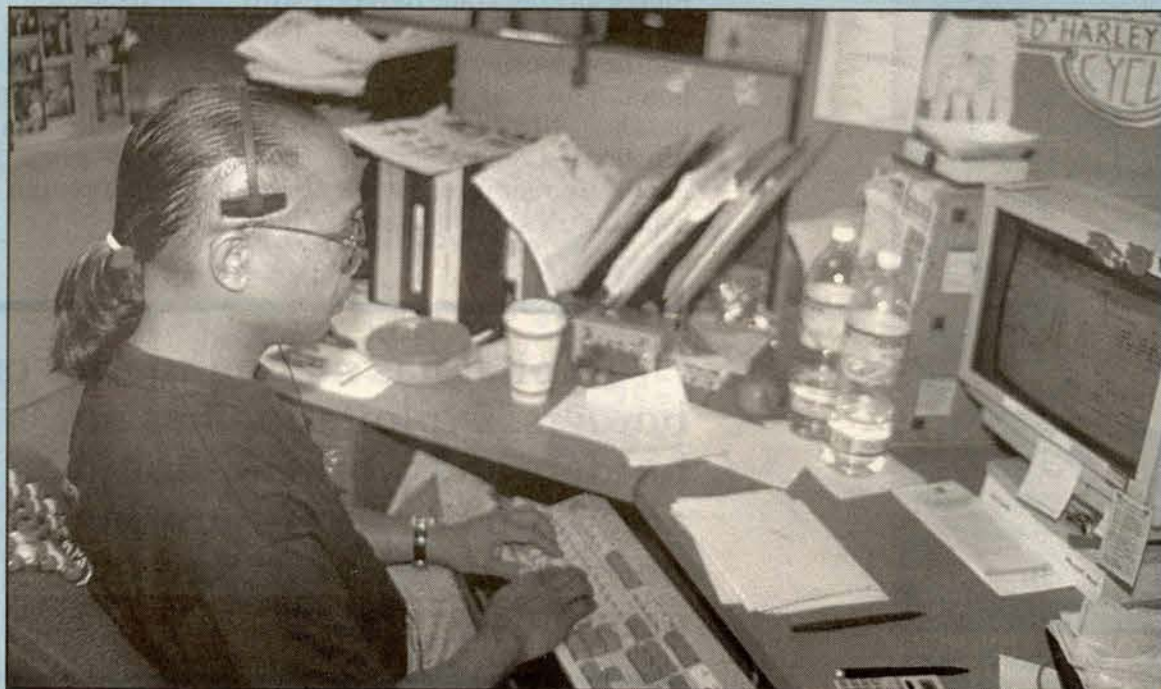
## At PG&E's San Francisco



Shop Stewards Maggie Wang (above), Marty Finnerty (right) and Ed Abriam (below).

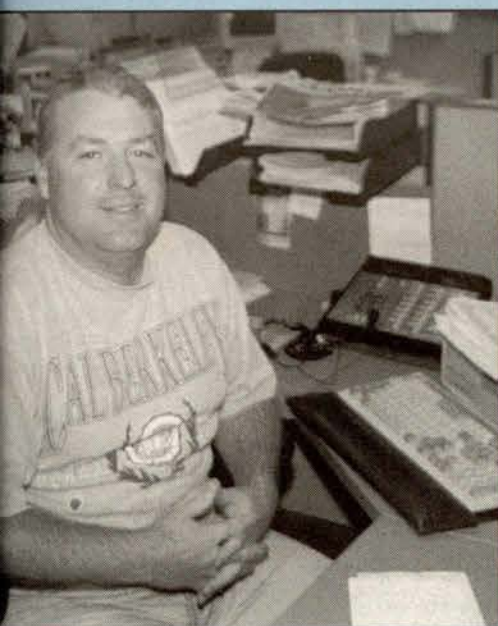
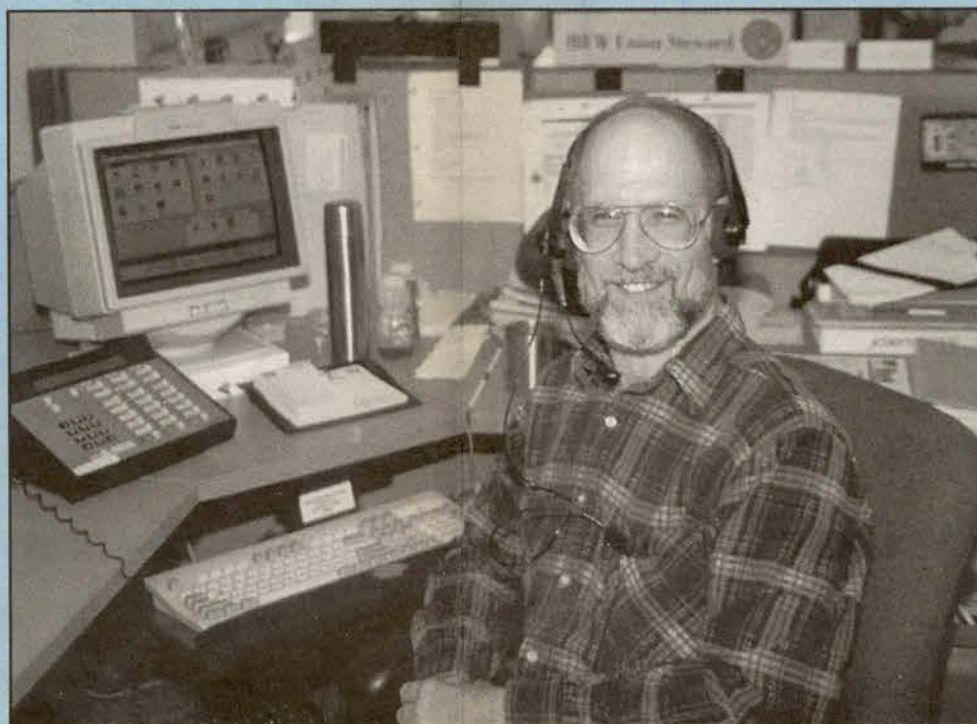


