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**In 2005, News briefs**

**General Motors** expected to spend \$5.6 billion on health care coverage, the Washington Outlook reported. GM now spends more than \$1,500 on health-care for each car it produces—more than it spends on steel.

**Since Bush took office**, the number of Americans without health insurance has climbed to 48 million.

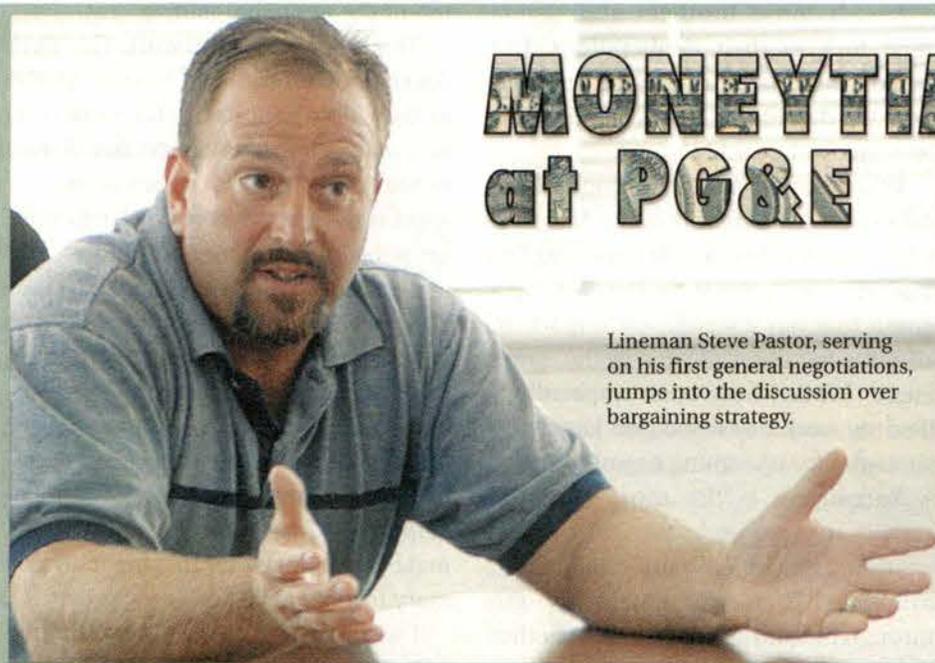
**A man convicted of enslaving**, starving and beating workers at his American Samoa garment factory was sentenced in federal court in Honolulu on June 29 to 40 years in prison. Before Kil Soo Lee's garment factory was closed, it made clothes for J.C. Penny and other retailers.

**Key Senate Republicans** are considering raising the Social Security retirement age as high as 69 over several years, according to a recent report by the Associated Press.

**Nearly a quarter (24%) of older adults** reported that they had failed to get health care services because of cost, including not filling a prescription, not seeing a doctor or specialist when needed, or skipping a medical test or follow-up treatment, according to a survey by the Commonwealth Fund.

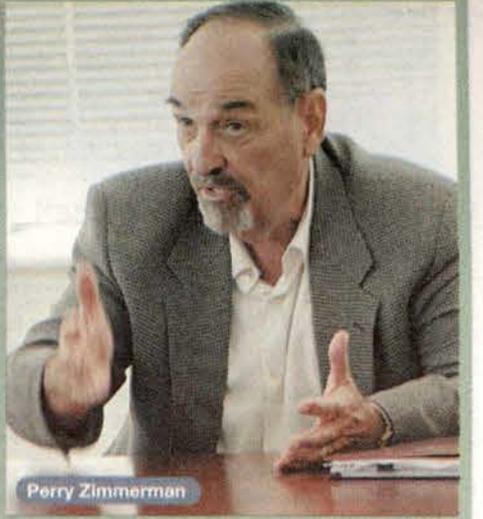
# Utility Reporter

IBEW LOCAL 1245 • AFL-CIO  
Volume 54 No. 6 • July/August 2005  
UNITY IS STRENGTH  
For up-to-the-minute news, see our web site: [www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com)



## MONEYTIME at PG&E

Lineman Steve Pastor, serving on his first general negotiations, jumps into the discussion over bargaining strategy.



*It's time to talk money at Pacific Gas & Electric.*

Wages for 2006-2007 and pension benefits for current retirees will be on the table as part of the "re-opener" built into the current labor agreement. "Our members know what they have done to restore this company to financial health, and the company knows it, too," said Local 1245 Business Manager Perry Zimmerman. "Individually, and together as a union, employees have gone the extra mile to help this company succeed. It is appropriate and it is necessary for

continued on page 6

## Union, PG&E discuss AMI fallout

As if vicious dogs weren't enough to worry about, Meter Readers at Pacific Gas & Electric are keeping a wary eye on a new technology that could dramatically change their worklife in the not-so-distant future.

PG&E is aggressively pursuing a new version of automated meter reading known as Advanced Meter Infrastructure. If the company gains the necessary approval from state regulators, it plans a five-year blitz to install 9.3 million automated meters for all of its gas and electric customers.

While changes in technology may be inevitable, job trauma is not, and the

union has moved quickly to examine the impact on its members and try to minimize it.

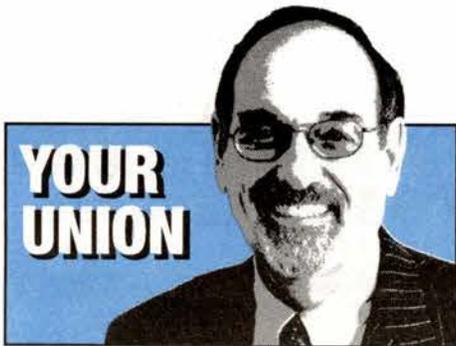
Letter Agreement 05-27, signed on June 10 by Local 1245 Business Manager Perry Zimmerman, lays out some of the parameters for who will perform the installations, and provides that the company and union will meet to discuss the appropriate classification and wage rate for Meter Readers who volunteer to perform installation work. (The full text of Letter Agreement 05-27 is available at [www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com))

continued on page 6

## Bargaining committee named at Sierra Pacific Power

Local 1245 has named the bargaining committee for 2005 general negotiations with Sierra Pacific Power. The committee will begin meeting this month to prepare for negotiations with the company. Committee members are:

- Gino Aramini, Working Foreman Substation / Reno
- Gary Bailey, Control Room Operator / Tracy Station
- Tom Cornell, Substation Electrician / Reno
- Aaron Dorman, Instrument Tech. / Valmy Station
- Mike Grimm, Troublemaker / Minden
- Reto Gross, Lineman / Fallon
- Dale Huntsman, Fleet Mechanic / Reno
- Jerry McAllister, Light Working Foreman / Reno Gas
- Wayne Paterson, Line Working Foreman / Reno
- Rita Weisshaar, Customer Service Representative Working Foreman / Reno
- Samson Wilson, Meter Reader / Reno



**Perry Zimmerman**  
BUSINESS MANAGER

## Keeping the focus on bargaining

I am often asked what I think of recent attempts by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) to reshape the AFL-CIO—the umbrella organization that unites most of America's unions—and to leave the AFL-CIO if it is not reshaped to SEIU's liking.

The answer is—I don't think about it very much.

For well over a year the SEIU and a few other international unions have spoken out very loudly about the shortcomings they see in the AFL-CIO. Various proposals have been put forward to

restructure AFL-CIO programs and staff. Many of these proposals talk about the importance of gaining new members for America's unions, which represent only about 13% of America's workforce today. These proposals will be hotly debated, no doubt, at the AFL-CIO convention in Chicago, which will be getting underway about the same time this column appears.

I wish those brothers and sisters good luck in their deliberations, but frankly these debates are far removed from the day-to-day needs of our members here at Local 1245.

What I think about the most these days is not the structure of the AFL-CIO. What I think about is collective bargaining—the one activity undertaken by a union that has a significant impact on all of the members covered by the agreement. While I have other responsibilities, my work day is focused largely on strategies for upcoming negotiations.

Bargaining is the most essential activity that we undertake. More than anything else it embodies the union principle that we have strength through our unity. That is true whether the bargaining unit is a smaller group like the City of Santa Clara or Truckee Donner Public Utility District, or a

larger group like Sierra Pacific Power or Pacific Gas & Electric.

While the international unions in Washington DC are arguing over how to structure the labor movement, we will be researching and analyzing the data that will maximize our union's impact at the bargaining table. We will be busy finding the right mix of rank and file members and staff needed to best represent the entire bargaining unit.

This is not glamorous work. This work doesn't make headlines (except maybe in the Utility Reporter). This work is by no means an exact science. But it does require that we be rigorous in our approach—learning from past mistakes, adapting to changing conditions, and not fearing to try something new.

By the end of this year, we will have negotiated new agreements for more than half of our members. The combined efforts of our members and our union staff will shape the wages, benefits and working conditions for years to come. It is a large responsibility, and I make no apologies for making it my primary focus for 2005.

I wish our brothers and sisters in the AFL-CIO the best of luck in their deliberations. But the responsibility to negotiate good contracts, not the grand design of the labor movement, is the thing most on my mind in the months ahead.

## CALENDAR

- Aug. 13-14:** Advisory Council, Reno
- Sept. 4:** Butte-Glenn Labor Council Labor Day Picnic, Chico
- Sept. 10:** Financial Planning Seminar – Outside Construction, Vacaville
- Sept. 14:** First meeting of the Vacaville/Sacramento Chapter of Local 1245 Retirees Club, Vacaville
- Sept. 24:** Local 1245 Golf Tournament, Vacaville
- Oct. 22:** Retirement Planning Seminar/Public Sector, Vacaville
- Oct. 29:** Service Awards, Stockton
- Nov. 8:** Statewide Special Election in California

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## Unit Updates

**Unit 3311, Reno,** meets at 6 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month. The recently-published unit schedule gave the wrong time.

**Unit 1411, City of Santa Clara,** meets on the second Wednesday of each month. The recently-published unit schedule gave the wrong day.

**Unit 3000, Davis PG&E-General Construction,** has elected its first officers. Unit Chair is Kevin Goodner. Unit Recorder is Jim Gindt.

**Unit 2316, Concord,** meets on Aug. 11 and Sept. 8. The dates in the recently-published unit schedule for these two months were in error.

**Unit 1513, Santa Cruz,** has a new meeting time: 4:30 pm. Meeting date and location remains the same.

## EVENTS

**A. Philip Randolph Institute (APRI) Statewide Conference**  
Al Fortier

**Summer Institute for Union Women**  
Ruth Bailey  
Gloria Flores  
Jerri Scaife

**Perry Zimmerman's**  
**19th Annual IBEW Local 1245**  
**Golf Tournament**

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**Where:** Green Tee Golf Course, Vacaville, CA  
**When:** Saturday, Sept. 24, 2005  
**Time:** 8:00 a.m. Shotgun Start  
**Entry Fee:** \$80.00 (Includes Cart, Green Fee & BBQ)  
**Entry Deadline:** Sept. 12, 2005 – Limited Tee Spaces

**BBQ, RAFFLES and AWARDS**  
**IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING!**

**LONGEST DRIVE**

**CLOSEST TO THE HOLE**

**WINE HOLE**

**BIRDIE ON HOLE # 6**

**IT'S GOLF TIME!** On Saturday, Sept. 24, 2005, Local 1245 will hold its 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Tournament. The cost is just \$80.00, which includes Golf Cart, Green Fees, and BBQ after the tournament. It will be a shotgun start at 8:00 a.m. Registration will begin promptly at 6:30 a.m. If you don't have a 4-Some, we will assign you or your group to a 4-Some.

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HEY! DON'T MISS OUT! GET YOUR NAME & MONEY IN NOW!  
 Make checks payable to IBEW Local 1245 and mail to:  
 Local 1245 Golf Tournament, P.O. Box 2547, Vacaville, CA 95696, Attn: Gail Varner

1. Name	P	
Address	R	
2. Name	I	
Address	T	
3. Name	C	
Address	A	
4. Name	R	
Address	E	

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS SEPT. 16<sup>th</sup> !!!**

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL:

Chairman, John Mendoza [Cell Phone] [209] 329-3449	Co-Chairman, Art Freitas [Cell Phone] [831] 421-1339
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# Californians can nail the coffin shut on electric deregulation Nov. 8

Californians will have a chance to nail the coffin shut on electric deregulation in the special election scheduled for this November.