Shop Stewards  
and Gina Pong

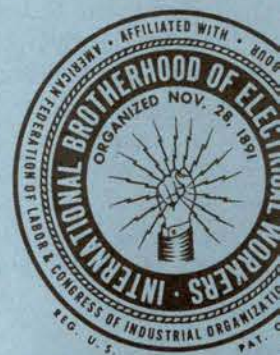
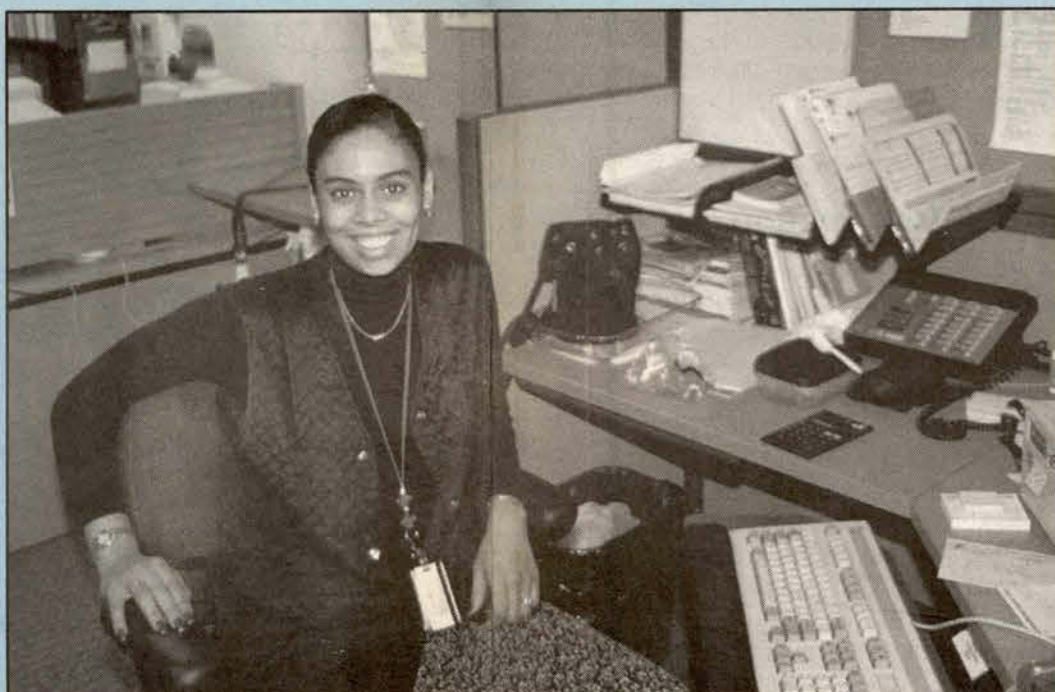
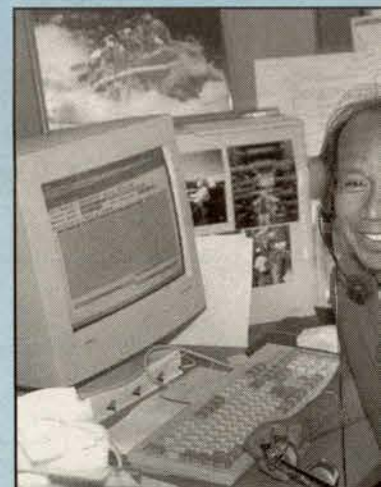




# At PG&E's San Francisco Call Center

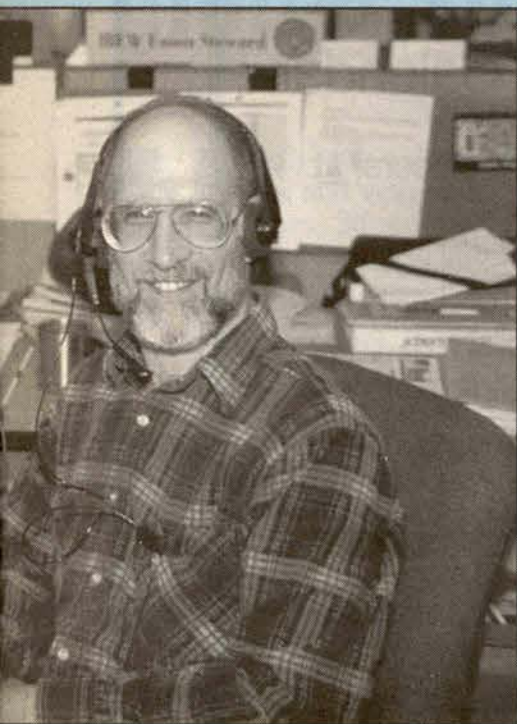


Shop Stewards Aaron Reaven (above)  
and Gina Pongasi (below).

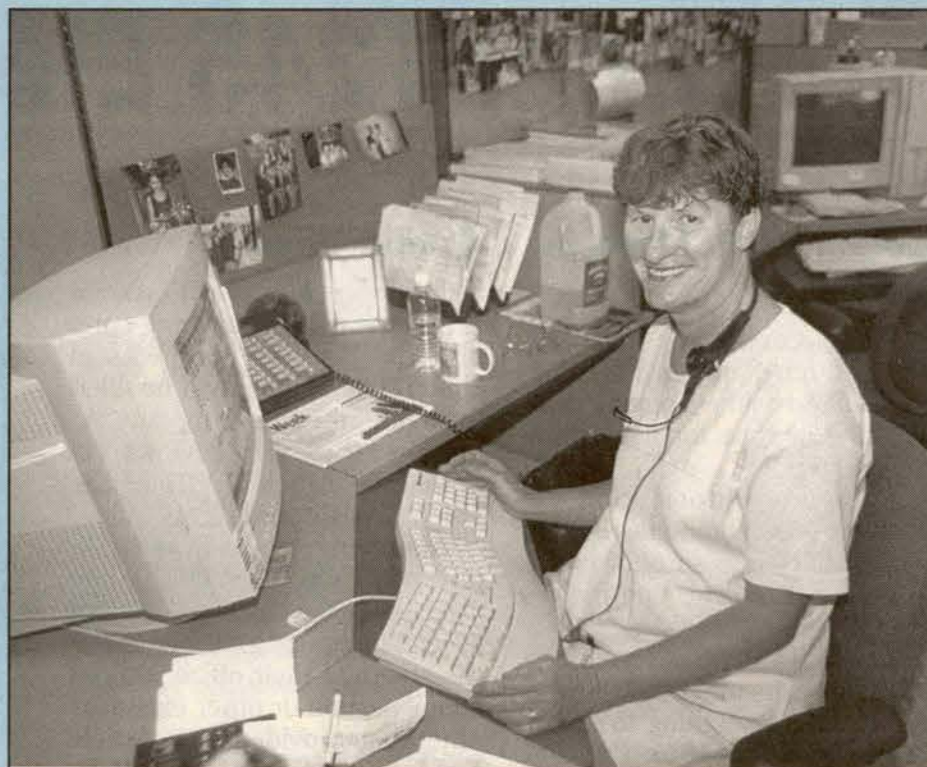




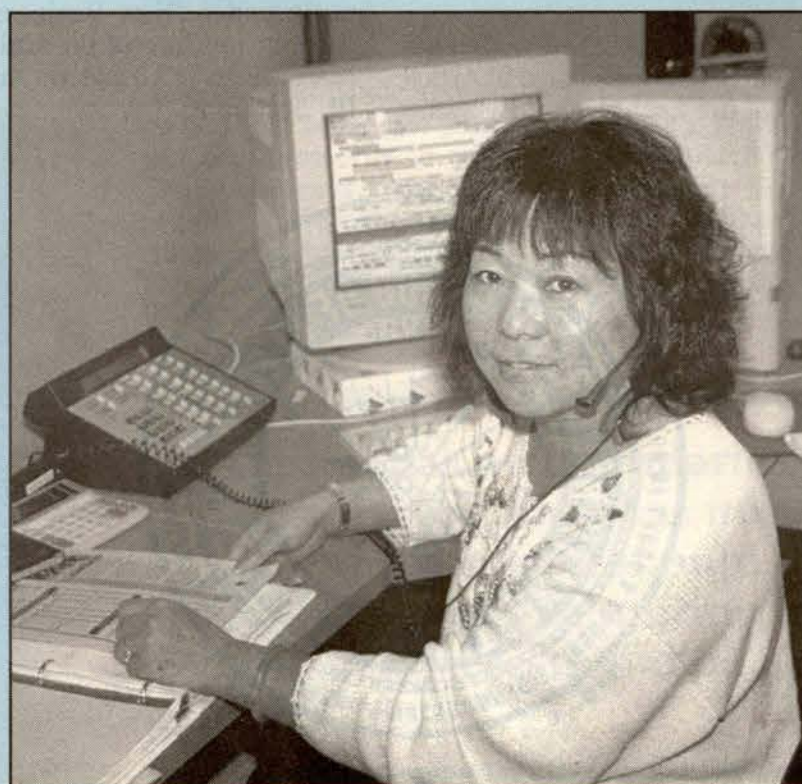
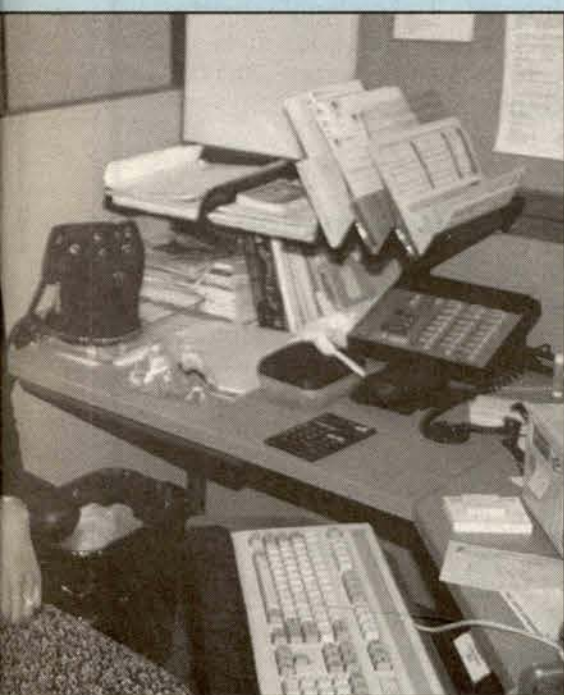
# San Francisco Call Center



Shop Steward Fran Andrakin-Baker (above),  
 Jamie del Rosario (left) and Susan Tso (below).



Working the Help Desk in San Francisco  
 are Shop Steward Fran Andrakin-Baker  
 (above), Jamie del Rosario (left) and  
 Susan Tso (below).