A ballot measure sponsored by The Utility Reform Network—and strongly supported by IBEW Local 1245—would repeal key provisions of the failed deregulation law passed in 1996 and restore regulated utilities' obligation to serve California customers.

The TURN ballot measure, called the Repeal of Deregulation and Black-out Avoidance Initiative, incorporates key elements of legislative bills sponsored in recent years by IBEW Local 1245, signaling a new willingness on the part of the consumer group to work cooperatively with the IBEW on energy legislation.

The ballot measure clearly establishes that utilities have an obligation to serve, and places independent power producers under state regulatory authority as well.

While some Californians may think that the energy crisis put an end to

deregulation in California, the disastrous law remains on the books and will spring back to life after the expiration of electricity contracts negotiated by the state during the power crisis of 2001.

"We have a deregulatory time bomb sitting in the heart of the current situation," said Marc Joseph, an attorney for the Local 1245-backed coalition of California Utility Employees.

Especially dangerous would be the return of "direct access," a system championed by Enron that allows unregulated power marketers to make contracts directly with large energy users. Direct access, in addition to being unfair to average consumers, makes it much more difficult to predict and plan for future electricity demand. Under the ballot measure, current direct access customers would be grandfathered but no new direct access contracts would be permitted.

Another provision of the ballot measure establishes that utilities do metering and billing. During the heyday of deregulation, Enron attempted to take this work

away from regulated utilities like PG&E.

TURN's initiative will lock into place a stable set of rules that will help to attract new investment at the lowest possible cost.

Local 1245 members have a very large interest in helping this ballot measure pass in California's Special Election this November.

## PG&E plans to close local offices

"PG&E maintains local offices throughout the service territory to serve you."

That's what the public sees when it visits the Pacific Gas & Electric website. But the message may soon be changing.

PG&E announced in mid-July that it plans to ask the California Public Utilities Commission to allow the company to close all of its local offices within two years. If the plan is approved, more than 300 bargaining unit members would be directly affected, many of whom are among the union's most senior, with an average service of 25 years.

Local 1245 intends to oppose the proposed closings through the grievance procedure. The union and com-

pany have agreed to expedite arbitration of the case. It is hoped that an arbitration can be scheduled this summer with a decision by early fall.

PG&E currently has local offices in approximately 80 communities throughout its service territory. The company believes that local offices are too expensive to maintain. It estimates the cost of a single transaction is between \$3 and \$7.

PG&E is expected to file its notice of intent to close local offices with the CPUC in August. The application is due to be filed in December, with a decision one year later, in December 2006. This would pave the way for local office closures in 2007.

## Who wants to drown nurses and firefighters in the bathtub?

*So-called paycheck protection initiative draws a bead on public employees and their unions*

By Eric Wolfe

Employer groups and ultra-conservatives like Grover Norquist are promoting a ballot initiative this November in California called "Paycheck Protection."

The deception starts with the name itself: there's nothing in the initiative that protects workers' paychecks. Those who are promoting the initiative have never lifted a finger to help workers guard their paychecks. Quite the contrary, the backers of this initiative have a long history of trying to weaken unions and undercut efforts by workers to gain more pay and better benefits.

The "Paycheck Protection" initiative, which unions rightly call the "Paycheck Deception" initiative, is a recycled version of Proposition 226, which Californians soundly rejected seven years ago. While Prop. 226 targeted all workers, the current initiative focuses on public employees.

Let's be very clear about one point. Grover Norquist, the godfather of Prop. 226 and the current initiative, hates unions and has no use whatsoever for public employees. He once proudly declared: "My goal is to cut government in half in 25 years to get it down to the size where we can drown it in the bathtub."

This sort of government bashing can create good sound bites on certain talk radio programs, but if you think for just

a minute what the implications are for you and your neighbors, you might decide you don't want to follow Norquist off that particular cliff. Consider for a moment the sort of work that is funded by the government and who performs the work: Firefighters. Police officers. Nurses. Teachers.

And yes, the utility workers at various public agencies around the state who keep the lights on for millions of Californians.

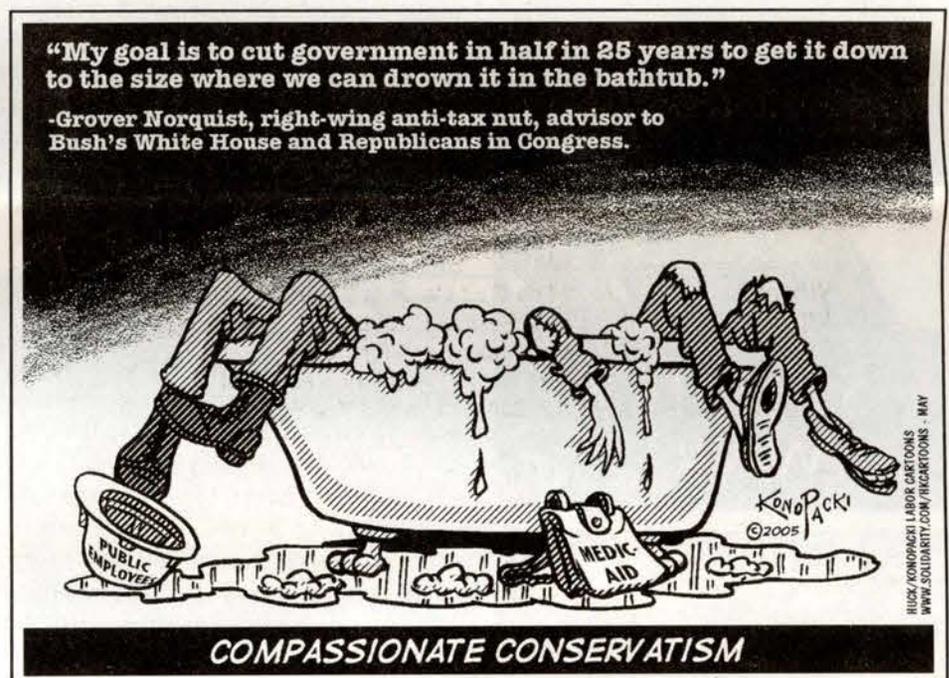
Norquist believes such workers should have no right to union representation. He apparently believes they have no right to exist, period, since he wants to drown the entire public sector in the bathtub.

This kind of rhetoric is not only mean-spirited and unhelpful in any discussion of what sort of government we, the people, want to have. It is outright un-American.

As former California Assembly Member Darrell Steinberg noted recently:

"The backers (of this initiative) propose no change for HMOs' political influence, only for nurses. They propose no change for the political influence of voucher advocates, only for teachers. They propose no change for the political influence of the gun manufacturers, only for police officers."

In other words, these champions of small government—or no govern-



ment—are perfectly happy to use government to restrict the liberties of working people who are trying to use their collective strength to improve their wages, benefits and working conditions.

The heart of this initiative is to use the government to meddle in the internal affairs of private organizations—in this case organizations representing nurses, teachers firefighters, police and other public employees.

Labor unions are already governed by comprehensive state and federal laws that protect the rights of members. If union members believe the union is not representing their views in the political world, they can try their hand in changing the union's direction by participating in union elections.

You don't see "paycheck protection" advocates trying to tell any other private organization how to organize its affairs. That's because their true goal isn't to protect the rights of individual union members or individual members of any other organization. Their goal is to weaken unions, period. If this initiative passes, it is clear that Norquist and his allies will be back soon to restrict the political clout of all unions, not just public sector workers. They're coming after some Local 1245 members now. They'll be back next time for the rest of us.

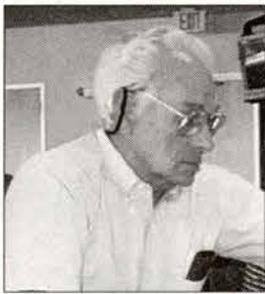
Don't let them get away with it. This November, let's send Paycheck Deception to the trash heap where it belongs.

Eric Wolfe is Communications Director for IBEW Local 1245.

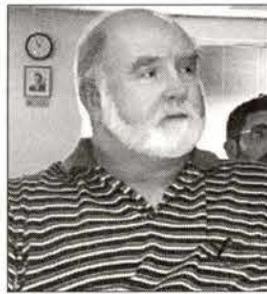
# Line Clearance Tree Trimmers



Carl Lamers



Fred Wann



John Shepherd



Senior Business Rep. Ray Thomas



Thomas McDonnell, left, and Virgil O'Neal

## Attendees

- Pete Ely: Davey Tree/Red Bluff
- James Gorman: Davey Tree/Arcata
- Carl Lamers: Davey Tree/Ukiah
- Virgil O'Neal: Davey Tree/Redding
- Steven Peoples: Davey Tree/Fortuna
- John Shepherd: Davey Tree/Redding
- Fred Wann: EPA PROVCO/Redding
- Thomas McDonnell: Asplundh/Lake County

## Line Clearance Tree Trimming Stewards

### Stepping Up to the Challenge

It's no secret: working conditions can be tough in the line clearance tree trimming industry. It's hard work, spread out over a large territory, and the stakes are high. One overgrown tree contacting a power line can wreak havoc on the electric grid. The pressure to perform can be intense.

It's not the sort of work you'd want to do without union protection.

Defending the rights of tree trimmers is a demanding job. It comes with high stress and no pay. But some Local 1245 members in this industry keep stepping up to the challenge. They're called union stewards.

At a conference on June 4 at Weakley Hall, stewards were reminded of the important role they play, and of the resources that are available to help them in their mission.

One of those resources is the Tree Trimmer Union Steward Manual, recently updated through the efforts of union Steward Carl Lamers. The manual is an indispensable guide for stewards navigating their way through the grievance procedure, industrial injury claims, and other issues affecting members on the job.

In addition to two hours of grievance procedure discussion and practice, union stewards reviewed the latest developments in Worker Compensation law, the Family Medical Leave Act and the California Paid Leave Act, with assistance from Assistant Business Manager Dennis Seyfer, Senior Business Rep. Ray Thomas and Business Rep. Junior Ornelas.

Thomas praised the stewards for turning out on a weekend when other activities were competing for their attention, including graduation ceremonies and other summer festivities.

"This is a great group of stewards," said Thomas after the conference. "The membership is fortunate to have these individuals representing them."



## SERVICE AWARDS



Jose Del Real (left), a Davey Tree foreman at the City of Palo Alto, receives 25-year award from Business Rep. Junior Ornelas.



James Roberts (left), an Asplundh Tree foreman in Sonora, receives 25-year award from Business Rep. Junior Ornelas.

## Delegados sindicales en la limpieza de líneas Respondiendo al desafío

No es un secreto que las condiciones de trabajo pueden ser duras en la industria de la poda de árboles para que no interfieran con las líneas eléctricas. Es un trabajo muy duro que se extiende sobre un gran territorio y los riesgos son grandes. Un árbol que haya crecido mucho y entre en contacto con una línea de transmisión eléctrica puede causar muchos problemas en la red de energía eléctrica. La presión para evitar que esto suceda puede ser intensa.

No es la clase de trabajo que usted quisiera hacer sin la protección de un sindicato.

El defender los derechos de los podadores de árboles es un trabajo con mucha responsabilidad y ninguna compensación económica. Pero algunos miembros del Local 1245 en esta industria están respondiendo a este desafío. Ellos son los delegados sindicales.

En una conferencia que tuvo lugar el 4 de junio en el salón Weakley Hall, se reconoció la función tan importante que desempeñan los delegados sindicales y los recursos que están disponibles para ayudarlos en su misión.

Uno de esos recursos es el manual de los delegados sindicales en la poda de árboles. Recientemente, este manual fue revisado gracias a los esfuerzos del delegado Carl Lamers. El manual es una guía indispensable para que los delegados puedan saber lo que tienen que hacer durante los procedimientos de quejas, las reclamaciones debidas a

las lesiones industriales y los otros problemas que afectan a los miembros del sindicato en sus trabajos.