# Local 1245 Election Notice

## Nominations Open in March

The election process will begin in March of this year for officers and Advisory Council, with balloting in June for new three-year terms.

Complete information on nominations, elections, duties, and qualifications of officers are found in the Local Union Bylaws and the International Union Constitution. If you do not have copies of these documents, they may be obtained by writing to *IBEW Local Union No. 1245, P.O. Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596*.

## Offices

The following officers shall be elected in accordance with Article XVIII of the IBEW Constitution and Article III of the Local 1245 Bylaws: President; Vice President; Recording Secretary; Treasurer; Business Manager-Financial Secretary; Southern Area Executive Board Member, Central Area Executive Board Member, Northern Area Executive Board Member, and At-Large Executive Board Member. The composition of the areas and at-large group represented on the Board are specified in Article III, Section 4 of the Local Union Bylaws.

The designated Advisory Council seats are listed in Article 13 of the Local Union Bylaws.

## Qualifications

**Business Manager-Financial Secretary:** The offices are combined per Article III of the Local Union Bylaws and must be filled by a member holding an "A" membership (EWBA) as required by Article XVIII of the IBEW Constitution.

Members elected to office in the Local Union must be able and available to attend all regular and special meetings and to conduct the affairs of their office without compensation or other expenses other than provided for in Article X of the Local Union Bylaws (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Section 7).

**Assistant Business Manager(s) and/or Business Representatives** shall not be eligible to hold any elective Unit or Local Union office (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Section 7).

To qualify as a candidate for Local Union office or Advisory Council Member, a member must have at least two years' continuous good standing in the Local Union immediately prior to March 1, 1998. (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Section 9).

## Nominations

Nomination of officers and Advisory Council members shall be made under "New Business" at the first meeting of the Units in March 1998 (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Section 8).

## Election Process Calendar

- March:** Nominations of officers at Unit meetings.
- May:** Election Issue of Utility Reporter published; ballots mailed to all eligible voters before June 1.
- June 1-22:** Mail ballot election held.
- June 22:** Ballots retrieved from Post Office box by election committee, then verified and counted. Results reported to all Unit Recorders immediately after certification.

In order to be a candidate for any Local Union office, including Advisory Council Member, a member must be present at the Unit meeting where he or she is nominated, or notify the Local Union Recording Secretary, Ed Mallory, in writing on or before March 1, 1998, that he or she will run for a specific Local Union office if nominated (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Section 4).

A member shall not accept nomination for more than one office of the Local Union (unless combined under the Bylaws). If a member is nominated for more than one office, he or she must immediately declare for which office he or she will be a candidate and decline all other nominations for Local Union office (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Section 9).

## Voting

As provided in Local Union Bylaws Article III, Section 11, the May issue of the Utility Reporter will contain "a list of all candidates for Local Union office, together with a factual

record of their activities within the Local Union, committee assignments performed, offices held, and experience gained for and in behalf of the Local Union..."

Ballots will be mailed before June 1, 1998 and must be returned by June 22. To be eligible to vote, you must have paid your dues for March 1998 on or before May 31, 1998, per Bylaws Article III, Section 10.

## Further Information

In addition to the Local 1245 Bylaws and the IBEW Constitution, the conduct of labor union elections is also covered by Title IV of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959 (LMRDA).

The U.S. Department of Labor publishes two relevant booklets: Rights and Responsibilities Under the LMRDA and CSRA and Electing Union Officers.

These booklets are available by writing the *U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Elections, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room No. North 5619, Washington, DC 20210*.



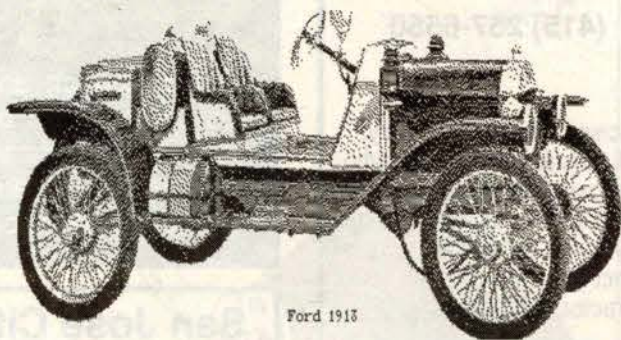


## Road rage: surviving the commute

**A**ccording to a study sponsored by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, reports of traffic incidents involving violence have been increasing at a rate of 7% per year since 1990. Rage is a factor in 66% of fatal traffic accidents.

"This is only the small tip of a very large iceberg," says David K. Willis, AAA president. "For every aggressive driving incident serious enough to result in a police report or newspaper article, there are hundreds or thousands more that never got reported to the authorities." Ricardo Martinez, federal administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), has declared road rage "the Number One traffic problem." And the New York Times has reported poll results from Washington, DC showing residents considered aggressive drivers more of a safety hazard than drunk drivers.

Over 10,000 traffic reports indicate most hostile, ag-



Ford 1913

Yesterday's leisurely motorist out for a Sunday drive bears little resemblance to today's fist-shaking, weapon-wielding commuter out to secure his or her piece of the road.

gressive drivers are males between 18 and 26 years old. However, in 413 of the reported incidents (4%) the perpetrators were women; in 86 cases, the driver was between 50 and 75 years old. In addition to using a gun, knife, club or tire iron, aggressive drivers have used a car as a weapon. In more than 200 cases, drivers used vehicles to attack law enforcement personnel, leading to the deaths of over 45 police officers and 38 drivers and passengers.

To keep safe, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety advises:

- Be alert for potentially dangerous or competitive situations—and avoid them.

- Keep your eyes on the road.