Además de las dos horas de discusión y práctica acerca de los procedimientos de quejas, varios delegados sindicales hablaron sobre los últimos cambios en la ley de compensación a los trabajadores, la ley de permiso de ausencia del trabajo debido a problemas médicos en la familia y la ley de California sobre la ausencia del trabajo con paga, teniendo la asistencia del subgerente de negocios Dennis Seyfer, del representante principal de negocios Ray Thomas y del representante de negocios Junior Ornelas.

El Sr. Thomas elogió a los delegados por asistir a esta conferencia en un fin de semana con muchas otras actividades, incluyendo las ceremonias de graduación y otras festividades de verano.

"Este es un gran grupo de delegados sindicales", dijo el Sr. Thomas después de la conferencia. "Los miembros son afortunados de tener a estas personas representándolos".



Serving on the ballot committee in the recent ratification vote on the new contract at Asplundh Tree, Trees Inc., and Utility Tree were, from left: Teller Enrique Gamez, Asplundh Tree; Teller Anthony Cuevas, Trees Inc.; and Judge Joy Mohr, Local 1245 staff.

## At work for EPA-PROVCO



Angel Mondragon, Foreman with EPA-PROVCO and a Local 1245 steward, drags brush on a job in Central Fresno Division.



Jose Duarte, Climber with EPA-PROVCO, works from the bucket on a job in Central Fresno Division.



Dedicating the historical plaque at the site of the nation's first commercial central electric power station are, from left, Ninth District Vice President Michael Mowrey, International Secretary/Treasurer Jon Walters, Local 6 Business Manager John O'Rourke, International President Ed Hill, and Local 1245 Business Manager Perry Zimmerman.

## Move over New York

# First commercial power plant

History books tell us that Thomas Edison's Pearl Street station in New York, opened in 1882, was the first commercial power plant in the United States.

If you repeat something often enough, people tend to accept it as true. But the Pearl Street station was a johnny-come-lately according to research by the IBEW and the Fund for Labor Culture and History.

In September of 1879, three years

before the New York plant went into operation, a power plant was opened at 22 Fourth Street in San Francisco by the California Electric Light Co., a predecessor of Pacific Gas & Electric Co. The plant, which contained a coal-fired boiler, a steam engine, and two Charles Brush Dynamos, supplied power to 21 arc lamp streetlights.

New York's a great city, but let's get one thing straight. The lights came on here first.

## Our Nation's First Commercial Central Electric Power Station

### Text of Plaque

At this site in September, 1879, the California Electric Light Company built a wooden shanty, holding a coal-fired boiler, a steam engine, and two small Charles Brush dynamos. The primitive central power station supplied electricity to twenty-one private or company-owned arc lamps in San Francisco. The C.E.L.C. plant—the first commercial electric power station in the world - burned down in April, 1880, but resumed operations at 117 O'Farrell and eventually at 220 Jessie Street. The C.E.L.C., by mergers with other firms, grew into the Pacific Gas and Electric Company. In 1886, the Society of California Pioneers erected Pioneer Hall on this original powerplant lot. The earthquake and fire leveled the ornate building in 1906. The California Labor Federation's predecessor state body held it's charter convention in the hall in 1901. Although the power plant and pioneer hall are long gone, the unknown electricians who brought light to their fellow citizens more than a century ago live in spirit wherever generators turn, current flows, and IBEW members serve their communities.

## Union to support 'Transformation'

Local 1245 has signed a Letter Agreement with PG&E that expresses the union's general support for the business transformation process launched at PG&E in late 2004.

"We are especially supportive of the company's goal of improving service and identifying cost savings," said Business Manager Perry Zimmerman. "At the same time, we look forward to working with PG&E on its plans for investing in the replacement of aging infrastructure and building new facilities."

Letter Agreement 05-26 provides for

individual review by Local 1245 of specific initiatives and provides for involvement of bargaining unit employees in certain aspects of the transformation process. Contractual disputes arising from the transformation process will continue to be resolved through the grievance and arbitration procedure.

The union, like PG&E, aims to have the company recognized as an industry leader with dedicated employees, satisfied customers, and cost-efficient service.

The full text of Letter Agreement 05-26 is available at [www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com).

## Variance sought for 2-man crews

# PG&E Letter Agreement increases compensation for rubber gloving

The rubber glove premium has been increased by 3% in a new Letter Agreement with Pacific Gas & Electric signed on June 9 by Local 1245 Business Manager Perry Zimmerman.

Letter of Agreement 05-23 rolls the new 3% premium and the previously-negotiated 6% rubber glove premium into the base rate for Journeyman Lineman and classifications higher in the line of progression in Title 200 and 300. Because the premium is included directly in the base pay, it will no longer be considered a "premium." An additional 3% increase will be added to the same classifications when the necessary variances are approved by the State of California for two-man rubber glove procedures.

General bargaining in 2003 provided for an ad hoc committee to look at improving the original rubber glove agreement (Letter Agreement 90-34) and to consider additional compensation. The committee met four times over the last year and one-half and agreed to modifications in the current rubber glove agreement, and to jointly pursue a variance from the State of California to allow the use of rubber gloving techniques with a two-man crew on a voluntary basis. Currently a three man crew is needed to perform the work.

Other highlights of Letter Agreement 95-23 include:

- Moves the EMF Committee to Title 105.3.
- Eliminates the Rubber Gloving and Barehanding Committee and makes their issues part of the Overview Committee.
- Adds Compliance Inspector and Apprentice Lineman to the application of the rubber glove agreement.
- Modifies the retention of live line tools from "on all line trucks in service" to "at all job locations where live line procedures may be performed".
- Requires Hiring Hall classifications to be certified by PG&E before any rubber glove work can be done.

The agreement also provides that if and when the variance is achieved, the basic rubber glove crew will be two people. If the variance is not approved, the second 3% increase will be forfeit.

The first 3% is effective June 9. A joint committee will be formed to develop the procedures and a communication plan if the variance is approved by the State of California. Local 1245 Business Representative Larry Pierce will head up Local 1245's delegation on this joint committee, which will be comprised of members of the ad hoc committee. The joint committee will work in Livermore to develop the procedures and communication plan if the variance is approved by the State of California.

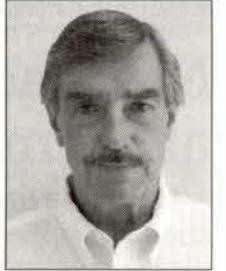
Assistant Business Manager Bob Choate will work with the company on the application for the rubber glove variance.

"This agreement is another milestone for IBEW 1245 as we were the driver for the Rubber Gloving and Barehanding Agreement procedures in California," Choate said. "We were able to develop a safe and productive program that is the leader in the industry."

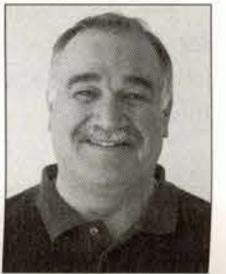
Choate said the concept of the two-man rubber glove procedures is worth exploring because this type of work is starting to increase due to changes in technology in line equipment and also due to a shortage of linemen in the industry.

"We need to stay in the lead so we can control a safe work environment for our members doing this work," he said.

A copy of the Letter of Agreement is available at [www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com).



Larry Pierce

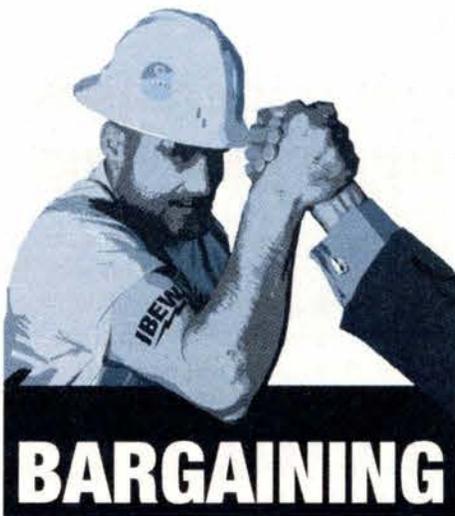


Bob Choate



## Newark Substation, 1947

Employees at PG&E's Newark substation in 1947 were, top row from left: Paul Hunt, Foreman; A.J. Silva, Operator; Bob Taylor, Operator; G.E. Jackson, Helper; Walt Stienmetz, Maintenance; Al Hallstrom, Maintenance; Tony Alonzo, Operator; Lenard Rose, Operator; Chuck Brewer, Maintenance. Bottom row, from left: Wesley Hammond, Operator; L.R. Raymond, Operator, Charlie Burtch, Operator; Joe Silva, Helper; Frank Katzer, Operator; George Kirby, Helper; Harry Webber, General Foreman. Photo courtesy of LeRoy R. Raymond



## New pact ratified at Plumas Sierra

Members of Local 1245 ratified a new agreement at Plumas Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative that raises wages and makes other improvements.

The three-year agreement provides for 3% wage increases on July 1, 2005 and July 1, 2006, and a 3.5% increase on July 1, 2007.

The agreement also provides a \$2.09/hour "market equity adjustment" for Journeyman Lineman and higher classifications, with \$1.03/hour effective Jan. 1, 2006 and \$1.06/hour effective Jan. 1, 2007.

The meal allowance was increased to \$9.50 for breakfast, \$10.50 for lunch, and \$22 for dinner.

Other provisions include:

- Compression of the CSR progression schedule from 84 to 36 months.
- Increase on-call pay for Electric Department by increments to \$549.01 on July 1, 2007.
- Establish on-call pay for the Internet Department at \$432.60 on July 1, 2005, rising to \$445.57 on July 2006 and \$461.16 on July 1, 2007, with on-call pay increased a percentage equal of the general wage increase after July 1, 2007.
- Modify overtime language to provide that all time worked on Sundays and holidays to be paid at double-time rate.
- Medical plan change from NRECA Indemnity Plan to NRECA PPO plan, with employer to develop a "Catastrophic Fund" for use by employees who need medical attention outside the PPO network for issues where a PPO is not available.
- Contract opener during second quarter of 2007 for post-retirement medical and Lineman wage rate.

Representing Local 1245 on the bargaining committee were Bob Smith, Bruce Smith, Debbie Murphy, Judy Alexander, Richard Ritterath and Business Rep. Randy Osborn.



Randy Osborn

## Frontier employees: bundle up!

Local 1245 members at Frontier have a chance to boost their employer's business outlook by subscribing to the company's new bundled service.

With a single call to Frontier, employees as well as any other potential customer can sign up for the "Frontier Connections" bundle, which provides telephone, television and high-speed Internet services.

The television service is made possible by Frontier's new alliance with EchoStar's DISH Network digital satellite TV services.

To learn more about the program, Frontier employees can call 877-427-9158 or visit [www.Frontiernet.net](http://www.Frontiernet.net).



### PG&E Bargaining...from page 1

their efforts to be recognized."

At its first meeting, held July 13 at Weakley Hall in Vacaville, the union bargaining committee reviewed the contractual provisions for the re-opener and began to identify the data that will be needed to make the union's case at the bargaining table.

"There is a lot that has to happen before we can sit down to talk with the company," said Senior Assistant Business Manager Tom Dalzell. "PG&E will have its numbers ready, and so must we."

The Local 1245 bargaining committee will consist of many veteran negotiators, drawn from Division and General Construction, Physical and Clerical, Gas and Electric. Retirees will also be represented on the committee, which will be attempting to negotiate improvements in the pension benefit for current retirees. (See box for full list of committee members).

Company and union negotiators are expected to begin meeting in September. Local 1245 members can receive the lat-

### PG&E Meter Readers...from page 1

PG&E has pledged to provide retraining to current Meter Readers and to make "reasonable efforts" to provide employment options to workers who wish to remain with the company. With a large number of retirements predicted in coming years, employment opportunities with PG&E should remain strong.

Under the Letter Agreement, PG&E is permitted to contract out meter installation work provided that existing Meter Readers are given the opportunity to

## Utility Reporter captures five awards

The Utility Reporter received a First Place award for an in-depth analysis of safety issues in the line clearance tree trimming industry. The article, "Utility Tree's Dangerous Gamble" by Communications Director Eric Wolfe, was presented by the Western Labor Communications Association in May.

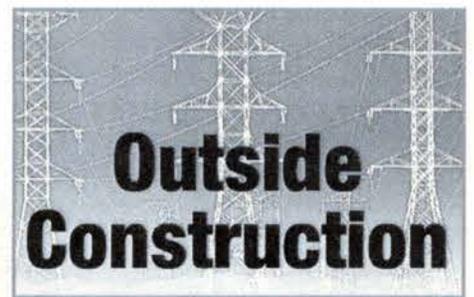
Other awards included:

- Second Place: Best Column, "Union Representation and Politics" by Perry Zimmerman
- Second Place: Best Feature Story, "Peer Volunteers" by Eric Wolfe
- Second Place: Best Overall Newspaper
- Third Place: Best Website

Business Manager Perry Zimmerman is the paper's executive editor. Communications Director Eric Wolfe serves as managing editor.

### PG&E Bargaining Committee

- Donna Ambeau, Sr. Service Rep. I, East Bay
- Terry Andreucci, Electric Crew Foreman, Sierra Division
- Pat Duffy, Shift Control Tech, Diablo Canyon
- Jack Hill, Retiree, San Jose
- Dan Mayo, Troubleman, Fresno area
- Lou Mennel, Gas Service Rep, Sacramento
- Stu Neblett, Telecomm Crew Lead, Shasta
- Steve Pastor, Lineman, East Bay
- Mike Saner, Subforeman A, General Construction
- Mike Scafani, Gas Crew Lead - Welding, North Bay
- Bob Choate, Assistant Business Manager
- Tom Dalzell, Senior Assistant Business Manager
- Dorothy Fortier, Assistant Business Manager
- Perry Zimmerman, Business Manager



## Work Report

During the past month we had 77 calls for Journeyman Lineman; 5 for Equipment Specialist; 19 for Groundman; 3 for Cable Splicers; 47 for U.G. Tech; and 8 for Apprentice. Total calls: 159



Dave Crawford

The books, as of July 13:

- Journey Lineman, Book 1: 3
- Journey Lineman, Book 2: 3
- Lineman, Book 3: 2
- Lineman, Book 4: 14
- Equipment Specialist, Book 1: 4
- Equipment Specialist, Book 2: 6
- Equipment Specialist, Book 3: 3
- Groundman, Book 1: 12
- Groundman, Book 2: 6
- Groundman, Book 3: 28
- Groundman, Book 4: 104
- Cable Splicer, Book 1: 0
- Cable Splicer, Book 2: 1
- Cable Splicer, Book 3: 0

Total working on Outside Agreement: 114 crews

U.G. Agreement: 40 crews  
Pole and Test Agreement: 40 crews  
Teledata Agreement: 14 crews  
Total crews: 208

Currently we have 264 apprentices: 6 are traveling, 41 are working out of Local 1245; 213 are working out of Local 47; 3 are working out of Local 396 and 13 are laid off due to various reasons. 27 apprentices have passed their test and are Journeymen.

Sierra Pacific Power is putting out some small projects. We are also starting negotiations with NECA and Henkels & McCoy on the Teledata Agreement.

The next Joint Safety meeting is Aug. 17. And don't forget the Golf Tournament on Sept. 24!

Dave Crawford, Business Rep.

scheduled to meet with PG&E officials at Weakley Hall on July 26.

Any Meter Reader vacancies that occur during the transition to AMI will be filled with employees from the Local 1245 Hiring Hall.

Pending timely approval by the California Public Utilities Commission, PG&E will begin deploying advanced meters as early as spring 2006, with full conversion of all electric and gas meters expected by 2011.



## The right tool

"The right tool for the right job" is a phrase that rings true throughout the world as men and women build things. As kids, we learn quickly how much easier and more efficiently our work proceeds when we are using the tool that is best for the job. Having the right tools can make all the difference in any job.

What is it that most makes a group of professionals stand out among their peers? More times than not, it is their tools. A professional demands the best quality tools, takes care of them, keeps them organized, and continually strives to improve the work process through improved tool use.

I would recommend to every work group that they use the best tools for every job. Our present work force is aging, which makes it even more important to remind everyone to use tools to save your bodies.

You've heard the old phrase, "Advertising doesn't cost, it pays." The same holds true for tools. Non-professionals many times make the error of bad tool purchasing, through omission or poor tool selection. The thinking is always that it will save money. It is prudent to review tool purchases, but it should go without saying that a quality tool works when you need it, makes the job faster and smoother through better performance, and prevents unnecessary strain on workers. All these combine to save money through efficiency, and also by keeping the workers more healthy. A professional must have the tool that's

the best for the job. That's the essence of being a professional.

Tool budgets can get out of hand, when tools are not managed by the work force. Many of the tools we utilize daily are safety related. These are the tools that most deserve care and management by the professional in the work force. That's one of the responsibilities of being professional in all your work habits. The extraordinary cost of lost and damaged tools due to lack of concern or care has negative repercussions upon your next tool request. Respect for the company's willingness to make the purchase of quality tools is shown through caring for all tools that are provided. On the other side of the equation, management must make the commitment to their professional workforce to provide the best quality tools.

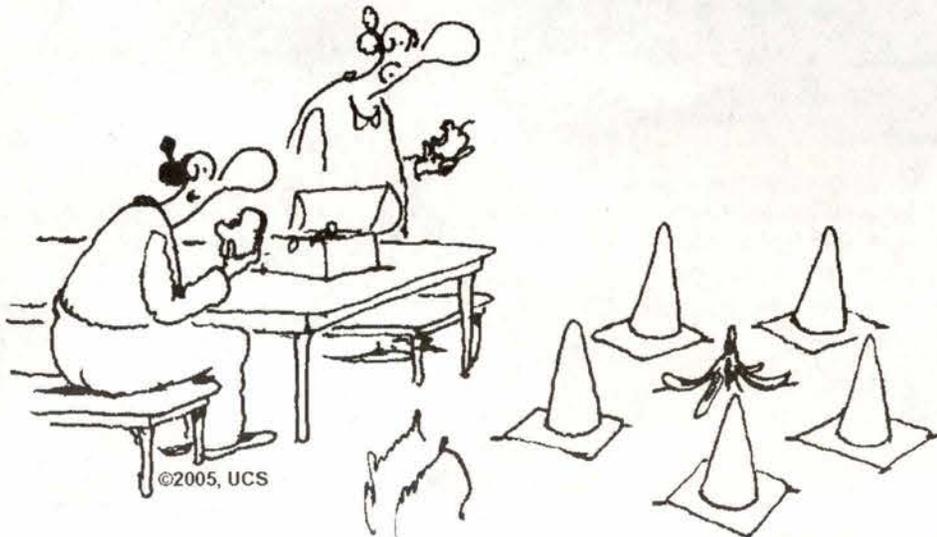
Tool purchases and tool policies can be one of the successful joint labor-management efforts within an organization. When both management and labor approach the issue of tools with a professional perspective, everyone benefits.

Whether you are young or more mature, it's wise to work intelligently and save your body. Use your top tool—your brain—to make tools work for you. Use tools to spare unnecessary wear and tear on your body. It's a special tool that can't be replaced—at least not yet.

Bob Burkle

## Local 1245 Safety Committee

Current members of the Local 1245 Safety Committee are Keith Hopp, Pacific Gas & Electric; Al White, Pacific Gas & Electric; David Vipond, Citizens Communications; Rich Lane, Turlock Irrigation District; Art Torres, Sacramento Municipal Utility District; Gil Suarez, Davey Tree; Bob Burkle, City of Santa Clara; and Assistant Business Manager Howard Stiefer.



"Wow! That safety committeeman is good."

UtilityReporter

## Cuts in Medicaid will make things worse

# Uninsured workers cost you money

Workers with health care insurance are paying extra costs to cover health care for the 48 million Americans without insurance, according to a new report. In 2005, premiums for employer-provided family health insurance are expected to cost, on average, an extra \$922 to cover the costs of providing health care to the uninsured.

Paying a Premium: The Added Cost of Care for the Uninsured, released June 9 by the health consumer group Families USA, estimates these added premium costs will rise to \$1,502 in 2010.

"The large and increasing number of uninsured Americans is no longer simply an altruistic concern on behalf of those without health coverage but a matter of self-interest for everyone," says Ron Pollack, Families USA executive director. "The stakes are high, both for businesses and for workers who do have health insurance because they bear the brunt of costs for the uninsured."

Nationally, the cost of providing health care to uninsured individuals who do not pay for the care they receive will be more than \$43 billion this year and reach nearly \$60 billion in 2010. In 11 states, the cost of covering this uncompensated care will exceed \$1 bil-

lion this year, including a \$5.8 billion price tag in California, where 7.8 million individuals are uninsured.

In 2010, the number of Americans who will be uninsured for the entire year will be nearly 53 million, the report says.

"This report underscores the importance of strengthening and protecting public programs such as Medicaid that are the health safety net for millions of Americans," Pollack says. Yet President George W. Bush has proposed reducing net funding for Medicaid by nearly \$1 billion in fiscal year 2005 and by nearly \$16 billion between 2005 and 2014.

"Medicaid cuts would only force more and more families into the ranks of the uninsured, thereby increasing insurance premiums for everyone who has health coverage," Pollack says.

Most of the uninsured are workers and their family members who do not participate in employer-provided insurance plans, forcing employees to seek public health care assistance. For example, a congressional study estimated that each Wal-Mart store costs taxpayers an average \$108,000 a year for its workers' children who are enrolled in state children's health insurance programs.

## Driving Hazards

On a morning last spring I was driving to work on Highway 41, a two-lane road, when I noticed up ahead some hazard lights flashing just before the junction with Route 145, which is the turnoff to Madera.

I couldn't tell if the lights were off the road—it looked like they were half on, half off. I started to slow it way down, mindful that it was raining.

There was a big semi-truck coming toward me, heading north to Oakhurst. As I was slowing down and coming to a stop, there in the road blocking the entire south-bound lane was a truck with flashers on and a steer that was very big and very dead.

I immediately placed my flashers on to warn the drivers behind me. I rolled down my window and asked if everyone was OK and if they needed a phone. The man I spoke to said they were OK and had already notified the California Highway Patrol.

I waited until the other lane was clear of traffic and then drove around the accident. I still kept my flashers on for a bit to warn oncoming traffic to slow down.

If I had not been alert and paying attention to the road condition, I would probably have assumed the hazard lights were disabled vehicles that were off the road. It would have been easy to assume I had a clear path and gone on to hit the steer in the road.

Too many times people come flying down the road in the morning, thinking



they are invincible. But no one is invincible against a thousand pound steer.

We had just had our PG&E Safety Kick-off meeting the day before and it included a discussion about avoidable vehicle accidents.