- Avoid eye contact with an aggressive driver.

- Stay cool—don't react if someone's egging you on.

- Assume the other driver's mistakes are not personal.

- Be polite and courteous, regardless of how the other driver behaves.

- Avoid all conflict if possible. If challenged, take a deep breath and get out of the way.

## Make New Year's safety resolutions

**I**f you're like most folks, your 1998 goals probably look something like this: Lose 15 pounds, work out at the gym, buy a new car... But put those on page 2, and put safety first, so you're alive to attack the other goals.

Rodale Press's "Safety Check" offers these five easy ways to make a big difference:

**1. Learn CPR.** "I had a fast lesson in CPR when I was just seven years old," recalls Edith O. "When my baby sister turned blue, she almost died from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. My mother, who knew CPR, coached me so I could breathe life back into her as she drove to the hospital." the number of lives saved by CPR annually is in the thousands.

**2. Strap on your seatbelt 12 times.** Actually, you should buckle up every time you drive, but a huge number of folks are still careless: 3 in 10 don't. Studies show that you can develop simple habits by performing a task as few as 12 consecutive times. That's why it's important to fasten your safety belt every time you're in a car. Before you know it, the habit becomes automatic—it feels weird to not wear the belt. Lives saved in collisions: about 20,000. Number of people uninjured despite a crash: up to 1,500,000.

**3. Love your back.** When you get out of bed, ease out by rolling on your side, then pushing up. When exercising, include health-back moves. Before lifting something heavy, as a buddy to lend a hand. When you've

shoveled snow for 40 minutes and there's still a driveway to clear, go ahead—hire the neighborhood kid to finish the job. Americans would save \$17 billion a year, with 93 million fewer lost workdays, if we took care of our backs.

**4. Use PPE both on and off the job.** Wear personal protection equipment (PPE)—d, gloves, face masks, whatever the situation calls for. Whether you handle chemicals at work or spray roses at home, use PPE. About 90% of all eye injuries can be prevented with PPE.

**5. Hold a hammer with 100% care.** Americans spend far too much time in the Emergency Room with injuries from nails, screws, tacks and bolts. The number of preventable injuries in this category is 200,000.

## Safety Matters

By the Local 1245  
Safety Committee

### Space heaters need space

**K**ee portable and other space heaters at least three feet from furniture, bedding, walls, clothing and other things that can burn.

Always use proper fuel in portable kerosene heaters, and make sure they

are legal in your community before using them.

Ensure proper ventilation for any fueled heater to avoid a build-up of deadly carbon monoxide.

Be sure the heater is approved by an independent testing laboratory.

### Keep the pathway clear

**S**afety experts say you can walk onto any job site and tell how safe it is simply by checking out the "state of the aisles."

Wearing thousands of dollars' worth of personal protection equipment won't help if one drill bit left on the floor sidelines you for months. Here are some pointers offered by Rodale Press's Safety Check:

**Just do it.** Housekeeping moves are part of everyone's job. If something's in the way, move it.

**Look out for the other guy.** Leaving tools, boxes or equipment scattered on floors invites trouble. Even though you know

where they are, you can't assume others do. Best move: Make it a policy to put everything away after each work period. If you're not finished yet and go for a break, either block off the area appropriately with workhorses or move the equipment aside.

**Park heavy equipment out of traffic's way.** It's too easy to lose toes when you walk into a forklift that wasn't there two hours ago.

**Always close drawers.** File cabinet drawers frequently have a mechanism that pulls them back to their original position—for good reason. Walking into an open file drawer—at any level—can level you.



"I suggest you stop skipping your workplace fitness program!"



## City College of San Francisco Labor Studies Program

**Spring Semester, 1998**

**(415) 267-6550**

**Classes begin January 20, 1998**

All classes are at Downtown Campus, 800 Mission St. (at 4th St.), in San Francisco unless otherwise noted. Fees are \$13/unit for all students, plus a \$10 per student fee. Some tuition assistance is available.

### **Labor 70: History of American Labor Movement (3 units)**

Thursdays, 7-10 pm  
Bring the history of America's workers to life! Unions, strikes, locouts, slavery, emancipation, victory, defeat, solidarity, you and me, that's labor history.  
Instructor: Bill Shields

### **Labor 72: Labor & Employment Law (3 units)**

Tuesdays, 7-10 pm  
Your rights as a worker in both the union and non-union workplace. Focus on using important legal protections to help yourself, your union, and your fellow workers.  
Instructor: Carole Birnhak and Indira Talwar

### **Labor 77: Grievance & Arbitration (3 units)**

Wednesdays, 7-10 pm  
Rights and responsibilities of grievance handling; identifying and investigating grievances; internal organizing; dealing with supervisors and grievance

meetings. Arbitration as the final step.  
Instructor: Albert Lannon

### **Labor 85: Bay Area Labor History (2 units)**

Tuesdays, Jan. 20-April 7, 7-10 pm  
Zoom in for a close-up on working class history here at home. Includes labor priest Fr. Yorke, longshoreman Harry Bridges, farm worker leader Dolores Huerta and ... you.  
Instructor: Sue Englander

### **Labor 94B: Child Care Workers' rights (1 unit)**

Wednesdays, Feb. 4 - Mar. 11 6 - 9 pm  
John Adams Campus, 1860 Hayes  
Developed with the Worthy Wage Campaign and the college's Child Development Department. For every child care worker who ever yearned for good pay, decent benefits and a voice on the job.  
Instructors: Kathleen White & Bill Shields

### **Labor 96A: Labor Relations in Hospitality (3 units)**

Mondays, 6:30-9:30 pm  
Developed in cooperation with Hotel and Restaurant Department, HERE Local 2 and SEIU Local 14. It's San

Francisco's biggest industry. We'll look at who owns it, who organized it, what labor relations are like today and how changes in overtime and welfare laws will impact it.  
Instructor: Bill Shields

### **Labor 96C: Labor Relations in the Modern American Workplace (3 units)**

Tuesdays, 5:30-8:30 pm  
Phelan Campus, Cloud Hall, Room 307B  
This class covers it all. It will provide an introduction to today's labor movement. We'll look at labor history, labor economics, new organizing strategies and your rights on the job.