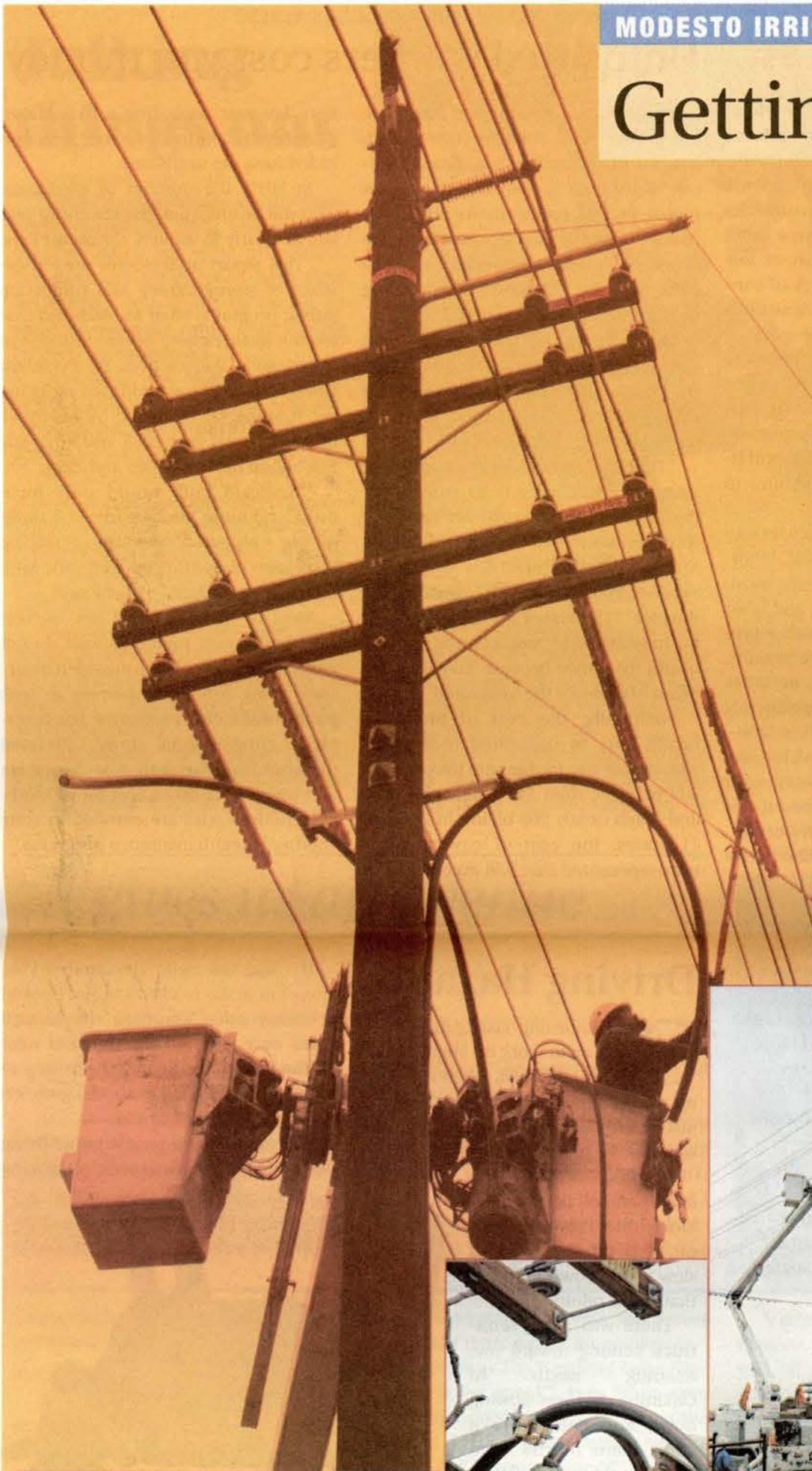
Please, whether it's your car or a company vehicle, remember to be extra careful when you drive in the dark or in the rain. None of us wants to end up like that steer.

Chris Habecker,

Local 1245 Recording Secretary

# Getting on the Same Side

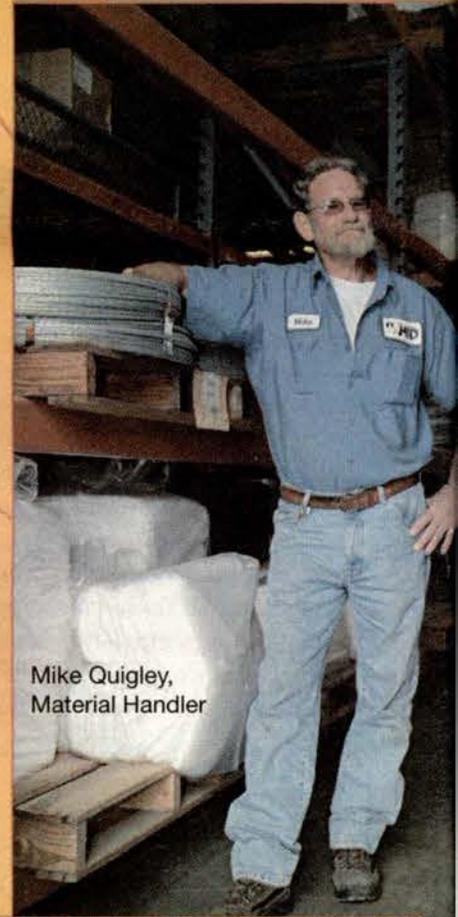
*For employees of the district, unity was a long time in the making.*



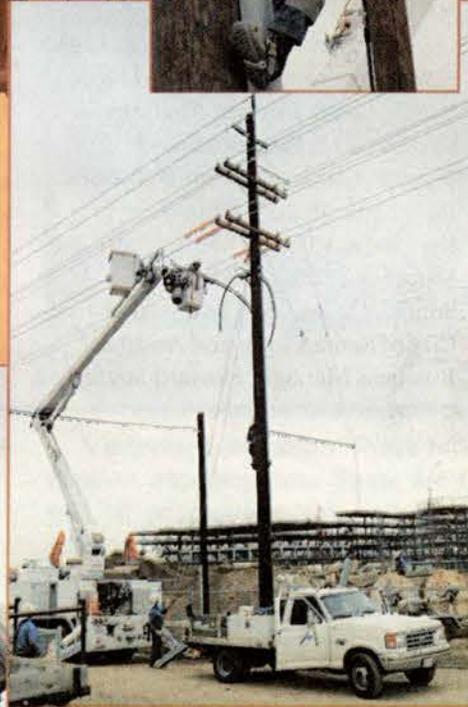
Amber Govia, Customer Service Representative



Denise Miller, Senior Customer Service Representative



Mike Quigley, Material Handler



ABOVE: MID crew pulls in underground wire for a new Kaiser facility (under construction in the background).

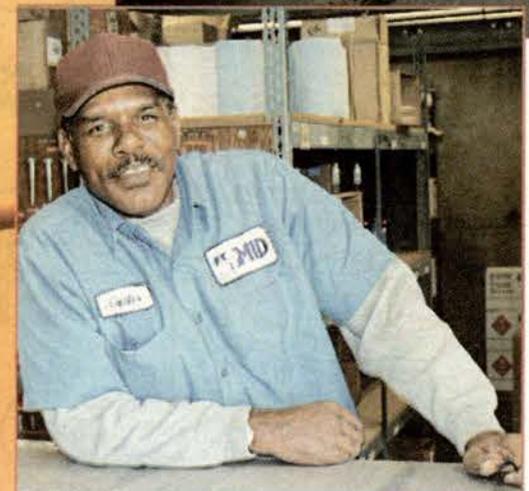


INSET: Dustin Sudweeks, Line Worker Apprentice



MID Line Workers Rick Korman (left) and Wally Eaton

Bryan Letson, Line Worker Apprentice



Curtis Sheppard, Tool Room Attendant

# of the Fence

the Modesto Irrigation District,  
me coming.



The Irrigation Department is in the Utility Service and Maintenance bargaining unit. From left: Woody Mouw, Randy Terra, Garth Jolliff, and Gary Counce. The last person on the right is Martin Gisler from the Professional and Supervisory bargaining unit.



Mike Stout knows. He was there when Local 1245 first started negotiating on behalf of members at MID in 1978.

He saw how hard it was to bargain effectively when a large number of employees are affiliated with a rival union or belong to no union at all.

"Everybody was split on things," Stout recalls.

Not anymore. In the fall of 2004, an overwhelming majority of MID employees in three separate work groups selected Local 1245 as their exclusive bargaining representative.

"Management looks at us different now. We're the majority in the company. It gives us a better foothold," says Stout, a Crew Leader in the Substation Department. "Everybody's getting on the same side of the fence."

By "everybody" Stout means Utility and Maintenance employees like himself, along with the Administrative, Technical and Clerical employees, and the Professional

and Supervisory employees. Together they are the backbone of the District's electric power, irrigation, and water treatment services.

Getting everybody on the same side of the fence didn't happen by accident. It took a concerted effort by a core group of dedicated people who were separated by function but shared a common vision.

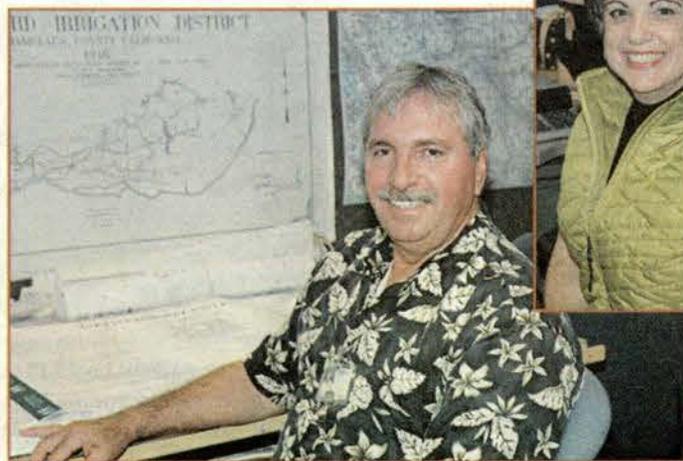
Karri Daves, a Senior Service Rep. in the Administrative, Technical and Clerical bargaining unit, hadn't exactly planned on being a union organizer. "I sort of stumbled into it," she recalls with a laugh. "I became the focal point for the girls in the Service Center."

Daves says she isn't the sort of person who "pushes, pushes," but she made herself available to discuss the union election process with other employees, and conveyed her own concept of what it means to be a union. She can sum it up in one word: "Solidarity."

In a union, "We're all equal," she says. "You have the benefits that come with being a member, and the support that you may need down the road."

David Souza, who helped rally the Professional and Supervisory group to the IBEW banner, knows what it's like to work for a non-union employer because

*continued on next page*



David Souza, Land Surveyor Supervisor and Joanie Stone, Customer Service Supervisor



Generation Crew Leader Forrest Davison at the Woodland Generation Station, and (right) standing next to the GE LM5000 engine, "like the one used on the Boeing 747."



Ben Cantrell, left, and Kris Jones, Apprentice Substation Electricians



Curtis Herbert, Generation Technician



Greg Lloyd, Substation Electrician, hooks up jumpers at the new Kiernan Substation.

# Talking things out

Some issues can't wait.

Contract negotiations are the time-honored way for labor and management to work out their differences. But there are times when both sides believe it's important to tackle an issue immediately, rather than waiting for general bargaining.

Since 2002, the Modesto Irrigation District Labor-Management Committee has provided a forum to discuss and resolve issues of mutual concern.

"It's squelched some fires that, before, would have been left to burn themselves out," says Kurt Celli, a union representative on the committee. "It gives us an avenue to deal with things."

The committee has discussed hiring policy, issues related to gloves, backing issues, tools and equipment, and fire retardant jackets, among others, according to Celli.

Celli believes the discussions have improved communications between management and the workforce.



Representing IBEW Local 1245 on the Labor-Management Committee at Modesto Irrigation District are, standing from left, Business Rep. Lynne Morel, Diane Ermis, Dave Souza. Seated, from left, are: Denise Miller, Mike Stout, Kurt Celli.

As experienced journeymen retire in growing numbers, the extra training for apprentices will help assure that young crews have more of the experience they need to perform the work.

"It benefits management to be able to talk things out," says Mike Stout, another IBEW representative on the

second most experienced journeyman in the department has about 4 years, according to Stout.

"They just didn't hire and everybody retired at the same time. They just didn't prepare for it," says Stout.

With the Labor-Management Committee, union members now have a regular forum to voice concerns—before conditions become critical.



Curt Celli

*"It gives us an avenue to deal with things."*

"They get a feel for what we think and we get a feel for what they think."

At a recent quarterly meeting, union and management members of the committee worked on a plan to restructure the apprenticeship program for Line Workers. Apprentices will now receive four years of training rather than three.

committee. "This way you get to sit down and hear both sides."

Stout says the committee may soon begin a review of the apprenticeship program for the substation department. And just in time. Stout, who is a Crew Leader in the substation department, has 29 years at the District. The

## Same Side of the Fence... continued from previous page

he's done it.

"They had less benefits, poor pay and you didn't have the ability to negotiate, because if you said too much you'd be jeopardizing your job," says Souza, a Land Surveyor Supervisor.

Although he was an officer in the rival union when the IBEW organizing campaign began in 2004, Souza says the people he worked with "decided we'd rather be in one strong unit rather than (being) fragmented." Having two unions, he says, "kept us small and ineffective" with "nobody supporting each other."

The days of a fragmented, under-represented workforce are over at MID. Active union members are already setting their sights on the next round of negotiations. Meanwhile, they're pro-

viding the everyday support that makes life a little more secure for employees.

"Right now I'm handling two grievances as we speak," says Stout, who serves not only as a steward but as the elected MID representative on the Local 1245 Advisory Council.

A grievance procedure. Wage hikes. Pension improvements. These are the sort of protections you can expect when everyone gets on the same side of the fence.

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 WBE03/05

## MID's twin missions: water and power

When the Modesto Irrigation District was organized in 1887 it was all about the water. A few enterprising people in Stanislaus County reckoned they could move beyond dry-farmed wheat if they could irrigate the land with snowmelt from the Sierras. Commercial electric power generation, still an infant industry even in the big cities, wasn't part of the plan.

Things change. When MID collaborated with neighboring Turlock Irrigation District on construction of the Don Pedro Dam beginning in 1919, it was clear that there would be two products of commercial value: electric power and irrigation water. On Oct. 29, 1923 a bakery and a community market began receiving power from the District. MID crews fanned out the next day to begin making good on the District's promise to provide power for all city and rural residents.

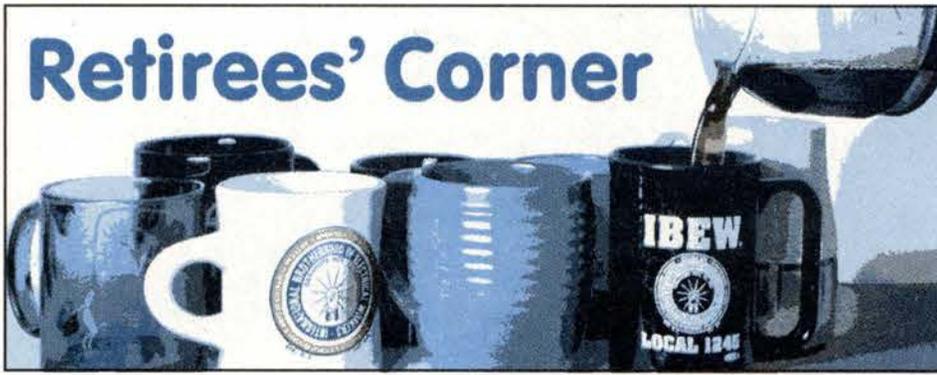
The next year, when bids to build substations, transmission and distribution lines came in unacceptably high, MID crews performed the work themselves. Seven years before the federal Rural Electrification Administration was formed to bring power to rural America, the MID distribution system had reached all farms in its district.

In the following decades, MID survived competition for electrical customers from neighboring giant PG&E, faced down possible encroachment on its water supplies by state and federal agencies, and expanded its power production capacity to meet an ever-growing demand. Among its most ambitious projects was the construction of the New San Pedro Dam. Completed in the early 1970s, the generators at San Pedro Dam today can generate about 200 megawatts of power. About one-third of that production is owned by MID.

Another significant source of power owned by MID are the two local Woodland Generation Stations, with a combined output of about 132 megawatts. MID also has a partial ownership interest in the San Juan Generation Station Unit 4 in New Mexico, which it shares with the City of Santa Clara and the City of Redding.

Though its mission was dramatically transformed by the rise of commercial electric power generation, MID has remained steadfast in its original purpose—providing water. The District currently has 60,448 acres in irrigation, with over 3,000 active irrigation accounts. Its water system includes the Don Pedro Reservoir, the Modesto Reservoir, and La Grange Dam, which diverts water for MID and Turlock Irrigation District. The water is delivered through 208 miles of canal and pipeline. MID also operates the Modesto Regional Water Treatment Plant, completed in 1994.

## Retirees' Corner



### New Social Security proposal fails to help solvency

A new proposal to create private Social Security accounts would do nothing to fix Social Security's long-term funding problems and would drain \$1.1 trillion from the Social Security trust fund in the first decade of the proposal, according to an analysis by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

The new proposal, announced on June 23 by Senator Jim DeMint, would

shift Social Security's current annual surpluses to private accounts, rather than using these surpluses to purchase Treasury bonds for the Social Security Trust Fund.

This shifting of funds, which would end when the Social Security surpluses disappear, suffers from three key flaws, according to the Center.

An analysis of the plan issued by the Social Security actuaries shows that by diverting substantial sums from the Social Security trust fund to private accounts, the plan would worsen Social Security's solvency problems. The plan attempts to disguise this problem by simply assuming that large

revenue transfers would somehow be made from the rest of the budget. Assuming there will be very large general revenues available for transferring is essentially a budget gimmick. The rest of the budget has no surplus revenue to transfer. The actuaries' analysis shows that in the absence of general revenue transfers, the plan would cause Social Security to become insolvent three years *sooner* than otherwise would be the case, in 2038 rather than in 2041.

The second key problem, which also is documented in the actuaries' analysis, is that the plan would increase the federal budget deficit every year for the next 75 years and beyond. For example, in fiscal year 2007, the deficit would be about \$89 billion higher than it otherwise would be. The debt that the federal government owes to outside creditors would increase by \$1.1 trillion by 2015.

Third, the proposal would require the hiring of thousands of new federal employees and significantly increase the government's administrative costs. The added administrative costs would amount to at least \$25 billion through 2015, with additional costs being incurred for many years after that.

In short, the proposal would fail to strengthen Social Security's finances while adding to already spiraling deficits and debt and carrying substantial administrative costs.

Senator DeMint's deceptive plan, and a similar Republican proposal in the House of Representatives, indicates the Republican Party will resort to gross deception to garner public support for President Bush's private accounts.

It's no wonder they're getting desperate. Despite the president's 60-day tour to promote private accounts, only 25% of the public approved of the way he is handling Social Security, according to a June 10 CBS News/New York Times poll.

### Vacaville/Sacramento Chapter Forming

The new Vacaville/Sacramento chapter of the Retirees Club will meet at 10:00 a.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, beginning Sept. 14. Ken Rawles has volunteered to be unit chair. Members from Sacramento, Marysville, Stockton, Chico, Roseville and surrounding areas are encouraged to attend. The location is Weakley Hall, 30 Orange Tree Circle, Vacaville. For more information, contact Business Rep. Darryl Norris at 916-688-3637 (drn8@ibew1245.com) or Ken Rawles at 707-546-3427 (redmtmman@yahoo.com). For driving directions, go to [www.ibew1245.com/vacaville-map.html](http://www.ibew1245.com/vacaville-map.html).

### Fresno, Reno, and Santa Rosa retirees

Retirees are also exploring the formation of new Retiree Club chapters in Fresno, Reno, and Santa Rosa. For Fresno info, call Mike Grill at 559-292-2031. For Reno info, call Randy Osborn at 775-834-6838. For Santa Rosa info, call Joe Osterlund at 415-238-2898.

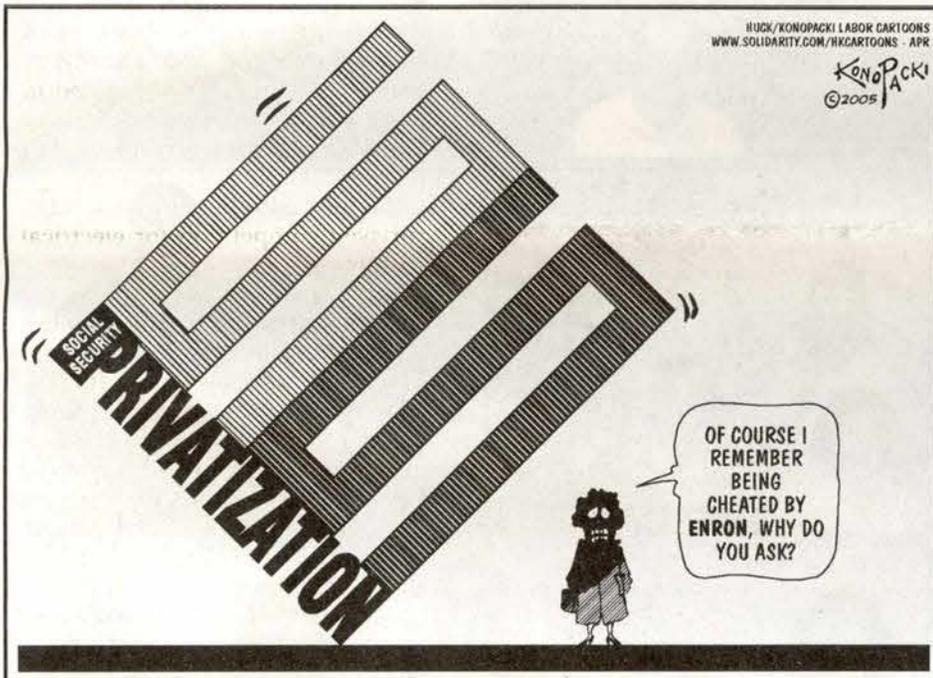
### Current meeting locations

#### East Bay Chapter:

Meets 2nd Thursday each month, 10 a.m.,  
IBEW Local 595,  
6250 Village Parkway  
Dublin, CA.

#### San Jose Chapter:

Meets 1st Thursday each month, 10 a.m.,  
IBEW Local 332  
2125 Canoas Garden  
San Jose.



## 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 your area. If you don't have a chapter nearby, call the union at 707-452-2718 and find out how you can help start one!

Fernando Artalejo, 22 years  
Stockton, CA

Kit Ashcraft, 24 years  
Tollhouse, CA

Marlene Beber, 25 years  
Martinez, CA

Stanley Bennett, 28 years  
San Luis Obispo, CA

Ulrich Boeschow, 30 years  
Arnold, CA

Frederick Bogdanoff, 27 years  
Wheatland, CA

Jerry Brzyszc, 31 years  
Auburn, CA

David Cannon, 33 years  
Tollhouse, CA

Kimberly Cross, 29 years  
Orland, CA

Robert Donofrio, 35 years  
San Francisco, CA

Clark Dotson, 37 years  
Gilroy, CA

John Hamm, 31 years  
Orland, CA

Mike Harrington, 29 years  
Petaluma, CA

Janice Hartmann, 17 years  
San Luis Obispo, CA

Robert Horton, 37 years  
Napa, CA

Harvey Johnson, 37 years  
Gilroy, CA

Peggy Kelleher, 28 years  
Richmond, CA

Mary-Alice Mc Daniel, 38 years  
Charlton, MA

Steven Miller, 38 years  
Sacramento, CA

Alan Mion, 38 years  
San Mateo, CA

Glen Nakamura, 32 years  
Carmel Valley, CA

Carol Nelson, 3 years  
Aloha, OR

Neil Orem, 25 years  
Port Angeles, WA

Michael Rains, 34 years  
Westminster, CO

Janet Reese, 29 years  
Esparto, CA

Alfred Rhodes, 20 years  
Pittsburg, CA

Katharine Roby, 27 years  
Pinole, CA

Linda Ruiz, 8 years  
Elk Grove, CA

Martin Shank, 27 years  
Concord, CA

Ronald Sheppard, 19 years  
Warwick, RI

David Silveira, 40 years  
Sebastopol, CA

Robert Smethurst, 48 years  
Campbell, CA

Douglas Snodgrass, 18 years  
Neosho, MO

John Sportsman, 26 years  
Las Vegas, NV

Gary Stagno, 35 years  
Riverbank, CA

Marvin Stevens, 42 years  
Paradise, CA

Marshall Swift Jr, 33 years  
Napa, CA

Walter Truluck, 33 years  
Siloam Springs, AR

Charles Tufts, 33 years  
Sanger, CA

Luther James Sr., 15 years  
Reno, NV

# SERVICE AWARDS



## Emeryville, CA

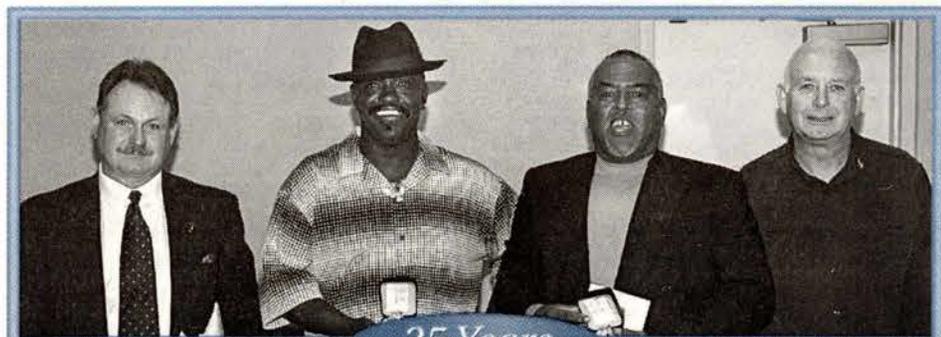
MAY 14, 2005



**The Real Edmund G. Brown**  
Edmund G. Brown receives 55-year plaque from Business Rep. Hunter Stern, left, and Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier, right. The former California governor with the same name was a friend of labor, to be sure, but we maintain that our 55-year member is the *real* Edmund G. Brown. Congratulations!