### **Labor 100: Race & Ethnicity in Labor (3 units)**

Wednesdays, 7-10pm  
Historically, life has been hard for people of color who wanted equality on the job, but who were often shunned by the organized labor movement. Learn about the roots of conflicts, stories of solidarity between working people of all nationalities, and positive steps that the labor movement has taken historically and today to deal with these issues.  
Instructors: Debbie Moy and Carmelita Tursi

## California AFL-CIO college scholarships

The California AFL-CIO is offering 37 college scholarships worth \$1000 each. Awards will be made based on an essay contest. Applications must be received before March 31, 1998. For information on details and rules of the essay competition, students should contact with local high school principal.

## San Jose City Coll. Labor Studies

**Spring Semester, 1998 (408) 288-3705**

**Classes begin Feb. 5, 1998**

### **LS23: Labor in American Society (1 unit)**

Thursdays, Feb. 5-March 5 6:30-9:30 pm  
Introduction to the labor movement in America. Explores the historical events that have shaped today's unions, current movement to revitalize unions.  
Instructor: Ron Lind

### **LS24: Leadership & Communications Skills (1 unit)**

Thursdays, March 12-April 16 6:30-9:30 pm  
Key interpersonal and group skills needed for leadership. Practical "hands-on" training.  
Instructor: Eddie Gonzales

### **LS25: Organizing & Politics (1 unit)**

Thursdays, April 23-May 21 6:30-9:30 pm  
Without new organizing the labor movement is dead. This course examines the emerging new approaches to building worker power through the process of organizing around workplace and political issues.

Learn how to sustain a process of continual organizing in a local union context.  
Instructors: Ron Lind

### **LS 136: Labor Studies Work Experience (1-4 units)**

Earn credit for your work in labor studies related activities. You must sign up for a minimum of 7 units including Work Experience to qualify. By arrangement. Mandatory Work Experience Orientation Sessions: Thursday, Feb. 12, 5:30 p.m.

### **LS 98: Directed Study (1-3 units)**

Explore topics in the field of labor studies under the direction of a faculty member. An individualized learning contract is utilized to map out specific learning objectives and activities. Examples of topics include readings in labor history, collective bargaining, labor law and current issues.  
Instructor: Beth Winters & Stephen Stamm

## Laney College Labor Studies

**Spring Semester, 1998**

**Classes begin January 12, 1998**

**(510) 464-3210**

All classes at Laney College, 10th & Fallon Streets, Oakland (one block from Lake Merritt BART Station). Fees are \$13/unit for all students, plus a \$2 Student Center fee. Some tuition assistance may be available.

### **LS 12: Collective Bargaining (3 units)**

Tuesdays, 7-10 pm  
Negotiating a labor agreement from start to finish, with simulated bargaining sessions.  
Instructor: Albert Lannon

### **LS 13: Economics for Labor & Community Leadership (3 units)**

Wednesdays, 7-10 pm  
Understand how our economy works and who it works for.

This class looks at the changing job market, free trade and capital flight, as well as our paychecks.  
Instructor: Ellen Starbird

### **LS 16: Rights & Discrimination in the Workplace (3 units)**

Mondays, 7:00-10:00 pm  
Workers' rights and legal protections on the job; how to pursue remedies through the law, and the union contract.  
Instructor: Tanya Russell

### **LS 48GD: Labor Research Strategies (3 units)**

Thursdays, 7-10 pm  
An introduction to research strategies and techniques for those who want to find out more about their bosses and/or their unions.  
Instructor: Albert Lannon

### **SHORT TERM SAT. CLASSES**

### **LS 201: Stewards' Training (1 unit)**

Saturdays, March 7, 14, 21 9 am-4 pm  
Intensive workshop for union stewards and other workplace leaders; grievance handling, internal organizing.  
Instructor: Joanne Jung

### **LS 248GI: Teams or Schemes? Employee Participation Programs (1 unit)**

Saturdays, April 18, 25, May 2 9 am-5 pm  
Employee involvement as union-busting or union-building.  
Instructors: Debbie Moy and Michael Haberberger

### **LS 248GL: Effective Meetings & Parliamentary Procedure (.5 unit)**

Saturday, Feb. 28 9 am-5 pm  
How to plan and build meetings that do what needs to be done. The rules that provide for majority rule while protecting the minority.  
Instructors: Joanne Jung

### **LS248GM: Surviving Downsizing (.5 unit)**

Saturday, Mar. 28  
Coping with today's insecure job market. Practical survival skills to get through unemployment and job hunting.  
Instructor: Ksiel Sztundel

## Union Privilege Scholarships

The AFL-CIO Union Privilege Program offers scholarship assistance to graduating high school seniors. Application deadline is Jan. 31, 1998, so hurry! To obtain an application, write:

Union Plus Credit Card Scholarship  
PO Box 9389  
Minneapolis, MN 55440-9389



# How 'big wink' politics works in Washington

By Orv Owen

Money is corrupting our democratic process and making it more and more difficult for average citizens to make their voices heard. When the corporations with the bucks want something done, their voices are heard loud and clear. The following article by Steve Protulis shows how the system works for the big guy and against the little guy. It should serve as a reminder of why it is so important that unions have the right to participate in the political process and promote the candidates who remember that the real America is made up of "little guys" like you and me. Keep the faith!