**Editors Honor Their Own**  
Receiving a 40-year award is former Business Rep. Ken Lohre, who served a long stretch in the 1960s and 1970s as editor of the Utility Reporter, a position subsequently held by Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier, right, and currently held by Communications Director Eric Wolfe, left.



35 Years



30 Years



25 Years

### THE HONOREES

**55 Years**  
Edmund G. Brown

**50 Years**  
James M. McMullan

**45 Years**  
Tom Hill

**40 Years**  
E Bradley  
Robert Choate  
Evan Evanson

Kenneth Lohre  
Ronald Robertson  
Jim Schober  
Craig Tangen

**35 Years**  
John Alvarez  
Chris Beckman

**35 Years**  
continued

Eugene Bergh  
Virginia Boatwright  
Robert Brown  
Larry Burns  
Darrell Burton  
George Carder  
Peter Castelluccio  
Valerie Chan  
Jules Chatman  
Carol Collins  
Major Cooper  
William Corriea  
Michael Cress  
Larry Darby  
Jim Disangro  
Edward Dorsey  
John Dudley  
Ronald Fernandez  
Frank Garcia  
Charles Gary  
Lockey Gehring  
Harvey Gomes  
Jackie Hall  
Richard Hall  
Dennis Harrison  
Leonard Head  
Milton Hill  
Thomas Irving  
Clifton Jackson  
James Kay  
Arthur Lawson  
Don Lillie  
Allen Lowry  
Lonnie Mc Clendon  
Louis Meyi

Pat Middlebrook  
Herb Mozon  
Jimmie Nelson  
Marion Notgrass  
Richard Oconnor  
Arthur Palmer  
James Pavon  
Enrique Perez  
Roy Price  
Marvin Rayner  
Charles Reals  
Edwin Reid  
Romeo Reyes  
Linda Sauer  
Gordon Sexton  
Raymond Sinosky  
Joseph Smith  
Jack Tyler  
William Warren  
Kenneth Watkins  
Ronald Wells  
Maurice Williams  
H Barron Williams  
Michael Wilson  
John Wimmer  
Jeff Wold

**30 Years**

Cornelio Adlao  
Robert Ahlers  
Eleanor Alafritz  
Richard Anderson  
Harold Annastas  
Dori Armbruster  
Milton Babbitt  
Edith Cabanban  
Rosario Cahandig  
Patrocini Calingo

Joseph Cardamone  
Kevin Center  
Robert Chapman  
Margaret Cooley  
Bernardo Cristobal  
Paul Davis  
Steven Drew  
Gary Fenton  
Dorothy Fortier  
Daniel Freeman  
Harry Hom  
George Hsu  
Alfred Hurtado  
Penny Ip  
Josephine Isidro  
Elaine Lam  
Ida Lee  
Darryl Lemas  
Sonia Magana  
Maria Martinez  
Adrian Martinez  
D Massey  
Ermiline Mata  
Edward Medina  
Carey Mitosinka  
Edgar Monroe  
Teresa Nicoletti  
Frank Nunes  
Belinda Osakwe  
Bart Post  
Judy Rhodes  
Victor Robles  
Lydia Sapiandante  
Jane Tang  
Denyu Tom  
Richard Vannoy  
Daniel Ward  
William Webb

**25 Years**

Pat Abney  
Angel Alvira  
Martha Armbruster  
James "Curtis" Ashford  
Glenn Ashworth  
Ivy Baker  
Steven Benedict  
Larry Bergman  
Steve Blasquez  
Steve Boeder  
Philip Booth  
William Brown  
Robert Buchanan  
Sharon Burt  
Shery Burton  
Timothy Caires  
Miguel Cano  
Patricia Carey-Lewis  
Jerry Cederquist  
Cecilia Ching  
Michael Chong  
Jerome Clifton  
Mary Contaxis  
Arthur Cortez  
Daniel Costa  
Melvin Craig  
Kevin Crane

Emma Cravanas  
John Criteria  
Allan De Lucio  
Galen Dea  
Ron Dodson  
Lino Dolay  
Cornelio Dominguez  
Matthew Dorricott  
William Douglas  
John Eddy  
Alfonso Estes  
Jane Fletcher  
Madeline Fong  
Alan Franck  
Eugene Frey  
Ruth Garcia  
Mauricio Garcia  
Dolores Gaudet  
Howard Gover  
Robert Grantham  
Douglas Gundersen  
Joseph Guzman  
Janice Halseide  
Diane Halsell  
Richard Harness  
Charles Harper  
Michael Harris  
Benjamin Hernandez  
John Holstein  
Ronald Huey  
June Huey  
Josephine Isaac  
Cornelio Javier  
William Johnson  
Tina Jones

Susan Jones  
Al Jordan  
William Jung  
Charles Kahler  
Anita Kimberlin  
Kathleen King  
Glenn Kiyomura  
John Klein  
Monica Knowlton  
Mitchell Langham  
Randall Lassus  
Rosalind Latigue-Grisby  
Elizabeth Lee  
Ross Lindblom  
Richard Lohr  
Scott Luer  
Stephen Lydon  
Brian Maryee  
Joyce McGee  
Jeffrey Miller  
Kenneth Mockel  
Thomas Moore  
Joe Morales  
Ramon Moreno  
Cynthia Mulvaney  
Fred Najera  
Oscar Navarro  
Stella Ng  
Jack Oliver  
Ernest Orozco  
Mary Padgett  
Ralph Palmer  
Gazaway Patrick  
D Philips  
John Pirie  
David Rabello  
Bhika Ram

Karen Rayos  
Neil Ridgway  
Clifford Rineor  
Trinidad Rodriguez  
Jesse Rutland  
Harry Ryles  
Michael Schecher  
Michael Sigler  
Jeffrey Silva  
Jeffrey Simmons  
Loretta Smith  
Lawrence Smith  
Richard Sonneborn  
John Sot  
Hilda Spencer  
William Stage  
Gilberto Suarez  
John Sullivan  
Jim Sullivan  
Ildefonso Tambunting  
Randolph Tancioco  
Linnie Tom  
Jaime Vera  
Pacita Villaluz  
Stephen Walker  
Gwenda Webster  
James Wedge  
Douglas Welch  
Nedra Williams  
Dean Wilson  
Linda Wilson  
Steven Wong  
Eduardo Zermeno  
Catherine Zugar

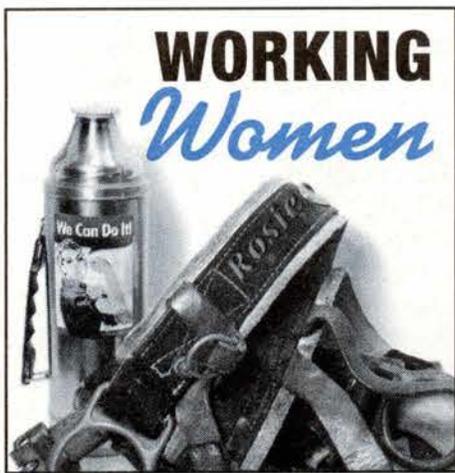
**Look what's on the IBEW 1245 website.**

Internet:  
www.ibew1245.com

At PG&E: Go to "My Stuff," select "IBEW"

The screenshot shows the IBEW Local 1245 website interface. At the top, there's a search bar and a navigation menu with options like 'Contact us', 'Ask Your Rep', 'Advisory Council', 'Officers and Executive Board', and 'Signatory Employers'. The main content area is divided into several sections: 'Current News' with several articles, 'IBEW Action Squad' featuring Perry Zimmerman, 'Calendar' with upcoming events, and 'Union Shopper' with various resources. A 'LIBRARY' section lists documents like 'Unit Meetings', 'Safety Matters', and 'IBEW 1245 History'. A 'More Photos' section shows a photo of a worker. At the bottom, there's a quote: "Power is not in what the establishment has but in what you think it has." - Saul Alinsky, Community Organizer.

- Frequent news updates
- Key contacts
- Photos galore!
- New member information
- Union library
- Benefits for you
- Union shopper
- More benefits
- News archive
- Coming events



## CAFTA: a threat to women workers

As Congress considers approving the Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), lawmakers are giving little thought to the impact such an agreement is likely to have on women workers.

In the US, women face significant job losses if companies are given new incentives to move production to Central America. This alone is sufficient reason to demand strong labor protections in all trade agreements to prevent a "race to the bottom" in terms of wages.

But in Central America, women are likely to face issues more serious than monetary loss.

The current status of women workers in Mexico's maquiladoras (assembly factories) starkly illustrates the impact of the 1993 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and serves as a warning of what women in Central America can expect if CAFTA is adopted.

Mexico is home to 3,000 maquiladoras, employing more than 1 million

workers, nearly half of them women. In labor-intensive operations such as electronic parts assembly, women represent 70% of the workforce. Factory management especially prefers to employ young women between the ages of 16 and 30.

When applying for a job in a maquiladora, women are often subjected to a pregnancy test and questioned about sexual activity, use of contraception and menstrual cycle. During employment, some employers conduct random pregnancy tests and force women workers to show used sanitary napkins to prove they are not pregnant.

Pregnant women are often forced to resign without receiving maternity benefits, even though such benefits are supposedly required by Mexican law. Many women continue to work in dangerous environments through their pregnancies, endangering their health and the health of their babies. Human Rights Watch has documented these practices in "A Job or Your Rights: Continued Sex Discrimination in Mexico's Maquiladora Sector."

Women working in Mexican factories typically work 10-hour shifts, six days a week for poverty wages. The average minimum wage in Mexico is \$4.20 a day (less than 50 cents an hour). The weekly sum of these earnings is far



less than the \$175 required weekly for a basket of basic food goods for a household of five—which does not include any medicines, clothing or nonessential items.

Maquiladoras workers toil under inflexible and stringent working conditions: limited and timed bathroom breaks, being locked out of the factory for tardiness, repetitive and tedious tasks without adequate safety equipment. Working women typically live in

shantytowns that lack basic services such as running water, electricity, paved roads, public lighting or a sense of public security.

Women who organize to improve conditions or challenge the status quo experience further harassment or violence.

NAFTA was approved 12 years ago without regard for women. Let's not repeat the mistake with CAFTA.

## Workplace sex can equal harassment, California Supreme Court rules

A manager who's engaged in sexual relations with subordinates is, under some circumstances, creating a hostile work environment, resulting in sexual harassment of other employees who are not involved, the California Supreme Court ruled July 18.

Former employees at the Valley State Prison for Women in Chowchilla set up the legal battle with their complaint that then-warden Lewis Kuykendall was sexually involved with at least three women at the same time.

The plaintiffs, themselves not sexually involved with the warden, alleged sexual harassment against the Department of Corrections and sued for damages. A lower court ruled against the women, saying the plaintiffs "were not themselves subjected to sexual advances and were not treated any differently than male employees.

However, the state Supreme Court overturned that decision July 18.

"Although an isolated instance of favoritism ... ordinarily would not constitute sexual harassment, when such sexual favoritism in a workplace is sufficiently widespread ... in which the

demeaning message is conveyed to female employees that they are viewed by management as 'sexual playthings' or that the way required for women to get ahead in the workplace is by engaging in sexual conduct," it can and does constitute harassment, Chief Justice Ronald M. George wrote in a strongly-worded decision for the unanimous court.

Phil Horowitz, of the California Employment Lawyers Association, who submitted a brief to the court in support of the women, called the decision "groundbreaking."

"It's the first major decision saying women can sue if they are treated worse because they're not the paramour of the supervisor," Horowitz told the Associated Press. "It's going to protect a lot of women in California from abuse and, hopefully, start a trend rolling in other jurisdictions."

The women sued in June 1999, alleging a pattern of harassment based on Kuykendall's relationships. From 1991 until 1998, the former warden "granted unwarranted and unfair employment benefits to the three women," the high court wrote.

When the women complained, they suffered retaliation, the high court wrote, calling it "an outrageous campaign of harassment against the plaintiffs."

An Internal Affairs investigation in 1998 resulted in Kuykendall's retirement.

### People Make the Union



Sheila Lawton is a Plant Service Clerk at Frontier in Sacramento. She serves the union as a shop steward and was a member of the union bargaining committee during the last set of negotiations.



"I can't go out with you ANY weekend Mr. Wankley... I'm too busy researching sexual harassment litigation."

# The LOCAL 1245 Union Primer

## Part I

### Why Is There a Union?

Imagine that you were fired because the boss didn't like your looks. Or because you refused to work a job you felt was unsafe.

Imagine being demoted or laid off, while someone with less training and fewer years on the job got promoted because they're a friend of the boss.

Before the union it was the boss's way or the highway. You worked when the boss told you to, and got paid what the boss wanted to pay. If you were off sick, or got hurt while working, you could lose your pay ... even your job.

Things are different today for employees represented by IBEW Local 1245 because some people had the courage to stand up and say "No."



Safety was a huge concern in the early days of the utility business. When the IBEW was organized in 1891, the death rate for linemen in some areas was one out of every two hired.

When IBEW Local 1245 was organized in the 1940s, workers at PG&E and other utilities faced serious workplace hazards. A half-century later union founder Ron Weakley could still list some of the hazards that dealt out injury and death to workers back then: ditch cave-ins, electrical contacts, steam burns in power plants, and inadequate protection against falls.

Utility jobsites are still dangerous places to work because electricity and natural gas are inherently hazardous. But jobsites are a hell of a lot safer than they used to be. This is not by chance. Safety remains a top priority because the union insists on it.



When the late L. L. Mitchell was a young PG&E lineman in Humboldt in the early 1940s, line crews worked seven days a week straight through the summer. No Saturdays off. No Sundays off. No holidays off. And no overtime pay.

Mitchell, one of the founders of Local 1245, once told this story about a remote job in the mountains. When the crew was getting ready to hike in—there was no road to the job site—it began to rain. Mitchell didn't believe they should work in the rain and refused to get out of the truck. The rest of the crew followed his example and the foreman had no choice but to drive the crew back to headquarters.

As punishment, the foreman tried to force Mitchell to clean the toilets. Again Mitchell refused, saying, "I'm a lineman; I just don't do that. If you want that done you hire a janitor."

Mitchell and his fellow employees had pride in themselves as workers. They drew strength from that pride and were determined to be treated with respect by their bosses.

Things have changed because people like Weakley, Mitchell and countless others dared to stand up for better treatment. It's the way things got changed back then. And it's the way things get changed today. Employees just like you have insisted on equal treatment, better wages, and better benefits.

But these things didn't happen because one employee stood up. They happened because the employees were able to stand up together as a union. When employees unite to speak with a single voice, they have the power to improve their situation.

You've heard the old saying, "Get it in writing." That's what a union does.

Employees who belong to IBEW Local 1245 have the power that comes from collective bargaining. They negotiate written labor agreements that are legally binding upon the employer.

The union staff provides expertise and guidance, but the employees themselves are the ones who decide what they want to achieve. They set the priorities for bargaining. That is the opportunity and the responsibility of union membership.

When you have no union, the boss can promise whatever he wants, but has no obligation to follow through on those promises. As a member of IBEW Local 1245 you are entitled by law to the wages, benefits and job protections in the union contract. Once the boss has agreed to them, they cannot be arbitrarily taken away.

Through collective bargaining, IBEW Local 1245 makes it possible for employees like you to achieve more for yourself and your family. Our union sets the standard for compensation in the utility industry.

Collective bargaining gives us the strength to achieve legally-binding wage scales determined by the labor agreement—not by the whims of management. It gives us the strength to win overtime pay premiums, paid days off, medical insurance, pensions and other benefits.

Collective bargaining also helps us win better job security through bidding rights, training opportunities, seniority provisions to protect against punitive layoffs, and grievance procedures to fight unjust discipline.

IBEW Local 1245 has made great strides forward in these areas. And we continue to seek improvements at every new round of collective bargaining.

Recent research by Peter D. Hart Research Associates has found that 57 million US workers say they would join a union if they had a chance. But when workers try to gain a voice on the job by forming a union, employers routinely respond with intimidation, harassment and retaliation. These employees have few ways to fight back because they are unorganized. They want collective power, but they don't have it.



When IBEW Local 1245 members go to work each day, we know what wages and benefits we are entitled to. We know the working conditions our employers are required to provide. We know that we will receive paid sick days, paid vacation, and paid holidays. And we know that we can protest through the grievance procedure if the boss fails to live up to the terms of the labor agreement.

These fundamental protections were no accident. Each of us stands taller because we stand on the shoulders of people who came before us, people who stood up for themselves and for each other.

Some people say, "Maybe people used to need unions, but they don't need them anymore."

This is like saying, "People used to need respect on the job but they don't need it anymore."

Tens of millions of US workers today lack basic wage and benefit protections. They know why people still need unions.

Those of us who have a union understand that bosses still sometimes try to bend the rules, that bosses will always look for ways to cut costs. That's why the union's job is never done.

*You need the union, and the union needs you. By learning about your rights in the workplace—and how to stand up for them—you help keep the union strong and your job secure.*





Working the GC gas job in Nevada City are, from left: Roger Bolstad, Miscellaneous Equipment Operator; Steve Lange, Fieldman; Greg Wagner, Backhoe; Ken Power, Backhoe; Michael Frasu, Fieldman.

# Daily grind...

It's not just the daily grind when PG&E brings gas service to new homes. Grinding and digging and filling and packing require considerable finesse when neighborhood activity continues all around you. This General Construction gas crew navigated its way around water lines, sewer lines and other gas services—not to mention moms driving by with the kids—to lay one mile of new 6-inch pipe. The crew's efforts will bring gas service to a dozen new homes in Nevada City, Ca. Orange cones mark the worksite by day, steel plates cover the soft spots at night— routine but critical measures to assure public safety as the job progresses.

*with finesse*

Photos by Eric Wolfe

RIGHT: Jed Pedersen, protective footwear and ear plugs in place, compacts loose ground with the whacker.

LEFT: Ken Power guides the steel cover into position. Greg Wagner, unseen, is at the controls in the backhoe.



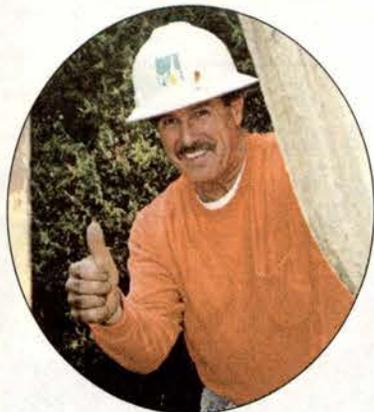
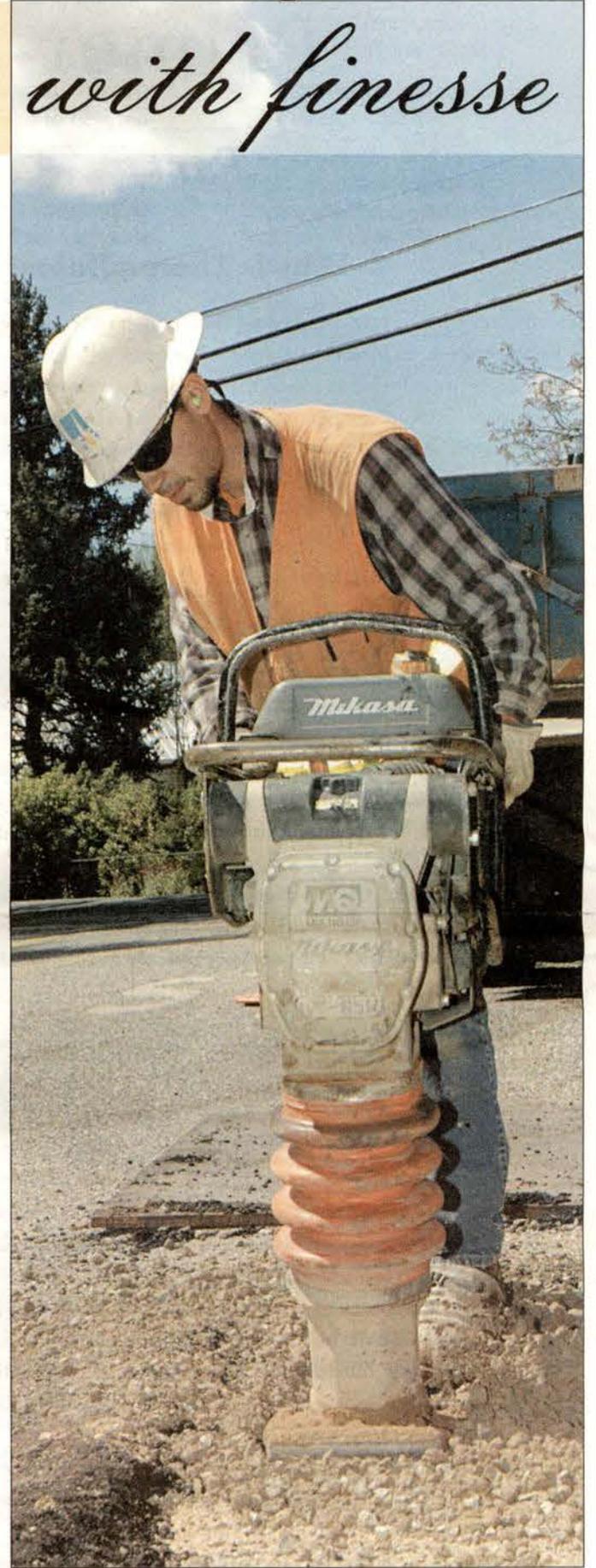
LEFT: Ken Power guides the steel cover into position. Greg Wagner, unseen, is at the controls in the backhoe.



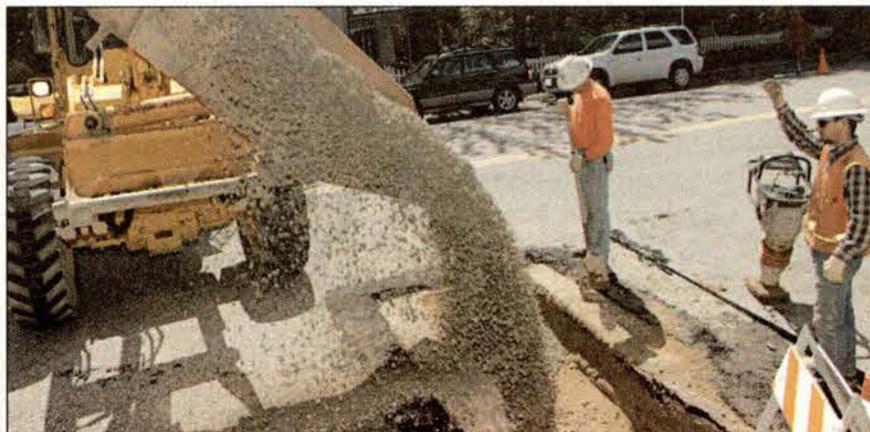
LEFT: Roger Bolstad and Steve Lange tamp down asphalt delivered by Greg Wagner, still unseen, in the backhoe.



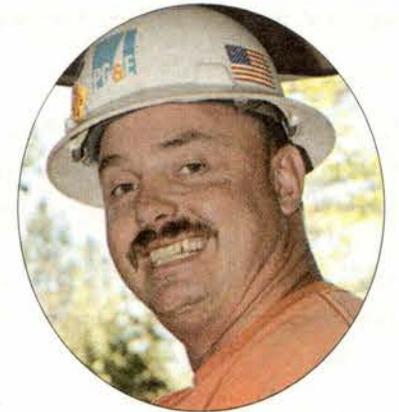
Working Foreman B Jim Loewen



Fieldman Michael Frasu offers a union thumbs-up.



Jed Pedersen, right, directs the gravel fill. Steve Lange is at left.



Backhoe Operator Greg Wagner, visible at last.