By Steve Protulis

Every day a Member of Congress—even in a "safe" district—has to raise \$1000 a day just to hold onto his or her office. That's a thousand dollars a day—seven days a week.

The result of this mad dash for money is that there is a lot of winking going on in Washington. Here's how "big wink" politics work:

A politician delivers a firebrand speech about the high cost of health care...and then votes to bail out the tobacco lobby which costs our health care system billions of dollars. *Wink, wink.*

A politician mourns the debts and liabilities being passed on to the next generation, and then votes to ease restrictions on heavy metal runoff allowed to pollute our groundwater for years to come. *Wink, wink.*

Politicians talk about the need to wean the poor off welfare and make them stand on their own two feet, and then they vote to extend massive tax cuts to the rich and large corporations, and extend tax credits to billion-dollar developers. *Wink, wink.*

The big wink is also practiced at a fast and furious rate in the area of senior citizen concerns. Politicians talk about how we must have health care cost containment, and then they vote against health care plans that would provide cost containment. *Wink, wink.*

They talk about the need to eliminate waste and fraud in the Medicare and Medicaid programs, and then they provide no enforcement

mechanism to ferret out the criminal ripping off of the Medicare system by doctors, and hospitals, and clinics, and medical equipment and service providers who make large contributions to political campaigns. *Wink, wink.*

Let me give you an example:

Columbia/HCA is the largest chain of hospitals in the US. It's a nonunion shop, a place where the Service Employees International Union has an ongoing battle to win workers representation. More importantly, it's

a continuing criminal enterprise: a huge corporation engaged in what appears to be organized crime—the systematic looting of the Medicare and Medicaid systems. The FBI recently kicked in the doors of five of its offices across the nation. Now let me tell you why Columbia/HCA was able to get away with such activities for so long—and why the company may yet get away with it. The CEO of Columbia/HCA is a fellow by the name of Tom Frist.

Here's the juicy part: Tom Frist—the CEO of Columbia/HCA has a brother. And that brother is none other than Bill Frist, the junior US Senator from Tennessee.

But wait, it gets better. Back in 1995, Senator Frist was the star of a million-dollar TV campaign in which he claimed that the GOP Medicare plan would cost you nothing, give you excellent coverage and eliminate waste and fraud! *Wink, wink.*

Guess who is being very,

very silent when it comes to Medicare fraud—Senator Frist and his rich brother! Finally, their rhetoric matches their actions!

The good news is that the National Council of Senior Citizens understands how Congress works and is prepared to fight those who practice "big wink" politics. As the recent battle over Medicare demonstrates, we've been very effective. We know how to end the "big wink" on Capitol Hill. However, we can only continue to be effective if we have support from our members—members who understand what it takes to stand up to Congress.

I cannot imagine anything as tragic as allowing the "big wink" to continue on Capitol Hill at the expense of your health and economic security. Remember: the health and income security you save may be your own.

*Steve Protulis is executive director, National Council of Senior Citizens.*

## Clinton proposes lower eligibility age for Medicare

Last month President Clinton proposed that people as young as 55 should be allowed to buy into Medicare, the Federal health insurance program now limited to those 65 or older.

For those 62 to 64, the proposal calls for a monthly premium of about \$300. When they become eligible for full Medicare benefits at 65, they would then have to pay \$10 to \$20 a month more than the premium for physician services. For those 65 and over, under the current program, that monthly charge is \$43.80.

Under the Clinton plan, people 55 or older who have lost their jobs and their health benefits, for example, in a corporate downsizing, could also get Medicare coverage for about \$400 a month.

Another group of early retirees, those whose employers reneged on promises to provide retiree

health benefits, would have the right to buy into a company-sponsored group plan.

Only about 40% of large employers offered health benefits to retirees younger than 65 in 1996, down from 46% in 1993, according to William M. Mercer, a benefits consulting firm.

Of the 22 million Americans between 55 and 65,

roughly 3 million have no health insurance. The Administration expects that one in 10 of those 3 million would participate in Medicare if given the option. Most would be in the 62-to-64 group. Many of those opting for the coverage would have pre-existing medical problems that led private insurers to reject

them or charge them high premiums.

But the Clinton plan would be too expensive for many middle-aged Americans. A third of those without insurance in the 62-to-64 group have annual incomes of less than \$12,000 or less than \$16,000 for couples, according to the Employee Benefits Research Institute.

## Panel recommends HMO oversight

A special advisory commission recommended last month that California establish a new agency to oversee the administration of health maintenance organizations and enact a wide range of measures intended to protect consumers and improve care, the New York Times reported.

More than 70% of insured Californians are now in some kind of managed-care plan, and there has been a

growing public backlash against HMO shortcomings. The Managed Health Care Improvement Task Force was appointed by Gov. Pete Wilson and the California Legislature last spring after a number of legislative changes had been proposed.

At a time when states and the Federal Government are wrestling with how to assure that the financial savings achieved by managed care do not undermine pa-

tient care, the panel's recommendations are considered likely to carry weight nationally.

In California, the immediate practical effect will be to give renewed impetus to some 70 pending bills—some of which Wilson vetoed in the past—that would guarantee patients easier access to care, including wider access to specialists and prescription drugs without administrative hurdles.

IBEW  
Local  
1245



Retirees Corner

### Retiree Club dates

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

**San Jose Chapter:**  
Meets 1st Thursday each month, 10 a.m. at Local 332, 1870 Stone Ave., San Jose.

Check out  
the  
Retirees  
Club!



## SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

### Local 1245 Trade and Vocational School Grant

The purpose of these grants is to provide aid to the children of members to attain a trade or technical education.

1. The grants will be as follows:  
\$500 per year, for up to two years for two candidates, as long as a passing grade is maintained, and a parent maintains membership in good standing in Local Union 1245.
2. In order to be a candidate in this contest, you must be a daughter or son, natural, legally adopted or a legal ward of a member of Local Union 1245. You must be a high school student who has graduated or is graduating in 1997. A copy of your diploma or a letter from your high school stating that you will graduate in 1997 must be attached to your application. Additionally, a letter of recommendation from your vocational teacher, department head, or school principal must accompany the application.
3. Applications may be secured by addressing the Recording Secretary of Local Union 1245, by calling the Union office, or by using the form printed in the Utility Reporter.
4. The grant will be made only to a candidate who intends to enroll full time in any industrial, technical or trade school, other than correspondence schools, which are accredited by the national Association of Trade and Technical Schools or the Association of Independent Colleges and Schools.
5. Applications must be mailed to IBEW, Local Union 1245, PO Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596, by registered mail or certified mail only, and be **postmarked no later than the first Monday of April each year (April 6, 1998)**.
6. Two names will be drawn by the Judge of the Competitive Scholarship Contest from those submitting applications. These two will be recipients of the grants.
7. Checks will be paid directly to the school upon presentation of tuition bills to the Local Union.
8. Presentation of awards will be made to recipients at the unit meeting nearest his/her residence following the drawing.

### Application for the Local 1245 Trade & Vocational School Grant for Members' Children Enrolling in Technical, Industrial, or Trade Schools

Sponsored by Local Union 1245  
International Brotherhood of  
Electrical Workers, AFL-CIO

PO Box 4790  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596  
(510) 933-6060

#### Candidate Information

Candidate's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
High School \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Address of High School \_\_\_\_\_  
What school do you expect to attend? \_\_\_\_\_  
Where is it located? \_\_\_\_\_  
What trade or craft will you be studying? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why this particular skill? \_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### Statement of Member/Parent

Name of Member/Parent \_\_\_\_\_  
Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that I am a member in good standing of IBEW Local Union 1245, that the Candidate named above, \_\_\_\_\_, is my \_\_\_\_\_, and that the Candidate will graduate from high school during the term ending \_\_\_\_\_, 1998.

Signature of Member/Parent \_\_\_\_\_  
Union Card No. \_\_\_\_\_

This is to certify that the above named Candidate is currently enrolled as a student at \_\_\_\_\_ and has or will be graduating in \_\_\_\_\_, 1998.

Official's Signature and Position \_\_\_\_\_

### Local 1245 Al Sandoval Memorial Competitive Scholarship

The purpose of this contest is to provide a grant in aid for scholarships to colleges and junior colleges, thereby making financial assistance toward the attainment of a higher education.

1. The grant will be as follows:  
\$500 per year, up to four (4) years, as long as a "C" (2.0) average is maintained, and a parent maintains membership in good standing in Local Union 1245.
2. In order to be a candidate in this contest, you must be a son or daughter, natural, legally adopted, or a legal ward of a member of Local Union 1245. You must also be a high school student who has graduated or is graduating in 1997. A copy of your diploma or a letter from your high school stating that you will graduate in 1997 must be attached to your scholarship application.
3. The scholarship grant will be made only to that candidate who intends to enroll full time in any college certified by their State Department of Education and accredited by the local accrediting association.
4. Application may be secured by addressing the Recording Secretary of Local Union 1245, by calling the Union office, or by using the form printed in the Utility Reporter.
5. Checks will be paid directly to the college upon presentation of tuition bills to the Local Union.
6. All applications shall be accompanied by a written essay, not to exceed five hundred (500) words, on the subject designated by the Executive Board.
7. Essays should be submitted on 8-1/2" by 11" paper, on one side, preferably typed and double spaced, with applicant's written signature at the conclusion of the essay.
8. Applications and essays must be mailed to IBEW, Local Union 1245, PO Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596, by registered or certified mail only, and be **postmarked no later than the first Monday in March of each year (March 2, 1998)**.
9. Each year the scholarship shall be presented at the Advisory Council meeting in May; the judge and a guest and the recipient and parents shall be invited, at Local Union expense, to present and receive the scholarship award.
10. A suitable trophy or plaque shall be purchased by the Local Union, at a cost not to exceed \$75, to be presented to the scholarship recipient.

The topic for the 1998 Al Sandoval Memorial Competitive Scholarship Essay is:  
"IS UTILITY DEREGULATION GOOD FOR THE CUSTOMER?"

### Application for the Al Sandoval Memorial Competitive Scholarship

Sponsored by Local Union 1245  
International Brotherhood of  
Electrical Workers, AFL-CIO

PO Box 4790  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596  
(510) 933-6060

Candidate's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
High School \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Address of High School \_\_\_\_\_  
What college or school do you expect to attend? \_\_\_\_\_  
Where is it located? \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### Statement of Member/Parent

Name of Member/Parent \_\_\_\_\_  
Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that I am a member in good standing of IBEW Local Union 1245, that the Candidate named above, \_\_\_\_\_, is my \_\_\_\_\_, and that the Candidate will graduate from high school during the term ending \_\_\_\_\_, 1998.

Signature of Member/Parent \_\_\_\_\_  
Union Card No. \_\_\_\_\_

This is to certify that the above named Candidate is currently enrolled as a student at \_\_\_\_\_ and has or will be graduating in \_\_\_\_\_, 1998.

Official's Signature and Position \_\_\_\_\_